



REVIEW TO KNOW THEM TO UNLOCK THE BARRIERS

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INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of twenty first century, Humanities and social sciences has played important role to the field of knowledge, Decorated by multy dimensional stories of equalities inmankind. Removal of Cast system and gender equality are the focused area of humanities and social sciences in modern India. The whole subject of the disability as an individual or as a group has remained out of the circumference of centralized thinking process . Streams , like Imperialist, nationalist, Marxist, subaltern, feminist, Brahmin, Non bramhanietc are developed their own discourses but still subject of disability is remain out of circumference of main stream writings in India. There are very few writings are available about the issues like social reforms for and of the people with disabilities, their struggle for human rights, Motivation behind their life-changing, The reasons behind their historical suffrage, Ideas and institutions related to disability and otherness of disabled people . etc. Realizing this fact It's a need of hour to focus on study of the disability issues in India. I briefly discussed some Essential aspects of disability in India, like legal rights, Social attitude and potentiality of development of equal opportunities for persons with disability.

This paper will focus on the facts, perspective and understanding of disability in India. It is need of hour to think seriously on Position of persons with disability in India in academic circumstances because It is most neglected aspect and marginalized sections of our society, many scholars and academicians are unaware about the strength, terminology and necessity of disability issue. The paper will help to understand the people with disability are Not disabled but they are the differently-abled, How is the attitude of society towards the persons with disabilities and how can it will be change, How technology bring changes in lives of persons with disabilities.

While reading a world report on disability by WHO and The world bank a coat of Naelmade me more sensational towards disability andit inspired me to write and think on the issue of disability.As- "Can you imagine that you're getting up in the morning with such severe pain which disables you from even moving out from your bed? Can you imagine yourself having a pain which even requires you to get an assistance to do the very simple day to day activities? Can you imagine yourself being fired from your job because you are unable to perform simple job requirements? And finally can you imagine your little child is crying for hug and you are unable to hug him due to the pain in your bones and joints? -Nael."(WORD 2011 ch. 1) It is a fact that It all always happens with persons with disabilities every day. And further Can you imagine your child asking questions about colors and you are unable to give answer because of yours blindness? Can you imagine you are not able to enjoy the beauty of songs and music in marriage party because of hearing impairment? And list goes in number of thousands of things which make difficult the lives of persons with disabilities.

Disabilities are an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. Impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem

experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations. Disability is thus not just a health problem. It is a complex phenomenon, reflecting the interaction between features of a person's body and features of the society in which he or she lives. Overcoming the difficulties faced by people with disabilities requires interventions to remove environmental and social barriers. People with disabilities have the same health needs as non-disabled people – for immunization, cancer screening etc. They also may experience a narrower margin of health, both because of poverty and social exclusion, and also because they may be vulnerable to secondary conditions, such as pressure sores or urinary tract infections. Evidence suggests that people with disabilities face barriers in accessing the health and rehabilitation services they need in many settings.

At the beginning of 21st Century Social thinkers presents the most comprehensive overview of Social justice and inclusive practices. Disability is key issue of the new millennium in the world. It created many challenges for sociologists, policy makers and social institutions. Increasing the linkage between Understanding the status of disability and disability studies in India some aspect has to be discussed here.

India is one of the first signatories to the United Nations Convention on the right of the Persons with Disabilities, which came into force on 3rd May 2008. As an obligation under Article 35 report, from time to time on the measures taken in the field of disability. "First country report of India on status of disability submitted by India to UN in 2015."(FCRSDI 1.) The report presents the major initiatives that have been taken by India so far to ensure the rights of persons with disability. The report highlights our main concern, challenges and opportunities to improve the lives of person with disabilities.

