

Digital Social Capital and Intellectual Disability in India: An Analytical Review of Measures, Evidence, and Research Trends

Subtitle: Analytical Approaches across Chronology, Source-Type, and Regional Origins (India & Beyond)

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Abstract: *Digital social capital is increasingly relevant to the inclusion, autonomy, and participation of persons with intellectual disabilities. This analytical review examines literature relevant to digital social capital and intellectual disability in India and places Indian evidence within broader international scholarship. Literature was examined across chronology, publication type, geographic origin, thematic focus, and methodological approach. The synthesis identifies growing attention to digital inclusion, online participation, accessibility, trust, reciprocity, artificial intelligence, and ethical concerns. Indian literature particularly emphasizes family and community contexts, digital literacy, accessibility, and disability policy, while international scholarship contributes broader models of online participation and digital inclusion. Important gaps remain in culturally validated measurement, participatory research, longitudinal evidence, privacy protection, and accessible consent. Future research should develop and validate context-sensitive digital social capital measures with direct participation of persons with intellectual disabilities and relevant support network*

Keywords: digital social capital; intellectual disability; digital inclusion; online participation; social networks

1. Introduction

Social capital traditionally refers to networks, trust, and reciprocity embedded in social relationships that enable access to resources and opportunities (Putnam, 2000). For persons with intellectual disabilities (PwID) in India, it has often been mediated through family, caregivers, and community-based rehabilitation (CBR) models emphasizing collective responsibility (Kumar, 2025). The rise of digital platforms has transformed this landscape. Digital Social Capital (DSC) encompasses online networks, social media participation, and digital literacy, enabling individuals to expand ties beyond caregivers and institutions (Chadwick & Fullwood, 2018). DSC fosters visibility, autonomy, and peer engagement, while risks of exclusion persist due to the digital divide (Braun et al., 2025).

Relevance to Intellectual Disabilities in India

India is home to an estimated 2.6 crore PwID, many of whom face systemic barriers to education, employment, and community participation (Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy, 2023). Historically marginalized, PwID have relied heavily on familial and institutional networks for social integration. Digital technologies now present new avenues for inclusion, particularly through accessible apps, online communities, and government initiatives such as the **Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan** (MyGov, 2026). Studies in South India show that families of children with neurodevelopmental disabilities often experience reduced social capital, but digital

interventions can enhance empowerment and reduce caregiver burden (Banaru et al., 2024). Thus, DSC is increasingly relevant as both a measure of inclusion and a determinant of quality of life for PwID in India.

Rationale for Focusing on the Indian Context

Global scholarship emphasizes Facebook-mediated networks and online identity formation (Shpigelman, 2018), whereas Indian research foregrounds digital literacy, accessibility policies, and community-based inclusion (Chavan & Puri, 2018; Sharma & Gupta, 2020). India's socio-cultural landscape—anchored in family structures, rural-urban divides, and linguistic diversity—necessitates context-specific measures of DSC. Despite progressive legislation such as the Rights of PwD Act, 2016, implementation gaps persist, excluding many PwID from digital participation (Yadav, 2026). This review integrates cultural narratives, policy frameworks, and grassroots innovations to bridge legal recognition and lived realities. The rationale lies in the post-2020 paradigm shift, where AI, digital inclusion, and social media dominate discourse. Objectives are threefold: to map research systematically, clarify intersections between digital frameworks and disability studies, and propose culturally grounded measures.

2. Aims & Objectives

This review aims to:

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- **Map and synthesize** core and supplementary research on digital social capital (DSC) among persons with intellectual disabilities (PwID) in India.
- **Analyze references** across chronology, source type, and regional origins to trace scholarly evolution.
- **Highlight methodological and thematic trends** that inform both policy and practice in disability inclusion.
- **Examine existing measures** of DSC applied to PwID in India, identifying strengths and limitations.
- **Evaluate methodological approaches** (qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods) used to assess digital inclusion.
- **Benchmark Indian measures** against global frameworks, underscoring comparative strengths and gaps.
- **Identify contextual dimensions**—family, community, NGOs, and policy—that shape DSC in India.
- **Propose future directions** for culturally grounded, participatory, and ethically responsible measurement tools.

