

**A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED PEOPLE-DIVYANGJAN
IN KARNATAKA: SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MYSORE DISTRICT.**

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Abstract

People with disabilities are vulnerable because of the many barriers we face: attitudinal, physical, and financial. Governments everywhere can no longer overlook the hundreds of millions of people with disabilities who are denied access to health, rehabilitation, support, education, and employment—and never get the chance to Shine-*Stephen Hawking*. Disability is a major public health issue especially in countries like India. Globally more than one billion people live with some form of disability, of whom nearly 200 million experience considerable difficulties in functioning. According to Census 2011, in India, there are 26.8 million persons are ‘disabled’ which amounts to 2.21% of the total population. Among the disabled population 56% (15 million) are males and 44% (11.8 million) are females. Majority (69%) of the disabled population resided in rural areas. In India, 20% of the disabled persons are having disability in movement, 19% are with disability in seeing, and another 19 % are with disability in hearing. 8% has multiple disabilities (2011 Census). Disabled face innumerable challenges at different levels. When a person has been not able to study and develop themselves against all odds and finds themselves in such a situation where they are not finding any suitable jobs, this affects their self-confidence. Disabled people who live in countryside areas are cut off from self-centric development and no knowledge of English and computers, which is essential for employment. Even though the respective state Government's reservation policy of 3% reservation in government and public sector jobs does not translate to a reality because the disabled cannot pass the tough competitive examinations, online recruitment tests, spot interviews. At the same time, the method of job identification is burdensome for the disabled people.

Key Words: *Disability, Poverty, Challenge, Cerebral Palsy.*

Introduction

Persons with disabilities are a key note which portrays impairments, restrictions on public participations. Impairment as a term is defined as ‘state of having a physical or mental condition which means that part of your body or brain doesn’t work properly’ whereas a restriction on public participations is basically a problem that’s experienced by a person in involvement in routine work (WHO 2012). These disabled groups are considered to be marginalised as they are the people who get ahead more care, attention and care in contrast to non-disabled persons or healthy persons. These people are more prone to diseases and require utmost care and attention in terms of immunizations and immune development programs either by the government or from the local NGO’s. They may even experience a narrower health margin, both because of social exclusion and poverty, and even because they are vulnerable to various other diseases such as bed sores, sciatica and other bone related problems.

Who are the Persons with Disabilities?

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD 2016) defines “Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others “.

The World Report on Disability 2011 sums up the various definitions of disability by stating that “Disability is complex, dynamic, multidimensional, and contested “.

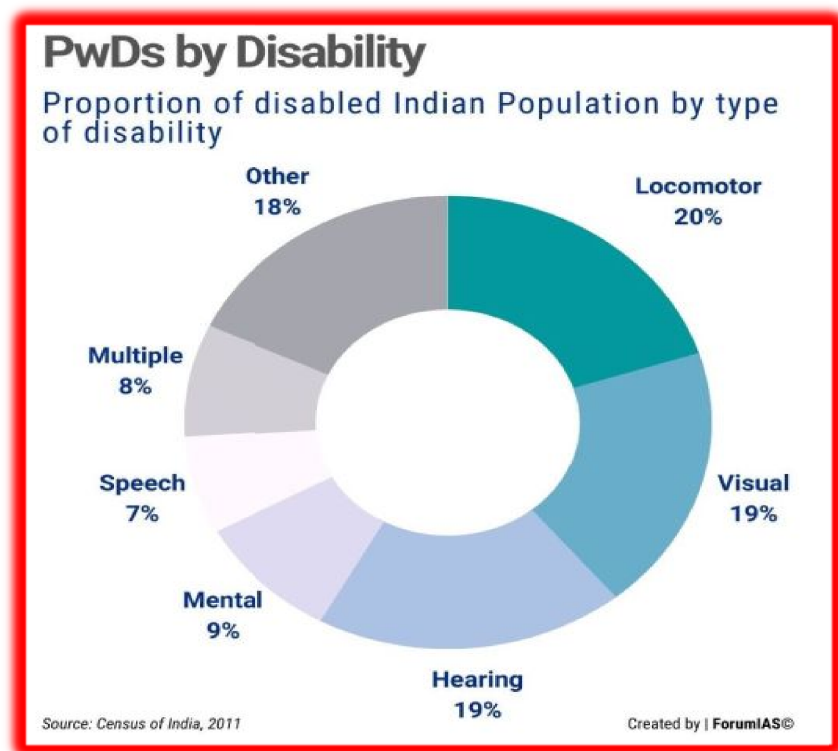
The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, uses the same definition as the UN CRPD. It further defines “Person with Benchmark Disability” as “A person with not less than 40% of a specified disability”.

