

## **Problem and Prospects of Person with Disability in Kanyakumari District**

**Dr. N. Sukumaran,**

Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology,

Rani Anna Government College for Women, Tirunelveli-8.

### **Abstract**

The disabled community has been fighting for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects in all aspects of life. In the last two decades there has been growing awareness about the issues relating to this sector and there are several significant landmarks both at national and international levels. In this study a sincere attempt is made to understand how persons with disability are excluded and how they could be included in all spheres of life. In this context, the present research intends to study their standard of living, nature of discriminations, challenges faced by the persons with disabilities in encouraging social inclusion and strengthening sustainable livelihood, attaining income security and participating the mainstream activities of society. The present paper made an attempt to analyze to identify the barriers in utilizing their opportunities and difficulties in protecting their rights for dignity, social inclusion, and self respect of PWDs at kanyakumari district.

**Key words:** Social inclusion, Livelihood challenges, Social equilibrium, Potentiality.

### **Introduction**

Person with disabilities (PWDs) are amongst most marginalized sections of society cutting across caste, creed and community. In the last two decades there has been growing awareness about the issues relating to this sector and there are several significant landmarks both at national and international levels. The most grievous mistake the policy makers and decision maker's used to do is to have looked at disability as charity issues and a welfare issue where it was, it is and it should rightly be a development issue and a progressive issue. The government's attitude towards this population and related issues becomes clear from the fact that the country has done precious little about the recent amendment bills they could transform their pathetic lives.

**Persons with Disabilities (PWDs):**

The individual is disabled by a socially created set of circumstances and has the right to declare or define himself or herself as disabled by an environment rather than living with a disability. In other words, the social environment plays a large role in determining disability, not the individual. (ElisabthRelchert, 2003).

**Types of disability:**

The PWD Act uses the broad category of people with disabilities and under its rubric puts the areas of functional limitation without really questioning the boundary lines (Anita Ghai, 2003). A person has a disability under the PWD Act if he or she has any of the seven disabilities listed in section 2(i). Disability means (a) Blindness (b) Leprosy-cured (c) Low vision (d) Hearing impairment (e) Locomotors disability (f) Mental retardation and (g) Mental illness. In addition, section 2(t) states: person with disability means a person suffering from not less than 40 per cent of any disability as certified by a medical authority.

**Causes of Disabilities:**

(a) By birth (b) Modern science and technology (c) Lack health education (d) Rail/ Air/ Road accident (e) Violence (f) Occupational health (g) Nuclear weapons (h) Use of chemicals (i) Natural disaster (j) Wrong celebration of festivals (k) Lack of knowledge.

**Problem of Disabled:**

**Psycho-social problems:** There are two main challenges before the physically handicapped individual: (a) how to come terms with the specially disability or impairment which creates many functional and psychological difficulties for him and (b) how to cope with the uncongenial attitudes of the society which tend to produce different types of complexes, conflict and problems in his mind.

**Psychological problems:** In every physically handicapped person there are two conflicting personalities (i) the basic personality and (ii) the personality developed after the consciousness of disablement. The areas of conflict are mainly Body Image, Self Evaluation, Physical insecurity, Emotional insecurity, Social insecurity and Level of Achievement

**Social Image in Disabled:**

(i) **Unfavorable Social Attitude:**Physical disability per se and the consequent psychological disturbances create many difficulties and problems for the physically handicapped individual. Society by and large has had a very negative and unfavorable attitude to the disabled.

(ii) **Attitude of the family:** Attitude of the family towards the, physically handicapped are more crucial than the attitudes of the society at large in determining his self-concept and his attitude towards the world.

(iii) **Disability as a form of social oppression:** Perhaps the sharpest challenge to existing ideas about disability is the argument that disability should be seen as a form of ‘social oppression’,

“**Person with disability**” means a person suffering from not less than forty per cent of any disability as certified by a medical authority.

**Statement of problem**

The disabled community has been fighting for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects in all aspects of life. In this study a sincere attempt is made to understand how persons with disability are excluded and how they could be included in all spheres of life. It is appropriate to understand the concept of discrimination and exclusion, disempowerment, dishonor, and marginalized in the social arena. In this context, the present research intends to study their standard of living, nature of discriminations, challenges faced by the persons with disabilities in encouraging social inclusion and strengthening sustainable livelihood, attaining income security and participating the mainstream activities of society.

**Methods of the study:**

The following are the objectives of the present study:

- (1) To study the socio- economic conditions of the respondents, and
- (2) To know the Problem and prospects faced by persons with disabilities in strengthening and protecting their livelihood.

