Barriers to social and educational inclusion in Latin America

Literature review

International Partners
Empowering People on the Front Lines of Poverty

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

FIRAH
RECHERCHE APPLIED
APPLIQUÉE SUR DISABILITY
LE HANDICAP RESEARCH

International Partners
Empowering People on the Front Lines of Poverty

International Partners Cassie Stern Memorial (IP) is committed to the vision that all people, no matter how poor, should have access to education, health care, and clean water.

IP promotes this vision by cultivating leadership in economically impoverished rural communities to bring hope, education, and opportunity. For individuals with disabilities this includes working with local partners[i] to:

- Providing residents of poor rural communities with information about the rights of individuals with disabilities and their families;
- Providing information, training, and resources to community members, educators, and families regarding strategies for promoting social and educational inclusion;
- Promoting the development of social networks for individuals with disabilities and their families within communities.

More : internationalpartners.org

College of Education

The College of Education (CoE) is part of the University of Maryland's College Park Campus. It is the flagship campus of the University of Maryland System. The College is dedicated to the goals of achieving excellence in teaching, research and public service.

Faculty and students from CoE collaborated with International Partners to design and implement all aspects of this project including:

- Research design,
- Data collection and analysis,
- Development of training materials,
- Delivering training, and
- Conducting community visits.

More : www.umd.edu

Founded in 2009 and state-approved, FIRAH is a foundation entirely dedicated to applied disability research. The International Foundation of Applied Disability Research was created by: the APF France Handicap, the APAJH, Nexem and Axel Kahn (FIRAH's Honorary President).
Firah's President is Patrick Gohet.

Our target is applied research which calls on a strong collaboration between stakeholders (including disabled people organisation) and researchers, in order to identify concrete solutions aimed at improving the quality of life of people with disabilities.
The FIRAH two main activities are :
- Annual calls for projects to select and finance innovative projects
- Sharing knowledge of applied research on disability to stakeholders in the field worlwide

www.firah.org

The present document was conducted as part of the applied research "Supporting the Inclusion of "Invisible" Children and Youth with Disabilities and their Families in Rural El Salvador" led by the University of Maryland, in partnership with International Partners Cassie Stern Memorial, and several stakeholders in the field. It was funded by FIRAH's (International Foundation of Applied Research on Disabilities). The review was conducted by Paula J. Beckman.

The goal of this literature review is to report on existing knowledge about applied research on the theme of poverty and disability at international level, and particularly the barriers to social and educational inclusion in Latin America. It resulted in the selection of relevant research which were each categorised using a set of predetermined criteria. Of these researches, 12 were selected as being particularly relevant or interesting because of their potential for being applied with practical effect, especially with persons with disabilities and their own organisations

What FIRAH means by the very general terms of applied research is:

- First, it is proper research based on precision and methodologies which allow the implementation of a scientific approach involving teams of one or more researchers or academics whose research is one of the statutory missions.

- Applied research differs from basic research. Its ultimate purpose is to increase independence and social participation of people with disabilities. It is not only aimed at producing theoretical knowledge but also tackling practical issues related to the needs and concerns of people with disabilities and their families. The collaboration between these people, professionals and researchers is a fundamental element to the achievement of this type of research.

- This type of research is designed to produce directly applicable results. In addition to usual publishing (scientific articles, research reports) applied research is also designed to produce other publications called "means of application[1]" which can take various forms: development of good practices, methodological guides, training tools, and are destined to different field stakeholders (people with disabilities, professionals, policies makers).

This work does not intent to be comprehensive but to identify the results and knowledge generated by research that could be useful for field stakeholders in order to improve the quality of life and social participation for people with disabilities.

Each title in the annotated bibliography contains a link with free or paying access to the work in question. Each reading note contains a link to the relevant research documentary note on FIRAH's website.

This document can be freely disseminated provided the source, author and relevant organisations are acknowledged.
FIRAH - 2020

---

[1] **Means of application**
Shaping of the findings and knowledge gained from applied research into products, services and contents to meet the expectations and needs of people with disabilities. These application supports are adjusted to be used by field stakeholders.

Table of contents

Editorial

As of November 2019, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) had 181 signatories. It has served as a catalyst for the development of national policies throughout the world designed to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in educational and community contexts. Despite this, an estimated 80 percent of persons with disabilities in low and middle-income countries live in poverty and the majority of children with disabilities in these countries are out-of-school. Although the direction of the relationship between poverty and disability has not been well established, there is a need for a better, more nuanced understanding of this relationship. Indeed, to fully realize the intention of the CRPD, there is a need to better understand the barriers that interfere with the ability of persons with disabilities to participate in the social and educational lives of their communities. There is also a need to develop strategies for promoting this participation that are relevant to the cultural and economic realities existing within countries.

In this review, we begin by examining data from a number of studies that focus on the relationship between poverty and disability at the international level. We then examine several studies focused on Latin American that provide grounding for our project in rural El Salvador which is designed to identify "invisible" children, youth and young adults with disabilities and create community based strategies that promote their participation. After describing barriers to inclusion which were identified across studies in that we found in Latin America, we conclude with recommendations for addressing these barriers.

Summary

An international commitment to addressing the rights of persons with disabilities was established in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). By November 2019, 180 countries and the European Union had ratified this agreement, making it a catalyst for the adoption of national policies designed to ensure that persons with disabilities have full access to educational and community settings. However, reports indicate that most school-age children with disabilities in low and middle-income countries remain excluded from the education system (Anastasiow & Keller, 2014; Filmer, 2008; WHO, 2011). Understanding this issue is challenging, in part due to cross-country differences in definitions and classification systems. What is undeniable, however, is that, if the barriers to social and educational participation are not better understood, it will be difficult to accomplish the aims of the CRPD.

The purpose of this review is to describe barriers to social and educational inclusion in Latin America. We searched major data bases related to this topic including, Education Research Complete, ERIC, PsycARTICLES, PsycCRITIQUES, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection, PsycINFO, SocINDEX and JSTOR. Since it is one of the most overarching and pervasive barriers to inclusion, this review starts by discussing the link between poverty and disability in general. It goes on to describe barriers that have emerged in a relatively small number of studies specifically conducted in Latin America and concludes with recommendations regarding practical strategies that may be of use in addressing these challenges.

Poverty and Disability

An estimated 80 percent of the nearly one billion individuals with disabilities around the world live in developing nations and a large body of evidence suggests they are more likely to live in poverty (Filmer, 2008; Mitra, Posarac & Vick, 2013). This disparity is a critical issue around the world and has been the focus of cross-national studies using country data, census data and/or household surveys to investigate this relationship. Recently, for example, in a meta-analysis of quantitative studies that focused on poverty and disability, Banks, Kuper & Polak (2018) found a significant relationship between these two factors in 122 out of 150 studies they analyzed. This association was present for all types of disability. Moreover, the strength of the relationship increased as level of poverty and/or severity of disability increased. Previously Groce, Kembhavi, Wirz, Lang, Trani, & Kett, M.(2011) used a meta-narrative approach to examine the relationship between poverty, health and disability. Although they did not find strong causal relationships, they did find associations between these factors. They suggested the need for a more nuanced consideration of these relationships as well as the need to build an evidence base that incorporates, not only the interactions between these factors, but their relationship to other factors (e.g. gender, age, urban/rural context) as well.

A similar relationship has also been identified when examining the inclusion of children with disabilities in educational settings. More than one third of the world's 115 million children that are out of school, have disabilities (World Bank, 2003). In general, low and middle-income countries tend to

report lower educational participation rates for children with disabilties (Beckman, et al 2016, Sabella, 2015). For example, El Salvador (where the research for this project was conducted), ratified the CRPD and has a national policy giving persons with disabilities the "right" to education. However, the Ministry of Education (MINED) reports that 16,309 children with disabilities were enrolled in school in 2013 out of a total student population of 1,720,639 or slightly less than one percent (MINED, 2014, p. 26, p.8). This number is much lower than reported in higher income countries (e.g.13% in USA; National Center for Education Statistics, 2015).

Using data from 143 countries, Anastasiou & Keller (2014) used structural equation modeling to investigate factors that associated with large disparities in access to education. They found that most of the variance in special education coverage (77.3 percent) was explained by gross national income per capita, adult literacy rate, educational variables, and expected years of formal schooling. In an earlier study using 14 household surveys from 13 low and middle-income countries, Filmer (2008) reported that the educational gaps between children with and without disabilities start as early as first grade and continue to widen – even when overall enrollment rates are relatively high. Filmer concludes that disabilities can be the result of the "cumulative deprivations of poverty" (Filmer, 2008, pp 149) and can contribute to poverty since those who live in poverty must use more of their income to access needed services. Additionally, a disability can make it difficult for individuals and/or their families to generate income. Thus, the World Health Organization (2011) concludes that, "…disability may increase the risk of poverty, and poverty may increase the risk of disability" (p.10).

The same result was also found in recent study specifically conducted in Latin America. Hincapié, Duryea, & Hincapié (2019) examined the relationship between school attendance for children with and without disabilities by looking at household surveys and census data in eight countries in Latin America. As in other studies, these authors found that children with disabilities were less likely to attend school, a gap that became larger as they got older. They were also less likely to complete school.