Types of Disabilities:

- i. Physical Disability:
Locomotive Disability: People suffering from Cerebral Palsy, Dwarfism, Muscular Dystrophy, Victims of Acid Attack.
- ii. Visual Impairment: Impairment of Vision, Low Vision
- iii. Hearing Impairment: Deaf and Hard to Hear
- iv. Speech and Hearing Disability: Mental Illness, Chronic Neurological Conditions, Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson Disease
- v. Blood Disorder: Hemophilia, Thalassemia, Sickle Cell Disease.

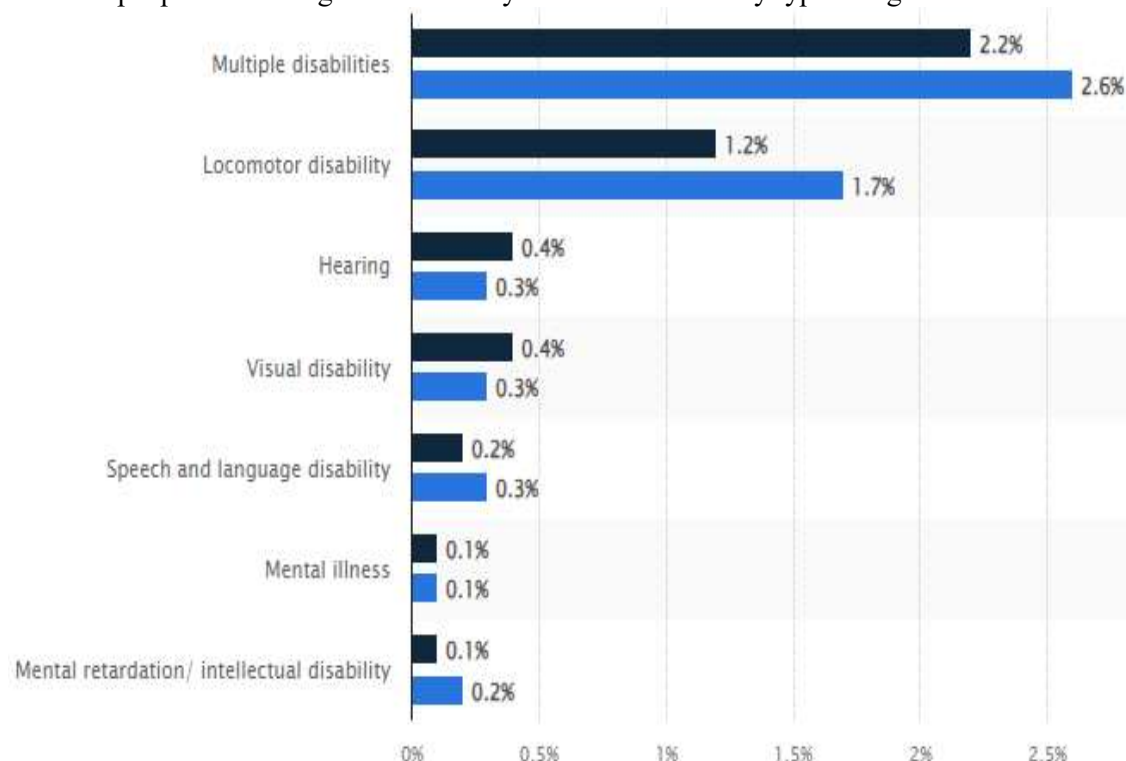
Current Status of Persons with Disabilities in India

