

**SOCIAL SECURITY CONCERNS FOR VISUALLY
CHALLENGED PERSONS: A STUDY OF SELECT
DISTRICTS OF WEST BENGAL (2000-2021)**

THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN ARTS

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Certified that the thesis entitled “**Social Security Concerns for Visually Challenged Persons: A Study of Select Districts of West Bengal (2000-2021)**” submitted by me for the award of the Doctor of the Philosophy in Arts at Jadavpur University is based upon my own work carried out under the supervision of **Dr. Bijaya Kumar Das**, Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, Jadavpur University, Kolkata and neither this thesis nor any part of it has been submitted before for any degree or diploma anywhere/ elsewhere.

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*Dedicated
to the
Memory of my Father*

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Braille Institute, South 24 Parganas, Visually Challenged Persons of Rubi and Sreema Society for Disabled and Blind Rehabilitation Centre, South 24 Parganas, Visually Challenged Persons of Nimpith Handicapped Welfare Society, South 24 Parganas, Visually Challenged Persons of the Society for the Welfare of the Blind, South 24 Parganas, Visually Challenged Persons of Mathurapur Nivedita Mahila Samity, South 24 Parganas, Visually Challenged Persons of New Age Society For All, South 24 Parganas, Visually Challenged Persons of Bamanagar Welfare Society, South 24 Parganas, Visually Challenged Persons of Halderchak Chetana Welfare Society, South 24 Parganas, Visually Challenged Persons of Netra Women and Child Welfare Society, South 24 Parganas, Visually Challenged Persons of Srijani Society for People with Disabilities, South 24 Parganas, Visually Challenged Persons of Sundarban Social Development Centre, South 24 Parganas, Visually Challenged Persons of Kapasaria Sarbik Village Service Society, Purba Medinipur, Visually Challenged Persons of Mahammadpur Development Mahila Samity, Purba Medinipur, Visually Challenged Persons of Bhagabanpur Sundarban Protibandhi Welfare Society, South 24 Parganas are worth mentioning.

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PREFACE

The discussion on “Social Security” for the vulnerable sections of the society in both developed and developing countries occupy a very insignificant place in the decision-making process at the National and Regional level. In the context of developing countries, the provisions for vulnerable section of society have not been adequately reflected in the democratic discussion on welfarism. This may due to insufficient economic resources of the states to support the provision of social security measures or there has been lack of political will and interest at the decision-making level to carry forward such social security measures. Contextualising the issues of social security for the visually challenged persons in the state of West Bengal with reference to the district of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas, they have been suffering from inadequate social security provisions provided by the Government of West Bengal. They have been leading very miserable life with respect to the satisfaction of basic economic needs and requirement along with proper health care services. There have not been adequate social security provisions for them offering their socio-political and economic upliftment. In every walk of life, they are facing a sense of insecurity, and that sense insecurity has not been reflected through policy-making initiatives. Besides, they are also suffering from the social stigma of accepting and recognizing them and their problems. Even if in most of the cases, they are debarred from family supports. They are suffering from the issues of social acceptability and dignity. They are suffering from similar nature of problems, though the magnitude of their problems differs from district to district, taking into account the overall developments of such districts. What is alarming in this context is that, while they have been suffering from multifarious problems and challenges, the solutions

measures to their problems including the social security measures are very limited in nature. The present research is an attempt to discuss and analyse the multifarious problems and challenges faced by the visually challenged persons in both of districts of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas, West Bengal with reference to the issues of social security provisions meant for them. The present research is basically a primary research.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

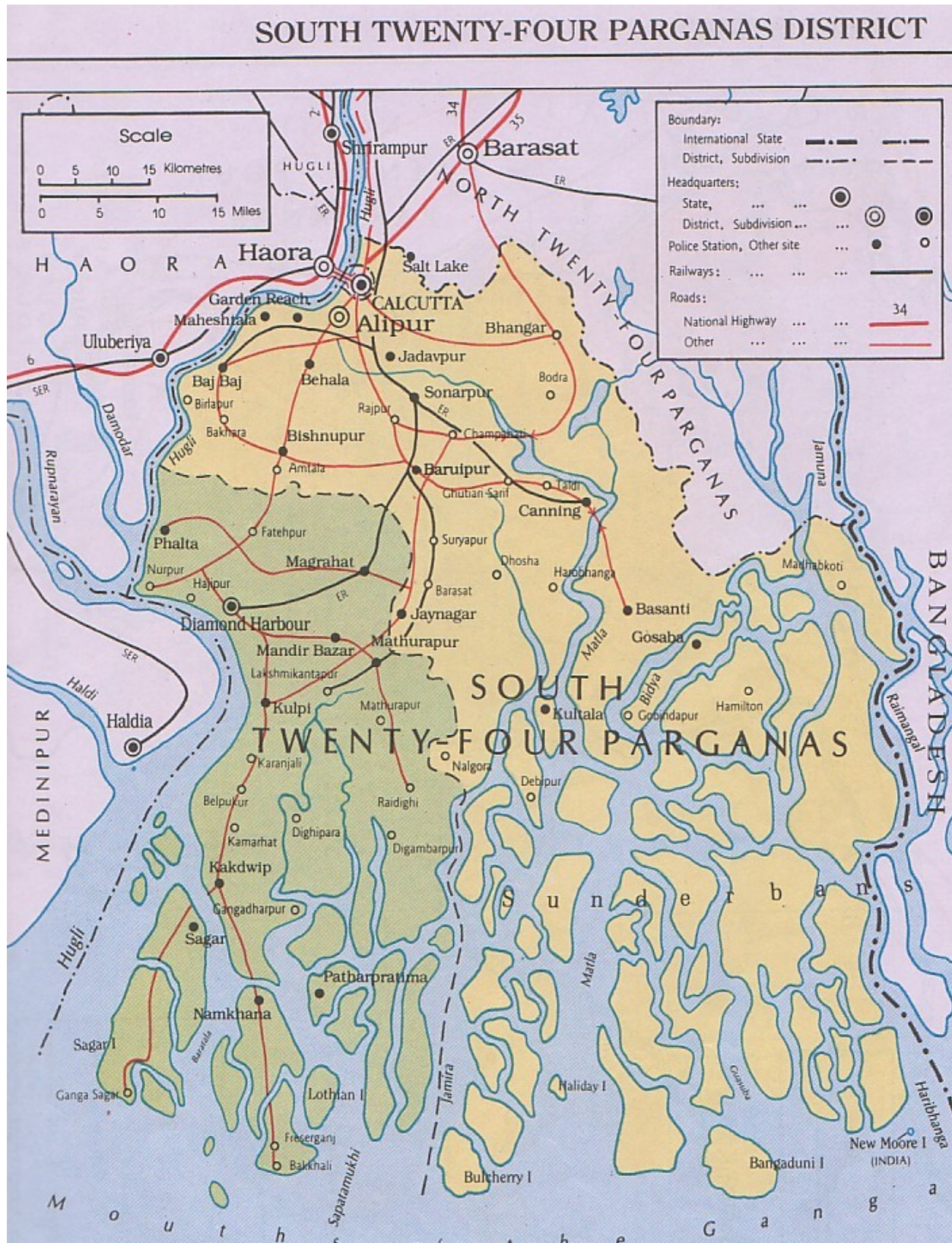
- **AIDS:** Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
- **APY:** Atal Pension Yojana
- **AUM:** Assets Under Management
- **BBA:** Blind Boys' Academy
- **BCW:** Backward class welfare
- **B.ED:** Bachelor of Education
- **BPA:** Blind Persons Association
- **BPB:** Baristha Pension Bima
- **CD:** Compact Disc
- **COPA:** Computer Operation and Programming Assistant
- **DA:** Dearness Allowance
- **EPFO:** Employee Provident Fund Organization
- **EAS:** Employment Assurance Scheme
- **GDP:** Gross Domestic Product
- **HIV:** Human Immunodeficiency Virus
- **IGNDPS:** Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme
- **IGNOAP:** Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme
- **IEDC:** Integrated Education for Disabled Children
- **ITI:** Industrial Training Institute
- **ILO:** International Labour Organisation
- **JBYP:** Janshree Bima Yojana

- **JGSY:** Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana
- **KSSSY:** Krishi Shramik Samajik Suraksha Yojana
- **MCA:** Metal Cutting Attendant
- **MEE:** Mass Education Extension
- **MR:** Mental Retardation
- **NFBS:** National Family Benefit Scheme
- **NIGDPS:** National Indira Gandhi Disability Pension Scheme
- **NIMA:** National Imagery and Mapping Agency
- **NDDFC:** National Disability Development and Finance Corporation
- **NPOP:** National Policy for Older Persons
- **NPE:** National Provident Fund
- **NPS:** National Pension System
- **NPSSS:** New Pension Scheme and Swavlamban
- **NSAP:** National Social Assistant Programme
- **NSAS:** National Social Assistance Scheme
- **NSSF:** National Social Security Fund
- **NGO:** Non-Governmental Organization
- **OECD:** Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
- **OBC:** Other Backward Class
- **PAYG:** Pay As You Go
- **PSC:** Public Service Commission
- **PWD:** Persons with Disability
- **PMJDY:** Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana

- **PMJJBY:** Pradhan Mantri Jyoti Bima Yojana
- **PMSBJ:** Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojna
- **PF:** Provident Fund
- **PPF:** Public Provident Fund
- **RPWD:** Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- **SSA:** Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
- **SC:** Schedule Caste
- **ST:** Schedule Tribe
- **SGSY:** Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana
- **SSC:** School Service Commission
- **TLM:** Teaching-Learning Materials
- **UNCRPD:** UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- **UN:** United Nation
- **UPIAS:** Union of the Physically Impaired against Segregation
- **UHS:** Universal Health Insurance Scheme
- **VH:** Visually Handicapped
- **VMARSB:** Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind
- **VTC:** Vocation Training Centre
- **WBBSE:** West Bengal Board of Secondary Education
- **WBCHSE:** West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education
- **WB:** World Bank
- **WHO:** World Health Organization

The map illustrates the Hooghly District, which is divided into three main administrative regions: **PASCHIM MEDINIPUR** (West Medinipur) in the north, **PURBA MEDINIPUR** (East Medinipur) in the center, and **SOUTH 24 PARGANAS** in the south. The district is bordered by **HOWRAH** to the north, **ORISSA** to the west, and the **Hugli** river to the south. Major towns and cities are marked, including Panskura, Kolaghat, Mecheda, Tamluk, Mayna, Nandakumar, Mahisadal, Bhaganbanpur, Potaspur, Chandipur, Sutanahata, Haldia, Egra, Mugbere, Nandigram, Khajuri, Rasulpur, Marishda, Kanthi, Birampur, Depal, Ramnagar, and Digha. The **Haldi Canal** and **Hugli** river are also shown.

SOURH 24 PARGANAS MAP



Introduction

Introduction

The issues of Social Security problems are considered as major issue in the Non-Traditional Security discourses across the globe in the contemporary times. Social Security is a major human rights issue which incorporate both financial security and the provision of medical health care facilities during individuals existence in different facets of his/her life. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) describes social security as the protection that the society provides through appropriate organization/ institutions against certain menaces where its members are perennially vulnerable. These menaces are considered as fundamentally contingencies against which an individual of small economic means cannot effectively furnish through his own ability to lead a dignified life in the society. The issues of social security therefore incorporate in counteracting the blind injustice of nature and economic activities through the coherent planned justice with a touch of benevolence to temper it. This definition of ILO furnishes appropriate provision to support an individual or to his/her family in order to protect and maintain them from sliding into contingent poverty. According to ILO, these contingencies include criteria such as- medical service and health protection for the workers, maternity relief for women, relief from unemployment, workplace injury, family accountability, retirement benefits in the old age. Ironically, this definition does not cover the protections that must be provided to the individual who are already destitute for which the Social Assistance Programmes are meant for. Modernization and urbanisation have resulted with a drastic socio-economic change, as well as it creates new disputes and tensions which are very consequent upon the old aged people affecting the family and fraternal security. The shift from an agrarian economy to an industrial economy

has brought magnitude nature of problems needing the provision of social security programme within the broader perspectives of institutions and organisations.

The objectives of any social security measure are to provide individuals and their families the confidence that their level of standard living and quality of life will not be exhausted by social or economic eventuality, to provide the medical services and health protection, to provide the income security against the implications of defined contingencies, to assist the victims with physical and vocational rehabilitation, to prevent or reduce the illness health and accidents in the workplaces, to protect against unemployment by maintenance and promotion of job guarantee. .

The contingencies of social security as delineated by ILO are included medical services and health protection, illness benefit, unemployment benefit, old age benefit, employment injury benefit, family benefit, maternity benefit, invalidity benefit and survivors benefit, as well as old age benefits. The following are some of the social security strategies which the State applies to address the social security grievances in their institutional and organisational discourses. First, it includes social insurance beneficiary participation in risk and resource sharing. Second, the provision of social assistance financed from general revenues and granting benefits on means test basis. Third, employers liability schemes where there is an identifiable employer and within the economic capacity of such employer. Fourth, National Provident Funds (NPF), Fifth, Universal schemes for social security.

The social security schemes in India cover of with two segments namely, organized sector and unorganized sector. Under the organized sector, the social security laws at present are divided into two categories such as, the contributory scheme and the non-contributory scheme. The contributory schemes are those which provide for financing of the social security programmes by contributions from the Government workers and employees. The contributory schemes cover of

the Employees State Insurance Act, 1948, the Provident Fund (PF), Pension and Deposit Linked Insurance Schemes (PDLS), Employees' Provident Funds Act, 1952 and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1948. On the contrary, the three major non-contributory schemes such as, the Work man's Compensation Act, 1923, the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 and the Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972. Social security in the unorganized sector are classified into four groups such as-Centrally funded social assistance programmes including Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), 1993, Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY), 1999, Jawahar Gram Smridhi Yojana (JGSY), 1999, Social insurance schemes including Janshree Bima Yojana (JBY), 2000, Krishi Shramik Samajik Suraksha Yojana (KSSSY), 2001, National Policy for Old Persons (NPOP), 1999, Social assistance through welfare funds of Central and State Governments, Atal Pension Yojana (APY), 2015, Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana(PMJJBY), 2015, Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), 2014 etc. The Social Security Act guarantees income maintenance for those who have been handicapped as a result of a work injury or other incident while on the job. However, the majorities of disabled persons in India are unemployed, or are involved in informal sector or dependent on their families, and require social protection. There are a few disabled beneficiaries who are able to get the benefit from some of the development programmes. Though, the legislative provisions provide of 3 percent reservation for disabled individuals, its coverage is very limited. Therefore, there is a need to deal with such issues through the measures of social security policies and programme.

Decades after decades, it has been seen that Persons with Disability in different form suffering from problems and difficulties and struggling with to lead a healthy and prosperous life. Though it is an universal phenomena, persons with disability from the third world or developing country's perspective have more prone to disadvantages and humiliations. India as a developing

country confronted with multifarious socio-economic and political problems affecting each and every corner of the society. Among various problems of socio-economic implications on harmonious and balanced society, the problems of the disabled people have been negatively affecting to visualize a balanced socio-political and economic order. According to 2011 census data around and approx. 2.21 percent (26.81 million) disabled peoples in India of which around 18.8 percent peoples are visually challenged category. According to Census Report of Persons with Disabilities, 2011 in West Bengal, there are 20, 17,406 (2.20 percent) persons with disabilities including visual, hearing speech, locomotor, mental retardation, mental illness and multiple disabilities of which around (21.04 percent) visually challenged persons are suffered from multifarious nature of disability problems. In the district of Purba Medinipur, the total number of persons with disabilities is 114088, which is around 2.23 percent along with seeing 20.84 percent, hearing 12.65 percent, speech 7.87 percent, movement 18.62 percent, mental retardation 7.32 percent, mental illness 3.64 percent, multiple disabilities 12.24 percent and others 16.78 percent. Among them, there are significant number of visually challenged persons is 23787, which is around 20.84 percent. In the district of South 24 Parganas District, the total number of persons with disabilities is 227129 (2.78 percent) comprising seeing 26.68 percent, hearing 14.51 percent, speech 5.97 percent, movement 13.07 percent, mental retardation 6.25 percent, mental illness 2.87 percent, multiple disabilities 8.93 percent, and 21.69 percent, where the most significant highest number of visually challenged persons is 60614 which is approximately (26.68 percent). In both of the districts of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas, the visually challenged persons are suffered from multifarious nature of disability problems. It has seen that all the constitutional, legal and developmental provisions and initiatives from states perspective to solve the menace are not satisfactory to achieve their

objectives. The persons with disability Act, 1995 and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 which designed as a state responsibility to empower disabled persons with providing equal opportunities, protection of their rights and equal participation development discourse are far away from achieving its objectives. As a result of which persons with disabilities are frequently prone to harassment, humiliation and multifarious disadvantages which pose a threat to the objectives of the preambles of the constitution in many respect. Interpretation to the problems of the disabled people on space and region wide provides a mis-match and imbalanced approaches from formal and non-formal and Governmental and non-governmental perspectives. There are regions on states in India which are witnessed as proactive to solve the problems of disabled people and according taken steps and initiative in both formal and informal areas of activities. But there are regions which are witnessed as inactive and pay less attention to incorporate in national debate and discourses. Another dimension which has been intimately linked with the menace is the provision of social security as provided by the state to them through formal and informal for the realization of a welfare and balanced society. The social security provision for disabled persons in India encompassing health, education, and economic development are very much negligible and occupy an insignificant place in national and regional policy-making discourse. The formal initiatives as designed by the state are less helpful to the cause of disable people. As a result, the disabled peoples, particularly the visually challenged persons do not get opportunities for their social and economic development. As contrast to this arguments and logic, in most of the industrialized countries under social security provision, special initiatives and programs have been designed to cover the problematic aspects. In less-industrial and low-countries, the aspects of structural adjustment programs and socio-economic changes have

produced large number of vulnerable groups including the disabled sections of the society and inroad to various social insurance schemes.

In India provision of social security has been a concurrent subject which encompasses both Union and State legislation. Thus, it has been the duty and responsibility on part of both Central Government and State Government to make legislation for the shaping of provisions and initiatives in formal set up.

Regional initiative and approaches to the problems of disability in both formal and informal structure has not been up to the mark as expected. In West Bengal, Government has taken initiatives through formal and legal instrument, for the enhancement of social security provisions which are not specifically targeted. Large number of non-formal initiatives and organizations are working for the cause of disabled people and their upliftment. However, the realization of a secure environment materializing their need and requirement in long run has been distance dream as they are humiliated victimized, and exploited in every walk of their lives.

Review of Literature

The proposed research intend to involves with the study of numerous literatures in the form of Government documents, treaties, reports, books and articles from journals field visit to reach out the objectives and proposed hypothesis of the research.

Review of Books

The book *“Education and Employment of the Blind –The Case Study of West Bengal”*, by Bikash C Sanyal, P.K. Giri, M. Roychowdhury, A.K. Pati, M. K. Mukharji and N.K. De, South Asian Publishers Pvt.,1985. The book depicts how Government of West Bengal unable to create the favourable circumstance for the blind to avail the basic facilities. Particular reference has been provided for all disabled persons including blind people.

The book **“Inclusive education for the challenged children present context”**, by Dr. Bishnupada Nanda and Sunita Mondal(ed), published by Jadavpur University press, 2014. Reference has been made for those visually challenged students who are expelled from mainstream school and to point out the negative attitude towards visually challenged in society.

The book **“Disability & Rehabilitation in Santhals & Lodhas of West Bengal”**, by Krishna Kabir, LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, 2013. The book demonstrated the attitude of the family and community about the problem of disability. It addressed the issues of inclusive education programme for the disabled persons from the view point of the National policies and Programmes along with initiative with from the NGOs.

The book **“Challenged Children: Problems and Management”**, Dr. Bishupada Nanda (ed.), Published by Ankush Prakashana, 2012. The book is about the misery of number of students with disabilities at Narandrapur, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal, who faces many problems regarding educational equipments.

The book **“NGOs: The New Lexicon of Health Care”**, by Ashok K. Sarkar, Concept Publishing Company Pvt. Ltd., 2005. The book represents a gloomy picture of social problems of handicapped and the role of NGOs in West Bengal.

The book **“Social Security for the Old: Myth and reality”**, by A. B. Bose, Concept Publishing Company Pvt. Ltd., 2006. The book varying lucidly addressed the issues of social security concerns in West Bengal for visually challenged persons above the age of 60.

The book **“Children with visual impairments: Social interaction, language and learning”**, by Alec Webster and João Roe, Routledge, 1998. The book depicts the special educational

qualification and experiences of the both class and subject teacher working with visual children with a great details in educational policy and provision.

The book “*Visual Impairments: Determining Eligibility for Social Security Benefits*”, by Peter Lennie and Susan B. Van Hemel (ed.), published by National Academies Press, 2002. The book points out the social security provisions that will provide facilities for visually disabled along with of public health problems as well as the prevalence and significance of Visual Impairments.

The book “*Disability and Disadvantage*”, by Kimberley Brownlee and Adam Cureton (ed.), published by Oxford University Press Inc., 2009. In my research, focuses on some longstanding problem which affects the disabled people in the society along with governmental policies towards disabled people.

The book “*Overcoming Disabling Barriers*”, by Len Barton(ed), published by Routledge, 2006. In my research, addressed the public awareness campaign towards disabled people and also pointed out the past, present and future of the disability rights movement.

The book “*Education for Visually Impaired Children*”, by Sachin Srivastava, Sonali Publications, 2011. In work, discussed the issues of visually impair children who may not be able to form a connection between the spoken words and real objects because of visual disability. Besides, the book refer to the implication of modern technology in day to day life of visually handicapped.

The book “*Disability: Challenges Vs Responses*”, by Ali Baquer and Anjali Sharma(ed), published by Can Concerned Action Now (CAN), 2006. In my work, represented the obstacles and prospectors of education and employment services for visually handicapped according to the

persons with disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995.

Review of Articles

The article, ***“Evaluation of Registered Visually Disabled Individuals in a District of West Bengal, India”***, by Sambuddha Ghosh, Subhalakshmi Mukhopadhyay, Krishnendu Sarkar, Manas Bandyopadhyay, Dipankar Maji, Gautam Bhaduri, Indian Journal of Community Medicine, Vol. 33, Issue 3, July 2008, addressed the socio-demographic characteristics, degree and cause of visual disability among certified visually disabled individuals in a rural district of West Bengal and to identify possible lacunae in the existing certification system.

The article, ***“A Study of Visual acuity among the students in a Rural Girls High School of West Bengal”***, written by Dr Kakali Mondal, Dr Nirmalya Manna, Dr Urmila Dasgupta, Dr Arup Chakraborty, Dr Soumi Biswas, and Dr Malay Mundle, IOSR Journal of Dental and Medical Sciences (IOSR-JDMS), Volume 10, Issue 2 (Sep.- Oct. 2013), described the assess to the visual acuity and visual impairment among the students in a Rural Girls High school of West Bengal and to identify the socio-demographic, Physical and nutritional factors contributing to visual impairments.

The article, ***“Visual Impairment in Urban School Children of Low-Income Families in Kolkata, India”***, by Sambuddha Ghosh, Udayaditya Mukhopadhyay, Dipankar Maji, Gautam Bhaduri, Indian Journal of Public Health, Volume 56, Issue 2, April-June, 2012, attention has been made with reference to the particular need of a special group of children coming from low-income families. Besides, data on the pattern of eye health problems in children from low-income families is necessary for planning need-based program for them.

The article, ***“Sarva Siksha Mission and Primary Education in Kolkata: Changes and Challenges”***, by Indrajit Roy Chowdhury, International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention, Volume 3, Issue 11, November. 2014, pointed out many opportunities in providing human capabilities to all learners including visually challenged through provision of community owned quality education in a mission mode.

The article, ***“Prevalence of Hearing Impairment in the Medinipur Sadar Subdivision, Paschim Medinipore district, West Bengal, India”***, by Dr. Kausik Chatterjee and Dr. Dipak Kumar Bhuniya, in International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR), Volume 3 Issue 10, October 2014, represented the prevalence of hearing with visually impairment and also try to provides the significant implications on the need of resource development for prevention and rehabilitation.

The article, ***“A Comparative Evaluation of Dental Caries Status among Visually Impaired and Normal Children of Malda, West Bengal: A New Caries Assessment System”***, by Sudipta Kar, Gautam Kundu, Shyamal. Kumar Maiti, Chiranjit Ghosh, Badruddin Ahamed Bazmi, and Santanu Mukhopadhyay, International Journal of Therapeutic Applications, Volume 20, 2015. In research, narrated the process of the evaluation and comparison of the prevalence of dental caries in visually impaired and normal children of Malda, West Bengal utilizing Caries Assessment Spectrum and Treatment.

The article, ***“Insight into Self-Concept of the Adolescents who are Visually Impaired in India”***, by Santoshi Halder and Poulomee Datta, International Journal of Special Education, Vol 27, No: 2, 2012, explored the behaviour, Intellectual and school status, physical appearance and

attributes, anxiety, happiness and satisfaction of the sighted adolescents and the adolescents with a visual impairment who need help and support, in order to develop positive self-concept.

The report, *“Employment of Disabled People in India”*, which is a Base Line Report and Prepared for National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP) by Diversity and Equal Opportunity Centre (DEOC), February 2009, pointed out a wide gap between the employment rate of people including blind with and without disabilities in the country, which requires proactive initiative on the part of all concerned to ensure that disability is included in the employment programmes of the Government and the private sector.

প্রতিস্পর্ধী বার্তা (Pratispardhi Barta), পশ্চিমবঙ্গ রাজ্য প্রতিবন্ধী সম্মিলনীর মুখপত্র, 1st Year, No-1, September-2013, a). Movement of Disabled Peoples: some discussion by Kanti Ganguly, b). New Policy and Principles for Disabled People by Muralidharan, c). Rehabilitation of Disabled People : A general discussion by Amartyalok Banerjee .

প্রতিস্পর্ধী বার্তা (Pratispardhi Barta), পশ্চিমবঙ্গ রাজ্য প্রতিবন্ধী সম্মিলনীর মুখপত্র, 2st Year, No-3, November-2014, a). Problem of Disabled people and Aact of Disability, 1995 by Sadhan Gupta, b). Rights of Disabled People by Ajoy Das, c). Disability and discussion about their problems by Bubai Bag, d). Negative attitude of Government of West Bengal towards disabled people by Pabir Saha.

Review of Paper Presented Seminar/ Workshop

Seminar on *Evaluation of the current Systems for Educating sightless children*, organized by Blind Persons’ Association, August 19, 2006, encompassed various issues and problems of persons with disabilities such as importance of integrated education for the sightless students by

Narayan Ganguly , Importance of special education at primary level for Blind Children by Dr. Pranab Chakraborty, Relevance of Braille System in the Age of High Technology by Dr. A . Gangatharen, The Social implication of Braille System by Amiya Biswas.

Research Objectives

Keeping in view the above-stated background and considerations, this proposed research attempts to focus on such problems of visually challenged people in our society that appear to resonate broadly and, more importantly, to reflect some reality. The study, therefore, aims at raising such problematic issues of visually challenged people involved in sustained public awareness and information generation campaigns that have acquired great global significance. This study attempts to examine how it has created major problems and challenges not only for West Bangle but also for the country as a whole. Finally study to argue paradoxically; though the Indian government has taken many initiatives, it has not succeeded in reversing the trends.

Research Questions

This study raises the following research questions:

1. What constitute the major Social Security concerns of the visually challenged persons?
2. How far the NGOs and civil society play an active role in ensuring the provision of Social Security for the visually challenged persons?
3. Why Governments at National and Regional level could not succeed to ensure the Social Security for the visually challenged persons?
4. Beyond constitutional framework, what are the other alternatives to provide Social Security as well as social status for visually challenged persons?

Research Methodology

The nature and contexts of the research allow the researcher to go through the multifarious process of adopting and integrating different aspect to be undertaken. The study opts for both descriptive and explanatory methods to arrive at conclusion. The descriptive method has been used to demonstrate the descriptive nature of the study as it describes the major thematic perspectives so far as the problems of the visually challenged persons and the remedial measures to that end. The analytical aptitude of the research has made an attempt to analyses the nature and contains of the descriptions made in every chapters. Though most of the part of the research is field-visit oriented, the research would like to adopt survey methods through a common framework of making questionnaire of objective and subjective nature. It would also like to use both primary sources in the form of government documents, survey reports, interviews, the constitution, speeches of officials and secondary sources in the form of books, journals, and articles as well as materials from internet, unpublished materials and papers presented in various national and international seminars that provide significant value to my study.

Organisation of Chapter

Introduction-

Chapter I - Understanding of Social Security for Disabled People: A Theoretical Analysis

Chapter II- Constitutional and Legal Provision of Social Security for Visually Challenged Persons in India with Reference to the State of West Bengal

Chapter III- The Nature and Problems of Visually Challenged Persons in the Districts of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas, West Bengal

Chapter IV- Approaches of Non-State Actors Working for the Cause of Visually Challenged Persons in the Districts of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas

Conclusion

Chapter Analysis

This Dissertation contains four substantive chapters that enlighten "Social Security Concerns for Visually Challenged Persons: A Study of Select Districts of West Bengal". The first chapter explains an Understanding of Social Security for Disabled people: A Theoretical Analysis in developed and developing countries. The second chapter elucidates Constitutional and Legal Provision of Social Security for Visually Challenged Persons in India with Reference to the State of West Bengal in particular. The third chapter explains numerous problems and challenges experienced by the visually challenged persons in the State of West Bengal. The final chapter illuminates the role and approaches of Non State Actors working in different part of West Bengal.

Chapter one, titled as *"Understanding of Social Security for Disabled People: A Theoretical Analysis "*, explores the nature and objective of social security by examining different definitions given by scholars and institutions in this field. The understanding of social security both in terms of organisational and individual dimensions highlights the socio-economic and political components of justice to them for their upliftment and empowerment. The need .based social security approach has emphasized the need for quality of life ensuring health care system and economic security. The second aspect of the chapter examines different models of disability after considering the different parameters of the concept of disability. Among the different model of disability, the chapter highlights the major thrusts of traditional model of disability, medical

model of disability, and social model of disability. The third aspect of the chapter highlights the perception of different theories towards the concept of disability. In this backdrop, this chapter examines the outlook of positivism, functionalism, post-modernism, marxism, human rights towards the noble cause of disability. Finally, the chapter has gone through different provisions of social security both in developed and developing countries. Here, emphasis has been given on the formal-institutional provisions for the enhancement of social security in both developed and developing countries.

Chapter two, titled as *"Constitutional and Legal Provision of Social Security for Visually Challenged Persons in India with Reference to the State of West Bengal"*, explains different constitutional and legal provisions meant for the disabled people. The chapter describes the constitutional provisions such as fundamental rights under different articles various provisions meant for them. Among the noted articles of the constitution 15(1), article 16, article 17, article 21, article 21(A), article 23, article 24, article 25, article 29 -30, article 45, article 47 are of paramount importance. Similarly, various legislative enactments for protection of the interest of the disabled people have been mentioned. The noted legislation enactments are the Mental Health Act, 1987, the Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992, the Person with disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, Persons with Disability Rules, 1996, Multiple Disability Act, 1999, National Policy for Persons with Disability Act, 2005, Persons with Disability Act, 2011, Persons with Disability Act, 2016, adequately illustrate the nature of different types of disabilities and prescribe provisions and remedial measures for the protection of the rights of disabled people.

The second part of the chapter addresses the components of legislative framework for the protection of the rights of the persons with disabilities with protection reference to the state of

West Bengal. The chapter briefly states out the state's initiative and institutional measures both promote and protection of the rights of the disabled people. The nature of the moral obligation of the state has been reflected in terms of the socio-economic and political measures through different institutional apparatus and dynamism of good governance.

Chapter third, titled as *“The Nature and Problems of Visually Challenged Persons in the Districts of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas, West Bengal,”* an attempt has been made to find out the composition of visually challenged persons along with the problems faced by them in West Bengal. In this backdrop, the survey method has been adopted on visually challenged persons of selected case study on unit of analysis which has been depicted in the form of diagram and tables. Among many challenges and problems, the problems of accessibility, attainment of basic education, employment, social security, honour and dignity, justice, social acceptability and empowering them are very significant. In this chapter, unit of analysis has been made through the technique of interview with both stated and on stated questionnaire. It has been formed that the challenges and problem of the visually challenged persons of selected case study are of similar in nature. The extent of such problems and challenges are varies from case study to case study, but the nature and character of problems and challenges are of similar in its outlook. They are struggling with the problems related to survival with dignity and integrity within the bound of legal structure and societal norms and values.

Chapter Four, titled as *“Approaches of Non-State Actors Working for the Cause of Visually Challenged Persons in the Districts of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas”*, encompasses the objectives and orientations of different Non- Governmental Organisation actively involved with such noble activities. The NGOs working for the cause of the visually challenged persons in different districts of West Bengal have been taken case study to illustrate the nature and scope of

their organisational activities in promoting the welfare measure for the visually challenged persons, The various NGOs such as Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (Purba Medinipur), Bikramnagar Udayan Sangha (Purba Medinipur), Teparpara Pratibandi Kalyankami Kendra (Purba Medinipur), Blind Persons Association (South 24 Pargams), Welfare Society for the Blind Geeta Basu Training Centre (South 24 Parganas), Premasree A Free Residential Home for Visually Impaired Children (South 24 Parganas), Deepanita Braille Institute (South 24 Parganas), Rubi and Srecma Society for Disabled and Blind Rehabilitation Centre (South 24 Parganas), Nimpith Handicapped Welfare Society (South 24 Parganas), Mathurapur Nivedita Mahila Samity (South 24 Parganas), New Age Society For All (South 24 Parganas), Bamanagar Welfare Society (South 24 Parganas), Netra Women and Child Welfare Society (South 24 Parganas), Srinjini Society for People with Disabilities (South 24 Parganas), Sundarban Social Development Centre (South 24 Parganas) and many NGOs are working for the cause of visually challenged persons. All the components of the field study method have been applied with a view to demonstrate both the aspects of the nature of the working of such NGOs and the initiatives that have been taken in different platforms and programmes. The success stories of the NGOs in responses to the menace of the visually challenged persons are examined.

Conclusion

The visually challenged persons in India in general and the state of West Bengal in particular have been suffering from multifarious challenges and problems. Though the nature and character of their problems may be similar in nature, but the magnitude of their problems varies from region to region depending on the economic factors, political awareness and Socio-cultural practices of the regions. The reasons for the menace have been more or less similar along with the constitutional provision to eradicate such menace. The state specific Legislative enactment

and development provision to that end varies state to state. The present study reveals that in spite of plethora of constitutional provision and development policy to root out the menace, the overall situation and their socio-economic-political conditions are not up to the standard. There is no doubt about the fact that incremental changes to their socio-economic and political conditions has been due to the handiwork of the constitutional provision and legislative enactment along with development policies to that end. The study also reveals that the state's approach to solve the menace is more passive and slow than the approaches of the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs). The NGOs working with this field are very much accessive and assertive to the day to day common problems of the visually challenged people, but the NGOs are very much handicapped with regard to availability of finance and decision-making capacity to that end. The study also reveals that the main causes of the disability are the economic backwardness and inadequate health care facilities. Political apathy to the menace is one of the reasons responsible for the continuing precarious problems affecting them physically and mentally. Further, societal norms, values, and practices are also responsible for the growing problems of the visually challenged persons in the society. Both political and societal awareness to the problems is highly necessary along with special measures taken by the state through its development policies and planning to visualise a healthy and harmonious society and social order.

Chapter- I

Understanding of Social Security for Disabled People: A Theoretical Analysis

Chapter- I

Understanding of Social Security for Disabled People: A Theoretical Analysis

The concept of the Social Security, its connotation is always ambiguous. Social Security is an ancient concept which has evolved over a period of time; it denotes the protection provided by the state institution for the welfare of persons who are incapable of his/her working due to old age, unemployment, sickness and disability. Abraham Epstein, a renowned writer on social security issue, said *“I insisted on the term ‘social security’ because by that time I had clear conception of the differences which lay between the concept of social insurance as worked out by Bismarck in Germany and the conception of social protection as elaborated in England. I did not want ‘economic security’ or ‘social insurance’ because this would give in the Germany twist of the actuarial insurance conception terms of compulsory savings which do not justify governmental contributions. I did not want ‘economic security’ because what I hoped for was not only a form of security for the workers. He also insisted on that type of security which would promote the welfare of security as a whole”*.¹ However, the concept of Social Security as used by Abraham Epstein was with a view to distinguish it from economic security or social insurance.

Sir Willilam Beveridge, a renowned British economist and social reformer in his report on ‘Social Insurance and Allied Services’ defined that *“ the term social security is used to denote*

¹ Epstein, Pierre. *Abraham Epstein: The Forgotten Father of Social Security*. University of Missouri Press, 2006, Columbia and London, 2006, p. 279.

the security of an income to take the place of earnings, when they are interrupted by unemployment, sickness or accident, or to provide for retirement through age or to provide loss of support by the death of another, and to meet exceptional expenditure such as those connected with birth, death and marriage, primarily social security means security of income up to a minimum, but the provision of an income should be associated with treatment designed to bring the interruption of earnings to an end as soon as possible."²

The above mentioned definition on social security highlights the security of income to be protected or to be needed when the earning is interrupted. There are different causes for ups and down of a secure income owing out of individuals sickness, accident, old-age, and unemployment, death of earning member or meeting of unforeseen exceptional expenditure coming out of the social necessity of the family. It is therefore obligatory on part of the state to intervene with the individual life exposed to such types of interruption of his/ her income or earnings. The state should step forward with some sort of programmes and planning design with different parameters to satisfy the need for a secure or protected income.

International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines social security as a security mechanism which provides sense of security against certain risks to which its members are constantly exposed through different forms. These are essentially contingencies against which an individual of modest means cannot effectively provide by his or her own ability alone or even in private amalgamation with his fellows. The mechanics of social security thus stand in using rational innovation in addressing the objective of social justice with a touch of benevolence to modulate

² Beveridge, Willilam. "Social Insurance and Allied Services report," *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, vol. 78(6), 2000, p. 851.

the blind unfairness of nature and economic activities.³ This definition laid stress on some sort of protective measures from the prospective of the state to ensure a provision of financial support to the family belong to the social misery and exploited group of persons. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has identified certain contingencies owing out of different background including sickness, medical care for workers, work-related injuries, death benefits, maternity leave, and unemployment in old-age scenario. Hence, the discourse on social security entails a condition where an individual or group of individual faces problems of magnitude nature comes out of risks associated with on protected incomes. These contingencies have different forms such as an accident, a severe financial situation resulting from a natural catastrophe and disaster in which the individual struggle with the attainment of basic resources needed for its own survival and the survival of their family. Therefore, social security is a protective measure of the state in the form of collective efforts against the socio-economic risks which are responsible for causing hardship to individuals or group of individuals.⁴ The action of the state in the form of collective measures authorizes the state to take positive discrimination tactics or strategy to build a new social order based on justice equality and fraternity.