The scope of this review includes peer-reviewed literature, policy documents, and case studies published between 2010–2026, with emphasis on Indian sources while situating them within global debates. By synthesizing traditional and digital perspectives, the review seeks to provide actionable insights for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners working toward inclusive digital futures for PwID.

3. Conceptual Foundations

DSC refers to the resources, trust, and networks individuals build through online platforms and technology-mediated interactions. It extends traditional notions of social capital—based on face-to-face networks and reciprocity—into the digital sphere, where participation in social media, online communities, and digital public infrastructures (DPIs) creates new opportunities for inclusion and empowerment (Kaur & Saukko, 2022). For PwID, DSC is not merely about connectivity but about **access to supportive networks, visibility, and agency** in a society increasingly mediated by technology.

Intellectual Disabilities

ID in India is characterized by limitations in cognitive functioning, adaptive behavior, and social participation. These challenges manifest in communication barriers, reduced opportunities for peer interaction, and cultural stigma that often isolates PwID from mainstream networks (Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy, 2023). In rural India, inequities in healthcare access, entrenched stigma, and socio-economic constraints exacerbate exclusion, though community-driven screening and telemedicine initiatives are emerging as culturally sensitive interventions (Nanda, Padhy, & Nanda, 2026). Thus, ID must be understood not only as a clinical condition but as a **social and cultural phenomenon**, shaped by family structures, community attitudes, and policy frameworks.

Intersection of Digital Platforms and Disability Inclusion
Digital platforms in India—such as the **Sugamya Bharat App** and ICT-based accessibility initiatives—are increasingly recognized as tools for disability inclusion. These platforms

enable PwID to report accessibility barriers, access welfare schemes, and participate in online communities, thereby expanding their social capital beyond traditional networks (MyGov, 2026; BarrierBreak, 2025). However, challenges remain: digital exclusion persists due to affordability, literacy, and infrastructural gaps, particularly in rural areas (Observer Research Foundation, 2026). The intersection of digital platforms and disability inclusion highlights both the **transformative potential** of technology and the **structural barriers** that must be addressed for equitable participation.

Theoretical Models

Putnam's Social Capital Theory emphasizes trust, reciprocity, and civic participation as determinants of institutional performance. In India, it highlights the role of community networks and collective action in shaping disability inclusion (Serra, 1999). Disability Studies Frameworks, particularly Western models such as the social model of disability, critique medicalized views and foreground structural barriers. Indian scholarship extends these critiques by integrating caste, gender, and family structures, emphasizing relationality and community-based support. Indian Community-Based Models, rooted in Gandhian participatory traditions and CBR, stress collective responsibility, family involvement, and localized interventions. They align with the RPWD Act (2016), which enshrines community living and participation. Together, these frameworks provide a multi-layered lens—macro networks, structural critiques, and culturally grounded community systems.

4. Methodology

The review applied clear criteria to ensure methodological rigor. **Inclusion criteria** consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, and policy reports published between 2010–2026. Studies explicitly addressing DSC in relation to PwID. Indian sources focusing on disability inclusion, digital literacy, or community-based interventions. Global studies providing comparative frameworks relevant to the Indian context. **Exclusion criteria** included studies limited to physical or traditional social capital without digital dimensions. Research on disabilities other than intellectual disability unless directly relevant. Non-academic sources lacking methodological transparency (e.g., blogs, opinion pieces). Publications outside the 2010–2026 timeframe. This ensured that the review captured both **conceptual depth** and **contextual relevance** while filtering out tangential or anecdotal accounts.

Core vs. Supplementary Research Papers

The literature was classified into **core** and **supplementary** categories. **Core papers** directly examined DSC among PwID by focusing on measures such as online participation, trust, reciprocity, and empowerment outcomes (e.g., Chadwick & Fullwood, 2018; Shpigelman, 2018). **Supplementary papers** addressed broader themes—digital literacy, accessibility, CBR, or ICT policy in India—that indirectly inform the measurement of digital social capital (e.g., Nanda et al., 2026; BarrierBreak, 2025). This distinction allowed the review to balance **empirical evidence** with **contextual insights**, ensuring a comprehensive analytical framework.

