



## PERCEPTION OF DISABLE STUDENTS ON THEIR EDUCATION: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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### Abstract

People with disabilities form a significant part of the world population. The exact numbers are hard to discern due to suspected underreporting and differences in the definition of disability between countries, and cultures. It is estimated that approximately 650 million people of global the population, or ten per cent of the total population, live with disability. It is also estimated that approximately 80 per cent of the global population living with disability live in developing countries. The global prevalence of disability and impairment is expected to rise due to factors such as increase in population, ageing, accidents, malnutrition, conflict, HIV and advancements in medical treatment which preserves and prolongs life. The experience of people with disability varies depending on their personal circumstances, availability of resources and other external factors. Similarly, students with disabilities represent an emerging population in higher education institutions, whose perceptions and experiences of higher education are ultimately shaped by their sociocultural experiences, the existing of environment, and the availability of specific facilities, required by them. Despite notable progress in legislations and policies for these students in higher education institutions, many of them still face various challenges in completing their studies successfully. Unfortunately it was also found that there is a dearth of research studies in the Indian context. The present paper is highlight that the attitude of disable students on higher education in Anantapuramu district of Andhra Pradesh State.

**Keywords:** *Disable Higher Education, Perception, and Problem.*

### Introduction

Education is the most effective vehicle of social and economic empowerment of the world's people with disability World disabled In keeping with the spirit of article 21 A of the constitution guaranteeing education as a fundamental right and section 26 of the Persons With Disabilities Act, 1995, free and compulsory education has to be provided to all children with disabilities up to the minimum age of 18 years.

The U.N General assembly Convention recalls Article 36 of the *UN Declaration of Human Rights*, which states that everyone has a right to education. The Convention recognizes that access to education is a fundamental right of persons with disabilities. Education is to be provided, wherever possible, in an “inclusive” manner; that is, within the context of the mainstream educational system and not in a segregated setting. Article 24 contains specific obligations that include the provision of “reasonable accommodations” for students with disabilities. These may include, as appropriate, access to (along with training in, and use of) accessible ICTs, including assistive technology and educational materials in an accessible format.

Disability in *India* has been neglected for a *long* time. ‘No serious effort was made by the Government of India for physical and vocational rehabilitation of the disabled.. In fact, there were only a few schools for educating disabled children and most of them were located in urban areas.



### **Statement of the Research Problem**

People with disability are a marginalized group, starved of services and mostly ignored by society, live in isolation, segregation, poverty, charity and even pity. As discussed earlier there are different types of Disability leading commonly to discrimination. As a result the disabled do not frequent public places and are not fortunate to enjoy the rights which a normal person does. They are deprived of education and employment.

In this condition pursuing higher education often remains a dream. To some extent people with Disability have managed to enter schools but higher education poses too many challenges which include social, physiological, and economic. This study takes in to account the different levels of these problems and their interactions to understand and highlight the problems faced by people in higher on the basis of the above identified problematic the following hypothesis and objectives have been framed for this research.

### **Objectives**

1. To study the importance of higher education
2. To analyse the perception of the disable students on education and facilities

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Setting of the study**

The District has been divided into 5 revenue divisions, consisting of 63 revenue mandals, with 949 villages and 16 towns. Anantapuramu is located in rain shadow area of Andhra Pradesh and is considered as drought prone area. It is notified as the top backward area in Andhra Pradesh As per 2011 census, Anantapuramu district has a population of 40.83 lakhs and a population density of 190 persons/sq.km which is growing as a decadal growth rate of 12.16%.

Though, it is an important educational centre with many prominent educational schools, colleges and universities, the average literacy rate is 63.57%, and the male, female literacy rates are 73.02% and 53.97% respectively. There may be several reasons behind the low people with Disability literacy rate. Divyang education is very important for the social and economic growth of society. Hence the area selected is Anantapuramu.

#### **Sample size**

The universe of the study comprised Disability students, enrolled in three universities of Anantapuramu district, Andhra Pradesh. A complete, reliable list of enrolled number of Disabled students in S.K University, JNTU, and Central University of A.P was collected by Regional Inspection Officer, and Distinct Education officer, Anantapuramu.

