



# Disability And Resilience: A Study Exploring Challenges And Solutions Towards Promoting Inclusivity

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## ABSTRACT

India is a developing country which is making progress day by day. There are so many practices in our society that do not exist anymore. One thing that still exists and is very common in India is Discrimination. There is no field left where there is no discrimination. Discrimination starts right from birth based on the caste you are born with till the social status you are dying with. For a time, one can change this discrimination by working on it, but there is a discrimination that is impossible to change and hard to survive with whole life is **Disability**. There is probably no society in which disabled people are not discriminated. Our society has so many prejudices, even for normal people, so what can we say about disabled people? Disabled people become the prime target of discriminatory practices and prejudiced attitudes of people. As a society, we are getting inspired and becoming open-minded as we are watching the achievements of such people despite them having so many difficulties in their life, but still there is a bunch of people who want to live in the bubble of prejudices and rigidness. Many people don't even know about disability, its causes, and the ways they can help such people. In this article, the author has tried to clear misunderstandings about the concept of disability. Additionally, this article describes the challenges disabled people face in their lives and how these people can be helped and supported to live a normal life.

**Keywords:** Disability, Handicapped, impairments, Causes, challenges, Diseases

## Introduction:

One of the difficult parts of human life is to be unable to do something. If, unfortunately, a person gets injured by an accident and for a while he/she cannot walk on his own, at that time he feels his life is burden on this earth. He becomes dependent on others. The day he gets well, he thanks God for making him well. This whole dependency was only for some days, but think about those who have this difficulty for their whole life. Being disabled is not a curse; it is just that they have some restrictions or cannot perform any activity that a normal person can do easily. Our society sees such people with so much negativity that they hamper their chance of living a normal life on this earth. Disabled people are also human just like us, they just need a little more effort.

Many people in our society don't even know the real definition of disability; they just see some different aspects in the behavior of children and tag them as disabled. Some people don't even know anything about disability, so they don't recognize the problem their child is facing; they just blame the child for their misconduct and misbehavior. Everyone must have seen a Bollywood movie called **TAARE JAMMEN PAR**, It is the best example of parents' ignorance towards their child. The stories of Bollywood movies are not always real, but cinema is the mirror of our society. Therefore, we need to be aware enough to know such information and kind & compassionate enough to deal with such people. Let's understand the concept of disability and other topics related to it in detail.

## Objectives of the study:

This chapter focuses on the conceptual clarity of the topic "Disability". It also describes the possible causes of disability and the challenges disabled people face in their daily lives. Additionally, this chapter also talks about the different ways to overcome the difficulties caused by that specific disability.

## Methodology of the study:

Present paper utilize the qualitative approach with employing descriptive method to thoroughly examine the term 'Disability'. The objective was to explore the subject in detail and for that researcher took a detailed review of existing literature. This process involved identifying key ideas, concepts and various perspective on disability and the challenges faced by people.

## Problem statement:

To study the challenges faced by disabled people and the ways to overcome the difficulties to some extent.