The objective of Social Security, as expounded by E. Ahmed, Jean Dreze, and Dr. Amartya Sen, is to use social mechanisms to prevent deprivation and vulnerability.⁵ According to their analysis, millions of individuals are massively vulnerable and deprived of their rights and liberties, as well as being alienated from the mainstream society in the globalised globe. Furthermore, they are suffering from serious challenges of current state of economic and social

³ International Labour Organisation, *Approach to Social Security: An international survey*, Geneva, 1942, p. 83.

⁴ Mohapatra, C. S. "Disability management in India: Challenges and Commitments." *Indian Institute of Public Administration*, New Delhi, India, 2004, p. 196.

⁵ Ahmad, Ehtisham, Jean Drèze, John Hills, and Amartya Sen, eds. *Social security in developing countries*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, New Delhi, India, 1999, pp.4-6.

deprivation where they are unable to access certain basic opportunities and guarantee of social security measures.

The notion of social security, according to the Report on the National Commission on Labour, is based on human dignity and social harmony. The fundamental theme behind social security measures is to demonstrate various welfare measures designed to protect the vulnerable section suffering from certain risks and problems. The analysis of National Commission on Labour also takes in to account the worthiness of the individuals who contributed for the society as a whole in their respective capacity. Hence they should be protected from certain contingencies (such as sickness, medical care for the worker, work related-injury, death of the worker, maternity, unemployment, and old age scenario) during his or her working life where he is not protected. Every individual worker are entitled to have their rights and liberties and these rights are legitimate to claim the social security benefits from the state against economic insecurity as a condition of human survival. In a modern welfare state, a comprehensive social security measures covers people from different background of contingencies. From the perspectives, the social security measures are considered as innovative ideas and insight covered of well structure planning and equitable pattern of the distribution of national resources among different strata of the society.⁶ Therefore, it is very clear that the concept of social security is one of the perimeters on which the edifice of the welfare state rests on. Walter Friedlander, a renowned social welfare expert and educator, defines social security as "*a societal programme of protections granted by society against these modern-day contingencies such an illness, joblessness, ageing, dependency, workplace injuries, and invalidism, against which the person*

⁶ Report of the National Commission on Labour, Government of India Ministry of Labour and Employment and Rehabilitation, 1969, p. 217.

*cannot be supposed to protect him and his family through his own aptitude or foresight."*⁷ The underlying theme of social security from this perspective covers of the strategy, planning and actions needed for the protection of individuals suffering from multifarious socio-economic contingency.

The Need for Social Security

The process of Modernization and urbanization with the institution building programme have radically bring changes in the socio-economic sphere which resulted in new form of tensions and conflicts which drastically poses barriers on social cohesion, unity, fraternity and dignity of individual. The transition from agrarian economy to an industrial economy has brought immense problems and difficulties to the vulnerable section of the society deprived of the basic requirement of food, shelter, clothing and other basic amenities needed for their survival and existence. In capitalist economy, the workers engaged in different an industrial work is mostly deprived of employment in the event of his or her illness, accidents, or old age. Similarly, while sickness of workers is identified in earning capacity temporarily, industrial accidents may make him or her disabled in partially or permanently, and old age may put a rest to his or her ability to earn and support him or her family. Yet, the worker does not have enough resources required to face the risks caused by sickness, accidents, unemployment and old age. Thus, the concerns for social security measure for the vulnerable sections of the society are fundamental task before the policy makers to address their grievances in order to have a society based on social justice. The state is needed to accommodate their interest by furnishing the alternative approaches to secure and stabilize the income from different source. In fact, the state should have perceived their

⁷ Friedlander, Walter A., *Introduction to Social Welfare*, Prentice Hall of India (Private) Limited, New Delhi, 1963, p.5.

problems from the angle of social needs and necessity within a border context of the policy of positive discrimination rooted through constitutional and legal protection. Hence, protection of victims from multifarious contingencies is the prime task in socio-political and economic reconstruction of society.

The social security measures in the backdrop of different form of contingencies are argued on the following account. First, social security measure will provide the more self-confidence to the individuals and their families that their standard of living and quality of life will not be gnarled by social and economic contingencies. Second, it will cover of provision of medical care and income security against the magnitudes of defined contingencies. Third, it will facilitate the victim's physical and vocational rehabilitation and thwart or reduce ill health and accidents in occupations. Fourth, it will work as safeguard against unemployment by providing protection in the form of upliftment of job addressing the scenario of unemployment and the provision of insurance against unemployment and old age benefit. Convention No. 102, Part II of the International Labour Organization has given emphasis on medical services, sickness benefits, unemployment insurance, and old age benefits, employment injury, family benefit, maternity benefit, invalidity benefit, and survivors benefit are some of the social security measures. Medical Care is needed for maintaining and improving the health of the persons for which they are able to do work and to attend to their personal needs. Sickness related-Benefit, as defined by Convention No. 102, Part III, covered those who are unable to work due to a morbid condition that resulted in a loss of earnings. Besides, Convention No. 130 also provides that, in the case of the death of a beneficiary of sickness benefit, a funeral benefit shall be endowed to the survivor or the person who has borne the expense of the funeral. Convention No. 102, Part IV of ILO focuses on full unemployment. Convention No. 168 of ILO also provides that States must

endeavor to extend protection to loss of earnings due to their partial unemployment and a temporary suspension of job or work. Similarly, as per Convention No. 102, Part V of ILO, old age benefit should be provided those persons who are surviving beyond a prescribed age. This age should not exceed 65 years old. This benefit is provided those persons who have already reached a certain age to spend a decent standard of living for the rest of their lives. According to Convention No. 102, Part VI of ILO, employment injury benefit is covered those persons who are normally incapable for work, invalidity due to accidents. Injured persons must get three types of benefits such as medical benefit, cash benefit and survival benefit. Convention No. 102, Part VII of ILO envisages that family benefit covered for the protection of children who are under school-leaving age or under 15 years of age. They must cover the endowment of benefits such as food, clothing and housing or domestic assistance. Convention No. 102, Part II and VII of ILO emphasizes that maternity benefit covered for women who are normally pregnant. They must get medical benefits which include at least prenatal, child birth, confinement and post-natal care and hospitalization. As per the International Labour Organization's Convention No. 102, Part IX, invalidity benefits are covered for those individuals who are inability or temporarily incapacity to employ in an activity. Convention No. 102, Part X of ILO envisages that survivor benefit covered for the loss of assistance experienced by the widow or children as a consequence of the death of the breadwinner. Survivors' benefit must be granted throughout the contingency. It is a long-term benefit which must be analyzed following substantial changes in the general level of earnings or in the cost of living.⁸

⁸ Humblet, Martine, and Rosinda Silva. *Social security: Standards for the XXIst century*. International Labour Office, 2002, pp. 17-38.

Understanding of Disability

The term '**Disability**' and '**Handicap**' refer to aspects of human disorder that cause everyone to be temporarily or permanently impaired or disabled at some point in their lives. The term 'Disability' refers to the various types of functional limitations including physical and medical condition or intellectual or sensory impairment, mental illness, whereas, the term 'Handicap' implies the lack of all kind of opportunities such as education, communication and information technology.⁹ The World Health Organization (WHO), in 1976, draws a three- fold classification - impairment, disability and handicap. 'Impairment' *is any loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological or anatomical structure or function*; 'Disability' *is any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being*; 'Handicap' *is a disadvantage for a given individual, resulting from an impairment or a disability, that prevents the fulfilment of a role that is considered normal (depending on age, sex and social and cultural factors) for that individual*.¹⁰ In 2001, The World Health Organization (WHO) gave a new definition of disability from different perspectives. The new definition is that *"Disability is an umbrella term which covers impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions. Impairment is a problem, which is occurring in human body function or structure; an activity limitation, which is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; a participation restriction, which is a problem exercised by an individual in involvement in life situations. Thus, disability is a complex, multidimensional and contested phenomenon, reflecting an interaction between*

⁹ Mohapatra, C. S. "Disability management in India: Challenges and Commitments." *Indian Institute of Public Administration*, New Delhi, India, 2004, p. 40.

¹⁰ Mehrotra, Nilika. *Disability, Gender & State Policy Exploring Margins*, Rawat Publications, New Delhi, India, 2013, pp. 53-54.

features of a person's body and features of the society in which he or she lives."¹¹ International Labour Organization (Texts of Convention No.159 and Recommendation No.168 Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983(No.159), in Article-1 defines that *"disability as an condition of individual whose prospects of securing, retaining and advancing in suitable employment and substantially reduced as a result of a duly recognized physical or mental impairment."*¹² As per Disabled Persons in India A Statistical Profile Report 2011, out of the 121 Cores populations, about 2.68 Cores persons are 'disabled persons' which is 2.1 percent of the overall population.¹³ Section-II of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 defines disability as follows: Blindness, Low Vision, Leprosy-Cured, Hearing Impairment, Loco-Motor Disability, Mental Retardation, and Mental Illness. Census 2011 draws a new definition and different types of disability. These are as follows. With a view to seeing, someone who cannot look at all; or has no sensation of light but depends on the assist of spectacles; or has blurred vision in spite of using spectacles, contact lenses etc., or can see light but cannot see properly to move anywhere independently. With a view to hearing, someone who cannot hear at all, or who has severe difficulty hearing daily conservational discourse with others, or who wears a hearing aid, or who has a hearing problem in one ear. In relations to speech, someone who is unable to speak at all, or who is unable to communicate on a regular basis, or who can only speak in single words rather than sentences. With a view to movement, someone who does not have both arms and legs; or is paralysed and unable to move; or are capable to only move with the assistance of

¹¹ World Report on Disability, World Health Organisation, The World Bank, 2011, pp. 3-7.

¹² International Labour Organization, 86th Session, Geneva, ILO convention 159 vocational rehabilitation and employment of disabled persons, June, 1998, p. 2.

¹³ Social Statistics Division, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. "Disabled Persons in India—A Statistical Profile 2016," p. 7.

walking aids; or has severe and permanent joint/muscle problems that have resulted in restricted movement; or has lost all of his or her fingers, toes, or a thumb; or are not capable to proceed or pick up any small item; or has difficulty in balancing and harmonising body movements; has a loss of body sensation owing to paralysis, leprosy, or any other reason; has any abnormality of the body parts, such as a hunchback; or has a very a very short(dwarf). In view to mental retardation, someone who lacks understanding / comprehension as compared to her/ his own age group; or is unable to communicate her/his needs when compared to other persons of her/his age group; or has difficulty in executing normal activities; or has problems understanding in deliberate routine instructions; or has a great deal of making judgments, memorising facts, or resolving problems. With a view to mental illness, someone who is having medicines or other treatment for mental illness; or exhibits unnecessary and excessive worry and anxiety; or exhibits repetitive behaviour/thoughts; exhibit sustained changes of mood or mood swings; has an unusual experience like hearing voices, seeing visions, experience of peculiar smells or feeling or peculiar taste; exhibits unusual behaviour such as talking/ laughing to self, viewing in space; or has trouble in social communications and adoptability. In view to any others, someone who have disabilities like “Autism” (Difficulty in communicating, interacting with others). In view to multiple disabilities a combination of two or more specific type of disabilities has identified.¹⁴

Disability is a part of the human understanding. The term 'disability' refers to socially recognised definitions for a variety of human conditions involving various forms of physical and mental impairments that occur throughout the course of a person's life in diverse cultural contexts. Here,

¹⁴ S. Jeyalakshmi, Chakrabarti, S. and Nivedita Gupta. *Disability in India-A statistical Profile*, Central Statistics Office Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation Government of India, March 2011, pp. 7-15.

the models of disability set up a framework for defining disability and innumerable phenomena that it entails. They endeavor to provide a platform on the basis of which government and society can formulate strategies for meeting the needs of disabled people. They bring out the mechanisms in which discourses about disability, responses to the various forms of disability, provision or limits access to labour, goods, services and political power for persons with disabilities are constructed. In practice, the following models of persons with disabilities will demonstrate the nature and context of disability owing out of different forces and its impacts on the individuals and society.

Different Model of Disability

There are different approaches contextualising some form of model depicting the nature and context of disability from the perspective of socio-political and economic environment. These approaches are rooted with of the physical environment associated with mental and physical faculties along with the unforeseen natural order as recognised by the society and the state from different perspective.

Traditional Model of Disability

India has an intangible cultural history and a civilisational legacy of making substantial sacrifices to help the poor and needy. According to this traditional perspective, people with disabilities constitute a marginalised group or section that are denied the basic right to life, liberty, education, employment and accessed to communication facilities in the mainstream society. They have been victimised and discriminated in their way to achieve the political, economic and social development. Such discrimination is based upon the negative outlook of the society towards them. From the Indian perspective, the issue and history of disability are linked

with different form of epics. In this context, two major such prototypes were depicted in the famous Indian epics Mahabharata and Ramayana, where Shakuni and Dasi Manthara, whose figures are immensely evocative in Indian culture. In this epic, Shakuni (Mahabharata), who has an orthopedic impairment, is portrayed as a vulture type man who is manipulative, crooked, and mean. The dwarf woman Manthara (Ramayana) has been depicted as narrow-minded and self-centered. Disabled characters were not treated as human being who leads a dignified life in their social existence. In the epic of Mahabharata, we have seen that Dhritarashtra's blindness plays metaphorical and suggestive aspect of his inability to judge between right and wrong.¹⁵ Usha Bhatt in his book the Physically Handicapped in India: A Growing National Problem explains various facets of India's historical attitudes towards persons with disabilities. According to her, the epic Mahabharata depicts the story of disabled people in a narrow connotation based on sympathy rather than apathy for their upliftment. She was of the opinion that the disabled people in ancient India lives with misery and their contribution to the society were never acknowledged similarly the issues of social equality for them were not discussed in any platforms design to socio-political development.¹⁶ Anita Ghai a renowned writer on disability issues explained, in Indian epic Mahabharata and Ramayana, many characters with disabilities are presented in a negative sense. Ghai specifically pointed out to Dhritarashtra who was a blind Kaurav king was not found worthy of throne owing to his blindness. However, during this period the welfare of the disadvantaged and vulnerable section of society were neglected and certain steps were taken

¹⁵ Banik, Somdev. "Representation of Disability Characters in Literature," *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Translation Studies (IJELR)*, vol. 3. issue. 2. 2016 (April-June).

¹⁶ Bhatt, Usha. *The Physically Handicapped in India: A Growing National Problem*, Shivlaxmi Bhuvan Publication, Bombay, 1963, p. 84.

gradually to achieve the cause of the disabled people for certain extent.¹⁷ It is acknowledged fact that there had been negative perception regarding the disabled people during the ancient history. They were deprived and humiliated to achieve social equality of opportunities and freedom as human being. The traditional model of disability has been criticized because of its close association with the normative values deeply rooted with blind believes and superstition prevailing in the ancient period.

Medical Model of Disability

The Medical model of disability is fundamentally structured upon the assumption that persons with disabilities gigantically face many problems and difficulties which are related to their physical, sensory along with intellectual impairments. It defines disability in the clinical milieu as a form of disease because disability triggered by disease or trauma and malnutrition. Thus, this model plays a seminal role in medical and paramedical perspectives to cure their problems and to make them fit in every walk of societal environment. This model also defines disable people as defect or sickness in body, which resides impairment within body of the disable person and must be alleviated through the medical treatment, care and rehabilitation facilities. From this perspective, it is believed that disabled people are physically incapable of performing various societal activities due to their physical deficiency. Therefore, it has been a common perception that disabled people are left out from many opportunities in their life because of physical inability and incapacity.¹⁸ Rhoda Olkin, a renowned clinical Psychologist, explained

¹⁷Addlakha, Renu (ed). *Disability Studies in India: Global Discourses, Local Realities*, Routledge. New Delhi, India, 2013, India, pp. 44-45.

¹⁸ Bruce, Anna, Gerard Quinn, Theresia Degener, Christine Burke, Shivaun Quinlivan, Joshua Castellino, Padraic Kenna, and Ursula Kilkelly. *Human rights and disability: the current use and future potential of United Nations human rights instruments in the Context of Disability*, Geneva: United Nations Press, USA, 2002, p. 24.

that disability is considered as a medical problem which locates within the individual. It is one kind of defect of body structure owing out of deficiency in nutrition. This problem must be recovered through medical treatment, amelioration of physical condition and rehabilitation process. The medical model nurtures the question of normalcy; both in the sense of carrying out and corroborating to certain standard from which disable people diverge. Standardization has been explained as the utilization of culturally valued means with a view to establish, empower and maintain valued societal roles for people. Medical interferences aimed at rejuvenating the disabled people to normalcy by employing the medical method to improve their capability to accomplish social requirement and needs as a normal human being does in their daily lives. The importance has given to the socio-cultural accepted norms in improving the socio cultural situation of people with disabilities beyond the four walls of social prejudice and blind believes associated with material and physical gains. This generalisation establishes and considers normalcy as a set of culturally cherished social roles. In this viewpoint, medical model conceives that there is an objective state of normalcy which harmonies the thinking process within a social environment which plays crucial role in improving their physical disorder.¹⁹ In this discourse, disability is seen as a condition inherent in the individual or as a personal tragedy. Disabled people are considered as people with limitations who cannot ensure a reasonable quality of life due to their impairment. This medical model anticipates individuals to find ways of adapting to society. It puts emphasis on the liability of modifying and adjusting to the social order of able-bodied person and their appropriate environment on the disabled people. According to medical model, the society and its value system has no role to play in the contingencies and curing aspect of disability.

¹⁹ Olkin, Rhoda. *What psychotherapists should know about disability*, Guilford Press, New York, 1999, p. 26.

Social Model of Disability

The social model of disability was gained its momentum from the British disability movement in the middle of 1960s and 1970s in response to the modifications of the medical model of disability. The initial point of enquiry of the social model remained with the fundamental principles of Disability (1976) mentioned in the Union of the Physically Impaired against Segregation (UPIAS). In the context of disability, The Union of the Physically Impaired against Segregation (UPIAS) postulates “... *In our view, it is society which disables physically impaired people. Disability is something imposed on top of our impairments by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society*”.²⁰ UPIAS has also acknowledged the factors associated with the social model of disability. It specifies that disability is a condition triggered by social circumstances and hence it should be eradicated. According to this model both internal and external factors such as morality, social institution, cooperation play a crucial role in the enhancement of quality of disabled people to lead their own life. Therefore, the issue of disability cannot be treated in isolation, societal forces and factors plays crucial role. The experts, professional who are engaged for the causes of disability should be committed to some sort of sacrifices for betterment of the disabled people.²¹ Mike Oliver, a disabled activist, stressed the significance of concentrating on the social dimensions of disability, namely how the physical and social environment imposes constraints on certain groups of individuals called as disabled. To understand it, UPIAS (1976) delineates an essential conceptual difference among the physical challenged and disability. Thus, the impairment is defined as lacking portion of defective limb, organism or mechanism of the body, on the other hand,

²⁰ Shakespeare, Tom, Watson, Nicholas. “Research in Social Science and Disability,” vol -2, 2002, p. 3.

²¹ UPIAS, Fundamental principles of disability, Union of the Physically Impaired against Segregation and the Disability Alliance, 1976, p. 4.

disability is defined in this way that, the disadvantage or constraint of activity triggered by an existing social organization takes minute or physically challenged people are not taken into account, and they are deprived of their basic fundamental rights and equal participation in mainstream societal activities.²² However, from social model perspective, Mike Oliver highlighted three exclusive facets about the social model. First, Social model plays an important role to change the focus from the functional limitations of individuals with impairment who are gigantically facing problems caused by disabling environments, barriers and cultures. Second, Social Model does not require seeing the specific problems from the disabling environment in which the problem of unemployment is the big issue. It entails not only intervention in the social organization and the operation of the labour market but also requires in transport, education and culture. Third, the social model encourages mass involvement in the service of the persons with disabilities rather than an individual effort to tackle the cause of disability.²³ The tragedy of the disabled persons are not merely with access to the education system, transport facilities, discriminatory policy on health, bad working condition and all kind of support system, but also a form of negative picturisation in hand of media such as newspaper, television and filmography.

Positivism and Disability

Positivism in social sciences emerged out of the thoughts of Isidore Auguste Marie Francois Comte who is regarded as the father of Positivism. He pointed out that only sense experience is real. Therefore, Positivism underlined the importance of precision, constructive power and relativism in the discourse of getting empirical facts. In this context, Positivism contends analytical statements regarding the physical or social world where statements are to be

²² Retief, Marno, and Rantosa. "Models of disability: A brief overview," 2018, p. 3.

²³ Barnes, Colin, and Geoffrey Mercer (ed). *Implementing the Social Model of Disability: Theory and Research*, The Disability Press, CDS Publications, The University of California, 2004, pp.18-31.

empirically examined by observation to evaluate its truth or falsity.²⁴ To that end, the positive approach on disability insights into the health research regarding disability and impairment, which is influenced by positivist ideas. It puts emphasis on the cures and means of decreasing impairments of disabled, and uses the methods of measured trials, random statistical sampling and designed questionnaires. The World Health Organization's classification of persons with disabilities is tilt towards the frequent use of positivist research in the field of disability.²⁵ According to positivist, the concept of subjectivity is extremely exclusive and can be examined through the objective method which is scientific in nature. Therefore, the positivist approach to disability acknowledges the fact that the nature and context of disability can be studied through the lenses of scientific criteria of objective evaluation. Therefore, there is no space for normative value judgment, emotional words in the broader framework of identifying the cause and remedial measures to the issues of disability.²⁶

Functionalism and Disability

The functionalist perspectives of disability based on certain assumption relating to the cause consequences and rehabilitation format require for bringing the normal life of individual and society. The functionalist perceived the issue of disability, deviant and sick in complimentary manner to demonstrate the dysfunctioning of society and societal order is due to such contingencies. To overcome such dysfunctioning the society has to take initiative under the welfare arrangement recognised by the political legal order. The functionalist theory underlines

²⁴ Ramaswamy, Sushila. *Political Theory ideas and concepts*, Macmillan Publishers, India, 2012, p. 16.

²⁵ International classification of impairments, diseases and handicaps, Geneva: World Health Organization, 1980. pp. 143-202.

²⁶ Oliver, Mike. "Changing the Social Relations of Research production?," *Disability, Handicap and Society*, Vol. 7. Issue- 2, 1992, pp. 101-114.

some programmes that claim to enable the cause of disabled section of society. However, it does not make any differences between contingencies coming out of disability, impairment and sick. The functionalist emphasises the need for the differential treatment through programmes which can be lead to devalued people to lead a culturally valued lives. The main problems of the functionalist perspectives remain with the fact that the disabled people regardless of the type or extent of their impairments are not a homogenous group that can be accommodated easily within a society on account of their collective and individual needs. In fact, disabled people differ widely in terms of the criteria of ethnic background, sexual orientation, age gap, religious beliefs, wealth, access to work environment and so on.²⁷

Post-Modernism and Disability

Post-modernism is a comprehensive experimental movement that emerged in the late twentieth century in western philosophy. Post-modernism is rooted with an approach to fragmented pluralistic culture in which people are transformed from fabricators to consumers, and it is linked to post-industrialism and societal advancement.²⁸ Post modernism acknowledges differences among individuals not on the basis of class consideration or caste consideration rather underline existence of social differences based on sex, ethnicity, sexuality and disability. This theory has little impact on health research on disability, but acknowledges the forces of poverty and social exclusion are twine factors responsible for the misery of the disabled people at large. As a democratic theory, post modernism theory is in favour of the policies and programmes of the state which are protective discrimination in nature are made for the upliftment of the living condition and improvement of experiments of any forms. Therefore, post

²⁷ Oliver, Michael. "Theories of disability in health practice and research." *Bmj* 317, no. 7170 (1998): 1446-1449.

²⁸ Heywood, Andrew. *Key Concepts in Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan, UK, 2013, p. 101.

modernism traces on existence of differences coming out of the structural and functional aspect of the existence of human body and mind. Further, it prescribes some remedial measures, especially measures dealing to the rehabilitation process. Again it acknowledges the contribution of disabled persons in the sphere of economic and societal development. Moreover, the prescription of health improvement as the post-modernist prescribe includes a broad range of societal and environmental involvement which consider as an instrument to boost and protect the health and quality of life of disabled people.²⁹

Marxism and Disability

Marxism as an approach deals with a movement emerged out of socio-economic issues which should be restructured according to the criteria of necessity and requirement. In fact, Marxism believes in social reformation, economic equality and societal change for the betterment of an equitable social order. Hence, the objective of Marxist approach lies with social freedom and economic equality considered as the base for further political development. Marxism postulates the main purpose of historical changes is the struggles among social classes. To that end, it considers the disabled section of the society as a form of social class engaged always with other social class in boarder context of cooperation and conflicts. In this context, according to Marxism, class conflicts is inevitable for certain kind of historical changes, the society needs to overcome the issues of maintenance of status quo. From the perspectives of disabled issues, Marxism emphasises the need for better social condition of the disabled people, which can be materialized through conflicts and struggles to have a well versed democracy and its institutional functioning. Marxism believes that the struggle of the disabled people in the

²⁹ Shakespeare, T., T. Bright, and H. Kuper (ed). “Access to health for persons with disabilities,” *Geneva: United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights* (2018), p. 3

ground that they are disadvantaged section of the society struggling for social equilibrium and social order. Marxism justifies the struggle of disabled people are necessary to bring changes in society and social structure characterised by high degree of exploitation and in equality. The disabled people are struggling with multifarious problems in the day-to-day live which should be eradicated with the application of social antagonism based on caste and religion. According to the Marxism, social changes can be possible within the boarder context of bringing revolution in human body and mind. Marxism as a philosophy always centered around the theme of cooperation and conflict directed towards social equilibrium based on social justice and economic equality. In this context, Marxism treats the problems of the disabled are intimately connected with the society and societal environment based on equal income and access to public distribution system. Marxism as a philosophy has always valued the contribution of disabled people in making the state and society as worthiest. Therefore, in the eyes of Marxian philosophy, societal change is needed in order to accommodate the interest of the disabled people.³⁰

Disability from the Perspectives of Human Rights

In the present context, disability is considered as a major human rights issues in the democratic discourses. The objective is as how to ensure and protect the interest of disabled people suffering from multifarious socio-economic injustice and restoration of their basic interest visa-vis the society. As statistic shows that over 600 million people in the world have a disability of one form or another, two third of them are living with poverty line mostly in the

³⁰ Russell, Marta. "Disablement, Oppression, and the Political Economy," *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*, Hammill Institute on Disabilities and Sage Publication, vol. 12, 2001, pp. 87-94.

developing countries.³¹ The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 recognises that all people are entitled to their civil, political, social and cultural rights and they have their rights to self-determination in an equal footing. The UN convention on human rights emphasises the need for food, shelter, clothing, medical care are some of the necessary social services meant for the development of the disabled section of the society. Further, the convention emphasises the need for social security in the event of unemployment, sickness, widowhood, old age which are beyond the control of their own capacity and capability.³² Therefore, human rights discourse on disabled question centered around political, legal and social acceptance aimed at the all-round development of the disable section of the society. The discourse of human rights on disabled issues emphasises the need for education, employment, healthcare, communication and housing etc. require for a well-balanced society without any form of distinction. Nowadays, it is obligatory on part of the state to facilitate various provision, programmes and enactment for enhancement of their dignity life. The major theme of conventions on disability emphasises the need for societal change and belief systems in relation to disabled section of the society. It is obligatory on part of the state who is party to the conventions on disabled people to ensure the basic amenities required or needed for a dignified life. Hence, any form of exploitation and on equal treatment is always has to be overthrown. The UN convention on disability emphasised the

³¹ Bruce, Anna, Gerard Quinn, Theresia Degener, Christine Burke, Shivaun Quinlivan, Joshua Castellino, Padraic Kenna, and Ursula Kilkelly. *Human rights and disability: the current use and future potential of United Nations human rights instruments in the Context of Disability*, Geneva: United Nations Press, USA, 2002, pp.1-2.

³² Riddle, Caristopher A. "Human rights, Disability and Capabilities," Palgrave Macmillan, New York, USA, 2017, pp. 1-6.

need for the societal change including the attitudinal changes of the society and social environment toward the disabled section of the society.³³

Disability and Amartya Sen's Capability Approach

The capability approach is first enunciated in 1997 by the Nobel laureate Amartya Sen in a Tanner lecture titled "Equality of What?". The capability approach is a broad multidimensional normative framework for the evaluation of human's well-being and social arrangements, the scheme of policies and programmes regarding societal change in society. This approach is intended to address a wide range of human well-being issues, including disability, gender discrimination, inequality, health, and poverty. Amartya Sen's capacity approach has recently gained tremendous popularity and this approach is the most useful paradigm for describing people with disabilities and comprehending their economic causes and values.³⁴ Sen's Capability approach broadly focuses on exchange entitlements, which are commodities and services gained through a person's resources or endowments rather than through purchasing or selling. These characteristics are determined by prerogative relations and are a part of prerogative mapping that includes ways of acquiring income and services other than productions and sale. The notion of capabilities refers to the fact that a person can achieve or could have achieved in life. The capability approach intended to examine the role of capability as a major factor in determining the existence of disabled people visa-vis other segment of the society. The capability approach acknowledges the role of individual intellect and physical ability as a major factor owing to any form of distinction. In terms of capability, the disabled person always struggles with the socio-

³³ Rioux, Marcia, and Anne Carbert. "Human Rights and Disability: The International Context," *Journal on Developmental Disabilities*, vol. 10, no.2, 2003, p. 2.

³⁴ Sen, Amartya. *Why Health Equity?*, Health Economics 11, Willy Inter Science, 2002, pp. 659-666.

economic environment and expects some sort of constitutional and legal guarantee to their well-being and development.³⁵

Social Security for Disabled People: The Study of Developed and Developing Countries

The concept social security is a worldwide phenomenon, and it is not restricted to the developed countries alone, but developing countries also. The provision of social security is one of the parameters of a welfare state. In fact, most of the countries of the world try to implement those provisions of social security through constitutional provisions and legal enactments. In case of the developing countries, the provision of social security to the vulnerable section of the society particularly the disabled people depends upon to major factors, first, the economic resources coming out of pattern of economic development, second, the political willingness of the decision makers reflected through the planning process. In case of the developed countries, the provisions of social security are reflected through different form of state or market organised social security system in collaborating majors. Due to the economic capability of the developed countries along with a strong sense of institution building they are very much capable of satisfying the basic needs and requirements of vulnerable section of the society and their contingencies. In the developed countries both the state and non-state actor are party to different welfare majors meant for the vulnerable section. The risks of social security majors are well addressed in the different platform organised by joint initiatives of both state and non-state actors. However, in the case of the developing countries there is no such scope for collaborating majors of state and non-state actors. Their perceptions to the provisions of social security are also different and the processes through which the social security provisions can be attained are also

³⁵ Mitra, Sophie. "The Capability Approach and Disability," *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*, vol. 16/NO. 4/2006/, pp. 236–247.

different. In case of the developing countries, the social security provision for the disable people are always at stake as a result disabled people struggles to find out a better means of livelihood to sustain both physically and mentally.

Social Security for Disabled People in Developed Countries

In developed countries, it is seen that the provision of social security emerged massively after World War II. In the European Union, Social security is described as social assistance and social insurance provisions that safeguard the disabled population against innumerable economic and social risks. Social security scheme in U.K covers the provision of cash benefits programs and health service benefit programmes including medical facilities. In the United State, Social Security covers only retirement benefits which is not considered as a broad out look to address the grievances of the disabled section of the society. The policies of social insurances are nature of contributory programmes where the workers and disabled section of the people contributed to face the future problems associated with old age, health risks and unemployment. The expenditure of the developed countries to address the social security provision varies from state to state. For example, 31 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) is spent to address the social security provision in Sweden; only 60 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in the United States is spent on the issues of social security. Again, institutional differences are there in the developed countries to address the social security provision of the disabled section. The institutional differences of the countries stems from their history and different perceptions on the role of private association against the institution working in public sectors. Despite some significant direct and indirect costs, social security has brought forth enormous benefits in terms of income maintenance, poverty reduction, and economic stability. There are different form of

social security majors as adopted by the developed countries through the policies and programmes of both private and public domain.³⁶

The Provision of Pension Systems

Pension system in the developed countries varies on account of the contribution made by the state and contribution made by private association with some sort of collaborating majors. Social security in developed countries typically combines three different elements—social assistance designed to relieve poverty, social insurance concerned with the provision of security and the spreading of income over the life cycle, and categorical transfers directed at redistribution between specific groups. The first category is typified in Britain by Income Support, which traces a direct line of descent from the Elizabethan Poor Law, in France by the *minimum vieillesse*, and in the US by welfare. The second category is illustrated in Britain by National Insurance pensions, unemployment benefit, and invalidity benefit, in France by a similar range of insurance benefits and in the US by OASDHI (Old-Age, Survivors, Disability, and Health Insurance). The third category is illustrated by Child Benefit and *Allocation familiale*, which, as we have noted, have no counterpart in the US.³⁷ If we look at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries where pension systems cover more than 90 percent of the labor force. In New Zealand, Canada, Ireland, and Denmark, there have been systems of public basic pension scheme and supplementary pension benefit schemes. In those countries the retirement system consists solely of a universal flat-rate pension coupled with an income-related pension. These pensions are coming from lifetime earnings, voluntary

³⁶ Dethier, Jean-Jacques. “*Social Security: What Can Developing Countries Learn from Developed Countries?* 2020 vision briefs BB20.” Special Edition, *International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)*, 2007, pp. 287-289.

³⁷ Ahmad, Ehtisham, Jean Drèze, John Hills, and Amartya Sen, eds. *Social security in developing countries*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, New Delhi, India, 1999, p.83.

occupational pension schemes, as well as voluntary individual retirement savings plans. In the United Kingdom and Australia, which have significant means-tested public schemes, as well as in Belgium and South Korea, the link between pension entitlements and pre-retirement earnings is weak. There are important minimum credits in the earnings-related pension plans of Belgium and the United Kingdom. In the Switzerland and United States, Social Security program that has a progressive formulas based on lifespan earnings, and also has charitable private pensions. In France and Japan, which have redistributive programs, fall in between. The pension systems in Finland, Italy, and the Netherlands are made up of a flat-rate public pension and a semi-required occupational pension linked to earnings and industrial agreements.³⁸

Health Insurance

In all industrialised countries, universal health insurance has been established. The health-insurance systems in developed countries differ in a number of ways. Health insurance systems of Japan, Canada, Singapore, Germany and the United State bridge a wide classification of dimensions. It covers with the most exclusive system for the United States, and the least expensive for Singapore. In Canada, there has been a universal sponsored health insurance system which is covered of the Medicare system administered independently by the thirteen provinces and territories. Every Canadian citizen and permanent resident is automatically covered with this provision. Most employers in this country provide private supplemental insurance as a subsidy to recruit quality employees, and few Canadian people purchase replacement insurance. Each territory of Canada is accountable for the raising revenue, planning,

³⁸ Dethier, Jean-Jacques. “*Social Security: What Can Developing Countries Learn from Developed Countries?* 2020 vision briefs BB20.” Special Edition, *International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)*, 2007, pp. 1-2.

regulating, and confirming the supply of health care services. In Germany, there has been mandatory universal health insurance coverage for everyone. The primary insurance system in Germany is a social health insurance system, which covers roughly 90 percent of the population. Even though, employers play a pivotal role in characterizing plan enrollment, collecting revenue from employees and passing it along to a quasi-government agency. The majority of Germany's health-care spending is funded through a fixed-rate income tax. Health plans of all applications must be accepted, and all valid claims must be paid. Government subsidies are available to unemployed people and low-income families. In Japan, there has a mandatory insurance system which is consisted of an employment-built insurance scheme for salaried employees, and a national health insurance scheme for the uninsured, self-insured and low income, along with a distinct insurance program for the elderly. Employment-built insurance system is the primary insurance program in which employers play a substantial role as sponsors and health plans have significant flexibility in designing their benefit features. Employer-built health insurance must provide coverage for the spouse and dependents.³⁹ A public national health insurance program covers those not eligible for employer-built insurance, including farmers, self-employed individuals, the unemployed, retirees, and expectant mothers, who together comprise about 34 percent of the population. Health insurance for the old age covers and provides additional benefits to the old and disabled individuals. Finally, every household that falls below the government-determined poverty level is eligible for welfare assistance. In U.S, there has been an employment-built health insurance system where employers play important role as guarantors of their employees. There are above 1200 private insurance companies which are contributing

³⁹ Ashish Kumar, V. P. Sriraman. "Comparative Study of Health Insurance Systems in Various Countries," *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development* 2015; 2(1), p.1.

health insurance and measured primarily by the 50 states. These companies also contribute tens thousands of different health insurance plans, lists of covered services, and cost sharing features, and so on. In addition, there are also various overlying public specific insurance programs considered to cover clients who are senior, disabled, or experiencing from end stage renal disease, the deprived or medically poor children, and the self-employed. Since, the U.S leans on both private and public insurance scheme; it is sometimes entitled a mixed insurance system. In Singapore, there has been a unique-to-the-world health care system in which the dominant form of insurance is mandatory self-insurance which is supported by sponsored saving. Even though complementary and special insurance programs are also indispensable to their system, the government also supports a second complimentary catastrophic spending insurance program. Singapore's system of health care also includes an optional long-term care insurance scheme with predetermined payments based on age of entry.⁴⁰

Unemployment Insurance

Unemployment insurance in industrialised countries varies greatly from country to country. In the Japan and United States, the gross rate of employment has changed about 10–15 percent and 35 percent. But the magnificence of unemployment benefits has no substantial impact on the level of GDP. Unemployment benefits have a net positive influence on productivity, which completely offsets any negative consequences on employment. People who are seeking the job or work are not eligible for unemployment benefits. Because it seems that they are new aspirants in the labour market or they have exhausted their entitlement. Only about a quarter of the unemployed in Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain receive assistance. Whatever, in France and Germany and from taxes in the United Kingdom, Unemployment benefit systems

⁴⁰ Culyer, J. Anthony. *Encyclopedia of Health Economics*, Elsevier Press, New York, 2014, pp. 2-17.

are mainly funded through social insurance contributions on earnings. Social assistance and other programs describe a smaller share of total social security than pensions and health care, but they generally provide highly effective coverage of families at risk. However, such transfers have an efficiency cost because they reduce incentives for low-income recipients to find employment. Because they raise taxes to finance income transfer programs may reduce incentives to work and save among the middle- and high-income earners who have to pay the extra taxes.⁴¹

Social Security for Disabled People in Developing Countries

Millions people in developing countries lives under extreme conditions of poverty and also suffer from severe and chronic deprivation. It has been found that most families live in remote areas with difficult conditions and they are massively deprived from education, health facilities, and employment. Such scenario make the individuals more vulnerable caused by their life circle changes, socio economic and political reforms and other events such as illness, old age and disability which negatively affects a wider section of population.⁴² Poverty levels are substantially higher in newly emerging countries. These countries are characterised by the elements of low income and labour markets is highly fragmented. Few developing countries have social protection measures where both rich and poor populations have on equal access to social assistance and insurance and health benefits. The larger populations in developing countries are not protected by a social security mechanism provided by formal sectors or institutions of public nature.

