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Sunita Tripathi
Research Scholar, Department of
Home Science, University of
Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India

Dr. Neena Mathur
Associate prof. & former Head B.
Sc (H. Sc), Mahila Vidyalaya PG
College, Lucknow, Uttar
Pradesh, India

Socio-economic status of disabled women

Sunita Tripathi and Dr. Neena Mathur

Abstract

Disability is a curse for all. Disabled women in particular face greater challenge for their very survival. Disabled women face several kinds of discrimination and reduced access to education, employment and other socioeconomic opportunities. Disabled women stand at a disadvantageous position in society. Their status is not only inferior to that of men, disabled women also face gender bias from their male counterparts. The objective of the present study is to examine the socio economic status of disabled women. The study was conducted in three districts of Uttar Pradesh. The sample consisted of 300 disabled women. Personal interview technique was used for data collection. Various government schemes for the betterment and upliftments for disabled women have failed to bring desired result. Majority of disabled women living in extremely pathetic condition belong to lowest strata of the society. Among different types of disabilities the prevalence of locomotors disability was highest, followed by visual, hearing and mental disability. Very few were engaged in some job and have access to various schemes and legislative measures passed by the government for the welfare of these neglected and poverty strikes miserable lots

Keywords: Disability, Socio economic.

Introduction

The concept of women with disability started with the notion that they can become an important part of the globalised era. Disabled women are subject to a long history of neglect, segregation, isolation, deprivation, charity, welfare and even pity. This list is supplemented with conditions of ignorance and poverty. Poorer sections of the society are invariably more prone to these factors. Although the rehabilitation measures have been taken by government and non-government organizations, it has not given the desired results which need immediate attention. Those are have always been ignored, empowerment programmes for women do not include issues of disabled women, development programmes rarely address the needs of disabled women or include them in community development programmes, disabled women are seen imperfect, incomplete, inferior, asexual, and non-productive and denial recognition as women and human beings. As per the report of World Health Organization Report of World Health Organization (WHO) (2011), the rate of disability is more than a billion in the world. It is more observed in developing countries with the increase in population, medical advances and ageing process. According to the committee on 'Rights of Persons with Disabilities', 2013, there is gender stereotypes that violence against women with disabilities has unique forms, unique causes and unique consequences. Rashida Manjoo (2011) [2] revealed in her study that women with disabilities face double or intersectional discrimination based on gender and disability (as well as other identities such as race, sexuality, indigenous status, etc.). Morris (1993) [3] discusses that there is absence of women with disabilities from feminist scholarship and feminist theory. She discusses her anger and frustration with feminism in two ways: first, that disability is generally invisible from feminism's mainstream agenda, and second, that when disability is a subject of research by feminists, the researchers objectifies disabled people so that the research is alienated from their experiences rather than attempting to understand the experiences of disabled women.

So, there is a need of research done by the disabled women themselves across the globe so that the real picture can be uncovered. There are differences of issues in the women disabilities in view with education, economic status, categorization, culture and government policies of every state and country. The study tried to find out the relations between categorization of disability, economic standard, educational qualification, monthly income with women empowerment,

Correspondence
Sunita Tripathi
Research Scholar, Department of
Home Science, University of
Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India

it clearly shows that due to their disability, most of them are subject to violence, betrayed by husband, they are deprived of good education, livelihood for which they feel that they are being marginalized. The disabled women those suffering from mental illness or mental retardation face the worst stigma and are subject to severe social exclusion. There is negative attitude of the society regarding the marriage of people with disabilities. People think that they are asexual and ineligible to marry. So, they do not plan about their marriage. Disabled girls are usually married to older men or unemployed person and become a source of income for them. The country can be developed fully only when this disability group is taken care of and fully involved in the inclusive growth.

Materials and method

The study was conducted in purposively selected districts of U.P which are Bahraich, Lucknow and Kanpur. The demographic profiles of these districts are same. From each district 100 samples of working disabled women were taken. A total of 300 working disabled women were used for study who were nearly engaged in income generating activities. During the study it was found that only visual, hearing and locomotor disabled women engaged in income generating

activities. Personal interview technique and observation methods were used to collect data from the respondent. Frequency, percentage, mean percent scores and chi square test using for statistical analysis.

The present study is an attempt to analyse the socio economic status of disabled women in the urban scenario. The study was conducted by both the qualitative and quantitative methods using complete enumeration.

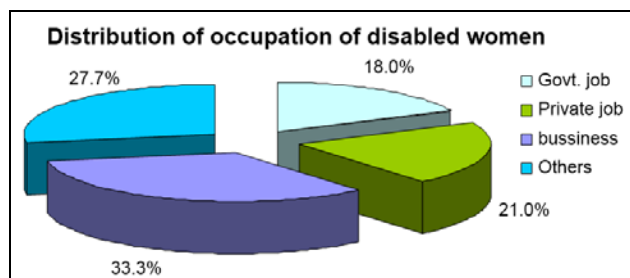
Findings of the study

The study clearly indicates that majority 54.7% working disabled women belong to the age group of 31-45 years. 23% belong to the age group of 18-30 years and 22.3% belong to the age group of 46-60 years respectively. Caste wise classification shows that majority 62% of working disabled women belonged to the OBC category. 20.3% belong to the SC &ST and 17.7% disabled women belong to the upper caste. Majority 52.3% working disabled are married. 37.7% are unmarried, 6.1% are widow and 4% are divorcee respectively. Family structure of the working disabled women showed that majority 57% of the working disabled women live in large family. 22.7% medium and 20.3% live in small family.