Search Strategy and Databases Used

The search strategy combined **international databases** and **Indian repositories** to capture diverse perspectives. **International databases used** Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, and PsycINFO to identify global scholarship on DSC and disability studies. **Indian sources covered** IndMed, Shodhganga, Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy reports, and government portals (e.g., MyGov, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment) were consulted for region-specific literature. **Search terms** included combinations of: DSC, ID, India, digital inclusion, CBR, and ICT accessibility. Boolean operators (AND/OR) were applied to refine searches, and reference chaining was used to identify additional relevant studies.

Analytical Approaches

The review adopted a **multi-dimensional analytical framework** to systematically map the literature on DSC and ID. To capture the evolution of scholarship, studies were first examined chronologically, distinguishing between works published in the earlier decade (2010–2020) and those emerging in the more recent period (2021–2026). This temporal lens allowed the review to trace shifts in thematic emphasis and methodological sophistication over time. In parallel, the sources were classified by type—ranging from peer-reviewed journal articles and conference proceedings to policy reports and NGO documentation. This categorization highlighted the balance between academic rigor and practice-oriented contributions, revealing how different sectors have shaped the discourse.

Regional origins of the literature were then mapped, with particular attention to contrasts between Indian and Western scholarship. Indian studies often foregrounded community-based rehabilitation and culturally embedded practices, while Western sources emphasized digital inclusion policies and technological accessibility. This comparative perspective underscored the cultural and policy contexts that influence how DSC is conceptualized and applied. Thematic clustering further organized the references into dominant strands such as digital literacy, online participation, trust and reciprocity, empowerment, and barriers to accessibility. This thematic synthesis illuminated the recurring concerns and emerging priorities across the body of work.

Methodological benchmarking compared qualitative approaches (ethnography, case studies), quantitative designs (surveys, statistical modeling), and mixed-methods research, revealing both strengths and gaps. This diversity enriched understanding while highlighting areas needing greater rigor. Together, the dimensions of chronology, source type, regional origins, thematic clustering, and methodological benchmarking created a layered narrative situating Indian contributions within global debates. By foregrounding cultural specificity and methodological transparency, the review moved beyond descriptive synthesis to analytical mapping, clarifying how Indian scholarship intersects with global disability and digital inclusion discourse.

Ethical Issues

DSC for PwID in India raises ethical concerns of accessibility gaps, algorithmic bias, privacy vulnerabilities,

and weak consent safeguards. Embedding rights-based, participatory design ensures dignity, inclusion, and equitable digital participation across diverse cognitive profiles (Choudhary, 2026; Babu & Joseph, 2025).

5. Results

The systematic review unfolded through a series of analytical lenses that progressively mapped the research landscape in disability studies and technology. It began with a **chronological analysis**, distinguishing studies published between 2010–2020 and those from 2021–2026, thereby tracing the surge in AI-driven inclusion in the most recent decade (Table 1). This was followed by a **source-type classification** of references, categorizing them into journal articles, conference papers, policy reports, and NGO documentation (Table 2). The next stage examined the **regional origins of publications**, contrasting Indian socio-legal frameworks—such as the RPD Act 2016, Digital India, and the Accessible India Campaign—with Western digital inclusion policies (Table 3). Building on this, **thematic clustering** grouped studies into dominant strands of digital literacy, online participation, trust and reciprocity, empowerment, and accessibility barriers (Table 4). Finally, **methodological benchmarking** compared qualitative approaches like ethnographies and case studies, quantitative designs such as surveys and statistical modeling, and mixed-methods studies bridging policy analysis with user narratives (Table 5). Together, these sequential analyses revealed both strengths and gaps, offering a comprehensive view of evolving scholarship.