A consistently reported limitation in this literature is that definitions, both of poverty and disability, are not consistent across and sometimes even within studies (Pinilla-Roncancio, 2015; Groce, et al, 2011). For example, differences in prevalence rates across countries can, in part, be accounted for by differences in definition and identification procedures. In a participatory action research study designed to develop an inclusion index, Polat (2011) found that in addition to assessment issues, definitions of disability influenced prevalence rates. For example in Tanzania, Albinism is identified as a disability, whereas, attention deficit disorders, autism and hyperactivity were described by one teacher as "western problems" that don't exist in Africa (p. 56). In El Salvador, learning disabilities and speech and language disorders are not considered disabilities for purposes of statistical reporting at the national level (MINED, 2015).

Barriers to Inclusion in Latin America

The previous section establishes that an association between poverty and disability has been identified across a broad range of studies focused on low and middle-income countries. While the directionality of that association is not well-established, some authors have suggested of a bi-directional relationship (Filmer, 2008; WHO, 2011). Still, a number of authors have pointed out that there is a need for a better understanding of factors that contribute to this relationship. In this section, we highlight a limited number of studies that are specific to Latin America and emphasize barriers at the intersection of poverty and disability.

In the study described previously by Hincapié, Duryea, & Hincapié (2019), the authors found that many schools did not have infrastructure that was appropriate for students with physical disabilities. For example, in Mexico, only 29 percent of primary schools had ramps and only 14 percent had accessible toilets. Three countries reported inadequate infrastructure even in special schools. Moreover, information was limited or unavailable with respect to accessibility for children and youth with sensory, cognitive and other disabilities. Other limitations of this data were acknowledged by authors and, as in other studies previously cited, included differences in definitions as well as a lack of distinction based on factors such as severity of disability.

Several other studies examined factors affecting the inclusion of people with disabilities in Latin America. One study, conducted in Nicaragua by Matt (2014) focused on caregivers' perceptions of their children's disabilities, their aspirations for the future, and the extent to which they sought rehabilitation and health services. The author reports findings from semi-structured interviews conducted with 13 caregivers of children and youth who had a variety of disabilities and were between 2 and 23 years of age. Many lacked access to education and medical care. There were also practical barriers to accessing services including transportation costs as well as lack of information about where services were located and how to access them. Another barrier that emerged in this study were included the beliefs and attitudes of families. Some caregivers were ashamed and hid their son or daughter from the public. However, when children were provided with educational services and when parents received education and training, parents had a better understanding of the disability and could think in terms of their son or daughter's potential. Although some superstitious and religious-based explanations for the disability lingered, most caregivers in Nicaragua offered biomedical explanations. Still, caring for a person with a disability was seen as something that would be rewarded by God and praying was viewed as having curative properties.

Similarly, Glover & Blankenship (2007) studied the attitudes of Mexican and Mexican-American families with respect to religious and spiritual beliefs related to disability. The authors administered the « Questions About Disability Survey » (QADS) to 160 participants who lived either in Northern Mexico (51% of the sample) or in the Rio Grande Valley in South Texas (49% of the sample). While most participants did not view disability as a punishment or as a moral test from God and did not see the "evil eye" as a cause of disability, about 25% did attribute disability to these factors. A substantial minority of participants (35%) saw "pride" as a cause of disability. Caring for a person with a disability

was seen as something that would be rewarded by God and praying was frequently viewed as having curative properties. Seventy percent of participants felt that people should give money to people with disabilities.

A common focus of the studies we found that were conducted in Latin America was teacher attitudes. For example, Díaz Haydar & Franco Media (2010) studied the perspectives of 23 teachers toward inclusive education in Columbia by using interviews, field observations, an attitude scale and an analysis of teacher's speech. Teachers were "ambivalent" toward inclusion and more or less equally distributed between having positive, negative and undecided attitudes. Some teachers saw inclusion as important but were uncertain of their preparation to implement it or the availability of resources to be successful. They also feared a loss of discipline and control in their classrooms, particularly with students who had attention deficits and hyperactivity. Teachers also believed that the government needed to do more, particularly by providing them with adequate resources. Although some acknowledged the right to inclusion in the school, they thought that education should be provided within the context of special classes so that students would get adequate, appropriate "attention." The authors concluded that it is not enough to change attitudes toward inclusion. They emphasized the need for more extensive pedagogical training to address the needs of students with disabilities in the classroom.

Similarly, three studies examined inclusion in El Salvador, which was country in which our project was conducted. All focused on teacher attitudes toward inclusion in public schools. The earliest study investigated the attitudes of 234 teachers from 56 primary schools in San Salvador (Figueroa, Martinez, & Rosales, J., 2005). Sixty-nine percent of teachers expressed negative attitudes about inclusion while 71 percent indicated that their preparation to work effectively with students who had special needs was limited. Importantly however, when teachers had specific training in special education, they often reported more positive attitudes about inclusion.

Hernández (2006) reported similar findings in a study designed to investigate the capacity of El Salvador to create inclusive education. She conducted interviews with government officials, representatives of non-governmental organizations, school administrators, parents and teachers. She also conducted document reviews (e.g., documents and policy reports from relevant organizations in El Salvador) as well as observations in two schools identified by local participants as "models" of inclusive educational practice. She found that although El Salvador has a number of advocacy organizations that promote educational access for individuals with disabilities as well as a dedicated government agency (CONAIPD) charged with protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities, there were a number of barriers to inclusive practice. An important challenge was poor quality of primary education in general which served as barrier for those with disabilities. There was a lack of adequate teacher training and high pupil teacher ratios. Few opportunities existed for specialized instruction of children with special needs. There were 30 special education schools for students with low-incidence disabilities in the country but these were mainly located in departmental capitals, making them difficult for students in rural areas to access. There were not consistent definitions or assessment processes and there was a need to improve teacher training and access to resources.

Nearly a decade later, Sabella (2015) conducted a study focused on teacher attitudes in rural El Salvador and reported very similar findings. His goal was to understand how education was provided to students with disabilities and to investigate professional attitudes regarding inclusion. He studied 12 rural schools in one municipality where he surveyed 43 teachers regarding their attitudes toward inclusion. He then conducted in-depth, qualitative interviews with a sub-sample of five teachers and three directors representing eight of the schools. He found that many children with disabilities in rural El Salvador did not attend school and even those with mild disabilities often did not receive needed services. While teachers generally agreed with the philosophy of inclusion, most thought that students with disabilities would receive a better education in special schools. Most had little training with respect to disabilities and were unsure of how to address student needs. Moreover, some disabilities (e.g. learning disabilities, mild intellectual disabilities) were often undiagnosed and teachers did not know how to identify these disabilities. This finding is consistent with those of Hernández, nearly ten years earlier. Also similar to Hernández, teachers reported that a lack of resources (e.g. assessments, equipment, academic resources) were major barriers to inclusion. Interestingly, teacher attitudes were consistent regardless of experience teaching, experience with disabilities, and amount of training with respect to inclusion. Training with respect to disability was rare and generally limited to descriptions of various disabilities rather than practical strategies for intervening with and/or supporting students with disabilities in their school. Teachers also expressed concern about family support for students with disabilities.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The studies reviewed here identify barriers to inclusion at the intersection of poverty and disability. A relatively consistent pattern also emerges with respect to barriers that limit the participation of persons with disabilities in low and middle-income countries. There are concerns about the ***overall quality of education*** in countries that lack sufficient funds to support even general education. This issue affects overall infrastructure, student-teacher ratios, access to educational materials (e.g. books, desks) and other resources, as well as opportunities for teacher training (Beckman, Abera, Sabella, Podzimek, & Joseph, 2016; Figueroa, Martinez, & Rosales, J., 2005; Hernández, 2006; Sabella, 2015). In places where even basic resources are lacking, providing specific accommodations for students with disabilities may seem a formidable task for governments and school personnel (Anastasiou & Keller, 2014).

In such contexts, the ***issue of accessibility and infrastructure*** can become a major barrier, a finding that was emphasized across the studies reviewed here (Beckman, et al, 2016; Hernandez, 2006, Hincapié, et al, 2019). Indeed, lack of basic infrastructure, such as ramps and accessible bathrooms precludes access to schools and other services and often exist on top of more general issues with infrastructure in some places (e.g., holes in the roof, bathrooms that don't function at all, limited availability of water). And, as has been pointed out elsewhere (Beckman, et al, 2016) the issue of accessibility is far more than an issue of accessibility within public buildings, but also extends to the ability to even get to school and other facilities at all. For persons in remote, rural communities this

often includes, but is not limited to, the ability to leave their home or community due to rough terrain, the need to travel long distances, the lack of accessible transportation.

Real access to school is also influenced by *lack of teacher training,* an issue that emerged across multiple studies (Beckman, et. al, 2016; Díaz & Media,2010; Hernández, 2006, Sabella, 2015) and is consistent with the findings of other studies world-wide (Beckman, et al, 2016). Moreover, lack of training was associated with teacher attitudes toward inclusion (Díaz Haydar & Media,2010; Hernández, 2006) and comfort with having students with disabilities in their classrooms with teachers often believing that students with disabilities would be better off in special schools. Indeed, concerns about lack training affected may aspects of their work including assessment, identification and methods for delivering instruction.

Closely related to a lack of training, *lack of resources* specific to students with disabilities was also identified as a barrier to inclusion (Beckman, et al, 2016; Díaz & Media,2010; Hernández, 2006; Sabella, 2015). Resources, such as adaptive equipment, diagnostic assessments, were often not available at all and if they were, teachers were not always prepared to use them. Thus, in El Salvador for example, students with intellectual and learning disabilities were often not identified and materials were often not adapted to their special needs.

