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PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES OF PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED PEOPLE IN KALABURAGI DISTRICT: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT :

As reported by Census of India, 2011, more than 2 Crore of Indian population is physically challenged or mentally retarded. The physically challenged are facing many of the problems and challenges in society. In this context, the present study has been made to analyze the problems faced by physically challenged in Kalaburagi district of Karnataka. Based on available statistics, totally 500 physically challenged including deaf, dumb and orthopedically handicapped were surveyed using interview schedules. The data analysed revealed that, one-third of this population is facing severe problems in their families as well as society. The article has given suggestions for the welfare of physically challenged.



KEYWORDS: *Physically Challenged, Disabled, Kalaburagi, India.*

INTRODUCTION:

In olden days disability was considered as a sin, disabled people were thought to be cursed, slowly it changed and they are no more called handicapped but was called as physically challenged. The different types of disabilities are vision Impairment, deaf or hard of hearing, mental health conditions, intellectual disability, acquired brain injury, autism spectrum disorder and physical disability (Pon Ramalingam, et al, 2020). According to Onuorah and Nnabuike (2014), the physically challenged is an individual who has a malformation or abnormality of body parts and /or ill health conditions that result in restrictions of normal movement and /or limitations of energy in the individual. According to WHO estimates, 15% of the world's population - approximately 1 billion persons in the world experiences some form of disability. The disability is defined as physical or mental conditions the person that limits his/her ability to function, to move and to act (Mohan, et al, 2021).

As per Census 2011 in India, out of 121 Crore population, about 2.68 Crore persons are Physically and Mentally Challenged that means 2.21% of total population (Majumder C, 2019). Among this special grouped population, 56% (1.5 Cr) are males and 44% (1.18 Cr) are females (Majumder, 2019). It is a widely known actuality that people with disability face multiple hurdles in their fight for equality. Also, the effects of social exclusion that both genders face is profound. Although both men as well as women with disabilities are subjected to discrimination, it is women who are at a greater disadvantage - given their gender. This results in them being more vulnerable to sexual and verbal abuse, physical violence, economic barriers, greater risk of poverty as well as fewer opportunities in

education, healthcare, employment, as compared to their male counterparts. Marginalisation, stigmatisation, discrimination, social exclusion, inability to participate in public life are a few of the stringent hardships that women with disabilities face as compare to men with disabilities and women without disabilities (Chahal, 2021).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The present study is aimed to explore the problems faced by physically challenged especially blind, deaf, dumb and orthopedically handicapped persons in Kalaburagi district of Karnataka. Based on their personal feelings and feelings of their family members, the problems are found.

METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS:

The present study has been made in Kalaburagi district of Karnataka and the researcher has visited the Department of Social Welfare Office in Kalaburagi city and collected details of Physically challenged in the district. Based on the same, total 500 physically challenges people are surveyed using interview schedules. In some cases, the parents of the disabled were also furnished the data. The collected primary data is analysed as under.

ANALYSIS OF THE PRIMARY DATA:

1. Age-Group of the Physically Challenged:

Age is major factor to influence the problems of the physically challenged. If the physically challenged are of younger age, then they are energetic and also do their work and personal activities on their own and if they are of old aged, then they are more dependent on others rather than independently living.

Table No. 1. Age-Group of Physically Challenged

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 25 Years	52	10.4
26 to 30 Years	114	22.8
31-50 Years	286	57.2
More than 50 Years	48	9.6
Total	500	100

2. Type of Disability:

The term physically challenged included the physically disabled and excluded mentally retarded. Hence, present study is made to cover only physically challenged, which include blind, deaf, dumb and orthopedically handicapped. At the time of collection of primary data, many of the blind, deaf and dumb were surveyed, still they have given incomplete information due to lack of adequate knowledge and hence, the information has been collected from their parents. Most of the orthopedically challenged people have complete information to the research. The type of disability of the physically challenged covered under the present study is as under.

