

ACCESSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT SCHEMES AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITY

Dr. MARI MUTHU

Assistant Professor, Dept of History,

Bishop Caldwell College, Maravanmadam

Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University

K.KALAI SELVI

(PhD Research Scholar,

Department of History, Kamaraj College, Tuticorin

Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University

Introduction

A disability is an impairment that may be cognitive, developmental, intellectual, mental, physical, sensory, or some combination of these. It substantially affects a person's life activities and may be present from birth or occur during a person's lifetime. India has a rich history of education. India is a huge country encompassing one billion people, of which 50 million are considered to be disabled or have special needs (Timmons & Alur, 2004). After Independence, education has been one of the important issues surrounding disability rights and practices. In the Indian context, inclusion has been a much hyped but often abused term. The use of the words integration and inclusion interchangeably has to 2 conceptual as well as practical difficulties. An important turning point for issues surrounding people with disabilities was the National Policy on Education (1986). The policy aimed at making it *an effective instrument for taking the country into the 21st century*. It envisaged improvement and expansion of education in all sectors, elimination of disparities in access and stressed improvement in the quality and relevance of basic education. This policy for the first time included a section on disabilities (Section 4.9).

There were 11,79,963 disabled individuals in Tamil Nadu in 2011, a disability rate of 1635 per 100 000 population. Disability in movement, hearing and sight individually accounted for 24%, 19% and 11% of the total disability, respectively. Sixteen districts had disability rates above the state average. As age advanced, disability rates increased; the highest disability rate of 2533 per 100 000 was among people aged 60 years and above. The disability rates were higher in males compared to females (1819 v. 1451 per 100 000). Rural areas had higher disability areas compared to urban (1670 v. 1599 per 100 000). Currently married, working populations and literate populations had lower disability rates. Disability rate in the Scheduled Castes was higher at 1763 per 100 000 compared to the Scheduled Tribes and other social groups. Multiple disability was high in the age groups 0-19 years and 60 years and above.

Briefly, the pertinent areas addressed in this section include:

- Education of children with mild disabilities will be in regular schools.
- Children with severe disabilities will be in special schools with hostel facilities in district headquarters
- Vocationalization of education will be initiated.
- Teacher training program will be reoriented to include education of disabled children.
- All voluntary efforts will be encouraged.

The National Policy on Education (NPE) was revised in 1986 which includes under the heading _The Handicapped ‘in Article 4.9 the following: The objective should be to integrate the physically and mentally handicapped with the general community as equal partners, to prepare them for normal growth and to enable them to face life with courage and confidence.

The following measures will be taken in this regard –

- (i) Wherever it is feasible, the education of children with motor handicaps and other mild handicaps will be common with that of others.
- (ii) Special schools with hostels will be provided, as far as possible at district headquarters, for the severely handicapped children.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research was initiated to study the status of awareness and utilization of the educational schemes for children with disability in the rural areas of Srivaikundam Taluk of Tuticorin District, Tamilnadu.

Objectives of the Research:

The objective of the research study area as following:

1. To find out the level of awareness among the parents of children with disabilities.
2. To identify the barriers and difficulties faced by the parents for availing benefits for their children with disabilities in rural areas.
3. To explore the role played by schools and concerned government officials with regard to generating awareness about and utilization of benefits by the children with disabilities.

Scope of the study

The present study is limited to the children with disability and parents having children with disability of the Srivaikundam Taluk of Tuticorin District, Tamilnadu. In this study, two types of person with disabilities i.e, Visually Impaired, Orthopedically Impaired are covered. This study basically understands the level of awareness about governmental educational schemes and program among the person with disability in the target areas of the research study. It is expected that the research study will help in effective recommendation of Education schemes of children with disability.