Under these circumstances then, it is not surprising that *caregiver attitudes and beliefs* were sometimes influenced. Many parents kept their son or daughter at home (Beckman, et. al, 2016; Matt, 2014) sometimes because of the stigma attached to disability, fear of how their children would be treated, other times out of the sheer difficulty of getting their son or daughter to school, particularly if they did not believe it would have beneficial outcomes. And, while the majority of parents in the studies we reviewed in Latin America did not report spiritual beliefs about such phenomena as the "evil eye", etc, some did feel God would look favorably upon them for caring for their son or daughter and relied on prayer as a means to address their concerns.

Overall, these studies are directly relevant to CRPD; in particular **to** Article 24 and the right to education. Several of the articles make practical recommendations (Beckman, et al, 2016; Hernandez, 2006, Hincapié, Duryea, & Hincapié, 2019; Sabella, 2016). Together, they highlight the importance of providing more training for staff, both because it has implications for changing attitudes as well as for the ability to conduct appropriate assessments, make needed accommodations and implement appropriate interventions. Some of the work that is needed is systemic and appropriate for intervention at the national or international level. In particular, initiatives to make schools and public building accessible are critical. It is also important to develop systems for transportation that include individuals with disabilities from rural areas, taking rural contexts into account. Additionally, making sure that all teachers have appropriate resources (e.g., assessment materials, assistive devices) as well as practical training is something that is essential (e.g. focus on assessment, identification, teaching methods) rather than abstract and/or theoretical in nature. Additionally, there is a need reduce stigma and promote acceptance through public awareness campaigns. While national campaigns are likely useful, there is also a need for local initiatives that reach to the community and family level.

These challenges are complex, the need is critical, and resolving them will require substantial investment. However, without addressing these challenges, it will be difficult to achieve the aims of the CRPD or ultimately, the goal of universal education.

Reading notes

Each reading note was selected for its interest regarding the needs of documentation of stakeholders in the field.

Each reading note contains a link to the relevant research documentary note on FIRAH's website.

Reading note 1. Cross-national differences in Special Education coverage: An empirical analysis

References

Anastasiou, D. & Keller, C.E. (2014). Cross-national differences in Special Education coverage: An empirical analysis. *Exceptional Children, 80* (3), 353-367. doi: 10.117700/00114402914522421.

Key words References

Education (disabilities, inclusion), International Development, All disabilities, Humanities and Social Sciences

Author's note

This study was designed to identify reasons for differences in national special education coverage across 143 countries. Authors reviewed cross-national comparisons in special education and examined contextual factors that affected provision of special education. They found that many countries have laws that assure the right to education for children with disabilities in accordance with the CRPD yet there were large disparities in access to special education across countries. The authors used structural equation modeling to find that 77 percent of the variance in special education coverage was accounted for by gross national income (GNI) per capita of a nation and adult literacy rates. They note however, that many lower income countries may have other competing priorities (e.g. health, safety, etc.) that may interfere with investment in special education. They noted that international policies are sometimes inconsistent with a countries context and that simply borrowing policies from one country (e.g. the United States, Europe) may actually cause new problems. This applies to inclusion when the effort to globalize inclusive policies neglect essential considerations such as infrastructure, resources, professional expertise. Specifically, globalizing educational policies about inclusion have sometimes ignored key factors such as resources, infrastructure, professional expertise, and cultural factors, thereby "contributing to the gap between rich rhetoric and poor reality."

Commentary

This article addresses factors related to Article 24 (Education) of the **CRPD.** It provides one evidence as to the relationship between poverty and disability. While authors predicted that increasing the GNI per capita for a nation would likely allow an increase in the education provided to students with disabilities, but admitted this was unrealistic as a strategy.

Limitations to this study include the quality of some of the data (for example with respect to adult literacy) since different countries may apply definitions/criteria differently. Data on special education coverage came from various sources, depending on the country. Finally, on a **practical level**, indicators of educational context were general making it difficult to identify more complex, nuanced factors that might influence coverage in special education, although the authors discuss the potential importance of practical issues such as availability of adequate resources and trained personnel.

Reading note 2. Poverty and disability in low- and middle-income countries: A systematic review

Access to the reading note and to complete documents in the documentary database on FIRAH's website

References

Banks L.M., Kuper H., Polack S. (2018) Correction: Poverty and disability in low- and middle-income countries: A systematic review. PLOS ONE 13(9).

Key words

Social sciences, International development (poverty), All disabilities

Author's note

This article is a meta-analysis of 150 articles from around the world focused on poverty and disability. The authors searched 10 databases and included only quantitative studies. Authors found clear evidence to support the link between economic poverty and disability, with 122 out of 150 studies finding a significant link between these variables. When data was disaggregated by type of disability, the association was present in every type of disability. Moreover, the strength of the relationship increased as level of poverty and/or severity of disability increased. The direction of this association was not established.

Commentary

This study was significant in that it had clear, though limited definitions of economic poverty and included studies that focused on broad range of disabilities. It is also directly relevant to Article 5 of the **CRPD** (Equality and non-discrimination). It is important to note that half of the articles included were focused on mental health conditions (e.g. depression), although the relationship held when considering physical, intellectual and sensory disabilities as well. The authors noted that one limitation was that the definition of economic poverty was economic data and did not focus on multidimensional indicators of poverty (e.g., access to education; access to health care; food security). Additionally nearly half of the studies were conducted in either Brazil, China or India, where the conditions may be different than in other low and middle-income countries. It also did not account for some of the additional costs associated with disability (e.g. costs of medical expenses, assistive devices, etc.).

Although the article was a meta-analysis and authors did not have specific connections to the field, it does have practical implications. Specifically, the authors argue for additional research focused on a variety of other variables including inadequate living standards, access to education and health services which could lead to more nuanced approaches to policy and service provision. They also suggest the importance of understanding intra-family dimensions (e.g. relative access to resources within a family). Importantly, the authors also suggest more research into the underlying drivers of

this association, such as the political, social and economic conditions that could lead professionals and policy makers to design interventions that address this association.

Reading note 3. From rights to realities: Confronting the challenge of educating persons with disabilities in developing countries

References

Beckman, P.J., Abera, N., Sabella, T., Podzimek, K. & Joseph, L., (2016) From rights to realities: Confronting the challenge of educating persons with disabilities in developing countries. Global Education Review, 3 (3), 4-27.

Key words

Humanities and Social Sciences, Education (Inclusion, Barriers); Accessibility; International Development; Access to services; Social perception, All disabilities

Author's note

This article begins by reviewing the link between poverty and disability. The authors note that, despite the catalyst provided by the CRPD and other international agreements, most children with disabilities in developing countries are out of school. The article then describes barriers to the realization of these agreements that have been reported in the literature, with a specific focus on examples that emerged in studies conducted by the authors in El Salvador, Ethiopia, and Liberia.

These studies identify common barriers to educational access that are consistent across a relatively limited literature conducted in local contexts. The authors offer several recommendations to address these challenges. These included a specific focus on public acceptance and awareness, the need to seek community voice, facilitate connection, and provide support, the importance of training that is practical, functional, and widely available, and the need to invest in systems for transportation. Moreover, the authors emphasize the importance of improving the overall quality of programming for children in low and middle-income countries.

Commentary

The article identifies barriers to inclusion in low and middle-income countries. It specifically highlights common themes identified by the authors in studies they conducted in El Salvador, Liberia, and Ethiopia. Since these barriers were common to studies conducted in very different contexts, the authors suggest that, unless they are addressed, they undermine the intention of a series of international agreements, including the **CRPD**. The conclusions are particularly relevant to several articles of the CRPD, including: Article 8 (Awareness-raising); Article 9 (Accessibility); and Article 24 (Education).

This article is highlights specific studies in three countries in the global south in the context of a more general review. All of the highlighted studies involved extensive fieldwork and engagement in local settings. The identification of common themes is useful given the very different contexts in which they

were conducted. However, it is not clear if the conclusions apply to other areas of the world as well (e.g. other parts of Africa. As a result, it would be helpful if examples from other regions of the world were included as well. In addition, the highlighted studies are all predominantly qualitative in nature and it would be useful to have additional examples to assure its applicability in a variety of contexts as well as additional quantitative studies. Nevertheless, the studies have some interesting **practical implications** that are consistent with other articles reviewed here (e.g. concerns about accessibility; issues posed by distance from services; attitudes; the need for more teacher training and resources, etc.).

Reading note 4. Percepción y actitudes hacia la inclusión educativa de los docentes de Soledad, Atlántico (Colombia)

Access to the document, only available in Spanish

References

Díaz Haydar, O. & Franco Media, F. (2010). Percepción y actitudes hacia la inclusión educativa de los docentes de Soledad, Atlántico (Colombia). Zona Próxima, 12, 12-39.

Key words

Humanities and Social Sciences? Education (Teacher attitudes ; inclusion)

Author's note

This study investigated the perspectives of 23 teachers toward inclusive education. Teachers came from seven schools with inclusion programs in Soledad, Colombia. The authors used an attitude scale, conducted interviews, analyzed teacher's speech, and conducted field observations. Findings suggested that teachers were "ambivalent" toward inclusion. Seven teachers reported positive attitudes; 7 had negative attitudes, and 8 were undecided. These findings were unrelated to age, gender or years of teaching experience. It is important to note that most of the teachers who expressed negative attitudes came from one institution which also had the largest population of economically disadvantaged students.

