
Persons with Disabilities: Challenges and Empowering

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INTRODUCTION

Marginality is an experience that affects millions of people throughout the world. People who are marginalized have relatively little control over their lives, and the resources available to them. This results in making them handicapped in delving contribution to society. A vicious circle is set up whereby their lack of positive and supportive relationships means that they are prevented from participating in local life, which in turn leads to further isolation. This has a tremendous impact on the development of human beings, as well as on society at large.

Marginalization In People With Disabilities:

In this article marginalized refers to persons with disabilities, children and youth with disabilities, persons with psychosocial disabilities, persons with intellectual disabilities, persons with albinism, little people, persons with deaf blindness and other specific impairment groups identified as marginalized in a target.

Definitions Of Persons With Disability:

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) defines “Persons with disabilities include those people having 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“.

Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, further defines “Person with Benchmark Disability” as “A person with not less than 40% of a specified disability”. In this article, you will get all about the Challenges associated with Persons with Disabilities and Empowering Technology for Persons with Disabilities.

Objectives Of The Study :

- Summarize the key challenges faced on Persons with Disabilities & Physical Disabilities.
- To know about the empowering of persons with disabilities
- To Understand the promoting equal opportunities and outcomes in employment for persons with disabilities
- Identify strategic Programs for disabled in India to improve and expand persons with disability

In this study analytical method is followed to examine the status **persons with disabilities: challenges and empowering**. This study is based on Secondary of data collected from books, journals, Seminar proceedings and website sources.

TYPES OF DISABILITIES

The different types of disabilities are given below:

Autism spectrum disorder, Blindness, Cerebral palsy, Chronic neurological conditions, Deaf blindness, Hemophilia, Hearing impairment, Intellectual disability, Leprosy cured, Locomotor disability, Low vision,

Mental illness, Muscular dystrophy, Multiple sclerosis, Specific learning disability, Speech and language disability, Thalassemia and Multiple disabilities.

Challenges Faced by Persons with Disabilities

Discrimination and Inequality: Persons with disabilities experience various forms of discrimination, including reluctance by employers to hire them, leading to limited employment opportunities. This discrimination hampers their social and economic integration, contributing to inequality.

Loss of Social Status: Limited opportunities for education and employment can result in Persons with disabilities experiencing a loss of social status. The lack of financial independence and inadequate access to resources especially further exacerbate this issue.

Inhuman Treatment: Persons with disabilities especially those with mental illness or mental retardation, often face social exclusion and inhumane treatment. Stigma and misunderstanding contribute to their marginalization within society.

Access to Education: Persons with disabilities encounter barriers in accessing education. Students with visual impairments may lack appropriate educational materials, while children with learning disabilities may face exclusion and rejection from schools.

Unemployment: Persons with disabilities experience lower employment rates, primarily due to stereotypes, stigma, and a lack of inclusive hiring practices. The reluctance of the private sector to hire Persons with disabilities restricts their ability to be financially independent and self-sufficient.

CHALLENGES FACED PHYSICAL DISABILITIES:

Limited accessibility: Access to public spaces, transportation, and buildings remains a persistent challenge for people with disabilities. Inadequate infrastructure and a lack of universally designed environments often create obstacles, limiting the mobility and independence of individuals with disabilities.

Social stigma and discrimination: Prejudice and misconceptions about disabilities contribute to the social marginalization of people with disabilities. Stereotypes can hinder their opportunities for education, employment, and social integration, perpetuating a cycle of exclusion and isolation.

Educational barriers: Despite legislative efforts to promote inclusive education, barriers persist within educational institutions. Inaccessible facilities, a lack of appropriate accommodations, and a shortage of trained educators contribute to the academic challenges faced by students with disabilities.

Employment disparities: The job market can be particularly challenging for individuals with disabilities. Discrimination, inaccessible workplaces, and lack of accommodations often limit their employment opportunities. Addressing these issues requires a concerted effort from both employers and policymakers.

Healthcare disparities: Access to quality healthcare can be compromised for people with disabilities. Barriers may include physical inaccessibility of healthcare facilities, lack of accessible information, and the neglect of specific healthcare needs. Bridging this gap is essential for ensuring the overall well-being of individuals with disabilities. Book an appointment with the best orthopedic hospital in Coimbatore if you are looking for advanced care and treatment for any motor disabilities.

