

# Indian Governments' Dilemma in Inclusion of Individuals with Disabilities in Organisations

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**Abstract--***In India only 9.7 million of 26.8 million people with disabilities (PwD) are employed (Census, 2011). Premising this, the research paper aims to present interview-based study to understand the barriers that Indian Govt. face in inclusion of individuals with disabilities in organisations. In order to comprehend the obstacles, it is essential to identify the key Govt. initiatives and the outcome of such initiatives which has been outlined from semi-structured interviews and literature. Findings indicate that the coordination among the employment exchanges with the private organisations and non-government agencies facilitating the skill development are poor, inclination of the vocational rehabilitation towards physically handicapped persons majorly, weak accessibility of the rural PwD towards vocational trainings, restricted job related information, inadequate technological skills, physical barriers at the training centers, ineffective Govt. quota system, unawareness and unwillingness of the private organisations towards incentives of hiring PwD and availability of substitute income opportunities through Govt. allowances are the major obstacles that the Govt. is facing. Findings imply that that reformation in the hiring system of PwD, awareness and reach of employment related information among the private organisations and PwD followed by the facilitation of infrastructure to the PwD is imperative to improve the employment of PwD in organisations.*

**Keywords--***Disability, Inclusion, Employment, Persons with Disabilities, Barriers*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

It has always been a key agenda for any government to yield employment opportunities for citizens of the country. It is a challenge for the Indian Govt. to provide equal employment opportunities for people with disabilities. In India, nearly 17 million people with disabilities are not employed. Only 4% of the total numbers of people with disabilities are employed in household industries and the remaining 96% in cultivation, agricultural labors etc. Not only are those, 10% of disabled people marginal workers in the total number of employed people with disabilities (Census, 2011). According to the 2009 World Bank report, the total number of vacancies identified for individuals with disabilities was 4.6 lakhs, but only 20 thousand were filled, i.e. 0.44 percent. These statistics motivated to build the guiding research question that is, "What is stopping the Govt. to render more employment to the persons with disabilities in India?"

This paper is initiated by understanding the ways that disability is defined by international bodies, consideration of "disability" in Indian context, followed by history of disability as accepted by the Govt. of India which has relevance to the research. The extent to which the Govt. considers disability will decide the level of efforts that the Govt. will take towards the persons with disabilities which will have an impact on the employability

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of the persons with disabilities. With every effort taken, an assessment of such step is necessary. The result of the assessment has deep roots which is imperative to comprehend. Thus this paper makes an attempt to take a deep dive to comprehend the roots of the current evaluation of the initiative taken by the Govt. towards inclusion of individuals with disabilities in organisations.

World Health Organisation (WHO) describes disability in three aspects which are impairment, activity limitation and participation restrictions. Impairment is a malfunction of any part of the body. Complexity faced by an individual in execution a task is labeled as an activity limitation whereas participation restriction is a state where an individual faces difficulties related to basic day to day life circumstances (WHO, 2011). The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) states disability as a result of an individual's impairment barrier, as well as the social attitude and environmental forces that impede them from participating in an unbiased way (UNCRPD, 2016). As per Mike Oliver's 1983 social model of disability, disability is the result of barriers between people with disabilities and the environment surrounded by attitudes, communication and social barriers (Oliver, 2013). In the Indian context pursuant to Section 2(s) of the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 disabled person means a person with long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment that, in interaction with barriers, hinders his full and effective participation in society equally with others. The benchmark to be referred to as a person with a disability is any individual who suffers from a minimum of 40% of any disability in the categories mentioned and certified by an authorized medical practitioner (RPwD, 2016). The visible characteristic of the person with disabilities does not affect the employment to a large extent as compared to the prejudice in the minds of the non-disabled people.

The Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation (2016) report gives a brief history of inclusion of PwD as a separate category in Indian Census. It states that till 1971, disability as a category did not reflect in the census of India. In 1981 census, disability was categorized into 3 segments which were totally blind, totally crippled and totally dumb. In 1991 census, consideration of disability was dropped. In 1995, "Persons with Disabilities (Equal opportunities, protection of rights and full participation) Act, 1995" was formed under which 7 categories of disabilities were formed which are blindness, low vision, leprosy cured, hearing impaired, loco-motor disability, mental retardation and mental illness. In 1999, two more additions were made to the disabilities category which are autism and multiple disabilities but in 2001 census 5 categories of disability were considered which are disability in seeing, speech, hearing, movement and mental. Finally in 2011 census made it to 8 categories by including mental illness, multiple disabilities and any other disability such as autism. The largest reform in disability framing categories took place in 2016 with the "Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016" where disability categories were increased to 21 by including dwarfism, thalassemia, hemophilia, Parkinson's disease, cerebral palsy, learning disabilities, multiple sclerosis, chronic neurological conditions, victims of acid attacks, etc.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