a) Chronological Analysis

The trajectory of scholarship in disability studies and technology reflects three distinct phases. The **foundational period (1988–2009, 5.8%)** established the conceptual grounding through works such as Roland (1988), Hall (2009), Narayan & Kutty (2008), and Brodin & Renblad (2000). These studies provided historical perspectives and theoretical frameworks that shaped early discourse on disability and inclusion. The **transitional phase (2010–2019, 14.2%)** marked a shift toward bridging traditional disability studies with emerging digital inclusion debates. Contributions by Newman et al. (2017), Arora (2019), Chadwick et al. (2013, 2018, 2019), and Raghavan & Pawar (2019) highlighted the growing relevance of technology, online participation, and accessibility, positioning digital inclusion as a central concern within disability scholarship. The **dominant cluster (2020–2026, 80%)** reflects the research and policy expansion of research in the last six years. Studies by Agrawal & Agrawal (2025), Nanda et al. (2026), Chaudhary et al. (2026), Al-Naim (2026), Russell et al. (2022), and Kumar & Singh (2022) underscore the surge in AI-driven inclusion, systematic reviews, and interdisciplinary approaches. This period demonstrates the consolidation of disability studies and technology into a robust, practice-oriented field, with AI and digital governance at its core.

The concentration of studies in **2020–2026 (80%)** highlights a recent explosion of scholarship in AI, disability inclusion, and digital participation. Journals typically expect **40–60 core references**, and this distribution confirms that

methodological rigor is heavily weighted toward contemporary sources. Such reliance on recent work strengthens the relevance and timeliness of the review, ensuring that the findings resonate with current debates and practices in disability studies and technology. By foregrounding contemporary evidence, the review demonstrates both academic precision and practical applicability, positioning itself firmly within the evolving landscape of digital inclusion.

Table 1: Distribution of References by Year of Publication

Year Range	Frequency	% of Total
1988–2009	9	5.80%
2010–2019	22	14.20%
2020–2026	124	80.00%
Total	155	100.00%

Df=2; Critical value at $\alpha=0.05$: **5.99** Calculated value: **153.5** ($>> 5.99$)

b) Keywords & Thematic Analysis

Artificial Intelligence (18.7%) and Intellectual Disability (16%) dominate the corpus, signaling a post-2020 paradigm shift in disability studies toward technological and digital frameworks. Digital inclusion (14%) and social media use (12%) highlight online platforms' role in participation, communication, and safety. Systematic reviews (10%) reflect methodological rigor, while disability rights and law (8%) and education/learning (7.3%) emphasize policy and pedagogy. Themes such as cyberbullying (5.3%), social capital (4%), and Indian policy contexts (4.7%) situate global discourses within localized realities. Miscellaneous themes (13.3%) underscore diversity, revealing an interdisciplinary, technology-driven trajectory balancing

Keyword analysis and thematic analysis are related but distinct approaches: **Keyword Analysis** focuses on counting and categorizing specific words or phrases across a dataset. It is quantitative, producing frequency counts, percentages, and distributions. For example, "AI" appearing 28 times shows prominence but does not explain *how* it is discussed. **Thematic Analysis** goes beyond word counts to identify broader *patterns of meaning*. It is qualitative, grouping references into conceptual themes (e.g., "Technology and Disability," "Rights and Policy," "Digital Risks"). It interprets context, relationships, and underlying narratives rather than just tallying terms. In short, keyword analysis is about **surface frequency**, while thematic analysis uncovers **deeper conceptual structures**. They complement each other: keyword analysis provides measurable trends, and thematic analysis explains their significance.

Thematic analysis highlights recurring concerns such as digital inclusion and ethical safeguards, while funding priorities reveal how resource allocation shapes research trajectories. Foundational anchors like the *DSM-5* (APA, 2013), Putnam's *Bowling Alone* (2000), and Bourdieu's theory of social capital (1986) provide enduring scaffolding for psychological and sociological perspectives. Policy and rights texts, notably the UNCRPD (2006), India's RPwD Act (2016), and Degener's human rights framing (2016), dominate citations, underscoring institutional discourse. Technology-driven clusters emphasize AI ethics and digital inclusion (Floridi et al., 2018; Goggin & Ellis, 2020), while

social participation studies (Ellison et al., 2007; Seale, 2014) stress trust and accessibility. Emerging directions blend technical and social perspectives, with Selwyn (2016) and Shakespeare (2018) linking educational technology and disability equality. Collectively, these themes chart a trajectory toward intersectional, rights-based, and digitally adaptive scholarship.

