



# Online Refresher Course\* for Alumni on ‘Contemporary Disability Perspectives and Experiences of Persons with Disability: Implications for Social Work Practice’

September 24, 2022

**Coordinator: Dr. Kalyani Talvelkar**

(\*This Refresher Course is not an UGC or RCI recognized course. It is designed for the alumni of College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan by the College.)

**Title:** Refresher Course for Alumni of College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan –  
'Contemporary Disability Perspectives and Experiences of Persons with Disability: Implications for Social Work Practice'

**Coordinator:** Dr. Kalyani Talvelkar

**Date:** September 24, 2022.

**Time:** 5.00 pm – 8.00 pm

**Venue:** Online Mode. Zoom Platform

**Objectives of the Workshop:**

- To provide insights into the contemporary disability perspectives and their implications for the social work practice.
- To understand the experiences & challenges faced by persons with disability and their families in India and initiate a discussion on the role of social workers in this context.

**Resource Persons:**

- Dr. Madhura Nagchaudhuri, Assistant Professor, Centre for Disability Studies and Action, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences.
- Ms. Poonam Pardeshi, Programme Officer, Programme Development and Support Unit, Aide et Action International.
- Ms. Mangala Ambekar, Administrative Staff Member, Canara Bank

**Details of the Participants:**

Twenty three people registered for the workshop. Though majority of the participants were from Maharashtra, there were a few participants who were from outside Maharashtra, from Delhi and Kerala.

The participants were the alumni of College of Social Work (Autonomous), Nirmala Niketan. Nearly all of them were working in the development field, and a few of them were working on disability issues.

### **Synoptic Overview on the Contents:**

The workshop started with a welcome note by Dr. Kalyani Talvelkar, Assistant Professor, College of Social Work (Autonomous), Nirmala Niketan. She explained, in brief, the objectives of the workshop and its schedule. After the welcome, she introduced the first speaker, Dr. Madhura Nagchaudhuri, Assistant Professor, Centre for Disability Studies and Action, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences.

The first session by Dr. Madhura N. was on 'Contemporary Disability Perspectives and Their Implications for Social Work Practice'. It started with introduction to Social Model and how it differs from the Medical Model of Disability. The session also covered ICF Model that reflects the BioPsychoSocial perspective and Critical Disability Theory. She concluded the session by linking the perspectives to social work practice in the field of disability and role of a social worker.

The second speaker was Ms. Poonam Pardeshi, Programme Officer, Programme Development and Support Unit, Aide et Action International. Ms. Anna Assisi, Alumna of College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan and coordinating team member for this refresher course, introduced her. Ms. Poonam Pardeshi shared her own personal journey of childhood, education and employment. She narrated the challenges she faced at each stage and also the positive experiences she had in her life journey. She linked her experiences to the insights on Critical Disability Theory that were given by Dr. Madhura N. She highlighted the importance of determination and optimism in dealing with the challenges that a person with disability has to face in Indian society. She also stressed the importance of professional courses for career and livelihood options for persons with disability.

The third speaker was Ms. Mangala Ambekar, an ex-staff member of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (A Government of India initiative) and currently a staff member with Canara Bank. She was introduced by Ms. Shama Sawant, an alumna of College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan and coordinating team member for this refresher course. Ms. Mangala shared her life story. She has come from a rural background, where not much was known about disability and disability rehabilitation.

She gave the credit to her parents for instilling in her the importance of education and confidence that she can also stand on her feet. Her father, especially, took personal interest in getting higher education opportunities for her. She also shared that one of her school teachers was very supportive to her. He was always encouraging her to take further education. He also came to visit her father

after her eighth standard to discuss her further education as her village did not have school after the eighth. He also gave a list of all the organizations in major cities in Maharashtra that work with persons with visual impairment and have hostel facilities for students with visual impairment for further studies. After visiting these places, her father decided to send her to Mumbai at Shrimati Kamla Mehta School for the Blind, Dadar. She met Ms. Poonam Pardeshi at this institute.