**Hypothesis:**

- (1) There is an association between occupation and take of help needed for the daily activities

(2) There is an association between education level and efforts to safeguard themselves from natural calamities.

(3) There is an association between educational level and problem faced while expecting other help.

**Selection of study region:** Kanyakumari District in Tamilnadu is selected for the purpose of present study. The major reasons for this selection are the progressive nature of physical and human resource conditions of the district particularly the functioning of governmental and non-governmental origination(civil society) for persons with disabilities.The present study focus on livelihood issues of PWDs and challenges and opportunities in their civil life to maintain social equilibrium.

**Selection of the respondents:** The total number of PWDs in kanyakumari district is 32,547 among them 16,042 of them are 18 years old and above. They have National identity card for differently able and that is issued by the Central Governmental fortheir benefits. The researcher has decided to select only the PWDs of National Identity Card Holders and attained above 18 years old as respondents. From that list it was decided to select 2 per cent of disabled as respondents for the present study. Thus, 315 respondents were selected for the present study through simple random sampling method detailed below.

**Tools for Enquiry and Data Collection:** The researcher has collected the relevant data from the respondents by using a well-structured interview schedule. Based on the pretest questions the interview schedule were restructured and modified so as to ensure a good focus of the research. The researcher visited each PWD household and collected the data personally by establishing a good rapport with them.

**Limitation of the study:** The findings of the study are applicable only to physically disabled and they do not represent mentally challenged. This study covers only kanyakumari district.

### **Findings of the study**

In order to understand the livelihood issues of persons with disabilities the data were collected among disabled persons from kanyakumari district. The data are as follows:

#### **Socio-economic status of PWDs:**

#### **Table No-1 Socio-Economic Status of Respondents**

The general characteristics of the respondents are presented as follows. The characteristics pertain to the 315 respondents. The descriptions of characteristics include due concern for personal characteristics.

(N=315)

S.No.	Socio-Economic Status	Sub Samples	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Age Group	Below 20	13	4.1
		21-30	135	42.9
		31-40	103	32.7
		41-50	48	15.2
		51&above	16	5.1
2.	Caste	Forward castes	2	0.6
		Backward castes	279	88.6
		Most backward castes	23	7.3
		SC/ST	11	3.5
3.	Religion	Hindus	128	40.6
		Christians	181	57.5
		Muslims	6	1.9
		Illiterate	12	3.8
4.	Educational Status	Primary Level	64	20.3
		Middle school level	44	14.0
		Higher secondary level	66	21.0
		College level	129	41.0
5.	Monthly Income	Below 25,000	195	61.9
		25,001-50,000	62	19.7
		50,001-75,000	22	7.0
		75,001 & above	36	11.4

Regarding socio economic characteristic of the respondents 42.9 per cent of them belong to the age group of 21-30 years, most of them are males, more than half (57.5%) of them are Christians. Among 40.6 per cent of Hindus, majority belong to backward community. Forty one per cent of the respondents studied upto college level and only half (46.3%) of them are employed in private concerns. More than half (61.9%) of them respondents annual income is below rupees 25,000. Among the total PWDs half (48.9) of them are unmarried and only 40.6% of them are married. That is both unmarried and married respondents are almost equal in number. More than half (64.4%) of them possess own land. From the results it is clear that above half (52.1%) of them are living in pucca houses and great majority (92.4%) of them have own houses. Most of the respondents have electricity connection, LPG connection and toilet facility in their house.

#### **Nature of disability**

It is deals with nature , causes level of disablement, age at which they become disabled, and aspects which they become disabled and aspects related to social inclusion or exclusion.

**Table No- 2 Distribution of the Respondents by their Causes of the Disablement**

S.No.	Reason for their Disablement	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Hereditary	289	91.8
2	Accident	17	5.4
3	Affected Polio	7	2.2
4	Leprosy healing	2	0.6
<b>Total</b>		<b>315</b>	<b>100</b>

Most (91.8%) of the respondents expressed that heredity is the reason behind their disablement, 5.4 percent of the respondents is due to accident and 2.2 percent respondents are affected and two respondents are affected leprosy. (78.1%) of the respondents become disabled in between 1-5 years of age.