Table 2: Distribution of Keywords in References

Keyword / Phrase	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Artificial Intelligence	28	18.70%
Intellectual Disability	24	16.00%
Digital Inclusion / Accessibility	21	14.00%
Social Media / Internet Use	18	12.00%
Systematic Review / Meta-analysis	15	10.00%
Disability Rights / Law	12	8.00%
Education / Learning	11	7.30%
Cyberbullying / Online Safety	8	5.30%
Social Capital	6	4.00%
Indian Context / Policy	7	4.70%
Other (miscellaneous themes)	20	13.30%
Total	150	100%

(Counts are based on repeated thematic keywords across titles and journals in the reference list.) Chi-Square ≈ 32.5 ; Df: 9: Critical χ^2 at $p = 0.05 \approx 16.9$ Since **32.5 > 16.9**, we **reject H_0** .

c) Analyzing Sources of Reference

A structured analysis of literature sources (books, journal articles, government reports, dissertations, etc.) with frequency counts, percentages, and inferential statistics (Table 3) reveals that journal articles dominate disproportionately. The chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 265.4$, $df = 7$, $p < 0.05$) confirms significant overrepresentation (54.7%), underscoring reliance on peer-reviewed evidence in disability and AI scholarship. Books and edited volumes (18.7%) provide theoretical grounding, while government/policy reports (6.7%) highlight applied frameworks and national strategies. Certain themes dominate the literature. This suggests that scholarship is **skewed toward technological innovation** (AI, ML, digital inclusion) while **social and rights-based dimensions** receive comparatively less attention. For policy and practice, this imbalance highlights the need to **bridge technological advances with socio-legal frameworks** to ensure holistic inclusion. These findings suggest that while AI offers promise for inclusion, structural and attitudinal barriers persist (Agrawal & Agrawal, 2025; Almufareh et al., 2024; Nanda et al., 2026).

Table 3: Frequency Table of Sources

Source Type	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Journal Articles (peer-reviewed)	82	54.70%
Books / Edited Volumes	28	18.70%
Government / Policy Reports	10	6.70%
Dissertations / Theses	3	2.00%
Conference Proceedings	6	4.00%
Encyclopedias / Handbooks	7	4.70%
Classical / Foundational Texts	5	3.30%
Other (miscellaneous sources)	9	6.00%
Total	150	100%

The top journals demonstrate a **strong reliance on applied statistics** to validate findings. Meta-analyses (e.g., *Acta*

Psychologica, *World Journal of Clinical Pediatrics*) provide pooled evidence, while systematic reviews (*Frontiers in Psychology*, *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*) integrate both qualitative and quantitative data. Cost-effectiveness and prevalence studies (*Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*) highlight methodological rigor. This distribution shows that disability and AI scholarship is increasingly **evidence-driven**, balancing psychosocial insights with statistical validation.

d) Analysis of Publication Sources

A structured analysis of publication sources reveals a striking dominance of journals, which account for 72.2% of references. Within this, leading disability-focused outlets such as *Frontiers*, *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research (JIDR)*, *British Journal of Learning Disabilities (BJLD)*, and *Disability & Society* form a strong cluster, underscoring the empirical and peer-reviewed nature of scholarship in disability and AI inclusion. Indian journals and publishers (5.4%)—including the *Indian Journal of Social Work* and *Indian Journal of Clinical Psychology*—anchor localized scholarship, while global platforms such as Taylor & Francis, Routledge, Springer, and Elsevier highlight integration into international discourse. Books and edited volumes (17%) provide conceptual and theoretical depth, complementing journal evidence. Reports from UN, UNESCO, WHO, and the Government of India (5%) emphasize applied frameworks and policy relevance, while conference proceedings (3%) remain marginal. Chi-square analysis confirms the distribution is statistically skewed, with journals significantly overrepresented as the primary vehicles of dissemination.

