



The status of women with disabilities in Telangana with respect to education

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Abstract

The present study was carried out to find out the status of women with disabilities in Telangana with respect to education. The sample for the present study consisted of 332 women with disabilities (160 OD, 79 VD and 93 HD) between the age range of 20-40 years and was drawn from Hyderabad and Ranga Reddy Districts. The subjects were selected using non probability sampling technique. For the present study convenient sampling method was used. The researcher had developed the questionnaire, and conducted Interviews, Objectives of the study were to find out the Status of women with disabilities in Education, to compare the Status of different categories of women with disabilities in Education, The present study has revealed that a difference was found in the status of women with disabilities in education, there is a significant difference in the educational status among Orthopedic Disabilities, Visually Disabilities and hearing Disabilities. This may be due to the availability of educational facilities. The item analysis and the data from personal interviews indicated that the present educational facilities are inadequate. They face problems due to inaccessible transport facilities and accessibility to buildings and other facilities in pursuing education. The findings of the present study can be used as a source of information to government institutions, non- government institutions, special schools, researchers and all those who are working in the field of rehabilitation centers for persons with disabilities and especially for women with disabilities. It can also be used to integrate women with disabilities in the society and assess their role in development programs.

Introduction

According to WHO Action Plan (2006-2011) 10% of the world's population experiences some form of disability or impairment. In South-east Asia, the prevalence of disability ranges from 1.5 – 21.3% of the total population, depending on definition and severity of disability (Mont 2007). According to the *Census 2011*, The population of women with disabilities in Andhra Pradesh is 10,42,148 out of which 21,899, stays in Hyderabad and 23,754 in Ranga Reddy Districts. Women are half of the human

population and women with disabilities comprise a similar proportion of persons with disabilities. It is the fact that women with disabilities face the same discrimination that women without disabilities have

Disability

The term 'disability' refers to loss of health, where health is conceptualized in terms of functioning capacity in a set of health domains such as mobility, cognition, hearing and vision (WHO 2004). The Person with Disabilities



(Equal opportunities, protection of rights and full participation) Act 1995 defines disability in the specific context of person suffering from not less than 40% of any disability as certified by a medical authority.

Disability is a barrier to education. Only a few of women with disabilities proceeded to university education and the highest enrolment can be seen at under graduation level. Most of them drop out from school due to inaccessible educational institutions, especially women with physical disabilities. Also hostel facilities for girls with disabilities are very less. In spite of all these inconveniences and handicapping atmosphere, girls/women with disabilities are pursuing education in mainstream schools and colleges.

Categories of Disabilities

As explained earlier there are various types of disabilities. As per the PWD Act (1995) there are seven categories of disabilities, which are explained below.

1. Blindness
2. Low vision
3. Leprosy-cured
4. Hearing impairment
5. Loco motor disability
6. Mental retardation
7. Mental illness

Causes of Disability

Disability is caused by various causes and is grouped in to prenatal, prenatal and postnatal causes.

Prenatal causes: Those disabilities that are acquired before birth. These may be due to diseases that have harmed the mother during pregnancy, or genetic incompatibilities between the parents.

Perinatal causes: Those disabilities that are acquired during birth. This could be due to prolonged lack of oxygen or the obstruction of the respiratory tract,

damage to the brain during birth (due to the accidental misuse of forceps, for example) or the baby being born prematurely.

Postnatal causes: Those disabilities gained after birth. They can be due to accidents, infection or other illnesses.

Women with Disabilities

Disabled women are women who have one or more impairments and experience barriers in society. We include disabled girls and women of colleges, in rural and urban areas, regardless of the severity of the impairment, regardless of sexual preference and regardless of cultural background, or whether they live in the community or an institution. Therefore, the needs of girls with disabilities may be more special than needs of any other groups and have to be addressed in all spheres of education. Regarding education, boys with disabilities attend school more frequently than girls with disabilities. The women with disabilities are twice to three times more likely to be victims of physical and sexual abuse than non-disabled women.

Resources and Opportunities for Women with Disabilities

In many communities women have fewer resources and opportunities than men. This inequality between men and women is also true among persons with disabilities. Wheel chairs, artificial limbs, sign language classes, Braille slates and other resources often expensive and less available for disabled women than for disabled men. Without aids like these, girls and women with disabilities are unable to avail the opportunities to get benefit for themselves. As a result, they are not able to get suitable jobs to take control of their own lives and to be a contributing member of the society.