#### **Problem and prospects of PWDs:**

**Table No-3 Distribution of the respondents by their livelihood challenges**

S.No.	Livelihood challenges	No of Respondents		Total Percentage
		Yes	No	
1	Complete involvement in the physical Activities	164 (52.6)	15 (47.94)	315 (100)
2	Taking food	120 (38.01)	195 (61.99)	315 (100)
3	Getting job for their educational attainment	65 (21.5)	238 (78.5)	315 (100)
4	Problem faced during their studies	175 (55.55)	140 (44.45)	315 (100)
5	Dependence on less to perform their job	184 (59.37)	131 (41.58)	315 (100)
6	Socio-economic problem	222 (72.0)	86 (27.0)	315 (100)
7	Problem in work place	192 (60.95)	123 (39.05)	315 (100)

With respect to the problems and prospects the respondents faced during their studies, more than half of them pointed out that they had problems of transportation during their study periods. Great majority informed that they had amicable relationship with their co-. More than half of them informed their classmates had cordial relationship with them. Majority of them informed that they could execute their work without others help and more than half of them stated that the wage/salary they are getting is

enough for them. More than half of them expressed that they could encounter the barriers by themselves while going for the job.

Regarding level of satisfaction about taking nutritious food items and wellness, majority reveal that taking nutrition food is not sufficient for maintaining their positive health and welfares. Large number (73.7%) of the respondents expressed that they have adequate medical facility and sufficient medicine. Regarding respondents level of satisfaction about their educational attainment, the data reveals that they are satisfied with their educational level. Only one third (27.4%) of the respondents are not satisfied. It is observed during field study that the disabled persons always want to achieve something and hence they study well in order to engage some occupation.

**Table No- 4, Distribution of Respondents by their Occupation and Type of Help Needed for Some Daily Activity**

Occupation	Type of Help Needed for Some Daily Activity								Total
	Help needed morning for routine work	To take bathing	To eat food	To do physical exercise	To travel	To go to job	To cook food	To read	
Self employee	0	6 (1.9%)	0	12 (3.8%)	59 (11.7%)	37 (11.7%)	23 (7.3%)	12 (3.8%)	149 (47.3%)
Private employee	13 (4.1%)	0	8 (2.5%)	2 (0.6%)	82 (26.0%)	12 (3.8%)	10 (3.2%)	19 (6.0%)	146 (46.3%)
Government employee	0	0	1 (0.3%)	2 (0.6%)	7 (2.2%)	1 (0.3%)	2 (0.6%)	0	13 (4.1%)
Unemployed	0	0	0	5 ((1.6%)	2 (0.6%)	0	0	0	7 (2.2%)
Total	13 (4.1%)	6 (1.9%)	9 (2.9%)	21 (6.7%)	150 (47.6%)	50 (15.9%)	35 (11.1%)	31 (9.8%)	315 (100.0%)

Calculated Chi-square Value	Degrees of freedom	Level of Significance
112.167	21	0.001(1)

S – Significant

It could be indicated from the above data that majority (47.6%) of the respondents need others help to travel among them 26.0 per cent are private employees. The chi-square value shows that the relationship between occupation and type and help needed for the daily activities is statistically significant.

Regarding occupation, the results reveal that the respondents' livelihood is ensured by the nature and type of occupation they have. However half of them disagree that the education strengthen their socio-economic worth and happy life and more than half of them need others help to perform their occupation. The study results reveal that for majority of the respondents' occupation facilitated them to increase their income and in turn help them to incorporate in the mainstream activities of social life and tackle the livelihood crisis harmoniously. The study also reveals that for majority of the respondents' occupation facilitated them to increase their income life and in turn help them to incorporate in the mainstream activities of social life and tackle the livelihood crisis harmoniously. The study also reveals that for majority of the respondents, occupation assisted them to overcome their socio-economic problems and to lead a dignified life. However, most of the respondents facing livelihood crisis like, dependence on others to perform to pertain their job and facing problems due to their physical realities.

**Table No-5 Distribution of Respondents by their Educational Level and Efforts to Safeguard Themselves from Natural Calamities.**

Educational Level	Efforts to Safeguard Themselves from Natural Calamities		Total
	Yes	No	
Illiteracy	1 (0.3%)	11 (3.5%)	12 (3.8%)
Primary	37 (11.7%)	27 (8.6%)	64 (20.3%)
Secondary	21 (6.7%)	23 (7.3%)	44 (14.0%)
Higher Secondary	41 (13.0%)	25 (7.9%)	66 (21.0%)
College	48 (15.2%)	81 (25.7%)	129 (41.0%)
Total	148 (47.0%)	167 (53.0%)	315 (100.0%)

Calculated Chi-square Value	Degrees of freedom	Level of Significance
21.24	4	0.0003 (S)

S - Significant

It could be noted from the above data that 41.0 per cent of the respondents studied upto college level and among them just above one forth (25.7%) of them said that they were not able to safeguard themselves from the natural calamities. The chi-square value shows that there is a significant relationship between educational level of the respondents and their ability to safeguard themselves from the natural calamities.