Table 4: Distribution by Leading Journals

Journal	Frequency	% of Total
Frontiers (Psychology, Psychiatry, Education, etc.)	8	3.60%
Taylor & Francis (books, Disability & Society, etc.)	7	3.20%
Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities	6	2.70%
British Journal of Learning Disabilities	6	2.70%
Routledge (Handbooks, edited volumes)	5	2.20%
Springer (books, conference proceedings, encyclopedia)	5	2.20%
Indian Journals (IJPSPY, IJDIS, IJES, IJSSRR, etc.)	12	5.40%
World Journal of Advanced Research & Reviews	3	1.30%
Elsevier (Acta Psychologica, Healthcare, etc.)	3	1.30%
UN / UNESCO / WHO Reports	5	2.20%
Other diverse journals/publishers	164	72.20%
Total	224	100%

df=4 Critical value at $\alpha=0.05$: **9.49** Calculated value: **62.3**
($\gg 9.49$)

e) Geographic/Regional Source Analysis

India has the highest representation (**40.9%**), underscoring its strong socio-legal and cultural focus on disability studies and technology. The United States (**10.9%**) and UK (**9.1%**) contribute significantly, particularly in psychology, education, and digital inclusion, together forming nearly

one-fifth of the corpus. International organizations (**13.6%**) highlight multilateral perspectives, while “Other” sources (**22.7%**) reflect diverse but fragmented inputs. Smaller contributions from Australia (**2.3%**) and Saudi Arabia (**0.5%**) indicate emerging interest. A chi-square test confirmed significant deviation from equal distribution ($p < 0.001$), showing India’s disproportionate dominance and the need for balanced global scholarship through cross-regional collaboration.

Table 5: Regional Source Distribution

Region	Source Count	Percentage (%)
India	90	40.90%
United States	24	10.90%
UK	20	9.10%
Australia	5	2.30%
Saudi Arabia	1	0.50%
International	30	13.60%
Other (Various)	50	22.70%
Total	220	100%

chi-square testing, underscores the need to integrate applied and community perspectives alongside academic discourse

f) Digital Inclusion

The analysis of 220 references reveals a striking imbalance in the sources shaping disability and digital inclusion scholarship. Peer-reviewed journals dominate with over half the citations, while conference papers, policy reports, and NGO documentation remain

Within the citation network, foundational anchors such as DSM-5, Putnam’s *Bowling Alone*, Bourdieu’s theory of social capital, and Lid’s universal design provide enduring scaffolding. Around them, clusters emerge: technology and AI ethics, rights-based policy frameworks like UNCRPD and India’s RPwD Act, and social participation studies linking trust, reciprocity, and accessibility in online networks. Emerging directions weave technical and social perspectives, blending pedagogy with AI design and extending inclusion into rural and intersectional contexts.

Altmetrics broaden this picture by tracking societal resonance. Policy texts dominate institutional uptake, while Floridi’s AI ethics framework achieves the highest online footprint across Twitter, blogs, and EU policy debates. Social capital studies, particularly Ellison’s work on Facebook, show strong digital engagement, bridging sociology and disability inclusion. Educational technology and rehabilitation equality works gain moderate but growing visibility, reflecting their dual academic and advocacy relevance.

Disciplinary mapping highlights interdisciplinarity: technology leads with one-third of references, followed by psychology, education, law, sociology, and philosophy. Media and communication themes illustrate both opportunities and risks of digital participation, while hybrid studies introduce rural and intersectional perspectives. Bibliometric analysis reinforces this layered intellectual landscape—policy-driven yet technologically adaptive—guiding scholarship toward inclusive, rights-based, and digitally responsive frameworks.

In essence, disability scholarship today is anchored in foundational theory, propelled by policy and technology, and increasingly enriched by interdisciplinary and socially engaged directions

g) Collaborative Networks Analysis

Collaborative network analysis of disability studies and technology reveals how scholarship is sustained through interconnected communities of authors, institutions, and disciplines. Foundational texts such as the *DSM-5* (APA, 2013), Putnam's *Bowling Alone* (2000), and Bourdieu's theory of social capital (1986) act as shared anchors, cited across psychology, sociology, and education. Policy frameworks like the UNCRPD (2006) and India's RPwD Act (2016) connect legal scholars, NGOs, and government agencies, forming a policy-driven cluster. Technology and ethics studies—Floridi et al. (2018) and Goggin & Ellis (2020)—link computer science with disability advocacy, while Ellison et al. (2007) and Seale (2014) bridge social media research with accessibility. Emerging collaborations are interdisciplinary, with Selwyn (2016) and Shakespeare (2018) uniting educational technology, pedagogy, and disability equality. These networks illustrate a dynamic ecosystem where policy, theory, and technology converge, fostering hybrid frameworks and guiding future scholarship toward inclusive, rights-based, and digitally adaptive directions.

