

# New research study explores attitudes to polio immunisation in India

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(Medical Xpress) -- The University of Birmingham is working with Ravenshaw University in Orissa on a new research project looking at ethics, policy and practice concerning polio vaccination in the state.

Although encouragingly [India](#) has been removed from the list of polio endemic countries, misconceptions still remain around polio vaccination within the country.

This two-year project will gather relevant empirical evidence about attitudes to polio vaccination campaigns in Orissa from three key groups - parents, community workers and those involved in planning and implementing the campaign, such as government officials. While no cases of polio have been officially reported recently in the state, the research team will study more remote tribal areas where facilities are less developed.

The study will outline and systematically explore the ethical issues that arise in relation to vaccination in general, as well as the issues raised by the empirical material gathered as part of the project. The aim is that this project will initiate a longstanding collaboration between the University of Birmingham and Ravenshaw in terms of both teaching and research in ethics and history relating to health. The first of a series of interdisciplinary research workshops will be held in Bhubaneswar in early December to widen the areas of discussion and seek topics for further joint work in the future.

Angus Dawson, Professor of Public Health Ethics from the College of Medical and Dental Sciences at the University of Birmingham, said:

“A lot of people in India do not opt for mass vaccination programmes for a number of reasons. We want to explore these reasons and bring about an attitudinal change. It's very exciting to be working in Orissa with Ravenshaw University on this kind of project. My background is in philosophy and ethics, but I have to engage with the real world of vaccination policy and practice. We expect to learn a lot about the historical, social and cultural context of public health work, and think this will result in new depth in terms of our own understanding, and further research questions to be explored in the future”.

Provided by University of Birmingham

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