## What is disability:

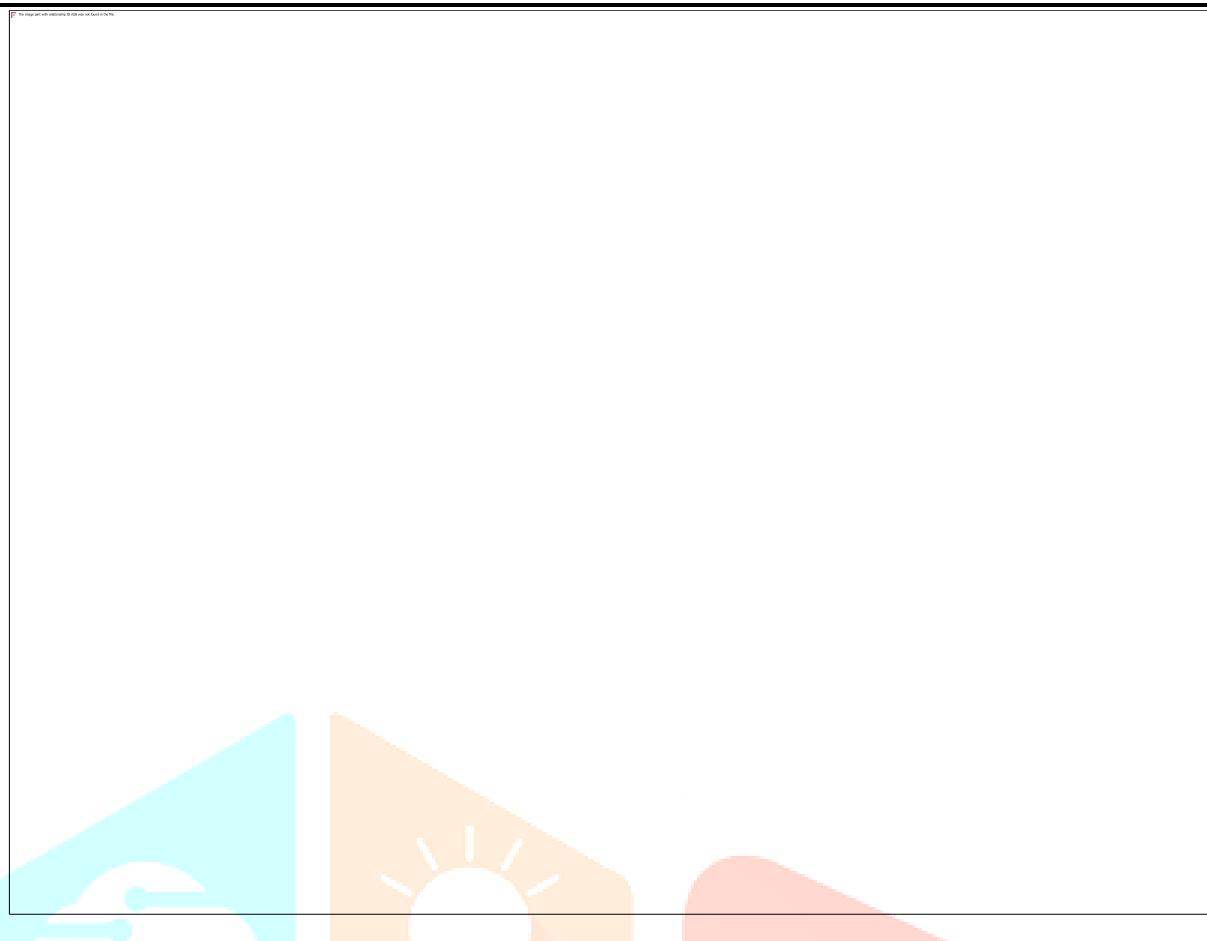
In 1980, the world health organization (WHO) provide the definition of disability as “Any restrictions or lack of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range, considered normal of a human being. In 2012 again, world health organisation defined disability as ***“it is an umbrella term covering impairments, activity limitations and participant restriction”. These three can be called as dimensions of disability.***

**Impairment**- Impairment refers to the problems that occur in body function and structure.

**Activity limitation**- Activity limitations describe the restriction that occurs while performing the activity.

**Participant Restriction**- Participant restriction describes all the difficulties that come in the way of participating in daily life activities.

Disability can be physical, mental, intellectual, and psychological. It may start from birth or it can occur anytime during life. Disability creates barriers in one's everyday life. From doing small household chores to taking education, it can create restrictions in the process. Due to this, the person who is suffering from this can get frustrated, irritated, or fed up with their life. Such populations are subject to violation of their respect and dignity. They are an easy target of abuse, ignorance, violation, and stereotyping due to their disability. Therefore, to protect them and their rights, the government has formed many policies for them. ***The national policies for persons with disabilities (2006) recognize that such a population is equally valuable human resources for the country and talks about creating an environment that provides them equal opportunities, full participation in the society, and protection of their rights.*** According to the 2011 census, in India, out of the total population of 121 crore, about 2.68 cr persons are disabled (2.21 percent). Out of 2.68 crore, 1.5 crore are males, and 1.18 crore are females. The majority (69%) of the disabled population resided in rural areas.



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FIG 1.1

### ***Types of disability***

There are various types of disability around the world. These various types of disability can affect a person's different aspects such as hearing, vision, thinking, cognition, movement, memory, communication etc. other than this, disability can occur at any point of life for example a child can have vision problem since birth whereas other child can fall from roof and get memory disorder. It is also possible that a man in his middle age can have hearing loss. On the basis of different aspects of human life, disability can be classified in the following way: -

**1) PHYSICAL DISABILITY:-** Physical disability includes any limitations which restricts the physical functions of human being. It can be temporary or permanent. This type of disability acquires either in prebirth or post birth because of some accident, injury or bad incident. Some of the examples of physical disability are:

**Person with vision problem:-** It is a condition where a person suffers from impairment of visual functioning. This condition includes both types which are someone who is having total absence of sight and someone who is potentially capable of using vision with an appropriate assisting device.