Financial strains: Living with a disability can incur additional costs, such as medical expenses, assistive devices, and specialized care. Financial strain is a common challenge, and social support systems must be strengthened to alleviate the economic burden faced by individuals and their families.

Technological gaps: While technology has the potential to empower individuals with disabilities, there is a significant gap in access. Not all assistive technologies are affordable or readily available, limiting the ability of people with disabilities to leverage the full range of technological advancements.

Transportation challenges: Public transportation systems are often not designed with the needs of individuals with disabilities in mind. Insufficient accommodations, such as wheelchair ramps and audible announcements, create barriers to independent mobility.

Mental health considerations: The emotional toll of living with a disability should not be underestimated. Individuals may face higher rates of depression, anxiety, and social isolation. Mental health support tailored to the unique challenges of disabilities is crucial for overall well-being.

Empowering Persons with Disabilities:

Empowering persons with disabilities involves fostering inclusive infrastructure, embracing assistive technology, and promoting equal opportunities in education and employment. By raising awareness, implementing supportive policies, and encouraging digital inclusion, society can break down barriers and ensure the full participation of individuals with disabilities. Collaboration between government, businesses, and communities is vital to create an environment where everyone can thrive, regardless of ability, contributing to a more equitable and empowered society. Empowering Persons with Disabilities Examples

- **Accessible Infrastructure:** Construct ramps and tactile paths for mobility.
- **Assistive Technology:** Provide tools like screen readers and braille displays for accessibility.
- **Inclusive Education:** Implement policies for equal access and support in schools.
- **Employment Opportunities:** Foster diversity and provide accommodations in workplaces.
- **Skill Development Programs:** Tailor training for specific needs, enhancing employability.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Challenge stereotypes and promote inclusive attitudes.
- **Policy Advocacy:** Advocate for rights, equal opportunities, and anti-discrimination policies.
- **Digital Inclusion:** Ensure online content is accessible to assistive technologies.
- **Community Support Services:** Offer counseling, healthcare, and social support at the community level.
- **Collaborative Partnerships:** Encourage alliances for a coordinated approach to empower persons with disabilities
- **Technology for Empowering Persons with Disabilities:** Technology is seen as improving the lives of persons with disabilities in the context of inclusive urban development.
- **Enabling an inclusive built environment:** Technology and ICT (Information and Communication Technology) are crucial in creating an enabling environment for persons with disabilities. This includes accessible infrastructure, assistive technology, and innovative solutions that allow them to participate fully in urban life.
- **Empowering individuals:** An accessible environment not only helps them overcome daily obstacles but also enables them to pursue their dreams.
- **Rapid urbanization and increasing population:** The urban population is projected to grow significantly, and a considerable number of persons with disabilities already live in cities. Technology can help address the challenges faced by this population in urban areas.
- **Addressing disaster and climate risks:** Technology can assist in mitigating disaster risks and support individuals with disabilities in adapting to and recovering from such situations.
- **Innovative technology and ICT:** Innovative technology and ICT solutions are crucial for inclusive urban transformation and improving the quality of life for all citizens.
- **Global platforms and initiatives:** The Government of India has initiated various platforms and initiatives to promote technological innovations and entrepreneurship, including the Start-up 20 Engagement Group and the G20 Digital Innovation Alliance. These platforms aim to showcase innovative solutions, create alliances, and discuss how technology and data can be effectively utilized for inclusive city management.

Opportunities And Outcomes In Employment For Persons With Disabilities

Promoting equality of opportunity for and inclusion of people with disabilities is central to social and economic development, emergence from the global financial and economic crisis and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals Despite major gains in recent years, people with disabilities still face

discrimination and other barriers to full participation in social, economic, political and cultural life. Of an estimated 650 million people with disabilities, 470 million are of working age.

People with disabilities are likely to be unemployed or earn less than non-disabled people and be in jobs with poor promotional prospects and working conditions, especially if they are women. Many work in the unprotected, informal economy. Few have access to skills development and other opportunities that would enable them to earn a decent living. The potential of very many disabled women and men remains untapped and unrecognized, leaving a majority living in poverty, dependence and social exclusion. Excluding disabled persons from the world of work has costs for societies, in terms of their productive potential, the cost of disability benefits and pensions and implications for their families and careers.