Altogether 150 sample respondents were selected who has been studying higher educational courses like Under Graduates, Post Graduates and Doctoral programme in these universities with using simple random sampling techniques. The researcher has personally visited, explain the purpose of the research study, benefit from the study, and benefit to the society especially disabled community in Andhra Pradesh state.

#### **Data collection instrument**

A self-structured questionnaire was used to assess the prevalence of psychosocial problems, their risk factors and knowledge levels among people with Disability students.



**Results and discussions**

**Table 1, Sources from which financial Aid was received by Students**

S.No	Financial Support	Frequency	Percentage
1	Social Welfare Scholarship	46	30.67
2	RDT Fellowship	67	44.67
3	UGC/CSIR/ICSSR	09	06.00
4	Not receiving fellowship	28	18.66
	Total	150	100.00

**Source: Field Survey**

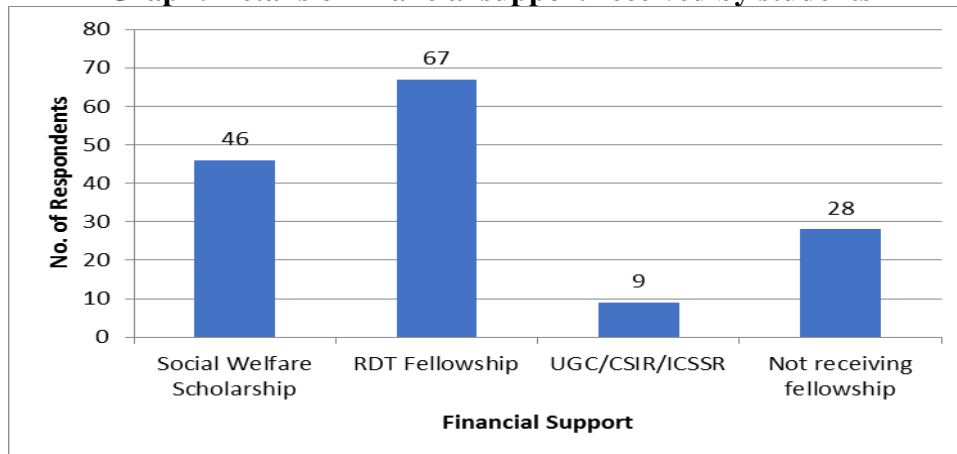
Enrolling in higher education institutions at university level can be an existing and enriching experience. It can also be expensive one. In addition to the tuition fees, there are other expenses like books, room rent, boarding expenses, health insurance, transportation and pocket money. In order to help these students financially, the UGC, ICSSR, the Government have introduced many scholarships such as social welfare scholarship, and other fellowships. Under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, the Government of India providing social welfare scholarship to “Improve the educational status of OBCs, SCs, STs, Minorities and persons with disabilities, whereas UGC is providing fellowships to the students those who cleared JRF/CSIR”

In addition, UGC is given financial assistance to all the students who enrolled in Central Universities in India. These kind of financial resources helps the students pay for or supplementary payment of educational expenses in higher education. The most important point we need to recognize is that financial aid, results in a partnership requires co-operation, communication, and an understanding of each other responsibilities within the financial support services process.

The present table found more member of fellowships have been receiving from non-Governmental organization (NGOs), i.e., Rural Development Trust (RDT) by the disable students and it represents 44.67 per cent (67 students), 30.67 per cent represents 46 disabled students were taken social welfare scholarship from the respected corporation and only nine disable students have received fellowship from the UGC/CSIR/ICSSR New Delhi.

It is quite interestingly found that 18.66 per cent of the respondents did not get any fellowship from any agency or any organization in the study area.

