Impact of Poverty on Disabled Population in India: An Assessment of Access India

Prof. M. Ramanjaneyulu¹ & M. Dhananjaya²

¹Professor and Chairman, Department of Economics, Bangalore University, Bengaluru-560056.
²Ph.D Scholar, Department of Economics, Bangalore University, Bengaluru-560056.

Amartya Sen, on his work the Poverty Index is based, comments: “It is amazing how smug and inactive most societies are about the prevalence of the unshared burden of disability, from which purely income-based views of poverty… only distract attention.”

Helen Keller said that “Science may have found a cure for most evils; but it has found no remedy for the worst of them all - the apathy of human beings.”

Introduction:

Market economy, poor health status, disability, and premature mortality of individuals received attention primarily as indicators of reduced living standards in the region of developing countries. The inequality, poverty and unemployment implications of the transition process were also very significant factor for the economic costs of poor. Education and health status of disabilities did not receive much attention because in a high-unemployment environment with an abundant supply of skilled labour. However, the situation is rapidly changing because many transition countries have experienced respectable economic growth through human development indicators. The poverty rate for working-age people with disabilities is nearly two and a half times higher than that for people without disabilities. Indeed, recent research finds that half of all working age adults who experience at least one year of poverty have a disability, and nearly two-thirds of those experiencing longer-term poverty have a disability. People with disabilities are also much more likely to experience material hardships such as food insecurity; inability to pay rent, mortgage, and utilities; or not being able to get needed medical care than people without disabilities at the same income levels. The same goes for families caring for a child with a disability. In addition to income poverty, individuals with disabilities are also nearly twice as likely to lack even modest precautionary savings in case of an unexpected expense or other financial shock. Fully 70 percent of individuals with disabilities responded that they “certainly” could not come up with Rs.1, 34,000 to meet an unexpected expense, compared to 37 percent of individuals without disabilities.

Review of Literature:

Rebecca Yeo (2005) Disability, Poverty and the New Development Agenda, Disability, Knowledge and Research (KAR), made a study on numerous policies and statements regarding disability and poverty reduction, and estimated that 50,000 people, including 10,000 disabled people, die every day as a result of extreme poverty. It is a disastrous crisis. Disabled people are among the most disadvantaged people in the world and are over-represented among the poorest of the poor. The relationship between disability and poverty has often been referred to as a vicious circle. This study representation may ambiguous the similarities between the processes of marginalisation experienced by disabled people and poor people. The World Bank’s poverty reduction strategies, claiming that the Bank’s approach perpetuates poverty, while the disability sector fights for inclusion within the Bank’s strategies. Wider assessment of the context is urgently required and alliances need to be built between marginalised people, if there is to be any real chance of creating a more humane society.

Jeanine Braithwaite and Daniel Mont (2008) made a study on Disability and Poverty: A Survey of World Bank Poverty Assessments and Implications, Social Protection and Labour. The study find that using standard assumptions about the distribution of household consumption among household members and the typical way that poverty lines are set in World Bank poverty assessments, this relationship may not appear to be as quantitatively significant as common sense and anecdotal evidence would suggest. The assessment is limited by the fact that household surveys which are used by the Bank to determine consumption and consumption-based poverty typically do not
include any questions about the disability status of household members. Only in one region of the Bank’s work, Europe and Central Asia, which find poverty assessments with numeric poverty rates for households with disabled member(s). Other poverty assessments were analysed in other regions of the Bank, in some cases, which provide data on disabled people in regard to employment, health, social assistance, or a related subject, but do not provide poverty rates per se. The poverty assessments are not made any allowance for the additional costs that households with a disabled member would face across the developing countries.

Meera Shenoy (2011) conducted a study on Persons with disability and the India labour market: Challenges and opportunities, ILO Publications (Rights and Permissions), International Labour Office, Switzerland focussed on Persons with disability in India face many challenges when looking to develop employable skills and in gaining meaningful employment in conditions of decent work. The main objective of the study is to identify strategic opportunities to improve and expand persons with disability participation in Indian labour markets. The number of disabled is proportionately higher in rural areas, accentuated by general poverty considerations and poor access to health services. The rural disabled are significantly disconnected from skills and markets. Literary levels are low, with the Census of India estimating that 51 per cent of persons with disability are not literate; 26 per cent reach up to the primary level; 6 per cent middle level and only 13 per cent secondary level and above. Rural disabled are cut off from markets, have no knowledge of English and computers which is important for employability, A National Skill Mission has been set up with the Prime Minister leading the agenda. National Skilling Development Corporation and three key government departments are focusing on skilling youth. But there is no mention of skilling the disabled in any of their plans.