Some teachers saw inclusion as important but were uncertain of their preparation to implement it or the availability of resources to be successful. They also feared a loss of discipline and control in their classrooms, particularly with students who had attention deficits and hyperactivity. Teachers also believed that the government needed to do more, particularly by providing them with adequate resources. Although some acknowledged the right to inclusion in the school, they thought that education should be provided within the context of special classes so that students would get adequate, appropriate "attention." The authors concluded that it is not enough to change attitudes toward inclusion. They emphasized the need for more extensive pedagogical training to address the needs of students with disabilities in the classroom.

Commentary

This article was selected because it focused specifically on inclusion within a Latin American context. Although the schools that participated in this study appeared to be in a metropolitan area, specifics with respect to urban/rural status were not available, nor were specifics with respect to the type and severity of disability of disability, economic circumstances of students in the municipality nor the age or gender of the students with disabilities in the classes.

The study has **practical implications** for improving teacher preparation so that teachers are better equipped to address the needs of students with disabilities in their classrooms. It addressed issues related to Articles 3, 4 (1.i) and 24 (4) of the **CRPD**.

Reading note 5. Actitudes del profesorado de 1º y 2º ciclo de educación básica del municipio de San Salvador hacia la integración de niños y niñas con necesidades educativas especiales en los centros educativos regulares

Unpublished thesis

References

Figueroa, A., Martínez, C. & Rosales, J. (2005). *Actitudes del profesorado de 1º y 2º ciclo de educación básica del municipio de San Salvador hacia la integración de niños y niñas con necesidades educativas especiales en los centros educativos regulares*. (Unpublished Thesis for Licenciatura). Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas, San Salvador.

Key words

Humanities and Social Sciences, Education (Teacher training; Attitudes, Inclusion), All disabilities

Author's note

These authors investigated the attitudes of 234 teachers from 56 primary schools in San Salvador, the capital of El Salvador using an adapted version of the questionnaire entitled "Cuestionario de las opiniones del profesor sobre la integración en la escuela ordinaria de los niños con necesidades educativas especiales" (Fernández, 1995). This scale included six factors related to teachers' attitudes toward inclusion (e.g. items related to general philosophy regarding 'integration', appropriateness of preparation, etc). The authors found that, as measured by this survey, 69.2% of teachers expressed a negative attitude about inclusion. Seventy-one percent of the teachers indicated that their preparation to work effectively with students who had special needs was limited; however, a higher percentage of teachers who had specific training in special education had more positive attitudes about inclusion.

Commentary

This study was the first study identified that related to inclusion in El Salvador. As one of the very few studies of inclusion that focused specifically on El Salvador, it is directly related to the issue of inclusive education in the geographic area of this project. It offered a good foundation for understanding its implementation in the Salvadoran context. However, since the entire sample of teachers was from inside the capital city, it is not clear to what extent these findings apply to teachers in rural schools.

An important finding was the relationship between the attitudes of teachers and the degree of preparation they had received to work with students with disabilities. It also was directly relevant to several, specific aspects of the **CRPD** including principles related to Article 24 (4) which addresses the right of persons with disabilities to education and training of teachers as well as in Article 4 (1.i) which emphasizes the obligation of the state to provide training.

The sample of teachers were all based inside of San Salvador, the capital of El Salvador, the region of the country in which the vast majority of services for individuals for disabilities are located. This limits the applicability of the study to the current project as it does not address issues specific to rural areas. However, it has **important practical** implications for the government of El Salvador and nongovernmental organizations with respect to the importance of providing resources and training to educators working with students who have disabilities.

Reading note 6. Disability, poverty, and schooling in developing countries: Results from 14 household surveys

Access to the reading note and to complete documents in the documentary database on FIRAH's website

References

Filmer, D. (2008). Disability, poverty, and schooling in developing countries: Results from 14 household surveys. The World Bank Economic Review. 22, (1) (January, 2008), 33-61. doi:10.1093/wher/lhm021.

Key words

Humanities and Social Sciences, Education (Disability); International Development, All disabilities

Author's note

Filmer (2008) examined 14 household surveys from 13 developing countries, with most having sample sizes ranging between 5,000 – 25,000. The prevalence of disability in these surveys was variable, but overall lower than is typically reported in developed countries. There was a relationship between poverty and disability, which the author attributed to poor educational opportunities. Findings indicated that, for adults, there was a positive relationship between disability and poverty and that this relationship was mediated by education. Interestingly, after the author accounted for educational attainment in individuals with disability, the relationship no longer held. Unfortunately, the study also found that children with disabilities were significantly less likely to be enrolled in school. Filmer also found that these gaps exist across countries, however, although the size of the gaps varies across countries. Moreover, the size of the gaps was typically greater for those in older age groups, suggesting that even when students with disabilities in low and middle-income countries start school, they don't attain as high a level. Finally, Filmer found that, "The order of magnitude of the school participation disability deficit is often larger than those associated with other characteristics such as gender, rural residence, or economic status." Since this gap starts early, Filmer emphasizes the importance of making sure that educational participation starts from an early age.

Commentary

This study specifically addressed Article 24 (Education) of the **CRPD** and has important practical implications despite some limitations, most of which were acknowledged by the author.

One such limitation which the author identified was that there are few data sets available of this nature available in developing countries. As a result, Filmer selected the countries for this study based on availability of data set rather than the representativeness of the country. Moreover, different surveys were used in different countries and definitions of disability were not consistent. Finally, the household surveys do not generally yield large numbers of individuals with disabilities (e.g, in Chad,

reported only 57 instances of disability among 6-17 year olds). Similarly there were variations in the way in which poverty is measure across data sets. Filmer points out that the definitional issues become important when considering the extent to which particular types of disabilities are associated with poverty. An additional question concerns nature of the sampling strategies for each survey which are likely to have varied by country. This is particularly important when considering the low prevalence of disability reported relative to more developed nations.

Although not conducted in the field, this study does have important **practical implications** suggesting the importance of ensuring that youth with disabilities are enrolled in and achieve in school in order to help reduce the chances that they will live in poverty.

Reading note 7. Mexican and Mexican Americans' Beliefs About God in Relation to Disability

References

Glover, N.M. & Blankenship, C. J. (2007*). Journal of Rehabilitation, 73* (4), 41-50.

Key words

Humanities and Social Sciences; Rehabilitation Families; Culture, All disabilities

Author's note

In this study, the attitudes of Mexican and Mexican-American families with respect to religious and spiritual beliefs related to disability. The authors administered the « Questions About Disability Survey » (QADS) to 160 participants who lived either in Northern Mexico (51% of the sample) or in the Rio Grande Valley in South Texas (49% of the sample). Authors developed the QADS through a combination of a literature review, focus groups, and expert review. The final questionnaire included 8 items to assess demographics and 56 items (using a 5-point Likert scale) and focused on attitudes toward disabilities.

The majority participants did not view disability as a punishment or as a moral test from God and did not see the "evil eye" as a cause of disability; however about 25% did attribute disability to these factors and a substantial minority of participants (35%) saw "pride" as a cause of disability. Caring for a person with a disability was seen as something that would be rewarded by God and praying was frequently viewed as having curative properties. Seventy percent of participants felt that people should give money to people with disabilities. No significant differences were found in this data based on gender or nationality.

The authors note that these findings are somewhat different than previous research with Latino populations and suggest that this may be because there have been shifts over time in cultural views about God and disability.

Commentary

This study focused on Mexican and Mexican-American population and was selected for this review due to its relevance to understanding cultural beliefs in Latin American populations as they pertain to disabilities. The study specifically relates to Article 3 (b, c) in **CRPD** which emphasizes the importance of nondiscrimination and full and effective participation in society. It was also selected because of its focus on cultural beliefs as well as its relationship to factors that may influence parental attitudes toward disability and thereby their social participation.

Strengths of this study included considerable effort to assure the internal and external validity of the scale. The study was limited in that it was not fully representative of the wide range of religious phenomena that need investigation with respect to beliefs about disability. It is also noteworthy that this sample was not randomly collected and that participants were volunteers, which could have influenced the findings.

The study has **practical implication**s regarding the influence of cultural beliefs on choices regarding the social inclusion of persons with disabilities. Additionally, it suggest the importance of extending public awareness campaigns to families and caregivers.

Reading note 8. Poverty and disability – a critical review of the literature in Low and Middle-Income countries

Access to the reading note and to complete documents in the documentary database on FIRAH's website

References

Groce, N., Kembhavi, G., Wirz, S., Lang, R., Trani, J. and Kett, M. (2011). Poverty and disability – a critical review of the literature in Low and Middle-Income countries. Working Paper Series : No : 16, Leonard Cheshire Disability and Inclusive Development Centre, University College London.

Key words

Humanities and Social Sciences, Access to health services; International Development, All disabilities

Author's note

This paper examined the evidence base for the link between poverty, disability and health. The authors began by identifying 293 manuscripts related to this topic, which was reduced to 27 papers that presented an evidence base. They used a meta-narrative approach to identify key themes and then reviewed findings related to these themes. Although the authors did not find strong causal relationships between poverty, health, and disability they did find a growing evidence base suggesting associations between these factors. They noted that part of the difficulty is that both the concepts of disability and of poverty are not defined in the same way either internationally or within studies. They argue that there is there is a need for a more nuanced analysis of these associations and that that there is a need to build an evidence base that incorporates the interactions between these three factors as well as their relationship to other factors (e.g. gender, age, urban/rural differences).