In India, there were around 26.8 million persons with disabilities, constituting 2.21% of India's total population (2011 Census). There were 14.9 million men (2.41% of men) and 11.9 million women (2.01% of women) with disabilities. 69% (18 million) of persons with disabilities reside in rural areas. 20% of persons with disabilities in India have a disability in movement, 19% have visual impairment, 19% have a hearing impairment and 8% have multiple disabilities. Disabilities are highest in the age group 10-19 years (46.2 lakh people). At an all India level, 34% of the total disabled population is reported as 'workers'. The proportion is highest in Nagaland 52% followed by Sikkim 49% and Arunachal Pradesh 45%. (2011 census report).



Source: 2011 Census Report

Share of people with recognized disability across Karnataka by type and gender



Sources: 2023 Karnataka states report.

December 3-Significant Day for Disabled persons:

December 3 is a significant day for disabled persons and the day has been marked as 'International Day of Persons with Disabilities by the United Nations since 1992'. The only slogan behind the annual observation of this day is to endorse the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society; and to increase the consciousness of the situation of persons with disabilities in every facet of political, social, economic and cultural life of the disabled.

Statement of the Problem

The Disability Rights Activists who work relentlessly for the welfare of the disabled and academicians working on disability issues, nevertheless, say that these numbers in the census are a very small percentage of the actual numbers. Total number of persons with disabilities in India suggests the number is between 40 and 80 million (World Bank Data report 2020). India is still lacking behind in providing much needed facilities to the disabled persons despite several hard work and campaign. It is a high time when we should work together to create a stress free environment for such persons breaking the barriers with the aim of changing negative attitudes about disabled persons into positive recognition of their attributes, skills and their sole rights. Regardless of significant proportion of the total population in India, persons with disabilities live a very harsh life. Their 'disability' is perceived as their 'inability' by employers and people have conceived their own thoughts about their capabilities. There are various instances in which disabled people where employers have denied a job to candidates with disability looking on to their conditions instead of increasing their morale. It is the right time to highlight the fact that studies suggest that at many times disabled persons have turned up more fruitful in comparison to non-disabled person.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To examine the educational challenges of the physically challenged persons.
2. To assess the medical facilities available for the physically challenged persons.

3. To evaluate the social conditions of the physically challenged persons.
4. To analyze the status of disabled people in the working place.
5. To highlight the constitutional and legal provisions for the welfare for the disabled.

Review of Literature

Shankar *et al.* (2002) reported the gender differences in disability among married patients with schizophrenia. The study sample included 30 married patients of both sexes. Disability was evaluated using the modified version of the Disability assessment schedule. Results indicated that women were more disabled than men, in contrast to the findings from literature elsewhere. Negative symptoms predominated among the factors associated with global disability in both sexes.

Srinivasa Murthy *et al.* (2008) assessed the costs and effects of a community outreach program for untreated schizophrenia patients in a rural community. Hundred cases were recruited and provided appropriate psychotropic medication and psychosocial support. They also assessed every three months over one and a half years on symptomatology, disability, family burden, resource use and costs.

Kumar *et al.* assessed (2011) the prevalence and pattern of mental disability in a rural taluk of Karnataka district. This was a community-based cross-sectional study. One thousand subjects were randomly selected from four villages and IDEAS was administered. Overall prevalence of mental disability was 2.3%. Among the disabled, majority had mild disability, followed by severe, moderate and profound severity.