**Leprosy cured person:** - it is a condition where a person loses sensation in body with deformity from mild to severe conditions.

**Person with hearing problem:** - it refers to a condition where a person may have problem in hearing day to day conversational speech if hearing aid is not being used.

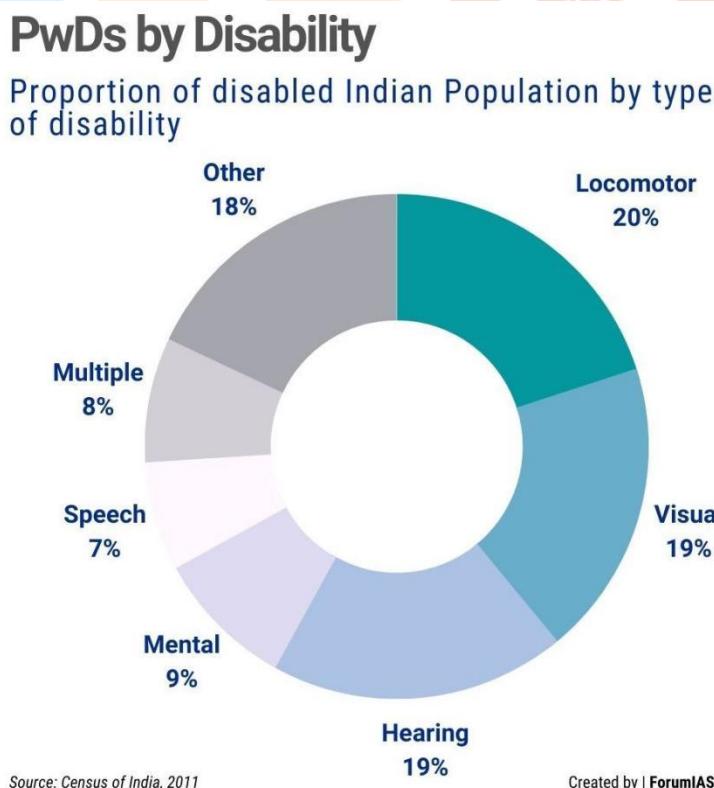
**Person with locomotor/movement disability:** - this type of disability affects a person's normal ability to move self or objects. See fig 1.2

**2) Mental disability:** - Mental disability is a condition in which a person's mental ability is affected moderately to severely. In this category, psychological and intellectual disability can be included. The definition of disability under the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995, is a 'disorder of the mind that results in partial or complete disturbance in the person's thinking, feeling and behaviour'

**Mental retardation:** - a condition in which the mind of a person is not fully developed. It is marked by lower-than-normal intelligence and limited daily skills. It normally presents from birth or develops later in life

**Mental illness:** - it includes mental disorder other than mental retardation. Mental illness can be described as irrational, inappropriate, and unrealistic behaviour.

**3) invisible disability:** - It is also called as Hidden Disability. Such disabilities are not typically apparent. When the person faces the particular situation then he/she get to know about such disabilities. Learning disabilities can be called as invisible disability.



Referred from <https://forumias.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Proportion-of-PwDs-768x797.jpeg>

**FIG 1.2**

## Causes of disabilities

Disability is an inevitable part of being human. *According to a report of the World Health Organization, almost everyone will temporarily or permanently experience disability at some point in their life. An estimated 1.3 billion people – about 16% of the global population – currently experience significant disability.* This number is increasing day by day due to noncommunicable diseases. It is not possible to prevent disabilities, but we can reduce them. To reduce their ratio, firstly we need to recognise and identify the causes of disability. It is not possible to prevent all disabilities. Some babies become disabled from the womb, and no one knows why. The journey of a person starts from when the child is in the womb. So many disabilities that start from birth are caused by harmful conditions in women's lives. Many disabilities can be prevented if women can get nutritious food, can get a healthy environment, and get protected from working in toxic chemicals. Here are some causes of disabilities:

**Poverty and malnutrition:** Two of the biggest causes of disability are poverty and malnutrition. Poor people are forced to live in such an environment with poor sanitation, unclean food and water, and unorganized living conditions.