After her education, Ms. Mangala had to struggle to get a job. She got a job with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. She worked very hard to ensure that all children with disability get learning opportunities and a chance to go for higher education. While on this job, she had to go to places far from her residence. She said that at one time she was placed in a tribal pada in Raigad from where her place of residence was nearly 5 hours away. She used to get up at 3.00 am in the morning, leave home at 4.00 am and come back by 10.00 pm. In spite of these hardships as well as shortcomings of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan as a programme, she feels satisfied that she gave her 100% to the children with disability with whom she was working during this period. She also highlighted certain shortcomings of the programme based on her experience.

After such inspiring and engaging sessions, floor was opened for discussion. The participants appreciated each and every resource persons. They also asked questions related to coping and problem solving strategies that were used by Ms. Poonam and Ms. Mangala while dealing with the barriers they faced at each stage of their life. There was also a detailed discussion on the root causes of the difficulties faced by persons with disability. It is not the impairment itself, but societal negative attitudes and lack of accessible services and facilities that create barriers for people with disability. Negative labeling result in social derogation of persons with disability wherein they are considered as less than equal to the rest of the society.

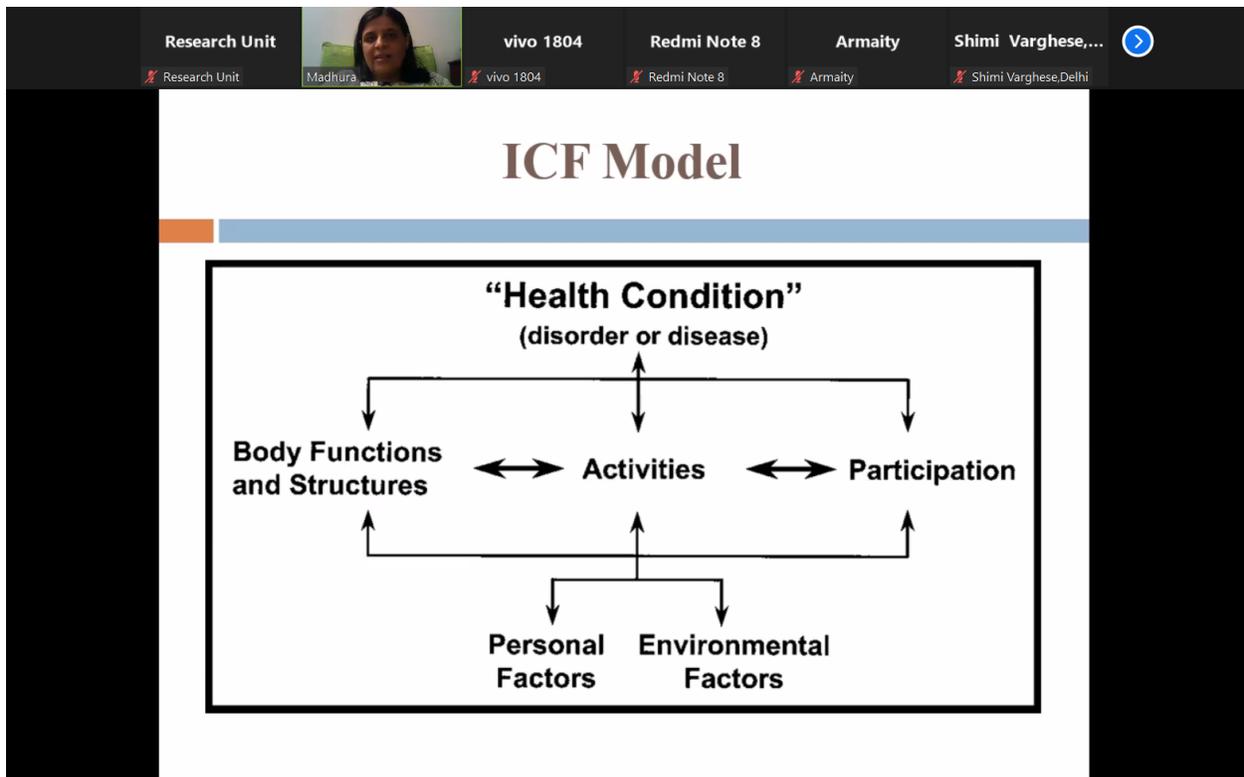
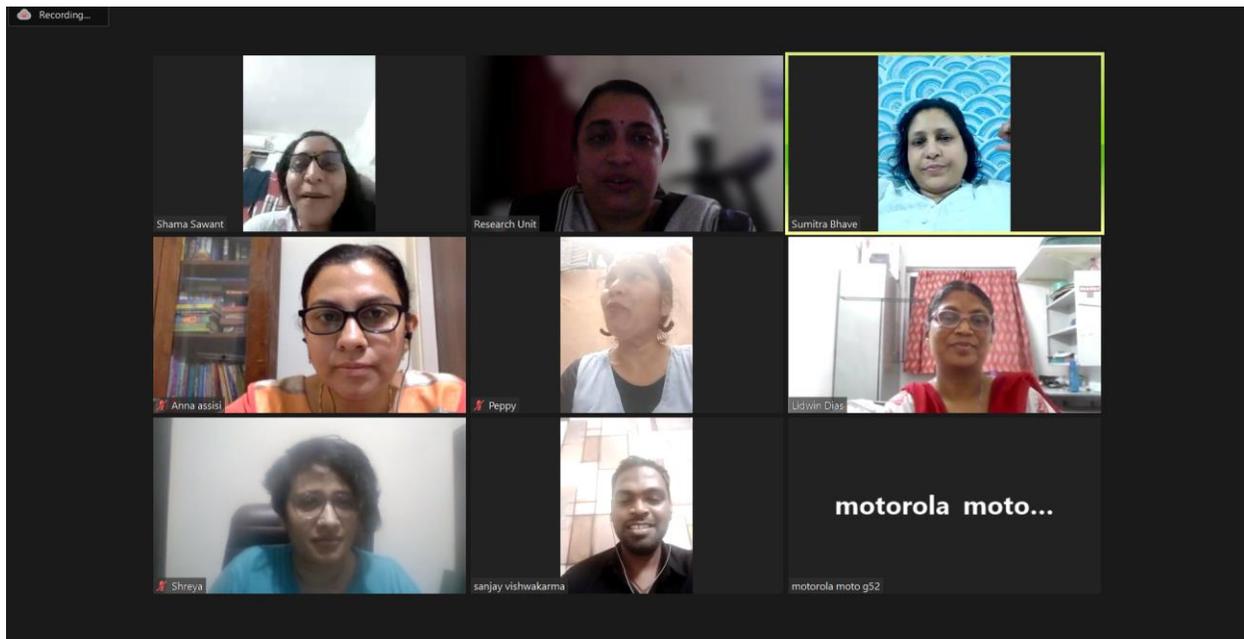
The resource persons, through their personal experiences highlighted the importance of self-confidence, perseverance, right guidance and mentoring at an early stage to decide life goals and informal support, to overcome these barriers successfully. The workshop was concluded with a very fruitful discussion on the role of a rehabilitation professional and a social worker in this context.

