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RESEARCH ARTICLE

EMPOWERMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES THROUGH INSTITUTIONAL BASED REHABILITATION SERVICES

***Dev Nandan Kumar**

Rehabilitation Officer, Composite Regional Centre for Persons with Disabilities (CRC),
Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Govt. of India, Patna, India

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ABSTRACT

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPD) Act, 2016; replaces the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995. The RPD Act includes total 21 conditions under disability. The existing eight national institutes established during 1970s and 1980s are old fashioned and working for empowerment of single disability. Studies have shown that non-inclusion of persons with disabilities in the development process has several implications, as stigma of disability may result in loss of income and additional cost to the person with disability, for their care providers and other family members. This also results in loss of education and social exclusion to them and their family. The Biwako Millenium Framework 2003-2012; has been extended as new Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities for the period 2013 to 2022 to "Make the Right Real" for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific. In addition to legal framework, extensive infrastructure has been developed to empower persons with disabilities in time bound manner by 2022. The present study has been conducted through purposive sampling and data shows that Composite Regional Centers (CRC) is providing only 84 % of rehabilitation services related to social security to persons with disabilities. Rehabilitation services related to education is limited to 28 %, employment services are 20 % and early intervention services are limited to 12 %.

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INTRODUCTION

In India, the Constitution ensures equality, freedom, justice and dignity of all individuals and implicitly mandates an inclusive society for all including persons with disabilities. In this sector, there are four legislations and one national policy for persons with disabilities namely, the Mental Health Act, 1987, Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992; Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995; and the National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999. Out of these, the last three legislations and the National Policy for Persons with Disabilities, 2006; are dealt in the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India and the first in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India.

Institutional Framework for empowerment: In addition to the legal framework, extensive infrastructure has been developed.

***Corresponding author: Dev Nandan Kumar,**

Rehabilitation Officer, Composite Regional Centre for Persons with Disabilities (CRC), Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Govt. of India, Patna, India,

The three statutory bodies, two central public enterprises, eight national institutes, eight Composite Regional Centers (CRCs) and 199 District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DDRCs) are working for empowerment of persons with disabilities. In addition to above, there are also several national institutions under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India working in the field of rehabilitation, like National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS), Bangalore; All India Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (AIIPMR), Mumbai; All India Institute of Speech and Hearing (AIISH), Mysore; Central Institute of Psychiatry (CIP), Ranchi, etc.

The Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD)

The Office of the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities has been set up as a statutory body under Section 57 of the PWD Act, 1995 (No.1 of 1996). The CCPD has mandate to implement the PWD Act 1995 and National Policy for persons with disabilities, 2006; inter-alia, to co-ordinate the work of the State Commissioners for Persons with Disabilities; monitor utilization of funds disbursed by the Central Government and take steps to safeguard the rights and

facilities, made available to the Persons with Disabilities. The CCPD has been assigned certain powers of a Civil Court for effective discharge of the functions.

National Institute for the Visually Handicapped (NIVH), Dehradun

The NIVH, was setup by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India, in 1979 with the main objectives to undertake or sponsor the training of trainers and rehabilitation professionals and to conduct, sponsor, co-ordinate or subsidize research in biomedical engineering leading to the effective evaluation of special appliances/instruments or suitable surgical or medical procedures or the development of new special appliances/ instruments.

Ali Yavar Jung National Institute for the Hearing Handicapped (AYJNIHH), Mumbai

The Institute was established in 1983, with the objectives of manpower development, research, clinical services, outreach and extension services, socio-economic rehabilitation services, material development and collection of information, documentation and dissemination of information for persons with hearing impairment. The Institute and its Regional Centres conduct Doctoral, Post-graduate, Graduate, Under-graduate and Diploma Courses in the fields of Education (Hearing Impairment), Speech and Hearing (Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology) and Media and Disability Communication.

National Institute for the Orthopaedically Handicapped (NIOH), Kolkata

The National Institute for the Orthopaedically Handicapped (NIOH) was established in 1978 at Kolkata, West Bengal to serve as an apex Institute for the development and rehabilitation services countrywide with focus on human resource development in disability specific sector like loco-motor, visual, speech, learning and mental retardation. The Institute is a leading organization providing trained manpower and research facilities in the key area of application of timely and special surgical intervention and other curative services along with assistive technologies for persons with loco-motor disabilities.

