

Problems of working disabled women

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Abstract: *No nation, society and family can flourish and be happy if fifty percent of its population, women and girls are not respected, free and happy. Not just in India, but in most countries of the world, women have been discriminated, excluded from decision making at all levels, marginalised and disempowered. In the case of women with disability suffer on both accounts, for being woman and also for being disabled. This study has emphasized on the conditions of women with disability, particularly in the state of Uttar Pradesh in India. This study explores to find out the constraints faced by the working disabled women. The study has emphasized to explore the ways out to bring them into the main stream. 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.*

Key Words: *Women with disabilities, women harassment, women empowerment.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Disabled women are the most vulnerable in Indian society. This vulnerability exists across class and caste. Deeper insight into the scenario reveals the fact that, though men and women suffer equally because of disability, some problems are exclusively women's problems. In a patriarchal society if disability affects boys and girls in almost identical fashions female child, faces the humiliation more than a boy. In India usually birth of sons is always celebrated; the birth of a girl is never has such celebration and the birth of a disabled girl always considered as a curse. A disabled boy is more acceptable than a disabled girl. If a family has a disabled boy they will do their best to make him a productive male which is not so when it comes to girls.

The causes of the increased risk of abuse to women with disabilities are numerous and complex. One of the key reasons is the disability itself: a woman with a serious disability may not be able to physically fight back or walk away from a potentially harmful situation. A woman with a cognitive impairment may not understand what is happening to her. A woman with communication impairment may not be able to tell people what is happening to her. Also, women with lifelong disabilities are taught to be compliant, and discouraged from being assertive. This very compliance, which is taught because it makes them easier to care for, can reduce the likelihood that a woman with a disability will speak out against an abusive situation

Disabled women have limited scope to get employment because of the multiple problems like stigma and discrimination, physical access, lack of technical expertise etc. There are also a lot of problems for disabled women to be self-employed. They face problems in obtaining raw materials and marketing their products, so they are left with no other option but to take up piecework. Evidences show that since ages disabled women have been doing routine and ill paid jobs like weaving, basket making, sewing, assembling of toys and production of handicraft items.

The major challenge which the disabled women fail to circumvent is the issue of access. In some facilities and in smaller offices there are no facilities at all. A survey conducted in 2004 audited the disability access of public offices in Mumbai, found that only 30 percent of the offices were truly equipped and followed the physical access norms. There were no ramps, washrooms, wheelchair access, disabled friendly toilets and libraries. The other challenge which most disabled face is in the area of discrimination. While disabled persons irrespective of their gender face discrimination in terms of their career growth prospect, holding senior management positions etc. women with disabilities face various kinds of discrimination some as serious as sexual harassment. Since most organizations had no mechanism to address their grievances, women silently faced the harassment.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

The main objective of the study to identify the constraints faced by the women with disability engaged in income generating activities.

3. MATERIALS AND METHOD:

The study was conducted in purposively selected districts of Uttar Pradesh 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. 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 study was conducted by both the qualitative and quantitative methods using complete enumeration.

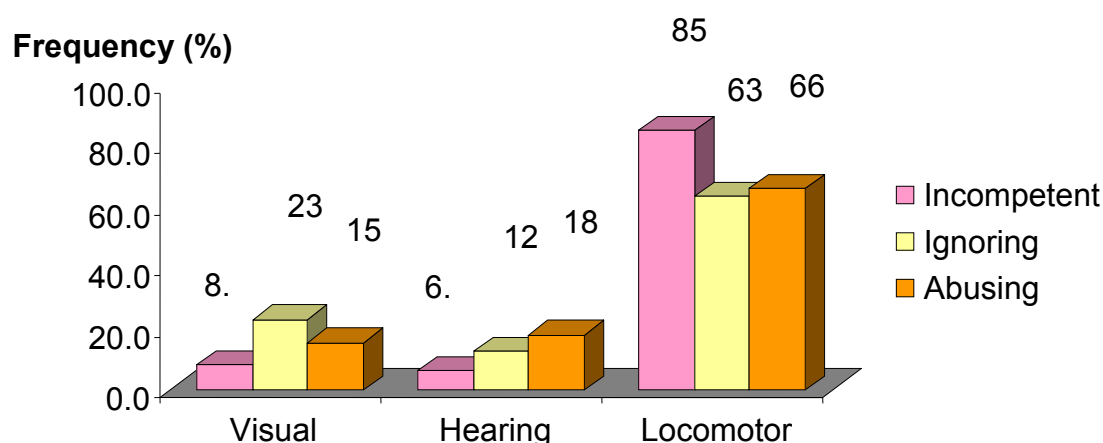
4. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

