



**International Conference:
Evidence in Global Disability and Health**

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ABSTRACT

Title: **Barriers to inclusive education for children with disabilities in India: a human rights approach.**

Abstract text (limited to 300 words, should include background, methods, results and conclusions):

Introduction

Despite growing impetus to ensure universal primary education in India, children with disabilities (CWDs) are largely disenfranchised. Global disability discourse has shifted from segregation in specialist provision, to integration in mainstream schools, and now to inclusion. Inclusive Education (IE) expects the school and wider community to adapt to enable children to engage, rather than expecting the individual child to change. Whilst IE is often justified on human rights grounds, this rights paradigm is seldom used to evaluate it in practice.

Methods

Within the context of relevant international human rights law (IHRL), this study assessed Indian law regarding disability and education and discovered that IHRL is translated faithfully into progressive domestic policy. Poor outcomes must therefore be explained by a significant policy-practice gap. This was analysed using rights-based tools; barriers were categorised according to which rights they violate, and also according to whether they primarily prevent children claiming their rights or prevent providers fulfilling them. Further analysis divided them into influence at micro, mezzo or macro societal levels.

Results

Micro level barriers include discrimination against particular impairments and lack of provision for physical access. Broader barriers include Indian societal attitudes, and overlapping deprivations of gender, caste, poverty and rural living. Inclusion discourse in India often takes an altruistic rather than rights based approach and is hindered by vague disability categorisation and paucity of disaggregated data. Dual ministerial administration of CWDs' education leads to contradictory approaches, reluctance to adapt curricula, poor coordination between actors, and inadequate funding.

Conclusion

Full inclusion can stir conflict between the right to education and rights to access, quality and inclusion within education, and so the possibility of a well funded and regulated continuum of provision will be discussed. In order to serve the best interests of CWDs in India, a more India-specific approach is required.

Deadline for abstract submission: November 30, 2015

Please submit your abstract to: disabilitycentre@lshtm.ac.uk

Restricted to one first author abstract per participant.

If you have any questions, please write to:
disabilitycentre@lshtm.ac.uk