There have been many scholarly works done on inclusion of disabilities at workplace, but very few in Indian contexts. There are various ways that the multinationals in India and Germany are engaged in improving the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in organisations has been compared (Kulkarni, Boehm, & Basu, 2016). There

are quick service retail chains such as KFC, Café Coffee Day have changed the concept of disability by including them at workplace thereby changing disability stigma to disability value (Friedner, 2013). An analysis of annual reports of nifty fifty companies who employ persons with disabilities have been done to evaluate the disability inclusion initiatives taken by those companies in India wherein some common practices have been highlighted (Heera, Maini, & Chandan, 2017). With regards to the current state of employment of persons with disabilities in India, some research work has been carried out. Central Govt. and the State Government have meaningful programmes to promote employment among persons with disabilities in India. The self-employment as well as employment in organisations aspect has been taken into consideration (Mitra & Sambamoorthi, 2006). Critical reflections on disability and employment in India have been highlighted where the outcomes of three employment initiatives in India have been examined (Kumar, Sonpal, & Hiranandani, 2012). It has been seen that no research has been done to highlight the initiatives that the Govt. has taken towards inclusion of people with disabilities in organisations exclusively, followed by an assessment of such initiatives, thereby trying to comprehend the barriers in achieving the desired state of employment. Only reports have been published by reputed bodies such as the ILO, the World Bank etc. in this context. Hence it is imperative to understand the existing research gaps.

The employment status of the persons with disabilities depends on the demographics present in the country such as the education level, the age group which is present in maximum number, the location of the majority etc. Hence it can be anticipated that the favorable demographics determines the probability of the success ratio. In India, 50% of the total population of people with disabilities belongs to the 20 to 60-year age group, which is the ideal period of employment, but only 4.66% of them are graduates and above. Moreover, 70 percent of the persons with disabilities reside in the rural areas. Maximum number of persons with disabilities exists in hearing, movement and other disabilities category. Gender wise, 47 percent of the PwD are males (Census, 2011).

From this statistics, India has an edge of demographic dividend but at the same time it's not capitalized which can be seen from the 36 percent of the persons with disabilities population as employed only. It is essential to identify the reason behind the state of unemployment. Is it because of the lack of initiatives from the Govt. or are there any other reasons behind this current condition of unemployment?

Avenues for employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities: Employment exchanges have been one of the oldest practices from the Govt. In India, as of December 2014, there are 978 employment exchanges exist that help to provide job prospects for all citizens administered by the "Directorate General for Employment and Training" (DGE&T). Apart from generating employment it also assists the job seekers by sharing employment related market information, guiding to select various vocational assistances and counseling about various career options. Individuals with disabilities can also avail the facilities from these employment exchanges. Besides the employment exchange, there are also special exchanges and special cells which specifically help people with disabilities to gain employment. There are currently 42 special exchanges and 38 special employment cells as per the report published by in 2014. The extent to which these employment exchanges are adding value in the lives of persons with disabilities, have been discussed in the later part of the paper. Public establishments and private sector firms engaged in non-agricultural activities with 25 or more workers are required to notify the closest employment

exchange on the vacancies as per the Employment Exchanges (Compulsory Notification of Vacancies) Act 1959. It is also mandatory for such employers to submit employment returns called ER- I and ER II which contains information such as the number of vacancies aroused, the sources of recruitment for the respective vacant positions, various departments of the required employees as well as their educational level required for those occupations (Mitra&Sambamoorthi, 2006).

"Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Rights Protection and Full Participation) Act, 1995" was in place to empower the PwD. It had 7 categories of disabilities. Due to some of the drawbacks of this act, in 2016, Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act was enacted. Although the draft bill of this Act was introduced in 2011, which Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha approved on December 2016 and finally on December 30, 2016, the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities came into force. This act came with multiple substantive provisions relating to job creation opportunities such as a 4 per cent reservation for people with disabilities in government jobs. 1% is reserved for blindness and low vision, 1% is reserved for hearing and speech impairment, 1% is reserved for locomotor disability including cerebral palsy, leprosy cured dwarfism, acid attack victims and muscular dystrophy and 1% is reserved for autism, intellectual deficiency, specific learning impairment and mental illness. In the case of multiple disabilities including deaf-blindness, individuals with disabilities in either of the subgroups would be considered (Sharma, 2018).By increasing the categories of disabilities to 21 out of 7, which include dwarfism, thalassemia, hemophilia, Parkinson's disease, cerebral palsy, learning disabilities, multiple sclerosis, chronic neurological conditions, acid attack victims, the scope of disabilities in job seeking has improved (Kumar L., 2017).Under this act, employers in the private sector are entitled to incentives if they hire at least 5 per cent of their employees in categories of disabilities. For the first three years, the employer's contribution to the provident fund (EPF) and employee state insurance (ESI) will be refunded for each worker with disabilities working at a monthly salary of up to Rs. 25000 and hired on or before April 1, 2008.However, the employer should accept the administrative fees of 1.1 per cent of EPF wages(Diversity and Equal Opportunity Centre report, 2009)