Discrimination is the major problem faced by the disabled women .Majority 75% working disabled women feel that most of the time their family discriminating with other family members. Regarding the problems faced by working disabled women majority 57.3% disabled faced physical barrier like ramps, accelerator, light, toilets etc is major problems in work place. Similarly 21.3% distance and ill behavior is the second major problems faced by disabled women in work place. 85.7% disabled women admitted that they faced many type of problem due to disability. Majority 58.7% disabled women admitted other people think that they are incompetent, 25.7% abusing and 15.7% ignoring them. Slightly variation found regarding physical harassment/abuse majority 50.3% working disabled women admitted that they have faced some type of physical harassment/abuse in life. Majority 78.8% disabled women have agreed that they had faced physical harassment in their young age. Regarding person involved in harassment/abuse majority 43.1% of disable women harassed by their husbands. 28.5% others people, 13.2% by family members, 6.6% by office employee, 5.3% by friends and 3.3% harassed by neighbors respectively. Majority 55.6% working disabled women admitted that they harassed at home. 15.2% at work site and 14.7% harassed at outside. Majority 76.2% working disabled women have agreed that they have not received any type of help/assistance in harassment/abuse.

Table 1: Distribution of type of problems facing by disabled women (n=300)

Type of problems	Visual		hearing		locomotor		total		χ^2 value	p value
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%		
incompetent	15	8.5	11	6.3	150	85.2	176	58.7	18.65	0.001
Ignoring	11	23.4	6	12.8	30	63.8	47	15.7		
Abusing	12	15.6	14	18.2	51	66.2	77	25.7		

Disability wise distribution of type of problems faced by disabled women

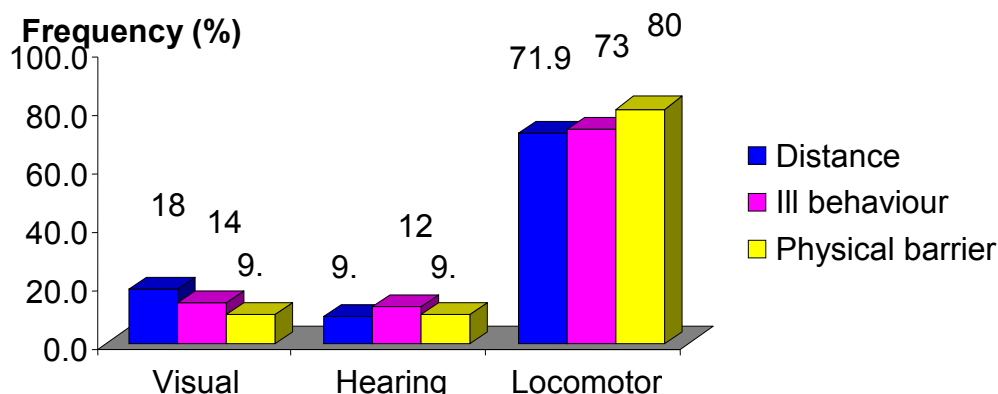


5. WORK PROBLEMS:

Table 2: Distribution of work problems faced by disabled women (n=300)

Work problem	visual		hearing		locomotor		total		χ^2 value	p value
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%		
Distance	12	18.8	6	9.4	46	71.9	64	21.3	3.96	0.412
Ill behaviour	9	14.1	8	12.5	47	73.4	64	21.3		
Physical barrier	17	9.9	17	9.9	138	80.2	172	57.3		

