Chapter Seven

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations
CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

India is one of the fastest growing economies of the world. Sustainability of growth process depends on the manner in which it is distributed among different sectors and different sections of the society. Growth needs to be inclusive benefiting all the sections of the society including persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities with more than 10 percent of total population are largest minority. Growth will have no meaning and relevance if persons with disabilities are not benefiting from it. The benefit to persons with disabilities can be measured by its impact on their socio economic status. Since persons with disabilities are neglected sections of the society, they need special attention by policy makers and social service organisations. Governments of India as well as all State governments have large number of special schemes designed for the empowerment of persons with disabilities. A legal provision like Persons with Disabilities Act is an example of interest on the part of government for their empowerment. At the same time, large numbers of non-governmental organisations are also active in the areas of disability and rehabilitation. Disability movement, gaining momentum in the world, has great impact on the disability movement in India. As a result of this, people’s perception about persons with disability has changed from one as a charity to one towards rights.

When large sections of population are suffering with the problem of disability of one or the other type, social and economic costs of side tracking them will be very high. The concept of rehabilitation embodied the democratic and humanitarian ideal that each individual is important and each member of the community should contribute to society to the fullest extent. Rehabilitation programs are concerned with helping disabled person as a human being who requires specialized help to enables him to realize his physical, social, emotional, and vocational potentials. These programmes presuppose full development and utilization of the individual as their goals. In fact, this concerns itself with the residual abilities and utilizes them in such a way as to
offset the effect of the disabilities to the maximum extent possible. The objective of long range planning for rehabilitation is to achieve maximum adjustments of the maximum number of disabled persons in maximum walks of life, when the formal rehabilitation process is completed through good teamwork between medical, surgical, physiological, social, educational and vocational personnel (Kothari Gopa 1985). Among various types of rehabilitation, i.e. physical rehabilitation, social rehabilitation, psychological rehabilitation and vocational rehabilitation, the last one is most important because all efforts directed towards the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities are ultimately aimed at their economic independence which is only possible through productive employment. The Present Study is an attempt to understand the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities with specific reference to vocational rehabilitation, which includes their education, training and employment. The role of government and non-governmental organisations in vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged is also analyzed here.

In order to have more focused approach, among different categories of persons with disabilities, persons with locomotor disabilities are selected for the study. Ahmedabad district of Gujarat is selected for study because it is the most urbanized district with large number of Non-governmental organisations actively working for persons with disabilities.

In order to analyze the vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged, the Study relies on both primary and secondary information. Secondary information is mainly obtained from the Census of India, National Sample Survey Organization etc. Primary information is collected through a randomly selected sample from Urban Ahmedabad. Structured questionnaire was administered to respondents from different areas of urban Ahmedabad. In order to have more detailed information about the role of government and non-governmental organisations, facilities required at work place, social attitude etc, the help of focus group discussions was undertaken.
The present chapter is an attempt to summarize the results of the study along with recommendations and policy suggestions. Chapter is divided into four parts. First part deals with main objectives of the study and second part covers major findings of the study. Third part deals with suggestions and recommendations and final part covers the limitations of the study.

7.1 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:
The Study was undertaken with the main objective of knowing the vocational rehabilitation including education, training and employment, of physically challenged labour force in urban India. Other objectives of the Study were to understand (1) the socio-economic characteristics of physically challenged labour force, (2) problems in vocational rehabilitation, (3) factors affecting vocational rehabilitation, (4) role of government and non-governmental organisations in vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged, (5) the extent of awareness and benefits of government schemes and its relationship with vocational rehabilitation, (6) awareness and membership of non-governmental organisations and its relationship with vocational rehabilitation, (7) relationship between disability characteristics and vocational rehabilitation etc.

The present study defines vocational rehabilitation in terms of educational achievement, level of training and employment status of physically challenged individual. An individual with good level of education, training and satisfying job is considered to be better rehabilitated than an individual who is poorly educated, poorly trained and either unemployed or not satisfied with present employment. Thus level of education, level and usefulness of training and income from present occupation are used as parameters to measure the vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities. Vocational rehabilitation index based on educational achievement, training achievement and employment achievement is calculated to measure the vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged.