Significance and Scope of the Study



According to Article 41 of the Constitution, "There state shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development make effective provisions for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other cases of underserved want". The results of the study will provide information on the implementation of the schemes and benefits, the educational and employment facilities and the attitude of family and the community towards them. To fulfill the objective of the researcher aims to collect the information through a questionnaire and interviewing women with disabilities to find out the educational status. The findings of the study will help the service providers, administrators, government officials and philanthropists in improving the services and educational and vocational training to women with disabilities and to avoid various discriminations from the society. In this way it is very probable that this study will be able to contribute, within the limitations of its scope, with qualitative and quantitative explanations about the status of women with disabilities.

Statement of the Problem

The aim of the study is to investigate the status of women with disabilities in Telangana with respect to educational status.

Objectives of the Study

1. To compare the Status of different categories of women with disabilities with respect to Education

Operational Definitions

Status

For the present study the status indicates the position and opinion of

women with disabilities in a society in terms of Educational status.

Women with disabilities

In the present study women with disabilities include women who have Orthopedic disability, Visual disability, and Hearing disability.

Women with Orthopedic Disability

Women with Orthopedic disability refer to defects in size and structure of bones and joints with difference in muscles. The condition may be present at birth or due to disease or accident.

Women with Visual Disability

For the present study women with visual disability refer to an individual with blind having no vision or light view and an individual with low vision whose central visual acuity is better than 20/200 and worse than 20/70.

Women with Hearing Disability

Hearing Disability refers to individuals who are deaf having hearing loss that prevents understanding speech through the ear and having hard of hearing whether permanent or fluctuating. Individual with hearing disabilities is usually describe in terms of slight, mild, moderate, severe and profound depending on the degrees of hearing loss.

Telangana

Telangamna means one of the States under Constitution of India which comprises of 31 districts, Hyderabad and Ranga Reddy districts were covered for data collection.

Studies Related to Education

Hussain (2011) had conducted a study on "Problems faced by physical disabilities students in educational institutions in district Kohat".

Fatema & Trivedi (2010) had conducted a study on "Educational aspiration of



physically handicapped children – A comparative study

Panda (2010) had conducted a study on “Emotional intelligence of visual disabilities adolescent girls in relation to their level of aspiration and educational achievement.

Alquatibisol (2009) had conducted a study on deaf students in higher education,

Khan (2006) had conducted a study on “Determinants of academic success of visual challenged children of secondary school a factorial study”

Mohan (2001) conducted a study on “problems and needs of visual impaired student at secondary level in Andhra Pradesh.

Satapathy & Singha (2002) had conducted a study on “Academic performance of visual disabilities and hearing-disabilities”.

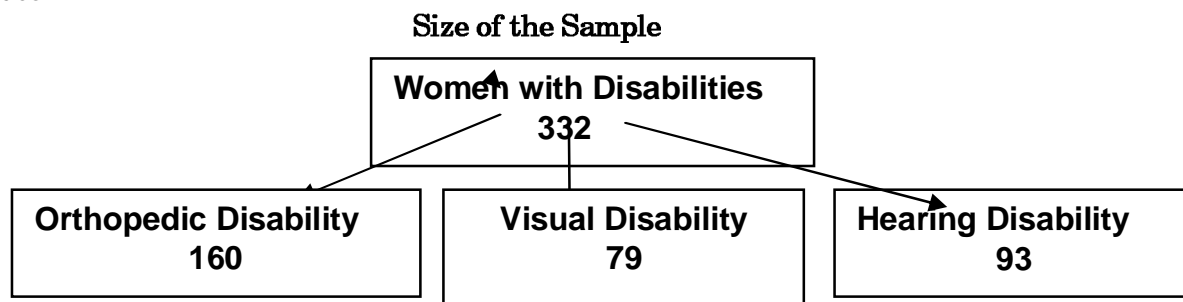
Karunanidhi & Ravindra (1998) Conducted study on “Adjustment among Orthopedic Disabilities and normal”

Hypothesis

1. There will be no significant difference in the educational status among the different categories of women with disabilities.

Sample Size

The sample size set for the study was 332 women with disabilities out of which 160 are having orthopedic disability, 79 are having visual disability, and 93 are having hearing disability.