Swami Vivekananda National Institute for Rehabilitation Training and Research, Cuttack

The Institute was established in 1975 and functioning with the objective of providing human resource development and implementing service delivery programmes, research and outreach programmes. It undertakes, sponsors and coordinates the training of personnel such as Doctors, Engineers, Prosthetists, Orthotists, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Multi-purpose Rehabilitation Therapists and such other personnel for rehabilitation of the the Persons with Disabilities.

Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya Institute for the Physically Handicapped (PDUIPH), New Delhi

It was established as a Non- governmental organization in the year 1960 by the Society for Crippled and Handicapped. The Government of India took administrative and financial control of the Institute during 1975 and registered it as a Society in the

year 1976 under Societies Registration Act, 1860. One of the main objectives of the Institute is to develop manpower for serving persons with loco-motor disabilities. The Institute runs different courses in pursuit of alleviating sufferings of the people with various impairments and to provide quality services in the fields of physiotherapy, occupational therapy, prosthetics and orthotics.

National Institute for the Mentally Handicapped (NIMH), Secunderabad

The Institute has been established in 1984 with the basic objective of developing human resources, equipped to deliver services through quality models of rehabilitation, based on life cycle needs. The Institute also administers B.Ed programmes in Special Education, keeping in view the needs of special teachers at various levels. It also runs M. Phil Programme in Special Education (mental retardation) that prepares students to take up research and training of manpower in the field of mental retardation.

National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (NIEPMD), Chennai

The National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (NIEPMD) was established in the year 2005, with the objective to serve as a National Resource Centre for empowerment of persons with multiple disabilities. The persons having more than one disability, as mentioned in the PWD Act, 1995 and the National Trust Act, 1999 are provided need based rehabilitation services. The Institute strives to achieve its basic objective of developing human resources in the area through offering M. Phil Degree, Post-graduate Diplomas and a Diploma Programme for catering to the requirements of professionals engaged in providing rehabilitation services to Persons with Multiple Disabilities.

Composite Regional Centres (CRCs)

Consequent to the enactment of the Persons with Disability Act (PWD), 1995 which enjoins upon the government a responsibility for taking up steps for providing an enabling environment for Persons with Disabilities, scheme of setting up CRCs was formulated. The scheme of setting up of Composite Regional Centres is a part of overall strategy to reach out to the persons with disabilities in the country and to facilitate the creation of the required infrastructure and capacity building at Central, State and District levels and below for awareness generation, training of rehabilitation professionals, service delivery etc. It was thought that initiative from the Central Government is necessary by supporting establishment of CRCs in order to speed up the process of establishing rehabilitation services and sharing with the State Government the innovative model of services developed by National Institutes, Regional Rehabilitation and Training Centres, DDRCs, etc. and also to do capacity building, to establish, strengthen and upgrade rehabilitation services to reach unreached disabled population. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has set up eight CRCs upto December 2011; to empower the persons with Disabilities, these are as under. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has set up eight Composite Regional Centres for Persons with Disabilities so far, to provide both preventive and promotional aspects of rehabilitation like education, health, employment and vocational training, research and manpower development etc.

Table 2. Composite Regional Centres In India

S.N	Name of CRCs	Location State	State Covered by CRC	Month & Year of Establishment
1	Srinagar	Jammu & Kashmir	Jammu & Kashmir	June 2000
2	Bhopal	Madhya Pradesh	MP & Chhattisgarh	August 2000
3	Lucknow	Uttar Pradesh	Uttar Pradesh	September 2000
4	Guwahati	Assam	North East Region	February 2001
5	Sundernagar	Himachal Pradesh	Himachal Pradesh & Punjab	May 2001
6	Patna	Bihar	Bihar	February 2009
7	Ahmedabad	Gujarat	Gujarat	August 2011
8	Kozhikode	Kerala	Kerala	December 2011

Table 1. National Institutes for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities

S.N.	National Institute	Place	Year of Establishment	Working Disabilities Area
1	National Institute for the Visually Handicapped, (NIVH)	Dehradun, Uttarakhand	1979	Visual Disability
2	Ali Yavar Jung National Institute for the Hearing Handicapped, (AYJNIHH)	Mumbai, Maharashtra	1983	Speech Language & Hearing Disability
3	National Institute for the Orthopaedically Handicapped (NIOH)	Kolkata, West Bangal	1978	Locomotor Disability
4	Swami Vivekanand National Institute for the Rehabilitation Training & Research (SVNIRTAR)	Cuttack, Odisha	1975	Locomotor disability
5	Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya Institute for the Physically Handicapped, (PDUIPH)	New Delhi, Delhi	1960	Locomotor and associated disabilities
6	National Institute for the Mentally Handicapped, (NIMH)	Secunderabad, Telangana	1984	Intellectual Disability
7	National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities, (NIEPMD)	Chennai, Tamil Nadu	2005	Multiple Disabilities
8	Indian Sign Language Research & Training Centre	New Delhi, Delhi	2015	Speech & Sign Language

