

# DISABILITY LEADING TO POVERTY IN INDIA

## –AN OVERVIEW

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### Abstract:

This paper attempts to throw lights on how disability is one of leading factor for poverty or why most of disabled person are poor from generations. Disability and poverty is flip side of coin. In this paper we are going to see key factors related to disability, how the vicious cycle of poverty related to disabled make then poor to poorer. Disabled are excluded by society in some or the other way and most serious part of this entire scenario is that there is no reliable data available which can prove and compare or can explain their indirect exclusion from society. Though government does its best at policy level and provisions to bring them above poverty line, but lot of things are yet to improve from mindset of society towards disabled persons to making concrete work to bring them in flow with non disabled person. Because depriving someone of something is nothing but denying. Disabled have to face many challenges, difficulties which most of them or not able to overcome, and they lead to their poverty.

**Keywords:** Social Exclusion, Disability, poverty,

### Introduction:

Disability is not only a term but it is life changing phenomenon for so many, who have to live the life of challenging events and most of them have to live in poverty So first let's understand what is disability means-

**According to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 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.

"**Person with benchmark disability**" means a person with not less than forty per cent. Of a specified disability where specified disability has not been defined in measurable terms and includes a person with disability where specified disability has been defined in measurable terms, as certified by the certifying authority.

According to worldometer.info worlds population as on date today is 7,794,413,990.and according to world health organization reports on disability about 15% of population lives with some form of disability. This means that about 1,169,162,098 persons in world have some or other form of disability this number will cross 2 billion in upcoming decades. Out of this number between 110 -190 millions peoples are suffering from significant difficulties in functioning (according to survey of 2018). Disabled are world's largest minority. And according to united organization 20% of world's poorest people have some kind of disability. And according to UNESCO in developing countries ninety percent of children do not go to school.

### Objectives of the Study:

1. To study about the disability (Divyagjan) reasons in India.
2. To study about correlation between disability and poverty in India.

**Hypothesis:**

Most of disables live in poverty in India.

**Methodology:**

The study is based on collection and analysis of secondary data from books, journals, magazines, articles and internet.

**Disability in India** — India's population as on date according to worldometer.info is 1,379,940,217 and if we consider the ratio of disabled person out of total population is 2.21% (as it was in 2011 census) the number of disabled person in India come around 30,496,678 and this number is in spot of bother as there are many ways which keeps in adding disability number like accidental disabilities, unreported disability out of social stigma and lack of awareness reasons and so on. India has huge number of people having one or multiple disabilities and India is in top position in world having the highest numbers of disabled population. As per 2011 census out of disables in India, 20% people have locomotive type of disability. 19% population face blindness or visual disability, 19% disabled population have inability or difficulty in hearing. 8% of population suffer from multiple disability. As per census the highest number of disabled person are teenagers and young having age 10 years to 19 years.

According to 2011 population data of census 69% of disabled person live in rural India. Which directly means that they have less access to everything like medical Aid to support their disability, knowledge of schemes for disabled, job opportunities, and so on, these can make their life bit easier. This is also a main contributing factor among so many which keeps them poor and helpless.

**Types of disability according to its onset and its impact** – Disability is an umbrella term which includes lot of variety of disabilities. It is not homogeneous. When a person comes to know he is disabled, the whole world becomes totally different for him as compared to non-disabled individual. Of late Rights to Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, have increased number of disabilities from seven to twenty-one. Before differentiating disability according to organ involved if we divide it in to two major types 1) disability by birth (Hereditary, congenital, during pregnancy, during childbirth) 2) Acquired disability (during life span of person or disabilities develops over certain period of time) then understanding the correlation between disability and poverty becomes easy.

**1) Disability by birth** (Hereditary, congenital, during pregnancy, during childbirth) –we can understand this type more in efficient way when a probe is made and considered it in two halves.