⁴¹ Dethier, Jean-Jacques. “*Social Security: What Can Developing Countries Learn from Developed Countries?* 2020 vision briefs BB20.” Special Edition, *International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)*, 2007, p. 2.

⁴² Justino, Patricia. “Social Security in developing countries: Myth or Necessity? Evidence from India,” Poverty Research Unit at Sussex Working Paper No. 20, September. 2003, (University of Sussex, Brighton), pp. 3-5.

Pension System in Developing Countries

In developing countries, a pension scheme provides a benefit to the employees, whose age is over 60/65, after the retiring from their job. The central focus of pension is to protect against the insecurity of old age individual and ensure to the maximum an adequate standard living of people in their life. Several governments in developing countries have implemented more effective pension policies and laws, with the goal of providing a replacement income to the elderly and disabled who are living below the poverty line. In the developing countries, there have been two types of pension schemes. The first provides a minimum pension unconditionally to the entire aged person. The second is a system of universal means testing. In Latin American countries such as Uruguay, Chile, Brazil, Argentina, and Costa Rica have noncontributory pension systems. It is more likely to determine the benefits of noncontributory programmes in Latin American countries using household surveys in Costa Rica, Bolivia, Panama, Paraguay, Chile, and Mexico. Bolivia has only universal noncontributory programme with 56 percent coverage for women and 44 percent coverage for men, which compare with OECD averages of 62 percent and 80 percent respectively. The gender gap highlights from 20 percent in Chile, Bolivia and Uruguay and 40 percent in Mexico. However, here a comparison points out that a momentous section of women is working in deferent categories of labour market. The position of women in labour market women in Latin America countries falls into lower level of coverage. In Mexico, Chile, and Peru, above 40 percent of the laboring-age population is not included to any pension structure. In Chile, where 60 percent of women have included with the pension scheme, have contributed for less than 50 percent of their labour. In this respect, it is shown that

noncontributory pensions can play significant role in reducing old age poverty among women.⁴³

In Latin America, Disability pension are often a source of inequality and inefficiency in social security system. The disability pension system varies between four main elements: First and foremost, total or partial incapacity. Second, disability duration which refers to whether a disability is temporary or permanent. Third, causes of disability such as workplace accidents, occupational illnesses, and so on. Fourth, General or specific disability, that means inability to previous job. Disabled persons rely heavily on disability benefits coverage. The period of coverage of disability pension usually depends on the temporary or permanent nature of the disability. If someone is a permanent disabled, his/ her stage of coverage is usually remaining life of the handicapped worker and family comprising surviving spouse and children until his/ her children is adulthood. In Uruguay, it has seen that there have been three types of benefits related to disability. First, total disability covers permanent incapability for any job in government and private sectors. Second, there has been a non-contributory benefit granting to disabled people. Third, a temporary benefit is given for partial incapability while permanent incapability for usual job cannot recognized for a maximum of three years. In Chile, Disability only refers to general and does not refer to specific, incapability and inability to perform day to day their activities. In Mexico, disability benefits are defined as the inability to get a similar job paying at least 50 percent of remuneration in the last year of work. Furthermore, there was a presumption that inability to work was caused by a disease or an accident. If he or she is found guilty of the crime that caused the disability, disability benefits will be denied immediately. In Bolivia, there is a 25 percent reference salary scheme in this country for people with

⁴³ Pensions at a Glance Latin America and the Caribbean, OECD Publishing, The World Bank, 2014, pp. 5-32.

disabilities.⁴⁴ In African countries, non-contributory pensions may be universal, pensions-tested, or means-tested, as well as aid plans to protect the elderly and disabled from poverty. Among the countries that participate in the universal programmes are Botswana, Uganda, Namibia, Zambia, Mauritius, Seychelles, and Kenya. In Lesotho, Swaziland, and Nigeria, pensions-tested are available. In South Africa, Cape Verde, and Kenya, means-tested assistance is available. In African Countries, there have been four variables which are the key pillar of pension provisions such as –benefits, eligibility ages, coverage and annual costs. In order to discuss the benefit schemes, it is shown that benefit levels fluctuate between 4 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in Botswana and 39 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita for eligible recipients over age of 70 years in Lesotho. Eligibility ages tend to coincide with contributory scheme eligibility ages, ranging from 60 to 65 years old. In order to discuss the coverage it is shown that universal schemes in Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, Mauritius, and Seychelles cover their entire group of beneficiaries. And means-tested schemes in Cape Verde, South Africa cover near about 65 percent to 68 percent of their entire populations. On the other hand, pensions-tested schemes in Lesotho cover its qualifying beneficiaries. In these countries it has been shown that there have been annual cost schemes, which reveal benefit level, coverage and eligibility age, fluctuating from 0.265 percent of GDP in Botswana to 2.2 percent of GDP in Mauritius. In Africa, mandatory contributory pension schemes are very available where, out of 47 countries 31 countries have national contributory Pay As You Go (PAYG) Defined Benefit (DB) schemes, in Nigeria there have been a defined-contribution (DC) scheme. In Ghana, there have a hybrid of Defined benefit (DB) and Defined contribution (DC) scheme. The four

⁴⁴ Grushka, Carlos O., and Gustavo Cesar DeMarco. *Disability pensions and social security reform: analysis of the Latin American experience*, Social Protection Discussion Paper Series, no. 0325, December 2015, pp. 1-6.

countries of Africa have no national contributory schemes but have some form of non-contributory old age benefit.⁴⁵ In African Countries, it has been shown that if a worker who becomes permanently disabled will receive an income flourished on their salary when his/her accident occurred. The National Social Security Fund (NSSF) designs that if a worker dies before his/her retirement, income support will also paid to workers family. Here the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) not only would pay attention to survivor benefits depend on the workers' salary but also the number of beneficiary of the families. The pension will be provided to the families until their children reach at the age of 18 years or complete his/her education. In addition, surviving spouses would receive a benefit for a limited period of time to assist the family for the loss of earnings. Beneficiaries of disability will be eligible for a pension when they reach at their retirement age. On the other hand, if disability benefit recipients do not reach retirement age, they will be entitled for survivor benefits based on their last salary before becoming disabled.⁴⁶ The Indian government made a number of initiatives and social protection schemes across the country in 1995, including Cash Allowance schemes for children, the disabled, and the old age, as well as the National Assistant Programme (NSAP). These programmes are proposed to become available to poor households in the case of their old age, disabled and maternity throughout country. Apart from this, both central and state governments have taken other initiatives which are meant for poorer sections of society, which are contributory in nature. At first look, the main goals of these programmes appear to reduce economic disparity and poverty, as well as to increase life quality. These schemes are mentions under the following heads: Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAP),

⁴⁵Dorfman, Mark. Pension Patterns in Sub-Saharan Africa, World Bank Group: Social Protection & Labor, Discussion Paper, No. 1503, July. 2015, pp. 2-12.

⁴⁶ "Comprehensive social security in South Africa," March, 2012, Version- 11.9, pp. 22-23.

Universal Health Insurance Scheme (UHS), National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS), Barishtha Pension Bima (BPB), Annapurna Scheme, Janashree Bima Yojana (JBY), New Pension Scheme and Swavalamban Scheme (NPSSS).⁴⁷ Besides, the central government has established many new schemes, for example, Atal Pension Yojana (APY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBJ). The Atal Pension Yojana (APY) is a contributory scheme targeting to endeavor old age income security for unorganized sector labour after their retirement who unfortunately do not have any formal pension scheme in their life. According to 2011 Census, approximately 58 million people in India are covered under various pension systems. A normal pension age for earning related pension benefits from the employees' pension scheme is maximum 58 years and the age of pension for the earning related employees provident fund scheme is maximum 55 years. Individuals, who are covered under various pension schemes, belonging to the organized sector, and are employed by the government, government enterprises, public and private sector enterprise. Such enterprises are controlled and covered by the Employee Provident Fund Organization (EPFO). In India, 88 percent of the workforce is mainly covered by unorganized workers and some workers are covered in organized sectors. Given that the Public Provident Fund (PPF) and Postal Saving Schemes are, by tradition, the foremost long term savings instruments, but these schemes have protected to small section of this population. These schemes which are initiated by the government in 2010-2011, can be considered as an extension of the Swavalamban Scheme. The scheme refers that monthly a minimum fixed pension is between Rs.1000 and Rs. 5000 to any subscribers from the retirement age. Unorganized workers, who are not covered by any family social security plan, are not required to pay income taxes. As a result, the government would

⁴⁷ Singh, Charan, Ayanendu Sanyal, and Kanchan Bharati. "Social Security Schemes: A Case for Universalisation," IIMB-WP N0. 498. December. 2015, pp. 5-11.

contribute Rs. 1000 to the workers for the next five years in 2015. In this context, it is seen that APY has enrolled 19.77 lakh subscribers in 2016 with Rs. 328 core of AUM (Assets under Management) and registers the highest month-on-month subscriber growth at 9.1 percent in January 2016 and asset growth at 25 percent in January 2016 all among NPS (National Pension System) sectors.⁴⁸ As per the Census 2011, in India, it is estimated that more than 2.68 Core persons are disabled which is 2.21 percent of the overall population. It is estimated that 56 percent (1.5 Core) are males and 44 percent (1.18 Core) are females. 1.68 Core disabled persons stay at rural areas and 0.81 Core stay at urban areas. As a signatory body, India enacted the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995. This Act defines disability as locomotor disability, low vision, hearing impairment, blindness, mental retardation, and mental illness, as well as providing education, employment, rehabilitation, nondiscrimination, and social security to those with these conditions. The government encourages the development of a comprehensive social security policy as well as the implementation of a supported pension scheme to just provide financial security to disabled people. The Government of India introduces a pension through the National Social Assistant Programme (NSAP). The National Social Assistant Program (NSAP) is established to provide financial assistance to the elderly, widows, and disabled people. The Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS) is the principal component of the National Social Assistant Programme (NSAP), which offers social benefits to handicapped persons living in poverty between the ages of 18 and 79 who have 80 percent or more disabilities. There has been an age limit criterion for getting the pension. The eligible age of disabled pensioners is only 18

⁴⁸ Rajasekhar, D., Santosh Kesavan, and R. Manjula. *Contributory Pension Schemes for the Poor: Issues and Ways Forward*, The Institute for Social and Economic Change, Working Paper 377, Marchang Reimeingam, 2016, p. 11-13.

years and he/she will obtain the amount Rs. 300 per month. The beneficiaries will receive Rs. 500 per month when he/she will attain the age of 80 years. Similarly, the states in India have launched different schemes to address the minimum amount under such pension schemes.⁴⁹

Health Insurance

In developing countries, more than 2 billion people who live below the extreme poverty line are suffering from inadequate health system affected by inequitable, inefficiency access, inadequate finance and unscrupulous quality services. The World Health Organisation (WHO) 2018, estimates that about more than 150 million of the people suffering from financial catastrophe to access a well design health care system. According to World Health Organisation (WHO), in the developing countries, there had been ample evidence that the access to effective health care is major problem for which millions of people suffer and die from three different types of diseases, such as – acute respiratory infections, malaria, diarrhea and pneumonia. It is anticipated that 15000 children is died within one month of their birth. However the majority of deaths are happening in the first week of their life. Many developing countries including South Africa, Latin America, Ghana, India, Namibia, Costa Rica, Colombia, Indonesia and Peru etc. has taken decision to have a healthy health insurance schemes in recent times.⁵⁰ There has been ample evidence that persons with disabilities face a widespread stigma and excluded from the health service.⁵¹ Along with that the social stigma and discrimination also pose hindrance to the access of health care system. Further, it has been demonstrated that the health care infrastructure facilities along with the knowledge and experience of person involved with such activities are

⁴⁹ National Social Assistant Programme, Programme Guideline, Government of India Ministry of Rural Development, New Delhi, October, 2014, p. 6.

⁵⁰ World Health Statistics: monitoring health for the SDGs, sustainable development goals, World Health Organization 2018, pp.4-5.

⁵¹ *Promoting Inclusion Through Social Protection: The Report on the World Social Situation 2018*, United Nations publication, New York, p-63.

insufficient to provide high quality of health services.⁵² In Africa (in Botswana, Uganda, Namibia, Zambia, Mauritius, Seychelles and Kenya), there has been practice of universal health coverage for persons with disabilities. For persons with disabilities in South Africa, there have been systems of public health facilities including medical insurance facilities. It is found that the health care worker attitudes towards persons with disabilities have been widely mentioned as a barrier in South Africa.⁵³ The path to health coverage in Latin America has a long and diverse history and it is marked as an important milestones. The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights acknowledged the right to health is a human rights issues in 1966, and observed everyone has the right to attain the best possible physical and mental health for himself and his family, including food, housing, clothing, medical care, and social security in the event of old age, widowhood, unemployment, sickness, or disability. The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights also outlines four particular criteria for realizing the rights to adequate health, including (1) reducing newborn mortality and stillbirth rates. (2) Developing in industrial and environmental hygiene. (3) Epidemic, ubiquitous, occupational, and other illnesses treatment, prevention, and control (4) accessing to medical treatment in the case of illness. in Latin America, it has been witnessed that inequality persist among the poor and rich in relation to accessing of a well health care system. The children in Latin America are highly prone to diseases such as diarrhea, pneumonia, respiratory infections, meningitis and other

⁵² Bright, Tess, and Hannah Kuper. "A Systematic Review of Access to General Healthcare Services for People with Disabilities in Low- and Middle-Income Countries," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, vol. 15(9), September 2018, pp. 1879-1885.

⁵³ Sherry, Kate. "Disability and rehabilitation: Essential considerations for equitable, accessible and poverty-reducing health care in South Africa," *South African Health Review*, 2018, vol. 2014-2015, no. 1, Health Systems Trust (HST), pp. 89-99.

infectious diseases.⁵⁴ In the Indian context, more than 70 million persons with disabilities face greater problems in accessing health care services. While the Government of India and the State Governments has introduced several health schemes for persons with disabilities, these schemes and programmes are not adequate enough to address the health problems adequately.⁵⁵ Children with disabilities face huge problems associated with vaccination against diseases such as diphtheria, measles, poliomyelitis and tuberculosis. In addition, Women with disabilities face different kinds of health problems such as pregnancy complication, metabolic disorder and glaucoma etc. Young women with disabilities have very minimal chances of receiving health care facilities. Most of times, they struggle with physical and financial problems for which they are not able to get proper treatment. Visually challenged persons face many problems in accessing health service.⁵⁶ Keeping in mind the issues of access to health services problems, Ministry of social justice and empowerment, Government of India has launched health insurance schemes for persons with disabilities such as- Niramaya health insurance scheme and Swavlamban health insurance scheme. The mission of Niramaya health insurance scheme is to afford same coverage irrespective of the model of disability covered under the National Trust Act, 1999. Under this scheme, disabled people will receive insurance coverage up to Rs.1.0 lakh. All persons with disabilities can access the facilities from any hospitals. On the other hand, the aim of Swavlamban health insurance scheme is to provide affordable Health Insurance to

⁵⁴ Dmytraczenko, Tania, and Gisele Almeida, (ed.). *Toward Universal Health Coverage and Equity in Latin America and the Caribbean Evidence from Selected Countries*, World Bank Group, Pan American Health Organization, World Health Organization, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/ The World Bank 1818 H Street NW, Washington, DC, 20433, 2015, pp. 90-114.

⁵⁵ The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol, United Nations, New York, 2006, p.18.

⁵⁶ Chaudhuri, Leni. “*Disability in India: Issues and Concerns*”, eSSConference Paper, New Delhi, India, Retrieved May 21 (2006): 2018, pp.15-24.

persons with Blindness, Loco-Motor disability, Low Vision, Hearing Impairment, leprosy-Cured, Mental-Retardation and mental illness, and to develop general Health condition of persons with Disabilities. This scheme can be availed by Persons with disabilities aged between 18 years and 65 years with having family annual income of less than Rs. 3 lakhs per annum. It also covers Rs 2 lakhs family floater policies for an affordable premium of Rs 355 per annum to persons with disabilities.⁵⁷

Unemployment Insurance

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) recognises handicapped people's right to work on an equal ground with others under Article 27. This involves the ability to make a living through employment that is freely selected or accepted in a labour market and workplace that is open, inclusive, and accessible to people with disabilities. In many countries, statistics on the employment of disabled individuals is seldom accessible. According to responses to an International Labour Organization (ILO) survey in 2003, 16 of the 111 countries and territories surveyed had no data on employment and disability. Despite recent advancements, the availability of data in low- and middle-income countries remains restricted. And, in many of these countries, a large part of the population works in the informal economy, therefore they are not included in all labour market statistics. They are also not protected by employment laws. Individuals with disabilities have lower employment rates than the general population, according to data from a variety of countries, extending from 30 percent in South Africa and 38 percent in Japan to 81 percent in Switzerland and 92 percent in Malawi. Because non-working persons with impairments frequently do not seek for employment and hence are not

⁵⁷ T, Sivakumar, JW James and Chethan Basavarajappa. "Health insurance schemes for children and adolescents with psychiatric disability," *Journal of Indian Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, January 2017, pp.1-9.

classified as part of the labour force, they are not included in the statistics. In fact, the unemployment rate may not give the full picture of their status in the labour market. Instead, the employment rate is a more often utilised indication of persons with disabilities' labour market position. According to the World Health Survey statistics for 51 nations, men with disabilities have a 52.8 percent employment rate and women with disabilities have a 19.6 percent work rate, paralleled to 64.9 percent for non-disabled men and 29.9 percent for non-disabled women. According to a recent research by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), working-age people with disabilities face considerable labour market disadvantages and poorer employment outcomes than working-age people without disabilities in 27 countries. Their employment rate was almost half that of people without disabilities, at 44 percent on average (75 percent). Persons without disabilities were 2.5 times more likely to be inactive (49 percent and 20 percent, respectively). People with various disabilities have a wide range of work rates, with those with mental health issues or intellectual impairments (28, 44) having the lowest employment rates. When compared to other employees, it was shown that those with mental health issues had more difficulty getting into the labour market and making a living. According to another study, persons with intellectual disabilities are three to four times less likely to be employed than those without disabilities, and they are more likely to be unemployed for longer periods of time. They are far less likely to be employed competitively and more likely to work in segregated environments.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ World Report on Disability, World Health Organisation, The World Bank, 2011, pp. 235-238.

Chapter –II

Constitutional and Legal Provision of Social Security for Visually challenged Persons in India with Reference to the State of West Bengal

Chapter –II

Constitutional and Legal Provision of Social Security for Visually challenged Persons in India with Reference to the State of West Bengal

In this Chapter emphasis is given upon two specific dimensions relating to the empowerment of the vulnerable sections of the society including the disabled people through the broader framework of constitutional and legal protection. The first dimension is about various constitutional provisions and legal enactments under the control of the Government of India to empower the vulnerable sections of the society including the disabled people. The second dimension is relating to specific legislative enactments and initiatives of the government of West Bengal to empower the vulnerable sections including the disabled people in West Bengal. The constitution of India is one of the longest written constitution in the world. It is adopted in 1949, after signed by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the President of the Constituent Assembly, and came into force from 1950.⁵⁹ The Preamble of Indian Constitution starts with WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a Sovereign, Socialist Secular Democratic Republic and to secure to all its citizens: Justice, social, economic and political; Liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; Equality of status and of opportunities;

⁵⁹ Basu, D. D: *Introduction to the Constitution of India*, Lexis Nexis Butterworths Wadhwa, Nagpur, 2012, p. 19.

and to promote among them all; Fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation.⁶⁰ The Preamble of the Constitution of India acknowledges and emphasises the need for empowering the citizens of India through the noble ideas of Democracy, Socialism, Sovereignty and all form of justices. The Preamble of the constitution of India while elaborating the basic objectives and outlooks of the constitution does not make any differences among the citizens on account of any form of distinctions, such as caste, colour, sex and physical and mental distinction. Therefore, the constitutional provisions of the Liberty, Equality, Justice, and Fraternity are meant for all classes of citizens irrespective of the social, political, economic, and physical status, the basic objectives of which is to establish an inclusive society tied with the spirit of integrity, fraternity and assuring dignity to all citizens in the society. Similarly, the provisions of Fundamental Rights under Part III of the Indian constitution try to establish political democracy by providing all the basic requirements of political upliftment of the citizens under a democratic framework. Further the provisions of the Directive principle of the state policy under Part IV of the constitution lays special emphasis on socio-economic empowerment of the citizens, thereby ensuring socio-economic democracy in India. The down strata or the down trodden sections of the society including the disabled under the special provisions of the fundamental rights and the directive principles of the state policy are liable to access the public institutions, public resorts, the use of wells, tanks, bathing, Ghats, temples which are maintained out of the Unions and the State funds meant for public purposes.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Pylee, M.V. *An Introduction to the Constitution of India*, Vikas Publishing House PVT LTD, New Delhi, India, 2013, p.27.

⁶¹ Ghosh, Peu. *Indian Government and Politics*, PHI Learning Private Limited, New Delhi, India, 2018, p. 60.

Provisions of Fundamental Rights

The provisions of Fundamental Rights under Indian Constitution are meant for Political Empowerment of Citizens and to establish political democracy where all citizens irrespective of any distinction enjoys the benefits of the political rights. The political rights of the citizens of India are protected on the law and any kinds of violation to their rights are subject to judicial intervention. In this context, there are certain articles within (Article 14-Article 32) provide provisions for political empowerment of citizens residing within territory of India. Under the provisions of fundamental rights the state is empowered to provide certain special initiatives for the vulnerable sections of the society under the umbrella of 'protective discrimination'. Hence, the Union Government and State government are empowered to make specific legislation to address the grievances of the vulnerable sections of the society.

Article 14 of the Constitution of India speaks about equality before law and equal protection in the eyes of law. Therefore, the state shall not deny any persons living in the territory of India equality before law and equal protection on the eyes of the law. However, the state can make special arrangement under protective discrimination, to address the grievances of the vulnerable sections of the society including disabled people.⁶²

Article 15(1) of the Indian Constitution prohibits discrimination against citizens based on race, religion, caste, class, sex, birthplace, or any combination of these factors. *Article 15(2)* of the Constitution of India also ensures that no citizen in the territory of India shall be subjected to any kind of discriminations in order to access public restaurants, hotels, shops, the usage of wells, bathing Ghats, tanks, pavements, streets and public resort places which are exclusively or

⁶² The Constitution of India, Government of India, Ministry of Law and Justice (Legislative Department), New Delhi, India, 2015, p. 6.

relatively maintained and restricted by government funds or equally devoted to the usage of the persons with disabilities along with the common public.⁶³ Although the Government has taken various policies and provisions in order to alleviate the severe problems experienced by persons with disabilities, these rules and regulations, and provisions still now are not considered and implemented properly. It is seen that persons with disabilities still now gigantically have been suffering and neglecting from their access to shops, public restaurants, hotels, roads, and places of public resort etc. and have been experiencing from high risk of severe violence.

Article 16 of the Constitution of India provides for equality of opportunities in matters of public employment or appointment. The state shall not make any distinctions on account of caste, religion, birthplaces, race, sex, place of residence etc. to avail the opportunities of the public employment or appointment. Here the state is empowered to provide specific legislation for employment of vulnerable sections in different state funded institutions by providing them reservation to access such opportunities.⁶⁴ However, there is several employment barriers have been experienced by the persons with disabilities in the society. They immensely face with various negative attitudes stemmed from misunderstanding, ignorance and stereotype beliefs etc. Similarly they are also left out from a number of Labour Market and Multinational Corporation due to their low literacy level, lack of daily living skills, and poor knowledge of English, lack of access to skills and technology etc.

Article 17 of the constitution of India talks about the abolition of untouchability and its practices in any form. To realize the basic objectives of Article 17, the government of India enacted the untouchability Offence Act 1955 which is renamed as the protection of civil rights

⁶³ Austin, Granville. *The Indian Constitution Cornerstone of a Nation*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, India, 2016, p. 64.

⁶⁴ The Constitution of India, Government of India, Ministry of Law and Justice (Legislative Department), New Delhi, India, 2019, pp. 7-8.

(1955) in 1974. The government of India prescribes constitutional and legal framework to protect article 17 of the constitution by providing the procedural and substantial aspects of legal and constitution interventions. The basic objective is abolition of untouchability and its practice in different form impacting to vulnerable sections of the society.⁶⁵

Article 19 of the constitution of India provides six basic fundamental rights to the citizens of India. These are freedom of speech and expression, assemble peaceably and without arms, form associations or unions (or co-operative societies), move freely throughout the territory of India, reside and settle in any part of the territory of India, and practise any profession, or carry on any occupation, trade or business. The state and state funded institutions are not expected to provide certain hindrances in the way of selecting the nature of occupation and professions against the will and interest of the citizens with reference to the vulnerable sections of the society. However, the state is expected to provide certain atmosphere and facilities conducive to their professions, occupations and their residences.⁶⁶

Article 21 of the constitution of India deals with the Right to life and personal liberty. Article 21 is not only considered as the most fundamental right but also the basic human right having both political and civil implications. According to Article 21 of the constitution of India, no citizens shall be deprived of their life and personal liberty as approved by the law.⁶⁷ The state has both moral and legal obligations to protect the life and personal liberty of the citizens without making any discrimination on the basis of socio-political status, economic and cultural practices and physical and mental distinction. The basic objective of this article lies with the spirit of

⁶⁵ Chitkara, M.G. *Ambedkar and Social Justice*, A P H Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, India, 2002, pp. 154-156.

⁶⁶ The Constitution of India (As on 31st July, 2018), Government of India, Ministry of Law and Justice Legislative Department, p. 26.

⁶⁷ The Constitution of India, Government of India, Ministry of Law and Justice (Legislative Department), New Delhi, India, 2019, pp. 24-33.

individual's life with the aspect of dignity in every sphere of their social existence. This article is meant for all sections of the society including the vulnerable sections. The present context witnessed suffering of the persons with disabilities specifically relating to their human dignity and self-respect and assertion.

Under the 86th constitutional Amendment Act, 2002 a fundamental basic right has been provided by implanting *Article 21A*. It provides the state to furnish free and compulsory education for all the children in the age group of 6 to 14 years.⁶⁸ The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 lucidly highlights that every children of the age group of 6 to 14 years shall obtain a fundamental right to free and compulsory education in school till completion of elementary education.⁶⁹ The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 directs that Government shall make sure that every disability children has access to free education until they reach at the age of eighteen years and also furnish to ameliorate the integrated school and special school for students with disabilities.⁷⁰ It is found that persons with disabilities enormously face physical barriers to educational services such as lack of inaccessible transportation system, wheelchair, ramps and toilets or elevators, inaccessible washrooms and door handles in school building.

Article 23 of the Constitution of India embargoes that there can be no traffic in human beings, beggar and all other forms of forced labour is totally prohibited and made punishable in

⁶⁸ Kishore Sharma, Brij. *Introduction to the Constitution of India*, PHI Learning Private Limited, New Delhi, India, 2011, p. 108.

⁶⁹ The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, The Extraordinary Gazette of India, Ministry of Law and Justice Legislative Department, New Delhi, India, p.3.

⁷⁰ The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, published in part II, Section 1 of the extraordinary Gazette of India, Ministry of Law, Justice and Company Affairs (Legislative Department), New Delhi, India, 1st January 1996, p. 14.

accordance with law.⁷¹ Article 23 prohibits the practices of trafficking in any form and the practices forced labour in India. Employment of children in any hazardous factories and industries are prohibited with a view to lead a decent life, full of social dignity and acceptance. But the situation of the vulnerable sections who are employed in beggar and trafficking work are worsening day by day.

Article 24 of the Constitution of India is oriented to encompass the target mention under article 23 of the Indian constitution.⁷²

Article 25 of the Constitution of India provides freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion, subject to public order, morality and health and to the other provisions. All persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right to freely profess, practise and propagate any religion he or she likes.

Article 26 of the constitution of India talks about freedom to manage religious affairs, subject to public order, morality and health. Every religious denomination or any section thereof shall have the right to establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purposes, to manage its own affairs in matters of religion, to own and acquire movable and immovable property, and to administer such property in accordance with law.

Article 28 of the constitution of India ensures freedom as to attendance at religious instruction or religious worship in certain educational institutions. No religious instruction shall be provided in any educational institution wholly maintained out of State funds.⁷³

⁷¹ Kashyap C. Subhash. *Our Constitution An Introduction to India's Constitution and Constitutional Law*, National Book Trust, India, 2011, p. 140.

⁷² Kishore Sharma, Brij. *Introduction to the Constitution of India*, PHI Learning Private Limited, New Delhi, India, 2011, p. 110.

⁷³ Bakshi, P.M. *The Constitution of India*, Universal Law Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, India, 2009, pp. 62-65.

Article 38 of the constitution of India ensures to secure a social order for the promotion of welfare of the people. The State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may a social order in which socio-economic and political justice, and the idea of individual dignity will prevail. The State shall, in particular, strive to minimise the inequalities in income, social status.⁷⁴

Article 45 of the Constitution of India directs that state to furnish free and compulsory primary education for all children including the disabled until they arrive at the age group of fourteen years.⁷⁵

Article 47 of the constitution of India ensures that the state has important role to promote the nutrition level, living standard and the upliftment of public health system. The state shall take adequate measures to prevent from the consumption of intoxicating drugs and drinks which are considered as detrimental and injurious to health.⁷⁶

The Legislative Framework for the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The Government of India has taken initiatives through its legislative framework or legislative enactment to protect and promote the interest of the disabled people affecting the socio-economic and political status of the disabled sections of the society. The various initiatives in this regards are of the followings:

⁷⁴ The Constitution of India [As on 31st July, 2018], Government of India, Ministry of Law and Justice Legislative Department, p. 33.

⁷⁵ Bakshi, P.M. *The Constitution of India*, Universal Law Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, India, 2009, p. 90.

⁷⁶ The Gazette of India Extraordinarily published by Authority, New Delhi, India, Saturday, Nov.26, 1949, p. 2367.

The Mental Health Act, 1987

Mental Health Act was initiated by government of India in 1987. Later on it has converted into the Indian Lunacy Act of 1992. The legislation provides a comprehensive plan and programmes relating to the treatment and care of mentally ill people. This Act also envisages better facilities to address individual's development to face with the problems associated with various contingencies of the disabled persons. In addition, the Act was immensely beneficial so far as it brings a major shift in the attitudinal change of the people of the society towards the disabled people. Further, the government's approach towards the issues of disability, in particular, the issues of mental illness got momentum with passing of the Indian Lunacy Act of 1992. This Act affirmed that no stigma should be attached to such illness because it is curable when proper diagnosis would be taken into account at the earlier stage. It treats mental health as diseases which can be treated like other diseases. The purpose of the Act is to normalise and standardise admission to psychiatric hospitals or nursing homes for mentally ill people who lack sufficient understanding to have treatment on a charitable basis, as well as to protect the rights of such people while they are detained. This Act gave more emphasis on the societal environment and family affection along with medical treatment to improve the condition of mental ill person. As per this Act, the Indian Government is empowered to guide and control the mechanism of the health care system including the nature and functioning of the psychiatric hospitals and nursing homes along with provision for their standardized norms. The Act facilitated the establishment of central institutions for mental health facilities at the union level and state officials for providing services to mentally ill persons in various provinces.⁷⁷ The

⁷⁷ The Mental Health Act, 1987, The Gazette of India Extraordinary, Part-II, Section-1, Published by Authority, Ministry of law and justice (Legislative Department), May, 22, 1987., New Delhi, India, pp. 2-22.

various important provisions of the Act includes- First, A mentally ill person has the right to be admitted, treated and taken care of in psychiatric hospital or psychiatric nursing home established or maintained by government or any other person for the treatment and care of mentally ill persons. Second, mentally ill persons under treatment shall not be laid open to any indignity-physical or mental. Nor can such mentally ill person be used for purposes of research except for his/her diagnosis or treatment or with his/ her consent. Third, mentally ill persons who are availing the facilities of remuneration, pension, gratuity or any allowance from the Indian government are to be protected. The person who is taking the responsibility of the mentally ill person in his/her families is entitled to receive such payment subject to certificate issued by the district magistrate in this regards. Fourth, a mentally ill person shall be permitted to access the facilities of a medical and legal practitioner to justify the injustice made to them in the different form and magnitudes.⁷⁸

The Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992

The Rehabilitation Council of India Act is the first piece of legislation related to special education for the disabled people. The Act was passed by Indian parliament in 1992 and it came into force with effect from 1993 to legalize and standardize the training of rehabilitation authorities and maintenance of a central rehabilitation register. The Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1993 was amended in 2002 to incorporate the additional responsibilities of monitoring the training of rehabilitation authorities and personnel, as well as encouraging research in rehabilitation.⁷⁹ The major functions of the Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 2002 provided for the basic qualifications required for the rehabilitation authorities and professionals and to

⁷⁸ Singh, J P, Manoj k Dash. *Disability Development in India*, Kanishka Publishers, Distributors, New Delhi, 2006, p. 30.

⁷⁹ Baquer, Ali, Sharma Anjali. "Disability: Challenges Vs Responses," Concerned Action Now, New Delhi, India and Global College Press, Arizona, USA, 2006, p. 338.

maintain a system of central rehabilitation register for authorities and professionals involved in task of the rehabilitation activities.⁸⁰

UN Standard Rules on Equality of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, 1993

The United Nations (UN) standard Rules state that the term ‘Disability’ identified plethora of different functional limitations of disabled people which can occur in different places and situations. Accordingly, the status of disability is owing out of physical condition, intellectual or sensory impairment condition, medical conditions or mental illness condition. Such conditions are both permanent and transitory in nature. The Act defines Handicapped as a injury or limitation of opportunities to participate in the community life on an equal footing with others. Therefore, the objective of this Act is to bring the disabled section to the limelight by providing the health care and social support.⁸¹

The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995

The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights, and Full Participation) Act, 1995 passed by parliament in the winter session of 1995, is a milestone regarding the success of disability movement in India. The beginning of this Act marked a watershed in the quality of life of all disabled people in the country and contains a variety of progressive steps for both preventive and promotional aspects such as provisions for education, vocational training, employment, reservation, manpower development, research, creation of

⁸⁰ The Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992 (No. 34 of 1992), The Gazette of India Extraordinarily Part II Section 1, published by Authority, Wednesday, September 2, 1992, New Delhi, India, pp. 1-15.

⁸¹ Ahmed, Rumi. *Rights of Persons with Disability in India- A critical Legal Analysis*, White Falcon Publishing, New Delhi, India, 2015, pp. 98-99.

barrier-free environment, unemployment allowance for persons with disabilities, rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, special insurance scheme for the disabled employees.⁸²

The basic features of this Act cover with number of variables such as-

- To spell out the responsibility of the state towards prevention of disabilities and protection of disabled people's rights in access to education, employment, health, training and rehabilitation.
- To create barrier free-environment for persons with disabilities.
- To remove all discrimination of disabled people in the sharing of development benefits.
- To counteract any situation of abuse and exploitation of disabled people.
- To lay down a strategies for a comprehensive development of programmes and services for equal opportunities of opportunities for persons with disabilities.
- To make special provision for integration of disabled people with the social mainstream.⁸³

There are 14 chapters and 74 clauses in this Act. The first chapter of the Act addresses seven forms of disabilities, including blindness, low vision, leprosy-cured, hearing impairment, locomotor disability, mental retardation and mental illness. The criteria of categorising of each type of disability are enshrined in the respective definitions of concerned disability group. A Person with Disability is defined as someone who has at least 40 percent of any handicap, as

⁸² Mohapatra, C. S. "Disability management in India: Challenges and Commitments." *Indian Institute of Public Administration*, New Delhi, India, 2004, pp. 294-295.

⁸³ Mehrotra, Nilika. "Disability Rights Movements in India: Politics and Practice," *Economic & Political Weekly*, vol xlv no. 6, (February 5, 2011), p. 79.

determined by a medical authority. The different aspects of disability are mentioned under the following heads.

‘Blindness’- the condition of blindness refers to:

- Total loss of vision.
- With corrective lenses, visual acuity in the better eye does not exceed 6/60 or 20/200 (Snellen).
- Limitation of the range of vision subtending an angle of 20 degree or worse.

‘Low vision’- the condition of low vision is defined as:

Even after treatment or regular refractive correction, a person who uses or is potentially capable of using vision for the planning or execution of a task with an appropriate assistive technology has visual impairment.

‘Leprosy-cured’- the condition of leprosy- cured refers to:

- Loss of sensation in the hands or feet, as well as sensory loss and paresis in the eye and eyelids but with no manifest deformity.
- Manifest deformity and paresis yet with enough movement in their hands and feet to enable them to engage in typical economic activity.
- Extreme physical deformity as well as advanced age which prevent him from working in any productive capacity, and the term "leprosy cured" shall be interpreted accordingly.

‘Hearing impairment’- the condition of hearing impairment is defined as:

- Loss of 60 decibels or more in the better ear in the conversational range of frequencies.

‘Locomotor disability’- the condition of locomotor disability refers to:

- Disability of the bones, joints or muscles leading to substantial restriction of the movement of the limbs; and Cerebral palsy.

‘Mental Retardation’- the condition of mental retardation is defined as:

- A condition of arrested or incomplete development of mind of persons, specially characterized by sub-normality of intelligence.

‘Mental Illness’- the condition of mental illness is defined as:

- Any mental disorder that is not mental retardation.⁸⁴

Prevention and Early Detection of Disabilities

Despite their limited economical affords and development, the Government at the union, state and local level try to minimize the occurrence of disability through certain preventive measures such measures are involved with the following activities.