**Graph: Details of financial support received by students**





**Table 2, Students Perception on management enter into Higher Education**

S.No	Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
1	Not Encouraging	44	29.33
2	Partially Encouraging	72	48.00
3	Encouraging	34	22.67
	Total	150	100.00

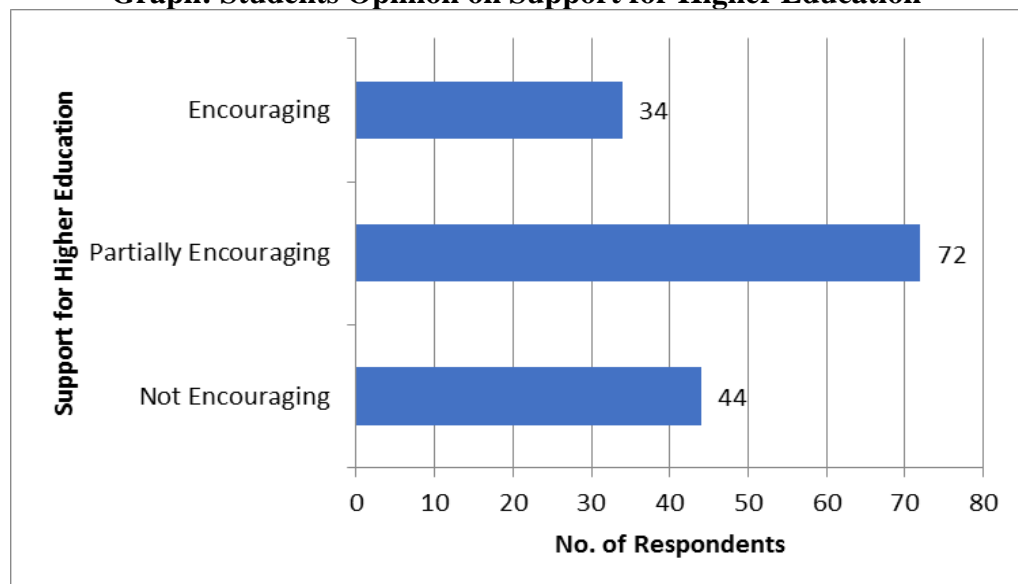
Source: Field Survey

Further, “the researcher attempt to make an empirical evidence about the perception of disabled students on whether their university management/authority has been encouraging and so that you have entered in to higher education. According to their study, encouragement is defined in terms of respondents perception on university encouragement to disabled students participation in social and academic activities by providing proper support services in their respective universities and getting feed back with a view to evaluate impact and to better understand existing practices, including in this process, the voice of the students with disability themselves”.

The present table 2 discloses that the perception of the disabled students on motivation of the university authority or management in Ananthapuramu district of Andhra Pradesh. It’s found from the above table that 29.29 per cent of male disabled students in total male students were expressed that there is no encouraging by the college/university management authority to enter into higher education, 49.49 per cent of male students and 45.09 female students were accepted that they have partially motivated by the management or authority of colleges or universities to enter into higher education in the study area.

It is another found that 21.22 per cent of male students and 25.50 per cent of female disabled students were expressed that they have motivated/encouraged by the university/college authorities or management. Altogether 29.33 per cent of the respondents don’t motivated by any one, and more than 70 per cent of the respondents have motivated and encouraged by various representatives with partially to fully motivated.