Area of study

The present study has been conducted in Srivaikundam Taluk of Tuticorin District, Tamilnadu. The population of Tuticorin District 17,50,176. Total population of person with disability of Tuticorin District is 31,370. There are various tools which the data from the respondents can be collected: The most commonly used method in the research is the interview schedule method. There are two broad categories in which the interview method can be divide; the structured interview and semi-structure interview. The present study aims to explore and analyze the ground realities in rural sectors. Accordingly, a semi- structured quantitative interview schedule would be drawn up for data collection. The sample size of the study would consist of 30 parents of children with disabilities by

using simple random sampling. The respondents were drawn from Srivaikundam Taluk of Tuticorin District, Tamilnadu. As the study will be based in that particular block named as Karungadal.

Result and Discussion

Table-1 Socio – Economic Characteristics of the Respondents (N=30)

S.No	Characteristics	No. of Respondents	Percentage %
1	Age Group		
	1 to 5 years	10	33.33
	6 to 10 years	8	26.67
	11 to 15 years	9	30
	Above 16	3	10
2	Education		
	Illiterates	3	10
	Primary	11	36.67
	Secondary	13	43.33
	Graduate	3	10
3	Education of Parents		
	Illiterates	18	60
	Primary	7	23.33
	Secondary	5	16.67
4	Family Type		
	Joint	8	26.67
	Nuclear family	22	73.33
5	Caste		
	Bc	15	50
	Sc	6	20
	General	9	30
6	Housing Status		
	Own	18	60
	Rented	11	36.67
	Government Housing Scheme	1	3.33
7	Housing Pattern		
	Thatched	23	76.67
	Government Housing Scheme	1	3.33
	Tiled	6	20

The above table shows the demographic profile of the respondents. In the age level 33.33 per cent of the respondents belongs to 1-5 years age category followed by 30 per cent of the respondents belongs to 11-15 years age category and 26.67 per cent of the respondents belongs

to 1-5 years age category finally 10 per cent of the respondents belongs to above 16 years age category.

Regarding to the education level of the respondents, out of 30 children with disability, 43.33% of them were completed secondary education, followed by 36.67% of them were completed primary education and 10 per cent of the respondents were completed Graduation. The remaining 10 per cent of the respondents remain illiterates.

With respect to the educational level of their parents, The Parents are more attached and play an important role in the upbringing of the child so it becomes imperative that the parents should be educated. the parents is found to have low literacy levels due to which he is not much aware and is able to access the schemes available for his children. More than 60% of the respondent's parents were illiterates. 23.33% respondent's parents were completed primary level. 16.67% respondent's parents were completed secondary level education. All of respondent belong to State government primary and Secondary School.

Regarding family level of the respondents, the trend towards nuclear family is found more in the respondent. Child with disability feels much comfort within their family. Out of 30 respondents reviewed and it is found that 73.33% of them were Nuclear family and 26.67% of them were Joint family.

In community level of the respondents, out of 30 respondents, more than 50% of the respondents belong to BC caste and 20% of the respondents belong to SC General Caste and 30%. of the respondents belongs to general category.

With respect to the housing status of the respondents, More than half (50%) of the respondents were living in Own house. Followed by (36.67%) of the respondents living in rented house and finally very few of (3.33%) of the respondent living under Government Housing Scheme. In that the majority of the respondents (76.67%) were living in thatched house, because their standard of living is very low. Followed by (20%) of them were living in Tiled house. The remaining (3.33%) of them were living in Government Housing Scheme.

Table: 4.6 TYPE OF DISABILITY

Types	Frequency	Percentage
Orthopedic	21	70
Visual	9	30
Total	30	100

The above table shows, out of 30 respondents 70% of Children belongs to orthopedically handicapped, 30% of Children belongs to Visually Impairment. The researcher selects only orthopedically handicapped and Visually Impairment

Table 4.7 Levels of Disability

S.No	Levels of Disability	Frequency	Percentage
1	Severity	11	36.67
2	Moderate	17	56.67
3	Mild	2	6.66
	Total	30	100

In disability level, out of 30 respondents 36.67% of children suffering from severity disability, 56.67% of children suffering from moderate disability followed by 6.66% children suffering from mild disability.