- The cause of disability can be undertaken through surveys, investigations and research concerning the cause of occurrence of disabilities.
- Promoting various preventive measures to address the issues of disabilities.
- Screening all the children at least once in a year for identifying ‘at risk case’.
- Providing staff at the primary health centers for assisting.
- Imparting sponsor awareness campaign to disseminate information about hygiene, health and sanitation.
- Approaching the issues relating to pre-natal, perinatal, and post-natal care of the mother and child.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ PWD ACT, 1995, The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and full Participation) Act, 1995, published in Part II, Section 1 of the Extraordinary Gazette of India Ministry of Law, Justice and Company Affairs (Legislative Department) New Delhi, India, the 1st January, 1996, pp. 3-5.

⁸⁵ Dhawan, Sikha. *Handbook of Disability and Rehabilitation*, Arise Publishers & Distributors, New Delhi, India, 2011, p. 86.

Right to Free Education

The Governments and the local authorities are under obligation to discharge the following functions and responsibilities.

- Ensuring the rights to free education for children with disabilities in in integrated schools or special schools.
- Promoting appropriate transport facilities, removal of architectural barriers, restricting of curriculum and modifications in the examination system for the benefit of every children with disabilities.
- Providing free books, scholarship, uniform and other learning materials to children with disabilities enrolled in the school.
- Providing the equipment with vocational training facilities for children with disabilities.
- Establishing adequate number of teachers' training institutions and support the national institutes to promote teachers' training programmes so that momentous trained manpower will be available for integrate and special schools for children with disabilities.
- Provisions for non-formal education for disabled children.⁸⁶

Employment

The Government is obelized to provide

- 3 percent reserved seats for people with impairments, with 1 percent reserved seats for people with blindness or limited vision, hearing impairment, and locomotor disability/cerebral palsy. But, it is seen that persons with mental retardation are not covered.

⁸⁶ Baquer, Ali, Sharma Anjali. "Disability: Challenges Vs Responses," Concerned Action Now, New Delhi, India and Global College Press, Arizona, USA, 2006, pp. 436-439.

- Provision for 3 percent reservation in the Government educational institutes for persons with disabilities.
- Formulation of numerous programmes to ensure the employment of people with disabilities, such as training and welfare services, the relaxing of upper age limits, health and safety measures, and the creation of a non-discriminatory environment in places where people with disabilities work.
- Ensuring provision of promotion to higher grade with all economic benefits.⁸⁷

Affirmative Action and Non-discrimination

The Government's affirmative actions and policy of non-discrimination cover with the following items.

- Making schemes to provide aids in favour of persons with disabilities such as house, business, special recreational school, research centers and factories by entrepreneurs with disabilities.
- Providing facilities to access public building, rail compartments, buses and aircrafts to persons with disabilities.
- Provisions for wheelchairs for people with disabilities to be used in all public places and washing rooms.
- Creating barrier free environment for persons with disabilities by providing ramps facilities in hospital, primary health centres, other medical care and rehabilitation institutions.
- Making braille symbols and auditory signals in elevators or lifts.

⁸⁷ Chaudhuri, Leni. *"Disability in India: Issues and Concerns,"* eSSConference Paper, New Delhi, India, Retrieved May 21 (2006): 2018, p. 29.

- Provision for the installation of auditory signals at red lights and engrave on the surface of the zebra crossing in the public roads, and also engrave on the edges of railway platforms for visual challenged persons.

Research and Manpower Development

The Governments and local authorities are obliged to provide the following facilities.

- Promoting and sponsor research, inter alia in the areas of prevention of persons with disabilities, rehabilitation including community-based rehabilitation, development of assistive devices and job identification.
- Granting financial assistance to universities, other institutes of higher learning, professional organisations, and non-governmental research units or institutions for the purpose of conducting research in the areas of special education, rehabilitation, and manpower development.

Social Security

The Government and local authorities under the Act of welfare perform the task of

- Providing the financial assistance to Non-Government Organizations for rehabilitation of persons with disabilities.
- Affording suitable insurance coverage, compensation, loans and maintenance of dependents etc. for the assistance of the government employees with disabilities.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ PWD ACT, 1995, The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and full Participation) Act, 1995, published in Part II, Section 1 of the Extraordinary Gazette of India Ministry of Law, Justice and Company Affairs (Legislative Department) New Delhi, India, the 1st January, 1996, pp. 22-31.

Persons with Disabilities Rules, 1996

Persons with Disabilities Rules are deliberation in exercising of the powers discussed by sub section(1) and (2) of sections 73 of the Persons with Disabilities(Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 (1 of 1996). The objectives of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 1996 encompass the following agendas.

- disability certificates issued by a Medical Board properly established by the Central and State Governments for persons with disabilities (locomotor/visual including low vision/ hearing and speech disability, mental retardation, and leprosy cured). A Medical Board, comprised of at least three expert doctors, is established by each state government. After examining the body of patient, the Medical Board shall provide a certificate if there is any chance of transform in the dimension of disability. And the Medical Board shall mention the period of validity in the certificate, in cases where there is any chance of variation in the degree of disability.
- Computation of vacancies in the Special Employment Exchange for Persons with Disabilities in Group A, B, C, and D posts determined by the Government. The vacancies are reported to the appropriate special employment exchange in writing, with the following information provided for each type of vacancy, specifically, the employer's name and address, telephone number, nature of the position, qualifications, age limits, and place of employment. As per provision, vacancies are to be advertised at least thirty days before the date on which candidates are evaluated and interviews or examinations are held to fill the vacancy. Vacancies for posts of technical and scientific nature with a basic pay of Rs. 1400/- or more per month by the government under this Act. Special

Employment Exchange office is to be notified by the Central Government in its Official Gazette.⁸⁹

The National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999

The National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999, under sub-section (1) of section (3), addresses a widespread need among families seeking a sustainable development for their disabled children. The major objectives of the Act address the following prerequisite needed for the disabled people.

- Enabling and empowering persons with disabilities to live as independently and with dignity as possible within the community to which they belong.
- Strengthening the facilities to provide support to persons with disabilities to live within their families.
- Promoting measures for the care and protection of persons with disabilities in the event of death of their parent and guardian.
- Extending organizational support to provide need-based services during the period of crisis in the family of disabled.⁹⁰

National Policy for Persons with Disabilities Act, 2005

The National Policy for Persons with Disabilities Act, 2005 which took effect in February 2006, underlined that people with disabilities are one of the most vulnerable people

⁸⁹ Persons with Disabilities Rules, 1996, The Gazette of India Extraordinary Part II - Section 3 Published By Authority Ministry of Welfare, 31st December, 1996, New Delhi, India, pp. 1-11.

⁹⁰ The National Trust Act, 1999 (No. 44 of 1999) Rules & Regulations, National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities (Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India). pp. 4-9.

in India. It aims to create barrier free environment that will provide them equal opportunities and protection of life and full participation in societal mainstream. Physical, Educational development and Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities are discussed under the National Policy for Persons with Disabilities Act, 2005. This Act also emphasises barrier-free environments, rehabilitation measures for women and children with disabilities, employment, early detection and intervention, disability certificate issuance, social security and research, human resource development and counseling, and medical rehabilitation.⁹¹

Persons with Disabilities Act, 2011

Persons with Disabilities Act, 2011 came into force on 2011 by the Central Government. The main objectives of the Act are to recognize inner capacity exercised by all persons with disabilities and make provision for support where it is required and to acknowledge the special vulnerabilities of children with disabilities so that they are treated as equal basis with other children. Broadly, this Act deals with the following measures.

- Lifting barriers with respect to awareness raising that is most important because both state and civil society recognize that disability is an integral part of human condition and also dismantle the stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices which prevent the full participation of persons with disabilities. This Act focuses upon the stigma reduction programmes, mass education campaigns, use of information technology, and sensitization workshop on disability rights.

⁹¹ National Policy for Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, 10th February 2006, New Delhi, India, pp. 3-15.

- Accessibility to all aspects of life, including physical barriers, transportation, information and communication technology systems, railways, toilets, parking spaces, elevators in both urban and rural locations.
- Ensuring Human resource development programmes for the social, economic and political rights for the disabled. The purposes of the human resource development programmes are to make provision for adequate numbers of professionals which are available in providing service for persons with disabilities at state, central, local and panchayat levels, and to induct the all education courses/ programmes for school, college and university teachers, doctors, nurses, social welfare officers, rural development officers, Aasha workers, Anganwadi workers engineers, other professionals and community workers.
- Ensuring equality before law and equal protection of law to prohibit discrimination on any ground on the equal basis with others.
- Provision for a system of inclusive education having the ideals of equal protection and equal benefits, provisions for special allowance, books, reasonable accommodation of the requirements for all girls with disabilities.
- Ensuring rights to work and employment for women and girls with disabilities. The Government is empowered to take necessary initiatives for protection of the women and girls with disabilities to ensure discrimination-free recruitment, promotion and other related matters. This Act also provide reasonable accommodation requirement, support mechanisms, training and assistance for skill development, vocational training for women and girls with disabilities in rural and urban areas.

- Ensuring the Rights to access the health care facilities of women with disabilities including family planning programmes, in accessible environment without any discrimination on the basis of sex in rural and urban areas.⁹²

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 was passed by parliament on 28 December, 2016 after getting the consent of the President of India. This Act emphasises equal opportunities, full participation and inclusion in society, accessibility, employment, non-discrimination, equality between men and women, respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities, support for children's evolving capacities, and support for children's rights to maintain their identities. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 identified the following 21 types of persons with disabilities.

‘Blindness’ - the condition of blindness is defined as:

- a situation in which a person's eyesight is completely lost; visual acuity in the better eye is less than 10/200 (Snellen) with best feasible correction; and the field of vision is limited to an angle of less than 10 degrees.

‘Low Vision’ - the condition of low vision is defined as:

- a condition where a person has visual acuity not exceeding 6/18 or less than 20/60 up to 3/60 or up to 10/200 (Snellen) in the better eye with best possible correction; or limitation of the field of vision subtending an angle of less than 40 degree up to 10 degree.

⁹² Persons with Disabilities Act, 2011, Working Draft (9th February, 2011), Centre for Disabilities Studies, Hyderabad, India, pp. 4-37.

‘Leprosy Cured Person’- the condition of leprosy cured person is defined as:

- a person who has lost sensation in their hands or feet, as well as loss of sensation and paresis in their eyes and eye lids, but no manifest deformity; a person who has manifest deformity and paresis but enough movement in their hands and feet to engage in typical economic activities.

Hearing Impairment (deaf and hard of hearing) - the condition of hearing impairment is defined as:

- Hearing Impairment including Deaf and hard of Hearing people, where Deaf refers to someone who has a 70DB hearing loss in speech frequencies in both ears; A hard of hearing person, on the other hand, has a 60DB to 70DB hearing loss in both ears in speech frequencies.

‘Speech and Language Disability’- the condition of speech and language disability is defined as:

- a permanent handicap caused by a disorder, such as laryngectomy or aphasia that affects one or more aspects of speech and language because of organic or neurological condition.

‘Locomotor Disability’- the condition of locomotor disability is defined as:

- a person’s inability to execute distinctive activities associated with movement and objects resulting from affliction of musculoskeletal or nervous system.

‘Dwarfism’- the condition of dwarfism is defined as:

- a medical or genetic disorder that causes an adult height of less than 4 feet 10 inches (147 cm).

‘Muscular Dystrophy’- the condition of muscular dystrophy is defined as:

- a group of hereditary genetic muscle disease that weakens the muscle to move the human body.

‘Acid Attack Victim’- the condition of acid attack victim is defined as:

- a person who is disfigured due to violent assaults by throwing of acid or similar corrosive substance.

‘Intellectual Disability’- the condition of intellectual disability is defined as:

- a disorder marked by considerable limitations in both intellectual functioning (reasoning, learning, problem solving).

‘Specific Learning Disabilities’- the condition of specific learning disabilities is defined as:

- a heterogeneous group of condition wherein there is a problem processing spoken or written, language, which can lead to difficulties comprehending, speaking, reading, writing, spelling, or doing mathematical calculations and also includes perceptual impairments, dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, and developmental aphasia are some of the conditions that fall under this category.

‘Autism Spectrum Disorder’- the condition of autism spectrum disorder is defined as:

- a Neuro-developmental disorder that affects a person's capacity to understand and communicate with others and often manifests in the first three years of life.

‘Mental Illness’- the condition of mental illness is defined as:

- a extensive disorder of intellectual, temper, observation, orientation, or memory that grossly weakens judgment, capability, behaviour to make out reality or aptitude to meet the normal demands of life.

‘Chronic Neurological conditions’- the condition of chronic neurological is defined as: Multiple Sclerosis and Parkinson’s disease.

‘Multiple Sclerosis’- the condition of multiple sclerosis is defined as:

- an inflammatory, nervous system in which myelin sheaths around the axons of nerve cells of the brain and spinal cord are damaged , leading to demyelination and affecting the ability of nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord to communicate with each other.

‘Parkinson’s disease’- the condition of Parkinson’s disease is defined as:

- a progressive nervous system disease characterised by tremor, muscular rigidity, and slow, imprecise movement that primarily affects middle-aged and elderly people and is caused by degeneration of the brain's basal ganglia and a lack of the neurotransmitter dopamine.

‘Hemophilia’- the condition of hemophilia is defined as:

- an inheritable disorder that only affects men but is passed down through the generations by women to their male children, characterised by a loss or impairment of blood's normal clotting power, as a result of which a minor can lead to fatal bleeding.

‘Thalassemia’- the condition of thalassemia is defined as:

- Inherited disorder characterized by reduced or absent amounts of hemoglobin.

‘Sickle Cell Disease’- the condition of sickle cell disease is defined as:

- Chronic anemia, painful events, and a variety of consequences owing to tissue and organ damage are all symptoms of this hemolytic disorder.

‘Multiple Disabilities’- the condition of multiple disabilities refers to Deaf Blindness.

‘Deaf Blindness’- the condition of deaf blindness is defined as:

- a disorder in which a person's hearing and vision impairments combine to cause severe communication, developmental, and educational difficulties.

The Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 points out that the Government shall guarantee that persons with disabilities have the rights to enjoy of equality, life with dignity and respect for his/her integrity equally with others. Special procedures must be implemented by the appropriate government and local authorities to ensure that all women and children with disabilities have the fundamental right to freely express their opinions on all issues. The role of police who receives a complaint or otherwise knows regarding abuse, violence, or exploitation of persons with disabilities must inform the aggrieved person of his or her right to seek protection under section (2). The police shall also inform about particulars of nearest institution or organization working for the rehabilitation of the persons with disabilities; the right to legal aid; the right to take a complaint file. Persons with disabilities must have equal legal capacity on an equal basis with other in all aspects of life, the right to equal recognition before the law, the right to possess and inherit movable and immovable property, as well as govern their financial affairs. Children with disabilities must be provided with inclusive education in all educational institutions funded or acknowledged by the government and local authorities. The government must ensure that education to people who are blind or deaf, an adequate number of teacher training institutions to train and employ educators, including teachers with disabilities who are qualified in sign language and Braille, as well as teachers who have been educated to teach children with intellectual disabilities. The government will develop required plans and initiatives to secure and promote the inclusion of people with disabilities in society. The government would also

implement appropriate healthcare measures, social security, insurance schemes, and rehabilitation programmes for people with disabilities.⁹³

The Legislative Framework for the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in West Bengal

The West Bengal Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Rules, 1999

The West Bengal Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Rules, 1999 came into force on Saturday, July 17, 1999. This Act covers with the following agendas.

➤ Disability Certificate Issued

A medical board is empowered to issue a disability certificate to a person who has multiple disabilities. A medical board consists of at least two members, one of whom acts as Chairperson and the other acts as a specialist for assessing the specific type of disability. The superintendents of all Government Medical College Hospital, all District Hospitals, all Sub Divisional Hospital and the Block Medical Officer of Health or his equivalent at the Block level act as the Chairperson of such Medical Boards. The Medical Board provides a disability certificate those persons who are actual disabled. Each person with disabilities is to be entitled to receive an identification card issued by the Medical Board to get facilities and concessions in railway, buses or other mode of transport owned by Government and non-Government.

⁹³ The Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, The Gazette of India Extraordinary Part II, Section1, published by Authority, Wednesday, December 28, 2016, New Delhi, India, pp. 1-35.

Disability identity card is valid for a period of ten years with effect from the date of issue and as per medical rules and norms; this identity card has to be renewed within six months.

➤ **Employment**

Vacancies for disabled people in Group A, B, C, and D are notified from the Special Employment Exchange according to the State Government's instructions published in the official gazette. The notification of Vacancy posts is sent to the concerned Vocational Rehabilitation Centre for Handicapped. The Vacancies are notified in writing to the appropriate Special Employment Exchange by following particulars, such as- name and residential address of employer; telephone number of employer; nature and number of vacancy in Orthopedically Handicapped, Visual Handicapped, and Hearing Handicapped.⁹⁴

The West Bengal Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2017

The West Bengal Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2017 deals with the following matters.

➤ **State Committee for Research on Disability**

This State Committees for Research on Disability at the State level are to consist of distinguished person having an immense experience on research work in the field of natural science/ social science/ Medical science to be designated as Ex-officio Chairperson. Five persons, especially disabled people from registered Non-Government Organization working on disability shall have to be selected by the State Government and three persons having vast experiences in the area of Law and Legal Research. This Rule emphasises the fact that no

⁹⁴ West Bengal Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Rules, 1999, The Calcutta Gazette Extraordinarily published by Authority, Saturday, July 17, 1999, pp. 1-9.

persons with disabilities shall be a subject of research except when the research involves physical impact on his body.

➤ **Certificate of Registration of Institution**

An Institution for Persons with Disabilities may propose an application in prescribed form along with supporting documents such as documentary evidence of work in the field of disability; the Constitution or by laws or regulations governing the institutions; a statement regarding total number of persons with disabilities employed in the institution along with their respective duties. The Rehabilitation Council of India is responsible for catering to the unique requirements of children with disabilities, as well as providing technical and educational materials to those with disabilities. The Certificate of Registration issued under 51(2) shall remain valid for 3 years from the date of issue.

State Fund for Persons with Disabilities and its Management

The State Fund for Persons with Disabilities involves with items such as grants, gifts, donations, land or immovable properties, benefactions, bequests, or transfers, Government grants-in-aid. There shall be a Governing body consist of the following members to manage the state Fund. First, Principal Secretary deals with Empowerment of persons with disabilities in the State Government. Second, Representatives from the Department of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Education, Department of Labour and Employment, Department of Finance, Department of Panchayat & Rural Development, Land & Land Reforms, Urban Development and Municipal Affairs, Mass Education Extension and Library Services of the State Government not below the rank of joint secretary. Third, Five persons are representing

different types of disabilities to be selected by the State Government on rotation basis. Forth, State Commissioner for persons with disabilities in the state government.⁹⁵

State Governmental Initiatives for Visually Challenged Students in Various Educational Institutions in West Bengal

On the basis of my field visits to various institutions, I have gathered information regarding the provisions of welfare measures meant for the visually challenged students from the two districts such as- Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas. The functions and welfare measures of these institutions are mentioned bellow:

Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy

The Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy was established on 2th February, 1957. It is a fully residential government-sponsored institution working from primary school to secondary school for the blind students and sponsored by the Department of Mass Education Extension, Government of West Bengal. This school is primarily affiliated with the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education (WBBSE) and the West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education (WBCHSE). The Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy began in a very modest manner with the goals of providing education, training and rehabilitation service to the visually challenged students and has now promoted into a full-fledged institution with fulfill multiple schemes for education such as- General Education up to Higher Secondary (including Craft, Book-Binding, Typewriting etc.), Vocational Music, ITI, Rural adult blind training in agriculture

⁹⁵ West Bengal The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2017. Government of West Bengal, Department of Women & Child Development and Social Welfare, August 28, 2017, Salt Lake, Kolkata, West Bengal, pp. 1-14.

and animal husbandry, a swimming pool project, a Braille library, a Regional Teachers' Training Centre, a Regional Braille Press, a Computer Operation and Programming Assistant, a Low Vision Centre and Clinic, and an Audio Book Studio and so on. This Academy provides life-centered education to visually impaired students. In the Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy, the total number of visually challenged students including B.Ed. college students is 242 (Two Hundred Forty Two). In Primary Section, there are only 26 (Twenty Six) visually challenged students. From Class 5 (Five) to 10 (Tenth) Section, there are 85(Eighty Five) visually challenged students. In Higher Secondary Section, there are 20 (Twenty) visually challenged Students. In addition, there are 60 (Sixty) B.Ed. students, ungraded 8 (Eight) students, MCA (Metal Cutting Attendant) 20 (Twenty) students, COPA (Computer Operation and Programming Assistant) 10 (Ten) students who have come from rural areas of various districts of the state, taking training in Agriculture and Animal Husbandry. In this institution, there are 6 (Six) full time teachers and many part time teachers who teach the visually challenged students from primary section to higher secondary section. Besides, there are 4(Four) B.Ed. teachers, 3(ITI Instructors), 3 (COPA Instructors), and 3 (Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Instructors) who teach the visually challenged students. As per the Field Report of Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy, the yearly pass out results is very satisfactory. Very talented students, who are studying for higher education in this institution, have a goal as how to succeed in their life through reaching the pinnacle of mountain. So far as the reading materials including the books meant for the Visually Challenged Students, the Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy has established a wonderful Braille Library. This Braille Library plays a vital role in promoting the education and rehabilitation of the visually challenged students. The beneficiaries of the Academy are the students and trainees, ex-students who are attending colleges and

universities and the research scholars in the field of blindness and associated disabilities of different universities. All the students (Class I to XII) of the Academy get the prescribed text books provided by the Library. The number of volumes accessioned in the Library is 48,357 including 37,774 embossed books and 10,585 letterpress books. There are also 882 talking books (in taps, cassettes and discs). There has been in addition of 532 books in different categories during the years. In addition, the Regional Braille Press of the Blind Boys' Academy began its activities in 1967. It is engaged with the task of printing and publishing braille text and reference books in various languages such as- Bengali, English, Sikkimese, Manipuri, Meghalaya and Sanskrit on variety of subjects including Mathematics, Science and Geography from beginner's class to secondary level as well as a few books for higher secondary and three year Degree Course. The Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy also established an Audio Book Studio which provides reading materials in the format of C.D. with the financial help from Ford Foundation. Both text books and general manuals which are being recorded and copies are being provided for the use of the visually challenged students of this institution. Still now 108 books have been recorded up to 2019. The Academy also provides many scholarships for the ninth class visually challenged students such as – Scholarship for the Handicapped Student by the Department of Mass Education, Government of West Bengal; Swami Vivekananda Merit Cum Means Scholarship by School Education Department, Government of West Bengal; Scholarship for Back Ward Class Students by BCW Department, Government of West Bengal. Apart from, the West Bengal State Government provides various educational instrument facilities such as- uniform, bag, shoe, winter garment, festival garment and also grants educational tour and sports, state award for excellent achievement, roll model, etc. Apart from the Government Schemes, in this Academy, many educational devices are provided by various Non -State Actors such as -

NGOs, Corporations etc. The Academy organizes regularly different kind of Co-curricular Activities such as- Recitation, Braille Reading and Writing, Clay-Modeling, Story-telling, Debate, Music, Extempore Speech, Quiz, Elocution etc. Along with, The Academy also commemorates Louise Braille Day, Teachers' Day, Helen Keller Day, and International Day for Persons with Disabilities. The visually challenged students of Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy have lack of enthusiastic bent of mind for learning Braille because of their impairment associated with vision. Therefore, the Academy provides them with low vision aids like Magnifying Glass, Large Printed Books etc. To provide facilities these low vision children for improvement of quality of life, a Low Vision and Clinic has been started on the premises of the Academy to consider the functional vision and supply suitable low vision aids to the low vision children with the financial assistance of Kirpalani Foundation and Cognizant. In this Academy, there is also provision for Computer Training Programme facility for the visually challenged students who have completed X Standard to lead a full-fledged Vocational Course. The students of classes V to XII of the Academy are attending Computer Application Classes regularly. Apart from these, Computer Application has been included in the syllabus of MCA Training Course. In addition, the Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy provides Sub-Contract Workshop where 10(Ten) trainees are engaged in the task of spice-powder production manufacturing of folding sticks for the blind, stylus to be used for writing on Braille slates, signature guide, production of candle, soap cake, plates of Shal Leaves, chau and potato chips and mushroom cultivation etc.

Table No. 2.1- Total Number of Teachers and Students Ratio of Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy.

T E A C H E R S	Primary Section				T O T A L	From 5 th Class Students to 10 th Class Students						T O T A L	12 th Section		T O T A L	B. Ed .	U G (G R A D E D)	I. T. (M C A)	C O P A	A G R I C U L T U R E	T O T A L	T O T A L S T U D E N T S
	1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10		11	12								
	M	M	M	M		M	M	M	M	M	M		M	M		M	M	M	M	M		
19	0	10	8	8	26	10	14	12	14	18	17	85	10	10	20	60	8	20	10	13	111	242

Source: Field Report on Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy.

Table No. 2.2- From Primary Section to Higher Secondary Section of the yearly Class Wise Percentages (2014-2020) of Result of Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy.

Class Section from Primary to Higher Secondary	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
	Percenta ge	Percenta ge	Percenta ge	Percenta ge	Percenta ge	Percenta ge	Percenta ge
1	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
5	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
7	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
8	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
9	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
10	90	90.50	92	89.60	90	95	100
11	76	78	79.08	92	83	90	100
12	76	78	79.08	91.11	85.28	90	100

Source: Field Report on Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy.

Table No. 2.3- From Primary Section to Higher Secondary Section of the yearly Dropped out Visually Challenged Students (2014-2020) of Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy.

Dropped out Visually Challenged Students	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Field Report on Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy.

Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB)

Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB) was established on 2nd March, 1978. It is located to the North West of the Haldia Port Complex, in a remote Village- Viveknagar, Post office– Chaitanyapur, in the district of Purba Medinipur, West Bengal. The main objectives of Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB) are to promote and protect education for the visually challenged students; to provide education to the visually challenged students to make them self-dependence and dignified citizens of the Country; to manifest the perfection of endowments and to develop rehabilitation possibilities of the visually challenged students; to help them to stand on their own feet; to develop Human Resources; to assist the visually challenged persons to lead a better and dignified life in the society; to show them a new light not leading to begging destiny. According to my Field Survey, Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB) has been engaged with the task of imparting education from Primary Section to Higher Secondary Section. This is a Bengali medium school. The total number of visually challenged students of Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB) is 173 (One Hundred Seventy Three), gender wise- 106 males students and 67 females students. In Primary Section,

there are 61 (Sixty One) visually challenged students with class wise ratio 35 (Thirty Five) males students and 26 (Twenty Six) females students. On the other hand, from Class 5 (Five) to 10 (Tenth) Section, there are 80 (Eighty) visually challenged students with class wise ratio of 47 (Forty Seven) males students and 33 (Thirty Three) Females students. In addition, in Higher Secondary Section, there are 30 (Thirty) visually challenged Students with class wise ratio of 21 (Twenty One) males students and 9 (Nine) females students. As well, there are 2 (Two) visually males students in Vocation training Centre (VTC). In addition, there are facilities of availing of the study materials in different form. This institution provides 6070 (Six Thousand Seventy) Brails books and 1500 (One Thousand Five Hundred) Printed books. The Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB) also provides many scholarships for the nine classes visually challenged students, such as – Scholarship for the Handicapped Student sponsored by the Department of Mass Education, Government of West Bengal; Swami Vivekananda Merit Cum Means Scholarship through School Education Department, Government of West Bengal; Scholarship for Back Ward Class Students by BCW Department, Government of West Bengal. Apart from the Government initiatives, Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB) provides special facilities for visually challenged students, such as- Scholarship of Birla Group (Priyambada Birla Scholarship); Telegraph Education Foundation Scholarship; and Indian Oil Scholarship. In addition, the institution also provides assistive technology for visually challenged students who are most depended on the technology, such as –for tactual base reading/writing ‘DAISY’ for digital Access in the field of teaching learning; Talking Books; Reading Machine for reading the print materials; NIMA and MAGIC Software; and Internet and E-books. The Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB) has taken initiatives to ensure the barrier free environment,

such as Ramp; Disable friendly Classroom and Toilet Blocks; Wheelchair; Brails leveling; Mobility map (Tactual lay out the school environment). However, there is no lift facility for accessing to the school building and hostel building. The institution also provides Vocational Training for the visually challenged students. There are four major vocational trades like- Cane and Bamboo mora; Weaving; Candle making; Book Binding; Agarbati items with decorators are being provided by the Vocational Training system of the school for visually challenged students who are academically back ward and the objective is to generate their self-employment. The Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB) has also provide financial assistance and support for the visually challenged students, such as- Free Education and Training; Remission of Hostel charges for the students; Books and TLM stationaries and Assistive Devices are provided to the students in free of cost. In the context of social security of visually challenged students, Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB) provides social security facilities for the students. The institution provides Disability Pension Schemes- ‘Manabik Pension’ for disabled persons who are under the category of 50 percent of disabledness; Disability Pension Scheme for the persons with disabilities below 50 percent of disabledness and National Disability Development and Finance Corporation (NDDFC). In addition, the institution also provides Free Educational Services, Rehabilitation Services, Hostel Facilities with Food and Lodging, Brails Books, Teaching Learning Devices, Teaching Learning Materials, several types of Assistive Devices, Brails Devices and other services which are being provided to the students as per their needs.

Table No. 2.4- Total Number of Visually Challenged Students and Gender Wise Total Number of Male and Female Students of Vivekanda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB).

Total Number of Visually Challenged Students	Gender Wise Total Number of Males and Females Students	
173	Males	Females
	106	67

Source: Field Report on Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB).

Table No. 2.5- Total Number of Teachers and Gender Wise Students Ratio from Primary Section to 12th Section and VTC of Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB).

T E A C H E R S	Primary Section								T O T A L	From 5 th Class Students to 10 th Class Students														T O T A L	12 th Section				T O T A L	V T C	T O T A L	T O T A L S T U D E N T S
	1		2		3		4			5		6		7		8		9		10		11			12							
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		M	F						
23	15	8	5	4	7	5	8	9	61	8	8	8	8	9	8	10	3	5	3	7	3	80	10	5	11	4	30	2	0	2	173	

Source: Field Report on Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB).

Table No. 2.6- From Primary Section to Higher Secondary Section of the yearly Class Wise Percentages (2014-2020) of Result of Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB).

Class Section from Primary to Higher Secondary	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
1	97	99	99	100	100	100	100
2	99	99	100	99	99	100	100
3	100	100	97	99	99	100	100
4	99	98	100	98	99	100	100
5	100	97	100	100	100	100	100
6	97	100	100	100	100	100	100
7	97	100	99	100	100	100	100
8	99	98	100	99	99	100	100
9	99	97	100	100	100	100	100
10	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
11	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
12	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Field Report on Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB).

Table No. 2.7- From Primary Section to Higher Secondary Section of the yearly Dropped Out Visually Challenged Students (2014-2020) of Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB).

Dropped out Visually Challenged Students	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
	0	1	1	0	1	0	0

Source: Field Report on Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB).

Vivekananda Loksiksha Niketan (Special School for the Visually Handicapped (VH) and Mental Retardation (MR))

Vivekananda Loksiksha Niketan (Special School for the Visually Handicapped (VH) and Mental Retardation (MR)) was established in 1998. It is organized by the Tribal/ Social Welfare Department. It is located in the village of Faridpur and post office of Dakshin Dauki in Junput Coastal Belt of the Bay of Bengal with nice scenic beauty of Purba Medinipur district of West Bengal. It is a well-equipped multistoried Bengali medium institution. The main objectives of Vivekananda Loksiksha Niketan (Special School for the VH and MR) is to organize various curricular, co-curricular activities and counselling relating to the intellectual development of the learners, to provide support to the visually challenged students for their project work, term activities, community services, to provide equality status for the visually challenged students irrespective of class, caste, religion, sex and socio-economic development, to provide value education among students-teachers, to provide Governmental facilities to the visually challenged students. The institution also provides assistive technology, such as- Abacus technology, Taylor Frame, Sensor Develop Activity Technology, Perkins Braille Machine and Blind Stick for smooth movements of the visually challenged students. In addition, the institution provides 350 (Three hundred fifty) Braille books for the students. In this School, 17 (Seventeen) students out of 37 (Thirty Seven) students are availing the scholarship from the Department of Women and Child Development & Social Welfare. There are curriculum activities like vocational Unit including candle making and incense stick which are made by the visually challenged students. In the context of Social Security of visually challenged students, Vivekananda Loksiksha Niketan (Special School for the VH and MR) assists with the programme of 'Manabik Pension' provided by West Bengal Government, and the provision for annually organized eye checkup camp for the visually challenged student. However, it is observed that the visually challenged students

colossally face huge problems in Vivekananda Loksiksha Niketan (Special School for the VH and MR). There are lack of clinical psychologists for counseling the visually challenged students to develop their potentiality and manpower. Sufficient Braille books are not available for visually challenged students. There are no computer facilities to learn and enhance knowledge for the visually challenged students in the library. Besides, there are no ramp and lift facilities for smooth movement to toilets, bathrooms, kitchen and upper stairs etc.

Table No. 2.8- Total Number of Visually Challenged Students as per Gender Wise in Vivekananda Loksiksha Niketan (Special School for the VM and MR).

Total Number of Visually Challenged Students	Gender Wise Total Number of Males and Females Students	
37	Males	Females
	23	14

Source: Field Report on Vivekananda Loksiksha Niketan (Special School for the VM and MR).

Table No. 2.9- Class Wise Total Number of Male and Female Visually Challenged Students in Vivekananda Loksiksha Niketan (Special School for the VM and MR).

Pre-Primary			Primary									
Males	Females	Total	1 st Standard		2 nd Standard		3 rd Standard		4 th Standard		Total	Total
5	3	8	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	29	8+29=
			5	1	5	3	4	2	4	5		37

Source: Field Report on Vivekananda Loksiksha Niketan (Special School for the VM and MR).

Table No. 2.10- Total Number of Passed Out Students and Dropped Out Students (2014-2020) in Vivekananda Loksiksha Niketan (Special School for the VM and MR).

Total Number of Teachers	Year	Percentage of Passed Out Students	Year	Number of Dropped Out Students
7	2014	87	2014	04
	2015	88	2015	05
	2016	87.5	2016	06
	2017	91.5	2017	04
	2018	91.5	2018	04
	2019	93.5	2019	03
	2020	100	2020	0

Source: Field Report on Vivekananda Loksiksha Niketan (Special School for the VM and MR).

Moyna Ramkrishnayan Association: A Residential Special School for Blind & Mentally Retarded Children

Moyna Ramkrishnayan Association, a Residential Special School for Blind & M.R Children was established on 16th March, 1992 and started as an academic institution from 29th December, 2000. The school was sponsored by Mass Education Extension (MEE), Government of West Bengal. It is situated at the village of Harkuli Bhandarchak, post office and police station at Moyna of Purba Medinipur. The main objectives of Moyna Ramkrishnayan Association, a Residential Special School for Blind & M.R Children is to provide training to the students having full blindness and low vision , to assist them in providing teaching, health in primary level, to teach the visually challenged students through Braille method, to organize vocational training for rehabilitating the over 18 year old visually challenged students marginalized from normal education facilities, to provide mobility training for travelling from one place to another places, to stand up them in the mainstream society through development programmes. The institution provides ‘Manabik Pension’ @ Rs. 1000/- per month and Academic Stipends @ Rs.

30000/- per year for the visually challenged students which are sponsored by the Government. The institution also organizes health checkup camp and the distribution of handicapped certificate issued by the district hospital. The institution provides Braille System, Mac Board (Tailor Frame), Abacus, music instruments and folding stick etc. for the visually challenged students. Besides, the Moyna Ramkrishnayan Association, a Residential Special School for Blind & M.R Children institution annually organizes many activities such as – Survey, Screening, Identification and Assessment, Workshop, Seminar, Parent and Family Counseling and also organizes early intervention programme for the students, such as - Speech Therapy, Green Therapy, Art Therapy, Music Therapy, Physio Therapy, Sport, P.T. Yoga Therapy and Income Generating, Normalization, Job Placement and to bring the visually challenged students in mainstream.

Table No. 2.11- Total Number of Visually Challenged Students and Gender Wise Total Number of Male and Female Students of Moyna Ramkrishnayan Association: A Residential Special School for Blind & M.R Children.

Total Number of Visually Challenged Students	Gender Wise Total Number of Males and Females Students	
	Males	Females
	25	
	10	15

Source: Field Report on Moyna Ramkrishnayan Association: A Residential Special School for Blind & M.R Children.

Table No. 2.12- Total Number of Teachers and Yearly Class Wise Percentages of Pre-Primary Students Result of Moyna Ramkrishnayan Association: A Residential Special School for Blind & M.R Children.

Total Number of Teachers	Pre-Primary				Drop Out Students
2	1 st Standard	2 nd Standard	3 rd Standard	4 th Standard	0
	60	60	60	60	

Source: Field Report on Moyna Ramkrishnayan Association: A Residential Special School for Blind & M.R Children.