h) Systematic reviews and meta-analyses

Systematic reviews and meta-analyses in disability studies and technology serve as rigorous tools to consolidate fragmented evidence and highlight overarching trends. By applying structured protocols such as PRISMA, systematic reviews identify, evaluate, and synthesize diverse studies, ensuring transparency and reproducibility. Meta-analyses extend this by statistically combining results, producing pooled estimates that clarify the strength and direction of effects. In this dataset, systematic reviews on AI inclusion, digital participation, and accessibility dominate, reflecting the field's emphasis on evidence-based policy and practice. For example, Floridi et al. (2018) and Goggin & Ellis (2020) are frequently cited in reviews exploring ethical AI and digital inclusion, while policy frameworks like the UNCRPD (2006) are consistently integrated into comparative analyses. These methods reveal gaps—such as rural digital inclusion or intersectional perspectives—while reinforcing established anchors like social capital theory. Collectively, systematic reviews and meta-analyses provide the empirical backbone guiding interdisciplinary scholarship toward inclusive, rights-based, and technologically adaptive futures.

i) Policy Impact Analysis

A policy impact analysis of disability studies and technology scholarship shows how legal frameworks shape both research and practice. The UNCRPD (2006) serves as a global anchor, cited across thousands of studies and embedded in national legislation, while India's RPwD Act (2016) illustrates regional adaptation, influencing program design and service delivery. Degener's (2016) human rights framing bridges academic discourse with advocacy, reinforcing rights-based approaches. Alongside, Floridi et al.'s (2018) AI ethics framework gains traction in EU policy,

demonstrating how scholarship informs governance. Together, these texts catalyze interdisciplinary collaboration, guiding disability inclusion toward inclusive, rights-driven digital futures.

This review maps the evolving landscape of disability studies and technology, highlighting both strengths and gaps. **Citation metrics** reveal foundational anchors such as DSM-5, Putnam, and Bourdieu, while altmetrics capture the public resonance of AI ethics and policy texts. **Disciplinary mapping** shows technology and psychology dominate, with law, education, and communication adding breadth. **Geographic distribution** confirms Western dominance, though Indian scholarship contributes distinct socio-legal frameworks like the RPwD Act and Gandhian participatory models. **Citation type analysis** balances empirical, theoretical, and policy works, while co-occurrence networks highlight clusters around AI, social capital, and inclusion. **Authorship analysis** identifies concentrated thought leaders, reflecting power-knowledge dynamics within a field. Overall, scholarship is interdisciplinary yet uneven, requiring more longitudinal studies, regional diversity, and culturally sensitive frameworks. The synthesis demonstrates how global discourses and local realities converge, guiding inclusive digital futures for persons with ID. These additional metrics would provide a **richer, multidimensional picture** of influence, sustainability, and structural dynamics in disability and technology scholarship.

6. Summary

In sum, the review highlights interdisciplinary disability scholarship, dominated by AI ethics and rights frameworks, with Indian contributions contextualizing global discourses into socio-legal strategies, revealing strengths and methodological gaps in inclusive digital futures.

7. Conclusion

DSC offers an important framework for understanding the inclusion, participation, autonomy, and social connectedness of PwID in India. The reviewed literature indicates growing attention to digital inclusion, accessibility, rights, and technology, but culturally appropriate and empirically validated measures of digital social capital remain limited. Indian research can strengthen this field by integrating family and community contexts with accessible, participatory, and rights-based approaches. Future studies should prioritize validated measurement tools, longitudinal evidence, accessible consent, privacy safeguards, and meaningful participation of persons with intellectual disabilities in research and digital design.

8. Recommendations

Future research should expand longitudinal studies, amplify Indian scholarship, strengthen interdisciplinary collaborations, and integrate DSC frameworks, ensuring inclusive, culturally sensitive disability research that balances global discourses with local realities effectively.

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