Disability wise distribution of work problem faced by disabled women

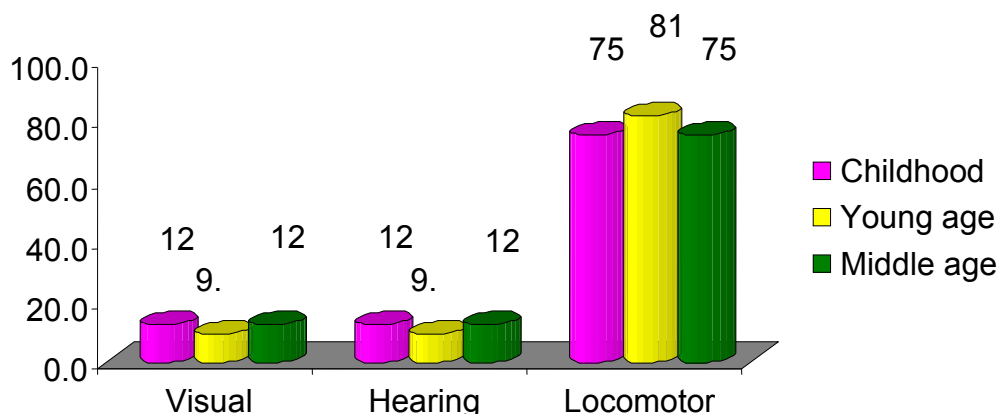


Beginning of physical harassment/abuse

Table 3: Distribution of beginning of physical harassment/abuse of disabled women (n=151)

Beginning of physical harassment/abuse	visual		hearing		locomotor		total		χ^2 value	p value
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%		
Childhood	1	12.5	1	12.5	6	75.0	8	5.3	0.67	0.955
Young age	11	9.2	11	9.2	97	81.5	119	78.8		
Middle age	3	12.5	3	12.5	18	75.0	24	8.0		

Disability wise distribution of beginning of physical harassment/abuse of disabled women



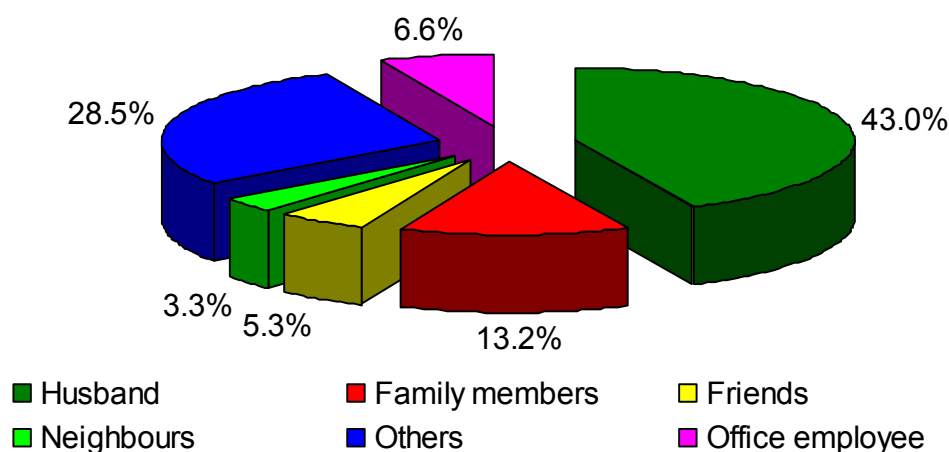
Person involved in physical harassment/abuse

Table 4: Distribution of person involved in physical harassment/abuse of disabled women (n=151)

Person involved in physical harassment/abuse	Visual		hearing		locomotor		total		χ^2 value	p value
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%		
Husband	4	6.2	4	6.2	57	87.7	65	43.0	16.13	0.096

Family members	1	5.0	2	10.0	17	85.0	20	13.2		
Friends	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	100.0	8	5.3		
Neighbours	0	0.0	2	40.0	3	60.0	5	3.3		
Others	8	18.6	6	14.0	29	67.4	43	28.5		
Office employee	2	20.0	1	10.0	7	70.0	10	6.6		

Distribution of person involved in physical harassment/abuse of disabled women



6. CONCLUSION:

It is absolutely right that working disabled women are facing lot of problems like discrimination with family members, physical harassment in working places, physical barriers and ill behavior of their colleagues. Massive disabled women admitted they are discriminating with their family members and in working places sometimes realized that people abusing, ignoring, and think they are abnormal and unable to work in a proper manner. Working disabled women admitted that physical barrier like accelerator, ramps, light, toilets etc are major problems in work place. Disabled women were hesitant discuss about physical harassment/ abuse. More than half of the total respondents admitted that they had faced physical harassment at their early stage and by their husband at home. They had not received any assistance for this. Finally problems encountered by disabled women shows their struggle towards a social equality in the society. In the case of disabled women they are out of mind and thought of the society. Comparatively with the olden days somehow the present day society is accepting them as a part of the human society. But the question is how much space is given to them? They are in the need of support and care from the society especially from the family members and relative circle.

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