



## Entrollement of Differently Abled in Higher Education

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### INTRODUCTION

Disability is a multi-dimensional and complex construct and there is no single universally accepted, unproblematic definition of disability. Not only do definitions differ across countries but these also differ and change within a country with evolving legal, political and social discourses. It is very difficult to find reliable data about the prevalence of disability in India. In general, the search for a single prevalence rate is an illusion, and the range of estimates, and their varied origins, makes it difficult to say very much with assurance about people with disabilities.

National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) in its endeavour to provide information on the magnitude and other characteristics of the disabled persons conducted the third survey of disabled persons in the country during July 2002 to December 2002. The number of disabled persons in the country was estimated<sup>1</sup> to be 18.49 million during July to December, 2002. They formed about 1.8 per cent of the total population. About 10.63 per cent of the disabled persons suffered from more than one type of disabilities.

Among the different types of disabilities, the prevalence of locomotor disability was highest in the country – it was 1046 in the rural and 901 in the urban per 100000 persons. This was followed by visual disability and hearing disability. About 69 persons per 100,000 were either born disabled or become disabled for some reasons in India during the last 365 days. The incidence rate was also observed to be higher among males than that among females. About 55 per cent of the disabled in India were illiterate and about 9 per cent completed 'secondary and above' level of education.

India's higher education system is the third largest in the world, next to the United States and China. The main governing body at the tertiary level is the University Grants Commission, which enforces its standards, advises the government, and helps coordinate between the centre and the state. Accreditation for higher learning is overseen by 12 autonomous institutions established by the University Grants Commission.

### India's access to higher education for people with disabilities.

#### Special Needs Education

Understanding and accommodating students with disability has become a central focus for higher education. The students' experience of disability remains towards the margin of higher education's focus. Given enrolment trends, this status is ironic, but despite their increasing number, many students experiencing disability in many campuses/universities are viewed as different in ways that fails to affirm diversity or to facilitate their inclusion.

In this background, the University Grants Commission (UGC) vide its policy paper on education in the Eleventh five-year plan has stated that persons with disability should not be ignored in the higher education system. It has recommended development of special education teacher preparation pro-

gramme and also a scheme to provide special assistance to disabled persons to facilitate better accessibility in higher education to achieve better results with an objective to:

- To provide counseling to differently-abled students on the types of courses they could study at the higher education institutions.
- To ensure admission of as many differently-abled students as possible through the open quota and also through the reservation meant for them.
- To gather orders dealing with fee concessions, examination procedures, reservation policies, etc., pertaining to differently-abled persons.
- To assess the educational needs of differently-abled persons enrolled in the higher education institutions to determine the types of assistive devices to be procured.
- To conduct awareness programmes for teachers of the institution about the approaches to teaching, evaluation procedures, etc, which they should address in the case of differently-abled students.
- To study the aptitude of differently-abled students and assist the min getting appropriate employment when desired by them after their studies.
- To celebrate important days pertaining to disability such as the World Disabled Day, White CaneDay, etc., in the institution and also in the neighbourhood in order to create awareness about the capabilities of differently-abled persons.
- To ensure maintenance of special assistive devices procured by the higher education institution under the HEPSN scheme and encourage differently-abled persons to use them for enriching their learning experiences
- Providing Access to Differently-abled persons
- Providing Special Equipment to Augment the Educational Services for Disabled Persons
- Disability Units in Universities/Colleges

### NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Now a day's education plays an important role in human life. The government is also focusing to give good education and it also gives concessions and provides new schemes to develop education. The quality of the people in the aspect of behaviors, communication, socialization all have improved, because of education. In higher education the special students have frequent opportunity to participate and develop their skills. This research focuses primarily on the enrollment of persons with disability in higher education.

### Main Objectives

- To find out the percentage of the enrollment of persons with disabilities in higher education over the past 5 years.
- To enumerate the number of persons with disability in Govt, Aided, and Private (Self finance) Arts and Science colleges of Trichy district.
- To compare the strength of persons with disabilities in higher education with reference to gender.
- To study the enrollment of persons with disabilities in higher education with reference to the type of disability.

- To find out the discipline of study opted by persons with disabilities in higher education

Review of literature

1. The Hindu March 30, 2011 For A 'Barrier-Free' Higher Education Amutha Kannan - Creating awareness and improving accessibility is key to bringing persons with special needs into mainstream education. Physical barriers persist in preventing those with disabilities from having access to higher education. Creating awareness on this condition in educational institutions is the key to promoting higher education for persons with special needs. G. Victoria Naomi, said barriers were not only physical, but also in attitude and communication. The cost of coming up with adaptations in building to make it disabled-friendly was only two per cent of the total building cost. It was not the cost that prevented the institution from making the expenditure, but the insensitive attitude of the society towards disability, she added.
2. Gorard, S. (2008). Who is missing from higher education?Cambridge Journal of Education, 38(3), 421-437. S This paper discusses the difficulties of establishing a clear count of UK higher education students in terms of the categories used for widening participation, such as occupational background or ethnicity. Using some of the best and most complete data available, such as the annual figures from the Higher Education Statistics Agency, the paper then establishes that there is little evidence of a simple consistent pattern of under-representation within these categories, expect perhaps for men and students of white ethnicity. However, once prior qualifications are taken into account there is no evidence that potential students are unfairly and disproportionately denied access to higher education in terms of occupation, ethnicity, sex or disability. This has important implications for what we mean by widening participation in higher education and how we might achieve it.