The constitution of India guarantees equality, freedom, justice and dignity to all its citizens includes the persons with disabilities. In fact article 41 states that the states shall make effective provision for mitigation of underserved want including disablement. "The persons with disabilities (equal opportunities, protection of rights and full participation) Act, 1995 was our main legislation."(PWD ACT 1995). It support by our national policy and various schemes/ programmes. "National policy for persons with disabilities has been launched by government of India in 2006."(NOFPWD) The national policy recognize that person with disabilities are a valuable human resource for the country and seek to create an environment that provides them equal opportunities, protection of their rights and full participation in society. The policy also recognizes the fact that a majority of persons with disabilities can lead a better quality of life if they have equal opportunities and effective access to rehabilitations measures. its emphasis is on the physical, educational and economic rehabilitation of PWDs. A separate Department, Department of Disability Affairs has been created to deal with disability issue at national level. "Now the Department of Disability Affairs renamed as Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities."(NPPPWD)

According to First country report, While dealing with the multidimensional issues of rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, both in terms of numbers and quality, institutions dedicated to specific disabilities for providing services, manpower development and undertaking research. Rehabilitation council Act 1992 for regulation of rehabilitation education, while the office of chief commissioner and state commissioners for PWDs have been established for safeguarding the interest of the PWDs and for monitoring the effective implementation of the PWDs act. Another statutory body, the National Trust was established to undertake measures for persons with Autism, Cerebral palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999 In addition, civil society organizations, which are dedicatedly working in the field of disabilities, are being provided with financial support to augment facilities for the benefits of PWDs."(FCRSDI)

As per the PWDs act of 1995, "Person with Disability means a person suffering from not less than forty per cent of any disability as certified by a medical authority."(PWD ACT 1995)The act has covered seven types of disabilities as- Blindness, Low vision, Leprosy-cured, Hearing impairment, Loco motor disability, Mental retardation, Mental illness. The act has based on medical model of disability, It had many loopholes and limitations, Many stakeholders and scholars were demanding new act for disability since long back. Most recently The Persons with disability act, 2016 has been passed by Indian a parliament. One significant factor that distinguishes the RPD Act, 2016 from its predecessor the PWD Act, 1995 is that the former

amplifies and elaborates the human rights and fundamental freedoms of persons with disabilities with unprecedented emphasis with the result that it is more

Compatible with the United Nations Convention on right of person with disability, 2008 (UNCRPD). The act accepted broader view towards disability. As per The Persons with disability act, 2016. "Person with disability means a person with long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which, in interaction with barriers, hinders his full and effective participation in society equally with others." (PWD ACT 2016 03.) The act covered 21 types of disabilities. It's a with the inclusion of 14 new disabilities, total 21 disabilities would be covered under the above said act, As- Blindness, Low-vision, Leprosy Cured persons, Hearing Impairment (deaf and hard of hearing), Locomotors Disability, Dwarfism, Intellectual Disability, Mental Illness, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, Chronic Neurological conditions, Specific Learning Disabilities, Multiple Sclerosis, Speech and Language disability, Thalassemia, Hemophilia, Sickle Cell disease, Multiple Disabilities including deaf-blindness, Acid Attack victim, Parkinson's disease. The financial and other benefits of other social security schemes would be extended to more number of disabled persons.

Why we have to think disability issue seriously? Some figures can speak itself more than words- As per Census 2011, in India, "Out of the 121 Cr population, about 2.68 Cr persons are 'disabled' which is 2.21% of the total population." (DPIISP2016 07) In an era where 'inclusive development' is being emphasized as the right path towards sustainable development, focused initiatives for the welfare of disabled persons are essential. This emphasizes the need for strengthening disability statistics in the Country.

Number of persons with disability is very serious issue for policy makers and stakeholders. Increasing the linkage between definitions and types of disability and statistics is gaining global recognition. "Around 10 per cent of the world's population, or 650 million people, live with disabilities. They are the world's largest minority. This figure is increasing through population growth, medical advances and the ageing process." (ICOROPWDSFAPWD) Experts agree that a singular, universally accepted definition of disability does not exist. Even as a set of symptoms by them. The multi dimensionality of disability demands that more complex, flexible measures that will capture disability in all its manifestations be developed and adapted. "Any reported disability prevalence rate is dependent both on the definition and perspective of disability that is being targeted and on the intended purpose for collecting disability statistics." (Mitchell E.)