Commentary

This article provides a critical review of research related to poverty and disability and makes a powerful argument for additional data establishing these links as nations around the world strive to address the CRPD. It specifically addresses Articles 24 and 25 of the **CRPD**. Although the authors acknowledged the inter-related nature of poverty, education, and health, their analysis did not establish strong causal links. They argue that there is a need to examine factors that mediate this relationship need to be examined more thoroughly – for example, how does this relationship play out in urban vs rural settings and influence such issues as work availability, access to services, etc. Such information would help interventionists create more **practical ways to intervene.**

Reading note 9. Assessing El Salvador's Capacity For Creating Inclusive Educational Opportunities For Students With Disabilities Using A Capacity Assessment Framework

Access to the reading note and to complete documents in the documentary database on FIRAH's website

References

Hernández, G.Y. (2006). Assessing El Salvador's capacity for creating inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities using a capacity assessment framework. (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Maryland)

Key words

Humanities and Social Sciences, Education (Inclusion), All disabilities

Author's note

Hernández used an exploratory case study methodology to investigate the capacity of El Salvador to create inclusive education for children with disabilities. She conducted interviews with government officials, representatives of non-governmental organizations, school administrators, parents and teachers (n=35). She also conducted document reviews (documents and policy reports from relevant organizations in El Salvador including the Ministry of Education; USAID; World Bank) as well as observations conducted in two schools which were identified by local participants as "models" of inclusive educational practice.

The author noted that although El Salvador has a number of advocacy organizations that promote educational access for individuals with disabilities as well as a dedicated government agency (CONAIPD) charged with protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities, there are a number of barriers to inclusive practice. She found that poor quality of primary education in general was a barrier to providing for children with disabilities, specifically lack of adequate teacher training and high pupil teacher ratios. Few opportunities existed for specialized instruction of children with special needs in El Salvador, with only 30 special education schools for students with low-incidence disabilities existing in the country, mainly located in departmental capitals, causing special difficulty for students in rural areas to access the schools. She also reported that there is a need to develop a consistent definition and assessment process as well as the need for teacher training and resources.

Commentary

This study is relevant to several, specific aspects of the **CRPD** including principles related to Article 24 (4) which addresses the right of persons with disabilities to education and training of teachers as well as in Article 4 (1.i) which emphasizes the obligation of the state to provide training.

Its findings are similar to that of Sabella, which was conducted nearly a decade later in its emphasis on the lack of a consistent definition regarding disability, the lack of teacher training and the need for resources. **Practical recommendations** directly relate to these issues and include the need for a more consistent definition of disability. It also highlights the need for more training and capacity development for teachers who have students with disabilities in their classrooms.

Reading note 10. Education for All: Advancing disability inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean

Access to the reading note and to complete documents in the documentary database on FIRAH's website

References

Hincapié, D., Duryea, S., & Hincapié, I. (2019, April). Education for All: Advancing disability inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean. IDB Policy Brief-299.

Key words

Humanities and Social Sciences, Education; International Development, All disabilities

Author's note

This article examined data from eight countries in Latin America regarding the gap in school attendance for children with and without disabilities using census data and household surveys. Authors found that children with disabilities were less likely to attend school and that the gap was larger as they got older. They were also less likely to complete school. They found that many schools did not have the appropriate infrastructure for students with physical disabilities and that there was a lack of information regarding accessibility for children and youth with sensory, cognitive and other disabilities. For example, in Mexico, only 29 percent of primary schools had ramps, only 14 percent had accessible toilets. Three countries reported inadequate infrastructure even in special schools. The authors offered a number of practical recommendations for moving forward including the need to reduce stigma, to improve the identification of students with disabilities by strengthening early identification and assessment, reducing physical barriers to access, improving infrastructure beyond just accommodations for mobility impairments (e.g. providing assistive technology) and providing training for teachers as well as trained aides.

Commentary

Limitations of this data were acknowledged by authors and included differences in definitions, a lack of distinction based on severity of disability, etc. It also should be noted that data on accessibility of schools was limited to ramps and accessible toilets; data were not available on other types of accommodations.

Despite these limitations, this article directly addressed multiple aspects of the **CRPD** with specific reference to Article 24 noting the ways that specific aspects of this article (e.g. for example that state parties ensure reasonable accommodations individualized support measures). It also provided extensive**, practical recommendations** for change that are consistent with the findings of our work in El Salvador as well as a number of the other studies in this review.

Reading note 11. Perceptions of disability among caregivers of children with disabilities in Nicaragua: Implications for future opportunities and health care access

Access to the reading note and to complete documents in the documentary database on FIRAH's website

References

Matt, S. B. (Fall, 2014). Perceptions of disability among caregivers of children with disabilities in Nicaragua : Implications for future opportunities and health care access. *Disability Studies Quarterly, 34 (4), 17 pp.*

Key words

Humanities and Social Sciences, Families; Education; Services; Access to health services, All disabilities

Author's note

This study focused on caregivers' perceptions of their children's disabilities, their aspirations for their son or daughter's future, and the extent to which they sought rehabilitation and health services. The study reports the findings from semi-structured interviews conducted with 13 caregivers of children who had a variety of disabilities and were between 2 and 23 years of age. Although there were some lingering superstitious and religious-based explanations for the disability, most caregivers described biomedical explanations. However, caring for a person with a disability was seen as something that would be rewarded by God and praying was frequently viewed as having curative properties.

Practical barriers to accessing services included lack of information about where services were located and how to access services and transportation costs. Overall, the authors found that in Nicaragua, many individuals with disabilities lacked access to education and medical care and that families are often ashamed and therefore hide their children with disabilities from the public. However, when children were provided with educational services and when their parents received education and training, parents had a better understanding of their child's disability and were able to think in terms of their child's potential.

Commentary

This article was chosen based its location in Nicaragua, Central America and is in close proximity to El Salvador. We also chose it because of its focus on caregiver perceptions. The authors employed qualitative methodology to understand caregivers' perceptions of their son or daughter's disability. Although the study is limited by a relatively small sample size, it was one of the studies most closely related to the purpose of this project.

The study directly addressed several issues relevant to the **CRPD**, specifically: the right to education (Article 24) and health (Article 25) services, accessibility (Article 9), full and effective participation and inclusion, and equality of opportunity (Article 5).

From a **practical standpoint**, findings were particularly salient with respect to better understanding the challenge of providing services to children and families. The article concluded with recommendations for the way in which services are needed.

Reading note 12. Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inclusion Of Children With Disabilities In Rural El Salvador

Access to the reading note and to complete documents in the documentary database on FIRAH's website

References

Sabella, T. (2015). *Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Rural El Salvador.* (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Maryland, 2015)

Key words

Humanities and Social Sciences, Education (Inclusion; Teacher attitudes; Rural Schools), All disabilities

Author's note

Noting that teacher attitudes are an important factor in the implementation of policies that support the CRPD, Sabella conducted a study focused on the attitudes of teachers toward the inclusion of students with disabilities in rural El Salvador. Specifically, his goal was to understand how education for individuals with disabilities was provided and to investigate professional attitudes regarding inclusion of children with disabilities. With this goal in mind, he conducted a mixed methods case study of 12 rural schools in one municipality in El Salvador. He began with a survey of 43 teachers focused on their attitudes toward inclusion. He followed these surveys with in-depth, qualitative interviews with a sub-sample of five teachers and three directors representing eight of the schools in this department. This study was the first investigation of teachers' attitudes toward inclusion in rural parts of El Salvador and focused specifically on the needs and challenges that exist in creating inclusive schools across this country.

Sabella reported that many children who have disabilities in El Salvador do not attend school and even those with mild disabilities were often not receiving needed services. While the teachers who were interviewed generally agreed with the philosophy of inclusion, most believed that students with disabilities would get a better education if they attended special schools. At least in part this was because most had little training with respect to disabilities, were unsure of how to address student needs. Some types of disabilities (e.g. learning disabilities, mild intellectual disabilities) were often completely undiagnosed and teachers did not know how to identify these disabilities. They indicated that a lack of resources (e.g. assessments, equipment, academic resources) were major barriers to inclusion. These attitudes were consistent regardless of experience teaching, experience with disabilities, and amount of training with respect to inclusion. Training with respect to disability was rare for public school teachers and generally limited to definitions of various types of disabilities (e.g. what is cerebral palsy) rather than practical strategies for intervening with and/or supporting students with disabilities in their school. Teachers also expressed concern about family support for students with disabilities.

Commentary

This study was important because it was only the third study we found that specifically focused on inclusion in El Salvador and was particularly important as it specifically focused on inclusion in a rural department. It addressed issues related to Articles 3, 4 (1.i) and 24 (4) of the **CRPD**. However, it is limited in focus to only one department in El Salvador and it would be beneficial if it were replicated in other geographical areas as well.

The study was conducted with extensive direct fieldwork in schools and has a number of **practical implications**. Barriers to implementation of inclusive practice in rural El Salvador were extensive and included lack of definitions for intellectual and learning disabilities, lack of accessibility, lack of resources, and lack of practical training for teachers, particularly with respect to effective teaching methods for students with disabilities in their classrooms. Sabella concluded with specific recommendations for practice.

Bibliography

The bibliography contains research references that have been identified for the literature review.

A link to each research is available by clicking on the title (the majority of them are on free access).

❖ Abera, N. (2014). Teacher's beliefs and practices toward children with disabilities in Ethiopia (Doctoral dissertation), University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland.

