Evidence and gap map finds 50 studies on teacher training for the inclusion of students with disabilities in low- and middle-income Asia-Pacific countries

Only 16 out of 41 countries report evidence on in-service teacher professional development for disability inclusion in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) of the Asia-Pacific region. These LMICs are still transitioning from segregated schooling to inclusive education.

A majority of the identified interventions focus on changing teacher attitudes towards the inclusion of students with disabilities and understanding different forms of disabilities.

What is this evidence and gap map about?

More than 1 billion people live with disabilities, 80% of them in LMICs. While it is widely recognised that teacher readiness and capability are key contributors to a successful transition towards disability-inclusive education, in-service teacher professional development for disability inclusion remains an under-researched area.

This evidence and gap map will help governments, schools, and policymakers to identify areas where there is sufficient evidence and areas where more evidence is needed. The EGM will assist agencies in deciding where to channel their resources, to:

- support interventions with a greater evidence base
- improve evidence collection where the evidence base is weak
- re-assess support for current interventions.

What studies are included?

The 50 studies included in this EGM were published between January 2000 and December 2021. Most (29 studies) were published in the last five years.

The studies vary greatly in their methods: a few have experimental designs and many use observational techniques for data collection.

Teacher professional development for disability inclusion remains an under-researched area.

What is the aim of this EGM?

The aim of this EGM is to identify evidence on interventions focused on in-service teacher professional development for the inclusion of students with disabilities. The EGM considers early years to Year 12 education in LMICs in the Asia-Pacific region.
What are the main findings of this EGM?

The included studies are unequally distributed across the intervention and outcome categories of the EGM. A significant number of interventions focus on changing teacher attitudes and understanding of disability, as many of these countries are in the early stages of the inclusive education agenda.

Only three studies discuss interventions for supporting mental health amongst students with a disability. One study reports an intervention to support students with physical disabilities where the teachers received training on mobility disability, as part of a larger teacher development programme.

Almost half of the 50 included studies are in mainstream school settings. None of the interventions identified support students with disabilities during emergency or crisis situations. This should be a key focus in the light of the current pandemic and widespread environmental disasters.

What do the findings of the map mean?

The evidence collated here is unevenly distributed and there is room for more studies in this space. The EGM highlights the following needs:

• Uptake of primary research using robust methods to measure intervention effectiveness and impact
• Interventions designed to support school mental health and psychosocial wellbeing for students with disabilities
• Support for education systems’ efforts on evidence synthesis through regional alliances and the formation of evidence hubs

How up-to-date is this EGM?

The authors searched for studies published up to December 2021.

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Campbell is an international, voluntary, non-profit research network. We summarise and evaluate the quality of evidence about programmes in the social and behavioural sciences. Our aim is to help people make better choices and better policy decisions.

About this summary


The interactive EGM is available here: [https://datavis.acer.org/gem/disability-inclusion-TPD](https://datavis.acer.org/gem/disability-inclusion-TPD)

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