In accordance with the "Rights to Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016," Section 34(2) in the event that reserved vacancies remain vacant due to the non-availability of suitable persons with disabilities; it will be postponed for recruitment in the coming year. If adequate persons with disabilities are not available in the following year, they will be filled in by interchanging among categories of disability. Even after interchanging the vacancies remain empty, in such case it will be allocated for non PwD candidates.The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment shall identify posts in the organizations in every group(A,B,C,D) that can be reserved for the PwD by the help of an knowledgeable committee with representation of persons with benchmark disabilities of such posts (RPwD Act, Section 33(ii). Moreover government will carry out periodic assessment of the identified posts at an interval of every 3 years(ILO, 2003).The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) is India's recruitment bureau which is administrating the appointments and examinations.The Staff Selection Commission (SSC) conducts the recruitment of non-gazetted employees in Group 'B' and 'C' categories. Both of these Govt. bodies grant concessions to the candidates who fall under the persons with disabilities categories and even conduct special recruitment drives exclusively for them(ILO, 2003).Under the reservation policy, in the case of Group C and D jobs, person with disability candidates with a general caste are granted upper age relaxation of 10 years, 13 years for OBC

and 15 years for SC / ST category via direct recruitment. Similarly, for Groups A and B the age limit for general caste is softened by 5 years, for OBC by 8 years and for SC / ST by 10 years (ILO, 2003).

National Institute for the Hearing Handicapped (NIHH) which is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment that deals with issues related to the reservation provisions of persons with disabilities in government jobs and assists in filling up of the backlog vacant positions which were reserved for PwD. This institution has developed a jobfordeaf.nic.in website to enable people with hearing impairments to register and upload their profiles to an online platform.(Diversity and Equal Opportunity Centre report, 2009)

The protected/ sheltered employment system is applicable for severely disabled and intellectually challenged persons. There are two approaches of managing this system. First, a non-government organisation would take a contract from the government or any industry and thereby establish a residential center as a work facility where the persons with disabilities would be assisted with jobs, either on a daily wage basis or on the basis of final production. The second option is to provide contract-based employment for a group of disabled persons. In this case, the government has specifically laid down the type of jobs to be assigned to the disabled person, such as recaning of chairs, binding books, registers and the sourcing of chalks (ILO, 2004).

Based in Agartala, Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Delhi, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Jabalpur, Jaipur, Kanpur, Kolkata, Ludhiana, Mumbai, Patna, Puducherry, Ranchi, Srinagar, Thiruvananthapuram, Una, and Vadodara, 21 Vocational Rehabilitation Centers for the Handicapped (VRC) were established. The VRCs are primarily inspired to perform vocational tests of the persons with disabilities and assist them with short-term training which may last up-to 12 months. Some of the VRC's also offer placement opportunities. 7 Skills training workshops were added to 7 VRCs in Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kanpur, Mumbai and Thiruvananthapuram as a skills development agenda for disabled people. Informal training is given to people with disabilities who do not possess the required academic qualifications to help them enroll in formal training institutions such as Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) or Polytechnics.Proposal to establish at least one VRC in each State/UTs have been made which is yet to be implemented (National Career Service Report, 2016). Since all the VRC's are situated in the urban areas, in order to deliver the training services to the persons with disabilities residing in the rural areas, 11 Rural Rehabilitation Extension Centers (RRECs) were established in 11 blocks under 5 VRCs, Chennai, Kanpur, Kolkata, Ludhiana and Mumbai, respectively.These RRECs organize Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) in partnership with NGOs where mobile rehabilitation counselors periodically conduct disability assessment camps (ILO & Youth4Jobs, 2011). In order to eradicate the lack of the appropriate facilities for rehabilitation for the PwD, 7 composite regional centers (CRC) have been established under the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment. In Guwahati (Assam), Patna (Bihar), Bhopal (M.P.), Srinagar (J&K), Sundernagar (Himachal Pradesh), Lucknow (U.P.), Ahmedabad (Gujarat) and Kozhikode (Kerala), these CRCs are located. The objective of the CRCs is to create the requiredinfrastructure for vocational training, manpower development, conducting research and rehabilitation for PwD. Through the provision of skill enhancement, it leads to the improvement of opportunities for employment.(Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation Report, 2016)

The Skills Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPwD) program has been established within Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) with the goal of enhancing the skills of persons with disabilities according to the industry's requirement to help them achieve effective and sustainable jobs. Currently SCPwD is jointly promoted by CII and Ministry of Social Justice and empowerment.

The Apprentices Act, 1961 was enacted to encourage training and improve the employability opportunities of unemployed persons in private sector organizations. According to this act, the Govt. has requested the state directories to ensure that at least 3 percent of the seats are allocated to the physically handicapped persons for the apprenticeship training. DWARKA Scheme, under ministry of rural development, rural poor under poverty alleviation program, self-help groups receive informal training in trades and business relevant to their employment where persons with disabilities are also included (ILO, 2004). The department of adult independent living under National Institute for the Mentally Handicapped assists the persons with disabilities with multiple disabilities with evaluation, vocational guidance, skills training and employment (GoI, 2018).