CRCs were proposed to be set up at locations where the existing infrastructure for providing comprehensive services to disabled were inadequate and where such centres are needed the most. CRCs are functioning under the administrative control, supervision and financial control of National Institutes (NIs) and audit is done by the CAG.

Institutional Based Rehabilitation Services

Human Resource Development Programme

As its prime objective, CRCs are engaged in a continuous process of competency development in people and creation of trained manpower through its HRD programmes to produce growth of individuals with disabilities. The centre's policies and programmes are designed to support and sustain opportunities for continuing acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies which are beneficial to the individual and the society. In human resource development, the major activities are to conduct long-term and short-term courses, training workshops and continuing education programmes for professional enculturation.

Outreach and Identification Camps

Persons with disabilities are not a homogeneous group. Therefore sufficient numbers of outreach identification camps are expected to be conducted with the help of the concern state officials and by involving the NGOs working in the disability sector. The CRCs reported to have gone for outreach identification camps but extent of effort and outcome of the same varies from CRC to CRC. Some CRCs organized such camps involving anganwadi workers, teachers, health workers, PRIs, DDRCs etc. Assessment of PWDs by rehabilitation professionals for medical treatment, counseling, therapy, referrals, Aids and Appliances etc. were the activities taken up in such camps along with awareness camps on social entitlements, legal rights etc

Assistance To Disabled Persons For Purchase/Fitting of Aids/Appliances (ADIP Scheme)

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India has entrusted responsibilities to CRCs for procuring and distributing durable, sophisticated and scientifically manufactured, modern, standard aids and appliances to promote physical, social, psychological rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities by reducing the effects of disabilities and at the same time enhance their economic potential. Assistive devices are given to PWDs under the scheme with an aim to improve their independent functioning, and to arrest the extent of disability and occurrence of secondary disability.

Rehabilitation Services to PWDs by CRCs

CRCs provide a spectrum of service delivery systems for rehabilitation of persons with disabilities. It is common practice to use an eclectic approach incorporating combination of service models best suited to individual needs. A wide range of service models comprising of core and supporting services are used by multidisciplinary team at the center for overall betterment of persons with disabilities. CRCs have tremendous growth in provision of services based on life cycle approach encompassing infants, children, youth and adults. All the CRCs are running OPD services for PWDs which was found to be the most satisfying job being carried out by CRCs.

Disability Assessment and Identification

Detailed assessment of beneficiaries is done at the CRCs by medical, paramedical and rehabilitation professionals. The information is shared among them concluding into provision of multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary rehabilitation services. At camps, the composite assessment is done and rehabilitation services are provided. Cases from both are referred for appropriate management to hospitals, educational institutions

and vocational facilities. But on this parameter too some CRCs are doing good job whereas some are lagging behind.

Self Help Group Formation

CRCs are extending support and facilitation in formation of Self Help Groups (SHGs) of disabled persons. The purpose is to empower persons with disabilities through extending soft loan for self employment, higher education, rehabilitation and other requirements etc. The SHGs is being financially supported by the National Trust as well as by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India.

Capacity Building

CRCs are actively involved in capacity building of officials, NGOs, PRIs and persons associated with rehabilitation activities in their region of operation, in the form of providing technical assistance, training, setting up of facilities etc. The purpose is to provide value addition training to state government and district officials, sufficient step towards capacity building of people associated with the problems of disabled persons in their region.

Parents Organizations

In the case of severe disabilities, the voices of persons with disabilities are being raised by their parents even there is provision of financial assistance to parent's organizations. The CRCs are actively involved in facilitation and provide technical support in formation and running parent's organizations.

Research and Development

CRCs have been established, inter- alia, to conduct research and creation of cost effective, easy to replicate and effective models of services which can reduce the effects of disabilities and enhance the economic potential of the disabled as well as for service organization like DDRCs, rehabilitation professionals, medical and health professionals.

