CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS
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CONCLUSION :-

The high incidence of disability in India caused by preventable and curable diseases demonstrate the lack of awareness among the masses about the available preventive measures for disease or trauma, (accidents etc.) It also indicates the lack of medical facilities in our rural areas. The widespread illiteracy, poor economic and sanitary conditions, ignorance about the available means of treatment and inaccessibility of medical services have further aggravated the situation. It is, therefore, obvious that lack of facilities and often unscientific means of treatment are generally responsible for their present state of affairs.

Negative attitude of the people towards disabled in the community, reluctance on the part of the employers to employ them and indifference or the ridicule of the neighbours towards unemployed and helpless disabled are indicative of the fact that advancement in education and employment have not yet been able to eradicate social stigma. It is also noteworthy that the paucity of job opportunity, absence of vocational or professional training, and stigma attached with disability are the major factors dogging their rehabilitation process.
SUGGESTIONS:

On the basis of this study as well as personal and close interaction of the researcher with such disadvantaged persons in course of his field work, the following suggestions are made to integrate these disabled into the mainstream of social life.

1. CONSISTENCY AND CLARITY OF DEFINITIONS:

In the course of the present study, the investigator felt the absence of well defined simple definition relating to disability. The existing definitions, including the one advocated by WHO, seem to be incomplete as well as inconsistent and cause lack of uniformity in the data on the disabled. Thus, for systematic compilation of the complete statistics, it is suggested that the definition and concepts relating to disability may be reviewed and made more scientific and simple to understand.

RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT REHABILITATION OF THE DISABLED:

Important means of mass communications should be geared up so as to help in raising the level of awareness about available preventive measures for various disabling conditions as well as existing educational and rehabilitation facilities.
MORE FOCUS ON PREVENTIVE MEASURES:

Prevention of disability should be given top priority in a developing country like India. This will not only rescue several millions of our population from the suffering and tribulation of disability throughout their life, but also save a lot of national wealth. This should be incorporated as a high-priority component of our national socio-economic policies and development plans. The basic infrastructure for this purpose should be extended to the village-level for the prevention and control of such diseases in initial stages. In order to avoid industrial, agricultural and road accidents, there is need for the identification of the causes of disability. The public also need to be trained through mass education programmes in the use of the implements and measures of safety. If necessary, Punitive action should also be taken against the violators of these safety rules.

EXPANSION OF THE MEDICAL FACILITIES WITH A RURAL BIAS:

Medical service equipped with modern means of treatment for the disabled should be adequately expanded to cover the length and breadth of the country. Special emphasis should be given to reach the unreached of the vast rural population of India. The vast disabled rural population should be properly taken care of. In the mean time however, a chain of mobile medical units should be built up to carry the rehabilitative services to the door step of the remotest corner of the country. This team will work in close collaboration with the
local PHC or the Additional PHC.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION CENTRES IN RURAL-SETTING:

Since the bulk of the disabled population live in the rural areas, the vocational as well as the medical rehabilitation centers should be also provided in the rural areas as far as possible. In these vocational rehabilitation centres, importance should be given to the rural occupation, so that the rural disabled may utilize it and thereby earn their livelihood in the village itself. They need not be detached from their culture and compelled to migrate to urban areas in search of jobs and ultimately land up in begging. These rural rehabilitation centers can play a crucial role in their education, vocational training, as well as prevention, cure and their rehabilitation. Non-residential institutions may be promoted in these rural areas, as these require much less resources as compared to the residential vocational rehabilitation centres. This seems essential because of the limited financial resources at the disposal of the government and voluntary organizations.

In short, the concentration of rehabilitation services in urban areas should be decentralized and democratized in favour of rural based population. It is evident that city-centered rehabilitation planning will have to be consciously and substantially revised in order to take into account the needs for minimal, if not adequate coverage of rural areas.
EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES TO BE IMPROVED :-

Educational facilities for the disabled should be geared up even in rural areas. Professional and vocational education should be emphasized. Education not only restores self confidence of the disabled but also helps in creating an awareness among them and the public about the basic causes of disability, its prevention prospects and rehabilitation. Education will also help in warding off dogmatic fear attached to disability.

EDUCATING AND TRAINING PARENTS :-

Parents play a pivotal role in all-round development of their child. It is more so if the child is a disabled. Unfortunately in our country, the majority of the parents of the disabled are either uneducated or barely educated resulting in dereliction in duty on their part towards their disabled children. Emotional support of the parents will help the disabled to tackle adverse public attitudes like, pity, ridicule, superstition, apathy and indifference etc. The attitude of the parents and their awareness of the problem is of paramount importance in any area where action is called for and this is all the more required in disabling conditions. "Parents Guidance Bureau" should be set up and attached with every educational institutions. Thus parents should be provided library facilities, books, pamphlets, reports etc relating to education, health and employment of their disadvantaged children. Small workshops may be organ-
ized from time to time for the parents in various parts of
the country, specially in rural areas on various aspects of
child developments. The mobile rehabilitation team may be
entrusted with responsibility. Special provisions may be made
for imparting orientation courses to the school teachers so
as to bring about radical changes in their outlook towards
such disadvantaged students.