### **Assessment of Initiatives**

The report of the National Career Service (2016) reflects the employment exchange output towards the Persons with disabilities as of 2003. Only 200 individuals with disabilities has been given job opportunity out of the total 5700 registered and 94700 individuals with disabilities in live register with the special employment exchanges which results the percentage of placement to 3.51 percent and 0.21 percent respectively. Likewise, only 1900 persons with disabilities out of the total of 30500 registered persons with disabilities in employment exchanges and 717300 in the live registry, making the percentage of placement 6.23% and 0.26% respectively. Out of these 1900 PwD placed through employment exchanges 1600 belong to orthopedically impaired disabled candidates and remaining 100 each in deaf and dumb and blind categories. Similarly in the 200 PwD placed through special exchanges belong completely from orthopedically impaired category. The statistics regarding the performance of the special cells as on 2013 shows that 583 PwD have been placed out of total of 92736 in live register which makes the placement percentage as 0.6.

This highlights that the placement percentage special exchange and employment exchange is very low. Secondly 70 percent PwD in the live registers belong to the orthopedics category, 13 percent blind and 16 percent deaf and dumb. The other categories of the PwD are either not considered or not registered nor placed. Even the placement percentage of special exchange which is 0.6 is not encouraging (National Career Service Report, 2016). Only 27 percent of the People with disabilities are officially registered with the special exchanges and special cells of regular employment exchanges (World Bank Report, 2009). A thorough overview of job placement outcomes from employment exchanges cannot be obtained. Even no information is available on cost per placement in special exchanges and special cells as compared to the employment exchanges (Mitra & Sambamoorthi, 2006)

During 2014, only 12363 persons with disabilities were rehabilitated through the Vocational Rehabilitation Centers for Handicapped (VRC's), which indicates that the capacity of the VRC facilities is comparatively small compared to the number of PwDs existing in the nation. More than 65 percent of the PwD rehabilitated belonged to orthopedically impaired category compared to 7 percent blind, 22 percent deaf and 5 percent mild mentally retarded

persons. (National Career Service Report, 2016). Reservation of 3 percent is available for PwD in all vocational trainings yet not accessible to them due to the location of the VRCs in urban areas. There are no data showing changes in job prospects or earnings for trainees or gained sustainable jobs after VRC training. (World Bank Report, 2009)

According to the Apprentices Act, 1961, 3 percent of the seats are allocated to the physically handicapped persons for the apprenticeship training. 559 PwD underwent the apprentice training i.e. 0.03 percent utilization. There is no data available regarding PwD participation in the apprentice training programs for 2004 – 05 onwards (World Bank Report, 2009). Only physically disabled persons are eligible for apprentices act which makes the other categories of PwD as non-eligible to avail the facility.

The UPSC recruitment advertisements of 2018 shows that only physically challenged persons viz. orthopedically handicapped, loco-motor disability and cerebral Palsy with disability are eligible. Even the forms include the hearing handicapped as an additional category. Some advertisements have PH instead of PwD which notifies Physically Handicapped and not any other categories. PwD are not applicable for positions in recruitment of police, security etc. (UPSC, 2018). Even the SSC recruitment advertisement also highlights the need of orthopedic handicapped, hearing impaired. Some of them highlight blindness, low vision, hearing impaired, loco motor disability and cerebral palsy. (SSC, 2018). The PwD categories such as leprosy cured, mental retardation, mental illness, autism and multiple disabilities and speech impairment has been completely ignored. Even after the adoption of the 2016 Legislation on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in which the category of disabilities has been expanded to 21 categories, there is no mention of dwarfism, thalassemia, hemophilia, Parkinson's disease, learning disabilities, multiple sclerosis, severe neurological conditions, acid attack victims. As of 2015, there was only one special recruitment drive for persons with disabilities where 296 were chosen (SSC, 2018)

Overall vacancies in the government sector were 45 lakhs in early 2000, out of which 4.6 lakhs were listed for people with disabilities and only 20 thousand were filled, i.e. 0.44 percent. (World Bank Report, 2009). The identified and non-identified posts are considered while calculating the number of seats reserved for PwD but for appointment purpose, only the posts identified for the PwD will be taken into account (Jagaran Josh, 2016).

A roster is maintained with 100 point vacancy based reservation in every government institution for appointment of PwD. Points 1, 25, 50 and 75 are reserved for PwD. The posts that are identified for the PwD doesn't fall on any of the four points mentioned, the post will remain vacant. (Diversity and Equal Opportunity Centre Report, 2009)

The government identifies the suitable PwD category along with physical requirements which is completely arbitrary. It states those services that are applicable for the successful candidate with disabilities. Some of the examples are that candidates with both limbs disabled are eligible for IAS but not for other services, candidates with one arm and leg are eligible for IFS and IAS, and candidates with one leg affected or hearing impaired are qualified for Delhi, Daman and Diu, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Dadra and Nagar Haveli Police and not for

any other police service. This means that the disabled policemen of these places are only effective. Such rules appear illogical (Sharma, 2018).