Variables

Independent variables: Categories of women with disabilities, orthopedic disability, Visual disability, Hearing disability.

Dependent variables: Status of women with disabilities (Education)

Tools used

The researcher had developed a questionnaire for collecting the data and interviewed thirty disabled women to get more in depth information.

Pilot Study

The questionnaire was given to 15 women with disabilities by hand with necessary instructions. Later the

researcher collected the questionnaires personally from them.

Statistical Techniques

Each subject of the sample was given an identification number by serially numbering from one to three hundred and thirty two and entered in a master sheet. The collected data was edited, coded then entered against the identification number of each subject. Based on the objectives of the study the data was analyzed. Tests of significance such as ANOVA, Fisher’s least significant difference test, and t-test were used to find out the significance. The statistical analysis of data was done through



computer application using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Comparison of Educational Status among the different categories of Women With Disabilities

Hypothesis 1: - There will be no significant difference in the educational status among the different categories of women with disabilities.

Table-2 Mean and SD of Educational Status of Women with Disabilities

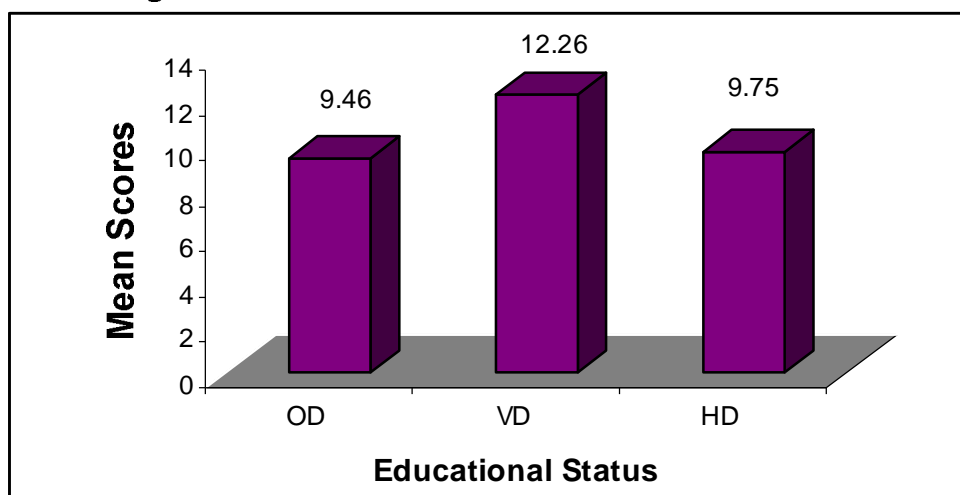
| Domain | Disability Type | n | Mean | SD |
|-----------|-----------------|-----|-------|------|
| Education | OD | 160 | 9.46 | 2.90 |
| | VD | 79 | 12.26 | 3.24 |
| | HD | 93 | 9.75 | 3.03 |
| | Total | 332 | 10.21 | 3.22 |

*OD-Orthopedic disability, VD- Visual Disability, HD – Hearing Disability

Above table indicates the mean scores and SD of all the three groups. The mean and SD of OD women is 9.46 and 2.90. The mean of visual disabilities

women is 12.26 and SD is 3.24. The mean of HI women is 9.75 SD is 3.03 and overall mean is 10.21 and SD is 3.22.

Figure-1 Educational Status of Women with Disabilities



It is evident from the data as well as the figure that there is a difference in the mean scores among the groups. The visual disabilities has the highest mean score with 12.26 followed by HI with mean 9.75 and OD with least mean score 9.46.

To find out whether there is any significant difference in mean scores among the three groups One Way Analysis of Variance was carried out and the analysis of data is given below.



Table-2 Summary of One Way Analysis of Variance on Educational Status among Women with Disabilities

| Domain | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-----------|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|------|
| Education | Between Groups | 441.243 | 2 | 220.621 | 24.142 | .000 |
| | Within Groups | 3006.573 | 329 | 9.139 | | |
| | Total | 3447.816 | 331 | | | |

From entries given in table-2 results it can be seen that F-ratio is 24.14 which is statistically significant at $p < 0.01$ level. Therefore the hypothesis that there will be no significant difference in the educational status

among the different categories of women with disabilities is rejected.

