

Available online @ www.iaraindia.com

SELP Journal of Social Science - A Blind Review & Refereed Quarterly Journal

ISSN: 0975-9999 (P) 2349-1655 (O)

Impact Factor: 3.655(CIF), 2.78(IRJIF), 2.77(NAAS)

Volume XI, Issue 43

January - March 2020

Formerly UGC Approved Journal (46622), © Author

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DISABILITY AND POVERTY: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY IN THE CONTEXT OF INDIAN SOCIETY

Dr. RAJESH M. SOSA

Assistant Professor in Sociology

L.R.Valiya Arts and P.R. Mehta Commerce College.

Bhavnagar (Gujarat)

Introduction

Poverty considered as a cause of social inequality in rural India. Social inequalities are there on the base of on caste system and land relations. 68 % of Indian population are living in rural areas. Past, present and future of India is depends upon development of villages. Agricultural economy mostly depends on natural factoring India. Poverty is an economical problem consider in India. Government and non-governmental efforts has been carried out to remove poverty in rural Indian communities. According to Gandhi, “without strong and developed villages we can’t achieve real independence.”

There is a relationship between poverty and disability in Indian society. In India’s constitution disabled people have been given the status of poor classes. The population of India is also known as a people- based population on the population structure. Disability in a person is considered a physical defect, But in the Indian society, the person’s physical defect has linked to social system. The person’s disability is considered to be a person’s karma, punya etc... In the traditional Indian society there was an intimate relationship between business and caste. Physical labour was considered to be the main part of any profession. So those who couldn’t do the labour work, their financial condition was poor. However, due to the impact of reservation system, government schemes and welfare programs in the current India, their economic condition has changed, but there has not been a significant change in the social status. It is examined in the present study about the relationship between poverty and disability, based on Indian society.

Disability, the Concept

Disability is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as any restriction or lack of ability (resulting from impairment) to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered

normal for a human being (WHO, 2004). International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines a disabled person as an individual whose prospects of securing, retaining and advancing in suitable employment are substantially reduced as a

result of a duly recognized physical or mental impairment.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) states 'Disability means with respect to an individual (i) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual, (ii) a record of such an impairment, or (iii) being regarded as having such an impairment. The meaning of disability in any society needs to be negotiated as embedded in multiple cultural discourses with subtle nuance. On the one hand, there is the assumption that disability implies a lack or a flaw, leading to diminished capability while on the other hand, disability is associated with deceit, mischief and evil.

The sociologist Irving Zola (1993) is critical of strictly classifying a person into a particular type and degree of disability as the „fixity“ of numbers is underscored by the inherent dynamism of status of disability that changes because of temporality of health status, the importance of context in manifesting a limitation and the vagaries of conflicting classification systems. Zola argued Disability is not a „thing“ possessed by some persons and not by others but it is described rather as a set of characteristics everyone shares to varying degrees and in varying forms and combinations.

As per the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, disability has been defined under seven broad heads i.e. Blindness, Low vision, Leprosy – cured, Hearing impairment, Loco motor disability, Mental retardation and Mental illness.

Meaning of Poverty:

Shukla Rohit said that “poverty is a situation, which arise through lack of essential commodities and inadequate nourishment essential for human livings.”

A person who expense less than minimum expenditure criteria suggested by Indian planning commission is considering as a poor.

Peter Townsend said that “A person or a family who can not living reasonable and acceptable life style and standard of life in the society consider as poor.”

So poverty is a situation in which a person couldn't get his daily living requirements lack of sufficient resources for living life. A criteria index has been developed for determine poverty, named as “poverty line” or “Line of poverty.” Person or family who lives below poverty line defined as poor.

Situation of poverty can seen every where in India. Various committees has been formed in India to solve the problem of poverty. C Rangrajan committee is among one of these committees. C Rangrajan committee presented a report in 2014. According to their report “A person of urban area who earns less than Rs. 47 per day is considers as poor person and rural area who earns less than Rs. 32 per day is consider as a poor.

According to Aravind pangadhiya committee's report , A person who can not get 2400 collieries per day in rural area and 2100 collieries per day in urban area is consider as a poor.

In 2013 planning commission distributed of total 25.7 % of poverty combining 13.71% rural areas where as a 21.9 of urban areas poverty.

According to Rangrajan committees report there are 29.5% people consider as below poverty line in India. World bank reports of 2016 figures shows 27% Indian people are poor.

At present in every Indian state, the proportion of poverty seen in either more or less extents. For example Chhatisgarh 39.93% Zarkhand 36.96% and Bihar

33.74 poverty. Gujarat has 16.63% of poverty proportion.