Main Provisions of the Act

- Prevention and Early Detection of Disabilities.
- Education.
- Employment.
- Non-discrimination.
- Research and Manpower Development.
- Affirmative Action.
- Social Security
- Grievance Redressal.

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN INDIA

1. National Institute of Social Defense (NISD): is an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. It provides various services to persons with disabilities, including rehabilitation, training, and research. NISD is responsible for issuing disability certificates in India

2. Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) : is a government department under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. The department is responsible for implementing various schemes and programs for the welfare of persons with disabilities in India.

3. Unique Disability ID (UDID): is a unique identification number issued to persons with disabilities in India. The UDID is a centralized database of persons with disabilities, and it helps provide easy access to various government schemes and benefits.

4. National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC): is a government organisation that provides financial assistance to persons with disabilities. NHFDC also issues disability certificates and offers vocational training for persons with disabilities.

5. National Institute for the Orthopedically Handicapped (NIOH): is an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. The institute provides rehabilitation services, education, and training to persons with disabilities.

6. DISHA (Early Intervention and School Readiness Scheme): This is an early intervention and school readiness scheme for children in the age group of 0-10 years with the four disabilities covered under the National Trust Act and aims at setting up Disha Centres for early intervention for Person with Disability through therapies, trainings and providing support to family members.

7. VIKAAS (Day Care): This is a Day care scheme, primarily to expand the range of opportunities available to a person with disability for enhancing interpersonal and vocational skills as they are on a transition to higher age groups.

8. SAMARTH (Respite Care): The objective of Samarth scheme is to provide respite home for orphans or abandoned, families in crisis and also for Persons with Disabilities from BPL families including destitute with at least one of the four disabilities covered under the National Trust Act.

9. GHARAUNDA (Group Home for Adults): Gharaunda scheme is to provide an assured home and minimum quality of care services throughout the life of the person with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities with adequate and quality care service with acceptable living standards including provision of basic medical care from professional doctors.

10. NIRAMAYA (Health Insurance Scheme): Niramaya scheme is to provide affordable Health Insurance to persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities.

11. SAHYOGI (Caregiver training scheme): This scheme aims at setting up caregiver cells (CGCs) to provide training and create a skilled workforce of caregivers to provide adequate and nurturing care for Person with Disabilities and their families who require it. It also seeks to provide parents an opportunity to get trained in caregiving if they so desire.

12. GYAN PRABHA (Educational support): Gyan Prabha scheme aims to encourage people with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities for pursuing educational/ vocational courses like graduation courses, professional courses and vocational training leading to employment or self-employment.

13. PRERNA (Marketing Assistance): Prerna is the marketing assistance scheme of National Trust with an objective to create viable and widespread channels for sale of products and services produced by Person with disability covered under National Trust Act.

14. SAMBHAV (Aids and Assisted Devices): This is a scheme to setup additional resource centres, one each in each city of the country with population greater than 5 million, to collate and collect the Aids, software and other form of assistive devices developed with a provision of display and demonstration of the devices. The scheme also includes maintaining information, pertaining to aids and assistive devices present at Sambhav centre, on National Trust website.

15. BADHTE KADAM (Awareness and Community Interaction): This scheme shall support Registered Organizations (RO) of The National Trust to carry out activities that focus on increasing the awareness of The National Trust disabilities.

CONCLUSION:

Disability is considered to be a social stigma in society which needs to be improvised. Disability is nothing but impairment in mind of people rather than being impaired by limbs. People in the society have such belief for them which makes them unable to stand on their own. Factors like funding, training, attitudes of families and friends are major factors responsible for slow down of growth of disabled persons. In the areas where they have been taken care of, they have proved their mettle and reached heights and achieved highest scores in society. People are excluded and prevented from participating effectively on equal terms in mainstream society. Disability is an unfortunate part of human life which can affect not only the natural way of living but also despair 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. We must give an opportunity, not for sympathy towards the disability.

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