At job fairs in Hissar (Haryana) and Lucknow, the Skill council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPwD) participated. Although the number of people with disabilities placed are unknown. Data or figures concerning the DWARKA scheme regarding the number of persons with disabilities enrolled or working are not available (ILO, 2004). Under protected or sheltered employment, it is essential to know the number of PwD employed, the type of jobs allocated, details about the training sessions but not information could be traced (ILO, 2004). NIHH has created a website called jobsfordeaf.nic.in that is not operational.

### **III. METHODOLOGY**

This paper is exploratory in nature, which makes an attempt to understand the barriers Govt has to face in generating job opportunities for disabled persons. The self-employment aspect has been not taken into consideration in this study since such initiatives do not attract PwD being included at workplace. This study has been initiated from defining the concept of disability. Various reputed bodies World Health Organisation (WHO), International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have defined this concept. Then the disability as defined in Indian context was found from the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016. Tri-approach was adopted to obtain access to the data. First the fundamental legislation such as Article 41 of Constitution of India, the Apprentices Act, 1961, Craftsmen training scheme, Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016 were reviewed extensively. Government portals such as Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social justice and Empowerment, Ministry of Labour and Employment, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Ministry of Rural Development have been perused. This provided a clear understanding of the laws available to protect people with disabilities in India. Reports from the ILO, World Bank, Government Institutions and a national level NGO in collaboration with the BCG group were carefully researched. After getting to know about the main initiatives on paper, the knowledge about the practical scenario was essential. Hence specialists in the domain were approached. A diversity and inclusion consultant and a non-government organisation was contacted who helps in identifying the suitability of the differently abled people to the respective roles in select organisations, trains them and places them to such organisation. Informal conversations from these specialists about other initiatives which Govt. currently operates at a state level and challenges for the Govt. in generating employment were discovered. Questions such as initiatives which were different at a state level compared to central level, their opinion about such initiatives, their personal experience dealing with such initiatives were asked.

The second way was to reach out to few organizations from various sectors to see the phenomena in a balanced manner. Links from 5 organizations were made available from an NGO and the consultant since they were their current clients. The organisations belonged to IT, ITES, hospitality, retail, quick service retail sector. The CSR head from the from the IT organisation, the diversity and inclusion manager from ITES, the managing director from the hospitality, Head HR from the retail and Regional HR Manager from the quick service retail organisation were contacted. A semi-structured interview format was administered with the respective members of the organisations,



to verify the results of the Government's initiatives. Questions about the understanding of diverse initiatives, their keenness in participating or availing the benefit of such schemes, outcome of such programs and their impact on business performance were some of areas of discussion.

The third option was essentially to contact the Government institutions. Employment exchange, special exchange and special cells play a vital role in generating employment of persons with disabilities. Secondly, vocational rehabilitation centers for disabled persons (VRC's) located in major cities involved in training disabled persons are key in making them ready for industry. Hence respondents from these institutions were selected to give insight in this research. Since the NGO were domain experts, one reference was received from them to interact with one of the employment officer of the employment exchange based in Bangalore. After briefing the purpose of the interaction to the employment officer, two other officers were invited in the discussion to get a meaningful insight about the current phenomenon. Hence it turned out to be a mini-focus group interview. Initially it was about the performance of the employment exchange and then gradually directed the discussion to the employment status of the persons with disabilities. Rather than asking about the low performance of the employment exchange, difficulties that they face in performing their duties and responsibilities were asked. The discussion went to an extent where the participants were asked to share their personal experience dealing with the persons with disabilities. The last interview was with a representative from the Hosur-based vocational rehabilitation center for the disabled, Bangalore, who further reinforced the ground complexities behind the low employment of disabled people. The respondent from the VRC were asked about his experience in training the persons with disabilities, different kinds of challenges that he faces in transforming the talents, required areas of improvement etc. Mostly this face to face interaction was based on open ended questions.

#### IV. RESULTS

**Table 1:** Barriers that Govt. face towards inclusion of persons with disabilities

Majority of the employment exchange units have rarely any information about the vacancies from private organisations.
The coordination between the exchanges and VRCs', non-government agencies facilitating the skill development and the employers are poor
Lack of training among employment exchange members, special exchanges in dealing with disabled persons
VRCs' are more focused towards physically handicapped persons rather than intellectual disabilities
Reservation of 3 percent is available for PwD in all vocational trainings yet not accessible to them due to the location of the VRCs' in urban areas
VRCs' are not able to accommodate all categories of PwD due to poor infrastructure
Training programs that are conducted for the PwD do not match the industry requirement

The reservation/ quota system for PwD in Govt. Job has been ineffective so far
Government schemes and job-related information are limited to the urban areas
Due to the enhancement in technology many PwD have lost job prospects like telephone operator, stenographer, typist etc.
Unavailability of affordable computer literacy centres with appropriate accommodations and assistive technologies
Majority of the PwD are not prepared, trained to pass the written test and interviews
Many employers are unaware about the incentive schemes for hiring PwD
Hesitation among the private employers to deal with the Govt. agencies in availing the incentives
Section 35 from the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 states that the incentives will be provided to the private sector employers within the limit if their economy. This statement of provision with the economic limit makes the employers lose hope on the legislation
Social security schemes implemented by the Govt. lure the persons with disabilities in not opting for any employment.