**a) Disabilities develop during pregnancy period** -- Though India is having growing GDP numbers, more than world's one third malnutrition children are found in India. Pregnant and lactating ladies and children under 3 years of age of more prone to malnutrition. We also have malnutrition issue more in rural area. 65.97% of population resides in rural area. Children, women are not getting proper nutrition. And pregnant women who should get balanced diet, proper nutrition and care which is not taken due to poverty, awareness. This is reason why pregnant women do suffer from malnutrition and nutritional deficiency. These two reasons are main contributors leading to disability in new born babies. Malnutrition does cause or contributes in developing different types of disabilities. And once a person becomes disabled its play its role to keep him in undernourished, Vise-a-versa scenario. It is pretty clear that poor people are enabled or Lack in taking care of nutrition and medication during pregnancy which ends in poor development of fetus in mother's womb. Also, poverty pushes poor pregnant woman to work in all stages of pregnancy. And this is how Poverty leads to birth of child with disabilities. Lack of awareness, medical aid, slow or delay development of fetus medical facilities, resulting in various medical complications for both the pregnant mother and the unborn child. This scenario gives birth to baby of poor health or disability. Thus, poverty creates disability and disability creates poverty in its long run during life span of disabled individual. This is vicious cycle.

## 2) Acquired disability –

(During life span of person or disabilities develops over certain period of time) maternal malnutrition causes risk of pregnancy outcome, Labour obstruction low birth weight babies, growth retardation, ill health children which are vulnerable to get infections. When a malnourished baby is born scientific study has proven that after age 2-3 impact of malnutrition is irreversible. Broad range of Impairments are seen due to varied infections, traumas and congenital anomalies like physical, intellectual, visual, hearing. Some disabilities may be anatomic or sensory or may be mechanical. About 10 -20% of person have one or another kind of developmental disability. Post accidental disabilities are also a cause of worry in India. Road accident leads to 65% disabilities. Apart from road accidents there are many forms of accidents as well which can bring moderate to severe kind of disabilities. Disabilities due to wars, different type of natural and unnatural disasters, different type of violence and other factors leads to disabilities. Whatever is the cause of disability, post disability life of person becomes very challenging and partly dependent or totally dependent. It demands support from all aspect physical, financial, technical, familial, governmental and psychological. It is been observed that disabled person becomes a liability according to psyche view of society and it pushes disabled persons to poverty.

## Consequences of being born disabled –

Non- ending journey of suffering starts with birth when a child is detected as disabled in any form. And also long journey of suffering for the parents as well. First it starts with knowing about disability its self, doing research, then comes treatment part where it can be taken, it's costing, affordability, dealing with care needed for child. Then comes the expense part where most of the population suffers a lot, getting numerous appointments of doctors, medical aid service providers, searching for schools and so on. Even though, when disabled children get education it is completely different as compared to non-disabled children. Disabled children education concentrate more on training of how to adjust socially, general living skills and skill required according to their disability. Educating disabled child and taking treatment drains money from their parents all sources they have. In order to take care of disabled child one of the parent has to at his service all times which demands job sacrifices from one of the parent which creates financial pressure on the family. Thus, all sort of these trouble leads to anger, frustrations and economic loss for family if they are already poor then these children are deprived of education, basic medical aids and equipments and their maintenance. Until this time disabled starts receiving discrimination from family, society. Poor families have limits of their own above which they lack in taking care to their disabled child. Above mentioned all things put a very negative impact on disabled children's mind. They can't get education, they loose their confidence, desire to fight against all odds, and they become more dependent which make poor family and the disabled poorer.

## Hurdles which keep disabled person on back foot socially & financially

Disabled person comes across many hurdles in his life. Those make him more dysfunctional and hinder his/her ability to do something to fight against poverty.

- 1) **Bias or prejudiced** — This is the most common hurdle about behavior of society towards disabled many peoples in society do have prejudiced mindset for disabled persons they have less favorable feeling about disabled. Commonly known as Ableism. For example that they want to be cured, physically disabled person must be intellectual disabled also. Blind person is having inner special qualities or insight. Being disabled they must be residing in unhygienic places, about their impairments, about their inabilities they are not considered in race, and they are given fake sympathy.
- 2) **Physical hurdle** — Every disabled person having physical disability has to face these hurdles and find very difficult to overcome. Accessibility is difficult to overcome. So many examples can be given to explain this hurdle few can be explained as difficulties of travelling or meeting someone away from them. Its starts with weather disabled person have wheelchair or not, do they have those helping aid or not, with the help of which they can walk. Even do they have aid to support their next hurdle is lack of infrastructure public transport barriers which can meet their requirements like buses of low floor, ramps, Braille guidance, low level shelves, elevators, automated doors, guided pedestrian pathways, broad doors, proper lighting, reservations for disabled and so on. All these hurdles work against the disabled

person which push him towards inaccessibility of facilities, meeting his needs, getting him job, loans, which in turn leads to poverty