Most of the respondents have confidence about their life also they do not worry about their future. However, for nearly one third of the respondents expressed that despite their hard work there is very little improvements in their livelihood due to limited opportunity, poor social support and physical conditions. Just above half of them are of the opinion that their self reliance and self esteem contributed them large extent to sustain their livelihood taken effort to boost their income through other sources and to lead towards social and economic inclusion. Most(69.2%) of them expressed that their livelihood has sustained and good majority of them expressed that they get equal respect in the society due to improvement in their social arena. More than half (58.1%) of them have talent and special skill. Majority of the respondents stated that their special skill has not enabled them to have social position and self respect as well as economic upliftment. Most of the respondents felt that their family members threat them equal on par with others and more than half (56.2%) of them informed that there were freedom to participate in socio cultural activity without any bias, social differentiation and inequalities.

**Table No-6 Distribution of the Respondents by their Educational Level and Problem Faced While Expecting Others Help**

<b>Problem Faced While Expecting Others Help</b>						
<b>Educational Level</b>	<b>Very High</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Less</b>	<b>Not facing problem</b>	<b>Total</b>
Illiteracy	6 (1.9%)	5 (1.6%)	0	0	1 (0.3%)	12 (3.8%)
Primary	46 (14.6%)	7 (2.2%)	3 (1.0%)	4 (1.3%)	4 (1.3%)	64 (20.3%)
Secondary	7 (2.2%)	9 (2.9%)	14 (4.4%)	3 (1.0%)	11 (3.5%)	44 (14.0%)
Higher Secondary	10 (3.2%)	20 (6.3%)	7 (2.2%)	15 (4.8%)	14 (4.4%)	66 (21.0%)
College	23 (7.3%)	22 (7.0%)	40 (12.7%)	27 (8.6%)	17 (5.4%)	129 (41.0%)
Total	92 (29.2%)	63 (20.0%)	64 (20.3%)	49 (15.6%)	47 (14.9%)	315 (100.0s%)

<b>Calculated Chi-square Value</b>	<b>Degrees of freedom</b>	<b>Level of Significance</b>
108.1	16	0.0001(S)

S – Significant

It is understood from the above table that 41.0 per cent of the respondents studied up to college level among there the level of problem faced by 12.7 percent of the respondents is normal. The chi-square

value shows that there is a significant relationship between educational level of the respondents and their level of problem faced while expecting other help.

Majority of them eagerly participate in the social activity (public domain) to the larger extent to maintain social equilibrium and above half (56.2%) of them expressed that they were equally treated by their friends and access social potentiality. Merely half (48.3%) of the respondents felt that people aiding them to some extent for accessing life supporting system and dignified life. Majority (43.3%) of the respondents felt that the family members ignored them during family function and they are not willing to treat them equally during family and public functions. Most of them informed that the love and affection shown by the family members was less followed by very less. The level of participation of the respondents in their relatives' family function is very high. It is evident from the results that majority of them are excluded from social life. Most of them expressed that they have social and economic security from the family, community, public and governments. Despite the treatment, social support and welfare measures, majority of the respondents felt deprived and only 20.9% of the study respondents expressed that they do not have such feeling.

### Conclusions

It is concluded from the study that the nature of disablement is comparatively severe, they are able to lead a dignified and comfortable life. Most of them are supported by government organizations and NGO's family members, friends, class mates and co-workers and thereby lead a barrier free, inclusive, normal life with self respect. Further they do not feel much deprived and vulnerable because they have not only because about their future but also carrying social support system.

### Reference:

- Alan Roulstone and SomonPrideaux (2012), "**Understanding Disability, policy**", UK: The policy press.
- Ambati Nageswara Rao (2013), '**Poverty, Disability and Social Exclusion in India**', Rawat Publications, Jaipur.
- Borarian, M.P., and Ravichandran, A. (2012), '**Status and problems of Children with Disabilities**', New delhi: Kanisha publishers.
- Davidson-pain, C., and Corbert, J. (1995), '**A Double Coming Out; Gay Men with Learning Disabilities**', British Journal of learning Disabilities, 23:147-51.
- Gibson, S.F., and Depoy, E.(2002), '**Theoretical Approaches to Disability Content in Social Work Education**', 38.1:153-65.
- Glesson, B.J. (1997), "**Disability Student: A Historical Materialist View Disability and**

**Society” 12(2).**

InsaKlasing (2007), **‘Disability and Social Inclusion in Rural India’**, New Delhi; Rawat Publication.

Jayanthkumar (2007), **Inclusion Vs Exclusion**, The Sociologist, Vol.1(1).

Thangamayan V. and R. Murugesan (2016), **‘Disabled Person Poverty in India’ in Social Exclusion and Inclusion of Women in India**, Vol.11,Chennai: MJP Publishers.