The barriers that Govt. face in inclusion of persons with disabilities were disclosed from literature review, NGO and diversity consultant, representatives met from the organisations but majorly from the respondents of employment exchange and vocational rehabilitation centers for handicapped (summarized in Table 1).

The interaction with the respondent from the NGO highlighted some of the significant barriers that Govt. face. One of them is that, the employment officers are not trained or experienced at times to manage the queries from the persons with disabilities. It results in offending them, thereby discouraging them to approach next time to the employment exchange. Secondly due to the enrichment of technology many persons with disabilities have lost job prospects like telephone operator, stenographer, typist etc. which are group C jobs in government sector. Earlier these jobs were available in Govt. sector but today these categories of jobs have almost diminished. Third, interestingly the Govt. measures taken for the persons with disabilities have back fired and resulted into unemployment. For example, the provision of unemployment allowance, disability pension schemes, care-giver allowance, supported guardianship scheme to provide financial security. Moreover there are other social security incentives such as rural housing schemes, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee (MGNREGA) Act, 2005 which also gives an avenue for the persons with disabilities to yield. According to The rights of persons with disabilities act, 2016, unemployment allowance is applicable for the persons with disabilities who have registered for two years and above with special employment exchange and yet could not get placed in any occupation. As per the MGNREGA, it assures 100-day guaranteed unskilled manual work to every rural adult with an objective to lessen poverty. Commenting on these schemes, the respondent says...

Majority of the people with disabilities are present in the rural areas and these people available loads of benefits, subsidies from the Govt. Schemes. For e.g. the disability pension scheme in Goa entitles a person with disability to avail Rs. 2000 to 4000 per month. Many states have free housing schemes and free medical facilities too. Imagine a family in rural area has 5 members and all of them avail the MNNREGA facility thereby earns Rs. 200 per day which makes to Rs. 1000 per day. This means a family in rural area on an average has the potential to earn Rs. 360000 per annum. In addition they get free housing and medical treatments; kids receive free education, mid-day meals, disability pension, unemployment allowance etc. In such case how can you convince a person with disability to come to an urban area, stay away from their family and work in a retail store or a café or in BPO and earn Rs. 5000 to 10000 per month? They are happily unemployed

The diversity consultant highlighted the dilemma that persons with disabilities come across between the old technology and new technology during their job search. Many of them become ineligible for jobs due to the lack of required skills. For e.g. typewriting skill is still obligatory for several positions wherein the many typewriting institutes have radically reduced or shut down. Few Govt. organizations demand for computer literacy which becomes ahindrance for the persons with disabilities to get a job with such conditions. Maximum persons with disabilities reside at rural areas where computer training institutes are very less and moreover, additional software is essential to be installed for the persons with disabilities to operate; especially for visually impaired persons. She recalls a conversation with one of the person with disabilities...

... Ma'am, the fees of the computer institute is very high; I can't afford to pay the fees for the computer center. I have learnt type writing, it was easy and affordable. Now the eligibility mentioned in many job vacancies want computer literacy. With lot of difficulty I arranged the fees for the computer center, but whenever to go to the center, they say no electricity, please wait. What do I do...?

According to her, learning typewriting is user-friendly for the persons with disabilities because of the loud sound of the typewriter keys which generates a constant response to the learner, the space between the keys are more due to which it helps them to identify the right keys and type faster.

The corporate social responsibility head of the IT organisation and the diversity and inclusion manager from ITES organisation agreed on one point which is that the overall system of coordination between the employment exchange, vocational rehabilitation centers, NGO's who are facilitating the skill development programs is weak. The employment exchanges have their own standards and emphasis on Govt. jobs only, the VRC's train based on a fixed module which has been developed ages ago; the NGO's meet the exact requirement of a particular client who has no touch with any employment exchange.

... All the stakeholders operate in their own circumference. No one is in touch with anyone...

....No one knows what the other is doing...

The managing director from the hospitality recalls... once we approached one of the VRC to seek trained manpower for our backend as well front end staff, but they were not prepared with the requirement that we were looking in the candidates to handle the business requirement...

This clearly reflects that there is a mismatch of the skill offered at the VRCs and skill required from the industry. In such case the low rate of employability is assured.

The head HR from the retail organisation highlighted a vital point which is that the employment exchanges focus more into employment in Govt. organisation whereas majority of the Govt. organisations follow online recruitment mode which is an obstacle for the persons with disabilities since accessibility to computers stands out to be a challenge.