Methodology of the Study:

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. The primary sources material relates to the field survey conducted in the month of March 2023, through interview schedule in Mysore District. In order to easy my study 50 disable men and women who were suffering from speech, locomotor, visually impaired hearing, mentally disabled were selected on Random Sampling Method. In the interview method instead of getting information from the mentally disabled respondents, information collected from their parents and caretakers. Informal discussions were also made with the officials of NGOs. The secondary data was collected from the Magazines, Journals, Periodicals, Daily Newspapers, etc.

Discussions and Results

People with physical disabilities are facing many problems. The following are the problems faced by them are discussed here briefly.

1. **Problem of attending Social Gathering:** Physically challenged people are facing very embarrassing situation while attending social gatherings in their families like naming ceremonies, Pooja time, marriage anniversaries, fixing of marriage date and other auspicious functions. Out of 50 respondents 35 of them consisting of 70 percent are expressed their helplessness that they are facing the problem of attending social gathering. They said they tend to avoid social gathering because one or the guest of the gathering ask the reason for their physical disability, how it has happened? When it has happened? Where is has happened? in a stupid curiosity. In order to avoid this, they themselves boycott social gathering. Even parents avoid to attend social gathering as they are not ready answer unwanted questions of their relatives and friends.
2. **Fear of Social Boycott:** Physically challenged respondent's parents are living in a fear of social boycott in their respective villages. Out of 50 respondents 38 of them consisting of 76 per cent of the disable people expressed their view that their parents are living in a fear of social boycott. They said in pain that they avoid to invite any relatives or near one to any of their august gathering, fearing social boycott. They feel the relatives who attend the gathering will spread false rumors about them of disability in a flash thus bringing disrepute to their family.

3. **Problem of Unemployment:** When a person is employed their standard of living increases because of the money they earn. Majority of the respondents who are consisting of 86 per cent of them consisting of 43 of them replied that they are facing the problem of Unemployment. They are lamenting that with limited educational qualification they failed to get government jobs, private sector companies are reluctant to hire the physically challenged people undermining their capacity and stigma. This is affecting the moral of the physically challenged in a swift way. Thus increasing the suicidal attitude of the disabled people.
4. **Inhuman Treatment:** Human Rights and humane treatments are very important for making sure that all humans get treated equally. Bering human it is very important to live in dignity. Out of 50 respondents 26 of them consisting of 52 per cent opined that they are not treated equally in the society. Parents of the physically challenged people also laments that their mentally retarded children are facing the problem of Inhuman Treatment with the hands of their neighbors their relatives. Constant nagging, teasing and humiliation by the outsiders driving parents in to state of insane.
5. **Loss of Identity:** Having an identity can give you a sense of belonging, which is important to your wellbeing and confidence. Nearly 50 per cent of the physically challenged people consisting of 25 of them responded that they feel they do not have any sort of respectable identity in the society. They said due to their incapacity they are not considered as worthy citizens by the other members of the society. Due to this in different attitude of others, physically challenged people do not show any sort of competitiveness and have developed lethargic attitude.
6. **Disable free environment:** It is the duty of the State and Central Government to provide ramp facilities, lift facilities, wide doors, wheelchair with assistant must be provided to the needy physically challenged people. But it is unfortunately note that all the recognized institutions are adhering the rules and regulations that have been stipulated. Nearly 90 per cent of the respondents consisting of 45 out of 50 physically challenged people complained that lack of disable-free environment makes them difficult to commute in public transport systems and access to high rise buildings. Lack of this facilities hinders the movement of disables to complete their work without much effort. Visually challenged people are the worst affected, they face hurricane task of locating office addresses and finding right person.
7. **Denial of Property Rights:** The Hindu Succession Act of 1956 all the family members are eligible to get the equal share of the property. 78 per cent of the respondents who were consisting of 37 respondents reacted that in reality they are denied of the property rights. They complained that the siblings of the physically challenged people act as the care takers of the disabled and enjoy the property rights. They also disclosed that even the parents support the healthy siblings in managing the property affairs. Hence it is evident from the discussion that physically challenged people denied of property rights unofficially and they are the victim of family domination and discrimination.
8. **Stigma to the family:** Stigma is when someone sees you in a negative was because of your mental illness. 65 per cent of the physically challenged people consisting of 28 respondents replied that they feel guilty of being stigma to the family. They hide themselves when any marriage proposal comes to their siblings. They feel they are cornered and a blot to the family. At the same time, they are worried that due to their physical deformity they may jeopardize the chances of marriage proposals of other family members. Social Stigma and discrimination can make the mental problems worse and stop the physically challenged people health worse.
9. **Women with Disabilities:** Women and girls with disabilities are often pushed to the extreme margin and they experience profound of pain and humiliation. Women with disabilities are the worst affected. Travelling with disabilities to the school is the major hurdle for the disable girls. Hence the rate of drop out of disable female kids are increasing. 90 per cent of the respondents consisting of 45 physically challenged people replied that parents are very