Topics: Early childhood education, disability, inclusion, teacher attitude

Abera examined the beliefs and practices of teachers toward students with disabilities at one early childhood school in Ethiopia. This case study included ethnographic features (interviews, observations, focus groups) to examine teachers' beliefs about children with disabilities, and factors that influence those beliefs as well as how teachers' beliefs are evidenced by their daily classroom practices. She found that while teachers acknowledged the presence of traditional beliefs linking disability to supernatural causes, most verbally rejected those beliefs and believed that given the appropriate support, children with disabilities could learn. Most held similar expectations of students regardless of their abilities and some tried to help their students meet behavioral and academic standards. However, most indicated that their training to work with students with disabilities was limited. The article as direct implications for Article 24 of the CRPD. Practical recommendations included the need for focus on training.

❖ Al-Ghaib, O., Andrae K., Gondwe, R. (2017) Still left behind: Pathways to inclusive education for girls with disabilities. UNGEI & Leonard Cheshire Disability.

Topics: inclusive education, disability, gender

This report examined reports and evaluations of interventions that were implemented after the CRPD was adopted. Authors reported need for more analysis of the interaction between gender and disability. Noting that girls with disabilities are one of the most marginalized groups in the world. They point out that agencies committed to gender issue often overlook barriers for persons with disabilities and those committed to disability ignore gender issues. The report documents an increased awareness at the government level around inclusive education, and by many international development organizations, yet found little evidence of good practice publicly available or shared by different sectors. At a practical level, the authors emphasize the importance of teacher training as well as gender and disability responsive pedagogy to provide quality inclusive education. They also argue that the commitments the CRPD, EFA, and the SDGs need to be established in national policies that ensure the removal of gender and disability barriers to education.

❖ Álvarez, Marina; Castro, Pilar; Campo-Mon, María Ángeles; Álvarez-Martino, Eva. (2005) Actitudes de los maestros ante las necesidades educativas específicas. Psicothema, 17(4), 601-606.

Topics: inclusive education, disability, teacher attitude

The authors distributed a self-designed questionnaire to 389 teachers in 35 primary schools across Asturias, Spain to investigate attitudes toward inclusion of children with disabilities, The study revealed that teachers agree with the philosophy of inclusion but still desire more support in the in resources and strategies for the proper implementation of the necessary services.

❖ Amadio, M. (2009). Inclusive education in Latin America and the Caribbean: Exploratory analysis of the national reports presented at the 2008 International Conference on Education. Prospects, 39(3), 293-305.

Topics: inclusive education, disability, government policy

In this article, the author conducted a content analysis on documents from 25 countries which included a focus on the approach to inclusive education, curricular issues, and the challenges to inclusive education within the country. He reported that there is a gap between the vision and principles articulated and actual practice and that there was a need to ensure that policies are reflected in concreate actions within schools and classrooms.

❖ Anastasiou, D. & Keller, C.E. (2014). Cross-national differences in Special Education coverage: An empirical analysis. Exceptional Children, 80 (3), 353-367. doi: 10.117700/00114402914522421.

Topics: inclusive education, disability, government policy

This study investigated data from 2008 in 143 countries and found that many countries have laws, which assure the right to education for children with disabilities in accordance with the CRPD yet large disparities in access to special education among countries. Using structural equation modeling, the authors found that special education coverage was significantly related to the gross national income (GNI) of a nation as well as adult literacy rates. They predicted that increasing the GNI per capita for a nation would likely allow an increase in the education provided to students with disabilities, but admitted this was unrealistic as a strategy.

❖ Asamblea Legislativa, Republica de El Salvador. (2000). Decreto 888, Ley de Equiparación de Oportunidades para las Personas con Discapacidad. San Salvador.

Topics: disability, government policy, El Salvador

This law established the system of equalization of opportunities for people disabilities in El Salvador. It entitles persons with disabilities to be protected against discrimination, exploitation, degrading or abusive treatment because of their disability, to receive appropriate education, to have access to public facilities, to obtain employment and not to be dismissed because of their disability, and to have access to grants systems. It states that the state and the society should promote social awareness the

rights of persons with disabilities.

❖ Bayat, M. (2015). The stories of 'snake children': Killing and abuse of children with developmental disabilities in West Africa. Journal of Intellectual Disability Research, 59(1), 1-10. doi: 10.1111/jir.12118

Topics: intellectual disability, abuse, Africa

The author conducted an ethnographic study of the practice of abandoning or killing children with Intellectual Disabilities (ID) in Cote d'Ivoire. She explains that children with ID are the most likely to be out of school or abandoned and that in regions of Africa many children with ID do not survive past age 5. The killing and abuse of children with ID is explained within the context of indigenous African religions, animism and folk culture. The concept of disability 'otherness' and inferiority is also explored as a framework for reflection and ethical debate.

Bayat notes that the killing of children with ID currently takes place in Cote d'Ivoire but the extent of the killing is not known.

❖ Beckman, P.J. (2014). Educating children with special needs: Understanding local realities in developing countries, Early Childhood Development Task Force on Children with Disabilities, ECDtf Message 14, 3-5. Retrieved from:

Topics: inclusive education, disability, government policy, local barriers

This article states that the international community must investigate local issues in developing countries that inhibit children with disabilities from participating in school. She recognizes that national policies have been the first step to bring attention to the need to serve children with disabilities but notes that guaranteeing that children with disabilities have access to the

educational system and are served appropriately in schools is a much more complex. She suggests that the implementation of inclusive policies in developing countries requires efforts to address the real barriers that poor families face in caring for and educating their children with disabilities.

❖ Beckman, P., Abera, N., Sabella, T., Podzimek, K, Joseph, L. (2016). From Rights to Realities: Confronting the Challenge of Educating Persons with Disabilities in Developing Countries. Global Education Review, 3 (3), 4-27.

Topics: inclusive education, disability, teacher attitude, government policy, local barriers

The authors review literature to reveal common barriers to educational access for children with disabilities in developing nations and then examines the local factors which inhibit meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities with examples from the authors' research in El Salvador, Ethiopia, and Liberia. Although they recognize that the CRPD has moved many nations to adopt policies focusing on increasing participation of individuals with disabilities in educational settings, most children with disabilities in developing countries are still out-of- school. To address common barriers, recommendations are made to focus on public acceptance and awareness, seek community support, provide practical and functional training to many local actors, invest in systems for transportation, and improve the overall quality of education programming.

❖ Booth, T., Ainscow, M., Vaughan, M. (2002). [Index for Inclusion: Developing learning and participation in schools](). Bristol, UK: Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education.

Topics: inclusive education, disability, implementation planning

The Index for Inclusion was produced over three years with help from a team of teachers, parents, researchers, and representatives of disability organizations. It is designed as a resource to support the inclusive development of schools. It is intended to be used to promote reflection about inclusion and to lead to greater participation of students in schools. The Index provides some key concepts to support development of inclusive schools, a Review Framework and Review Materials for use in evaluation of the school and to identify priorities for change. It also includes materials to ensure that the process of reviewing the school and planning for change is inclusive.

❖ Braithwaite, J., Carroll, R., Mont, D., & Peffley, K. (2008). [Disability & development in the World Bank: FY 2000 – 2007]() [PDF file].

Topics: inclusion, disability, International aid, implementation planning

This paper reviews the World Bank's involvement in disability, explains some of the good practices the Bank discovered in the period of 2000 to 2007, before the introduction of the CRPD. The World Bank estimates that 10-12 percent of the world has disability and explains the formation of the Washington City Group begun by the UN and supported by the World Bank to improve methods for measuring of disability, since many developing countries underestimate the prevalence of disability. The Bank's disability and development team produced notes on inclusive education and the cost of making schools and information accessible. The World Bank worked with WHO on the first World Report on Disability. This document reported the Bank's intention to help guide countries in incremental implementations of the CRPD and potentially provide global monitoring service and construction of a results framework for the CRPD.

❖ De Boer, A., Pijl, S., & Minnaert, A. (2011). [Regular primary schoolteachers' attitudes towards inclusive education: A Review of the literature](). International Journal of Inclusive Education, 15(3), 331-353.

Topics: inclusive education, disability, teacher attitude

The authors analyzed international literature on attitudes toward inclusion, finding 26 studies from 16 countries, published between 1998 and 2008, focusing on regular primary school teachers' attitudes. They concluded that teachers hold negative or undecided beliefs. about inclusive education, and do not feel competent to teach students with special needs. It found that teachers with more experience or training in inclusive education had more positive attitudes than those with less experience and training with inclusion. However, they found that teachers with more years of general teaching experience had more negative attitudes toward inclusive education. The authors did not arrive at a conclusion regarding the impact of teachers' attitudes on the social participation of students with disabilities.

❖ Díaz Haydar, O., Franco Media, F. (2010). Percepción y actitudes hacia la inclusión educativa de los docentes de Soledad, Atlántico (Colombia). Zona Próxima, 12, 12-39.

Topics: inclusive education, disability, teacher attitude, Latin America

This study investigated the perspectives toward inclusive education of 23 teachers from seven schools with inclusion programs in Soledad, Colombia. The authors used a questionnaire using a Likert scale to measure the teachers' attitudes. They also interviewed teachers and observed them. They found that the majority of teachers were more positive regarding inclusion after their experience in the inclusive school. They also reported that the teachers who participated saw inclusion as important but were uncertain of their preparation to be successful with it. They noted that good inclusive policy was not sufficient, emphasizing their need for more training and the allocation of proper resources.