She shared an incident with a differently abled candidate during an interview where the candidate disclosed his experience. The candidate is blind, but educated who wanted to apply for Govt. jobs online but couldn't find an appropriate cyber café from where he can apply. Today the candidate is working as a warehouse executive with the retail organisation since JAWS software has been installed for him in the computer system. He was trained by the NGO.

The regional human resource manager from the quick service retail organisation emphasized on few vital areas of concern. First, many employers are unaware about the incentive schemes for employing persons with disabilities.

...All that employers know is that, there is some tax benefit if we hire persons with disabilities. In fact I came to know about the details when I met someone from a NGO who is a specialist in the area of disability employment...

Secondly, those who are aware of the schemes; yet do not want to get into the hassles of dealing with government schemes.

...The moment we come to know that the exempted amount of employer's contribution to the provident fund (EPF) and employee state insurance (ESI) needs to be received from the respective Government offices, for the first three years for each person with disability employed incentive., the first thing which comes in our mind is, forget it, it will not happen. And if it happens, we have shell out some amount to the Govt. officials to get the work done. So why to get make our hands dirty...

Third, Section 35 from the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 states that "The appropriate Government and the local authorities shall, within the limit of their economic capacity and development, provide incentives to employer in private sector to ensure that at least five percent of their work force is composed of persons with benchmark disability."Such statements of providing incentives with the economic limits of the local authorities reduce the confidence on the legislation. In his words...

...If it is a law, it has to be firm and not dicey. If a written document from the Govt. states such unpredictable statement, then it cannot be trustworthy...

One of the respondent from the employment exchange stated that employment exchange units have rarely any information about the vacancies from private organisations.

In his words ...Sir it is compulsory for private sector employers excluding the ones in agriculture, where 25 or more employees are working comes under the employment exchanges (compulsory notification of Vacancies) act, 1959. These organisations should let us know about the vacancies at the nearest employment exchange in a fixed format as prescribed by the Govt., but no one follows now a days...

...Sir, there are many employment exchanges available in the country, but the trend in today's generation is to apply for jobs through online and persons with disabilities are less. In Karnataka itself there are 40 offices of employment exchanges. If people register, we will surely notify vacancies to the people...

This reflects a lack of motivation among persons with disabilities to apply through employment exchanges which may be because of various reasons. When asked about the probable reasons of low registration from persons with disabilities, the second respondent replied... Sometimes the family members don't allow them to come, sometimes the infrastructure of the country don't support the persons with disabilities to travel, come to the employment exchange, collect forms, fill up and then apply...

Even the National Career Service (2016) report, supports the fact that of the 26,8 million people with disabilities, only 5700 have been registered and 94700 in the live register.

The third respondent added that accessibility of the government schemes and job related information is restricted to the urban areas only.

...Many village people Sir don't know about the special exchange or special cells available with the employment exchange which is applicable for persons with disabilities...

Moreover, majority of the vacancies are offered for orthopedic handicapped persons but they are not prepared or trained to pass the written test and interviews. One of the respondent states that...

...What can we do when disabled people are able to clear the exams and interviews? We are only the middlemen between the candidates and the companies. They should get trained properly, work hard and then sit for the exams. It is a competition where everyone should get an equal chance...

The interaction with the respondent from the vocational rehabilitation centers for handicapped (VRC) provided meaningful insights to the ground realities. According to him, a reservation of 3 percent is offered for persons with disabilities in all vocational trainings, yet many of them do not use the facility provided by the training center. It may be due to the location of the centers which are only in major city areas. The persons with disabilities residing in the rural areas are not in a position to access the opportunity. Proposal has been made to establish at least one VRC in each State/UTs but it is yet to be implemented. 11 Rural Rehabilitation Extension Centers (RREC) are there under 5 VRCs which are Chennai, Kanpur, Kolkata, Ludhiana and Mumbai but here only mobile rehabilitation counselors carry out disability assessment camps periodically. The practical training aspect is missing. A question was asked to this respondent that more than 65 percent of the persons with disabilities rehabilitated are from orthopedically impaired category which shows that VRC's are more focused towards physically handicapped persons rather than intellectual disabilities. What is his opinion about it? He Replied...

...Who ever will come to the center, we will do an assessment to assign the appropriate training module to them. Maximum orthopedically handicapped people come, so we train them. Everyone sees only the statistics; no one checks the reality...

But later during the conversation, it was found that there are specific reasons behind the VRC's focusing more towards physically handicapped persons...

...Generally the complete time to train a person with disability takes one year. In that case, the trainees have to stay in the residential complex of the training center. But we may not have the adequate facility for all types of disabilities to stay. It may not be suitable or comfortable according to their type of disability. There might be physical barrier at times for a locomotor disability, the machines needs to be installed with right software and working well in condition for the blind people. Sometimes the family members of the intellectual disabilities are not confident to leave them for such a long period out of their homes since they are not used to such...

Indeed, it is challenge for all stakeholders i.e. the VRC trainers, the persons with various impairments and also for the family members who would be reluctant to send their children for a longer duration. Not only because of technical issues, but due to safety issues too.