- 3) **Hurdle to communicate** — Communication is the most required mean to get in touch with the world for any one of us. Unfortunately this becomes hurdle for most of disabled due to current facilities made available for them to communicate in general like speaking, hearing, reading writing and comprehending. Unavailability of Braille, translators, sign language, reaching to expected person, hearing aids makes situation worse for them. And most important things in this hurdle are the time patience required by the non-disabled human being to communicate with disabled person.

- 4) **Social hurdle** — Around the worlds almost 650 millions person live with disability. Person with disability they live their life on the margins of society. The most difficult problems is impression of society that they consider disabled person as a burden or liability this leads to their decimation and harassment. This is why disables are get segregated from being part of society. Disabled person have to face this hurdle in an environment where they survive, where they are born and brought up, and they work.

As seen earlier disabled are discriminated right from family to school when they are growing but their actual fight with discrimination starts when they grown up and do have expectation to earn their bread and butter. Due to disability most of disabled remain unemployed for longer time than non-disabled person. Even if they get job they are of low skilled, on poor salary and get no or less promotion. Very few extra ordinary disabled individual are holding top managerial or professional post in organizations. Disabled person in comparison to non-disabled person earn very less money. There is inequality at employment level for disabled.

When disabled person is doing some job following discrimination are done. Making fun of about being disabled, passing judgments about their inabilities to do a particular job, having different set of rules for disabled employee while doing his recruitment, providing them different training or excluding them from selection process or firing them from jobs.

- 5) **Educational hurdle** – More than 54.7% remained uneducated according to a survey. Though education is right of every disabled child, they lack behind in getting this right due to many factors few of already discuss and few are as follows absence of services which can match their needs, absence of awareness in families about facilities available and how to make them available, absence of dedicated service providers who can teach them if they can't reach to avail services.

- 6) **Hurdle at policy implementation level** - So many thing are done at government level in form of making policies, making provisions, allocation of funds for helping the persons with disabilities, Giving reservations, issuing health cards, giving pensions, giving loans to start a business, helping, motivating and providing support for the NGOs which are helping for the disabled person.

Though so many things done at policy level. Disabled face many problems to access the services easily. Regarding employments reservations are there But ground level realities are quite different, to lack of co-ordination between different government services they are hardly able to reach and do all process to get job. Many of seats remain vacant. In spite of reservations very few are able to get jobs. Very few are able to get their reserved seat in higher educational institutions.

Getting loans, getting subsidy are never easy task for disabled persons. They are not able to physically handle paperwork, which are required to submit and take follow-up of their loan proposal, inflexible working attitude and conditions make their follow up weak. In spite of having intension, dependent methods of handling issues related to disables, Weak infrastructure, And lack of serving attitude towards disables are reasons for poor implementation of polices.

**Conclusion** – We have almost 650 million disabled people all over world. Every disabled person has its own set of problems and needs a different set of solutions to it. Only by providing a common set of relief will not be enough. Poverty and disability are inter connected, one leads to another that's we need different measures at different step few of suggestions are listed as follows-

- Preventing disability to happen in new born babies by taking proper care of pregnant ladies, giving them proper nutrition and medical care stopping negligence during delivery of babies



- Stopping malnutrition of children's which can prevent them from getting disabled in their developmental age and in future.
- Giving disabled children non biased, non discriminated proper education along with non-disabled children to keep them in flow with society
- Improving disabled person life. By providing them the basic medical treatment, aids and equipments, skilled based educations, employment and basic infrastructure, proper rehabilitation so they can avail all opportunity available for them on their own efforts.
- Perfect implementation of policies made for disables.
- An honest attempt should be made to remove every possible hurdle in front of them.
- Most important measure need to be taken is at psych level of the society where awareness needs to create. Considering disabled person as an asset and not the liability. Instead of sympathy they need bit supportive attitude. And making them self dependent.

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