India Menon, Susan Parish and Roderick Rose (2013) conducted a study on the “State” of Persons with Disabilities in India focussed with comparable levels of income, India has one of the more progressive among the developing countries in respect of disability policy frame workers. Despite, people with disabilities in India are still subject to multiple disadvantages. This study on state-level variations in outcomes for people with disabilities to provide an explanation for the contrast between the liberal laws on paper and the challenges faced by people with disabilities in practice. Using average monthly per capita expenditure as an indicator of economic well-being, instrumental variables Wald estimator results indicate that households with members with disabilities have expenditures that are 14 percent lower as compared to households with able members. This effect is most pronounced among families with male adults and children with disabilities, and in states that are relatively poor, relatively more urban and those that have low to medium levels of inequality.

The objectives of the study:
The objectives of the present study on Impact of Poverty on Disabled Population in India: An assessment of Access India is as follows.

1. To estimate the key challenges and issues of disability in Indian labour markets;
2. To estimate the level of poverty with disability in India
3. To estimate the level of education of disability population in India
4. To study persons with disability with work participation in labour market of Indian
5. To understand the policy measures for the progress of disabled people in India

Hypotheses of the Study:
The hypotheses have been framed based on the above objectives which are as follows.

1. Poverty of disabled persons are more chronic and sever in India
2. Education of disability persons is more progressive through social welfare measures in India.
3. The work participation is increasing in disabled persons in India.
4. The rehabilitation expenditure on disabled people in India is fully utilised.

Methodology:
The present paper is based on the secondary sources of information and data. The data has been collected from Census Population 2001, 2011 and annual reports of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, Reports of Disabled Population etc. The data has been compiled and analysed to understand the different dimension of disability in terms of literature and work force. The statistical tools such as growth rates, compound growth rates and trend lines for annual data have been applied for clear understating of dynamics of different types of
disabled and their actual situation in India. The analysis is confined to the different levels of literacy, different types of workers of disabled and rehabilitation of government in India.

### Table 1: Number of Disabled Population and Type of Disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population/Type of Disability</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>ACGR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>1028610328.0</td>
<td>1210193422.0</td>
<td>1.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Disabled population</td>
<td>21906769.0</td>
<td>26810557.0</td>
<td>2.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability rate (per lakh population)</td>
<td>2130.0</td>
<td>2681.0</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Type of Disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>ACGR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) In seeing</td>
<td>10634881.0</td>
<td>5032463.0</td>
<td>-7.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) In speech</td>
<td>1640868.0</td>
<td>1998535.0</td>
<td>1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) In hearing</td>
<td>1261722.0</td>
<td>5071007.0</td>
<td>14.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) In movement</td>
<td>6105477.0</td>
<td>5436604.0</td>
<td>-1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Mental</td>
<td>2263821.0</td>
<td>1505624.0</td>
<td>-4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Illness</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>722826.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Other</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>4927011.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Disability</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>2116487.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India 2001 and 2011.

**Figure 1: Compound Growth of Disabled Population in India during 2001-2011**

Growth of Disabled Population in India:

The population growth in India has been increasing at 1.64 per cent per annum during 2001-2011. However, the disabled population growth is higher than that of the annual growth rate of India. It is registered at 2.04 per cent per annum in this decade because of poverty, unemployment and malnutrition among the different poorer section of the society. The disability rate per lakh population has also been increasing at 2.33 per cent per annum. Among the total disabled population, there are the different types which are comprised of seeing, speech, hearing, movement, and mental
illness and mental retardation and multiple disabled etc. Among all types of disabled, there is major problem with hearing which has been increasing very alarmingly at 14.92 per cent per annum, which is followed by speech which comprised of 1.99 per cent per annum. Interestingly, disability in seeing, in movement and mental disorder which are all declining its dimensions with -7.21 per cent decrease per annum, -1.15 per cent decline and -4.0 declines respectively during this decade of 2001-2011. Moreover, there is a need of attention of the government to facilitate and alleviate the disability among the people because; workforce is a human capital which enhances the growth of the economy.