NEED FOR WIDENING JOB AVENUES FOR THE DISABLED :-

Job-opportunity may be regarded as one of the greatest
blessing for the physically disabled persons. If will make
not only them economically self-sufficient but also guard
their self-esteem. This is perhaps one of the most important
steps for their rehabilitation in order to enhance the em-
ployment avenues for the disabled, more sheltered workshops-
both in urban and rural areas should be set up, their
products should be subsidized and properly marketed, only
they can earn a better livelihood. If it is subsidized, it
can stand in competition with the products of other brands in
the open market. Incentives to the employers like income-tax
rebates, subsidies and loans can be granted. The state govern-
ment may follow the Punjab pattern where the employment
exchange undertakes to pay 30 days' salary to the employers
of the disabled. A Rehabilitation Act for the disabled is
also suggested as in USA.(Rehb.Act.1973) which prohibits
govt. agencies and contractors from discriminating against
the disabled and mandates affirmative action plan for their hiring and promotion. The reserved percentages of job should be filled by all the government and private agencies and violation in this regard may be followed by exemplary punishment.

PRIORITY IN EMPLOYMENT :-

All state governments should attach priority in allocation of employment to the disabled and also relax certain conditions like the central Government Sector. The quantum of reservations for them should also be increased from 3% to 5% for all categories of jobs. Private employers should be mandated to fill up their vacancies in a similar manner.

NEED FOR PROPER CO-ORDINATION :-

There is also a necessity of proper linkages/coordination among various departments of the government like education, health, employment, labour and others, so that there may be no duplicity of work. This will also help in proper utilization of the existing infrastructure facilities with improved quality of service. Besides, this Central Social Welfare Department should work in close cooperation with the State Social Welfare Departments of different states for proper implementation and success of the rehabilitation programme for the disabled.
NEED FOR POLITICAL-WILL AND OPERATIONAL IDEOLOGY :-

For the overall development of the disabled, there is a greater need for political-will and ideology. This is necessary for proper implementation of the schemes helping the really needy disabled at the grassroot level. The political will to educate, to rehabilitate, to prevent and to cure the disabling conditions of the disabled is more important than the provision of temporary financial allocations for them. The eligibility conditions for providing benefits for the disabled need to be revised, from time to time, taking into account the price-index.

NEED FOR TREATING EXPENDITURE OF THE DISABLED AS 'INVESTMENT':-

All the expenditure on rehabilitation (Physical, vocational and psycho-social) may be treated as an investment and should be continued on a long-term-basis as part of planning for economic growth. There is a great need for more liberal expenditure for the disabled, as these are not only justified on social and moral grounds but also on economic ground.

MAN POWER TRAINING AND MOBILIZATION :-

Proper and efficient manpower is a must for successful implementation of any rehabilitation programme. Educational vocational training, prevention prospect of the disabled and
their employment call for proper implementation of various programmes. For this purpose, man-power planning should be revamped with the economic development programme. The facilities must be extended to the training of the teaching staff, medical and para-medical and employment personnel in the states.

ENCOURAGING AND INVOLVING MORE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES IN THIS AREA :-

More voluntary agencies should be encouraged to work for the betterment of the disabled specially in the rural areas. Adequate funds if required, should be provided to them. Training facilities for them should also be arranged in such a way, so as to cater to their requirements.

SPECIAL COURTS AND SPECIAL CELLS FOR THEIR PROTECTION :-

It is suggested that like other cells and courts for the protection of minority and deprived groups based on social ground, special cells maybe set-up for the protection in the interest of the disabled. This will not only help in preventing the atrocities and denials of human rights of the disabled, but also ensure their rightful place in the society.

APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY IN PLENTY :-

Rehabilitation aids and appliances play a major role
in the physical rehabilitation of the disabled. Proper culturally accepted useful, comfortable and weather resistant prosthetic device with low cost maybe innovated and made available in plenty. Appropriate indigenous technology may be innovated with locally available material (like the "Jaipur Foot") by the local craftsmen. Maintenance, repairs and replacement of these devices should be made cheaper and made available within reachable distance.

RECREATIONAL SERVICES FOR THE DISABLED:

Recreation plays a significant role in the personality development of human being. But ironically this aspect has not attracted wider attention so far as a possible tool in the rehabilitation process. This is because the awareness that recreation can serve as a means for prompting socialization, relieving tension, lending a sense of achievement to and boosting the self image of the disabled individual is a recent phenomenon. Organized recreational facilities including games and sports may be provided for the disabled. They may be encouraged to participate in the general recreational facilities in various institutions of integrated education or vocational training.