Vocational Rehabilitation = Educational Achievement + Training Achievement + Employment Achievement
Educational achievement is measured by years spent by an individual for education. Training achievement is measured by availability and usefulness of training and employment achievement is measured by an annual income earned by an individual.

7.2 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:
Major findings of the study are;

1. Physically challenged females are less in number as compared to their male counterpart as far as labour market is concern. This may be due to social system which does not accept physically challenged females to be engaged in economic life, confining them to four walls of their houses. This increases their dependence on their family members and society as a whole.

2. Physically challenged aged more than 45 are less in labour force which is an indication of the fact that they are not acceptable in labour market at higher age.

3. Caste is major barriers for physically challenged to be economic independent and contributing member of the society. Physically challenged from scheduled castes are facing double discrimination because of physically as well as social disabilities.

4. In more than 43 percent cases, physically challenged respondents are the only earning members of the family. This makes regular and stable economic opportunities even more important for the survival of family.

5. Nearly 60 percent of physically challenged are from moderately or less educated families, which limits their potentials to fully extracting the abilities in the labour market.

6. Among different causes of impairment, in more than 50 percent cases, polio is major cause of impairment.

7. The availability of disability certificates is quite satisfactory among physically challenged. Nearly 93 percent of respondents have disability certificate.

8. Use of aid and appliances by physically challenged is very limited. Nearly 43 percent respondents are not using any aids or appliances.
9. Among different kinds of aids and appliances available to physically challenged, tricycle and calipers are most used by them. In more than 45 percent cases, aids and appliances are purchased by them and not provided by government or non-governmental organisations.

10. Education is limiting factor among physically challenged in labour force. Lack of education also limits their opportunities in employment market. Special education does not play prominent role in education among physically challenged since only 14 percent are educated in special school/college. In many cases, economic reasons forced them to leave education incomplete.

11. Classification of respondents by skill indicates that nearly 36 percent are unskilled creating barriers in their entry in the labour market. Among those who are skilled, majorities have their skill from private organisations. Moreover, in nearly 30 percent cases, skill acquired by the respondents is not useful indicating waste of time and financial resources. At the same time, nearly 30 percent respondents feel that skill acquired or provided to them is not appropriate, either looking to their physical limitations or market requirements.

12. Classification of respondents by their employment status indicates that nearly 23 percent are unemployed/ searching for employment opportunities. Respondents those who are employed are engaged in economic occupations like PCO, tailoring and cutting etc. which are outdated with limited income opportunities as indicated by their low annual income.

13. Low education level, lack or inappropriate training and low income affect the level of job satisfaction of physically challenged. Nearly 50 percent are either partially satisfied or not satisfied with their present occupation. Many of them are planning to change the job as well either due to low income, better job opportunities of due to low income. They have opted for present occupation mainly due to disability or due to lack of other employment opportunities.

14. Physically challenged need facilities like, ramps, lifts, separate parking, disabled friendly toilets and washrooms, wheelchair, etc at work place in order to increase their productivity. The Study reveals that in nearly
90 percent cases no facilities are available at work place. Architectural barriers at work place limit their productivity, income and employment potentials.

15. Information gathered from unemployed physically challenged persons, indicates that very few of them are taking any help from non-governmental organisations. Newspaper is major source in search for employment opportunities. Most of them rely on their self efforts.

16. Role of employment exchanges was found to be satisfactory in terms of registration of physically challenged for employment, but not very satisfactory in providing jobs.

17. About the usefulness of the society, nearly half of the respondents were of the view that society is not useful to physically challenged.

18. Among various schemes and benefits designed for the empowerment of physically challenged, it is observed that they are not aware about many of the schemes except transportation facilities and aids and appliances. Awareness about the schemes and benefits limits the benefits of the same to physically challenged labour force.

19. For a person with Disabilities the Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation Act 1995 is milestone in the direction of empowerment of physically challenged labour force. But the Study observed that only 20 percent respondents were aware about it, and only 5.3 percent have used it.