**Poor access to health care:** Delivery time is a crucial time for both mother and baby. It gives birth to the baby and new birth to the mother. Difficult labour can cause a baby to be born with a disability called cerebral palsy. Many times, the mother can't even reach the hospital for delivery, and by the time she reaches the hospital, the child gets attacked by some difficulties that can lead to disability. Additionally, in hospitals, untrained birth attendants can increase the risk of babies being born with many disabilities.

**Medicines and injections:** - Medicines and injections are something that help us to achieve a good healthy life. When it is used correctly, it can save lives of human beings, but if is used with even little carelessness, it can lead towards sicken, kill or disable millions of children. For example, giving injections with uncleaned needles and used syringes can cause some serious diseases such as hepatitis, HIV/AIDS. It also causes infections that can lead to paralysis, spinal cord injury, or even death.

**Bad accidents:** Accidents are the most unfortunate things that can happen to anyone's life. Many people get disabled because of injury at their home or workplace, but this disability is mostly minor or temporary. Injury happens due to breathing or drinking toxic chemicals, which leads to harmful disability. Some job sectors are highly dangerous for a person and recommended for women and child to make a distance from it are: Agriculture, mining and smaller businesses. The chemicals or dangerous elements present in pesticides can make women and her womb children disabled for the rest of their lives.

**Inherited disabilities:-** If certain genes are passed on by a parent, then their children have the possibility of having disability. Spinal muscular atrophy and muscular dystrophy are examples of inherited disabilities. A woman having one or more children with an inherited disability is more likely to give birth to a child with the same problem. Inherited Disabilities also occur when close blood relatives have children together.

## Challenges faced by disabled people and ways to reduce the difficulties they face

Although the government has made many efforts to make disabled people like normal people, there are many areas where disabled people feel helpless. They consider themselves less than others, due to which an inferiority complex develops in them. There are many cases where they have not even been offered a job due to their disability.

Dr Senthil Kumar, who has been in the field of rehabilitation and is currently leading 'the association of people with disability' says that challenges faced by disabled persons are multifold. According to him, there are many challenges we as a doctors and disabled persons as a sufferer feels:

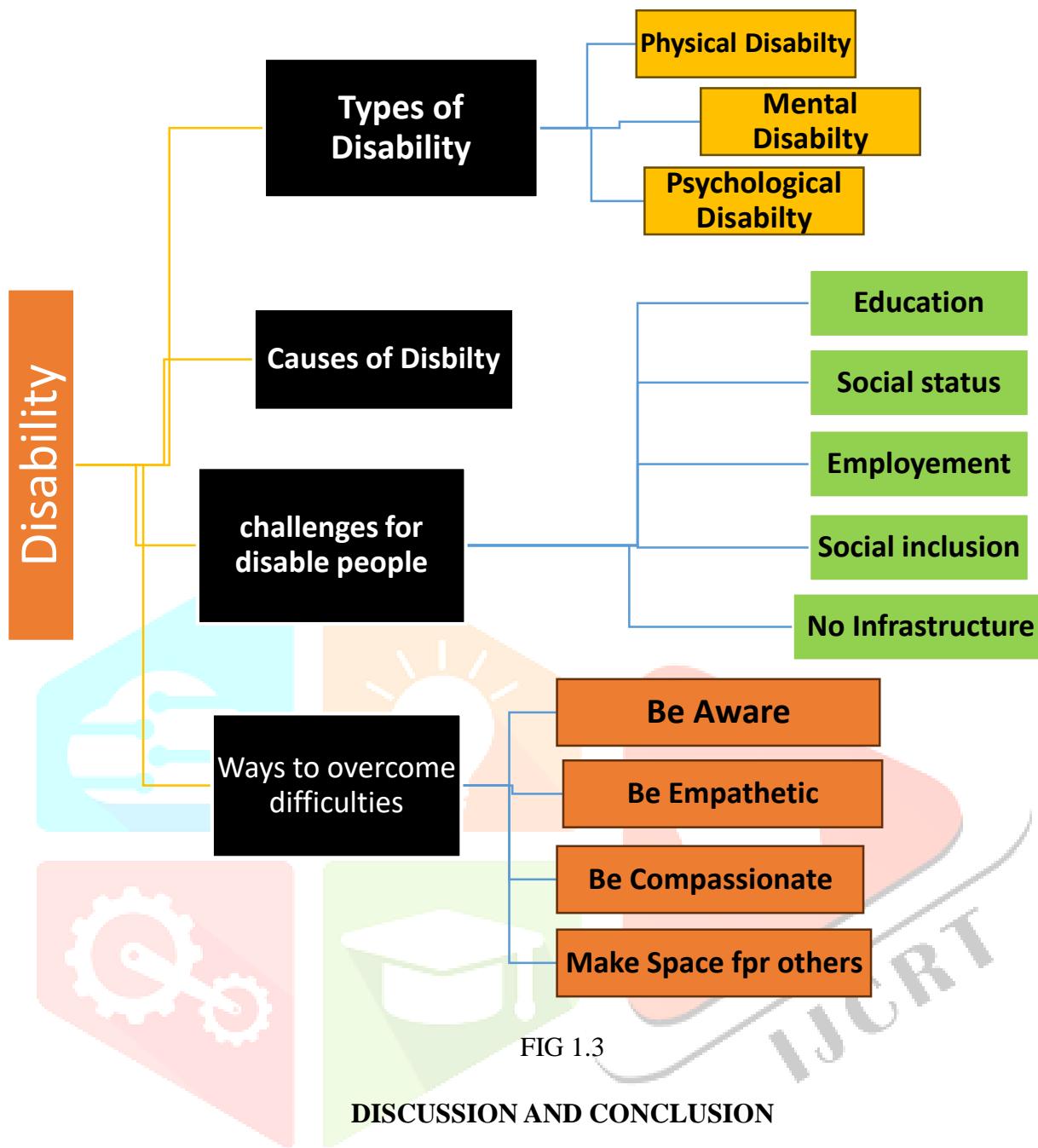
The first challenge of disability is very basic but very important as well, i.e., identifying the problem or *early diagnosis*. A general disease leads to impairment and this impairment leads to disability. Therefore, early diagnosis is important so that disability can be prevented.

