



Problem Faced By Physically Challenged Persons And Their Awareness Towards Welfare Measures

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Abstract:

The physically challenged persons are one of the excluded sections of the society and also they face number of problems in their daily life. In order to bring them in the main stream both the central as well as the state governments are introducing many welfare measures and schemes. To avail these welfare measures and the schemes, first of all they must aware about the same. The present study is conducted among the physically challenged persons about their problems in the daily life and also their awareness about various government welfare measures. The result of the present study indicated that the officials who are implementing the welfare measures know only few of the familiar welfare programmes of the physically challenged persons.

1.Introduction

Disabled people are the people with physical or mental incapacities. Common physical disabilities include blindness, deafness and paralysis, while common mental disabilities include autism and the effects of Down's syndrome. Disabilities generally vary in severity. One person with Down's syndrome for instance may be very limited in terms of activities available while another person only relatively mildly affected may be able to hold down a job and be much more self reliant.

There are four types of physically challenged, they are physically handicapped, Blind, Deaf, and Dump. The term disabled suggests a state of helplessness; something which falls short of the norm or standard viz., 'physical fitness'. Disability refers to any limitation experienced by the impaired individual in comparison with the activities of the unimpaired individual of similar age and sex.

2.Common Problems Of The Physically Challenged

The existing transportation and infrastructural facilities available to disabled are hardly adequate.

- Public transport related problem comprises the problems related to design of the vehicles (high and incompatible steps of vehicles from the platform level)
- Road constraints involve encroachment of bus stops by vendors, temporary structures and parked vehicles stopping of buses far from actual bus bays. Thus causing great inconvenience to them.
- Feeling of insecurity by the disabled while traveling in private buses.
- The disabled person is largely dependent on a family because they get economically and emotional support from family. The disabled person also gets emotional support from friends and relatives and also gets encouragement.

The Government also as part of welfare measure introduced various welfare schemes to benefit physically challenged persons. However, there exists a gap in the utilization of the services. Hence, there is a need to study in detail about the problems, support systems and utilization of rehabilitation measures introduced by various agencies. As a matter of policy, Government has extended the rehabilitation programme in the field of medical, education, psychological support etc., for disabled persons.

The provisions of reservation of seats and the financial institutions providing loans and assistance have to collect necessary information in order to identify the nature for disability. While providing three wheelers, ambulatory services, armchairs, crutches etc., to disabled persons, the low-income groups disabled should be give priority.

3.Social Problems For Disabled People

Disabled people sometimes have difficulty doing things and other people may take for granted, such as travelling on public transport, climbing stairs or even using some house hold appliances. However, the greatest challenge that disabled people have had to face has been society's misperception that they are the "breed apart". Historically they have been pitied, ignored, vilified-even hidden away in institutions.

Until the second half the 20th century, it was unfortunate today that the disabled people have some abilities, needs and interests as the rest of the populations. Nevertheless, discriminations continued to exist in certain important areas. Some employers were reluctant to take on or promote disables people; some landlords refused to give the land on rent to them; and courts sometimes deprived them of basic rights, including custody of their children. In recent decades, this situation has undergone some positive changes through adjustments in legislation and public attitudes. Also people with disabilities have lobbied for their rights as full citizens and productive individuals.

4.Review Of Literature

The relevant literature pertaining to the present investigation reports on problem faced by physically challenged persons and their rehabilitative measures. The main thrust of research is to understand the type of problems experienced by the physically challenged persons both within family and outside the family and their utilization of welfare measures which are implemented by both the central as well as the state government.

Disability as a condition of impairment physically or mental is having an objective aspect that can be usually described by a physician (Coft and Tindall, 1974). Impairment is defined as any deviation from the normal which results in defective function, structure, organization or development of whole or any part of the individual (Sussaman, 1977). The term "crippled" or orthopedically "Handicapped" is restricted to one group among the disabled, i.e. those who have physical defect or deformity which causes an interference with the normal functioning of the bones, muscles and joints. (Jansson, 1957). As said earlier orthopedically handicapped are those whose physical capacity is

impaired by the loss, deformity or paralysis of one or more limbs. They are the victims of diseases or injuries which after cure, leave behind a certain disability which is permanent and lifelong (Government of India, Planning Commission, 1951-61).