**Graph: Students Opinion on Support for Higher Education**





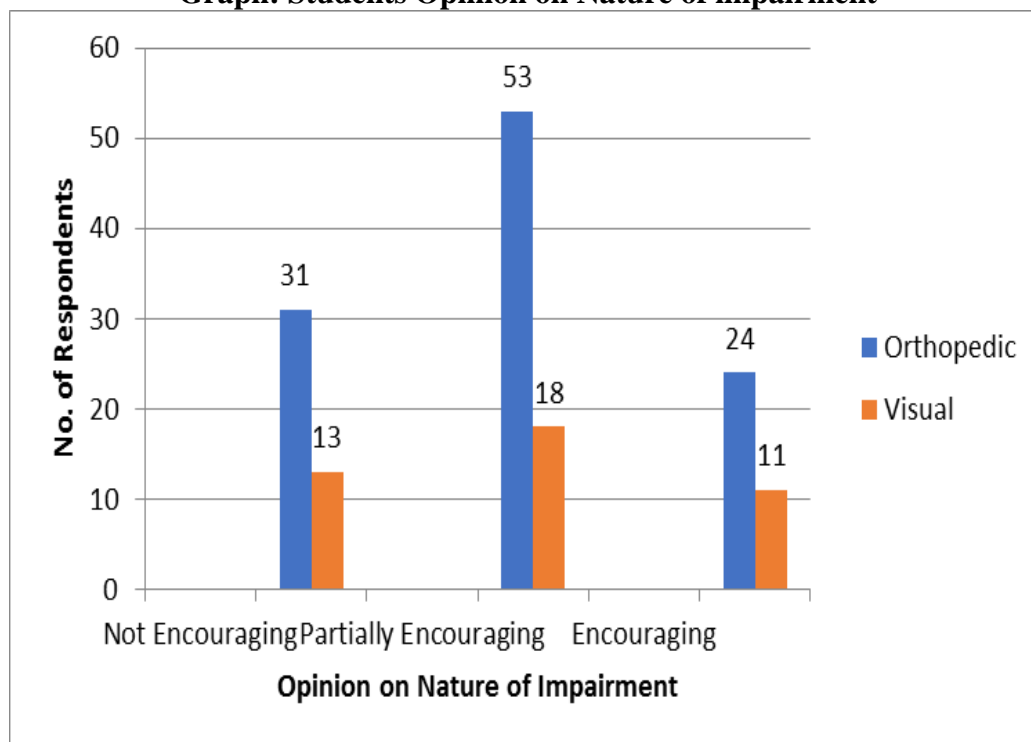
**Table 3, Students Perception on Nature of Impairment**

S.No	Variables	Nature of Impairment		Total
		Orthopedic	Visual	
1	Not Encouraging	31 (28.70)	13 (30.95)	44 (29.34)
2	Partially Encouraging	53 (49.07)	18 (42.85)	71 (47.34)
3	Encouraging	24 (22.23)	11 (26.20)	35 (23.32)
	Total	108 (72.00)	42 (28.00)	150 (100.00)

**Source: Field Survey**

The table 3 demonstrated that the relationship between encouraging/motivating by the university authorities or college management with the nature of impairment in the study area. It is come to know about the opinion on motivated factors like management of colleges or universities. It can be seen in table 3 that 28.70 per cent of orthopedic impairment students, and 30.95 per cent of visual impairment students would not motivated or encouraged by any one, while 49.07 per cent of orthopedic impairment students and 42.85 per cent of visual impairment students were stated that they have partially encouraged by the management or authorities of college or university, and finally encouraged by authorities of 22.23 per cent of orthopedic and 26.20 per cent of visual impairment was noticed in the study area.

**Graph: Students Opinion on Nature of impairment**





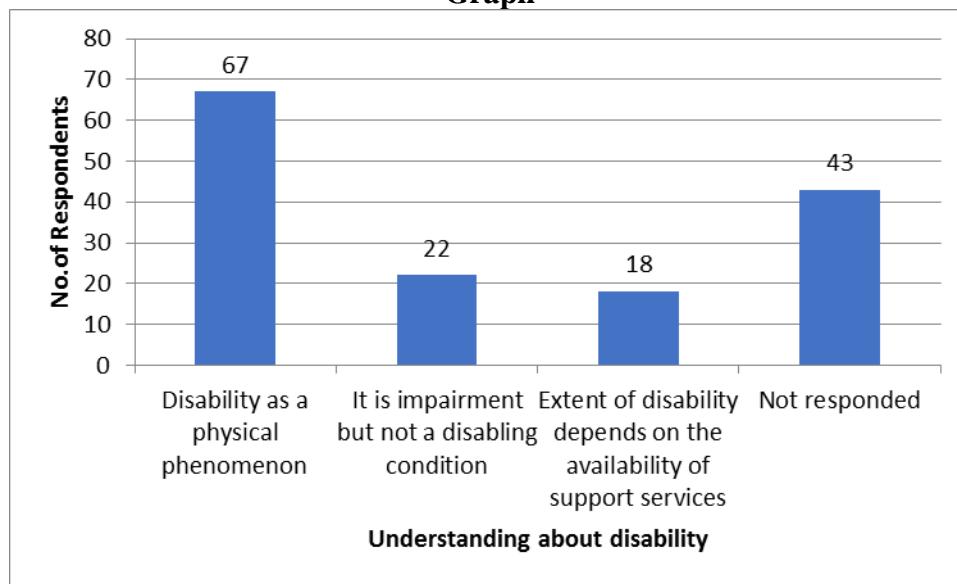
**Table 4, Understanding about Disability from Students Perspective**