Table No. 2. Type of Disability

Type of Disability	Frequency	Percentage
Blind	129	25.8
Deaf & Dumb	83	16.6
Orthopedic & Physical	278	55.6
Total	320	100

3. Caste-Groups of Physically Challenged:

Caste influences the problems faced by physically challenged. Many castes such as scheduled castes and scheduled tribes are poor and backward. As such, they are discriminated and neglected in society. In this way, these caste groups are facing many of the problems and challenges. If the physically challenged belongs to the scheduled castes and tribes, then they are facing many of the problems from both due to their castes and disabilities.

Table No. 3. Caste Groups of Physically Challenged

Caste Groups	Frequency	Percentage
Scheduled Caste	112	22.4
Scheduled Tribe	54	10.8
Other Backward Class & Minority	241	48.2
Others & Higher Castes	93	18.6
Total	500	100

4. Education (Including Presently Studying):

Many of the physically challenged especially orthopedically handicapped are still studying in schools and colleges. Few of them are educated or drop-outs. The educational level helps to solve the problems of the physically challenged. Surprisingly, it is found that, majority of the physically challenged are drop-outs at an early stage of education and the disability is the main reason for the same.

Table No. 4. Education (Including Presently Studying)

Education	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	105	21.0
Primary	96	19.2
Secondary	112	22.4
PU/ Under-Graduation	46	9.2
Graduation	130	26.0
Post-Graduate/ Research	11	2.2
Total	500	100

5. Reasons for Drop-Outs (Discontinuation of Education) or Illiterate:

It is found that, majority of the physically challenged have discontinued their education at an early age. The disability and dependence on others are the main reason for the same. Of course, one third of all the respondents have completed graduation or post-graduation and it seems that, their education is completed. Still two-third of all the disabled covered under the study have completed primary, secondary or under-graduation or even illiterates and hence, their education is discontinued and they have become drop-outs. Hence, the primary data was collected on the reasons for discontinue of the education of the physically challenged and presented in the following table.

Table No. 5. Reasons for Drop-Outs or Illiterate

Reasons for Drop-Outs	Frequency	Percentage
Poverty	150	30.0
Disability	164	32.8
Lack of Nearby Schools & Hostels	38	7.6
Any Other	07	1.4
Not Applicable/ Not Drop-Out	141	28.2
Total	500	100

6. Feeling on Disability while Performing Work and Activities:

Depending on the extent of disability and confidence among the physically challenged, they are performing their daily work and activities. Majority of these people are depending on their family members or others for their daily activities. Further, few of them learn the things by practice and perform their daily activities and work on their own. The feelings of the physically challenged on their disability while performing work and activities are tabulated as under.

Table No. 6. Feeling on Disability while Performing Work and Activities

Feeling on Disability While Performing Work and Activities	Frequency	Percentage
Normal	236	47.2
Highly Difficult	148	29.6
Depending on Others	116	23.2
Total	500	100

7. Feelings of the Society:

Every person expects that there should be fair status and respect in society for him or her. In case of physically challenged, it is observed that, few of them are getting sympathy, humanity, care and support in society whereas, majority of them are getting neglect and even humiliation in society. As such, such bad treatment has become problem faced by physically challenged. The feelings of the society as experienced by physically challenged are shown as under.

Table No. 7. Feelings of the Society

Feelings of the Society	Frequency	Percentage
Sympathetic	128	25.6
Cooperative & Friendly	104	20.8
Normal like Others	94	18.8
Neglect	78	15.6
Humiliation	96	19.2
Total	500	100

8. Feelings of Family Members:

Many of the family members especially mother and father much love, care and support their disabled children. Even few of them are also facing negligence due to increasing dependence on them. If their own family members neglect the physically challenged, then it is problem for them to perform their daily work or personal activities. The feelings of the family members towards the physically challenged are tabulated as under.

Table No. 8. Feelings of the Family Members

Feelings of the Family Members	Frequency	Percentage
Special Care & Affection	183	36.6
Equal like Others	218	43.6
Neglect	75	15.0
Humiliation	24	4.8
Total	500	100

9. Feelings that Burden to Family:

Most of the physically challenged are depending on their family members for their daily activities and works. As such, they feel that they have become burden with no use to their own family members. It is psychological problem faced by the physically challenged and the primary data collected on the same is disclosed as under.