The physically handicapped face problems as they attempt to adjust the demands of living in social environment. Their problems are not only those caused by their disability but also that of adjustment in a world that has apathetic or hostile attitude towards them magnifies their troubles and threatens their very existence as human beings. They face psychological, educational, employment and social problems. Among these, the most difficult is the adjustment to the hostile social forces in the society (Sharma, 1981), disabled person suffers with the erroneous beliefs, which dry up their day-to-day way of life. It automatically generates a social resistance to accepting means of treating or ameliorating disability (Nirmala, 1977). The above literature gives an account of the problems experienced by the physically challenged and various welfare schemes introduced by the government. Yet very few empirical studies are available regarding the utilization of welfare services. In order to fill this research gap the present study being conducted among the physically challenged persons.

5. Methodology

The study is combination of both exploratory as well as descriptive in nature. The study is conducted within the urban limits of Puducherry and the beneficiaries are identified through the list available in the Social Welfare Department, Government of Puducherry and later 50 respondents are selected through accidental sampling method. The interview schedule is used as a tool to collect the data from the respondents. The schedule contains personal profile of the physically challenged persons and their awareness on the various welfare schemes of the government.

6. Results And Discussion

Among the 50 respondents, three fourth of the respondents are males and the remaining one third are females. A greater proportion of the employed work as coolies (60%) and three respondents work in white collar jobs (6%) and two fifth of the respondents earn less than 1499 rupees per month and one third of respondents are not working since they are students and aged people. Respondents in the age group 15 and 29 years are more confident (40%) in facing problems. Considering respondents marital status one half are married. A little above one half of respondents are orthopedically handicapped while

12% are blind, 6% are deaf and 12% are mentally disordered and one in ten is deaf and dumb. One third of respondents have a family size of three members while the educational qualification of the respondents show that one fifth of are illiterates and a similar proportion are educated up to middle school and high school. Majority of the respondents move from one place to another place on their own without others help and the one third of respondents is dependent on others. Half of the respondents express that they are treated with discrimination, both inside and outside the family, three fourth of respondents report low self esteem as they are not earning money and unable to communicate properly. Greater proportion of respondents reported that they receive high level emotional support from family members, whereas others get moderate level of emotional support. A great proportion consider themselves as a burden to family because since they are not in a position to support their family members in any way, while three out of ten express that their inability to financially support their family is a major setback.

Social Welfare department organizes tour every year for three to four days for the physically challenged persons. Only nine respondents have attended such tours. Except one all respondents have received financial assistance, two fifth of respondents have received the identity card but many of them feel it was not much use. All respondents have received 10 kgs of rice per month but they complained that it was not regular. One fourth of the respondents have participated in awareness camp and four respondents have utilized welfare schemes for the professional training for typewriting and computer course. Three fourth of the respondents came to know about various welfare scheme from the Anganwadi workers, Two third of respondents stated that they follow cinema actors as role models in their life. Two fifth of respondents read books during the free time.

In the light of the above analysis, it is possible to outline certain basic tenets in planning for rehabilitation. Respondents express that increase in amount of financial assistance and scholarships would be beneficial. Government should also take steps to create awareness about the welfare schemes through the Anganwadi workers, Television, Radio, Newspapers. Respondents also opine that it would be beneficial if government give money for travel rather than the bus pass since they have to wait only for government buses to travel. Suitable self employment opportunities should be provided for all physically challenged person Rehabilitation attempt should be functional and should enable the physically challenged persons to be economically independent, provide

capacity, building and integrate them into the society. Rehabilitation should be viewed as total community service involving a combination of preventive, curative and servicing aspects. Government should ensure that every child with a disability has access to a free education in an appropriate environment until he /she attains 18 years of age. It is observed that the physically challenged people do not consider disability as a problem. They are confident of performing jobs but only when they are depressed. They feel that they are unable do the work.

7. Conclusion

Most of the officials and Anganwadi workers are not aware of the various government schemes which introduced for the welfare of the physically challenged. In general, they are only aware about financial assistance and provisions of 10 Kg. of rice per month but they are not aware of other types of welfare schemes and measures. Therefore it is necessary for the officials and other service providers must know the various welfare schemes of the physically challenged and that in turn help them to introduce the same to the beneficiaries. The new schemes should be given sufficient publicity and awareness campaigns should be conducted at various level. The respondents also stated that it takes more time for processing of their requests and availing benefits. Therefore a genuine attempt has to be made to remove any discrimination in sharing the development benefits, there by integrating this group into society's mainstream.

8.Reference

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