PSYCHO-SOCIAL COUNSELING SERVICE FOR THE DISABLED:

It is high time that the rural areas need these kinds of services for their rural poor disabled. This work may be done
by the mobile units, which will try to reach the unreached.

STRONG DISABLED ORGANIZATIONS (PRESSURE AND INTEREST GROUPS) NEEDED:

There is a necessity for the disabled to form powerful pressure groups which should advocate for their welfare through various organizations and forums. In this case, undoubtedly, the best advocates for their own cause are the disabled themselves. The organization formed and managed by them obviously should have a greater impact upon the policy makers.

Apart from this, they should have a few strong, active organizational base with good articulated influential leaders. There can be no denying the fact that an organization which can boast of well known personalities among its board of members, can not only highlight the genuine grievances of such persons but also get its demand fulfilled without much difficulty. The intelligentsia among the disabled may have a greater role to play in this direction.

MORE INDEPTH AND INTEGRATED RESEARCH IN THIS DIRECTION REQUIRED:

Disability, so far has been one of the most neglected areas from research point of view in India. Only a limited
numbers of empirical studies have been conducted in this field. Subjects like deaf and dumb, blind and mentally retarded are taken care of, but when it comes to orthopaedically disabled the situation is quite disappointing. There is a need for conducting well-planned indepth and integrated studies so as to throw lights on their problems and prospects.

INNOVATIVE EXPERIMENTS AND SUCCESS STORIES SHOULD BE HIGHLIGHTED:-

Innovative experiments and success stories involving the effective resettlement of the disabled in the rural sector should be properly highlighted and carefully studied for wide replication.

COMMUNITY BASED REHABILITATION SERVICE :-

For a developing country like India, community based rehabilitation service and family based rehabilitation service may be better suited. The community or the family may be trained to tackle the problems of rehabilitation with the able guidance of expert bodies. Peoples' participation should be heavily drawn in. In recent years, as the success or failure of development projects has been traced, often, the presence or absence of people's participation makes all the difference. Participation means drawing in people in the family and community etc, as a material and manpower re-
source. Judging the validity of rehabilitation action envisaged. Participation also implies the widest possible utilization of the disabled persons themselves also in the planning and managing of services. It is only then that the credibility gap between the rehabilitation services and its clientele will be reduced.

PROPER SOCIAL REHABILITATION POLICY REQUIRED:

Physical and social barriers exclude people with disability from full participation. It is only through intelligent social policy and action that these barriers can be removed. Instead of keeping The National Bill on the Right of the Disabled persons hanging in abeyance in the parliament due to administrative and procedural red-tapism there should be proper approval of it and should be implemented as soon as possible.

There is no doubt that the Indian constitution inter alia many of its provisions, stresses the need for protection and care of the vulnerable sections of the community, including the disabled. It is also a fact that the government of India has sponsored many programmes for the care, protection, training and employment of the disabled. But so far no clear-cut National Policy has been formulated in this regard. The bill to this effect is still in the cold storage. It may be suggested that the Department of Social Welfare should
give effect to the recommendations of justice Baharul Islam Committee without any further delay.

UNIVERSAL EXTENSION OF THE CONCESSIONS:--

A wide variety of concessions in regard to educational qualifications, medical examinations, training, employment age, travel etc., have been instituted by central and state governments, universities etc. Such concessions are sporadic and local in nature. It is recommended that steps should be taken for their universal extension.

APPLICATION OF YOGA FOR THE REHABILITATION OF THE DISABLED:--

Yoga has proved to be very effective in the rehabilitation process of the handicapped persons (Natarajan, 1982, Geeta, 1988). If it is combined with physiotherapy it gives excellent results. Research at the BILEY center at Vivekananda Puram at Kanya Kumari has proved that physiotherapy exercises produce better results and are long lasting if they are integrated with yogic therapy. It was also seen that the integrated method helped to keep the minds of the practitioners free from unnecessary tension. It develops the inner strength and the will power of the disabled which is very necessary for speedy rehabilitation. The time is now ripe for introducing yogic therapy in rehabilitation centers and combine it with the prevalent methods. There is also a need to introduce it in the home and community based rehabilitation programmes which will reduce the dependence of the disabled on man, machine or medicine. Total rehabilitation
for the disabled can be easily achieved if yoga is accepted as a way of life for the disabled.

Considering all the factors discussed in the preceding pages the welfare of the disabled should be treated as an indicator of development for the measurement of the level of development of our country. It is hoped that the government, which has been committed to eliminating poverty and stimulating the process of economic development, will do the needful for the cause of the disabled. At the same time the government should constantly evaluate the needs and services provided so as to ensure flexibility in its programmes in responding to the changing needs. It is only then, the government can live up to the society's expectation that they alone can provide human dynamic service in the right direction and help the disabled to be "Totally Rehabilitated."