Disability data in India:

As per the census 2011 in India out of the 121 cr. Population, 2.68 cr. Persons are disabled which is 2.21% of the total population. Among the disabled population 56% are male and 44% are females. In the population, the male and female population are 51% and 49% respectively. 69% of the disabled population resided in rural areas and 31% resided in urban areas.

The percentage of disabled population among males and females are 2.41% and 2.01% respectively. At all India level as well as disaggregated by various social groups, the proportion of disabled in the corresponding population is higher for males than females.

Proportion of disabled population by social Groups in India- Census, 2011

Social Group	Persons	Male	Females
Total	2.21	2.41	2.01
SC	2.45	2.68	2.2
ST	2.05	2.18	1.92
Other than	2.18	2.37	1.98

The percentage of disabled to total population increased from 2.13% in 2001 to 2.21% in 2011. In rural areas, increasing ratio was from 2.21% in 2001 to 2.24% in 2011 whereas, in urban areas, it increased from 1.93% to 2.17 during this period. Similar trend observed among males and females during this period.

The Census 2011 revealed that, In India, 20% of the disabled persons are having disability in movement, 19% are with disability seeing and another 19% are with disability in hearing. 8% has multiple disabilities.

Disabled population by type of Disability in India -Census, 2011

Sr. No.	Type of Disability	Percentage
1	Seeing	19
2	Hearing	19
3	Speech	07
4	Movement	20
5	Mental Retardation	06
6	Mental illness	03
7	Any Other	18
8	Multiple Disability	08

Methodology

The present study has been a descriptive form. In this study primary and secondary information has been used for data collection. The objective demonstration method has been used to determine the study unit. Interview schedules and inspection methods have been used for data collection. Based on this data collection and analysis, such findings were found. The present study has been done with Bhavnagar district in mind. Total 200 respondents have been selected by selecting 20 respondents from 10 Talukas of the district. The main objectives of this study were as follows.

1. Finding the concept of Poverty, getting information about its Causes and Salutations.
2. Find out how the person's handicap is responsible for poverty.
3. Find out how a disability is responsible for poverty
4. Find out how to overcome poverty arising due to disability.

Collection of primary data is a most important stage in every investigation. The researcher visited household and working places, where the physically challenged are there and collected data or needed information according to the objective of the study by personal interviewing them. It is observed that the respondents are from all background educated, the researcher personally interacted with the respondents and collected information on their personal, educational, occupational, socio-economic, awareness, problems, challenges, type of support they are getting and attitudinal aspects.

Social Background and Problems

According to International Labour Organization the, people living with physically disability face barriers across the worldwide to proper employment and other related facilities. One potential solution for physically disabled people with entrepreneurial skills are play vital role in self employment. The collection of information of the respondent's background is necessary for the detailed analysis of the collected data from field of the present study.

Type of Disability

Disability is the consequence of an impairment that may be physical, cognitive, mental, sensory, emotional, developmental or some combination of these. The type of disability indicate that, out of 300 physically challenged respondents, about 28% are multiple disability followed by hearing disability respondents are about 24% disability in speech are about 19% and visually disability respondents were about 24% respectively.

Religion

Religion is the way of life in which people are having faith, culture and tradition. Religion in one of the oldest serving social institutions of humanity. According to karl Marx religion is the opium for the masses an individuals attitudes, beliefs, faith and action pattern are considered to be influenced by the religion to which the individual is attached. The distribution of respondents were are about 84% were belongs to Hindu religion, the second high numbers of respondents were belongs to Muslims religions and represented by 11% and the lowest number of respondents were belongs to Christians. The majority of the respondents were males of 74% and females were 26%. The data on family background of respondents are presented 34% were came from rural family background, about 66 % were belongs to urban family background. The distribution of nature of the family among the 350 respondents of the present study, about 56% respondents were living in nuclear family, whereas nuclear family respondents were 44%. Among all respondents about 14% were illiterate, followed by undergraduate respondents were about 35%, graduated respondents are about 18% primary level of education were completed by about 11% and post graduate respondents were about 1%. This information regarding that majority of the respondents were about more than 50% are not much exposed to the education, this may be due to the their disability and poor economic status.

Engagement of the Respondents:

It serves as an indicator of socio-economic status and position of the individual. It reflects that way of life style, behavior, conduct, ethical and moral values of the individuals in the society.

The degree of respect, honor and prestige is attached with which kind of work under taken by the man. The distribution of the respondents according to their engagement in various aspects and the data reveals that, among total respondents, about 30% illiterate and unemployed, followed by respondents are about 21% engaged in education, respondents were about 18% are doing agriculture or allied works, respondents are about 8% are engaged in small business or self employed, where, respondents are about 3% engaged in employment in organized sector and about 20% respondents are engaged in seasonal employment or employment in un organized sector respectively.