protective as far as the female disable children are concerned. There are instances in which, sexual abuses have been taken on the female disable children. Hence parents are finding very difficult to manage disable daughter and they feel their son or daughter is burden throughout their life.

Constitutional Provisions for the security of Physically Challenged People

Following are the few glimpses of the constitutional and welfare provisions for the Physically Challenged people. They are: -

- a. **Preamble: of the Indian Constitution:** The Preamble of the Indian Constitution assures to secure social justice to all citizens along with equality of status and of opportunity.
- b. **Fundamental Rights:** Dignity of the individual is the fundamental conception behind all the fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution. All fundamental rights are available to the persons with disabilities.
- c. **Directive Principles of State Policy:** Article 41 insists the State to make effective provisions for securing the right to work, education and to public assistance in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disability.

Legal Provisions for the Disabled

1. **The Mental Health Act, 2017:** It replaced the Mental Health Act, 1987. It has been passed with the objective to provide for mental healthcare and related services for persons with mental illness and to protect, promote and fulfill their rights.
2. **The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016:** It came into force in April 2017. It replaced the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995. It fulfils the obligations to the United National Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).
3. **The National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999:** It has been enacted with the objective to provide for the constitution of a body at the National level for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities. The trust aims to provide total care to persons with mental retardation and cerebral palsy and also manage the properties bequeathed to the Trust.

Welfare Programs for the Physically challenged people

- a. **Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre:** It promotes the use of sign language and also to develop human resources in the field.
- b. **National Institute of Mental Health Rehabilitation (NIMHR):** It aims to work towards capacity building in the field of mental health rehabilitation. It also aims to develop community-based rehabilitation protocols for mainstreaming persons with mental illness who have been successfully cured.

Conclusion:

Disability is considered to be a social stigma in society which needs to be improvised. Disability is nothing but impairment in mind of negative people rather than being impaired by limbs. Disability is an ill-fated part of human life which can affect not only the natural way of living but also hopelessness strength and power. It is said that a person can win everywhere but when it comes to home and he has lost the battle at home, it is the point where a person dies. **Article 21** of the constitution assure every person has right to life with dignity that includes disabled persons. On the other hand, mere passing of the act and implementing laws are not sufficient and it has to be executed in actions. The finest possible manner to empower the physically challenged persons is to train, giving computer based education and boost the morale of disabled sections of society is by making them ready for the industrial oriented jobs opportunities. The key stakeholders are government, companies, NGOs and the disabled community. There is an opportunity to skill the disabled for industry needs. Vocational skills and training them in setup small scale industry are imbibed in such persons based on the needs of the industry. India has set up an ambitious task of

skilling 500 million youth in five years to garner its demographic area with financial budget (Indian Economic Forum 2020). National Skilling Development Corporation and government departments have taken initiation on training youths. Technological improvement is also needed to aid in overall development of disabled persons as every department and government is technology driven. An employment portal should be set up, especially for the physically challenged people, which should have a data of all classes of disable people and should offer job opportunities to the qualified disabled person.

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