Another issue is the *lack of awareness*. As a society we are very educated. We are taking so many degrees but perhaps we are not getting common sense in our education. Although we study about disability, causes and how to behave with such people in books but in real life we are not able to applying it. Still our thinking is rooted in stereotyping, ignorance and sympathy. At a community level, superstitious beliefs and cultural barriers are major factor who hinders inclusion process.

The next challenge that comes in the way of disability is a *lack of adequate treatment & resources*. In our hospitals, schools, and public areas, there is less infrastructure for disabled people. They feel helpless in the area out of their comfortable home due to the unavailability of resources. Other than this, there is a difference between diseases and disability. Diseases can be reduced quickly by giving medicines, but to reduce disability, we need a long time and the help of assistive and adaptive techniques to make such people's lives normal.

The major issue in this way is *Ignorance*. Even though the government has made many policies for disability, the biggest lack is that of implementation. Our government has no data regarding the number of disabled people in our country and the types of disability they are suffering from. Without the knowledge of data, the implementation of policies is like wasting time, energy, and resources. RPWD Act 2016 claimed that by 2021, India should have a barrier-free environment; however, still, nothing has changed.

For the conceptual clarity of the above topic, a mind map has also been prepared. See FIG 1.3



## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Just as a coin has two sides, head and tail, similarly, understanding disability also has two sides, the first is to recognize the problem the particular person is going through, and the second is what we can do about it. Before planning and implementing anything, we need to understand that disability should be considered normal. Although it is the worst thing that can happen to anyone, we need to accept it. There are 2 strategies by which disability can be tackled, and for that role, two factors are important. The first factor is the disabled person himself, and the second factor is the community around him. The one who is facing disability needs to be strong enough to accept the reality of their life. Other the community needs to be aware, empathetic not sympathetic and compassionate enough towards such population. **Stephen Hawkins** says to disabled people communities, “*my advice to other disabled people would be, concentrate the things your disability doesn't prevent you doing well and don't regret the things it interferes with.*

Today, we are in such a society where man has reached the moon. Disabled people have also left their disability behind and have moved ahead in life. These people have the strength to move forward due to the various new policies made by the government. Today there is no field where disabled people have not raised the flag, be it in the field of sports or technology. We all must have heard about **Nelson Mandela**, he used to say *that only 50 years ago, persons with intellectual disabilities were scorned, isolated, and neglected; today, they can attend school, become employed, and assimilate into their local communities.*

Today, in the world, everyone from great authors to common people know and recognize disability; all that is needed is a little sensitivity and awareness. India is still far behind when it comes to removing infrastructural and attitudinal barriers for people with disabilities. It will take a lot of time to develop a culture where the needs of the population with disability will be kept in mind.

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