Attitudes of Society:

The people are living with physical challenges are encounter problems associated to the society and their surroundings in which they surviving. The present study has focused on the kind of societal problems are faced by physically challenged people in the present society. Here we also took in to consideration of some other related problems facing in the contemporary society and having fear effects on their life. In the present study the variables impact on the societal status of the disable person has been studies and explain about opinion of the respondents on attitude of society towards disabled people indicate that, majority of the respondents about 82% were stated that society will see in inferior towards the disabled people. The data explain about opinion of the respondents about 72% were stated that they think the disability is a curse, annoyance it has great extent of impact on their mental status, whereas about 28% of the respondents are stated that they do not have any mental impact

due the presence condition or having disability in their life.

Feeling of respondents and family members towards disable:

The data analysis on feelings of respondents towards disability indicate that, majority of them are dissatisfied in life their percentage is about 49% followed by about 18% were feeling lucky with compare to others and 33% were feeling normal like others. Over the years, perception about disability or physically challenged have been varied considerably from one community to a community. Literature on disability or physically challenged history continues to pose a major challenge to disability studies in their make an effort to draw the development and arrangement of perceptions towards persons living with disabilities. It is towards this end that this work tries to find the present coherent literature review on cross-cultural variables that power of perceptions in the direction of with disabilities from a historical background. The final section provides a few example that illustrate positive steps taken by the international community and several countries to improve disability perception.

The data on mental status of the respondents comparing to normal persons indicated that about only 9 % respondents are stated that they are equal to the normal person, whereas, majority of the respondents are about 91% are not feeling equal to the normal persons. The data indicate that, analysis on feelings of family members towards disability respondents reveals that, majority of them are showing live and affection towards the physically challenged people and their percentage is 42% followed by about 27% are receiving equal with other family members and 24% are cordial and

cooperative with the physically challenged people, whereas about 8% of them are hostile with the physically disabled family members.

Conclusions

The summary of findings of the study is given here.

Education

The level of education of a disabled child is dependent on a number of factors including family income, availability of school facility, distance from school, physical and social access to education etc. It was seen that indicators of disability such as extent of disability, onset of disability, age at onset of disability, whether aid received, appliance used, treatment taken, inter-alia, significantly affect educational attainment of persons with disabilities.

The difficulties faced by persons with multiple disabilities were manifested in lower level of educational status of such people, generally at all levels of education. It was found that illiteracy rate was the highest amongst persons with multiple disabilities (72.5%) when compared with single, physical or mental disability. The mean educational levels of disabled population by type of disability, sex and sector were analyzed by taking the educational status on a ten point scale starting with '0' value for illiterate. Persons with mental retardation had the least educational attainment mean, which was perhaps due to their inherent difficulty of learning on account of low mental development. Comparison of education among different types of disabilities through Duncan Mean test showed that educational level varied significantly depending on the type of disability.

It was found that, along with increase in the extent of disability from mild to severe, there was a rise in per cent of illiterates. An almost universal decline in the proportion of disabled person at every level of education was observed

with increased severity confirming that greater extent of disability impacted education adversely at all levels. Degree of disability, which can be taken as similar to 'extent' of disability, was also observed to be significantly associated with illiteracy or low level of educational attainment. Analysis of variance was done to show that the variation in mean education for various extent of disability was significant. Chi-Square test indicated a significant association between extent of disability and educational status, thus establishing the interlinked between extent of disability and education.

Employment

The association between various disability indicators and employment/unemployment status in general has been examined focusing on some observable limiting features of employment, due to disability. It discussed the relative disadvantageous position of the persons with disability in employment as compared with the overall population. The adverse impact of disability on the employment status was evidenced to increase along with the severity of disability. It was observed that high level of unemployment and employability is associated with disability on account of a wide array of disability related factors which, in turn, affect economic well-being of persons with disability.

