

International and Canadian Child Rights Partnership (ICCRP): Summary of the International Scholarly Literature Review



We studied the international academic literature published (from 2005 to present) to determine the status of where we are at on the connection between children's participation in their protection. We also wanted to find out where we are at on monitoring this participation in their protection. There were 29 articles. Keep in mind that there are limitations of international literature on this topic; most participation literature is in English, however there is a gap since communities lack resources to publish in English (Theis, 2007).

The literature review contributes to greater understanding of child participation in protection, and identified current efforts around the globe that are increasing children's participation.

Protection concerns around the world include: exploitation and abuse; children living on the streets; children of war; victims and orphans of HIV/AIDS; political, economic, cultural, religious and environmental discrimination; family violence, abuse or neglect; poverty; child marriage; and child labour. **Note however, that some of these protection concerns are challenged and contested by children, child labour being one of them.

Latin American-specific Literature Review

This research involves academic literature in international journals. Team members based in Brazil also conducted a Latin American-specific literature review that excluded the Caribbean from 2005 to 2015 and included 86 publications in Spanish and Portuguese from across the region. This focus on the wide region represents a huge diversity with very high-income inequality. This research only found 3, there are very few publications on **monitoring** children's participation in relation to their protection.

There is understanding of children and youth as **subjects of rights** that approaches **child protection** through a **child's rights framework**. Children and youth are understood as **citizens**: Emphasizing reinforcing the importance of **listening** to their **voices**. The important idea of **child and youth protagonism** is introduced. This idea emphasizes the child's individual capacity and contrasts with **participation** as a **collective** understanding form of action. It highlights young people's **autonomy** (making a decision without being forced to do by someone else) and their capacity to assume **leadership roles**. **Spaces for child participation** include: schools, family contexts, and state and municipal councils.



The international literature review identified a variety of approaches needed for child participation in protection efforts. The common **themes** include the need for improvements in education and training, legislation and policy, accountability measures, and monitoring and evaluation.

Participation & Protection

Some of the concerns limiting children's participation in their protection are: age, adult views on childhood, belief in children's capacities, over-protection, and fear of causing emotional harm. However, much of the literature challenges these ideas about children's participation and provides different ways of thinking about and being with children.



There is a debate about how to understand and interpret protection. While international organizations and international non-governmental organizations have established protection and safety concerns, children challenge some of these issues based on their own experiences, such as: labour, marriage, over-protection, understandings of vulnerability (harm), labels, and stigmatization (negative attitudes from society) are

issues.

Visual methods in Liberia argues that: young children's views of protection and risk may challenge common adult understandings of child protection; peers' views may vary due to individual contexts. For example, a person working a dangerous job may be unsafe, but for some people, it can be a protective factor as it will bring income. There is a shift in understandings about rights requiring young people's perspectives to be "living rights" (Hanson & Nieuwenhuys, 2013).

There is recognition of the need for improved education and training, as well as the roles of legislation and policy. In conclusion, these current conceptualizations and approaches to monitoring child participation in international child protection reveal strengths, weaknesses/gaps and highlight the need to support innovations in research, policy, and practice.

A Look at the Country and Regions Studied in the Literature

Many reports are international or look at a broader region, such as Southeast Asia, East Asia and the Pacific.



United Nations



Rwanda



England



Lithuania



Wales



South Africa



Ireland



United States



Zimbabwe



Estonia



Liberia



Norway



Nepal



India



Netherlands



Ethiopia



Peru



Vietnam