Table No. 9. Feelings that Burden to Family

Feelings that Burden to Family	Frequency	Percentage
Always	125	25.0
Sometimes	210	42.0
Never	165	33.0
Total	320	100

10. Problems Faced by Family:

Due to disability, many of the problems and challenges are faced by the families of the physically challenged. The problems faced by their families as observed by physically challenged are as under.

Table No. 10. Problems Faced by Family

Family Problems	Frequency	Percentage
Poverty	168	33.6
Frequent Ill Health	81	16.2
Alienation & Discrimination in Society	63	12.6
Any Other	15	3.0
None	173	34.6
Total	500	100

11. Personal Feelings on Disability:

Many of the physically challenged are facing discrimination, neglect and humiliation from their own family members and society. Even they are also depending on their families for their personal daily work and activities. As such, they have felt that, they have become burden to their families. They feel that their disability is curse, menace or bad luck and in this respect, the personal feelings of the physically challenged on their disability are as follows.

Table No. 11. Personal Feelings on Disability

Personal Feelings on Disability	Frequency	Percentage
Curse of God	173	34.6
Ill Fate	116	23.2
Bad Luck	148	29.6
Means to Get Public Sympathy	63	12.6
Any Other	--	--
Total	500	100

12. Disability is Curse, Annoyance and Depressing Factor:

When the problems such as discrimination, humiliation, neglect and insult faced by physically challenged are analyzed, it is found that, psychologically they feel that disability is curse, annoyance and depressing factor. The opinions of the physically challenged are as under:

Table No. 12. Disability is Curse, Annoyance and Depressing Factor

Disability is Curse, Annoyance	Frequency	Percentage
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and Depressing Factor		
Always	139	27.8
Sometimes	224	44.8
Never	137	27.4
Total	320	100

SUGGESTIONS FROM THE STUDY:

Following suggestions are made from the present study:

1. It is essential to find out the reasons for drop-outs among physically challenged by the schools and colleges and it is suggested to the school authorities and teachers to bring the physically challenged children back to schools by suggesting suitable solutions to their problems, which resulted in drop-out.
2. The schools and colleges should provide necessary Aids and tools needed for blind, deaf, dumb and orthopedically handicapped students, so that it will be supportive to such students to attend schools regularly.
3. Self-employment training schemes based on the existing skills and expertise are suggested for the physically challenged.
4. It is suggested to Anganawadis and Panchayats to survey the physically challenged in their areas and villages and increase the awareness of such physically challenged people on various welfare schemes formulated for their benefits.
5. It is suggested to support, care, show sympathy and humanity towards physically challenged by their family members, public and society.
6. It is suggested to the policy makers and the Government to pass legislations against discrimination, humiliation, insult and neglect of the physically challenged in society and there is need to fix punishment and fine, if any on violation of such laws.
7. It is suggested to the Government to open special schools and colleges, hostels, learning centres and libraries for the physically challenged in every Taluka.
8. 24x7 Helpline for the education, healthcare, problems faced by physically challenged is essential and it will help and support them during emergency circumstances.
9. It is suggested to physically challenged to strengthen their health by performing Yoga, Meditation, Physical Exercise, recreational activities, if possible so that, their health can be always fine.

CONCLUSION:

To conclude, humanity, sympathy, affection, care, support, cooperation and help is essentially needed for physically challenged. Though, many of the persons are physically challenged, still they have made extraordinary achievements all over the world. Hence, it is essential to motivate and encourage the creativity of physically challenged so that they can achieve extraordinary things in their life. As discussed above, many of the physically challenged people are facing various problems and challenges in their families as well as in society. To solve their problems, there is essential need of care and support of their family members. Further, more welfare schemes such as healthcare, socio-economic security, skill development programmes based on the psychology of the physically challenged, etc. are essential for their overall empowerment and development. Though family pension assured the livelihood and economic security of the physically challenged, still it is found that, compared to present day cost of living, the pension amount is meagre and it is essentially suggested to increase the amount of family pension for the physically challenged.

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