



## **Man Power Development in Special Education & Rehabilitation in India: Need and Requirement**

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### ***Abstract***

*The Census of India (2011) estimates that the total number of disabled population is 26,810,557 which indicates that they need Education, Training and Rehabilitative Services. The manpower development in the area of special education and rehabilitation is regulated by Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI), a statutory body under Ministry of Social justice & Empowerment. The present strength of personnel and Professionals in the field of Special Education and Rehabilitation is 67738 (RCI, 2011). The disabilities for which manpower development programme are conducted in different categories ranging from certificate to Master Degree in Regular, Distance and Online mode are Hearing Impairment, Mental Retardation, Visual Impairment, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Learning Disability, Loco-Motor Impairment and Neurogenic Disorder, Speech and Hearing, Community Based Rehabilitation, Multiple disabilities and others. In a total RCI conducts 60 different courses in regular mode and 8 courses in distance mode. There is a need of focusing new courses in the area of Special Education and Rehabilitation including more emerging disability and evidence based practices. The courses which are needed in the present context are superspecialised and employment oriented. The training centers which are imparting training for manpower development are also concentrated to certificate and diploma level. As Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) is going to be implemented at higher education level, more focused programme has to be designed for smooth inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in University level institutions.*

## **Introduction**

### **Current Scenario of Manpower Development in Special Education and Rehabilitation**

Ensuring access to education for children with disabilities is one of the most serious issues facing the less-developed nations (Abosi, 2003; Ainscow, Jangira, & Ahuja, 1995; Price & Takamine, 2003). Estimates are that 85% of the world's children with disabilities, and 80% of adults with disabilities, live in the less-developed nations of Africa, Asia-the Pacific and Latin America (Charlton, 1998; Eleweke & Rodda, 2002; Helander, 1993; Khan & Durkin, 1995; Kohli, 1993) While exact figures are unknown (Abosi, 2003; Kohli, 1993; Muuya, 2002; Price & Takamine, 2003), the literature suggests that 1% to 5% of children with special education needs are enrolled in school in these areas (Ainscow, Jangira, & Ahuja, 1995; Eleweke & Rodda, 2002; Joutsalainen, 1993; Kohli, 1993; Price & Takamine, 2003). The education of Persons with disabilities in India has long been considered as a charity model of service delivery. The education to Persons with disabilities even after about six decades of independence is largely provided in a segregated manner through non-government organizations and church missionaries.

As per the Census of India 2011 report, there are **26,810,557** people affected with certain form of disability. Out of which **5,032,463** are affected by Visual Impairment, **5,071,00** Hearing Impairment, **5,436,604** Locomotors Impairment, **1,505,624** Mental Retardation, **2,116,487** Multiple Disability, **4,927,011** with any other form and the rest are affected by Speech Disability and Mental Illness.

As per statistics available, at least *2500 special schools and eight major National Institutes of disability, Eight Composite Rehabilitation Centers, Regional Rehabilitation Training Centers, and Seventeen Vocational rehabilitation Centers and Non-Government Organisations* are now imparting education and rehabilitation services to the Persons with Disabilities. Though their contributions are serving a large number of Persons with disabilities, still millions of children with disabilities do not have access to any form of education. These institutes play a vital role in meeting the needs of trained manpower for services to disabled persons. They offer a variety of long-term training programs like Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Education of the Deaf, Communication Disorders, Prosthetic and orthotic engineering, Audiology,

Speech therapy as well as training of Special teachers. These courses lead to the award of Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates. The institutes also cover a large number of short-term training courses, seminars, orientation courses and camps.

Today India has come a long way and made a good progress in the field of disability rehabilitation. Due to global competitiveness, education scenario in India is fast changing. Along with that, special education is also catching importance and various government agencies are working hard to make it available to masses. The developments in the field of special education and success of western researches have also led to government and other institutions working in the disability rehabilitation towards inclusive education. All these courses are regulated and governed by the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) - a legislative body under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

The governmental legislative framework dealing with disability have primarily been envisaged and constituted within the provisions of the four major disability-related Acts in recent times. The first two Acts discussed below cover two distinct aspects of disability namely, physical and mental disabilities and the sets of concerns following from them. The third Act views disability issues primarily as the framework of rehabilitation. The PWD Act, covers a number of areas regarding disability.