Chapter-III

The Nature and Problems of Visually Challenged Persons in the District of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas, West Bengal

Chapter-III

The Nature and Problems of Visually Challenged Persons in the District of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas, West Bengal

The World Bank (WB) and the World Health Organization (WHO) estimate that approximately more than 2 billion Persons with Disabilities or Physically Challenged Persons live with different kinds of disability in the world.⁹⁶ As per the latest Disabled Persons in India A Statistical Profile 2016, around 121 Core People are living both rural and urban areas in India. About 2.68 Cores are persons with disabilities which constitute around 2.1 percent among the total population. In India among the disabled population, male disabled populations are 56 percent (1.5Core.) and female disabled populations are 44 percent (1.18 Core).⁹⁷

The persons with disabilities Act, 1995 brought into sharp focus of the state's responsibility to empower the disabled with equal opportunities, protection of rights and equal participation in the development discourse. The persons with disabilities have been facing problems associated with access to all opportunities for social and economic developments.⁹⁸ They always suffer

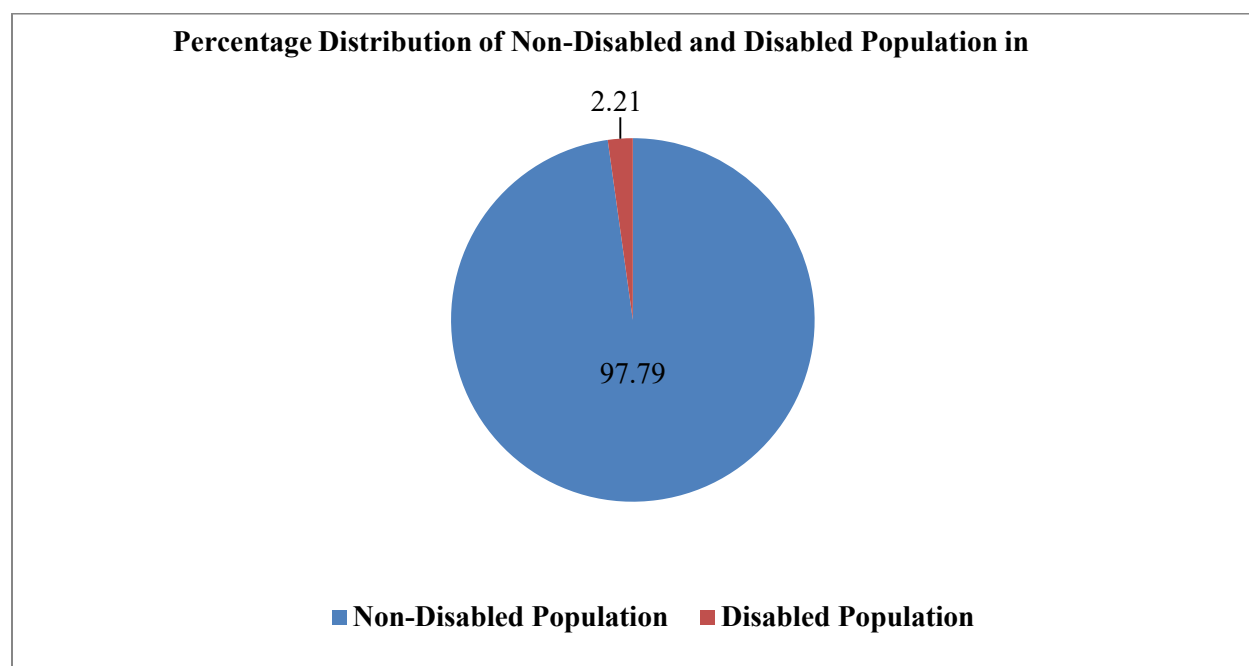
⁹⁶ World Report on Disability 2011, World Health Organization and the World Bank, p. 11.

⁹⁷ Social Statistics Division, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. "Disabled Persons in India—A Statistical Profile 2016," pp. 7-20.

⁹⁸ PWD ACT, 1995, The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and full Participation) Act, 1995, published in Part II, Section 1 of the Extraordinary Gazette of India

from multifarious problems in accessing, education institutions, employment benefits, health benefits and social security issues. These problems are becoming more challenging issues day by day. The stereotype mindset of the society does not look at people with disabilities with equal footing. Thus, the persons with disabilities are the most deprived, neglected and vulnerable section in our society. Keeping in view the above-stated considerations, this chapter attempts to focus on such problems of visually challenged persons in the state of West Bengal with particular reference to the district of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas.

Figure No. 3.1- Percentage Distribution of Non-Disabled and Disabled Population in India: 2016.

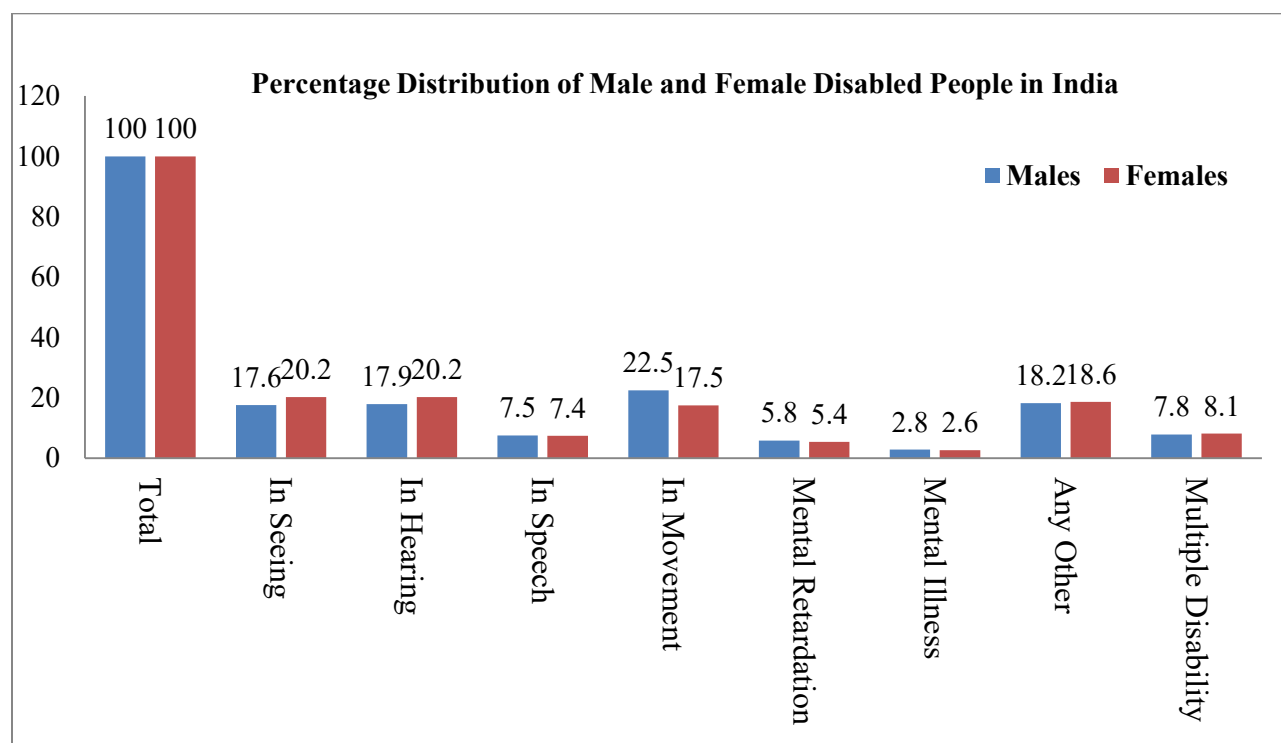


Source: Social Statistics Division, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India: 2016.

Disabled Persons in India A Statistical Profile 2016 estimates the nature of disability in the following manners. Male section constitutes 17.6 percent and female section constitutes 20.2

percent of persons with disabilities are having disability in seeing, male section constitutes 17.9 percent and female section constitutes 20.2 are with disability in hearing, male section constitutes 7.5 percent and female section constitutes 7.4 percent are with disability in speech, male section constitutes 22.5 percent and female section constitutes 17.5 percent are with disability in movement, male section constitutes 5.8 percent and female section constitutes 5.4 percent are with disability in mental retardation, male section constitutes 2.8 percent and female section constitutes 2.6 percent are with disability in mental illness, male section constitutes 18.2 percent and female section constitutes 18.6 are with disability in any other, male section constitutes 7.8 percent and female section constitutes 8.1 percent are with disability in multiple disability.

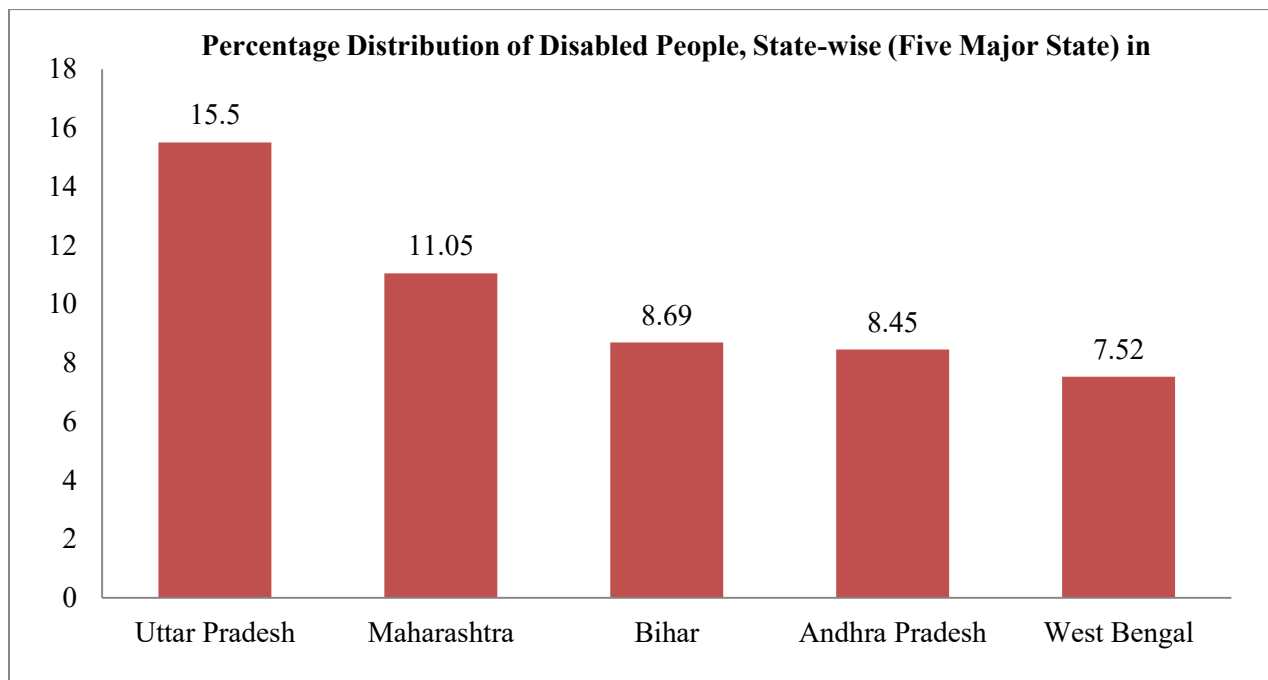
Figure No. 3.2- Percentage Distribution of Different Types of Male and Female Disabled People in India: 2016.



Source: Social Statistics Division, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India: 2016.

The Disabled Persons in India A Statistical Profile 2016 estimates that nearly 51.21 percent Persons with Disabilities are from five states in India. The state Uttar Pradesh constitutes the highest number of disabled people (15.5 percent) followed by Maharashtra (11.05 percent), Bihar (8.69 percent), Andhra Pradesh (8.45 percent) and West Bengal (7.52 percent).⁹⁹

Figure No. 3.3- Percentage distribution of Disabled People, State-Wise (Five Major State) in India: 2016.



Source: Social Statistics Division, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India: 2016.

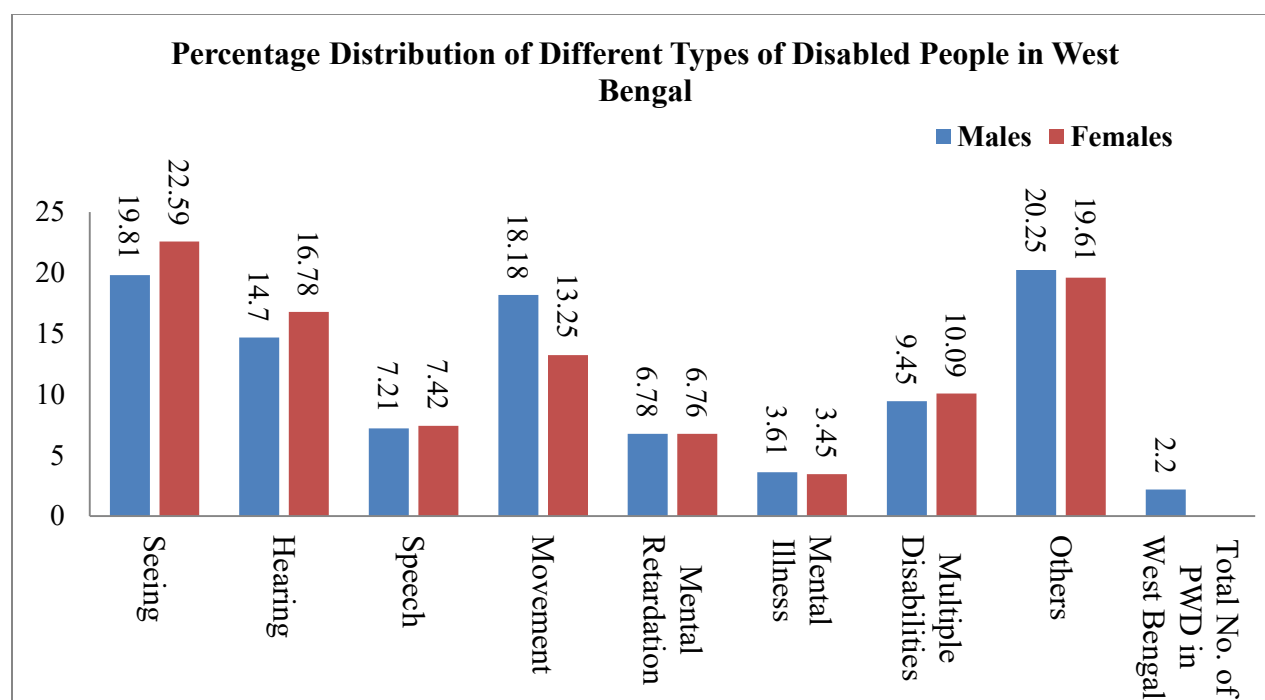
The District Statistical Handbook (2014) characterizes the nature of disability in West Bengal in the following manners.

There are 20, 17,406/ (2.20 percent) people are disabled persons including visually challenged (male 19.81 percent and female 22.59 percent), hearing (male 14.7 percent and

⁹⁹ Social Statistics Division, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. "Disabled Persons in India—A Statistical Profile 2016," pp. 36-70.

female 16.78 percent), speech (male 7.21 percent and female 7.42 percent), movement (male 18.18 percent and female 13.25 percent), mental retardation (male 6.78 percent and female 6.76 percent), mental illness (male 3.61 percent and female 3.45 percent), multiple disabilities (male 9.45 percent and female 10.09 percent) and others (male 20.25 percent and female 19.61 percent). However, there is the most significant numbers of visually challenged persons (21.04 percent), out of which 19.81 percent are males and 22.59 percent are females.¹⁰⁰

Figure No. 3.4- Percentage Distribution of Different Types of Disabled People in West Bengal: 2014.



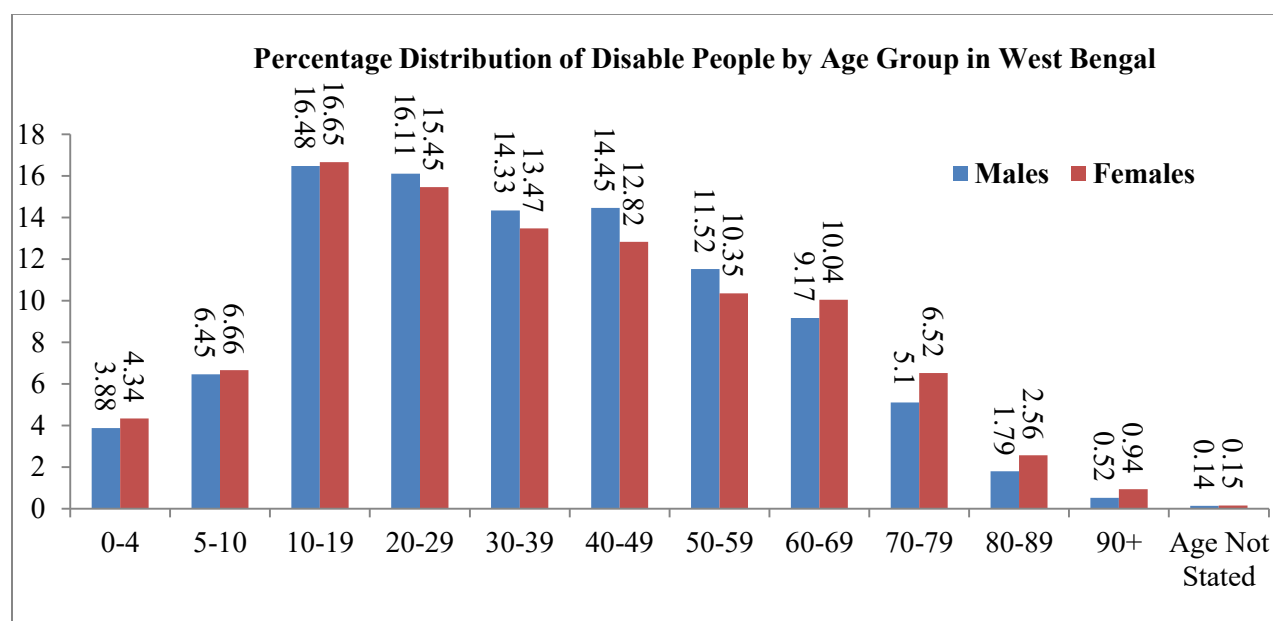
Source: Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation Government of West Bengal, 2014.

The estimation of different types of disabled people in West Bengal is represented on the basis of their age group which has been depicted in the table mentioned below. The number of disabled persons is male 3.88 percent and female 4.34 of disabled people in the age group (0-04). Male 6.45 percent and female 6.66 percent is in the age group (5-10). Male 16.48 percent and female

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, pp. 18-92.

6.65 percent is in the age group (10-19 year). Male 16.11 percent and female 15.45 of disabled persons is in the age group (20-29 year). Male 14.33 percent and female 13.47 percent is in the age (30-39 year). Male 14.45 percent and female 12.82 percent is in the age group (40-49 year). Male 11.52 percent and female 10.35 percent is in the age group (50-59 year). The number of disabled persons is male 9.17 percent and female 10.04 percent is in the age group (60-69 year). Male 5.1 percent and female 6.52 percent is in the age group (70-79 year). Male 1.79 percent and female 2.56 percent is in the age group (80-89 year). Male 0.52 percent and female 0.94 is in the age group (90+ years). Male 0.14 percent and female 0.15 percent is in the age group (Age not stated). As per the above mentioned statistics, it is found that the percentage of disabled persons is highest in the age group 10-19 year and, the second is in the age group 20-29 year for both male and female disabled persons.

Figure No. 3.5-Percentage Distribution of Disable People by Age Group in West Bengal, 2011.

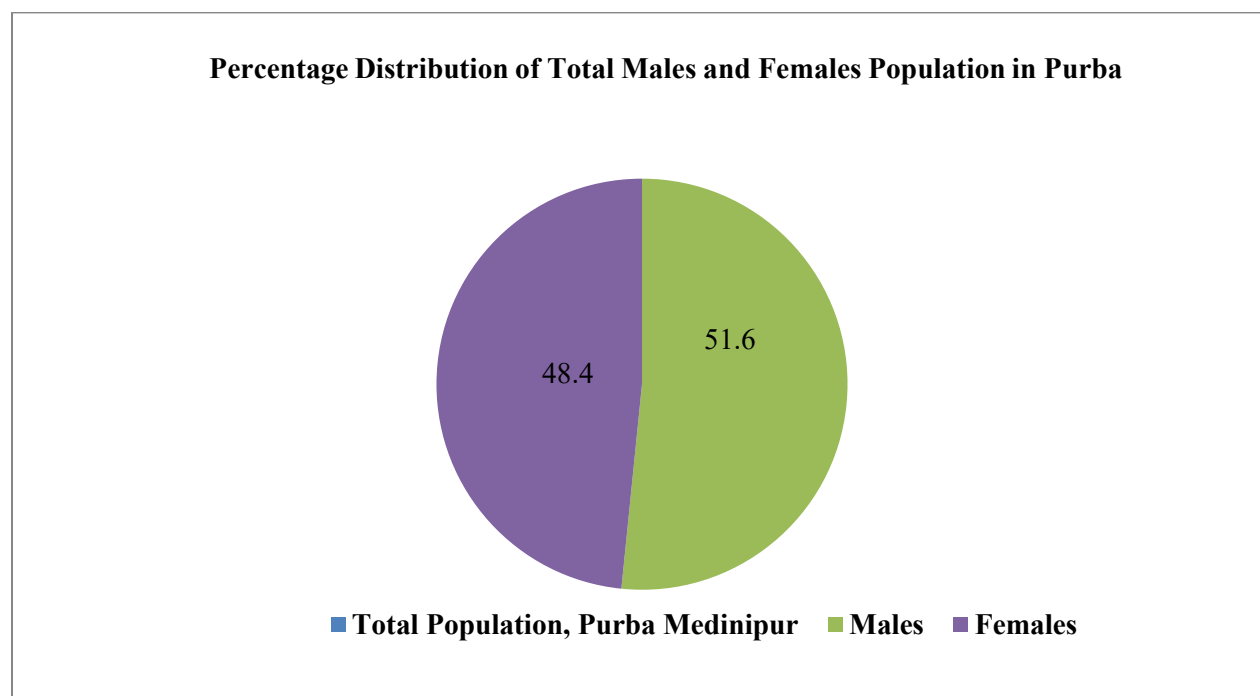


Source: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2011.

Survey on the Nature of Disability in the District of Purba Medinipur

The district of Purba Medinipur is located in the Southern part of West Bengal which is formed on 1st January, 2002. The total area of the district of Purba Medinipur is around 4713 square kilometers. The district is surrounded by Rupnarayan River, Hooghly River to the East, District Paschim Medinipur to the West and North and State of Odisha to the South-West as well as beyond the rivers South 24 Parganas and Howrah district from the Eastern boundary. The district of Purba Medinipur is constituted with 4 (four) Sub-divisions such as -Tamluk Sub-division, Haldia Sub-division, Egra Sub-division and Contai Sub-division including Community Development Blocks (twenty five), Municipalities(Five). Tamluk Sub-division have (seven) Community Development Blocks namely, Tamluk, Moyna, Panskura, Kolaghat, Moyna, Shahid Matangini and Chandipur (Nandigram-III). Egra Sub-division have (six) Community Development Blocks namely, Egra-I, Egra-II, Patashpur-I, Patashpur-II, Bhagawanpur-I, and Bhagawanpur-II. Contai Sub-division have (eight) Sub-division namely, Contai, Deshopran, Contai-III, Khejuri-I, Khejuri-II, Ramnagar-I, Ramnagar-II, and Bhagawanpur-II. Haldia Sub-division have (five) Sub-division namely, Nandigram-I, Nandigram-II, Mahisadal, Sutahata, and Haldia. According to District Census Handbook, 2014 there are 5 municipalities in the district of Prba Medinipur, namely, Panskura, Tamluk, Haldia, Egra and Contai. The total population of the district of Purba Medinipur is 5.57 percent (50, 95,857), out of which 51.60 percent (26, 29,834) are males and 48.40 percent (24, 66,041) are females.

Figure No. 3.6- Percentage Distribution of Total Males and Females Population in Purba Medinipur: 2014.

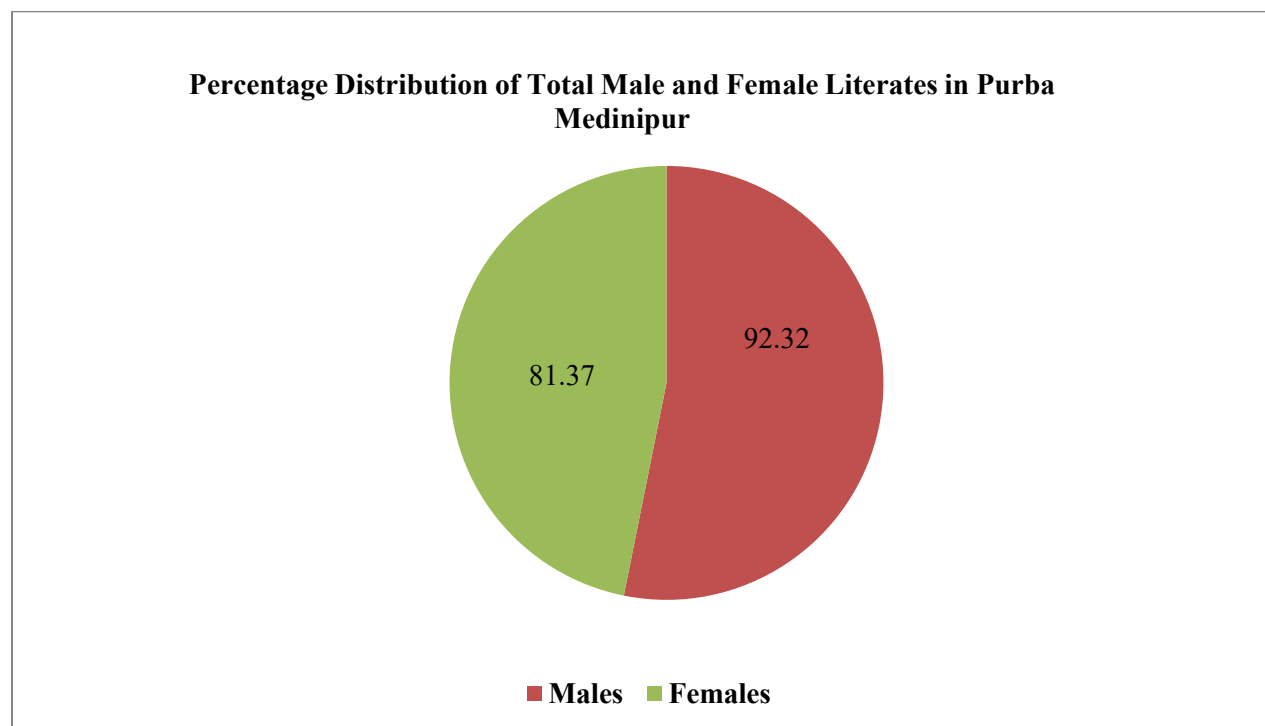


Source: Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation Government of West Bengal, 2014.

In comparison with the other districts of West Bengal, the rank of Purba Medinipur is highest in terms of literacy. In the District of Purba Medinipur, the literate population is 3,923,194 (87.02 percent), where male literate people are 2149073 (92.32 percent) and female literate people are 1774121 (81.37 percent).¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ District Census Handbook, Purba Medinipur, Village and Town Directory, Directorate of Census Operations, West Bengal, Series-20, Part-XII-A, pp. 5-53.

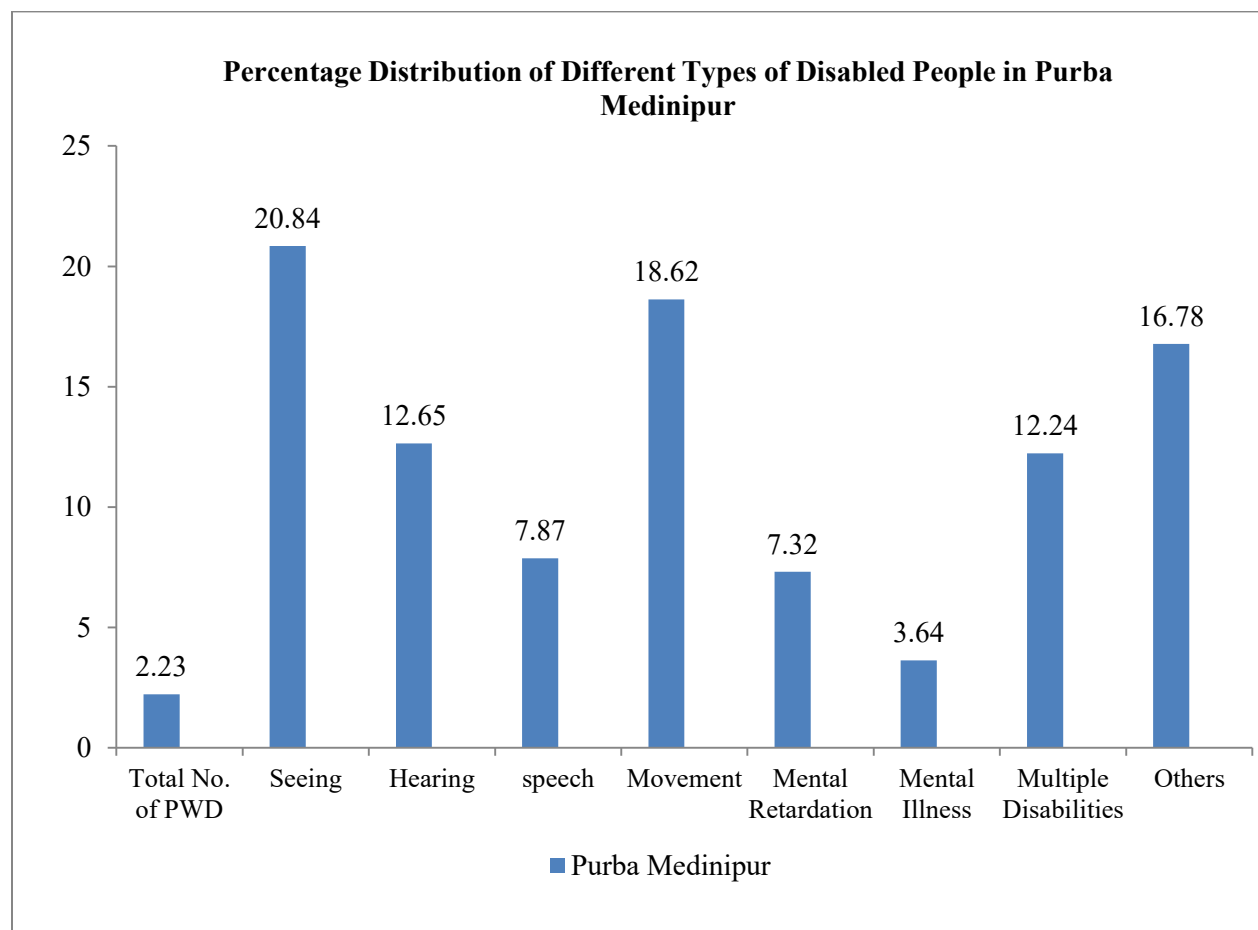
Figure No. 3.7- Percentage Distribution of Total Male and Female Literates in Purba Medinipur, 2014.



Source: Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation Government of West Bengal, 2014.

According to Census 2011 Report, Office of the Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, Department of Women & Child Development and Social Welfare, Govt. of West Bengal, it is estimated that in West Bengal, there are 20, 17,406 (2.20 percent) persons with disabilities including visual, hearing, speech, locomotor, mental retardation, mental illness and multiple disabilities. In Purba Medinipur, the total number of persons with disabilities is 114088, which is around 2.23 percent along with seeing 20.84 percent, hearing 12.65 percent, speech 7.87 percent, movement 18.62 percent, mental retardation 7.32 percent, mental illness 3.64 percent, multiple disabilities 12.24 percent and others 16.78 percent. Among them, there are significant number of visually challenged persons is 23787, which is around 20.84 percent.

Figure No. 3.8- Percentage Distribution of Different Types of Disabled People in Purba Medinipur, 2011.

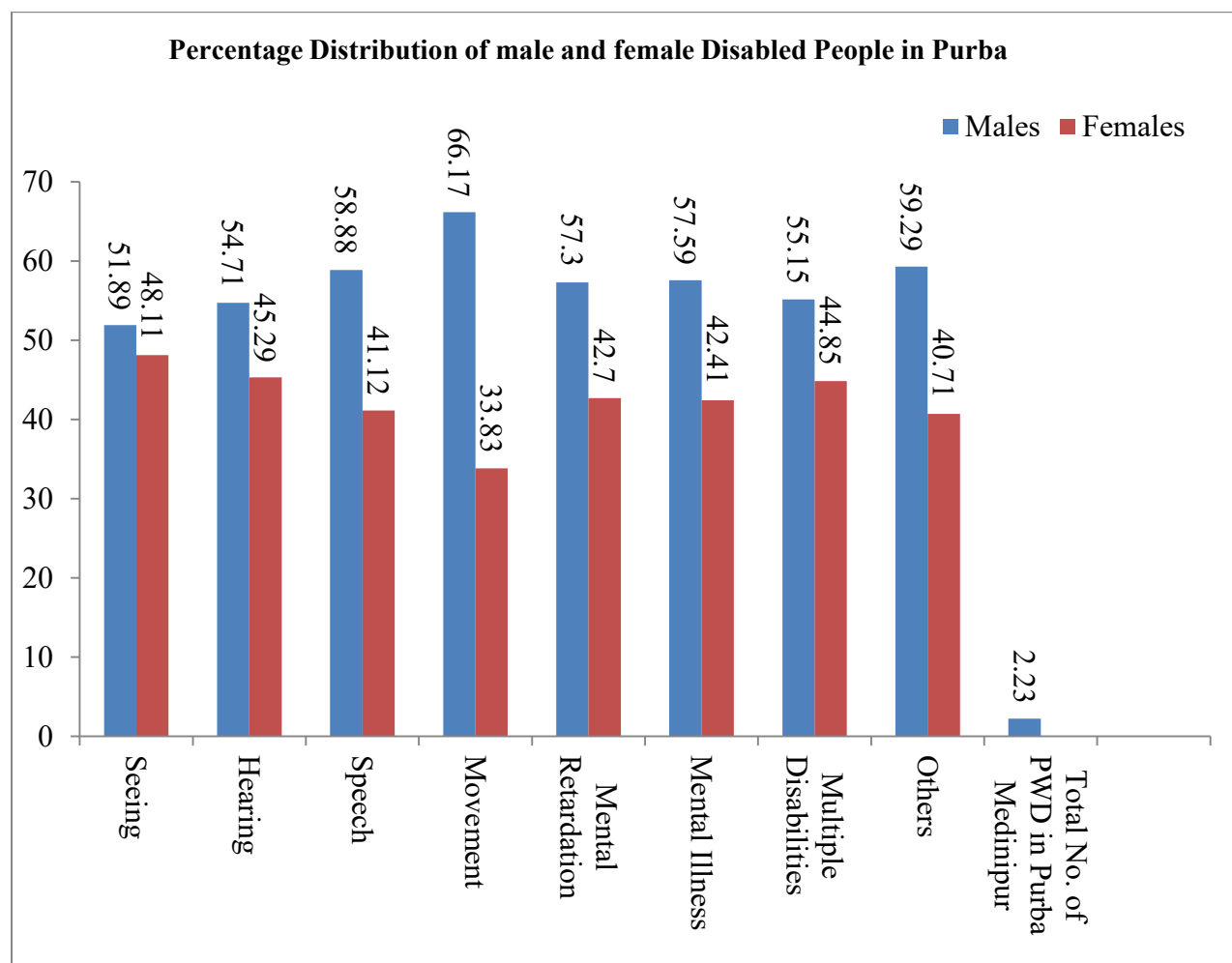


Source: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

The nature of the distribution of disabled people in male and female ratio is depicted in the following manner. In Purba Medinipur, the total number of disabled people is 2.23 percent, out of which 51.89 percent is with male seeing and 48.11 percent is with female seeing. 54.71 percent is with male hearing and 45.29 percent is female hearing. Male speech is with 58.88 percent and female speech is with 41.12 percent. 66.17 percent is with male movement and 33.83 percent is with female movement. 57.3 percent is with male mental retardation and 42.7 percent is with female mental retardation. 57.59 percent is with male mental illness and 42.41 percent is

female mental illness. Male multiple disability is with 55.15 percent and female multiple disability is with 44.85 percent. 59.29 percent is with male other and 40.71 percent is with female other.

Figure No. 3.9- Percentage Distribution of Male and Female Disabled People in Purba Medinipur, 2011.

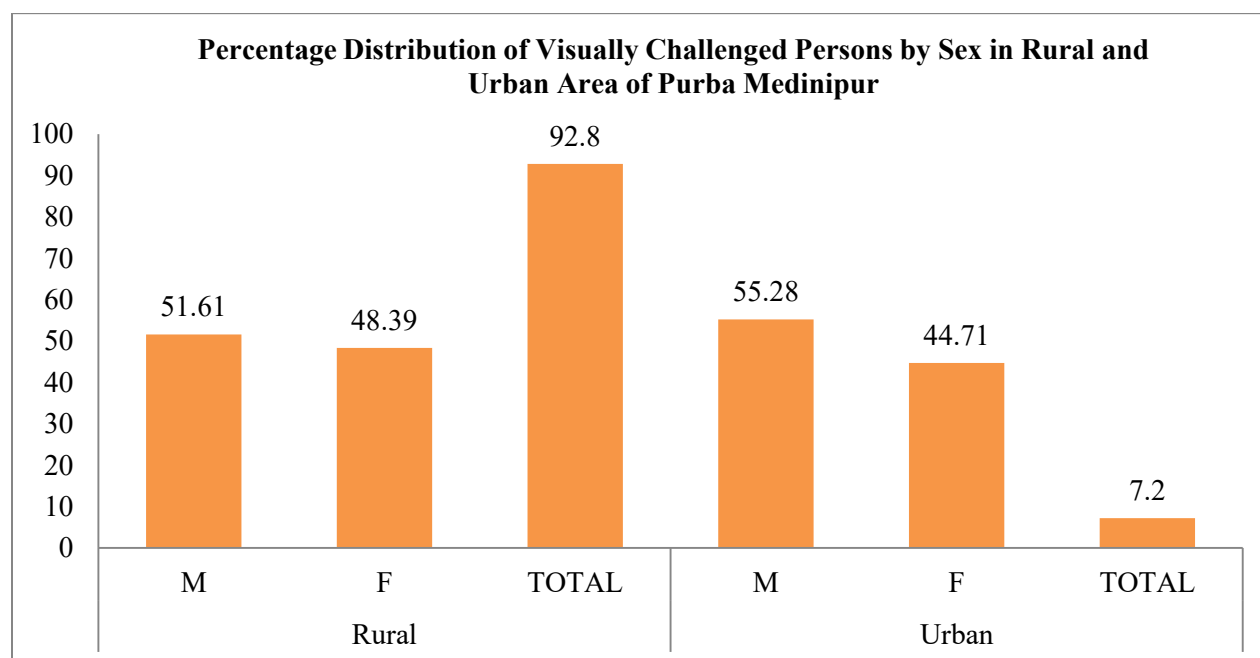


Source: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

The sex ratio wise distribution of Visually Challenged Persons in both rural and urban areas in Purba Medinipur depicted in the following manner.

In the rural area, 51.61 percent of visually challenged persons are males and 48.11 percent of visually challenged persons are females, on the other hand, in the urban area 55.28 percent of visually challenged persons are with males and 44.71 of visually challenged are with females.¹⁰²

Figure No. 3.10- Percentage Distribution of Visually Challenged Persons by Sex in Rural and Urban Area of Purba Medinipur, 2011.



Source: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2011.