❖ Figueroa, A., Martínez, C., & Rosales, J. (2005). Actitudes del profesorado de 1º y 2º ciclo de educación básica del municipio de San Salvador hacia la integración de niños y niñas con necesidades educativas especiales en los centros educativos regulares. (Unpublished Thesis for Licenciatura). Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas, San Salvador. (non available online)

Topics: inclusive education, disability, teacher attitude, El Salvador

Figueroa, Martínez and Rosales (2005) investigated the attitudes of 234 teachers from 56 primary schools in San Salvador, the capital of El Salvador. Teachers were asked to respond to a questionnaire focused on the inclusion of children with special education needs in their classrooms. Sixty-nine percent expressed a negative attitude toward inclusion. Over 77 percent said they had no training in special education even though 66 percent had had children with special education needs in their classes. Teachers responded most favorably on items related to the philosophy of inclusion and least favorably, on items regarding student conduct. This study offers a good foundation for understanding inclusion in El Salvador. However, the entire sample of teachers was from inside the capital city and provide little insight as to the implications for rural schools.

❖ Filmer, D. (2008). Disability, poverty, and schooling in developing countries: Results from 14 household surveys. The World Bank Economic Review, 22, (1), 141-163.

Topics: education, disability, poverty, low and middle income countries

Filmer (2008) examined 14 household studies conducted between 1992 and 2004 from 13 developing countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. One to two percent of these surveys reported including persons with disabilities. Adults with disabilities tended to live in poorer households and attained lower levels of education. Children with disabilities were significantly less likely to be enrolled in school. Moreover disability was more strongly associated with educational attainment than other characteristics such as gender, rural residence, or economic status..15). A relationship was found between poverty and disability, which Filmer attributed to more limited educational opportunities.

❖ Hernandez, G. (2006). Assessing El Salvador's capacity for creating inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities using a capacity assessment framework. (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Maryland, 2006).

Topics: inclusive education, disability, government policy, El Salvador

Hernandez investigated the capacity of El Salvador to educate children with disabilities

The author noted that poor quality of primary education in general was a barrier to providing for children with disabilities, specifically lack of adequate teacher training and high pupil teacher ratios. She found that few opportunities existed for specialized instruction of children with special needs in El Salvador, with only 30 special education schools for students with low-incidence disabilities existing in the country. These were mainly located in departmental capitals, causing special difficulty for students in rural areas to access the schools.

❖ Hincapié, D., Duryea, S., & Hincapié, I. (2019, April). Education for All: Advancing disability inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean. IDB Policy Brief-299.

Topics: Education policy, persons with disabilities, Latin America and the Caribbean

The authors examined data from eight countries in Latin America in the context of prevailing international agreements, in particular Article 24 of the CRPD. They focused on the gap in school attendance for children with and without disabilities. Children with disabilities were less likely to attend school - a gap that became larger with student age - and they were less likely to complete school. Many schools did not have the appropriate infrastructure for students with physical disabilities and there was a lack of information regarding accessibility for children and youth with sensory, cognitive and other disabilities. The authors provided a number of practical recommendations for moving forward including the need to reduce stigma, to improve the identification of students with disabilities by strengthening early identification and assessment, reducing physical barriers to access, improving infrastructure beyond just accommodations for mobility impairments (e.g. providing assistive technology) and providing training for teachers as well as trained aides.

❖ Marques, J., & Bannon, I. (2010). Central America: Education Reform in a Post-Conflict Setting, Opportunities and Challenge. CPR no. CPR 4. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Topics: education, government policy, Latin America

This study examined the impact of conflict on education in El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua and the post-conflict reform in these countries. It analyzed the impact of those reforms to provide lessons based on that history. The authors note that educational services for the poor were inadequate before the conflicts and worsened by fighting as defense spending rose and education spending suffered. The study reveals that these countries have not found ways to make sure that education reaches the poorest of their populations. It provides further lessons to be learned from the conflicts in Central America.

❖ MINED (Diciembre, 2010). Política de educación inclusiva. San Salvador: MINED

Topics: education, inclusion, government policy, El Salvador

The Ministry of Education's (MINED) publication of the document "Política de Educación Inclusiva" established the government's intent to meet the educational needs of children with disabilities in regular schools. MINED identifies 30 special schools and 639 "Aulas de Apoyo Educativo" or special education resource rooms in the country. However, it has put its focus on inclusive education, indicating that 2805 Centros Educativos Integradores, where children with disabilities should receive education in the same schools and classes as other students from their area (MINED, 2009b). At the time of this writing however, it is unclear the extent to which these classrooms exist or how effective they are. This policy document discusses the philosophy of inclusive education as well as the legal background for it, but provides very little detail regarding the implementation of the policy and no information on funding for the policy.

❖ MINED. (2016). Observatorio MINED 2016: Sobre los Centros Educativos Públicos de El Salvador. San Salvador: Ministerio de Educación.

Topics: education, El Salvador

This report, produced by the Ministry of Education (MINED) of El Salvador, provides data regarding the numbers of students served in all schools and programs operated by MINED across the country. It provides numbers and percentages of children in different types of schools as well as data on schools and teachers across the country. They report that there are 1,972 schools which serve children with some form of disability, which is only 38.43% of schools. Only 260 or 1.48% of teachers received training related to inclusive education.

❖ Mitra, S., Posarac, A., & Vick, B. (2013). Disability and poverty in developing countries: A multidimensional study. World Development, 41, 1-18.

Topics: disability, poverty, education

Mitra, Posarac and Vick (2013) investigated internationally comparable data from 15 developing countries to examine the relationship between poverty and disability. They found that disability is significantly associated with poverty, as well as lower educational achievement, lower employment, and higher medical costs. The authors suggest that poverty may lead to disability due to such factors as malnutrition and lack of access to sanitation and health care. They emphasize the need to consider persons with disabilities in policy and research regarding poverty in developing countries. They also point out that the economic deprivations associated with disability are not uniform across developing countries and policy must reflect those differences. Finally, they suggest that policies that promote access to education and employment could be very important for persons with disabilities in developing countries.

- ❖ Mont, D. (2007). Measuring disability prevalence. World Bank Social Protection Discussion Paper, 706.

Topics: disability, prevalence and measurement

Mont notes that there is a wide variation of disability prevalence rates in different countries which can be attributed to differing definitions of disability as well as different methods of data collection and study designs. He acknowledges that while comparable international data on disability is important for planning, implementing and evaluating policy, it is often not available. The author provides a standard for defining and measuring disability that is focsed on measuring functional limitations. He reports that current data from more developed countries, report rates of disability of 10-12 percent of the population.

- ❖ Myers, J., Pinnock, H., & Suresh, S. (2016) #Costing Equity: The case for disability-responsive education financing. IDDC & Light for the World.

Topics: education, inclusion, disability, financing

The report notes that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were the first global goals to mention persons with disabilities and not leave them out of planning for development. It highlights the significant cost of exclusion from education as countries lose billions of dollars of potential income when persons with disabilities are not educated or working. The report states that child- friendly, inclusive education brings better social, academic, health and economic outcomes for all learners, and at less cost than special/segregated education and notes that global funding for education is declining. It also states that domestic resources are the most important source of education financing, governments are urged to allocate 4–6% of GDP to education. However, the authors note that Households are significant contributors to domestic financing for education, and some countries are moving for more household contribution, which could cause further exclusion for persons with disabilities who often come from the poor households. They recommend disaggregating spending to be compliant with UNCRPD domestic financing goals, increasing the tax base, and ending tax dodging and calls for a reverse in the decline of international aid for education.

- ❖ Opertti, R. & Belalcázar, C. (2008) Trends in inclusive education at regional and interregional levels: Issues and challenges. Prospects, 38, 113-135.

Topics: disability, poverty, education

Opertti and Belalcázar (2008) examined Workshops on Inclusive Education organized by UNESCO's International Bureau of Education (IBE) in 2007 and identifies trends across them highlighting areas for future debate on inclusive education. They contend that the extent to which special schools should be maintained is debatable, and established the importance of societal inclusion as well as educational inclusion. They note the importance of empowering local communities in the design and implementation of inclusive education. They state that inclusive education provided a new way to address the challenge of providing high quality equitable education for all under the EFA goals set at that time. The study reported the exploration in the workshops of need for curricular changes to achieve inclusive education and expressed the idea that curriculum can be exclusionary when it is too academic and exam oriented. The need for improved teacher preparation to provide conceptual frameworks and methodologies for addressing diverse expectations and needs of learners was

proposed by the authors.

❖ Pérez, D. (2017, July 21) People with disabilities in Latin America RUH Global Impact.

Topics: Latin America, Disability, Inequality, Political participation

Reviewing a number of policy documents, Pérez notes that although there have been attempts in Latin America to include People with Disabilities, there are still significant socioeconomic gaps that leave individuals with disabilities vulnerable. While emphasizing that Latin America and the Caribbean is a complex region that includes 20 different countries with their own culture, politics and governments, there is data indicating that across the LAC region, many issues need to be addressed with respect to disability. He points to data from the World Bank that indicates that across LAC an estimated 50 million people have disabilities which is about 10 percent of the region's population. This data also suggests that between 70-80 percent of children with disabilities do not have access to education and that 80-90 percent are unemployed. He emphasizes that until people with disabilities have a bigger political voice in the region so that policy makers have a better sense of individual needs.

❖ Pinilla-Roncancio, M. (2015).   Disability and social protection in Latin American countries. Disability & Society, 30 (7), 1005-1020.