- National Trust for Welfare of persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999. (National Trust Act, 1999)
- The Mental Health Act, 1987
- Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992
- The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of rights and Full Participation) Act 1995 (PWD Act, 1995)

With the enactment of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995, the integration of students with disabilities has now become the responsibility of Ministry of Human Resource Development. The PWD Act 1995 proposed the provision of improved educational services, medical care, vocational training, employment and social security for all persons with disabilities.

Education of persons with Disabilities at different level have been implemented by various programme like SSA at Elementary level, IEDSS at Secondary and Higher secondary and RUSA at higher Education level. SSA is implemented at a large scale in every states and IEDSS is implemented in few states and RUSA is going to be implemented at University level Institutions from 2014.

### **Manpower Development in Disability Sector**

The major role of Rehabilitation Council of India is to recognize and regulate training programme in the field of Special education & Rehabilitation. Till now RCI is recognises courses in Regular, Distance and online mode ranging from Certificate to Masters Level in the field of

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1. Visual Impairment
  2. Hearing Impairment
  3. Mental Retardation
  4. Learning Disability
  5. Rehabilitation Engineering/Technology
  6. Prosthetics & Orthotics
  7. Community Based Rehabilitation
  8. Rehabilitation Psychology
  9. Speech & Hearing
  10. Clinical Psychology
  11. Locomotor and Cerebral Palsy
  12. Autism Spectrum and Disorder
  13. Rehabilitation Therapy
  14. Vocation Counselling and Rehabilitation Social Work/Administration

These courses are being run by different Government, NGOs and Private bodies in different states. As per the record of RCI till August, 2013, there are 472 institutes are running different programme in regular mode and various study centers by 10 Open Universities in distance mode. Till now there are 43902 Personnel and 23836 professionals have been registered

## **Suggestions and Recommendations**

In spite of the remarkable achievements done by RCI in the field of Special Education and Rehabilitation, there a lot of lacunae in the current implementation of curricular and module of the courses observed which are as follows:

- The present training programme may be upgraded to research level consisting cross disability, cross discipline and cross cultural.
- Management, Media, Developmental Studies, Emerging Areas, Superspecialised areas must be highlighted for manpower development
- According to the law there are free services for people with disabilities. But at the present time there are no resources for implementation. Hence voluntary groups are often established to meet the need
- In principle there is free access, but, A large part of the service provision for people with disability is met by NGOs, though it is the responsibility of the government. This seems to be a conscious measure on the part of the policies and legislations passed by the Government.
- Service provisions for certain disabilities such as for the blind and intellectual impaired seem to be of a high standard. There are many NGOs working in this field and the level of education in the area is high. At the same time, for other disabilities like autism, mentally ill, epilepsy and disabled women there is lack of knowledge among parents, professionals, teachers not to mention the disabled persons themselves.
- As per the UNCRPD, 2007 A ranges of disabilities are not officially recognised this includes e.g. epilepsy and people with hemophilia which is still awaited.
- Enhance focus on currently neglected disability groups such as mentally ill, autism, muscular dystrophy, epilepsy, parents of disabled children, women etc.
- Increase awareness among disabled people themselves and their relatives about their capacities and rights and thus empower them to break out of the dependency syndrome the strong charity tradition has created.

- Training of people with disability in lobbying and advocacy skills, e.g. strategic planning, communication skills, knowledge on legislation and political structures, etc. The training should be tailor made for the different levels of decision-making.
- Support to raise awareness targeting negative attitudes among civil servants, e.g. utilisation of mass media.
- Support access to international experiences in the area of lobbying and advocacy.
- Support to resource centers accumulating and distributing specific know-how on currently neglected disability groups.
- To exchange experiences and knowledge between Indian partners and International disability organisations.
- Gather information from districts on disability activists and achievements / experiences made in a database.
- Conflicting interest among some organisations in the field of disability (mainly among service providers and non-service providers) because of dependency of financial support from the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- The AIDS patients, who undergo substantial disability, when not obtaining adequate treatment, are not included in the disability sector.

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