Barrier Free Access Consultations

CRCs have mandate to provide technical support to state government and create awareness about requirements of barrier free access for persons with disabilities at different levels among various stake holders.

Educational Empowerment of PWDs by CRCs

The role of CRCs in educational empowerment is a catalyst, which is facilitating persons with disabilities or its parents in taking admission, preschool, college and university management training, taking concessional loan for higher studies. In addition to above, CRCs are also creating awareness for educational rights among PWDs through handbill, leaflets publication and providing guidance and counseling services to parents of PWDs for school admission, education its benefits etc. To develop independent mobility skills orientation and mobility training to PWDs is also being provided along with teaching aids and appliances distribution under ADIP Scheme.

Economical Empowerment of PWDs by CRCs

The CRCs are also playing important role in economic empowerment of PWDs through awareness creation about employment rights to local authorities as well as PWDs through information educational communication etc. Guidance and Counseling services to persons with disabilities about provisions for economic empowerment and technical support to State Govt. in formulation of policy related to economic empowerment, technical Support to State Govt. in Job Identification for PWDs are also provided by CRCs.

Review of Literature

During the 2002, Rao, L.G found that empowerment of persons with disabilities in India has a long past but a short scientific history, several individuals and organizations initiated measures for the betterment and improvement of the persons with disabilities. But, unfortunately, their efforts were highly individualistic and perhaps slightly unorganized and adhoc in nature. Peshawaria, R., Menon, D.K., and Venkatasana, S. in 2003, found that to fulfill parental expectations of children with mental retardation special, rehabilitation services may be classified into ten areas i.e. medical, visual, auditory, communication, motor, cognitive, self-help, problematic behavior, socialization and psychiatric. In 2008, Harley, D. A., Rice, S., and Dean, G. discussed that the rehabilitation services are more effective when integrated into the individuals need and provided by the leading disability rehabilitation organizations. Strengthen of CRCs to provide quality rehabilitation services is current requirements according to Baswan, B.S. (2011) and Sharma, P. in 2014, stated that the considering the limited resources in terms of build infrastructure, manpower CRCs have been able to perform their responsibilities in a satisfactory manner. He also suggested as of now the operational area of CRCs is very large and resources limited, in view of such situation there is need to establish more CRCs in bigger State.

Objectives of the Study

To study the services being provided by CRCs to all types of persons with disabilities and its role in educational empowerment and economic empowerment during last 3 years.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study is descriptive in nature and the survey method has been employed. Present study has cover the Composite Regional Centres (CRCs) funded by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India. Sample of the study is CRC Lucknow and has been selected through purposive sampling. During the review of related literature no such specific standardized tools were found available. Before start of the study and finalization of tools, CRC Lucknow was also visited to have an understanding of the core issues of the study. Based on the objectives, total three questionnaire/ tools in the form of close ended questions were prepared for this study. Study attempted to explore quantitative dimensions, detailed desk research was undertaken to develop insight into the key areas to be focused during the primary data. In this activity reports and data available from various sources have been studied. Relevant documents of the CRCs and schemes including guidelines of the schemes, study and

evaluation reports, survey reports, progress reports, monitoring strategy and reports, plan of action, audited statement of accounts, budget of the CRCs, project proposals, course materials developed, training modules, programme schedules, IEC materials developed, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), list and details of implementing organizations, etc. haven been also collected and reviewed. Percentage statistical technique was used in this study. The collected data related to services from prevention to social security has been divided into three components. The first part is frequency distribution of the sample according to the nature of services such as early Intervention, preschool management training, education, employment, social security services etc. The second part is dedicated to educational empowerment and third is for economic rehabilitation components. Rehabilitation services have been classified according to life cycle needs of persons with disabilities and objectives of CRCs.

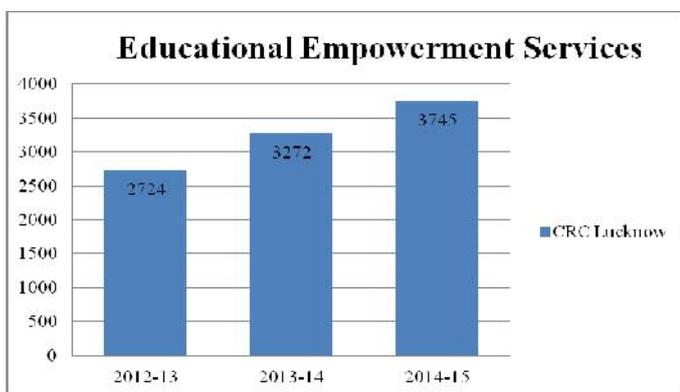
RESULTS

Researcher elaborates the rehabilitation services in form of Service Module and categorized all rehabilitation services into 25 items in the form of five modules i.e. Early Intervention, Education, Employment, Social Security and Rehabilitation / others. The rehabilitation services module is given below in Table 3.