20. Role of non-governmental organisations is very crucial in rehabilitation of physically challenged. It is observed that nearly 25 percent respondents were not aware about any such organisations. Further, it is also observed that nearly 46 percent respondents were not member of any organisation. Since benefits of government schemes are availed through non-governmental organisations, which mainly work for their members, lack of awareness and membership of non-governmental organisations is a cause of concern.

21. Among various sources of motivation, Study observed that, family members are the major source of motivation for physically challenged.
22. Among various socio-economic factors used by the Study, caste, family education, family income and age have significant impact on the vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged labour force.

23. Number of family members, gender, and marital status of the respondents have no significant impact on their vocational rehabilitation.

24. The different characteristics such as disability percentage, reason of disability, age at onset of disability and use of aids and appliances do not have any significant relationship with vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged

25. Awareness and membership of non-governmental organisations working for physically challenged do not exhibit significant relationship with vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged labor force.

26. Awareness and benefits of government schemes and benefits have positive impact on the vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged labour force

27. Years of education and affect of disability on education have positive and significant relationship with vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged labour force.

28. Place of education does not have any significant relationship with vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged labour force.

29. Among various characteristics related to skill and training, it has been observed that availability of skill and usefulness of training have positive relationship with vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged labour force.

30. Nature of training (formal or informal) and place of training has no significant relationship with vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged labour force.

31. The nature of occupation, annual income, appropriateness of present job, plan to change job, and facilities at work place has positive and significant relationship with vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged labour force.
32. Number of jobs done (changed) by the respondents, job satisfaction, and effect of disability on work has no significant relationship with vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged labour force.

7.3 SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Special attention of policy makers, non-governmental organisations, and all concerned with rehabilitation of physically challenged towards the female members of the society is need of the day. Special programmes should be designed for vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged females.

2. Physically challenged are facing more problems in their vocational rehabilitation at higher age as compared to their young counterparts. Non-governmental organisations need to pay special attention towards their rehabilitation.

3. Physically challenged from reserved castes are facing problem in vocational rehabilitation because of their disability as well as caste handicaps. Priorities in policies related to physically challenged from reserve categories in education, training and employment can certainly improve their conditions.

4. There should be provision of stable and regular employment opportunities for physically challenged. Schemes like unemployment insurance will help them to a great extent, at the time of sickness or unemployment, in maintaining their living standards.

5. Physically challenged from low or moderately educated and low income families are facing problems in becoming part of labour force because of their low level of education and family support. Non-governmental organisations should pay special attention on the education and training of physically challenged from low educated and low income families.

6. In spite of mass scale polio eradication programme, polio is still major cause of impairment. This is an indication of failure of the programme. Separate studies should be conducted in order to find the reasons for the failure of programme and for improvement in the programme.
7. Use of appropriate aids and appliances is precondition of successful vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged. Government as well as non-governmental organisations should provide appropriate aids and appliances to all physically challenged in order to restore their physical impairment to fullest extent. Government should also provide subsidies and tax concession on manufacturing and sale of aids and appliances. Special centers should be established for research and development of aids and appliances for special categories of impairments.

8. Inclusive education is the only option for increasing level of education among large number of physically challenged. But the architectural and attitudinal barriers in educational institutes hinder the educational development of physically challenged. All educational institutes should compulsorily (through legal means) be barrier free (both architectural and attitudinal).

9. Special educational institutions can work as facilitators in the process of inclusive education, providing training and educational materials to the teachers of normal schools.

10. Vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged depends on the skill acquired by persons with disabilities. Skill creates opportunities for economic development through job or self employment. Non governmental organisations need to expand their scope of activities to provide training, that too in trades which are in high demand.

11. In absence of proper guidance, physically challenged end up venturing in to trades which do not give them adequate income for their sustenance. Governmental agencies and non government organisations have a major role to play in providing guidance and support in selection of trade.

12. Physically challenged who are employed should be provided with appropriate facilities like ramps, parking, lifts etc. in order to minimize their hardships. This will also increase their employability and productivity.

