Inequities in birth registration, violent discipline, and child labour by disability: Evidence from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys in 24 Countries

Amiya Bhatia, Calum Davey, Tess Bright, Sara Rotenberg, Emily Eldred, Claudia Cappa, Hannah Kuper, Karen Devries

a London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
b Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences, University of Oxford
c Data and Analytics Section, UNICEF, United States
Invisibility in data

- Children with disabilities are often missing in data

- In 2016, UNICEF included the Child Functioning Module (CFM) to measure disability in national surveys conducted in over 100 countries
The Missing Billion report, moving from awareness to action
www.missingbillion.org

UNICEF report ‘Seen, Counted, Included’
Disabled young women face double the risk of sexual violence

‘Alarming’ report from disability royal commission released just hours after March 4 Justice protests

Almost a third of disabled children and teenagers face abuse, global study finds

Analysis involved more than 16 million young people from 25 countries conducted over three decades
The exposure of children with and without disabilities to violent parental discipline: Cross-sectional surveys in 17 middle- and low-income countries

Eric Emerson, Gwynnyth Llewellyn

Centre for Disability Research and Policy, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Sydney, Sydney, NSW, 2141, Australia
Centre of Research Excellence in Disability and Health, University of Sydney, Sydney, NSW, 2141, Australia
Centre for Disability Research, Faculty of Health & Medicine, Lancaster University, Lancaster, LA1 4YW, UK

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Youth with disabilities are more likely than their peers to engage in hazardous child labour

Eric Emerson | Gwynnyth Llewellyn
Aim: To make inequities by disability in three child protection outcomes among girls and boys visible:

- No birth registration
- Violent discipline
- Child labour

Approach: Analysis of data from the UNICEF MICS in 24 countries.

- **On average analysis** – % of girls and boys with disabilities and prevalence of child protection outcomes
- **Equity analysis** – magnitude of inequity between children with and without a disability and prevalence gaps
323,436 children | 24 Countries | 6 regions

East Asia and the Pacific
  – Mongolia; Tonga

South Asia
  – Bangladesh

East Central Asia
  – Kosovo; Kyrgyzstan;
    North Macedonia; Serbia

South America
  – Guyana; Suriname

Middle East and North Africa
  – Algeria; Iraq; State of Palestine

Sub-Saharan Africa
  – CAR; Chad; DRC Congo; Ghana; Guinea-Bissau; Lesotho; Madagascar; Sao Tome and Principe; Sierra Leone; The Gambia; Togo; Zimbabwe
Disability: Child Functioning Module (CFM)

Does your child have difficulty...

2-4 year olds (8 domains)

seeing, hearing, walking, fine motor communication/comprehension, learning, playing, controlling behaviour

5-17 year olds (12 domains)

seeing, hearing, walking, self care, communication/comprehension, learning, remembering, controlling behaviour, concentrating, accepting change, making friends, anxiety and depression

Washington Group on Disability Statistics:

Children whose caregivers reported:

1) “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do at all” on any of the functional domains or

2) reported experiencing depression or anxiety “daily” were considered as children with disabilities
% of children aged 2-17 years with disabilities

- Ranged from 4.0% in Serbia to 27.6% in Central African Republic (CAR)
- In ten countries, more than 15% of children had a disability
- In Chad and CAR one in four children had a disability
Findings: Birth registration and disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>% of children aged 2-4 years whose births were not registered and who did not have a birth certificate</th>
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| Average prevalence | • 12 countries with universal birth registration coverage  
• Range: 72.4% in Chad to 16.1% in Togo |
| Inequities by disability | • Boys: inequities in 4 countries. Prevalence gap 7.9%-points in CAR  
• Girls: inequities in 4 countries. Prevalence gap 17.4% points in Suriname |
| Implications | • Universal birth registration is possible for children with disabilities  
• Country-level inequities by disability differ by sex  
• Need to ensure efforts to improve birth registration also benefit children with disabilities |
Findings: Violent discipline and disability

**Definition**

% of children aged 2-14 years who experienced at least one form of psychological aggression or physical punishment from any adult in the household during the last month

**Average prevalence**

- Range: 47.0% in Serbia to 95.1% in Ghana
- Above 50% in 23/24 countries.

**Inequities by disability**

- Boys: inequities in 6 countries (violent discipline) and 17 countries (severe punishment)
- Girls: Inequities in 6 countries (violent discipline), 13 countries (severe punishment)

**Implications**

- High overall prevalence of violent discipline and large inequities for children with disabilities, especially for severe punishment
- Future research should examine severity of violence and disability
Findings: Child labour and disability

**Definition**

% of children aged 5-17 years who performed household chores or economic activities over the age-specified thresholds in the past week. Hazardous labour included carrying heavy loads, dangerous tools, extreme temperatures, noise and chemicals.

**Average prevalence**

- Range: 2.0% in Algeria to 35.6% in Chad
- Above 20% (1 in 5) in 10 countries

**Inequities by disability**

- Boys: Inequities in 3 countries (child labour), 8 countries (hazardous labour)
- Girls: Inequities in 2 countries (child labour), 8 countries (hazardous labour). Prevalence of hazardous labour 3x higher among girls with disabilities in Palestine

**Implications**

- Few countries had inequities in child labour by disability
- Boys and girls with disabilities more likely to be in hazardous labour
- Future research should examine location and nature of work and disability
Limitations

• Survey design was not designed to enable disaggregated analyses by disability and sex and child protection outcomes and other sociodemographics

• Limits of disability measures

• Country-level analysis could obscure sub-national inequities

• Surveys do not include children who are street connected, incarcerated or living in residential care

• All measures were caregiver reported and may not reflect the experiences of children and young people

• Measures are likely to be underreported and could vary by country
Implications

Research and data collection
• Further country-specific mixed methods research
• Intersectional analyses
• Youth-centered research

SDG monitoring
• ‘On average’ monitoring obscures inequities
• SDGs must be monitored – and achieved – among boys and girls with disabilities

Programming
• Disability responsive violence prevention
• Integration of child protection and violence prevention in disability programming and advocacy
Thank you

amiya.bhatia@lshtm.ac.uk

@amiyabhatia