The details of the growth of disabled during this decade can be seen from the table 1 and figure 1 also represents the dimensions of growth in different disabled population in India.

Growth of Disabled in each age-group for different population categories in India

The People with Disabled PwD in all age groups have been increased at 2.07 per cent per annum in the decade of 2001-11 in India. In rural area it has increased at 1.29 per cent, where as in urban area it has increased a maximum of 4.01 per cent annum. Among male it has increased to 1.75 per cent and in the female population it has increased to 2.43 per cent. It also represents that growth in urban area has been increasing enormously and it is also more in female category because of several reasons. Among all type of age groups only 10-19 and 20-29 age groups have a maximum number that is 17.2 and 15.6 as per Census 2011. A positive increase can be seen from the age groups of 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, and above all age groups. A declining growth can be seen from ages of 0-4, 05-19, because of several measures taken by the government for the last two decades. Even among the age groups of rural area the 10-19 age groups stand the highest that is 17.5 per cent in 2011, which is followed by 20-29 age groups with 14.7 per cent. In urban area also represents the same age group such as 10-19 and 20-29 registered the maximum at 17.8 per cent and 15.4 per cent. As far as male and female disabled population is concerned, the same 10-19 age group and 20-29 age groups recorded the highest 17.4 percent and 16.1 per cent among male and 17 per cent and 15 per cent among female respectively.

Accessible Campaign for Disabled India

Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 under Sections 44, 45 and 46 categorically provides for non-discrimination in transport, non-discrimination on the road and non-discrimination in built environment respectively. As per Section 46 of the PwD Act, the States are required to provide for –

1. Ramps in public buildings;
2. Adaptation of toilets for wheelchair users;
3. Braille symbols and auditory signals in elevators or lifts;
4. Ramps in hospitals, primary health centres and other medical care and rehabilitation.

Section 44 and 45 of the said Act cast responsibility on the States to take measures to make public transport accessible for PwDs and also make provision for auditory signals at red lights in public roads, curb cuts and slops in pavements, engraving on the surface at zebra crossings etc.

Employing persons with disability to increase benefits:

Employing persons with disability might provide multi-dimensional benefit to an employer as human capital to expand talent pool by gaining skills and valued workforce. The lower rate of attrition among disabled employees results in lower training and hiring costs. The return on investment can be possible for companies to leverage benefits extended by the government for employing persons with disability. The retention of employees results in lower costs of training and hiring. There is a need of enhancement of workforce diversity. Innovation on using the technology can also be used to increase productivity. E.g. use of Jaws software by many IT firms has allowed the companies to successfully employ visually impaired persons with disability. There is also need of encouragement to stimulate new product and service development through disability-inclusive diverse teams.

Table -2: Details of Financial and Physical Achievements of Disability Rehabilitation centres (DDRCs) from 2004-05 to 2014-15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Finance Rs. In Crore</th>
<th>Physical Achievements in lakhs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Budget Estimate</td>
<td>Expenditure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-05</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>67.31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Disability Rehabilitation in India:

The rehabilitation of people with disability is at progressive through the budgetary allocation of funds and their progress of education, health and employment purposes. There is a continuous increase of budget estimates over a period of time which has been presented in the table 18. The utilisation of funds for the cause of rehabilitation has not been achieved fully because of several reasons. There is a gap between allocation and expenditure of funds for rehabilitation of disabled people. The marginal rate of increase can be seen by budget allocation over a period from 2004-05 to 2015-06 and a marginal rate of declining trend has been envisaged by trend line equation. The achievements in helping disabled people seem to be stagnant over a period of time in India. The table and graph represent the magnitude of achievements and budget allocation and expenditure of disabled people in India.

Poverty of Disabled People in India

Extreme poverty for households with disabled member’s prevailed in low income segment of society. There is only a slightly higher rate of poverty when disabled people are present, but the rate of extreme poverty is much higher. Disabled people in India also have lower employment rates, and the gap between their employment and that of non-disabled people is growing. The large majority of persons with disability in India are capable of productive work. Despite this fact, the employment rate of disabled population is lower (about 60 percent on average) than the general population, with the gap widening Having a disability reduces the probability of being employed by over 30 percent for males in rural Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, though the effect is lower for women and nearly 45 percent of households with a person with a disability report an adult missing work to care for [disabled] member, the bulk of these every day and on average for 2.5
hours. However, other adult men are more likely to be working in households with disabled members, due to the need to compensate for lost income. The Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index should include disability as an indicator. Nearly 15 per cent of the world’s population, according to the World Health Organisation, live with special needs and are, by definition, predisposed to being poor. They need more resources to achieve the same standards as typical people. They also get very little understanding; let alone sympathy or support from their better-off fellow citizens. The Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index is not purely income based, and that’s a promising step. But clearly we still have a lot more to do before we can understand the true nature of poverty.