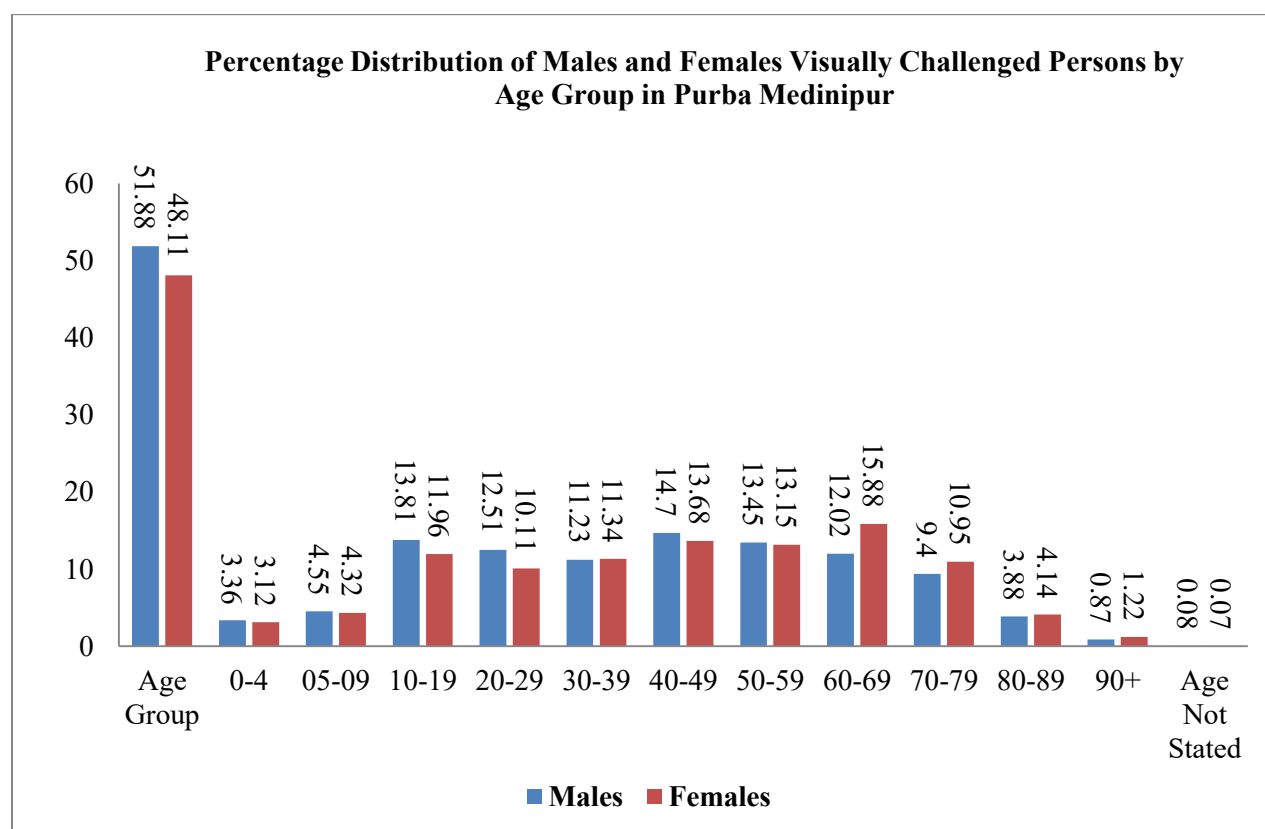
Further, age-group analysis of the percentage of Visually Challenged Persons in the district of Purba Medinipur, 2011, is depicted in the following manner.

The number of male visually challenged persons is 13.81 percent and female 11.96 percent in the age group (10-19 year). Male 12.51 percent and female 10.11 of visually challenged persons is in the age group (20-29 year). Male 11.23 percent and female 11.34 percent is in the age (30-39 year). Male 14.7 percent and female 13.68 percent is in the age group (40-49 year). Male

¹⁰² Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2011.

13.45 percent and female 13.15 percent is in the age group (50-59 year). The number of visually challenged persons is male 12.02 percent and female 15.88 percent is in the age group (60-69 year). Male 9.4 percent and female 10.95 percent is in the age group (70-79 year). Male 3.88 percent and female 4.14 percent is in the age group (80-89 year). Male 0.87 percent and female 1.22 is in the age group (90+ years). Male 0.08 percent and female 0.07 percent is in the age group (Age not stated). As per the above mentioned analysis, it is found that the percentage of visually challenged persons is highest in the age group 40-49 year and, followed by age group 60-69 year for both male and female visually challenged persons.

Figure No. 3.11- Percentage Distribution of Visually Challenged Persons by Age Group in the District of Purba Medinipur, 2011.



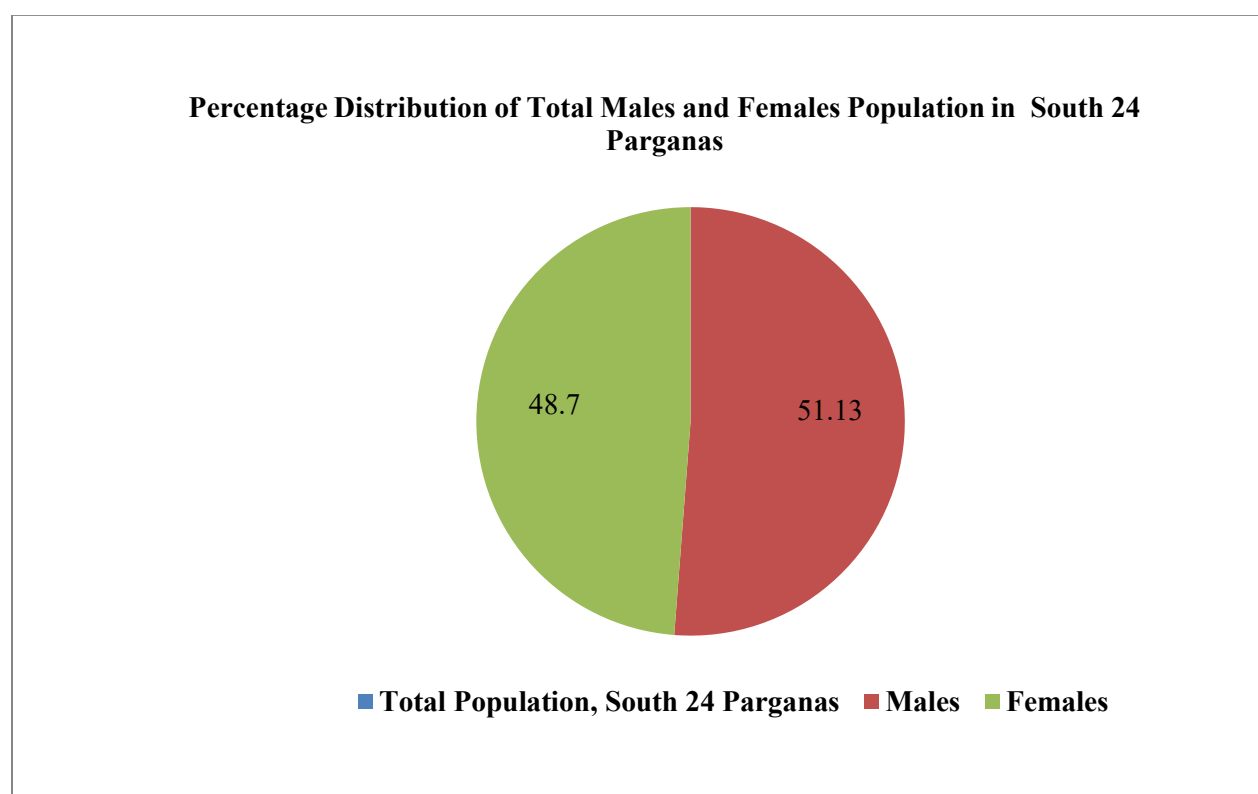
Source: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2011.

Survey on the Nature of Disability in the District of South 24 Parganas

The district of South 24 Parganas is the second most heavily populated district in West Bengal. The present South 24 Parganas district composed of moribund, active parts of Gangetic delta plains of Bengal. The total area of the district of South 24 Parganas is 9960 square kilometers. It is mainly surrounded by the Bay of Bengal, Bangladesh across the Raimangal and Kalindi rivers to its East, Kolkata and North 24 Parganas Districts to its North-West and North-East and the District of Howrah and East Medinipur across the Bhagirathi Rivers to its West. The Sundarban (The largest Mangrove Forest ecosystem of the world) is situated at most of the Southern and Eastern part of the district. The present South 24 Parganas district is established with five sub-division such as Alipur (Sadar), Baruipur, Diamond Harbour, Kakdwip and Canning including (Twenty Nine) Community Development Blocks and (Seven) Municipalities. In Alipur (Sadar) Sub-division, there are (five) Community Development Blocks, namely, Bishnupur-I, Bishnupur-II, Budge Budge-I, Budge Budge-II, and Thakurpukur-Mahestala. In Baruipur Sub-division, there are (Seven) Community Development Blocks, namely, Baruipur, Bhangar-I, Bhangar-II, Joynagar-I, Joynagar-II, Kultali, and Sonarpur. In Diamond Harbour Sub-division, there are 9 (Nine) Community Development Blocks namely, Diamond Harbour-I, Diamond Harbour-II, Falta, Kulpi, Magrahat-I, Magrahat-II, Mandirbazar, Mathurapur-I, and Mathurapur-II. Kakdwip Sub-division have (Four) Community Development Blocks, namely, Kakdwip, Namkhana and Patharpratima, Sagar. Canning Sub-division have (Four) Community Development Blocks namely, Canning-I, Canning-II, Basanti and Gosaba. According to the Census of India, 2011, there are (Seven) municipalities in the district of South 24 Parganas namely Budge-Budge Municipality, Maheshtala Municipality, Pujali Municipality, Joynagar-

Mazilpur Municipality, Baruipur Municipality, Rajpur-Sonarpur Municipality and Diamond Harbour Municipality. As per District Census Handbook 2014, the total population of the district of South 24 Parganas is 8,1 61,961 which is 8.93 percent of total population of West Bengal, out of which males population are 4,173,778 (51.13 percent) and females are 3,988,183 (48.86 percent)

Figure No. 3.12- Percentage Distribution of Total Males and Females Population in South 24 Parganas, 2014.

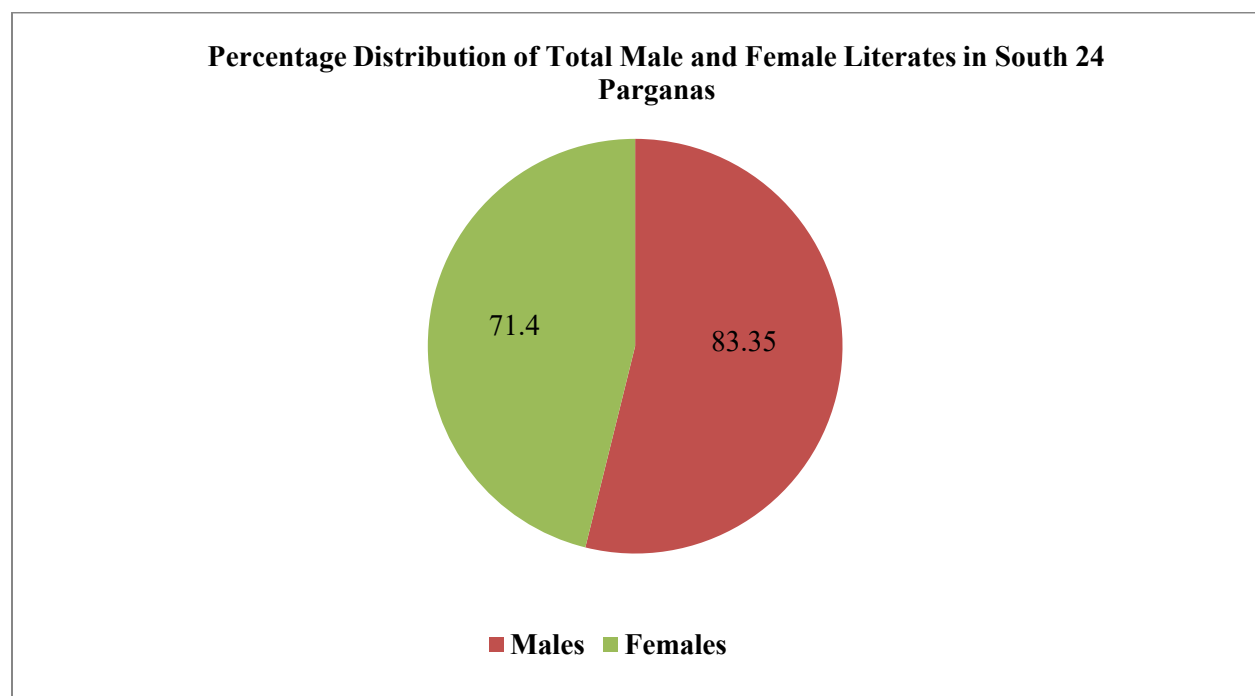


Source: Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation Government of West Bengal, 2014.

Literacy rate of the population of the South 24 Parganas District is outlined by means of the percentage of literates in the age group of (seven) years and above also. The Literate population of the District of South 24 Parganas is 5,531,657 (8.93 percent), out of which literate male

persons are 3,043,277 (83.35 percent) and female literate population is 2,488,380 (71.40 percent).¹⁰³

Figure No. 3.13- Percentage Distribution of Total Male and Female Literates in South 24 Parganas, 2014.



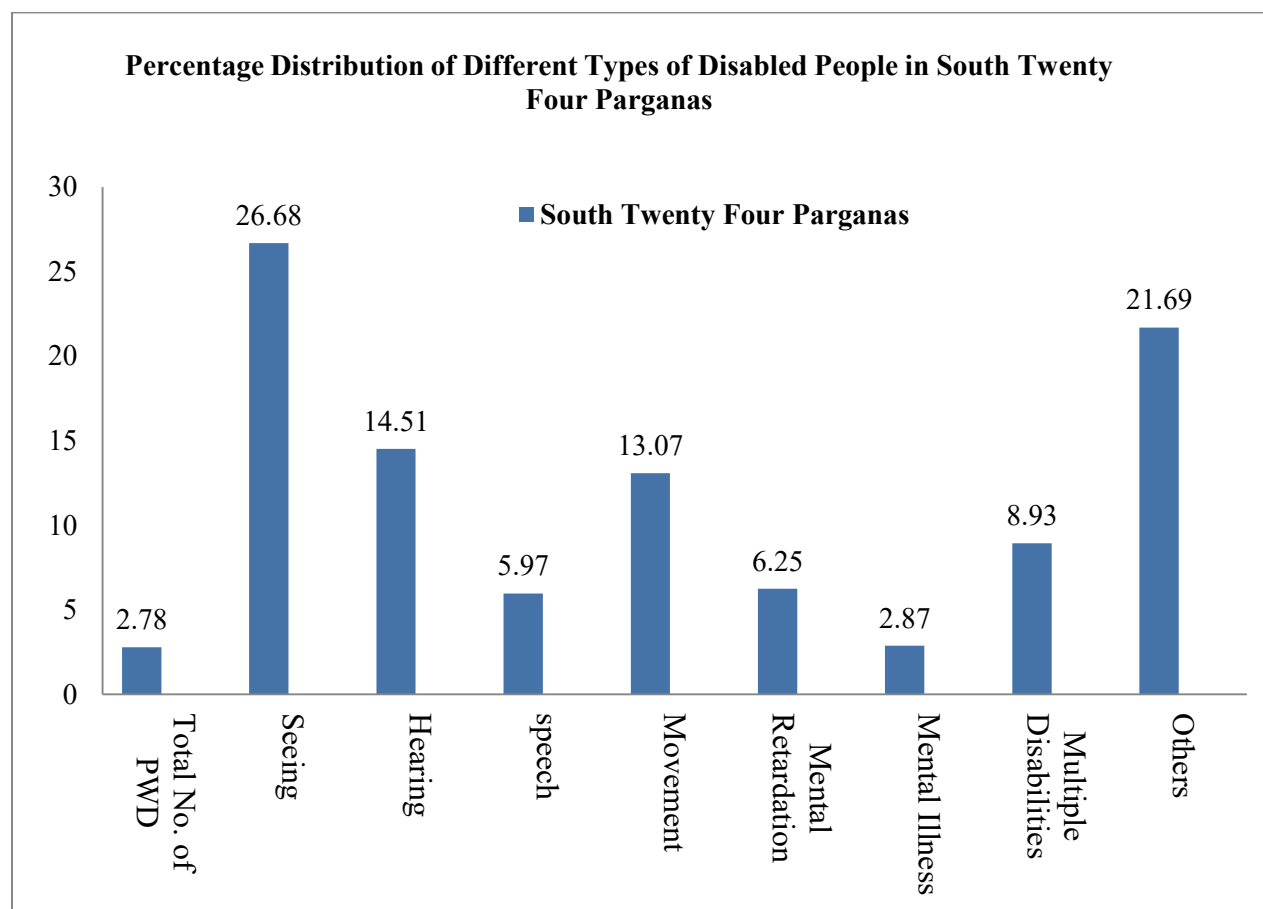
Source: Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation Government of West Bengal, 2014.

The total number of persons with disabilities in the South 24 Parganas District is 227129 (2.78 percent) comprising seeing 26.68 percent, hearing 14.51 percent, speech 5.97 percent, movement 13.07 percent, mental retardation 6.25 percent, mental illness 2.87 percent, multiple disabilities 8.93 percent, and 21.69 percent, where the most significant highest number of visually challenged persons is 60614 which is approximately (26.68 percent).¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ District Census Handbook, South Twenty Four Parganas, Village and Town Directory, Directorate of Census Operations West Bengal, 2011 Series-20, Part-XII-A, pp. 8-53.

¹⁰⁴ Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2011

Figure No. 3.14- Percentage Distribution of Different Types of Persons with Disabilities in South Twenty Four Parganas, 2011.

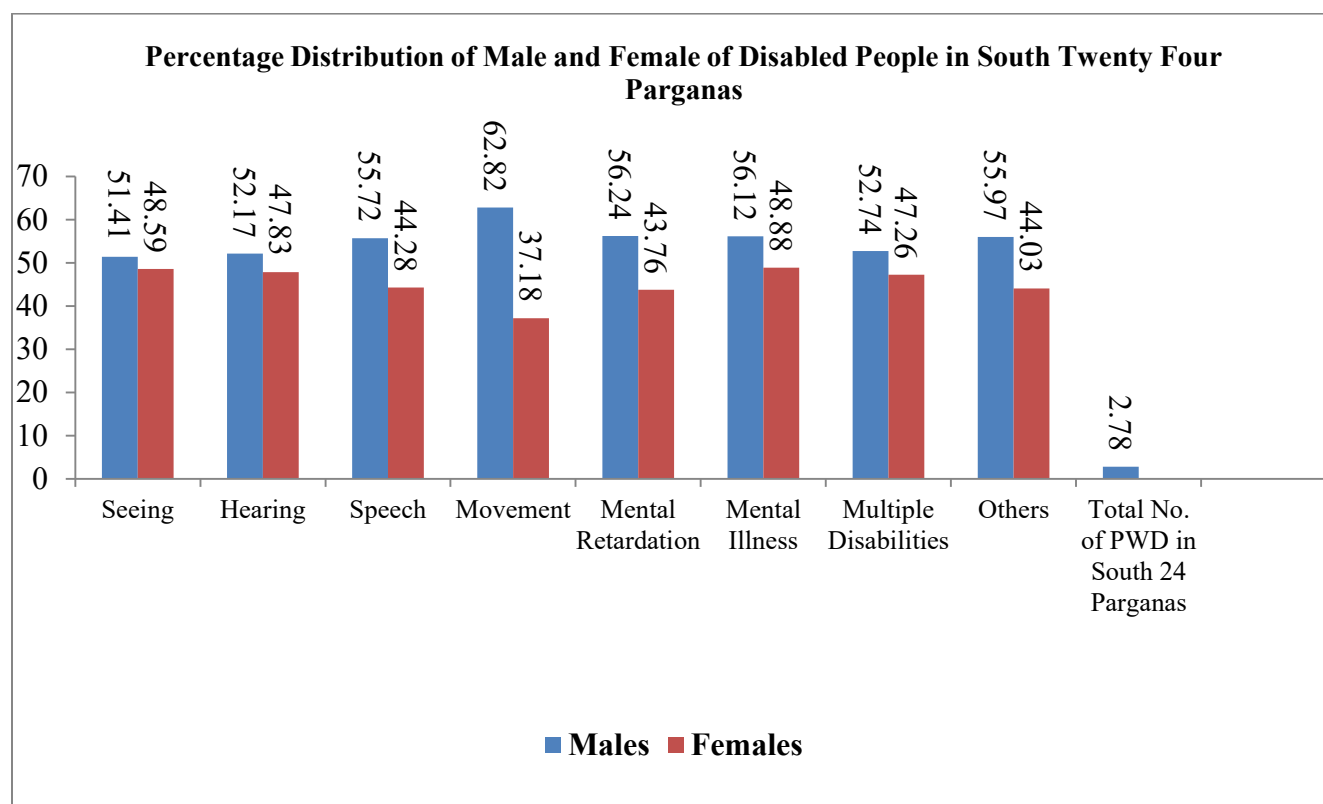


Source: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2011.

The distributions of male and female Disabled People in South 24 Parganas are in the following manner. 51.41 percent is with male seeing and 48.59 is with female seeing. 52.17 percent is with male hearing and 47.83 percent is female hearing. Male speech is with 55.72 percent and female speech is with 44.28 percent. 62.82 percent is with male movement and 37.18 percent is with female movement. 56.24 percent is with male mental retardation and 43.76 percent is with female mental retardation. 56.12 percent is with male mental illness and 48.88 percent is female

mental illness. Male multiple disability is with 52.74 percent and female multiple disability is with 47.26 percent. 55.74 percent is with male other and 44.03 percent is with female other.

Figure No. 3.15- Percentage Distribution of Male and Female of Disabled People in South Twenty Four Parganas, 2011

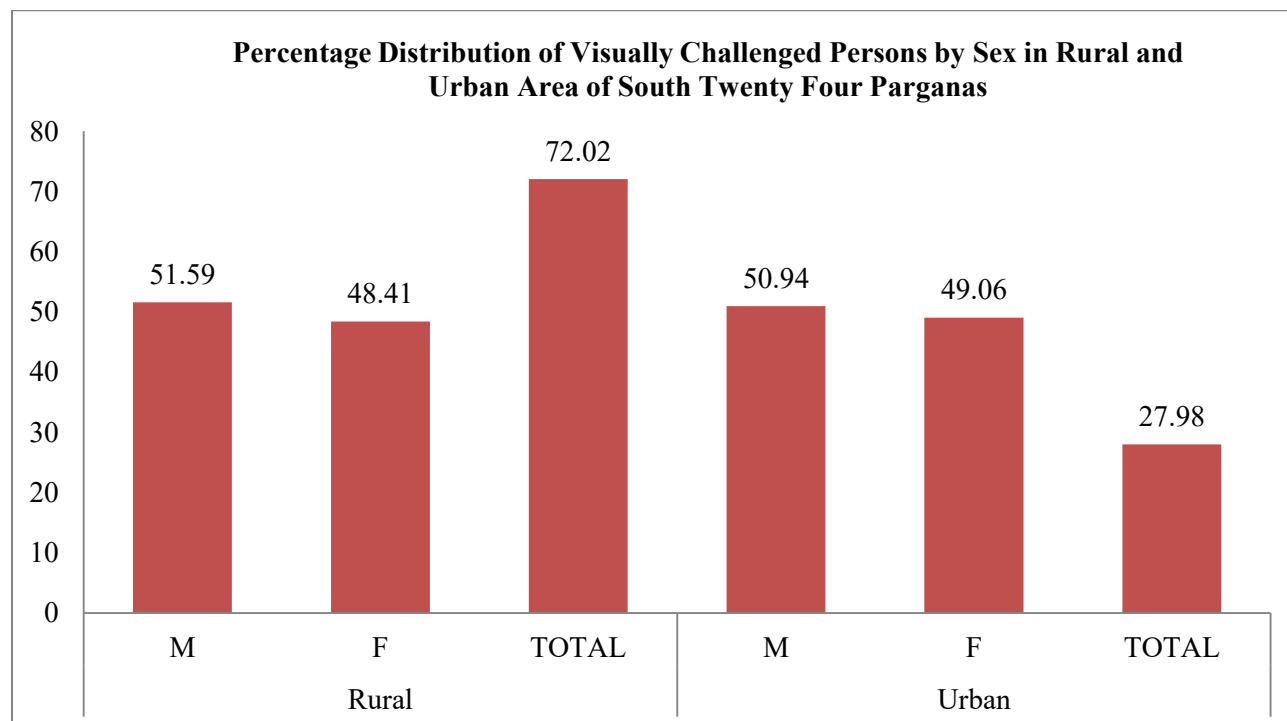


Source: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2011.

The sex ratio of visually challenged people in both rural and urban areas of South 24 Parganas is in the following manner. The male visually challenged person is 51.41 percent and the females visually challenged person is 48.59 percent in rural areas, on the other hand, in the urban area,

the male visually challenged persons is 50.94 percent and female visually challenged persons is 49.06 percent.¹⁰⁵

Figure No. 3.16- Percentage Distribution of Visually Challenged Persons by Sex in Rural and Urban Area of South Twenty Four Parganas, 2011.



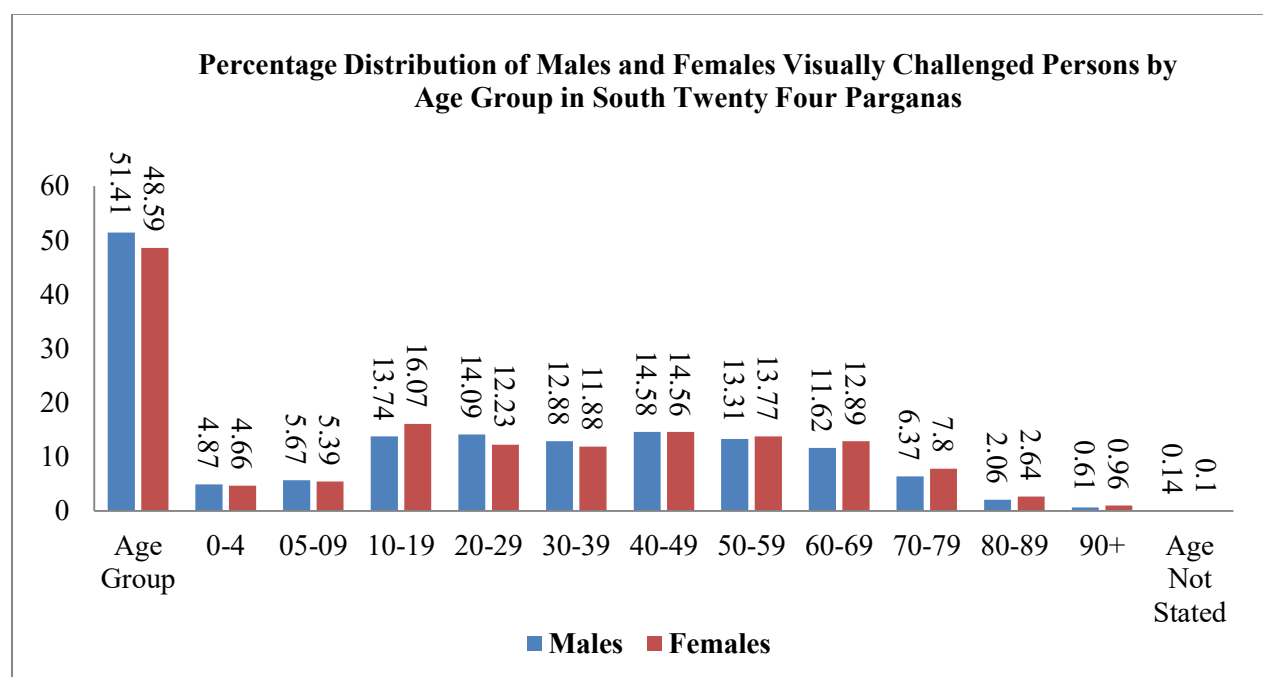
Source: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. 2011.

The distribution of Visually Challenged Persons on Age Group basis in the district of South 24 Parganas are depicted in the following manner. The male constitutes 4.87 percent and female constitutes 4.66 percent is in the age group (0-4). Male constitutes 5.67 percent and female constitutes 5.39 percent is in the age group (05-09). Male constitutes 13.74 percent and female constitutes 16.07 percent in the age group (10-19 year). Male constitutes 14.09 percent and female constitutes 12.23 of visually challenged persons is in the age group (20-29 year). Male

¹⁰⁵ Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2011

constitutes 12.88 percent and female constitutes 11.88 percent is in the age (30-39 year). Male constitutes 14.58 percent and female constitutes 14.56 percent is in the age group (40-49 year). Male constitutes 13.31 percent and female constitutes 13.77 percent is in the age group (50-59 year). Male constitutes 11.62 percent and female constitutes 12.89 percent is in the age group (60-69 year). Male constitutes 6.37 percent and female constitutes 7.8 percent is in the age group (70-79 year). Male constitutes 2.06 percent and female constitutes 2.64 percent is in the age group (80-89 year). Male constitutes 0.61 percent and female constitutes 0.96 is in the age group (90+ years). Male constitutes 0.14 percent and female constitutes 0.1 percent is in the age group (Age not stated). As per the statistics mentioned above, the percentage of visually challenged persons is highest in the age group (40-49 year) followed by the age group (50-59 year) for both male and female visually challenged persons.

Figure No. 3.17- Visually Challenged Persons by Age Group in the District of South Twenty Four Parganas, 2011.



Source: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. 2011.

Problems and Challenges Faced by the Visually Challenged Persons

According to Amartya Sen a noted economist, “Disabled people are not only the most deprived human beings in the developing world, they are most neglected.”¹⁰⁶ The Visually Challenged Persons are not a homogenous group in the district of Purba Medinipur. They are also gigantically deprived and neglected of all opportunities. The basic needs and facilities such as accessibility, education, employment and health are denied to them. It is found that the physically able person do not consider the visually challenged persons with the same eye in society. In addition to the physical problems, they also carry the brunt of social ostracism and stigma. In today’s globalized world, therefore, the visually challenged persons, most of times, face a magnitude of obstacles in their way of life. In the context of the district of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas, these problems and obstacles are highlighted under the following head.

In the context of accessibility to the basic requirements of the visually challenged persons in both district of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas, it is found that the situation of visually challenged persons is not satisfactory. Only a few schools and educational buildings have system of pavements and ramps for visually challenged students. In most of the schools, colleges and hospitals, there are no ramps or lifts facilities for persons with disabilities, especially visually challenged students. Again, the actual scenario in both district of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas reveals that visually challenged persons are not asked to have a seat in any public bus because maximum of the buses are full of passengers. Besides, the visually challenged persons

¹⁰⁶ Sen, Amartya. *The Idea of Justice*, Massachusetts, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press Cambridge, 2009, p. 256.

are facing problems on public roads because of lack of installation of signal at traffic lights and designing appropriate symbols, and warning signals for persons with disabilities, especially visually challenged persons.

So far as the educational developments of the visually challenged persons are concerned, they have been confronted with number of problems and challenges associated with accessing to education through formal and non-formal mode. Though, the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 emphasised the role of government and local authorities to take appropriate action programme to ensure that students with disabilities shall not be deprived from accessing free education, the prevailing situations of the visually challenged students has witnessed a negative connotation in accessing the benefit of educational development. Contextualising the problems of visually challenged students in West Bengal with special reference to both the district of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas, the challenges associated with accessing educational benefits are more of similar nature. The visually challenged students are always confronted with problems associated with a holistic approach to integrated educational systems. Again the problems of the arrangement of special schools and colleges with the facilities of vocational training programme are major impediment in the way of realizing the benefits of education.¹⁰⁷ In addition to this, they have been facing the problems of infrastructure facilities such as- special library, sufficient number of brail books and other related documents in most of the schools and colleges along with sufficient number of trained teachers for their all-round educational development. In the context of Establishment of Educational Institutions for the blind and other physically & mentally handicapped in the both District of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas, it is depicted in the following manner. The

¹⁰⁷ Handbook, District Statistical, and Purba Medinipur. "Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics." *Government of West Bengal* (2014), pp. 27-37.

Educational Institutions for the blind and other physically & mentally handicapped in the District of Purba Medinipur are from the session 2006-2007 (10), 2007-2008 (10), 2008-2009 (10), 2009-2010 (10), 2010-2011 (10), 2011-2012 (10), 2012-2013 (10), 2013-2014 (7), 2014-2015 (7), 2015-2016 (7), 2016-2017 (7), 2017-2018 (7).¹⁰⁸

Table No. 3.18- Establishment of Educational Institutions for the Blind and Other Physically & Mentally Handicapped in the District of Purba Medinipur from 2006 to 2018.

Sl. No	Institutions	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
1	Educational Institutions for the Blind and other Physically & Mentally Handicapped	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	7	7	7	7	7

Source: Bureau of Applied Economic & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation, Government of West Bengal.

On the other hand, in the District of South 24 Parganas, the Educational Institutions for the blind and other physically & mentally handicapped are from the session 2006-2007 (7), 2007-2008 (7),

¹⁰⁸ Handbook, District Statistical, and Purba Medinipur. "Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics." *Government of West Bengal* (2018), pp. 28-35.

2008-2009 (6), 2009-2010 (5), 2010-2011 (4), 2011-2012 (5), 2012-2013 (5), 2013-2014 (5), 2014-2015 (8), 2015-2016 (5), 2016-2017 (5), 2017-2018 (5).¹⁰⁹

Table No. 3.19- Establishment of Educational Institutions for the Blind and Other Physically & Mentally Handicapped in the District of South Twenty Four Parganas, From 2006 to 2018.

Sl. No	Institutions	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
1	Educational Institutions for the Blind and other Physically & Mentally Handicapped	7	7	6	5	4	5	5	5	8	5	5	5

Source: Bureau of Applied Economic & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation, Government of West Bengal.

In relations to the employment generation schemes for the visually challenged persons in both district of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas are concerned, there is no specific data available in any form. Though the government of West Bengal has provided the schemes of reservations for visually challenged persons to access the benefits of employment in public sectors, their employment in the private sectors are very negligible due to the cause of societal

¹⁰⁹ Handbook, District Statistical and South Twenty Parganas. "Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics." *Government of West Bengal* (2018), pp. 27-35.

superstition and physical impairment. Even if private sector, their employment are mostly in the field of agriculture, small hotels and restaurants. In the context of West Bengal, Section 32-41 and Chapter VI of The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, protection of rights and full Participation) Act 1995 under Office of the Commission for Persons with Disabilities, Department of Women and Child Development and Social Welfare, Government of West Bengal provided 3 percent reservation seats for Persons with Disabilities following to 100 point roster. The 100 point roster depicted that i). Blindness & Low Vision: 1 percent (12th Vacancy) ii). Hearing Impairment: 1 percent (42nd Vacancy) iii). Locomotor disability or CP: 1 percent (72nd Vacancy). In terms of age relaxation, Physically Challenged persons are eligible to take age relaxation of 5 year for their recruitment in State Government of West Bengal and relaxation of 5 percent marks in admission and recruitment to Schools, Colleges and Universities. Again Persons with Disabilities are exempted from payment of examination and application fees Rs. 40 percent of total fees prescribed in respect of competitive examination. As per Office of the Commission for Persons with Disabilities, Department of Women and Child Development and Social Welfare, Government of West Bengal, 6450 Persons with Disabilities are working as Assistant Teachers in Government and Government aided Schools during the academic session 2014-15. The State Government of West Bengal first launched Employment Bank Portal for the persons with disabilities, which is an supportive platform among three parties including ‘the Job Seekers, ‘the Employers’ and ‘the placement agencies’ enabling the persons with disabilities to enroll online. Therefore, Employment Bank Portal is mainly established to help the job seekers to search for their suitable employment as per their qualifications. It is noted that 13560 persons with disabilities have registered their names in Employment Bank Portal, out of which 1530 persons with disabilities have been sanctioned unemployment assistance Rupees 1500/- per

month. In addition, the State Government of West Bengal, Department of Women and Child Development and Social Welfare organized a 'ROJGAR MELA' in the International Day of the persons with disabilities in 2014 where 530 persons with disabilities appeared out of which 100 persons with disabilities were short listed.¹¹⁰ In continuation to this effort, in 2015-16 Session, there were 13750 persons with disabilities have registered their names in Employment Bank, out of which 1560 persons with disabilities have been sanctioned assistant Rupees 1500/- per month.¹¹¹ Likewise, during the 2016-17 Session, 13980 persons with disabilities have registered their names in Employment Bank, out of which 1417 persons with disabilities have been sanctioned unemployment assistance Rupees 1500/- per month.¹¹² With keeping in mind that, one of the most effective pillars of empowerment and inclusion is economic development. A ROJGAR MELA (2018-19) was held on 4th and 5th December, 2019 through the initiatives of W & CD & SW Dept. Government of West Bengal. The numbers of qualified persons were 574 (Five Hundred Seventy Four) disabled candidate appeared, out of which 174 disabled persons were short listed.¹¹³

So far as the scheme and programmes of social security for visually challenged persons are concerned, the Government of West Bengal launched West Bengal Disability Pension Scheme in 2010. Under this scheme, it is cited that the financial assistance of @ Rs. 750/- (Seven Hundred Fifty Rupees) per month is provided to persons with disabilities who are residents of the state of West Bengal. To realize the Disability Pension scheme, the government has provided certain

¹¹⁰ Annual Report (2014-2015), Department of Women and Child Development and Social Welfare, State Commission for Persons with Disabilities, West Bengal, p.5.

¹¹¹ Annual Report (2015-2016), Department of Women and Child Development and Social Welfare, State Commission for Persons with Disabilities, West Bengal, p.4

¹¹² Annual Report (2016-2017), Department of Women and Child Development and Social Welfare, State Commission for Persons with Disabilities, West Bengal, pp. 4-5.