As RenuAddlakh stated, "It is ironic that while India probably has the largest number of persons with disabilities in world after china, if total population size is taken as a reliable indicator, accurate clinical, empirical and demographic data on disability is not available." (AddlakhRenued.) When we compare the statistical data of developing countries with developed countries. "It find less percentage in number of persons with disabilities in developing countries of Asia and pacific regain. For example, According to conservative estimates approximately 3% of India's population is disabled." (Census of India 2001) If we go by what the U.N. officials or various other experts says, the figure could very well be in double digits. As high as 20%. "Australia does admit officially that 18.5% of their population is affected by one form of disability or the other." (ABS 2009) United Kingdom's disabled population is estimated at 14.2%." (FFDIUK 2011) "The prevalence rates in The United States and Canada are 19.4% and 18.5%, respectively. Conversely, developing countries often report very low rates. In countries such as Kenya and Bangladesh the reported rates of disability are under 1%." (WORD 2011. 25)

Basic question is that why the numbers are so high for such 'developed' nations as Australia, U.K. or U.S.A.? The answer is quite simple. One, their definition of 'disability' is much broader and embracing. For example, in such countries 'people with internal conditions' are also considered disabled. "These are individuals where the disability is not very visible. A person with one lung or one kidney or a person with a severe heart ailment would be termed 'disabled'. In certain countries, even diabetics are given shade under the umbrella of disability." (WORD 2011. 22) Second thing, such countries and societies are now looking at disability as a social issue and not as a medical one, as is the case in India where disability is a stigma. To be disabled

means to be a person without a leg, arm, eye, twisted or worse, crooked! People are ashamed to be labeled 'disabled'.

Sometimes well educated people also hesitate to talk about the disability- I would like to share my personal experience about the census of India 2011. The fellow who was a surveyor visited to my home and asked some questions about members in my family and some question related to census, After few minutes she left my home without asking a question about disability. Though It was compulsory to them to ask a about a disability to every individual at the time of survey, many times the trainings were conducted by government authority for that. After some time I called back that lady and asked her, why she didn't asked questions related to disability? She said, "She felt that there might be no such a person living in your family, because you people are looking so educated and rich. Ok no problem tell me is there any person with disability in your family?" I think thousands of people can have such type of experience, to whom nobody asked for their disability. This is the fact of our census. In spite of this we have 2.21 percentage persons with disabilities in India.

One more thing has to be discussed here , India carries out the Census every ten years. The last Census was conducted in the year 2011. This exercise provided comprehensive data on the status of disability in India. "The percentage of disabled to the total population increased from 2.13% in 2001 to 2.21% in 2011. In rural areas, the increase was from 2.21% in 2001 to 2.24% in 2011 whereas, in urban areas, it increased from 1.93% to 2.17% during this period. The same trend was observed among males and females during this period." (DPIISP2016. 20) Within this ten years very low growth can be observed in disability prevalence rate because both of census were based on the definition adopted in PWD act of 1995 .But it might be possible to observe big jump in number of persons with disability in census 2021 because that census will be based on the definition adopted in RPDW act 2016 which is more broader than earlier.

Government has framed good legal framework for welfare of persons with disability but success of disability right movement is totally depend of implementation of laws as well as social attitude towards the people with disabilities. Since long back, Our society has three different types of perspectives /Attitudes towards differently-abled people in our country as well as in the world at large as- Every one of the general society falls in any one of three attitudes towards PWD. Also It includes disabled people themselves in a same way

1)"Attitude of Acceptance" - Some people have the healthy attitude towards PWD and they believe in the inclusion of People with Disabilities as general citizens of the country. Some people with disabilities also consider themselves as normal as others. Without any type of pity or charity, They accept the people with their disability as well. Some people think as Disability is not the sole responsibility of the physically challenged person, for this they must have do something, Such desires are easily rise in their mind. Disability right movement has accelerated by The people with this tendency. Some people with disabilities also accept themselves as a valuable personhood though they are disabled.

