

Disability: A Study of Challenges and Response of State and Society

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Abstract:

Disability is not a new phenomenon since the origin of man-kind, his/her status was and is decided on the basis of his/her abilities and disabilities. Until the dawn of modern era disability was treated as curse and the outcome of evil deeds of a family. Although modern technology like assistive devices has given new meaning to disability and they are treated as differently abled instead of disabled. But only a limited section of society have access to these assistive devices and are aware of it in most parts of our country, the status of person with disability is miserable and deplorable. Amongst these unfortunate area valley of Kashmir stands at top due to ongoing armed conflict and political unrest. The core objective of this research paper is to highlight the plight of persons with disabilities and the callous response of state and society.

Key Words: Dawn, Assistive Devices, Static, Apathy, Vulnerable.

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Introduction:

As per the census report of 2011, 26.7 million, according nearly the 30% of total population of India, suffering from one or other types of disability are residing in India. Thus, making India the home for the largest number of persons with disability but unofficial reports put this figure around 50 million, nearly 5% of total population of India more than two decades have lapsed, since the first act for the persons with disability was passed called P.W.D act of 1995 and several rights for such persons were enshrined and guaranteed by this act. Although the condition of such persons after passing this act did not remain static but due to apathy of successive regimes the act failed to bring any revolutionary changes.

Conditions of persons with disability in J and K:

Coming to this part of the world, the condition of persons with disabilities is much more pathetic, miserable and deplorable on account of several reasons. But on going armed struggle and political unrest are the basic causes for their sad condition. As per the census report of 2011, 361153 persons suffering from different types of disabilities are residing in the state of J and K. But according to unofficial sources J and K is the home of nearly 600000 such persons. Amongst 361153, 233000 are residing in Kashmir province and 128000 in Jammu province. The percentage of male disables is nearly 57% are around 204000 and percentage of female disables is 43% around nearly around 158000. From 2001 to 2011 there is overall increase of 190% in the population of persons with disability and Kashmir province is vulnerable because of conflict. Since the emergence of armed struggle in 1990, there is drastic increase in the no. of disable persons there is hardly any house hold left in Kashmir province which remained unaffected in the ongoing armed conflict. Although there is increase in all types of disabilities, but the number of mental ill persons have increased manifold.

As per census report of 2001, the total number of disables was 3000000. But this number has increased to 30161000 in 2011 total increase of 190%. Following table shows the district wise population of disabled in J and K in 2011.

S.No	District	Disabled population
01.	Kupwara	31,798
02.	Budgam	21,800
03.	Leh	3,859
04.	Kargil	4,050
05.	poonch	12,409
06.	kathua	16,743
07.	Rajouri	16,743
08.	Baramullah	26,491
09.	Bandipur	13,792
10.	Srinagar	26,373
11.	Ganderabal	9,611
12.	Pulwama	25,227
13.	Shopian	7,904
14.	Anantnag	48,653
15.	Kulgam	14,415
16.	Doda	11,355
17.	Ramban	6,542
18.	Kishtwar	5,802
19.	Udhampur	11,515
20.	Reasi	5,579
21.	Jammu	33,785
22.	Sambha	6,722

Response of state and society towards persons with disability:

Realizing the needs and aspirations of such persons both central Govt. as well as state Govt. devised several policies and Schemes for the rehabilitation of disabled. But these policies and Schemes more or less remained on papers rather to be implemented on ground level. Central Govt. established Composed Regional Centre (CRC) in Srinagar with a mandate to impart various vocational skills to disabled persons in order to make them self-sufficient and independent. It's another broader objective was rehabilitation of such persons but the Centre failed to achieve its set goals and central Govt. has almost made its mind to wind up this institute. There are several state sponsored schemes for such persons but Integrated Social Security scheme is one of them. As per the scheme INR 400 per month prior to 2014 were given to disabled persons but the present Govt. increased it from 400 to 1000 INR per month. The decision was hailed by this community but irregular release of this amount and less number of beneficiaries benefited by this scheme is the major drawback of this scheme. As per the official report out of 361153 disabled 102715 were covered under this scheme till 2014 this shows that more than 50% disabled are still left out till 2014. Lack of awareness and heavy burden on the department of social welfare is the major cause that persons with disability or not drawing benefits from these scheme, besides these two major causes Callous attitude that of concerned officers and social stigma amongst the parents is also responsible for this debacle. Besides, the persons with disability in general and young disabled girls in particular feel insecure themselves. From 2012 to 2017 more than a Dozen young disabled girls suffering from one or other type of disability were sexually abused. This insecurity and social stigma compelled parents to keep these young disabled girls confined within the four walls. In a recently concluded study of district Anantnag by an NGO explored shocking results. As per the report of study several young disabled girls were confined within the four walls out of insecurity and social stigma. The study revealed that two young disabled girls Saima and Nazia age 25 and 20 respectively (Name changed), from Achabal Anantnag were confined within the four walls of their house by their parents and family members from last 10 to 15 years. This imprisonment have severely shattered their health and both the girls have been trapped on the life threatening disease of diabetes, hypertension and trauma. Another young disabled girl namely Massart age 22 from Waghama, Bijbehara has also been confined by her parents since she attained puberty. This long hostage have resulted in the deformity of her face. Three sisters from Vailookokernag

namely Sareen, nasreen and Yasmeen age 22, 20, 18 have attained their marriageable age. But no one is ready to marry with them because all of them are suffering from blindness. This has greatly affected their family and severally hampered the occupation of their father who is a tailor master by profession. Another young disable woman form MattanAnantnag age 35 overcome all the challenges, completed her studies and got of teacher in education department. Ulfat, age 35 was suffering from partial blindness despite being Govt. employee, her disability came in her way and no one was ready to marry her she finally committed suicidethere are so many such episodes which go unnoticed and no one cared about them.

Assistive Devices:

Modern technology have revolutionized each and every field, invention of several types of assistive devices like jazz sot ware, talking software, smart canes, Hearing aids, clippers and sophisticated wheel chairs have made the education and employment of such persons possible and easy. But its irony is that neither Govt. nor the private institutes pay any importance to make these assistive devices reachable for such persons. Except AbrarAhamd Bhat from Srinagar no other person is expert in having the knowledge of assistive devices used by the blind people in the valley of Kashmir. This young boy despite his all efforts cannot have access to each and every blind.

Conclusion:

Disability seems to be a complex phenomenon and different types of disabilities have different challenges and needs, it is the responsibility of bothstate and its citizens to pay utmost attention for the rehabilitation of this down trodden section. Furthermore it is the duty of concerned officers to make all kinds of efforts in order to get each and every scheme made for such persons implemented on ground level it is also necessary to make all the written material Govt. and private officers, Govt. educational institutes, public transport and public parks accessible for them. Govt. and private institutes must pay importance to make the assistive devices reachable for such persons easily and on low expenses.

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