¹¹³ Annual Report (2018-2019), Department of Women and Child Development and Social Welfare, State Commission for Persons with Disabilities, West Bengal, pp. 4-5

criteria of such nature. First the persons with disabilities have to collect the Application Form in free of cost and Application Form have to address to the following offices: office of the Block Development Officer or the Executive Officer of the concerned Panchayat Samity in the event of the applicant stays in the rural areas under the said Panchayat Samity, Office of the Sub-Divisional Officer in the event of the applicant stays in Municipal/ Notified areas outside the areas of Kolkata Municipal Corporation, and Office of the Controller of Vagrancy, West Bengal Situated at Purta Bhawan, Bidhan Nagar, Kolkata-700091, in the event of the applicant stays within the areas under Kolkata Municipal Corporation, Application Form for Pension shall be addressed to The District Magistrate of the concerned District and submitted to the Block Development Officer or the Executive Officer of the concerned Panchayat Samity in the event of the applicant stays in the rural areas under the said Panchayat Samity. As per the information from the Department of Women Development & Social Welfare there are persons with disabilities (44,244) who are eligible to get the pension benefits. Accordingly their getting pension benefits of @ Rs. 750/- per month. National Indira Gandhi Disability Pension Scheme (NIGDPS) has implemented through the Department of Panchayat and Rural Development. 45,828 Persons with severe Disability received Pension (@ Rs. 600/- per month out of which (@ Rs. 300/- Central share and Rs. 300/- State share) during 2016-17.¹¹⁴ The West Bengal Disability Pension Scheme, 2010 directed by Women and Child Development & Social Welfare is merged with 'Manabik Pension' Scheme under 'Jai Bangla Scheme'. As per the guidelines of the

¹¹⁴ The West Bengal Disability Pension Scheme, 2010, GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL, Department of Women & Child Development and Social Welfare Writers' Buildings, Kolkata-700001, pp. 2-8.

‘Manabik Pension’ Scheme, in the State of West Bengal, all persons with disabilities beneficiaries will get a pension @ Rs. 1000/-(Rupees One Hundred) per month.¹¹⁵

With reference to the Disability Pension scheme of Purba Medinipur, District Statistical Handbook, 2018 stated that there are total numbers of persons with disabilities approximately 114088, out of which 18,621 disabled people are pension recipients from 2006 to 2018. The year from 2006 to 2007 witnessed the numbers of Persons with Disabilities who are getting pension are approximately (667). From the year 2007 to 2008 the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (630). From the year 2008 to 2009, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (1456). From the year 2009 to 2010, the numbers of disabled pension recipients (1465). From the 2010 to 2011, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (1470).¹¹⁶ In addition, from the year 2011 to 2012, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (1961). From the year 2012 to 2013, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (1742). From the year 2013 to 2014, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (1870).¹¹⁷ Besides these, from the year 2014 to 2015, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (1870). From the year 2015 to 2016, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (1816). From the year 2016 to 2017, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (1822). From the year 2017 to 2018, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (1852).¹¹⁸

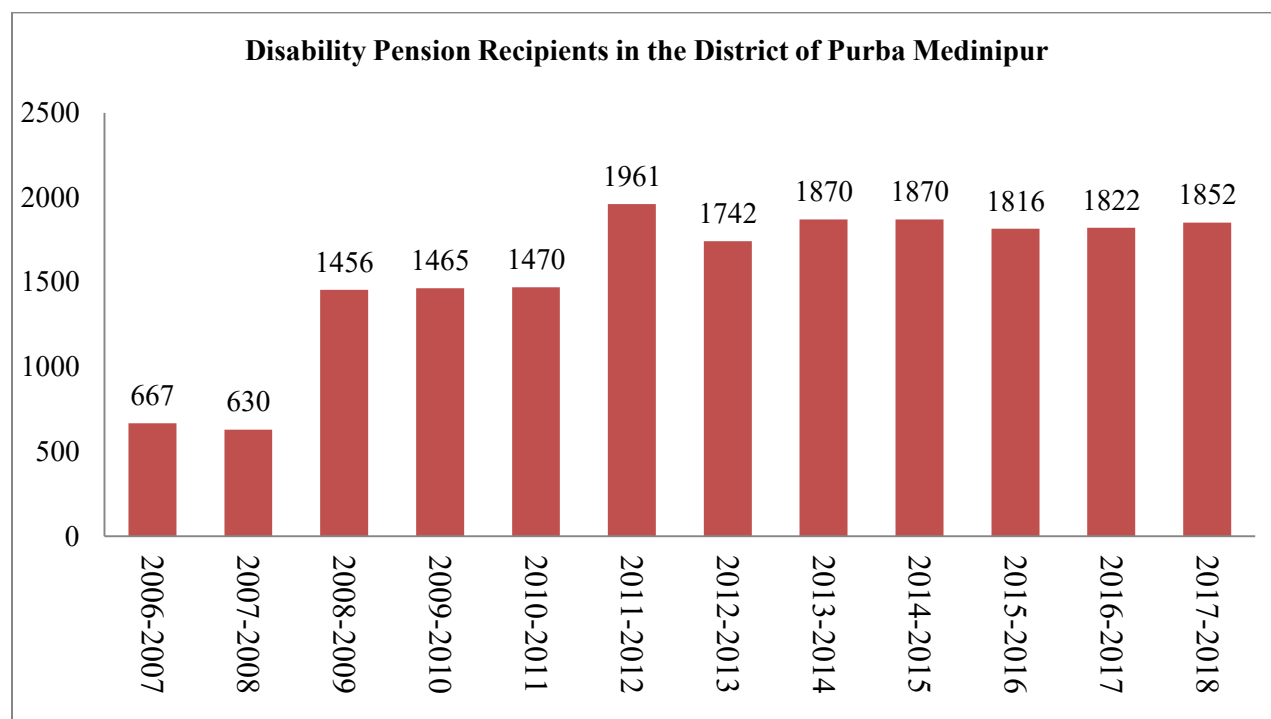
¹¹⁵ ‘Manabik’ Pension Scheme, Government of West Bengal, Department of Women and Child Development & Social Welfare, No. 1781-WCD-20099/2-2018-Part (2), Dated-06/05/2020.

¹¹⁶ Handbook, District Statistical, and Purba Medinipur. "Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics." *Government of West Bengal* (2010-2011), p. 65.

¹¹⁷ Handbook, District Statistical, and Purba Medinipur. "Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics." *Government of West Bengal* (2014), p. 65.

¹¹⁸ Handbook, District Statistical, and Purba Medinipur. "Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics." *Government of West Bengal* (2018) p. 65.

Figure No. 3.20- Disability Pension Recipients in the District of Purba Medinipur (From 2006 to 2018).



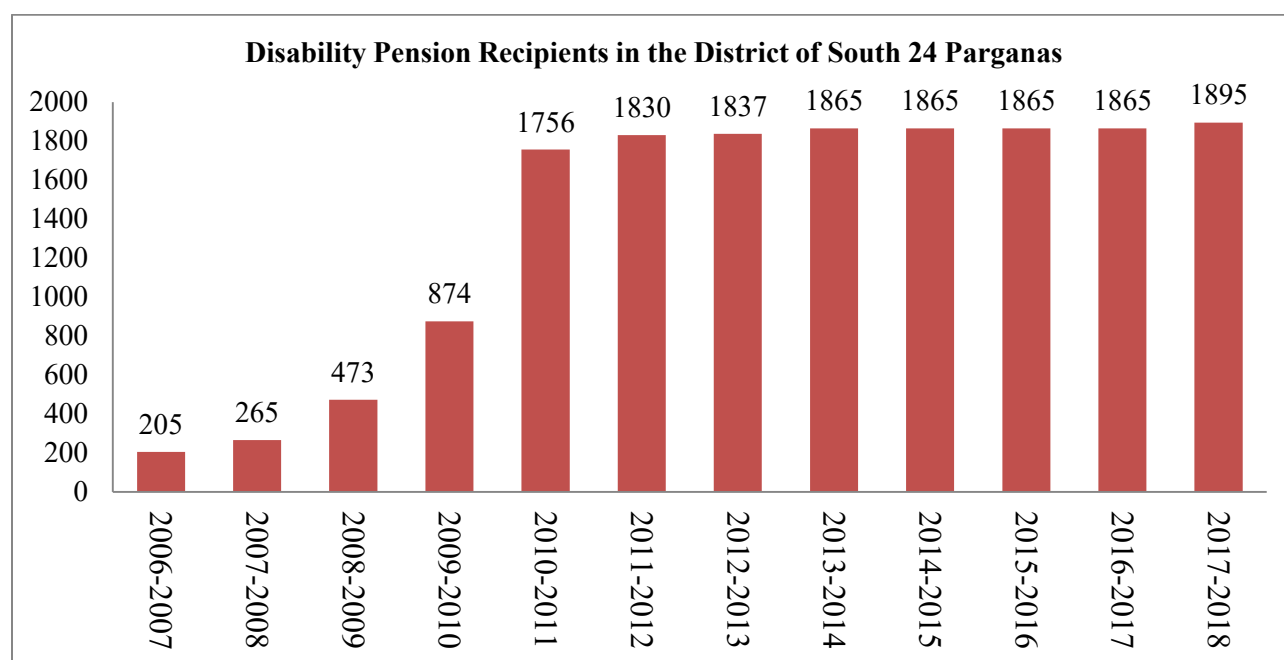
Source: Bureau of Applied Economic & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation, Government of West Bengal.

In the context of Disability Pension scheme of South 24 Parganas, Statistic Census Report, 2018 stated that there total number of persons with disabilities approximately 2, 27,129, out of which total 16,595 Persons with Disabilities are Pension recipients from 2006 to 2018 which has been mentioned in the following manner. From the year 2006 to 2007, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (205). From the year 2007 to 2008, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (265). From the year 2008 to 2009, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (473). From the year 2009 to 2010, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (874). From the year 2010 to 2011, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (1756).¹¹⁹ From the year

¹¹⁹ District Statistical Handbook, South Twenty Parganas, 2010 and 2011, Bureau of Applied Economic & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation, Government of West Bengal, p. 65.

2011 to 2012, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (1830). From the year 2012-2013, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (1837). From the year 2013-2014, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (1865).¹²⁰ From the year 2014 to 2015, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (1865). From the year 2015to 2016, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (1865). From the year 2016 to 2017, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (1865). From the year 2017 to 2018, the numbers of disabled pension recipients are (1895).¹²¹

Figure No. 3.21-Disability Pension in the District of South 24 Parganas (From 2006 to 2018).



Source: Bureau of Applied Economic & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation, Government of West Bengal.

¹²⁰ District Statistical Handbook, South Twenty Parganas, 2014, Bureau of Applied Economic & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation, Government of West Bengal, p. 65.

¹²¹ District Statistical Handbook, South Twenty Parganas, 2018, Bureau of Applied Economic & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation, Government of West Bengal, p. 65.

Interview with Visually Challenged Persons Facing with Numerous Problems in the District of Purba Medinipur

In the context of problems of the visually challenged persons, I have taken interviews of affected visually challenged persons.

On 30 December, 2020, I had interview with **Debabrata Khanra** is a Visually Challenged person having 25 years of old. He is residing at Nimtouri in the district of Purba Medinipur. He is now doing higher study in Bengali literature, 2nd Year (M.A), Jadavpur University. According to Debabrata Khanra, he is gigantically facing many problems in the state of West Bengal. To address the problems of accessibility, he told that as I am a 100% visually challenged person, I have been facing problems associated with walking at roads, lack of pavements, accessing government offices, educational institutions, ATMs etc. He has expressed that all visually challenged persons use a stick for moving from place to another places, which is very essential for them, but the government does not provide it to the visually challenged persons. It is bought by own arrangements. He has also expressed concern over the mismanagement and irregularities associated with their free movement in public road, according to him, there are no zebra crossing and audio voice signal for crossing the road which make them uncomfortable and insecure while crossing over the public road. The government of West Bengal has not taken adequate initiatives to that end. In addition, he has expressed concern over problems in government offices and institutions where there has no Braille system in lifts, ramps. He also mentioned a problem in accessing ATMs for which he is depended on other able persons because there is no braille voice system to withdraw the money. Regarding problems associated with accessibility of education, he has expressed that in educational institution, the government has declared that the persons with disabilities are provided 3 percent reservation for the admission. But the 3 percent

reservation according to him is not enough for the disabled students. Out of the 3 percent reservation the visually challenged students are provided only 1 percent reservation. He faces many problems in university where there are no availability of Braille books for higher education and no audio voice recorders. He also mentioned that there is a problem for getting the script writer on behalf of them for the examination purpose. According to him, the authority of the institution does not provide the script writer. Besides, he mentioned that the state government has launched youth computer center for training, but such computer training center are not specific to them. According to him, though the Right of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 has provided 3 percent reservation for the persons with disabilities including visually challenged, such reservation policy in practices are not strictly followed by the state government. He also expressed that the visually challenged persons face problems in both government and private sectors regarding their appointment because of their 100 percent blindness. The social security measures, with reference to 'Manabik Pension' @ Rs. 1000/- per month to all persons with disabilities is according to him, is not enough for doing higher study.

Interview with **Subhankar Bhunia** (on 30 December, 2020), who is a visually challenged student with the student of 20 year old, resides at Bhagwanpur, in the district of Purba Medinipur. He is pursuing graduation in the Department of History, Jadavpur University. According to Subhankar Bhunia persons with 100 percent blindness face many problems in walking at roads, pavements, government offices, educational institutions. To him, the government does not provide the white cane walking stick for moving from one place to other places. He also expressed his concern over lack of facilities in government offices and education institutions such as do the instrument of talking braille, ramps for the visually challenged persons. Again he confronted with problems while walking on the road because there is no zebra

crossing and special music in signal for visually challenged persons. Issues regarding accessibility to education, the government declaration of 3 percent of reservation are not sufficient for their educational development. In addition, he faces many problems in university where there are no availability of Braille books and audio voice recorders for higher education. He also expressed concern about the unviability of script writer during the period of examination. Regarding the employment issues, the above mentioned 3 percent reservation in getting a job is not sufficient enough. According to him, it is seen that recruitment of visually challenged person having 100 percent blindness in private sector are very negligible, and the government in this context are not taking bold steps.

Saddam Alam is a low vision student of 26 year old, resides at Haldia of Purba Medinipur. He is now doing the B.Ed. course at Jadavpur University. I have taken an interview about the problems of visually challenged on 1st January, 2021. According to him, the problems faced by the visually challenged persons are economic and societal in nature. The society is not accepting the visually challenged person within its mainstream. Most of the people in the society treat the visually challenged persons on the ground of sympathy. He has been facing problems associated with accessing road, pavement, institutions where there is lack of infrastructural facilities such as -traffic signal and audio voice sound system, lift facilities with braille for visually challenged persons. To address the problems of education, he mentions that the state of government has announced 3 percent reservation seat to the admission for the disabled students, but many institutions does not allow the policies of reservation in strict sense of the term. He has also mentioned that in West Bengal, there is lack of special schools for the visually challenged students. He is not happy with regard to the employment scenario of visually challenged

students, because, the government provided 3 percent reservation are not sufficient, it is not strictly implemented in every public sectors.

Interview with **Santipada Bhunia** who is a full blindness person is having 50 years of old. I have taken an interview on 5th January, 2021. He is a married person, having three children. He resides at the village and post office- Baraudaypur, Police station- Patashpur, District- Purba Medinipur. He shares his perception about the problems of the visually challenged persons. He identified the problems associated with traveling of the blind persons in buses and trains. To him, in most of the cases, the bus conductors refused to accept the concession certificate issued by the government for the disabled people. The government sponsored 'Manabik Pension' scheme @ Rs. 1000/- per month is not sufficient enough to satisfy the basic economic needs and requirement of the disabled persons.

Interview with **Amal Kumar Mishra (36 year old)** who is fully visually impaired person, resides at the Village of Pratapdighi, in Purba Medinipur. I have taken an interview on 9 January, 2021. He is pursuing Ph.D in the department of history, Jadavpur University. Considering to the problems of the visually challenged student, he has stated that he has faced with enormous problems and social stigma. He is very much concerned over the non-implementation of provision meant for the visually challenged persons in different Central Government and State Governments disability Act. He has also been facing the problems of accessibility to educational institutions, transport systems and proper study materials. To him, many educational institutions and Banks do not provide user friendly lift facility, and in the road, there is no special audio voice facility, in the red light signal. The policy of reservation to educational institutions and employment are not satisfactory. There are no sufficient braille books, computers, audio recorded voice materials and scribe writers. In addition, the competitive examination to different

position meant for the visually challenged persons are not taking place in due time, leading to severe unemployment problems, for example, since 2011, the West Bengal Government does not conduct the School Service Commission (SSC) Examination for employment. In regarding the social security issues, the government sponsored schemes are not sufficient for their daily livelihood with reference to ‘Manabik Pension’ @ Rs. 1000/- per month to all persons with disabilities.

I have taken an interview with **Subrata Bhowmik** (31 years old) on 7 March, 2021. He is completely 100 percent blindness person. He is a resident of Khagda village under Chandipur Block in the district of Purba Medinipur. He was the opinion that the problems of the disabled people are both family and society centric coming out of economic necessity and social dignity. He has very much apprehended about the social superstition and stigma regarding the disabled people. To him, it is seen that visually challenged persons are looked upon with pity in our society. he has nareted multifarious problems faced by the disabled people in accessing education, getting employment, specifically private sector, and problems associated with accessibility of educational institutions including accessibility to study materials and problems related to free movement without barriers or limitations. The social security provision provided by the government especially the ‘Manabik Pension’ scheme is not satisfactory.

Interview with Visually Challenged Persons Facing with Numerous Problems in the District of South 24 Parganas

Sanjib Rajak is a completely 100 percent visually challenged person. I have taken an interview on 18 February 2021. By profession, he is an Assistant Professor in the department of Bengali, Shusil Kar College. He resides at Baruipur in South 24 Parganas. According to him, the problems of the disabled people are primarily associated with the societal acceptance, economic

necessity and empowerment. He is concerned about lack of infrastructural facilities in accessing educational institutions, system of transportation and the provision of employment primarily in the private sectors. He has laid emphasis on the special school system with trained teachers and adequate study materials. He is not in favor of a common school system of both normal and disabled students. He has identified a peculiar problems relating to the language as medium of instruction and the availability of study materials in vernacular languages. To him, audio and PDF are available in both English and Hindi version, not much is available in Bengali version, especially Braille books. He is not satisfied with the present scheme of social security specifically the ‘Manabik pension’ scheme of @Rs 1,000 per month for people with disabilities, especially visually challenged persons.

Interview with **Kahnu Patra** (65 year old), I have taken an interview on 25 November, 2020. He resides at the village of Kalyanpur, South 24 Parganas. He has narrated peculiar problems which are basically from his own family environment. To him, because of his blindness and low income, the family members are very much abusive towards him, along with problems associated with social acceptance and recognitions. He is not satisfied with the social security measures, specifically the ‘Manabik Pension’ scheme (Rupees @1000 per month) because of its minimal and irregular nature.

Interview with **Gandhari Halder** is a 100 percent visually challenged person. I have taken an interview on 2nd August, 2021. She is 25 years old, born and brought up at Laxmikantapur, in the District of South 24 Parganas. She described her pathetic condition as blind women who cannot do anything for the family and society. She is of opinion that due to her gender, there was no family support and acceptance in different sphere of her life. Her parents decided not to send school because of her gender factor. She has also unaware of the facilities provided by the

government relating to education, transportation, employment and social security measures because of she is illiterate. Therefore, she has now chosen to beg in door to door, pavements and trains. Thus, she is leading a miserable life.

Interview with **Niranjan Mondal** (29 year) is person having low vision (75 percent). I have taken interview on 19th February, 2021. He resides at Sagar in the district of South 24 Parganas. By profession, he is an assistant professor of Sankaril Anil Biswas Mahavidyalaya in the district of Howrah. He is also pursuing Ph.D degree in the department of Bengali, Jadavpur University. He said that People with disabilities, especially blind people, are facing various problems in today's society. He narrated the problems of disabled people in relations to equal rights, full participation and opportunities. He is of the opinion that the government's provisions of educational facilities including admission to educational institutions and employment generations for the blind people are not strictly implemented. Further, he felt the problems of social prejudice as a major factor in accessing in traveling on the streets, administrative buildings, shopping malls, theaters, banks, etc. He also concerned about the lack of Braille books and audio books, getting of script writer during the examination, job guarantee in the private sectors for the disabled persons.

Interview with **Sukdev Biswas** (32 year old) is a low vision person with (70 percent). I have taken an interview on 22nd February, 2021. He is by profession, a railway employee. His native place is at Taldi under Canning Block in the district of South 24 Parganas. He described the problems of visually challenged persons in relations to accessibility to education, public places, restaurants, bathing ghats, employment in public and private sectors, accessibility of the social security provision from time to time by the government. He considered education is the pivot around which all-round development of the personality of the disabled people revolves around.

He is of the opinion that empowering the disabled by providing all means through both institutional and societal support are necessary conditions. In this context, he identified the factor of social stigma and lack of political will and awareness are responsible for the miserable position of the disabled people in the society.

Chapter- IV

Approaches of Non-State Actors Working for the Cause of Visually Challenged in the Districts of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas

Chapter- IV

Approaches of Non-State Actors Working for the Cause of Visually Challenged in the Districts of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas

Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs) is a heterogeneous group which can be classified into two broad categories such as- 'orientation' and 'level of operation'. Orientation NGOs are discussed by benevolent orientation, service orientation, participative orientation, empowering orientation. It refers to a number of initiatives, such as human rights, environmental, and development initiatives. On the sharp contrary, level of operation NGOs are understood by community constructed organisation, national level NGOs, and international level NGOs.¹²² According to the United Nations, all forms of confidential organisations which are autonomous from government authority can be regarded as Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs). In the framework of an opposing political party, these Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) must also be non-profit and non-criminal.¹²³ Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are defined by the World Bank (1990) as "an organisation or group of people working actively in society, completely independent of any external control, with specific goals and intentions to complete tasks aimed at bringing about desired change in a given community."¹²⁴ Professor Peter Willetts, known as a pioneer in the study of the transnational relations of non-governmental organisations,

¹²² Mostashari, Ali. "An Introduction to Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) Management," *Iranian Studies Group at MIT*, 2005, pp. 2-4.

¹²³ Lang, Raymond. "The Role of NGOs in the Process of Empowerment and Social Transformation of People with Disabilities," 2000, p. 6.

¹²⁴ Singh, Mubarak, and Anupama Sethi. "Role of NGOs in Promotion of Education of Disabled– A Case Study of Jammu District," 2003, p. 2.

defines Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as an autonomous and self-reliant voluntary association of individuals who collaborate on a regular basis for a few common goals and objectives other than obtaining government office, making money, or engaging in illegal activities.¹²⁵ Prof. Amartya Sen, a renowned economist, observed that *“the relationship between the state and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) is one of cooperative conflict. With the increasing role of the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in development activities, the Non-Governmental Organisations are now drawing attention to professionals from various other sectors, and capacities are being built in support areas likely, financial management, resource mobilization, human resources, leadership development, governance procedures and practices and institutional development.”*¹²⁶

In India, Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs) became popular in the 1980s. It played a pioneering role in the rural development programme according to the sixth five-year plan (1980-1985). The Seventh Five- year plan (1985-1990) acknowledges the contribution of NGOs in promoting self-reliant and independent communities. In India's eighth five-year plan (1986-1990), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are given more prominence for rural development programmes. In the Ninth five-year plan (1997-2002), emphasis has been given upon the role of NGOs in the upliftment of public-private partnership model.

According to a survey by planning commission, Government of India, the state of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka, Gujarat, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Orissa, and Rajasthan have the highest number of registered non-governmental organisations. Majority of Non-Governmental Organisation(NGOs) are engaged with the health service activities

¹²⁵ Lang, Raymond. “The Role of NGOs in the Process of Empowerment and Social Transformation of People with Disabilities,” 2000, p. 7.

¹²⁶ Mohammed, Asif, Yojana. “Role of NGOs in India,” Soochna Bhavan, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi, November 2011, p.10.

(HIV/AIDS, Drug De-addiction Awareness, Immunization, and Child Health Programme), education (especially non-formal activities, Elementary and Adult Education, Skill Development of adolescent girls, students with disabilities and women from poor and needy families), agriculture (especially agricultural extension and fisheries), nutrition programmes for children and expectant women, environment, water and sanitation, training and capacity building, peace building and conflict transformation, social development and community empowerment of weaker sections, age care (care for the aged or older persons), animal welfare, caste, cities, community development, culture and heritage, persons with disability, disaster management, housing and slums, population, poverty, rural transformation and waste management.¹²⁷

In the context of persons with disabilities in India, Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs) plays a fundamental role in providing beneficiary activities in provision for the persons with disabilities. Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs) has been involved with the task of imparting proper education for the children with disabilities. The Indian government has also recognised the activities of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to reach out to people with disabilities and provided them with a variety of opportunities. Moreover, numerous International development aid organizations emboldened NGOs to endeavor innovative approaches for apprehending people with disabilities. Around one million non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in India have adopted creative ideas and tactics for educating children with disabilities, mostly by encouraging the use of an integrated and inclusive approach system.

¹²⁷ "National Policy on the Voluntary Sector," *Voluntary Action Cell Planning Commission*, Government of India, May- 2007, pp. 6-8.

The Spastic Societies in West Bengal, Bombay, Tamil Nadu, Bangalore, and Delhi have made significant contributions to the development of mental retardation and cerebral palsy by developing innovative approaches to simply provide healthcare access for a large number of children with disabilities.

The present research has been related to the study of specific districts of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas in West Bengal with specific reference to the role of Non-Governmental Organisations working of the causes of the visually challenged persons. In this context, the role of Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs) are revolves around the basic themes, such as child rights, child welfare, child education, women upliftment and empowerment, health, access to transport facilities, social security provisions belongs to physically and mentally challenged. In the context of the present study, it is noted that few Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas in West Bengal, are actively working for the causes of persons with disabilities, particularly the visually challenged persons by providing them new skills and gaining self-reliance and enabling the visually challenged to lead a life of dignity and productivity.

Approaches of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (MR, VI & MULTIPLE), Purba Medinipur

The Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (MR, VI & MULTIPLE) was established in 1997. It is a Non-Governmental Organization. It is situated in the village of Chak Sri Krishnapur and located at Tamluk Block of Purba Medinipur district of West Bengal. It is registered under registered

society. This Non-Governmental Organisation is not funded by the Government of West Bengal, it is funded by the public donation. This institution provides schools for persons with disability students. It is co-educational institutions having 5 to 10 classes. There are 23(Twenty Three) visually challenged students (2019-2020) including 16(males) and 7(females). In this institution, the number of students with females-males ratio on class wise basis (2017-2020) has been mentioned:

Table No. 4.1- Total Students and Class Wise Total Number of Male And Female Visually Challenged Students (2017-2020), Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (MR, VI & MULTIPLE).

Total students and class wise total number of males and females visually challenged students (2017-2020)					
Students	Class	2017	2018	2019	2020
23	5 th	4	4	4	4
	6 th	5	5	8	8
	7 th	8	4	4	4
	8 th	4	0	0	0
	9 th	4	5	5	5
23	10 th	4	2	2	2

Source: Field Report on Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (MR, VI & MULTIPLE).

The class wise percentage of results of the visually challenged students in 2020 is 60 percent in Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (MR, VI & MULTIPLE) which is such nature.

Table No. 4.2- Class Wise Percentage of Results of Visually Challenged Students in Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (MR, VI & MULTIPLE).

Class wise percentage of results of the visually challenged students				
Class	2017	2018	2019	2020
5 th	60	60	60	60
6 th	60	60	60	60
7 th	60	60	60	60
8 th	60	60	60	60
9 th	60	60	60	60
10 th	60	60	60	60

Source: Field Report on Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (MR, VI & MULTIPLE).

The class wise percentage of drop out of the visually challenged students in 2020 is 0 percent in Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (MR, VI & MULTIPLE) which is such nature.

Table No. 4.3- Class Wise Percentage of Drop Out of Visually Challenged Students in Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (MR, VI & MULTIPLE).

Class wise percentage of drop out of visually challenged students				
Class	2017	2018	2019	2020
5 th	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
6 th	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
7 th	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
8 th	NIL	9	NIL	NIL
9 th	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
10 th	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL

Source: Field Report on Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (MR, VI & MULTIPLE).

With a view to accessing free barriers environment, this institution provides free hostel facility for the visually challenged students along with the provision of curriculum activities for rehabilitating the visually challenged students. To that end, this school arranges two types' curriculum and activities, namely -mobility and economic development programme in which candle making, music instrument and vocal music, swimming, sport and culture has been given more priorities. The Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (MR, VI, & MULTIPLE) is not entirely run by the West Bengal State Government, but rather by public donations. However, State Government assists with few assistive technologies through NGOs, such as- white Cann stick, audio recorder. As per the survey, there are 23(Twenty Three) visually challenged students in this school, but there is only 8 (Eight) Brails books available for reading purpose. The visually challenged students are taught vocal music in this institution. They are engaged with the activities of several cultural programmes where they earn and collect few rupees from the pupils. According to the General Secretary of the institution (Jogesh Samanta), Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (MR, VI & MULTIPLE) is a NGOs, the main objectives of this NGOs is to provide Equal Rights, Full Participation and Full Opportunities for the visually challenged students, and to build proper education, self-reliance, social development and compatible development for the visually challenged student.

Bikramnagar Udayan Sangha, Bikramnagar, Purba Medinipur

Bikramnagar Udayan Sangha is a Non-profit making voluntary organisation. It is located at Bikramnagar, in the district of Purba Medinipur, West Bengal. The organization has been registered by Government of West Bengal under Societies Registration Act, 1961. The funding of the Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) primarily comes from public donations. The organisation is primarily working with people resides in the rural areas of Purba Medinipur, the

objectives are women's and children's health, welfare programmes such as old age homes for male and female residents, vocational training programmes, book and clothing distribution, and disabled welfare programmes for socio-economic upliftment of the people who have much suffered and are yet being suffered in society. In addition, it is involved with the task of providing primary and basic education with preventive care of students with disabilities including visually challenged students and to make aware about the reasonable provisions of different government schemes to facilitate the persons with disabilities, to engage special trained teachers for the students with disabilities including visually challenged students, and to establish a vocational training programme for the disabled persons, to distribute educational materials and cloths to students with disabilities including visually challenged students.

Teparpara Pratibandi Kalyankami Kendra, Purba Medinipur

The Teparpara Pratibandi Kalyankami Kendra is a NGOs working for persons with disabilities including visually challenged persons. This Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs) is located at Teparpara in the district of Purba Medinipur. This Pratibandi Kalyankami Kendra is established in 2014. It is mainly funded and run by the public donation. According to Secretary of this NGO, (Raju Ari), the visually challenged persons face many problems in society. Therefore, keeping in mind their problems, we work together for the betterment of persons with disabilities including visually challenged persons to bring them in the mainstream society and to make them self-reliant like abled persons. The main objectives of Teparpara Pratibandi Kalyankami Kendra is to make aware the visually challenged persons, to provide the medical certificate issued by the district medical hospital for the visually challenged persons who are being deprived from receiving the handicapped certificate, and to provide white cane stick for visually challenged persons faced to walk in road, and to provide computer training facilities for

the visually challenged persons who are 40% visually challenged, to assist for getting the 'Manabik Pension' Scheme @ Rs. 1000/- per month. In addition, this Teparpara Pratibandi Kalyankami Kendra also involves with the task of providing wheelchairs, dresses and bags etc. for the visually challenged persons.

Blind Persons Association (BPA) in South 24 Parganas, Government of West Bengal

As per the interview with Ex-President-Narayan Ganguly, Vice-President-Sumita Roy and Secretary- Saikat Kar and Assistant Secretary –Nanda Kumar Dhar, Blind Persons Association (BPA) was established 4th January, 2003, by a handful of educated and conscious visually youth to promote self-confidence and self-dependence among their follow brothers and sisters. This Blind Persons Association (BPA) is now situated at Lal Bihari Shah Braille Academia, 24 No. Khan Para Road, Vidyapalli, Malancha Mahi Nagar, Kolkata, West Bengal-700145. The Blind Persons Association is in nature of Braille and Library Project. There are total 30 (Thirty) Visually Challenged Persons residing in Blind Persons Association, out of which there are 21 (Twenty one) males visually Challenged Persons and 9 (Nine) females. To state that, the state government does not provide any facility to this Association; rather this Blind Persons Association is being mainly funded by the Public Donation. There are 115 Braille Books printed with English and Bengali version, and one book with Tamil language. In order to have knowledge about the present scenario of Visually Challenged Persons in West Bengal, the members of Blind Persons Association strongly express their opinion that the Visually Challenged Persons are going through deep miserable conditions associated with the problems of Accessibility, Education, Employment and Social Security etc.

To substantiate the Accessibility of the Visually Challenged Persons, the members of Blind Persons Association expressed the conflictual nature of relations between W. P. 17615 (W) OF 2008 Integrated Disabled Employees' Association (I.D.E.A.) -vs- The State of West Bengal & Ors. WITH W. P. 18513 (W) OF 2008 (Ketabul Sk. and anr. -vs- Sate of West Bengal & Ors.)¹²⁸ wherein it is referred to public interest litigation for providing reservation of two seats for persons with disabilities including visually challenged persons each in all the buses whether state run or state sponsored or private buses and to guarantee provisions for auditory signals in roads and crossings, curb cuts and slopes in pavements, embossing surfaces of the zebra crossings, and warning signals and devising appropriate symbols. After that it is been, realized from their perspectives that the Government of West Bengal is very callousness for availing public transport system. They claim their right to be travel-free because of their disability, but most of the state buses have one seat instead of two seats for disabled. Private buses have no seats facilities for disabled persons including visually challenged persons rather they are shoved around, taunted and confined in the bus by its driver and conductor. Most of time private buses do not pick up the persons with disabilities including visually challenged persons because of their disability. In addition, they express that most of the Government buildings do not have lifts fitted with voice-announcements of the different floors. It is very difficult for them to access the buildings. Unfortunately, Government of West Bengal has not implemented even one percent of those guideline. The members of Blind Persons Association provide their concerns that when the visually challenged persons face with such kind of problems of accessibility, they try to work out

¹²⁸ 6.13 vs Ag/Skc The State Of West Bengal & ... on 10 June, 2013. W. P. 17615 (W) OF 2008 Integrated Disabled Employees' Association (I.D.E.A.) -vs- The State of West Bengal & Ors. WITH W. P. 18513 (W) OF 2008 (Ketabul Sk. and anr. -vs- Sate of West Bengal & Ors.)

movement against the state government for implementing the guideline to ensure the provision for the visually challenged persons.

To address the problems of accessibility regarding Education, the members of Blind Persons Association express their concerns on education facilities of the visually challenged persons that the state of West Bengal provides such as- three percent reservation policy for persons with disabilities including visually challenged persons in admission to all the government and government aided educational institutions and provision for scholarship to disabled students studying up to class VIII and from class IX onwards. Besides the state of Government provides 40 percent concession in application fees and examination fees for secondary and higher secondary and also provides Scribes facilities for the visually challenged students. The members of Blind Persons Association claim that there are different categories of disabled students in West Bengal. Three percent reservation in admission to all the government and government aided educational institutions which is provided by the state government of West Bengal for all disabled students is not sufficient and satisfactory because many disabled students including visually challenged students are also deprived from three percent reservation. The members of Blind Persons Association also claim that the visually challenged students colossally envisage many problems in higher education because we all know that Braille books are very limited in nature for higher education. According to some of the members of Blind Persons Association, still now the state of government does not provide Braille books for higher education. Rather, this Blind Persons Association has printed 115 books for the visually challenged students for studying in higher education. The state of government referred that the visually challenged students are provided Scribe for examination, but real story is that most of time the visually challenged students cannot arrange Scribe Writer in their examination. In addition, this

Association makes audio voice for the visually challenged students for higher education. The members of Blind Persons Association also strongly claim that many schools have been established, but still now any one blind government school is not established in West Bengal.

With a view to Employment facilities of Visually Challenged Persons, the members of Blind Persons Association pointed out that, the government provides three percent reservation in all posts for persons with disabilities including visually challenged persons. But, they claim that the state of West Bengal does not provide proper three percent reservations. The visually challenged persons have access to only one percent reservation which is insufficient for their employment guarantee. The members of Blind Persons Association also claim that the SSC recruitment process is not being held since 2011. In addition, not only SSC recruitment process is not discontinued, but also other government recruitment process does not continue in West Bengal. Therefore, many visually challenged persons are now begging in railways station for their daily living in the society. The members of Blind Persons Association also express that when the visually challenged persons face with problems in recruitment process, all time they try how to solve the problems. Therefore, the members organised mass movement for a genuine recruitment process and they are habituated to access state high court for implementing the recruitment laws. Besides, many visually challenged persons are deprived of their transfer facility in government sectors. Along with that, the members of Blind Persons Association asserted that private sectors do not allow to getting job for visually challenged persons due to their blindness.

To address the Social Security of the visually challenged persons, the members of Blind Persons Association stated that the state of government launched 'Manabik Pension' Scheme of @ Rs. 1000/- per month, and also mentioned that the government employee of children with disabilities are eligible to receive family pension for life if they are unable to earn their living even after

attaining the age of 25. But the real scenario is that the visually challenged persons are deprived of the pension facilities. In addition, the members of Association claimed that the visually challenged employees of the state government are eligible to receive a conveyance allowance at the rate of five per cent of their basic pay, subject to a maximum of Rs. 400/- per month in government aided schools and colleges. As a result, it is seen that persons with disabilities including visually challenged employees in West Bengal still now are deprived of this conveyance allowance. The members of Blind Persons Association are very much concerned about the state of governments policies towards visually challenged persons. The state government does not implement special facilities for the visually challenged persons; so that they can lead better live in society. The members of Blind Persons Association asserted their reservation that if the state government does provide such kind of facilities, the visually challenged persons will do the begging in the railway stations, buses, pavements etc.¹²⁹

Welfare Society for the Blind Geeta Basu Trainning Centre, South 24 Parganas

Welfare Society for the Blind Geeta Basu Trainning Centre is a NGOs working for the cause of visually challenged students. It was established on April, 1970. It is situated at P-102 Diamond Harbour Road (South 24 Parganas), New Alipore, Kolkata- 700053. The Welfare Society for the Blind has registered under the West Bengal Societies Act, 1961. The Society is functioned and funded by the public donations. The primary aim of the Welfare Society for the Blind is to looking after the welfare of the visually challenged without having any form of distinction such as cast, creed, religion and sex, so that the visually challenged persons may be trained and rehabilitated as self-supporting members of our community. Keeping in mind the

¹²⁹ Personal Interview with Ex-President-Narayan Ganguly, Vice-President-Sumita Roy and Secretary- Saikat Kar and Assistant Secretary –Nanda Kumar Dhar, on 23 December, 2020.

problems of visually challenged persons faced in society, the Welfare Society for the Blind provides following services to the visually challenged persons, such as - Computer Training Courses run by the society are organized by the Special Education HEPSN Cell of Jadavpur University. The training classes are held twice a week for two hours per day. They taught the basic computer course including basic concepts of computer, scene readable software and Microsoft word to computer fundamentals including Microsoft excel, Microsoft power point and communication through computer, Tutoring for Communicative Examination where the visually challenged trainees are trained for Government Service Examination, WBSSC, PSC, school service commission examination, rail, bank and postal examination, Communication and Soft Skill Training where conversation skill, grammar skill, personality development interactive skill are provided for the visually challenged persons. Tanning is provided to the visually challenged through the use of white cane stick in all environments, Handloom Weaving where the visually challenged are learned how to weave using a handloom and may become self-employed, Digital Library where audio CDs of regional texts and reference materials and online materials are loaded with assistive software such as 'Jaws' are provided for the visually challenged students. Training in weaving, Eco-friendly Paper Bag Making, Music (Rabindra Sangeet, Synthesizer, Tabla), Mobility Training, Counseling are available for the visually challenged students. Information relating to prospective employment opportunities, as well as data-bank of curriculum vitae of visually disabled persons looking for employment, Braille books materials including facilities for braille printing are provided for the visually challenged students.