Table 1: Distribution of education of disabled women

Education	Visual		Hearing		Locomotor		Total		χ^2 value	p value
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%		
Illiterate	21	19.4	16	14.8	71	65.7	108	36.0	23.51	0.053
Can read & write	11	15.1	9	12.3	53	72.6	73	24.3		
Primary	3	6.1	3	9.1	28	84.8	33	11.0		
Middle	2	9.5	2	9.5	17	81.0	21	7.0		
High school	1	4.8	1	4.8	19	90.5	21	7.0		
Intermediate	1	5.9	0	0.0	16	94.1	17	5.7		
Graduate	0	0.0	0	0.0	17	100.0	17	5.7		
Post graduate & above	0	0.0	0	0.0	10	100.0	10	3.3		

Table 1 clearly shows educational status of disabled women. Majority 36% working disabled women are illiterate, 24.3% only can read and write, 11% primary level, similar 7% middle and high school, 5.7% similar intermediate and graduate, only 3.3% had higher educational qualification ie. Post graduate and above. The reason behind that the low literacy level is accessibility but was not limited to physical accessibility alone, thus highlighting the complexities within the concern of accessibility besides architectural barriers and especially absence of ramps and toilets were the problems of long distance travel to reach the school and harassment by bus drivers, among them the lack of disabled friendly toilet facility which after a certain age become a cause for drop outs.



It is well known that employment is generally much lower for disabled than for others, but there is a further divide when it comes to involvement of women with disabilities in livelihood and other activities by disability. In general, women with mobility condition fare better while no employer wants to give employ women with disabilities in the mentally retarded category as they do not reach an acceptable level of education or skill to be employable. Regarding occupational status of disabled women majority 33.3% in government job, 27.7% other type of job, 21% are employed in private sector and 18% involved in business sector.

Regarding house possession of working disabled women majority 69.3% women live in rented house and 68% live in pucca house, 17.7% live in katcha type of house and 14.3% live in mixed house. Majority 89.7% working women had electricity facility in their home. And 10.3% disabled women had no electricity in the home. It is good news that 100% working disabled women used LPG gas in their home and maximum utility appliances available in the home of disabled women.

Majority 57.7% working disabled women had no transport facility. 17.3% had bicycle/tricycle, 14.3% had two wheeler and 10.7% disable women had four wheeler transport facility in the home. Regarding print/ electronic facility available in the house of working disabled women majority 39.3% women

had TV with cable connection in the home, 27.7% had telephone, 12% had computer with internet connection, 10.3%

read newspaper/magazine, and 7.7% listen radio and 3% had no electronic /print facility available in the ho

Table 2: Distribution of overall socioeconomic status of disabled women (n=300)

Socioeconomic status	Visual		Hearing		Locomotors		Total		χ^2 value	p value
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%		
High	7	29.2	4	16.7	13	54.2	24	8.0	12.23	0.016
Medium	9	17.6	7	13.7	35	68.6	51	17.0		
Low	22	9.8	20	8.9	183	81.3	224	75.0		

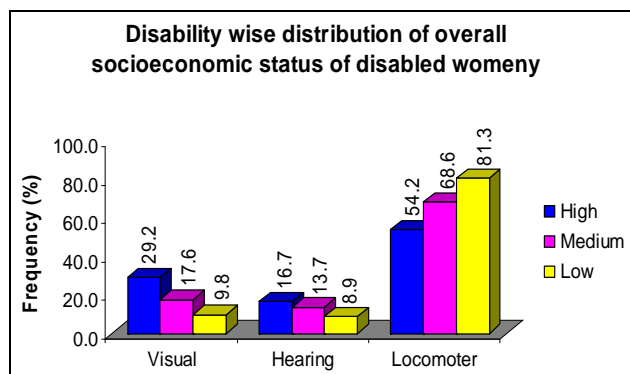


Table 2 clearly indicates that Majority 75% working disabled women comes under the low socio-economic status and maximum belong to a locomotors disability. 17% medium and only 8% working disabled women come under high socio economic status.

Conclusion

Disabled women are always victim of neglect in the society. Majority of disabled women belong to a low socio-economic status and very few of them come from well to do families. They do not have proper education and regular income. These unfortunate women entirely depend more or less on support from their families. They cannot assert for their rights too. These disabled women are too poor to earn their livelihood, and lead an honorable life. They do not have access to the policies and programmes of the government for their amelioration. So there is need to know actual status of disabled women and problems faced by them in their eyes. Recently government launched number of programme and policies for disabled people but not a single programme especially for disabled women which is necessary for their development and help to add with mainstream of the society.

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