S.No	Statement	Frequency	Percentage
1	Disability as a physical phenomenon	67	44.67
2	It is impairment but not a disabling condition	22	14.67
3	Extent of disability depends on the availability of support services	18	12.00
4	Not responded	43	28.66
	Total	150	100.00

Source: Field Survey

Disability is a broad term that is not consistently defined, why because the usage of this term is varied from person to person impairment to impairment and also medical terms/entities, societal norms, and Governmental agencies that address disability issues. “There is very limited research on how students with disability understand the term disability and how it is actually constructed by them. In this study, one of the researcher questions was explore how the term ‘disability’ is constructed by students with disabilities in higher education at college and university level. The following table 4 provides brief description of the students understanding the term disability in this own perspective.”

**Graph**



The table 4 data has clearly noticed that all respondents had their own individual preferences about how they perceived their disability. It is found how they perceived their disability. It is found from the table that nearly 71 per cent of the sample respondents has given and meager per cent of the respondents did not given any responses in the study area. Based on this responses 44.67 per cent of the disable students were stated that disability as a one of the physical phenomenon, 14.67 per cent respondents 22 disable students have reported that the disability is an one of the impairment but it is not a disability conditions of an individuals, another response were given by the disabled students like extent of disability depends on the availability of support services and it is reported that 12 per cent. It is quite interestingly found that nearly 29 per cent of the respondents did not give any response to that question.



**Table 5, Perception of Students participation in Extra Curricular Activity**

S.No	Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
1	Effective Participation	19	12.67
2	Partly Participation	96	64.00
3	No Participation	35	23.33
	Total	150	100.00

**Source: Field Survey**

“Extra-curricular activities Extra-curricular activities are pursued by students that fall outside the dominion of the normal university curriculum. Extra-curricular activities, which include students' cultural programmes, sports, student unions, and various clubs, are an important part of the educational experience of many students”. The important point is that students who actively participate in various extra-curricular activities will have and develop higher social skills, as well as achieve more success in academics, than those not participating in these activities. These students can acquire the basic skills necessary to participate partially in sports, student unions, and social events and other cultural programmes. These programmes give students with disabilities the opportunity to work with students without disabilities in a positive environment where everyone can actively contribute in one way or the other”.

“Another important benefit of extra-curricular activities is to provide these students with opportunities to begin to understand the diverse people's attitudes, skills and talents and how to interact effectively with their peer group while working towards a common goal. Extra-cultural activities provide an opportunity for the students to come closer to one another in college, irrespective of their social background. The active participation in extra-curricular activities can offer a sense of attachment and can influence identity, self-esteem and a feeling of belonging. Table provides a brief description of the participation of students in extra-curricular activities by nature of impairment.”

### Conclusions

Interestingly, students in the initial (face-to-face) iteration of this course almost unanimously suggested keeping the course as is instead of moving it on-line. Despite the presumptions of the first “cohort” of students, the data suggest that students in subsequent online versions of the course also had as powerful, if not more powerful, learning experiences as when the course was taught face-to-face. This is important to consider in the context of the course goals, theoretical framework, and overall positioning in a larger con-text of diversity courses and education. In an online format, students can be asked to be conscious and re-flective of the ways that their ideas are changing, and are given the space to do this reflection built into the course. Students can also be honest, both with them- selves, their peers, and their instructors, about the knowledge that they have around disability issues. The government will initiate and implement better policies for disable students through financial and moral support in drought prone are like Rayalaseema Region of Andhra Pradesh State.

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