Author’s response to reviews

Title: Effective implementation of the UNCRPD by Thailand State Party: challenges and potential remedies

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Responses to reviewers’ comments

Reviewer reports:

Reviewer #1: Thank you for the opportunity to review this interesting manuscript, in which the authors share results of a review of five documents related to reporting on Thailand’s progress toward implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and identify various inconsistencies between the reports and highlight identified implementation gaps. Although this manuscript would make an important and unique contribution to our field, it would require significant revisions before I could recommend publication. I will detail these below.

Method:

- It is important for the authors to provide much greater detail in their methods section so that reviewers can properly assess the rigor of the study. For example, on p. 4 the authors note that reports were "reviewed against" other reports. How was this done? Did you have a process for coding or an organizational system for analyzing the documents? What was the theoretical framework for this review? Who completed the actual document analysis (how many people)? Did you have processes to validate findings and ensure consistency among multiple researchers? Again, with the information provided in this section, it is difficult for me to make an informed judgement about study methods.

Ans.The framework and the method of analysis are revised and elaborated in text.
Findings:

- Before getting into what the documents did or did not contain, it would be useful for the authors to provide a brief summary or overview of each of the documents reviewed to provide context. For example, how long was each document? What was the structure and/or tone of the documents? What were the key messages of documents? A simple overview of the documents reviewed would help the reader to better contextualize the findings that you present.

Ans. This detail is added as the overview of the documents at the first part of the finding.

- It might be useful to provide direct page numbers to the sections of each document discussed so that a reader might easily refer back to a given section.

Ans. The paragraph numbers of the document are added in bracket after each discussion point.

- With results just in narrative form, it is hard for a reader to keep the different findings for the different documents organized conceptually. A Table that clearly organizes and summarizes the key findings for each document could be very useful.

Ans. The brief summary table is added (Table 2). It is too long to describe the content of each Article in table. So, I just use quantitative summarization as an overview of the finding.

- I would caution the authors from providing researcher opinion in the findings section. For example, on p. 6, the authors note "Lack of clarity on these critical Articles related to human rights suggests major implementation gaps". These sorts of reflections and commentary belong in the discussion, not results.

Ans. This sentence is deleted, as well as other sentences in the finding section that seem to be more of a comment/discussion.

- Some of the points made in monitoring and evaluation seem to require more context. For example, it might make sense that statistics change between data reported in 2007 and data reported in 2015 - both because population might change over time, and because definitions of disability could evolve over time and impact how people with disabilities are "counted". It is not really meaningful to note that two different reports provided two different numbers if
we don't have greater clarity about what the reports were measuring and where/how they got their data. Perhaps equally interesting would have been reports about the methods through which data were collected to arrive at the conflicting figures - you could then engage with this in a critical way in the discussion.

Ans. This is quite difficult to elaborate every discrepancy. So, I rewrite about this disagreement on a more general theme of ‘Information system’ and ‘monitoring and evaluation’ in the discussion section.

- Under "major factual discrepancies", the description about the legal amendment process was unclear. It is hard to understand what you are trying to say here. Consider revising.

Ans. I revise the finding section in accordance with the framework and this part on ‘major factual discrepancies’ is deleted as it seems to duplicate the part in the legislative compliance.

Discussion:

- On p. 9, the authors argue that the data they present show that the government has a "poor attitude". I do not believe that they have presented the data that would enable them to make this statement. Rather, one might argue that the government has shown a clear commitment to the rights of people with disabilities through the ratification of the CRPD and the attempt to align national policy - this is a great positive step. Rather, discrepancies in the reports demonstrate areas for improvement or areas that need increased support for monitoring and implementation, or targeted attention. If the ultimate goal of doing this study is to get the government to increase national support for the rights of people with disabilities, rather than condemn the government, you might consider taking a strength based approach and highlight specific areas for improvement and detail specific action that could be taken.

Ans. The sentence is deleted and the related content is rewritten as the area of improvement in the discussion section.

Overall:

- I found the extensive use of acronyms to be confusing and distracting. Although the authors provide a list of acronyms at the end, I would suggest that if possible, and particularly when the acronyms only appear once or twice in the manuscript, they use the full words. This will minimize confusion or the need to flip back and forth between the text and acronym list. Additionally, the acronyms NHRCT or DTH were not written in their entirety the first time they were used.
Ans. The acronyms are all re-checked and replaced as their entirety where possible.

- There are many English language errors in this manuscript, indicating that it was writing by non-native speakers. I would strongly suggest that the authors hire an external English proofreader to fix grammatical and stylistic issues.

Ans. For this version, I still didn’t hire an external English proofreader due to the time limit and the resources. However, if the manuscript’s content is considered acceptable, I’ll manage to have it proofread by the native speaker service later.

- State party is written with both lowercase and capital. The capitalization should be consistent throughout.

Ans. It is corrected as ‘State Party’ in the whole document. In some places, the word ‘government report’ is used interchangeably as appropriate.

Reviewer #2: This paper makes an important contribution to the field of disability policy in a Low-Middle income country. It will be strengthened by review of some elements:

1. In the Background section it would be important to have an explanation of how Thailand defined "disability" both officially and historically. There is mention of laws in the 80s as well as the 1991 rehabilitation act but there is need for some information regarding how the paradigm shift from medical to social model operated within the specific context of Thailand. A reminder of the Medical and Social models of disability will also be useful.

2. In the Background section, some information about cultural perspectives on disability will also help better grasp the ongoing policy debates.

Ans. The context of disability in Thailand is added in the background section.

3. In the Methods section there is also need for further information regarding how you proceeded with the qualitative analysis of the various texts. I was not sure of how you had proceeded to compare the various documents against the CRPD.

Ans. The framework and the method of analysis are revised and elaborated in text.
4. In the FINDINGS section there is a need to deepen the analysis. For instance on page 5 "implementation measures and activities": "Plenty of activities were reported in Articles on general concept (Article 6-9) and on basic services (Article 24-27)". Some discussion on what these might be will help better grasp the discrepancies.

Ans. It was initially supposed to explain that the State Party report focused more on scattering activities, e.g., the program or project on awareness raising, campaign, charity, rather than focus on measures or strategies of implementation. However, as it scattered so much that it’s too difficult to group them to visualize the picture. So in this point in the discussion section I revise and focus only on Article 7 (Children with disabilities) as one Article on core concept of CRPD.

5. The DISCUSSION presents interesting ideas, however some would need to be developed further. The fact that there is no "internalization of the core principle of CRPD" (p9) is a central idea that, I think is one of the main findings of the study. I think that this needs to be unpacked further for presenting a strong argument for working towards conciliating the perspectives of the CRPD and the Thai policy documents on disability.

Ans. I think the problem of internalization and participation is a dual problem. This is revised and described in the discussion section and the final framework.

6. Finally in terms of references there are mostly UN and official documents. There would be a need to include the research evidence in the field of disability policy in the South East Asia region. The paper states that reviews of the literature were conducted but there is very little reference to the research.

Ans. Few more references are added. However, the disability policy of the SEA countries are not explained here as I consider it would be too long and quite complicate to assess all Articles with every country policy at the same time. Each Article would certainly be supported by different policies in each country.

***I am not able to submit the track change version of the revised manuscript as it would be confusing with a lot of changes. Instead, I submit the clean text version with highlighting of the major change/add-up in blue alphabets.