2)"Attitude of Negligence"- Some Hippocratic people are not thinking about disabled people, they always think as, . "Let us see ourselves as we are, we should think about ourselves and our sorrows. We have no obligation to treat others indulged in pain. You do not have the responsibility to help them. Not only that, they insist that they should not be disturbed indirectly by PWD. Some people even go ahead and says "I do not see such grief". By such gestures they try to show the tenderness of their mind is very special. In fact, they may even believe it as authentically but Instead of expressing compassion towards others, they want to make themselves passionate. They try to stay away from the sick, beggars, the disabled, the poor and the ugly. if accidently this kind of people get disabled, they will be very Unfortunate and unable to face the challenges of disability. This attitude leads to disaster to the development of disabled right movement

3) "Attitude of Apathy" - Some people feel like - "Disability is a very minor issue, No need to pay attention for this, Our society is not dependent on disabled people for existence. Why do we have to solve the problem of handicapped? What is the need to give attention to others?". It is natural to get the depression because of accidental disability but In stead of this People should struggle for survive and confident to dignified life. But the people of indifference attitude do not do this. The problem of disability becomes more complicated due to the both of attitudes negligence and indifference. People with such an attitude are in every society. In our society, their ratio is so high.

Disability wise There are some variation in an approaches To elaborate the perspective towards disabled people in Indian society I would like to discuss the example of visually challenged people.

1- "Negative Approach"- Eyes are the most important sense in our life, those who doesn't have such sense organ are totally useless for society as well as themselves, They are the burden on the earth, Such an approach is the inorganic plaintive Negative approach. "Blindness is the result of bad deeds in previous birth, Blindness is genetic disorder , no one can change it, Blind people do not dream, Etc, Such types of Misconceptions are the result of this approach . In short, If there are no eyes, The society refuses all the Rights of human being to blind person.

2- "Sixth Sense Approach" - Even though a blind person is overcome all obstacles and goes upstream to success, society is not ready to accept it. They are doubtful about whether the person is capable to carry for long-term, The success which he or she has been achieved. On the other hand, the blind have the sixth additional sense (Sixth Sense) and therefore the community believes that they can achieve instant success. This type of thinking is absolutely baseless, Only the thing is, The other four senses become more intense to compensate for the lack of sensitivity of the eye, This happens naturally. By using the term sixth sense, Society rejects the spirit, perseverance, hard work, , diligence done by the blind person and stigmatize them.

Recently a new word has been added to the government lingo in India. They should now be referred to as divyang or divyangjan. This new word is a symbol of this attitude. A divyang means something divine or god has gifted to the person. Though our prime minister has good intention and he wanted to create a positive sense in public towards the persons with disability, using the term Divyang, Use of this term is making a completion to disabled people that they should have compulsory something divine in their personality. No disabled person would want to have a status of a divine being - all they want is equal opportunities, accessible infrastructure and understanding from the society.

3 - "Humanist and Healthy Approach" - Every blind person is witness to the above two approaches are totally being wrong. In all manners. Some people think as a blind person is an integral element of the community of ours. Except for Eyes, the mind, the intellect, the feeling and all other things of blind person are just like us. This approach is a humanist and healthy. The number of people with humanist approach are very less in our society but due to such type of people the disability right movement is trying to move towards human rights.

The reflection of these three perspectives of society seems to be lying in the literature. Norman Cousins, in his autobiography 'Face to Face', says, "When I became blind, some early days were very heavily bad for all of us to accept it, And it was natural. I was very weak during my illness. Housekeepers would avoid my appearance like an ominous man, My sisters were caring me as handcuffed a delicate arm and my mother was tearing hard to see me as blind." These three attitudes persist for today.

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