Table 4.8 Having Disability Certificate

S.No	Disability Certificate	Frequency	Percentage
1	Having	27	90
2	Not Having	3	10
	Total	30	100

To making a disability certificate is very tough for working class as well as rural illiterate people. The process which involves making certificate that needs to be understood. Disability certificate is issued in Block Office or District medical hospital. From the above the Table 4.9 it can be understood 90% of the respondents were having National Disability Certificate, 10% of the respondents were not having National Disability Certificate.

Table 4.9 Awareness about scholarship for person with disability

S.NO	Awareness about scholarship	Frequency	Percentage
1	Aware	20	66.67
2	Not Aware	10	33.33
	Total	30	100

Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (Government of India) provide Scheme of National scholarship for Person with disabilities. Above table clearly indicates that 66.67% of respondents aware about scholarship and only 33.33% of respondents not aware about scholarship schemes regarding disabled people.

Table 4.10 Utilization of scheme

S.NO	Utilization	Frequency	Percentage
1	Utilize	19	63.33
2	Not Utilize	11	36.67
	Total	30	100

Out of 30 respondent only 63.33% respondent utilizing scholarship and only 36.67% children not utilize scholarship. Researcher observed that no single respondent utilize frequently scholarship. School authority expresses that we don't get sufficient fund from higher authority so unable to distribute scholarship.

Table 4.11 Awareness about Reservation

S.No	Awareness	Frequency	Percentage
1	Not Aware	7	23.34
3	Partial Aware	9	30
4	Full Aware	4	13.33
	Total	30	100

In the reservation level, Out of 30 respondent 64.71% not aware about reservation, 29.41% partial aware followed by 5.88% fully aware about reservation of disability.

Findings and suggestions

- The maximum number of children with disability age group is 10-15 yrs is 53% followed by 6-10 yrs (30%) and female ratio is high in comparison to male. 13.33% of them were belongs to 15-20 years. 3.33% of them were belongs to 1-5 years.
- With respect to the educational level of the children with disability, 53.33% of them were completed primary education. 26.67% of them were completed secondary education. 20 of them were completed Graduation
- Regarding the educational level of the parents 60% of them were illiterates. 23.33% of them were completed primary level. 16.67% of them were completed

secondary level education. All of respondent belong to State government primary and Secondary School.

- In the family type, Out of 30 respondents, 73.33% of them were living in joint family and 26.67% of them were living in Nuclear family.
- Regarding to class category, more than 50% of the respondents belong to BC caste and 20% of the respondents belong to SC General Caste and 30%. Of the respondents belongs to general category
- With respect to the types of disability, out of 30 respondents 70% of Children belongs to orthopedically handicapped, 30% of Children belongs to Visually Impairment.
- In disability level, out of 30 respondents 36.67% of children suffering from severity disability, 56.67% of children suffering from moderate disability followed by 6.66% children suffering from mild disability and followed by 90% of the respondents were having National Disability Certificate, 10% of the respondents were not having National Disability Certificate.
- Regarding the level of awareness, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (Government of India) provides Scheme of National scholarship for Person with disabilities. 66.67% of respondents aware about scholarship and only 33.33% of respondents not aware about scholarship schemes for them.
- While utilizing schemes, Out of 30 respondent 63.33% respondent utilizing scholarship and only 36.67% children not utilize scholarship. Finally In the reservation level, Out of 30 respondent 64.71% not aware about reservation, 29.41% partial aware followed by 5.88% fully aware about reservation of disability.

Conclusion

As far as awareness of scheme is concern they are saying that they also don't know about such scheme and proper instruction and information is not provided by higher authority. It is found that very less technology is being provided to disabled children such as hearing aid, brail and other facilities like rickshaw, modified chair etc is not distributed properly, and it is available in district office. Due to illiteracy most of the time people don't what sort of schemes is available through which they can be benefited. Sometimes they also don't understand the importance of schemes which can be helpful. In context of rural area, various process involve to accessing schemes and program. Illiterate people unable to access and sometimes it is used by non targeted person.

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