Table 3. Summary of Rehabilitation Services Module

Rehab Services Module	Frequencies	Percentage
Early Intervention	3	12
Education	7	28
Employment	5	20
Social Security	3	12
Rehabilitation / Others	7	28

Data indicated that the educational empowerment service by the CRCs is increasing continuously year by year from 2724 during 2012-13, 3273 during 2013-14 and 3745 during 2014-15. However, some educational services such as facilitating in arrangements of accessible reading materials and training and awareness about Barrier Free Environment in school/ college / University etc, is not being provided yet.



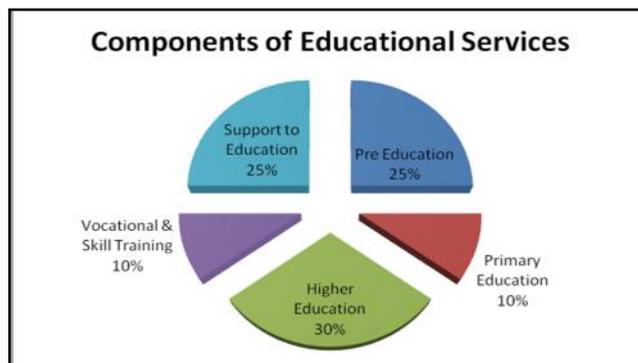
Graph 1. Educational Empowerment Services

Further, researcher elaborates the educational empowerment services in form of Service component and categorized all 20 items in the form of five components i.e. Pre Education, Primary Education, Higher Education, Vocational and Skill Training and Support to Education. The educational

empowerment services component is given below in table no 4.

Table 4. Summary of Educational Empowerment component

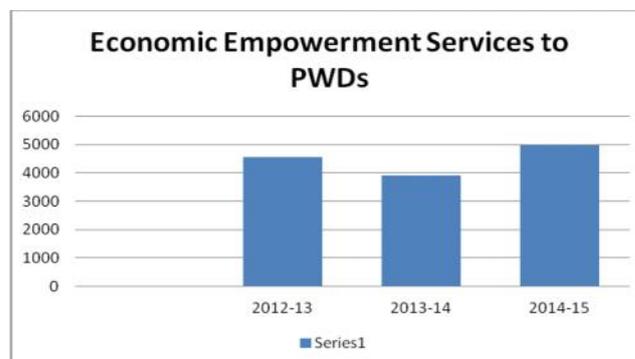
Particulars of Services	Frequency	Percentage
Pre Education	5	25
Primary Education	2	10
Higher Education	6	30
Vocational and Skill Training	2	10
Support to Education	5	25



Graph 2. Summary of Educational Empowerment components

Economic Empowerment Services to Pwds

It has been found that out of 20 items, CRCs are not providing any economic empowerment services such as Technical Support to State Govt. in Job Identification for PWDs, Facilitation to employers / State Govt. in organizing sensitization programme for its employees, Organizing Job Fair, Support to potential PWDs in establishment on their business, Support in organizing exhibition to sell goods, Sensitization programme for private sector employer are not being provided by CRCs so far. The services of CRCs for persons with disabilities is related to economic empowerment is not continuously increasing, during 2012-13 was 4551 and it has been found that during 2013-14 it was decreased and the number was 3902 and during 2014-15 it was 4964, which was increased from last two years.



Graph 3. Economic Empowerment Services to PWDs

DISCUSSION

On analysis of data, it has been found that CRCs is providing only 84 % of rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities, where some aspects are still missing and 16 % of services are not being provided. Rehabilitation services related to education and rehabilitation is limited to only 28 %, where

as employment service percentage is 20 % and early intervention and social security is limited to 12 % each. It has also been found that the services are increasing year by year from 2724 during 2012-13 to 3745 during 2014-15 and services related to economic empowerment is not increasing, it was during 2012-13 was 4551, 3902 during 2013-14 and during 2014-15 was 4964.

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