



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

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ABSTRACT

Title:

“Use of Information Technology to Help Students with Disabilities”

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

ABSTRACT

Millions of students across the India cannot benefit fully from a traditional educational program because they have a disability that impairs their ability to participate in a typical classroom environment. For these students, information-based technologies can play an especially important role. Not only can information technology facilitate a broader range of educational activities to meet a variety of needs for students with mild learning disorders, but adaptive technology now exists that can enable even those students with severe disabilities to become active learners in the classroom alongside their peers who do not have disabilities.

This article provides an overview of the role information technology can play in promoting the education of children with special needs within the regular classroom. For example, use of information technology for word processing, communication, research and multimedia projects can help the thirty lakh students with specific learning and emotional disorders keep up with their nondisabled peers. Information technology has also enhanced the development of sophisticated devices that can assist the twenty lakh students with more severe disabilities in overcoming a wide range of limitations that hinder classroom participation-from speech and hearing impairments to blindness and severe physical disabilities. However, many teachers are not adequately trained on how to use technology effectively in their classrooms, and the cost of the technology is a serious consideration for all schools. Thus although information technology has the potential to act as an equalizer by freeing many students from their disabilities, the barriers of inadequate training and cost must first be overcome before more widespread use can become a reality.

Keywords - Optical Character Recognition (OCR), Liquid Crystal Displays (LCDs), Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

CONCLUSION

The barriers of inadequate teacher training and high cost are problematic-significantly inhibiting the use of technology in classroom settings-but are not insurmountable. There is no doubt that technology has the potential to act as an equalizer by freeing many students from their disability in a way that allows them to achieve their true potential. More widespread use of technology would meet both the legal requirements and the spirit of the laws calling for students with special needs to be educated in the least restrictive environment. Thus, it is important for all individuals who are involved in policy decisions regarding the placement of students with disabilities, teacher training, and the funding of educational technologies to become familiar with the issues surrounding the use of technology for students with disabilities. Working together, parents, teachers, administrators, and school board members, as well as both students with disabilities and their nondisabled peers, can help create classroom environments in which all students have opportunities to learn.