

# Disabled Students in the State of Madhya Pradesh, India : An Imperial Study

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**Abstract :** Madhya Pradesh, the education level of disabled individuals is better compared to other states in India. About 52.54% of the disabled population is literate, while the overall literacy rate in the state is 70.63%. This study analyzed 1,552 disabled students, including 831 boys (53.54%) and 721 girls (46.46%). Visual impairment is the most common disability, affecting 559 children (36.01%). Mentally retarded children make up 508 (32.73%). Other disabilities include hearing impairment (7.15%), orthopedic issues (5.8%), speech problems (5.09%), cerebral palsy (1.55%), multiple disabilities (10.12%), and learning disabilities (1.55%).

**Introduction** - Disability is a global issue that intersects with marginalization and social exclusion. People with disabilities often face systemic barriers that hinder their access to opportunities for social and economic development (Amartya Sen and Wolfensohn, 2014). This population is denied fundamental rights such as education, employment, and healthcare, perpetuating cycles of inequality. However, disabilities are not uniform; they encompass various forms, each requiring specific care, support, and intervention (Leni, 2006).

India has a significant population of disabled individuals. According to the 2011 Census, approximately 26.8 million people, or 2.21% of the population, live with disabilities. Activists argue that the actual figure could be higher due to underreporting. The diversity in disability types and their prevalence highlights the need for inclusive policies and programs to address these challenges and promote equitable growth for this marginalized group.

## **Disability: Meaning and Definition**

Disability is a complex and relative concept, shaped by cultural, social, and contextual factors. Different cultures and societies have unique perceptions of what constitutes "normal" abilities, making disability a subjective and evolving idea. Over time, various fields have defined disability for distinct purposes, often focusing on medical, social, and political perspectives.

The Oxford Dictionary describes disability as an impairment that may be intellectual, physical, cognitive, sensory, or mental, impacting a person's ability to perform everyday activities. Disabilities can be present from birth or develop later in life.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) defines disability as the

interaction between individuals with impairments and environmental or societal barriers that hinder their full participation in society on equal terms with others.

Historically, the medical model of disability dominated, viewing disability as a deviation from the "normal" body and mind. This approach categorized individuals as healthy or unhealthy, normal or abnormal, creating a hierarchy that marginalized disabled individuals. During the 18th and 19th centuries, Western societies adopted this medicalized view, reinforcing social control through "bio-politics." Disabled bodies were often labeled as inferior, with the medical profession playing a central role in shaping societal attitudes and policies.

In contrast, modern frameworks emphasize a more inclusive perspective, recognizing the importance of addressing societal barriers, empowering individuals, and fostering equal opportunities for people with disabilities.

## **Objectives Of The Study :**

1. To know the growth rate of disabled population in The state of Madhya Pradesh .
2. To study the educational status of persons with disability in different districts of Madhya Pradesh .
3. To examine the work participation rate of disabled population in across the states in India.
4. To offer policy suggestions for upliftment of the disabled students of Madhya Pradesh

**Disability in india :** As per the 2011 Census, India has 26.8 million individuals with disabilities, accounting for 2.21% of the total population. This marks an increase from 21.9 million in 2001. Among the disabled, 14.9 million are males, while 11.9 million are females. A significant majority, 18 million, live in rural areas, compared to 8.1 million in urban areas. Disability prevalence stands at 2.41% for

males and 2.01% for females. Social group analysis shows 2.45% of the disabled population belongs to Scheduled Castes (SC), 2.05% to Scheduled Tribes (ST), and 2.18% to other categories.

**Disability in Madhya Pradesh (MP):** Madhya Pradesh is home to 15,51,931 disabled individuals, representing 2.14% of its total population and 5.79% of India's disabled population. Notably, 7.59% of MP's disabled population are children, making up 5.76% of India's total disabled children. The Census 2011 revealed that one in every 100 children aged 0-6 years in India has a disability, with 23% having hearing impairments, 30% visual impairments, and 10% movement-related disabilities.

In MP, only 52% of the disabled population, approximately 8,10,368 individuals, are registered as beneficiaries with the Department of Social Justice. This reflects a gap in social security coverage for the disabled. The educational and work participation rates among the disabled in MP remain low, further marginalizing them. Since education is crucial for integration into mainstream society, this study focuses on the educational infrastructure and support provided by institutions under the Department of Social Justice in the state.

**Data Collection :** The researcher visited various schools under all Block Resource Centers across three districts. After seeking permission from the school head, interviews were conducted with selected special children and their teachers. A specially designed schedule for disabled students was used to interview the children, followed by interviews with the teachers or school heads using a separate schedule tailored for them.

**Results and Discussion:** This study involved a sample of 1,552 students with disabilities from different districts of Madhya Pradesh who were availing welfare schemes. The data collected from these respondents was analyzed to provide a detailed profile, including personal and family details such as age, gender, religion, marital status, cause and type of disability, family structure, and living arrangements. The analysis also covered aspects like disability pension or unemployment allowance and essential identity documents such as voter ID, ration card, Aadhaar card, and disability certificates required for accessing

welfare schemes.

Additionally, the study examined the educational, occupational, and income details of the respondents and their families to understand their socio-economic conditions and participation in welfare initiatives.

**Conclusion :** The condition of the disabled community in Madhya Pradesh underscores the urgent need for a comprehensive, inclusive approach to address the unique challenges and disparities faced by this demographic. It is crucial for the Madhya Pradesh government to collaborate with non-governmental organizations and civil society to formulate holistic policies and programs that ensure equitable access to healthcare, education, and employment opportunities. These initiatives should also consider the specific needs of different regions to maximize their effectiveness. The overarching goal should be to foster a more inclusive and equitable society where individuals with disabilities can actively participate in and contribute to their communities.

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