13. Special employment exchanges have a major role to play in employment of physically challenged, if properly managed. Presently
they are working only for employment in public sector. Their scope need to be expanded to include private sector as well as assistance and support for self-employment.

14. Government has various schemes and benefits designed for the empowerment of physically challenged. But these schemes lack in awareness. Special awareness camps in coordination with non-governmental organisations and representatives of person with disabilities should be carried out so that benefits of the schemes reaches to maximum number of physically challenged.

15. Provisions of landmark Acts like Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act will have no meaning in the absence of awareness among beneficiaries Special drive for increasing awareness about legal provision for physically challenged should be carried out by government to make them aware about the provisions and the benefit from it.

7.4 VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION MODEL:
As stated earlier, all efforts towards empowerment of physically challenged boils down to one word ‘rehabilitation’. Rehabilitation is complete process consisting of physical, psychological, social and vocational rehabilitation. Among all these processes of rehabilitation, vocational rehabilitation is most important because all other rehabilitation processes will have no meaning if person cannot be resorted to useful and productive work. Vocational rehabilitation depends on their economic productivity as a part of the society, which in turn, depends on their education and training.

For providing education it is necessary to have system of inclusive education so that physically challenged can take education along with other able bodied members of the society in the same environment. This helps in increasing their self-confidence as well as in providing an opportunity to other members of the society to understand the abilities and capabilities of their physically challenged counterparts, thus supporting in their better social integration. Educational institutes should be barrier free (both architectural as well as attitudinal) for physically challenged. Proper counseling at the time of school
itself will help them in selection of lines of their choice in consideration with their physical limitations. Government benefits like scholarships, books and higher educational support should be fully utilized to increase education among physically challenged.

On successful completion of their education, physically challenged should be provided with appropriate training in order to increase their skills. Appropriate training increases employment potentials only if properly selected and imparted. As far as possible, training should be provided to them along with other able bodied candidates with necessary changes in order to make it adaptive to them. In selection of trade, physical limitations of the candidates, their personal interest, educational qualification, appropriateness of training as well as demand in the market should be taken in to consideration.

On successful completion of training, orientation about the opportunities in the market, both for employment and self employment will be of immense help to them. Those who are interested in self-employment should be provided with financial support. Government can provide loan at concessional rate of interest through the banking network. Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act which reserves 3 percent seats for physically challenged in public sector should be extended to include private sector as well. Employment exchange should play the role as a facilitator for employment of physically challenged and as a coordinator of efforts of all non-governmental organisations and representatives of physically challenged.

7.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH:
Present study is an attempt to focus on vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged in urban India with specific reference of persons with movement impairment. In spite of its efforts to capture all aspects of rehabilitation, is has certain limitations and there is ample scope for further research in this area. Following are the limitations of the study, highlighting the scope for further research.
1. The findings of the study can be used as indicators for vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged in urban India. But the conclusions drawn from the study cannot be generalized because of specific characteristics of study area i.e. Ahmedabad in terms of urbanization, economic and industrial development, and presence of large number of non-governmental organisations. Similar studies can also be conducted in other urban areas of India with different levels of economic and social development.

2. Study is limited in its scope covering only urban area. Similar studies conducted in rural areas will highlight the problems of vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged in rural India.

3. In order to have more focused approach, present study includes person with movement disabilities only. Vocational rehabilitation of persons with other types of disabilities is not dealt with in present study. There is scope for conducting similar studies for persons with other type of disabilities like blindness, deafness, hearing disability, mental disabilities etc.

4. Rehabilitation process consists of physical, social, psychological and vocational rehabilitation. Present study focuses only on vocational rehabilitation. There is a scope for expanding the study to include other types of rehabilitations in order to make it complete. This would require multidisciplinary research efforts.

5. Present study uses simple vocational rehabilitation index in order to quantify vocational rehabilitation of physically challenged, which is indicative in nature. More complex (extensive) approach in computing total rehabilitation index including physical, social, psychological and vocational parameters could be adopted to undertake formulations of policies and programmes for empowerment of physically challenged.