



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

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ABSTRACT

Title:	Addressing barriers to schooling of children with disabilities in rural India: issues of laboratories not laboratories
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Abstract text (limited to 300 words, should include background, methods, results and conclusions):

Education of children with disabilities has become a significant concern particularly in the last decade or so. Various international declarations on education and development, such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the World Education Forum, and national education policies have highlighted the need for including children with disabilities. In the educational research literature, barriers to schooling are primarily construed in terms of stigma, negative attitudes of teachers and peers or family members. However what remains largely conspicuous in this literature is a realisation that the real barriers many children with disabilities face in developing economies are in relation to meeting their basic needs. Drawing on the findings of a school based study in rural Karnataka (India) this paper highlights how a significant concern for mothers of children with disabilities was around basic hygiene and how this shaped their schooling experiences. Through interview data, what emerged strongly is how the lack of appropriate toilet training and/or the lack of appropriate toilet facilities in schools were significant barriers to the child's schooling. For these low income families, current moral and rights based debates in the field of inclusive education remained very distant, rather what they struggled with in the immediate was meeting their child's basic needs. The implications arising from this paper highlight not only the need for more robust monitoring of physical adaptations in schools settings, such as toilets and ramps, particularly at a time when significant amount of school funding is being directed towards these changes. Additionally, it also proposes the need for stronger alliances between education and health, particularly in contexts of poverty where individuals are less likely to have access to good health care systems, which can have even more profound implications for parents of children with disabilities.

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:

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