Research Methodology

The researcher design adopted by the researcher was the descriptive survey method. The universe for the present study on Differently Abled in higher education was confined to Trichy district. The study was conducted in 28 Arts and Science colleges of Trichy district. The survey was conducted to ascertain the enrollment of differently abled in arts and science related courses over the past five years in relation to the chosen variables like gender, type of disability, locality, type and status of the college etc..., A self invented checklist was used to collect data for the study. Using the tool, the researcher collected the data for the study from the choosen samples and later subjected the data to descriptive analysis.

The findings were discussed using percentage score and graphical representation

Results and Discussions

Table :1 Findings relating to differently abled in higher

Table 2:

S NO	COLLEGE	2007				2008				2009				2010				2011			
		V.I	H.I	L.V	P.H	V.I	H.I	L.V	P.H	V.I	H.I	L.V	P.H	V.I	H.I	L.V	P.H	V.I	H.I	L.V	P.H
1.	GOVT	1	-	1	3	1	1	2	4	1	-	3	5	2	-	4	8	2	-	4	5
2.	AIDED	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	1	3	1	-	3	5	-	-	1	2
3.	PRIVATE	-	-	1	4	1	1	2	12	2	-	3	6	3	1	5	4	1	1	4	7

Every year the number of Physically handicapped students were comparatively more than the other type of disability. However the number of Persons with Low Vision were (12) in 2010 and comparative-

educational institutions over the past five years (2007-2011):  
Represents the number of differently abled enrolled in higher educational institutions over the past five years (2007-2011):

S No	COLLEGE	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	TOTAL
1.	GOVT	5	6	9	14	11	45
2.	AIDED	1	2	5	9	4	21
3.	PRIVATE	5	16	11	23	13	68

The data in the above table indicate that majority of the respondents were enrolled in 2010. In Government Colleges there were 11 students, in Aided Colleges 4 students and in Private Colleges 13 students participated in 2011. Majority of students were (23) enrolled in Private Colleges followed by 14 Students with Disabilities in Government Colleges. Nine students were enrolled in Aided Colleges. However it is seen that the number of Persons with Disabilities enrolled showed a gradual increase from 2007-2011. However the number decreased slightly in 2011. Comparatively over the past five years, it is evident that the highest enrollment was seen in Private colleges (68) followed by Government Colleges which had 45 Students with Disabilities. The lowest enrollment was seen in Aided Colleges.

Figure: 1 Represents the number of Persons with Disabilities in Higher Educational Institutions enrolled over the past five years 2007-2011:

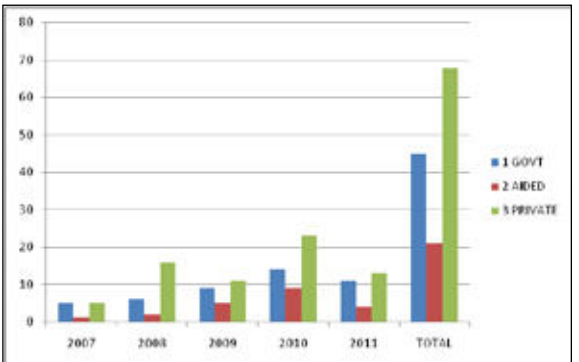


Table 2: Findings Relating To Persons with Disabilities enrolled In Higher Educational Institutions Over The Past Five Years (2007- 2011) in relation to type of disability

With reference to the type of disabled persons in Higher Education, the findings depict that the vast majority of respondent since 2007 to 2011, revealed that in 2010 & 2011 seventeen students with physical handicap were the highest to be enrolled.

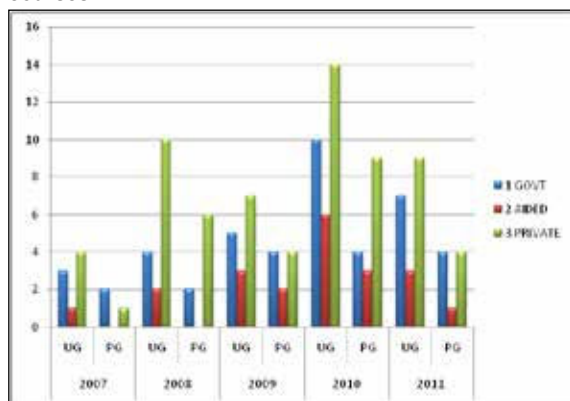
ly they were the second highest followed by Visual Impairment. The number of Hearing impaired were the least to be enrolled in higher education over the past five years.