Due to limitation of functional activities, the persons with disability mostly remained out of labour force. Only about twenty five percent of disabled persons were employed whereas the majority, seventy five percent was out of labour force. The persons who were able to work and also were seeking the same stood at a meager 0.7%. The mentally retarded persons were worst affected in terms of employment with a whopping 94.3% of such population remaining out of labour force followed by persons with blindness. Hearing disabled and loco motor disabled persons however, had

better employment levels respectively. Analysis of employment status of disabled persons by sex indicated that overall employment of females was less. In urban areas, persons with loco motor disability had the highest employment level of 42.3% as against the hearing disabled persons (36.5%). Whereas only 61.4% of rural overall population was out of labour force, 74% rural disabled persons were sharing the same fate. As regards overall population, majority of the persons out of labour force were engaged in attending educational institutions followed by persons attending domestic duties. In case of disabled population however, the majority of persons who were out of labour force belonged to 'other' category which included people not being able to work 'due to disability'. It shows that employment is adversely affected by disability conditions. A higher percentage of beggars in case of the disabled persons were indicative of social bias and their not being able to attend to domestic duties or educational institutions. Evidence has pointed to the fact that disability effectively hindered people from being able to get employment, which in turn, is likely to drag them to economic poverty. It has been found that the employment status, be it self-employment, regular employment or casual labour, three categories of disabled persons i.e. mentally retarded, mentally ill and blind persons were the worst affected ones as compared to persons with other disabilities.

Amongst the employed, the percentages of self-employed and regularly employed were higher in case of literates whereas higher percentage of illiterates worked as casual labourers. Persons with below primary level education had a lower level of employment than even the illiterates and those who were just literate without any formal schooling. This may be due to the inhibitions of persons who have attended school towards accepting any type of manual/casual work, unlike a person who

is either illiterate or never gone to school for formal education. The association between literacy and activity status was found to be significant. Severe disability is likely to throw a person out of labour force which means he is not even fit for seeking employment. The study shows that as the severity or the extent of disability increases from mild to moderate and then to severe, the proportion of person out of labour force also correspondingly witnessed an increase from 66.3% to 81.6% and thereafter, to as high as 93.4%. Amongst the persons with mild disability, employment was 32.8% as against 6.3% in case of persons suffering from severe disability. As extent of disability increased, there was a substantial drop in employment. As extent of disability moved from moderate to severe, the loco motor disabled persons suffered the most with a decline of employment by 13.4%, followed by hearing disabled persons.

In case of blindness, low vision and speech disability the drop in employment was between. It confirms the hypothesis that extent of disability is strongly negatively associated with employment. Further probe into the impact of extent of disability on the employment of persons with disabilities was done by bi-furcating the data on the basis of onset of disability, by sex and sector. It was witnessed that there was an unusual decline in the employment level and universal increase in the percentage of persons who were out of labour force, in both situations i.e. when the extent of disability increased from 'mild to moderate' and then from 'moderate to severe'. In general, regular employment was lower for people who had disability at birth where as their proportion as casual labourers was higher than those who acquired disability. Among urban males, employment was lower for people who had disability since birth as compared with persons who acquired disability later in course of life.

Analysis of age at onset and employment status of the disabled

population indicated that up to age-at-onset group 30-34 years, early onset of disability was associated with lesser percentage of employed persons indicating that early on set limits employment and hence reduces economic status. After 35 years of age i.e. around mid-life and thereafter, the picture reverses and may be due to coupling effect of progression of disability and other geriatric conditions at every higher level of onset age group of onset of disability.

Amongst persons who acquired disability in course of life, 37.2% were working before onset of disability, in general. Whereas the proportion of employed males were higher the same for females were lower. It was found that, disability had caused loss of work in case of 55.3% persons and change of work for 13.2% of them. However, only 31.4% escaped any loss or change of work after acquiring disability. Blind persons were affected most through loss of job and only 15.3% could manage status quo. The mentally ill persons were found to have lost their jobs in about 77% cases due to the onset of such illness. Mentally retarded persons who were already very low in terms of working before disability, suffered loss of job in 62% cases. The disabled persons who were least affected by loss of jobs were persons with speech disability (9.2%). Blind persons losing their jobs in most cases is likely to be more because of lack of barrier free access, assistive devices as also any plan for rehabilitating the employee who suffers such loss, whereas in case of mentally disabled persons, it is likely to be the social stigma that has caused the job loss. Generally, females were driven out of job in higher proportion than males.

These findings substantiate the fact that disability played havoc with the employment status of persons working before onset of disability in case of as high as 68.5% persons indicating a strong negative inter-linkage between occurrence of disability and his/her employment

status. Results shows that amongst those who were employed, a majority worked in primary sector (56%) as compared with secondary and tertiary sector. Sex wise analysis showed that amongst disabled population, higher percentage of female worked in primary sector compared to males. This was more prominent in rural areas compared with urban areas.

Generally, disabled persons commanded relatively higher (26.6%) employment in the tertiary sector as compared with overall population of the country. It was seen that a substantial 93.4% of severely disabled population were out of labour force due to high extent of disability as compared with the non-severe category. The employment pattern of those who had vocational education with engineering trades were observed to have a substantially higher level of employment as compared to those from non-engineering background. However, the employment level of disabled persons who did not have any vocational education was very low at only 24.4%. It was striking to observe that the percentage of beggars amongst those who lived alone was very high at 3.6% as compared with only 0.6% for those who lived with others in a house hold.