With the evolution of various industries and inclusion of people with disabilities in many sectors, the demand for more customization of training module has increased. VRC's find it challenging to train the person with disabilities as per the exact requirement of the industry. The respondent states that...

...Companies need exact readymade candidates so that the business does not get affected. Now every company has different requirement. Training the same candidate on different set of requirements becomes very difficult task for the trainee to absorb and perform. For e.g. the hearing impaired can work in a coffee shop as well as in retail store but the job responsibilities in both the places are completely different. Now if a third recruiter from ITES industry comes, the skill demanded changes drastically...

7 workshops on skill training were added to 7 VRCs located at Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Kanpur and Trivandrum which are generally within the city limits which make it difficult for the persons with disabilities residing at the rural areas to utilize the opportunity.

## **V. DISCUSSION**

The primary objective of the research was to identify the various barriers that the Govt. is facing to generate employment to the persons with disabilities. Stakeholders who are associated to the issue such as the domain expert in the field of inclusion of person with disabilities at workplace, NGO who is involved in training and placing disabled candidates with organizations, the decision makers of the organisations such as Head HR, Managing Director, Diversity and Inclusion Managers etc. were interviewed and finally the representatives from the employment exchange and vocational rehabilitation centers. Significant insights were found about the various obstacles the Government faces in rendering employment avenues to the persons with disabilities. Lack of training skills in the employment exchange, special exchanges staffs in managing the persons with disabilities discourage

them to approach further. This message spreads across the community of the disabled people and family members which further stops them to go to the exchanges. Disabled people are caught in a struggle between technological changes that have taken place from type writers to computers. Some find it easy to operate typewriters compared to the computers and others cannot afford it. Those who can afford it find it difficult to spot any computer center which has system accommodated with required software or face the issue with availability of interrupted electricity. Contrary to this, most of the Government institutions have an online mode of recruitment system which the people with disabilities find it complex to comply with. Those who cross these obstacles are unable to clear the written exams and interviews due to the lack of expertise. Government organisations have their own problems, such as the employment exchanges have no knowledge about the vacant positions from private employers. In addition, government schemes and employment-related information are not well available to rural people with disabilities. The government quota system has not culminated significantly in the development of jobs for people with disabilities. The vocational rehabilitation centers are not upgraded to the industry's necessary standards resulting in low employment. Moreover the centers are not well equipped with the infrastructure to accommodate the persons with disabilities. Not only is that, the VRCs located in urban areas, since rural people with disabilities do not have access to the resources. Among the key agencies such as the employment exchanges, NGOs, vocational rehabilitation centers and the employers, there exists a wide gap. In spite of the Govt. efforts, there are concerns from the private organizations too. Most of them are either uninformed of the incentives provisions or reluctant to fall in the trouble of dealing with govt. agencies. Even the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 has such clause, i.e. "appropriate Government and the local authorities shall, within the limit of their economic capacity and development, provide incentives to employer in private sector" that makes the private organizations think twice before employing the persons with disabilities. Finally to the surprise, the social security schemes which the Government is implementing such as unemployment allowance, disability pension or MNREGA income cause people with disabilities to choose no job. The findings show that job-related information needs to be disseminated in rural areas through the Rural Rehabilitation Extension Centers and Community Based Rehabilitation, so that the maximum number of people with disabilities is aware of employment opportunities in the rural areas. Furthermore, employment exchanges must ensure that private companies adhere to the employment exchange act, thus notifying the vacant positions in order to give them suitable candidates to establish win - win situations. The curriculum system of the vocational rehabilitation centers must be shared with private organisations, so that it can be revised according to the requirements of the sector and disabled people can be trained accordingly. The step must be taken to improve the vocational rehabilitation facility system capable of handling all disability groups. Government must also ensure that other categories of disability are included in the vacancies apart from the physically handicapped group through the UPSC and SSC authorities. Training should be given for the staff of the employment exchanges so that they can effectively manage and advise disabled people. Renowned industry bodies such as NASSCOM and CII should hold annual awareness seminars to inform private organisations about the related benefits, assistive technology and accommodation costs, leading to a greater inclination towards providing employment to the people with disabilities. Eventually, a strict evaluation of the government schemes must be carried out periodically to raise

awareness of the reality among the various institutions of government. This will result an end to the Government's dilemma in inclusion of individuals with disabilities at workplace.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The research was conducted on the basis of last available census data, i.e. Census 2011, which could vary from the real 2018 scenario. Secondly, only the respondents from the Bangalore area took part in the interview. Future research about the sample may be more comprehensive. An increased sample size may provide more perspective into the existing phenomenon, resulting in more remedies. Multiple generations of people with disabilities were not taken into account, a generic view on the disabled was considered. If different age groups are considered in the future research, specific experiences from respective strata will be meaningful. It could give a clearer picture of the actual situation if the persons with disabilities can also be added as respondents. It is important to include respondents from organizations that have overcome the obstacles that can offer a positive outlook to the dilemma of the government.

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