Further to find out which pair of means significantly differ; Fisher's least significant difference test was carried out. The results are summarized in the table below.

Table-3 Fisher's Least Significant Difference Test for Difference in pairs of Means in Educational status among the groups

| Domain | Pair wise(Groups) | Mean Difference | Sig |
|-----------|-------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Education | OD-VD | 2.79 | $P < 0.01$ |
| | OD-HD | 0.28 | $p > 0.05$ |
| | VD-HD | 2.51 | $P < 0.01$ |

***OD-Orthopedic disability, VD- Visual Disability, HD – Hearing Disability**

The above table indicates that the mean difference between orthopedic and visual disabilities is 2.79 and visual and hearing disabilities is 2.51. It is evident that there is a significant difference in educational status between women with visual and

orthopedic disability and women with visual and hearing disability. This means that the educational status of women with visual disabilities higher than women with orthopedic and hearing disabilities.



This may be due to the highest enrollment in the special schools as the number of special schools may be higher when compared to other disabilities. In addition the technological inventions have made possible for persons with visual disability to have an access to education. The difference may be because of the inaccessibility to the educational institutions, lack of hostel facilities, barrier free environment in the educational institutions and other places and lack of appropriate aids and appliances and financial support for women with Orthopedic and Hearing Disabilities.

Further to describe most of the women with disabilities who are pursuing education have to attend in formal schools due to the existing provision of free primary education. Therefore enrolment in special education is much lower. A massive dropout rate occurs from primary to secondary level. The girls and women with disabilities were either teased or their ventures to study were not supported by other members of their surrounding environment. Girls and Women with disabilities residing in hostels face problems due to absence of female house parent which limits sharing of womanly and other essential needs.

In spite of all these inconveniences and handicapping environment, women with disabilities have potentials to be in mainstream education. Some are in education process where their disability is not visibly identified. Women and girls with disabilities fare less in the educational arena than either their disabled male or non disabled female counterparts. (Rouso, 2010) Education is deemed less important for girls in the Indian society as they are not expected to become breadwinners. Disability limits their opportunities even more. Many girls

with disabilities are not only denied access to education, but also hidden away, as disability is perceived as a stigma.

The result of the present study is supported by the findings of Anam (2002) who stated that disability is a barrier to education. But the problems related to attitude, accessibility to existing facilities, options and awareness level of others also act as barriers for the education of women with disabilities.

Major Findings of the Study

In the present study the data was collected to find out the status of women with Orthopedic, Visual and Hearing disabilities on educational aspects. The results indicated the following.

The data analysis on educational status revealed a significant difference among the three groups of women with Disabilities. The pair wise comparison indicates that the pairs OD – VD and VD-HD differ significantly and no significant difference was found between the groups OD - HD. This means that the status of women with Visual Disability is higher than the other two groups. The item analysis and the data from personal interviews indicated that the present educational facilities are inadequate. They face problems due to inaccessible transport facilities and accessibility to buildings and other facilities in pursuing education and employment

Educational implications (conclusion)

1. The support from the central and state governments in the form of special provisions, schemes and benefits certainly has improved the status of women with disabilities in recent years. However, much more need to be done in raising the educational level of girls and women with disabilities.

2. The educational institutions should provide the appropriate education



to children with disabilities. For e.g. a child with Visual Disability needs mobility training, special materials such as Brail, embossed teaching learning material, A child with Hearing Disability require language and speech training, hearing aids, training in sign language etc and a child with Orthopedic Disability needs a wheel chair/ tricycle/calipers/ crutches and an infrastructure facility for his/her mobility. Apart from teachers, therapists support is essential in educational institutions.

3. Need based technical and professional training courses to be planned and the training centers along with hostels be available for women with disabilities. Economic independence will certainly foster the development of self confidence and encourages them to face challenges in their lives.

Conclusion

Women with disabilities have historically been neglected by those concerned with issues of disability. Often it is observed that the special needs of these children are not met in educational institutions. Therefore they are unable to achieve the knowledge and skills to the optimum level. In addition, financial problems and in accessibility to various facilities further discourages women with disabilities to pursue education. As

employment is linked with education the chances of getting gainful employment is less. In view of this more efforts are needed from the government to improve the rehabilitation services for women with disabilities by having adequate budget provision to increase the number of educational facilities with appropriate staff and infrastructure facilities.

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