It was observed that disability is the single major reason for a person remaining out of labour force. It was universally true that a whopping percentage of disabled population could not work due to disability showing that disability and unemployment are strongly and positively inter-linked. This phenomenon was true across all age groups and also across sector and sex. The study has evidenced that the proportion of persons who were not able to work due to disability, grew sharply in the 50's and beyond which is intuitively likely on account of coupling of other geriatric conditions with the specific disability he/she suffered in life. It was found that if aid has been advised and acquired, the disabled persons' employment levels

witnessed an increase. Amongst all types of disabled persons, mentally retarded persons were found to be not only disadvantaged in terms of employment, but also, had least proportion of regular or self-employed jobs, as most of them were casual labourers. Females, across all types of disabilities were generally seen working as casual labourer insubstantial proportion in urban areas. It was revealing to observe that all urban

mentally retarded females were employed only as casual labourers whereas 55% of rural females were engaged as casual labour. In contrast, generally least of the loco motor disabled females in urban areas were engaged in casual labour, may be because of availability of assistive devices and lesser social bias.

This may be because of the greater employment avenues in urban areas which make the remaining members of the household to work and the disabled females to attend to domestic duties only. It was observed that the percentage of beggars was significantly high amongst the blind persons in rural areas. Loco motor disabled had the highest proportion of beggars in urban areas.

Economic Poverty

The poverty ratios of disabled persons were calculated and found to be lower at 35.1 per cent for rural areas, as compared with a whopping 68.9 per cent for urban areas and 42.8 per cent at a national level. In contrast to overall population where urban poverty was less than rural poverty, it emerged that in case of disabled persons, urban poverty was much higher than the rural poverty. This may be because of (a) the higher standard of living that is required for moving above poverty line in urban areas, (b) relatively stronger social cohesion, sensitivity and support system for the disabled persons in the society in rural areas, (c) higher level of employment in rural areas as compared with their urban counterparts

This study has shown that poverty ratio was not only more among persons having severe disability as compared to mild disability, but the same was even higher when aid and appliances were advised but not acquired by the disabled persons. In rural areas, for severely disabled persons, reduction in poverty from 44.2% to 28.4% occurred with use of aid/appliance. This confirmed that disability hinders employment and accentuates poverty and therefore, use of aid and appliances did show to have ameliorated the economic condition. The association between poverty and aid acquired was found to be statistically significant.

Thus, it has been observed that economic implications of disability on poverty through low education and unemployed status are adverse and quite significant. There exists, thus, a close inter-linkage between disability and economic poverty. The study has gone into the detailed implications of various parameters of disability subject to limitation of data and explored the economic implications of disability on education, employment and economic poverty. This has given broad insights into the mechanism of inter-linkages between economic poverty and disability in India. The null hypotheses that economic poverty and disability are not linked to each other has been rejected by the findings as disability associates with economic poverty through economic parameters such as education, employment and income. Adverse implications of disability on the economic parameters i.e. education, employment and income have all been evidenced and tested to be valid, through this comprehensive and first such study undertaken in India. We have also reviewed the policy interventions in the disability sector in India with an objective to bring out policy suggestions from the results of the study, which are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

References :

1. Audinarayana and J. Sheela (2002): *Physical Disability among the Elderly in Tamil Nadu: Patterns, Differentials and Determinants, Health and Population - Perspectives and Issues.*
2. NSSO (2003): *Disabled Persons in India, National Sample Survey Organization 58th Round, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India.*
3. J-F., Bakhshi, P. & Nandipati, A. (2012). *'Delivering' education; maintaining inequality. The case of children with disabilities in Afghanistan.*
4. Mitra, S. (2005). *Disability and social safety nets in developing countries (Social Protection Discussion Paper Series-0509).*
5. Central Statistics Office Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation Government of India (March 2011). *Disability in India - A Statistical Profile.*
6. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (2006). *National Policy for Persons with Disabilities. New Delhi, India.*
7. Arora, D. (2002) *Public policy analysis: addressing the contextual challenges, Indian Social Science Review, Sage Publications*
8. Bhatt, A. (1989) *Development and Social Justice, Sage Publications, New Delhi.*
9. Datta, K.L. and Sharma, S. (2002) *Facets of Indian Poverty, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi*
10. www.census.co.in

<http://www.mospi.gov.in/national-sample-survey-office-nssso>