**Table 3: Represents The Number Of Persons With Disabilities In Higher Educational Institutions Enrolled Over The Past Five Years (2007-2011) In Relation To The Type Of Courses:**

S. No.	COLLEGE	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011	
		UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG
1.	GOVT	3	2	4	2	5	4	10	4	7	4
2.	AIDED	1	-	2	-	3	2	6	3	3	1
3.	PRIVATE	4	1	10	6	7	4	14	9	9	4

With reference to the course opted for, the findings reveal that over the years, majority of the respondents were enrolled in Under Graduate course. The number of students enrolled in Post Graduate courses were relatively less.

**Figure: 2 Represents the number of Persons with Disabilities in Higher Educational Institutions enrolled over the past five years (2007-2011) in relation to the type of courses:**

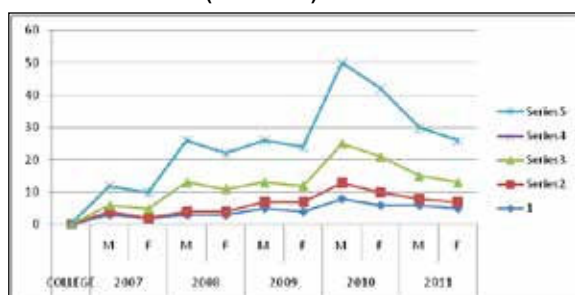


**Table 4: Represents The Number Of Persons With Disabilities In Higher Educational Institutions Enrolled Over The Past Five Years (2007-2011) In Relation To The Gender:**

S. No.	COLLEGE	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1.	GOVT	3	2	3	3	5	4	8	6	6	5
2.	AIDED	1	-	1	1	2	3	5	4	2	2
3.	PRIVATE	2	3	9	7	6	5	12	11	7	6
TOTAL		6	5	13	11	13	12	25	21	15	13

The above table 4 illustrates that in relation to gender over the past five years there were more male Students with Disabilities. Male students were the highest to be enrolled than the female students with Disabilities.

**Figure 3: Represents The Number Of Persons With Disabilities In Higher Educational Institutions Enrolled Over The Past Five Years (2007-2011) In Relation To The Gender:**



#### MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

Findings relating to enrollment of Persons with Disabilities in

higher education over the past 5 years:

- A great percentage of students (23) were enrolled in Private colleges followed by 14 students with Disabilities in Government colleges. Aided colleges had the least enrollment. Relating to the type of disabled admitted over the past 5 years the findings revealed that physically handicapped were the highest to be enrolled.
- With reference to the course opted for the findings revealed that majority of the respondents were enrolled in Under graduate course.
- Male students were the highest to be enrolled than the female Students with Disabilities.
- The Students with Disabilities in Government colleges are mostly from rural areas. In Aided and Private Colleges the Students with Disabilities are from urban areas.

Findings relating to enrollment of Persons with Disabilities in higher educational institutions for the current year (2011):

- The majority of respondents enrolled were 13 in Private colleges for the current year 2011.
- Most of the respondents (10-18%) were in the age group 21-23 years in Government, Aided and Private Colleges.
- In Government Colleges, majority of the respondents (22%) enrolled were male students. In the Private Colleges twenty four percent of the respondents enrolled were female students with disabilities
- The findings depict that the vast majority of respondents in Aided and Private Colleges were physically handicapped.
- It was seen that most of the respondents (28-32%) were in both Under graduate and Post graduate courses in Aided and Private College

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- To provide equal educational opportunities to disabled persons in higher education institutions.
- To equip higher education institutions with the facilities to provide access to disabled persons. It has been felt that differently-abled persons need special arrangements in the environment for their mobility and independent functioning. It is also a fact that many institutes have architectural barriers that disabled persons find difficult for their day-to-day functioning. To monitor the implementation of all existing and future legislation and policies pertaining to higher education of persons with disabilities.

#### CONCLUSION:

This study brought to light that there were definite signs of progress in provision of higher education to students with disability taking place within a demanding context. However, much further development is needed, in particular, barriers to accessing the curriculum needs to be addressed. This requires a cultural change within higher education, namely older universities, with a shift towards more accessible teaching practices and the wider availability of learning support for all students. Monitoring and evaluation of statistics and services for students with disabilities also needs further development. Gender differences and inequalities needs to be addressed and many more female students with disabilities to be motivated to join the mainstream of higher education. The government support and the financial outlay need to be qualitatively and quantitatively enhanced.

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