Conclusion and findings:

The disabled population growth is higher than that of the annual growth rate of India it is registered at 2.04 per cent per annum in this decade because of poverty, unemployment and malnutrition among the different poorer section of the society. Among all type of age groups only 10-19 and 20-29 age groups have a maximum number of disabled that is 17.2 and 15.6 in 2011. The general population of disability in seeing who are literates constitutes 61.98 per cent of men and 38.02 are women The illiterate rate of disabled people of Scheduled Caste is concerned, women are having more magnitude in lacking education in urban areas than rural areas that 56.6 per cent in rural areas and 58.28 per cent in urban area respectively. The population of disabled Scheduled Caste and their literature constitutes 15 per cent of male and 14 per cent of female; their status in rural area is higher than urban areas in respect of literacy. The people with disabled in movement among Scheduled caste and literature is concerned, male comprised of 12.1 percent and 14 per cent of female, their status in rural area is higher than urban areas in respect of literacy. The people with disabled in movement among Scheduled caste and literature is concerned, male comprised of 12.1 percent and about 6.5 percent of female in India which is more prevalent in rural areas than urban. The people with disabled in movement of Scheduled Tribes who constitute 4.7 per cent of males and 1.9 per cent of female, the literacy rate of male is more in rural areas than urban. The illiteracy among mental retarded male is higher than female in both rural and urban areas. The Scheduled Caste category is concerned, male population with mental retardation of illiterates are also large in number in rural areas among male and female. Scheduled caste is concerned, 11.3 per cent are rural male and 7.4 per cent of urban male are in multiple disabled with literacy. The disability of Seeing main workers constitutes 39.62 per cent of male and 12.58 per cent of female. The main workers in the age group of 15-59, male constitutes 57.39 per cent and female at 19.86 per cent and the age of 60+ consists of 32.48 per cent male and 8.24 per cent of female. The marginal workers 3 to 6 months of disabled in seeing is comprised of 9.10 percent of male and 7.85 per cent of female and in the age group of 15-59, both male and female consists of 12.29 percent and 11.79 per cent respectively. Nearly 41.74 per cent of male and 14.16 per cent of female were disabled in hearing and working as main workers. This category is more in the age of 15 – 59 years i.e. about 59.17 per cent of male and 21.05 per cent of female. Marginal workers 3 to 6 months who disabled in hearing shows 9.97 per cent of male and 9.28 per cent of female. This number is more in the age group of 15 -59 years, i.e.13.25 per cent of male and 13.26 per cent of female respectively. Disability in speech among the main workers constitutes 43.4 percent of male and 17.80 per cent of female. The main workers of this type of disabled are in large in number in age group of 15-59 years, which accounts for 58.52 of male and 23.69 per cent of female. Nearly 37.03 per cent of male and 12.46 per cent of female are disabled in movement who are the main workers in India, which is followed by marginal workers 3 to 6 months who comprised of 8.07 per cent of male and 6.32 per cent of female in India. As far as marginal workers of 3 to 6 months constitutes 9.93 per cent of male and 8.63 per cent of female. Whereas the age group of 60+ main workers of male with problem of movement with 23.45 per cent of male and 5.87 per cent of female in India. The main workers of disabled with mental retardation accounts for 18.73 per cent of male and 7.43 per cent of female which is followed by marginal workers 3 to 6 months with 5.95 per cent of male and 5.07 per cent of female, but marginal workers less than three months is very less in percentage with 1.99 per cent and 1.67 per cent for male and female respectively. There is need to increase budgetary allocation for disabled people in India.

References:


7. Rebecca Yeo (2005) Disability, Poverty and the New Development Agenda, Disability KAR, Knowledge and Research,

8. Suguru Mizunoya Unicef (2012), Nairobi, Kenya, Sophie Mitra Fordham University, New York, USA, Is There a Disability Gap in Employment Rates in Developing Countries.


15. https://www.rbi.org.in