Topics: Latin America, Disability, Legal protections

The author analyzed legal protections in five countries in Latin America (Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Costa Rica, and Mexico) by conducting a thematic analysis of 75 legal documents in these countries. She did this in the context of three models commonly used to understand issues related to disability: an individual model; an interactive model; and a social model. She found that there was a contradiction between the definitions used in legislation around disability and those around social protection. Noting that there are inherent tensions in such models and that these tensions can have a practical impact on persons with disabilities and their families. She suggests that these tensions are particularly important when considering the relationship between poverty and disability. She further observes that such factors as the inability to get paying work and the additional costs associated with disability are often not considered in social protection legislation and that such legislation does not provide incentives to ensure that fewer people are excluded from the labor market. She further suggests that this ignores the "real risks" of being socially and economically excluded.

❖ Podzimek, K. (2013). Emerging from the Shadows: A case study of the quality of life of students with disabilities in Monrovia, Liberia (doctoral dissertation). University of Maryland, College, Park, Maryland. Retrieved from

Topics: disability, family, quality of life, Africa

Podzimek (2013) examined the influence of an educational center in Monrovia, Liberia, that serves children with disabilities, on the lives of those children and their families using a Quality of Life (QOL) Framework. Interviews were conducted with family members, NGO workers and government employees. The study found that the center did contribute to a better quality of life for the children and that the Ministry of Education does not have a system to include individuals with disabilities in

school. However, she also reported the center is limited by cultural norms in trying to influence the community, and indicates that there is further need for inclusion of children with disabilities in the discussion development policies. The study revealed that stigma and societal norms have made it difficult for the center to develop required relationships with surrounding communities.

❖ Polat, F. (2011). Inclusion in education: A step towards social justice. International Journal of Educational Development, 31, 50-58. DOI: 10.1016/j.ijedudev.2010.06.009

Topics: disability, inclusion, education, Africa

Polat (2011) begins with a literature review focused on concepts that support inclusion in education and discusses disability in the context of social justice. The author notes the low enrollment of children with disabilities in schools in Tanzania and the government's attempt to increase their enrollment. The country signed the CRPD in 2008 and ratified it in 2009. They also signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Dakar framework. The author used the Index for Inclusion (Booth et al., 2000) involving teams of teachers and administrators from different districts to examine education in Tanzania. The study identified several major barriers to inclusion: infrastructure, classroom learning environment, health, water and sanitation, and negative community /cultural practices. Participants indicated that their practice of inclusive education is limited by a lack of facilities and guidance. The author notes that establishing inclusive education in Tanzania will require a huge investment to provide the necessary material resources.

❖ Sabella, T. (2015). Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Rural El Salvador. (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Maryland, 2015)

Topics: disability, inclusion, education, teacher attitude, El Salvador

Sabella(2015) conducted a mixed methods case study of the rural schools in one municipality, using a survey and interviews with teachers to investigate their attitudes regarding inclusion of children with disabilities. This research was the first investigation of teachers' attitudes toward inclusion in rural El Salvador and explored the needs and challenges which exist in creating inclusive schools across this country. It found teachers agreed to the right of children with disabilities to an education as well as the need to access to local schools. However, the teachers investigated responded to indicate limited training in inclusive education and a desire for more knowledge of tools and methods for educating children with disabilities in their classrooms.

❖ UNESCO (1994). The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education.

Topics: education, disability, inclusion

Four years after the first Education for All (EFA) conference, representatives from 92 governments and 25 international organizations met in Salamanca, Spain, for the World Conference on Special Needs Education. They adopted what came to be known as The Salamanca Statement and a Framework for Action. This estimated that in many developing countries, less than 1% of children with disabilities were included in the existing school systems. The framework is guided by a principle of inclusion, and called for the need to work towards schools that include everybody, and respond to individual needs.

❖ UNESCO (2004). [The right to education for persons with disabilities: Towards inclusion](). Paris: UNESCO

Topics: education, disability, inclusion

The first section of this paper covers the commitments made at Jomtien, Thailand to set up of the EFA disability Flagship. The second section provides the context for the work of the Flagship with emphasis on national planning, and the challenges of providing quality inclusive education at all levels. The paper reviews the need for financial resources and cross sector cooperation, and discusses the special considerations of education for females, the problem of HIV/AIDS and presents some examples of good practice. The third section, proposes a practical action framework with global, regional, and national activities.

❖ UNESCO (2005). [Guidelines for Inclusion: ensuring access to education for all.]() Paris, France: UNESCO.

Topics: education, inclusion

This paper discusses how to plan for children that have been excluded from education.It provides a historical perspective on the origins of inclusion and describes the shift from integration towards inclusion. It provides a theoretical framework, defining inclusion, explaining how it is related to human rights and the factors of quality and cost-effectiveness. The second part of the paper examines practical changes at the school level and outlines the key elements in the shift towards inclusion with a focus on the teachers, parents and educational policymakers as well as curricula. The third part provides tools for policymakers and planners for direct analysis of education plans. These guidelines are intended to serve as a basis for discussion among policymakers, educators, NGOs and international organizations to impact private and public education policy to promote access for all learners. These guidelines can help those working with National Plans for Education to identify gaps and strategies in order to take steps to ensure that inclusion is achieved in educational systems and that every child has access to a quality education.

❖ UNESCO (2015). [Latin America and the Caribbean Education for All]() 2015 Regional Review

Topics: education, Latin America

This report by UNESCO evaluates the Latin American Countries advances toward attaining the EFA goals and identifies the challenges and emerging issues that should be part of the regional educational agenda after 2015 and the end of the EFA goals. The authors believe that educational progress be judged according to criteria relating to quality, rather than the just access to education. The report states that there are large differences within the region, and many countries did not come close to reaching the basic EFA goals. They highlight that inequalities within almost all of the countries are very great, when comparing groups by social class, poverty status and place of residence. They note differences for groups in access to preprimary education and that many countries still have a shortage of qualified pre-primary teachers. While adjusted net enrolment rates for primary education are high in Latin America, dropout from primary or secondary education is still a problem in many countries and is often related to families' socioeconomic situation, rural versus urban residence and belonging to ethnic groups.

❖ Vaillant, D. (2011). [Preparing teachers for inclusive education in Latin America.](#) Prospects, 41(3), 385-398.

Topics: education, inclusion, Latin America, teacher education

Vaillant (2011) analyzed the challenges facing inclusive education in Latin America and explores possible solutions. After noting the important role of teachers in providing education that is inclusive for all, the author notes that teachers often finish their professional training without the skills needed to work with children in difficult circumstances. She suggests that teachers deserve more positive social status, should be rewarded for innovative work and given incentives to work in remote areas. She acknowledges that training of teachers for a more inclusive education system is gradually being incorporated as part of the educational policy agenda in some parts of Latin America but observes that quality is mediocre, and that access to education is uneven. She notes that the situation is more difficult in rural areas where there is more poverty and students are often in multi-grade settings, where it is a common practice to place the newest, least qualified teachers. The paper reveals a need for better professional development and teachers need to be monitored and given permanent support and training in the classroom after they complete their training. Vaillant proposes that strategies to support teachers to develop inclusive practices are needed along with opportunities to establish networks with other teachers and professionals and more training to work with children living in difficult circumstances.

❖ World Health Organization. (2011). [World report on disability](#). Malta: World Health Organization.

Topics: disability, inclusion, health care, education

The World Report on Disability provides information for understanding and defining disability and exploring the prevalence and cost of disability around the world. The report examines the interaction of disability in the fields of health care, education, employment and access to buildings and roads, transportation, information, and communication. The report estimates that about 15% of people in the world, live with some form of disability. It reveals that many children with disabilities around the world have been excluded from regular education opportunities and that even countries across Europe still use special classes and special schools to provide education to some children with disabilities. The World Report on Disability acknowledged that inclusion can be difficult and that there may sometimes be problems in a general class if the teacher cannot provide the necessary support for the learning and participation of children with disabilities.

❖ World Bank Fact Sheet: Disability in Latin America and the Caribbean (undated) (non available online)

Topics: Education

This fact sheet provides statistical information about the numbers of individuals with disabilities in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)

Noting that disability can be "both a cause and a consequence of poverty", this factsheet indicates there are 50 million persons with disabilities in LAC which is about 10 percent of the population and approximately 82 percent live in poverty. They often experience exclusion in the community – both with respect to stigmatization as well as failure to address their needs in the design of facilities, policies and programs. An estimated 20-30 percent of children with disabilities go to school in LAC. A variety of factors are responsible for this low attendance ranging from lack of teacher training, unavailability of transportation, lack of appropriate equipment and materials and attitudinal barriers.

❖ World Bank (2019, May). [Equity and inclusion in education in World Bank projects: Persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and sexual and gender minorities.](#)

Topics: Education,

This document examines issues related to inclusion for three groups of learners who have been marginalized: children with disabilities, indigenous peoples and sexual/gender minorities. After defining what inclusion means in the context of CRPD, the paper describes barriers that exist for learners with disabilities as well as the types of practical supports that are needed. Barriers described include attitudinal barriers; lack of accessibility to and in educational facilities; inaccessible materials and curricula; and discriminatory or limited public policies to protect these groups against discrimination. The paper goes on to identify changes that can be made to make educational environments more participatory for those with disabilities.

The goal of this literature review is to report on existing knowledge about applied research on the theme of poverty and disability at international level, and particularly the barriers to social and educational inclusion in Latin America.