Premasree A Free Residential Home for Visually Impaired Children

Premasree A Free Residential Home for Visually Impaired Children is a free residential home for visually impaired children. This Non-Governmental Organization was established on

2008 and began its activities as a registered trust in December, 2012. It is located at the scenic village of Jagulgachi in Ghatakpur, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal. Premasree A Free Residential Home for Visually Impaired Children is organised by the public donations. It is now becoming one of the most reliable residential homes for the visually impaired and blind in West Bengal where two hundred fifty visually challenged students are provided free education, as well as given on Braille literacy, formation, and concept. The main objectives of Premasree A Free Residential Home for Visually Impaired Children are to provide good education for the visually impaired children to assist them in enjoying Equal Rights and Full Participation in our society, to help the visually impaired and blind to achieve psychological and financial development and to make sure that every single visually impaired children and blind have the self-belief and skills to fulfill the potential, and to eradicate the social stigmas and to make awareness of treating individual/communities, and to promote a sustainable model of economic and academic opportunity to the blind and visually impaired children by providing them free access to a conducive environment for their allover development.

Deepanita Braille Institute, South 24 Parganas

Deepanita Braille Institute is a Non-Governmental Organization working for the visually challenged students. This institute was established on 2000. It is situated at Paschim Daspara, P.O- Sonarpur, in the district of South 24 Parganas, West Bengal. This Non-Governmental Organization is mainly run by the public donations. The main objectives of the Deepanita Braille Institute are to educate the visually challenged students in the marginal areas of South 24 Parganas where huge families are unable to get proper education as how to read and train their blind sons and daughters. To that end, this institution comes forward with its initiatives to teach students with visually challenged students, and to provide braille books for the visually

challenged students from class V to M.A. The institution provides the braille training on how to read this braille books, as well as provide audio voice record for the visually challenged students so that they can easily inducted to the teaching learning process. The institute strives to help out economically to the visually challenged students by imparting various training programmes, such as- sewing, doll making, candle making, various bag making, so that the visually challenged students will be not deprived of material wellbeing and would not be humiliated in the society. In addition, this Non-Governmental Organization intended to manifest the perfection of endowments and to develop rehabilitation possibilities for the visually challenged students.

Rubi and Sreema Society for Disabled and Blind Rehabilitation Centre, South 24 Parganas

Rubi and Sreema Society for Disabled and Blind Rehabilitation Centre is a Non-Governmental Organization, established in 2008. This Non-Governmental Organization is functioned by the public donations. It is located at the Village and Post office- 11 No. Ganeshpur 1st portion, P.S.- Kakdwip, the district of South 24 Parganas, West Bengal. The Rubi and Sreema Society for Disabled and Blind Rehabilitation Centre is registered as a society in West Bengal. It is working primarily in the domain of education and literacy, human rights, gender, child and youth development, legal awareness, right to information, minority issues, advocacy and social research, rural development and poverty alleviation, women development and empowerment, disaster management, vocational training, health and family welfare, labour and employment, etc. The main objectives of Rubi and Sreema Society for Disabled and Blind Rehabilitation Centre are to integrate and assimilate the visually challenged persons into the mainstream society where the visually challenged people confront with huge of obstacles which stand as a hindrance to their success in life, and endeavor to empower the visually challenged persons to overcome these obstacles. It also looking forward to provide a barrier free environment advantageous to

their overall development and provides a platform for free expression of them, to support the growth of the visually challenged persons in all possible spheres of life, through need-based individualized training and education, literacy, human rights, gender, child and youth development, legal awareness, right to information, advocacy and social research. It also laid emphasis on rural development and poverty alleviation programmes, issues of women development and empowerment, disaster management, vocational training, health and family welfare, labour and employment, etc.

Nimpith Handicapped Welfare Society, South 24 Parganas

Nimpith Handicapped Welfare Society is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) in the village and post office of Nimpith, P.S- Joynagar, District of South 24 Parganas, West Bengal. This Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) was established in 2002. Nimpith Handicapped Welfare Society is basically supported by donations, local associations, patrons, friends and well-wishers. The organization is characterised by the different kind of disabilities such as- locomotor, low vision, blindness, deaf and dram and so on. Nimpith Handicapped Welfare Society works in different areas of women development and empowerment, Vocational training, children education and literacy, health and nutrition. The main aims of this NGOs are to establish shelter for the persons with disabilities including visually challenged students, to provide braille books, stipend, scholarship, library and coaching center, to establish barrier free environment, to promote vocational training center, to help the disabled students including visually challenged students who are confronting for getting ‘Manabik Pension’ @ Rupees 1000/- granted from the West Bengal State Government, and as well as to help the disabled students including visually challenged students who are facing huge problems in district medical hospital to achieve their handicapped certificate and disability identity card. It also provides instruments such as- white

cann stick, wheelchair, blanket and dresses for the disabled persons including the visually challenged persons. It works to stimulate general public awareness for the visually challenged persons to ensure their equal rights and opportunities in mainstream society.

The Society for the Welfare of the Blind, South 24 Parganas

The Society for the Welfare of the Blind is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs). It is situated at Narendrapur, in the District of South 24 Parganas. The Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) was established in 1960. It is registered as a society in West Bengal. The Society for the Welfare of the Blind is mainly funded by the public donations, local associations, and friends. Biswajit Ghosh, a completely blind teacher and the principal of Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy (BBA) in Narendrapur, as well as the secretary of the Society for the Welfare of the Blind. According to Biswajit Ghosh, the Society for the Welfare of the Blind provides Braille equipment, gives good lessons, extends financial support for the Blind School and College students, and manages volunteers to translate books into Braille for the visually challenged students. Besides these, the Society for the Welfare of the Blind also promotes the issues of accessing education, employment and social security and steps to boost their self-confidence. According to Secretary Biswajit Ghosh, through Covid Pandemic, the Society for the Welfare of the Blind stated its journey to help such visually impaired persons across district assisting them ration, cash transfer and guiding the visually challenged persons with new means of livelihood. The Society for the Welfare of the Blind, still now, have helped 1000 (One Thousand) such visually challenged persons across eight districts of West Bengal.

Mathurapur Nivedita Mahila Samity, South 24 Parganas

Mathurapur Nivedita Mahila Samity is a Non-Governmental Organization. This Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) is situated at Mathurapur of Sundarban rural area, in the

district of South 24 Parganas. This Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) has registered under the West Bengal Societies Registration Act of XXVI of 1961. The Organization (NGOs) is run by the help of public donations from associations and friends and well-wishers. It is working for the protection and promotion of the interest of Other Backward Class (OBC), Schedule Caste (SC), Schedule Tribe (ST), Minority people and Persons with Disabilities including visually challenged persons who are suffering from social stigma, poverty, social superstition, lack of education, health facilities etc. The major activities of this Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) are covered with schemes of Girls Welfare Home (Orphan), Awareness Programme, Handicapped School and Home, Educational Programme, Training Programme and Health Programme. The main objectives of Mathurapur Nivedita Mahila Samity are to provide proper education facilities to the orphan and handicapped children including the visually challenged students. It also aimed at providing awareness to parents and communities who are not willing to send their children to the school, instead, the parents compelled their children to be involved in agriculture and family servant and child labour etc. It also provides hostel facilities along with many educational supports including books, library, dress materials as well as educational kits, self-employment through the vocational training which will improve the skill and working capability of the handicapped children including visually challenged.

New Age Society For All, South 24 Parganas

New Age Society For All is a Non-Government, Non-Profit Organization. It was registered under Societies Registration Act, 1961, established on April, 2009 at the beginning of the millennium by a number of senior most, highly experienced and dedicated social workers. It is located at Baruipur, South 24 Parganas. New Age Society For All is functioned and funded by the public donations from friends and well-wishers. This New Age Society For All has been

working for the welfare of different villagers under South 24 Parganas on mentally challenged, speech retarded, hearing impaired and visually challenged under its care and protection as well as orphan or abandoned of the society. The objectives of New Age Society For All are to integrate the persons with disabilities including visually challenged persons who are vulnerable to any form of negligence, abuse or exploitation in society. It also provides counseling facility and facilities of special non-formal education to prepare the persons with disabled students including visually challenged students for formal special education as per their capabilities. It is designed to create awareness programme to educate the disabled about their capability and needs and also organise campaigns regarding safe and secure environment, free accessibility for proper education and sustainable employment to assist the visually challenged persons. In addition, it also provides different types of entertainment programmes, such as- indoor-out door games, art and craft activities, frequent visit to parks, dance, pandal hopping etc.

Bamanagar Welfare Society, South 24 Parganas

The **Bamanagar Welfare Society** is a Non-Governmental Voluntary non-profitteering Organization. This organization was established in 2003 and lawfully registered under the government of West Bengal Societies Registration Act, XXVI of 1961. The members of the organization are inspired with the life and work of Swami Vivekananda. The Bamanagar Welfare Society is situated in the village and post of Bamanagar, Kakdwip, in the district of South 24 Parganas. The organization is mainly funded by the public donations from friends, relatives, neighbors etc. The main objectives of Bamanagar Welfare Society are to provide equal opportunities, rights and choice mentioned by the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. It is objectively oriented to create awareness and information about the needs and development of the visually challenged persons, to provide free accessibility to education and employment

opportunities for the visually challenged students, providing comprehensive vocational training, to encourage indoor and outdoor games for the persons with disabilities, especially the visually challenged.

Halderchak Chetana Welfare Society, South 24 Parganas

The Halderchak Chetana Welfare Society is a Non-Governmental Organization. This Society was established in 1987 and lawfully registered on 2009 under the government of West Bengal Societies Registration Act, XXVI of 1961. The organization is located at the beautiful costal area and in the village of Halderchak in the district of South 24 Parganas. It is funded by the donations come from respectable persons, relatives, well-wishers and foreign assistance. This Welfare Society is working on the various categories of persons with disabilities including physical disability, deaf and dumb, autism, mental health condition, and visual impairment. However, the main objectives of the Halderchak Chetana Welfare Society are to empower persons with disabilities including visually challenged by integrating them to the mainstream society, to create awareness of the basic needs for empowering them to lead independent live through access to education, employment, social security, health, transport and community activities. It also targeted to create public awareness for all persons with disabilities who are homogenous and not an integral part of our mainstream society to provide them comprehensive rehabilitation services and to encourage in every sphere of life. It also aimed at providing training facilities by imparting appropriate technology to upgrade their productive skills. It plays vital role in displacing their hidden potential at the surface level by providing more vocational training and career guidance.

Netra Women and Child Welfare Society, South 24 Parganas

Netra Women and Child Welfare Society is a Non-Governmental Organization. This organization was established in 1994. It is registered under West Bengal Society Registration Act, XXVI of 1961. This organization is situated at the village of Netra in the district of South 24 Parganas. This organization carries its activities from donations coming out of public, relatives, and well-wishers. This Netra Women and Child Welfare Society is working for the various categories of persons with disabilities (locomotor disability, hearing impairment and visual impairment) which has been emphasised under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. The objectives of Netra Women and Child Welfare Society are to provide free accessibility to inclusive education, employment, braille books, assistive technology and comprehensive vocation training facilities. It is oriented to create awareness programme among the people, parents, community and empowering the parents of the persons with disabilities including visually challenged to take care of them, to promote comprehensive and sustainable programme, to set up community based rehabilitation centre for destitute women and neglected children, especially persons with disabilities including visually challenged persons. Specifically, the organisations aimed at creating awareness among parents and community to reduce malnutrition related disability through nutritional supplements, to encourage sports and games, such as indoor and outdoor games and cultural activities.

Srijani Society for People with Disabilities, South 24 Parganas

The organization **Srijani Society for People with Disabilities** is a Non-Profit-Organization or Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs). This organization was established in 2007. It is located at Indranarayanpur Ramnagar Abad Dholahat, Kakdwip, South 24 Parganas. This organization is a registered society and approved by the West Bengal Society Registration Act,

XXVI of 1961. This organization maintains its activities and programmes through the public donations. Since 2007, the organization Srijani Society for People with Disabilities is working for the cause of all types of persons with disabilities in South 24 Parganas. The objectives of the Srijani Society for People with Disabilities are to empower and support every family, community and civil society about the issues of persons with disabilities, especially visually challenged persons to realize their equal rights, potentiality, and duties towards the society. It intends to integrate the persons with disabilities including visually challenged persons to the mainstream society through their participation in various community activities. The organisations is dedicated to provide braille books, aids or assistive technology and vocation training, bags, dresses, blanket and so on for the persons with disabilities. It is objectively oriented to create awareness about their empowerment through access to education, employment, social security, health, transport and community activities etc.,

Sundarban Social Development Centre, South 24 Parganas

Sundarban Social Development Centre is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs). This organization is started its journey for social development discourse in 1989. It is situated at the village of Sultanpur in the district of South 24 Parganas. Being a registered Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) under the Society Registration Act 1961, Sundarban Social Development Centre is implementing numerous community development projects, such as- access to education services, health care, livelihood promotion, social and environment protection issues, child protection and child rights, especially low vision and blindness persons. This organization is funded through the Government, Non-Government and international funding agencies for the cause of sustainable development programmes for the poor and marginalized communities who are living at the disaster Sundarban island area, South 24 Parganas. The major objectives of the

Sundarban Social Development Centre are to provide a bucket of services like cataract surgery with medicines and black spectacles, biometry test for the visually challenged persons, to create awareness on health issues, especially eye care, to provide home based management on growth monitoring and counseling facilities to create awareness for complete care of child health and nutrition.

Kapasaria Sarbik Village Service Society, Purba Medinipur

The organization Kapasaria Sarbik Village Service Society is a Non-Government Organization (NGOs). This organization is located at the village of Kapasaria, Mahishadal, Purba Medinipur. It was established in 1996 and lawfully granted as registered societies in 1997 under the Government of West Bengal Registered Society Act, 1961. This organization is functioned and funded by the public donations from publics, sympathizers, relatives, and friends and so on. Being a registered Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs), the organization Kapasaria Sarbik Village Service Society is working on various area of health and family welfare issues, legal awareness and aid facilities, minority issues, rural development and poverty alleviation programme, vocational training, women's development and empowerment, education and literacy, tribal affairs. The main objectives of Kapasaria Sarbik Village Service Society are to create awareness within family, relatives and community as how to take care and behave his/her disabled children, especially visually challenged persons. It encourages various campaigns in society for persons with disabilities, especially visually challenged persons to access public places, buildings, more safe and secure environment, issues of equal rights, protection and full participation provided by the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. It promotes sustainable development practices for the persons with disabilities, especially visually challenged

students. It provides study materials, braille books, aids and assistive technology to empower the persons with disabilities.

Mahammadpur Development Mahila Samity, Purba Medinipur

Mahammadpur Development Mahila Samity is a Non- Profit making voluntary organization or Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs). This organization is situated at the remote village of Mahammadpur under Bhagwanpur Block-1 in the district of Purba Medinipur. Mahammadpur Development Mahila Samity was set up in 1993 with a view to undertake socio-economic development activities for the needy and neglected segment of with a prime emphasis on issues such as- gender, education, employment, women development and empowerment, aged and disabled persons, especially visually challenged persons, tribal welfare, vocational training. This Mahila Samity has been registered by the Government of West Bengal under Societies Registration Act, XXVI of 1961. The main objectives of Mahammadpur Development Mahila Samity are to create awareness within family, community as how to make avail the handicapped certificate and identity card issued by the district medical hospital for visually challenged persons. It provides opportunities and participation to understand their rights against the social stigmas. It empowers persons with disabilities including visually challenged persons to become an integral part of the mainstream society through the provision of providing formal education, employment and vocational training. It also provides social security for persons with disabilities including visually challenged persons. It undertakes programmes such as- medical and support services, community based rehabilitation programmes for persons with disabilities, especially visually challenged persons. It also provides instrumental support through the distributions of White Cann Stick, wheelchair, blanket and dress materials as well as other educational kids for the disabled persons including the visually challenged persons.

Bhagabanpur Sundarban Protibandhi Welfare Society, South 24 Parganas

The organization **Bhagabanpur Sundarban Protibandhi Welfare Society** is a Non- Profit Organization. This Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) is located at the village of Bhagabanpur under the Block of Mathurapur 1of Sundarban rural area in the district of South 24 Parganas. The Welfare Society was established in 2006 and registered under West Bengal Society Registration Act XXVI of 1961. This organization is run by mainly from public assistances. The main objectives of the organization are to work for the cause of needy and marginalized persons in the society, especially visually challenged persons. The organisation is working on the issues of equal rights, equal opportunities, full participation and protection along with livelihood security. It undertakes programmes to promote social justice, equity and harmony, promotion of special education, employment, basic health programme and skill development programmes, sustainable development practices and strength community based protection for the persons with disabilities, especially visually challenged students.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion and Recommendations

The visually challenged persons in West Bengal with reference to the district of Purba Medinipue and South 24 Parganas have been suffering from multifarious challenges and problems. Though the nature and character of their problems may be similar in nature, but the magnitude of their problems varies from region to region depending on the economic factors, political awareness and socio-cultural practices of the regions. The reasons for the menace have been more or less similar along with the constitutional provision to eradicate such menace. The state specific legislative enactment and development provision to that end are similar in nature. The present study reveals that in spite of plethora of constitutional provision and development policy to root out the menace, the overall situation and their socio-economic-political conditions are not up to the standard. There is no doubt about the fact that incremental changes to their socio-economic and political conditions has been due to the handiwork of the constitutional provision and legislative enactment along with development policies to that end. The study also reveals that the state's approach to solve the menace is more passive and slow than the approaches of the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs). The NGOs working in this field are very much accessive and assertive to their day to day common problems of the visually challenged people, but the NGOs are very much handicapped with regard to the availability of finance and decision-making capacity to that end. The study also reveals that the main causes of the disability in both the district of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas are the economic backwardness and inadequate health care facilities. Political apathy to the menace is one of the reasons responsible for the continuing precarious problems affecting them physically and mentally. Further, societal norms, values, and practices are also responsible for the growing problems of the visually challenged persons in both the district of Purba Medinipur and South 24

Parganas. Both political and societal awareness to the problems is highly necessary along with special measures to be taken by the state through its development policies and planning to visualise a healthy and harmonious society and social order.

There is no doubt about the fact that the civil society and Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs) are playing significant role for the cause of the visually challenged people in both the districts, but their contributions in this domain are restricted to certain level. In the matter associated with imparting education to the visually challenged children, the NGOs and civil society are somehow able to manage the requirements at the primary level of providing education to them, but in case of the provision to imparting education at the higher level, the NGOs and civil society are handicapped by financial resources and the institutional arrangement. Further, the contribution of NGOs and civil society in the field of providing them job opportunities in the formal/ governmental sector are also very negligible. Mostly their contributions remain with the informal sector and unorganized sector. The visually challenged persons are mostly engaged in the informal sector including the hotels, restaurants, factories, agricultural productivity, etc. Again, even if their engagement in the informal sector, they are playing very negligible role restricted to manual labour. The role of the decision-making and leadership in the informal sector also are not meant for them. In fact, both at the level of formal sector and informal sector the leadership role of decision- making are not endowed with them.

The study reveals that, there is no adequate data at the governmental level depicting the classification of employment of the visually challenged persons provided to them by the Government. We have data on their employment at the preliminary education level or school education level. We do not have sufficient and adequate data representing their employment at the level of higher education, especially in the colleges and universities. In fact, their

employments in the college and university level in both teaching and non-teaching categories are not satisfactory. The visually challenged students and research scholars have been confronted with numerous problems associated with infrastructural and teaching learning facilities. At the higher stage of their education, the educational institutions are not modeled with their requirements. They are enrolled with the general version of educational institutions which are not conducive to their physical and mental development. Library facilities, including the availability of study materials to their needs and requirement are some of the basic issues of worrisome concerns. Similarly, the infrastructural facilities of the educational institutions including their physical communication to the institutions are not modeled with their needs. Further, lack of trained teachers versed with skill to teach the blind students in academic institutions are also major impediment to their learning process. Books and journals are of general character, not designed with their needs and requirements. Along with that, the social security measures provided by the State Government through various initiatives and programmes are very insufficient in nature. The reservation of seats for the visually challenged children at the school level and the reservation of seats at the college and university level should be more meaningful and more accessive. In the employment scenario, the reservation policy the State Government is undertaken are not sufficient and adequate. There has not been sufficient provision made by the State Government for them at the old-age-period. The study also reveals that, there are two major factors responsible for their miserable conditions in the society. First, there has been lake of political will and motive at the decision-making level to address their grievance, Secondly, the societal factor also responsible for their misery in the form of the negative and inhuman attitude of the society towards them and their causes.

The above mentioned analysis of the problems and challenges of the visually challenged persons in West Bengal, with reference to the district of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas needs attentions from the decision-making and societal perspective to rebuilt a new social order based on political and socio-economic justice to the vulnerable sections of the society, especially the visually challenged persons. In this context, as a researcher it is my obligation and responsibility to draw the attention of the state leadership at the decision-making level to looking into some of the perspectives for the all-round development of the visually challenged persons in West Bengal, with reference to the districts of Purba Medinipur and South 24 Parganas.

1. The provisions of social security for the visually challenged persons in West Bengal are not satisfactory enough to cover of all the economic necessity needed for their survivals. Therefore, there is a need to rethink the extension of social security provisions based on their economic needs and necessity.
2. The infrastructural facilities to access the educational institution along with the availability of study materials at the higher level of education should be catered according to their needs and necessity. To that end, the government should provide more equipped instruments and trained teachers based no their needs.
3. The State should take bold steps to introduce special school and class rooms for the visually challenged students.
4. The State should instruct the private agencies to provide reservation for the visually challenged persons in different capacities that can be possible through public private partnership.
5. The State should provide more stringent law to deal with violation against the visually challenged persons.

6. The State should facilitate with more dynamic provision regarding the issues of accessibility to public places, transport systems, barrier free environment and better health care facilities.

Appendix

APPENDIX

Chapter-II

Table No. 2.1-Total number of Teachers and Students ratio of Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy

T E A C H E R S	Primary Section				T O T A L	From 5 th Class Students to 10 th Class Students						T O T A L	12 th Section		T O T A L	B. Ed .	U G (G R A D E D)	I. T. I (M C A)	C O P A	A G R I C U L T U R E	T O T A L	T O T A L S T U D E N T S
	1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10		11	12								
	M	M	M	M		M	M	M	M	M	M		M	M		M	M	M	M	M		
19	0	10	8	8	26	10	14	12	14	18	17	85	10	10	20	60	8	20	10	13	111	242

Source: Field Report on Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy

Table No. 2.2- From Primary Section to Higher Secondary Section of the yearly class wise percentages (2014-2020) of result of Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy

Class Section from Primary to Higher Secondary	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
1	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

5	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
6	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
7	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
8	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
9	100	100	100	100	100	10	100
10	90	90.50	92	89.60	90	95	100
11	76	78	79.08	92	83	90	100
12	76	78	79.08	91.11	85.28	90	100

Source: Field Report on Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy

Table No. 2.3- From Primary Section to Higher Secondary Section of the yearly dropped out visually challenged students (2014-2020) of Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy

Dropped out Visually Challenged Students	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Field Report: Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys' Academy

Table No. 2.4- Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB)

Total Number of Visually Challenged Students	Gender Wise Total Number of Males and Females Students	
173	Males	Females
	106	67

Source: Field Report: Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB)

Table No. 2.5- Total number of Teachers and Gender wise Students ratio of Vivekanda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB)

T E A C H E R S	Primary Section								T O T A L	From 5 th Class Students to 10 th Class Students												T O T A L	12 th Section				T O T A L	V T C	T O T A L	S T U D E N T S	
	1		2		3		4			5		6		7		8		9		10			11		12						
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		M	F		M					F
23	15	8	5	4	7	5	8	9	61	8	8	8	8	9	8	10	3	5	3	7	3	80	10	5	11	4	30	2	0	2	173

Source: Field Report: Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB)

Table No. 2.6- From Primary Section to Higher Secondary Section of the yearly class wise percentages (2014-2019) of result of Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB)

Class Section from Primary to Higher Secondary	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
1	97	99	99	100	100	100
2	99	99	100	99	99	100
3	100	100	97	99	99	100
4	99	98	100	98	99	100
5	100	97	100	100	100	100
6	97	100	100	100	100	100
7	97	100	99	100	100	100
8	99	98	100	99	99	100
9	99	97	100	100	100	100
10	100	100	100	100	100	100
11	100	100	100	100	100	100
12	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Field Report: Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB)

Table No. 2.7- From Primary Section to Higher Secondary Section of the yearly dropped out visually challenged students (2014-2019) of Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB)

Dropped out Visually Challenged Students	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
	0	1	1	0	1	0

Source: Field Report: Vivekananda Mission Asram Residential School for the Blind (VMARSB)

Table No. 2.8- Total Number of Visually Challenged Students as per Gender Wise in Vivekananda Loksiksha Niketan (Special School for the VM and MR)

Total Number of Visually Challenged Students	Gender Wise Total Number of Males and Females Students	
37	Males	Females
	23	14

Source: Field Report: Vivekananda Loksiksha Niketan (Special School for the VM and MR).

Table No. 2.9- Class wise total number of males and females Visually Challenged students in Vivekananda Loksiksha Niketan (Special School for the VM and MR)

Pre-Primary			Primary									
Males	Females	Total	1 st Standard		2 nd Standard		3 rd Standard		4 th Standard		Total	Tot al
5	3	8	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	29	8+2 9=
			5	1	5	3	4	2	4	5		37

Source: Field Report: Vivekananda Loksiksha Niketan (Special School for the VM and MR).

Table No. 2.10- Total Number of Passed Out Students and Dropped Out Students (2014-2019) in Vivekananda Loksiksha Niketan (Special School for the VM and MR)

Total Number of Teachers	Year	Percentage of Passed Out Students	Year	Number of Dropped Out Students
7	2014	87	2014	04
	2015	88	2015	05
	2016	87.5	2016	06
	2017	91.5	2017	04
	2018	91.5	2018	04
	2019	93.5	2019	03
	2020	100	2020	0

Source: Field Report on Vivekananda Loksiksha Niketan (Special School for the VM and MR).

Table No. 2.11- Moyna Ramkrishnayan Association: A Residential Special School for Blind & M.R Children, 2020

Total Number of Visually Challenged Students	Gender Wise Total Number of Males and Females Students	
25	Males	Females
	10	15

Source: Field Report on Moyna Ramkrishnayan Association: A Residential Special School for Blind & M.R Children

Table No. 2.12- Total Number of Teachers and Yearly class wise percentages (2019) of Pre Primary Students Result of Moyna Ramkrishnayan Association: A Residential Special School for Blind & M.R Children

Total Number of Teachers	Pre Primary				Drop Out Students
2	1 st Standard	2 nd Standard	3 rd Standard	4 th Standard	0
	60	60	60	60	

Source: Field Report on Moyna Ramkrishnayan Association: A Residential Special School for Blind & M.R Children

Chapter-III

Table No. 3.1- Percentage Distribution of Non-Disabled and Disabled Population in India: 2011

Non-Disabled Population	97.79
Disabled Population	2.21

Source: Social Statistics Division, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India: 2016.

Table No. 3.2- Percentage Distribution of Male and Female Disabled People, India, 2016

Types of Disability	Males	Females
Total	100	100
In Seeing	17.6	20.2
In Hearing	17.9	20.2
In Speech	7.5	7.4
In Movement	22.5	17.5
Mental Retardation	5.8	5.4
Mental Illness	2.8	2.6
Any Other	18.2	18.6
Multiple Disability	7.8	8.1

Source: Social Statistics Division, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India: 2016.

Table No. 3.3- Percentage distribution of Disabled People, State-wise (Five Major State) in India: 2016

Five Major States	Disability
Uttar Pradesh	15.5
Maharashtra	11.05
Bihar	8.69
Andhra Pradesh	8.45
West Bengal	7.52

Source: Social Statistics Division, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India: 2016.

Table No. 3.4- Percentage distribution of Different types of Disabled People in West Bengal, 2016

Types of Disability	Males	Females
Seeing	19.81	22.59
Hearing	14.70	16.78
Speech	7.21	7.42
Movement	18.18	13.25
Mental Retardation	6.78	6.76
Mental Illness	3.61	3.45
Multiple Disabilities	9.45	10.09
Others	20.25	19.61
Total No. of PWD in West Bengal	2.2	

Source: Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation Government of West Bengal, 2014.

Table No. 3.5- Percentage Distribution of Disable People by Age Group in West Bengal, 2011

Age Group	Males	Females
0-4	3.88	4.34
5-9	6.45	6.66

10-19	16.48	16.65
20-29	16.11	15.45
30-39	14.33	13.47
40-49	14.45	12.82
50-59	11.52	10.35
60-69	9.17	10.04
70-79	5.10	6.52
80-89	1.79	2.56
90+	0.52	0.94
Age Not Stated	0.14	0.15

Source: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2011

Table No. 3.6- Percentage Distribution of Total Males and Females Population in Purba Medinipur, 2014

Total Males and Females Population, Purba Medinipur	
Males	51.60
Females	48.40

Source: Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation Government of West Bengal, 2014

Table No. 3.7- Percentage Distribution of Total Males and Females Literates in Purba Medinipur, 2014.

Total Males and Females Literates, Purba Medinipur	
Male	92.32
Female	81.37

Source: Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation Government of West Bengal, 2014

Table No. 3.8- Percentage Distribution of Different Types of Disabled People in Purba Medinipur, 2011

Purba Medinipur	Total No. of PWD	Seeing	Hearing	speech	Movement	Mental Retardation	Mental Illness	Multiple Disabilities	Others
	2.23	20.84	12.65	7.87	18.62	7.32	3.64	12.24	16.78

Source: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India

Table No. 3.9- Percentage Distribution of male and female Disabled People in Purba Medinipur, 2011

Types of Disability	Males	Females
Seeing	51.89	48.11
Hearing	54.71	45.29
Speech	58.88	41.12
Movement	66.17	33.83
Mental Retardation	57.30	42.70
Mental Illness	57.59	42.41
Multiple Disabilities	55.15	44.85
Others	59.29	40.71
Total No. of PWD in Purba Medinipur	2.23	

Source: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India

Table No. 3.10- Percentage Distribution of Visually Challenged Persons by Sex in Rural and Urban Area of Purba Medinipur, 2011

Rural			Urban		
M	F	TOTAL	M	F	TOTAL
51.61	48.39	92.80	55.28	44.71	7.20

Source: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2011

Table No. 3.11- Percentage Distribution of Males and Females Visually Challenged Persons by Age Group in Purba Medinipur, 2011

Age Group	Males	Females
	51.88	48.11
0-4	3.36	3.12
5-9	4.55	4.32
10-19	13.81	11.96
20-29	12.51	10.11
30-39	11.23	11.34
40-49	14.7	13.68
50-59	13.45	13.15
60-69	12.02	15.88
70-79	9.40	10.95
80-89	3.88	4.14
90+	0.87	1.22
Age Not Stated	0.08	0.07

Source: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2011

Table No. 3.12- Percentage Distribution of Total Males and Females Population, South 24 Parganas, 2014

Total Males and Females Population, South 24 Parganas	
Males	51.13
Females	48.70

Source: Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation Government of West Bengal, 2014

Table No. 3.13- Percentage Distribution of Total Males and Females Literates in South 24 Parganas, 2014

Total Males and Females Literates, South 24 Parganas	
Males	83.35
Females	71.40

Source: Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation Government of West Bengal, 2014

Table No.3.14- Percentage Distribution of Different Types of Disabled People in South Twenty Four Parganas, 2011

South Twenty Four Parganas	Total No. of PWD	Seeing	Hearing	speech	Movement	Mental Retardation	Mental Illness	Multiple Disabilities	Others
	2.78	26.68	14.51	5.97	13.07	6.25	2.87	8.93	21.69

Source: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2011

Table No.3.15- Percentage Distribution of male and female of Disabled People in South Twenty Four Parganas, 2011

Types of Disability	Males	Females
Seeing	51.41	48.59
Hearing	52.17	47.83
Speech	55.72	44.28
Movement	62.82	37.18
Mental Retardation	56.24	43.76
Mental Illness	56.12	48.88
Multiple Disabilities	52.74	47.26
Others	55.97	44.03
Total No. of PWD in South 24 Parganas	2.78	

Source: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2011

Table No. 3.16- Percentage Distribution of Visually Challenged Persons by Sex in Rural and Urban Area of South Twenty Four Parganas, 2011

Rural			Urban		
M	F	TOTAL	M	F	TOTAL
51.59	48.41	72.02	50.94	49.06	27.98

Source: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. 2011

Table No. 3.17- Percentage Distribution of Males and Females Visually Challenged Persons by Age Group in South Twenty Four Parganas, 2011

Age Group	Males	Females
	51.41	48.59
0-4	4.87	4.66
5-9	5.67	5.39
10-19	13.74	16.07
20-29	14.09	12.23
30-39	12.88	11.88
40-49	14.58	14.56
50-59	13.31	13.77
60-69	11.62	12.89
70-79	6.37	7.80
80-89	2.06	2.64
90+	0.61	0.96
Age Not Stated	0.14	0.10

Source: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. 2011

Table No. 3.18- Educational Institutions in the District of Purba Medinipur from 2006 to 2018

Sl. No	Type of Institutions	2007	2006-2008	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
1	Educational Institutions for the Blind and other Physically & Mentally Handicapped	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	7	7	7	7	7

Source: Bureau of Applied Economic & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation, Government of West Bengal

Table No. 3.19- Educational Institutions in the District of South Twenty Four Parganas, From 2006 to 2018

S l. N o	Type of Institution	2006- 2007	2007- 2008	2008- 2009	2009- 2010	2010- 2011	2011- 2012	2012- 2013	2013- 2014	2014- 2015	2015- 2016	2016- 2017	2017- 2018
1	Educational Institutions for the Blind and other Physically & Mentally Handicapped	7	7	6	5	4	5	5	5	8	5	5	5

Source: Bureau of Applied Economic & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation, Government of West Bengal

Table No- 3.20 Disability Pension Recipients in the District of Purba Medinipur (From 2006 to 2018)

Disability Pension Recipients in the District of Purba Medinipur	
Year	No. of the Disability Pension Recipients
2006-2007	667
2007-2008	630
2008-2009	1456
2009-2010	1465
2010-2011	1470
2011-2012	1961
2012-2013	1742
2013-2014	1870
2014-2015	1870
2015-2016	1816

2016-2017	1822
2017-2018	1852

Source: Bureau of Applied Economic & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation, Government of West Bengal.

Table No. 3.21-Disability Pension in the District of South 24 Parganas (From 2006 to 2018)

Disability Pension Recipients in the District of South 24 Parganas	
Year	Disability Pension Recipients in the District of South 24 Parganas
2006-2007	205
2007-2008	265
2008-2009	473
2009-2010	874
2010-2011	1756
2011-2012	1830
2012-2013	1837
2013-2014	1865
2014-2015	1865
2015-2016	1865
2016-2017	1865
2017-2018	1895

Source: Bureau of Applied Economic & Statistics Department of Statistics & Programme Implementation, Government of West Bengal.

Chapter -IV

Table No. 4.1- Total Students and Class Wise Total Number Of Males And Females Visually Challenged Students (2017-2020), Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (MR, VI & MULTIPLE).

Total students and class wise total number of males and females visually challenged students (2017-2020)				
Class	2017	2018	2019	2020
5 th	4	4	4	4
6 th	5	5	8	8
7 th	8	4	4	4
8 th	4	0	0	0
9 th	4	5	5	5
10 th	4	2	2	2

Source: Field Report on Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (MR, VI & MULTIPLE)

Table No. 4.2- Class Wise Percentage of Results of Visually Challenged Students in Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (MR, VI & MULTIPLE).

Class wise percentage of results of the visually challenged students				
Class	2017	2018	2019	2020
5 th	60	60	60	60
6 th	60	60	60	60
7 th	60	60	60	60
8 th	60	60	60	60
9 th	60	60	60	60
10 th	60	60	60	60

Source: Field Report on Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (MR, VI & MULTIPLE)

Table No. 4.3- Class Wise Percentage of drop out of Visually Challenged Students in Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (MR, VI & MULTIPLE).

Class wise percentage of drop out of visually challenged students				
Class	2017	2018	2019	2020
5 th	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
6 th	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
7 th	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
8 th	NIL	9	NIL	NIL
9 th	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
10 th	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL

Source: Field Report on Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (MR, VI & MULTIPLE)

Questionnaire

Questionnaire

- Institution Name
- Address of the Institution
- Foundation date of the institution
- Total Number of the visually challenged students in the institution
- Gender wise total number of males and females visually challenged students
(Male/Female)
- Class wise total number of males and females visually challenged student (V to XII)
- Total number of teachers in the institution
- Class wise percentage
- Drop out student (Male/Female)
- Total number of Braille Book
- Total number of scholarship provided in the institution
- Different type of Assistive technology
- Lift and ramp facilities
- Counseling facilities
- Different type of curriculum activities
- Social Security facility
- Financial assistant and support
- Approaches/ roles of NGOs
- Government facilities

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- Deepanita Braille Institute, South 24 Parganas
- Halderchak Chetana Welfare Society, South 24 Parganas
- Kapasaria Sarbik Village Service Society, Purba Medinipur
- Netra Women and Child Welfare Society, South 24 Parganas
- New Age Society For All, South 24 Parganas
- Nimpith Handicapped Welfare Society, South 24 Parganas
- Nimtouri Tamluk Unnayan Samity (MR, VI & MULTIPLE), Purba Medinipur
- Mahammadpur Development Mahila Samity, Purba Medinipur
- Mathurapur Nivedita Mahila Samity, South 24 Parganas
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