**Feedback of Participants:**

At the end of the workshop, feedback was taken by the participants. All participants said that the sessions were insightful and inspiring. Majority of the participants felt that it was a great learning experience. It made them reflect on their own beliefs and views about persons with disability. They opined that the inputs and sharing during the workshop were very useful to them as social workers. They said that they would recommend this session for others also to attend.

A few of the suggestions given by the participants was more such input sessions on disabilities and persons with disability in different forms through workshops or a certificate course and collaborations with like-minded people and organizations to work on disability issues at all levels.

One of the suggestions was also to form a Whatsapp group of participants of this refresher course who would continue the dialogue about how to bring about change to progress towards a more inclusive society. This platform will also be used to share information about various interventions by the NGOs as well as various government schemes for people with disabilities.

**PHOTOGRAPHS:**

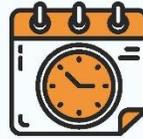


College of Social Work  
(Autonomous)  
Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai



Presents

**ONLINE REFRESHER COURSE\***  
**FOR ALUMNI ON**  
**CONTEMPORARY DISABILITY PERSPECTIVES**  
**AND EXPERIENCES OF PERSONS WITH**  
**DISABILITY: IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL**  
**WORK PRACTICE**



**SATURDAY,**  
**SEPTEMBER 24, 2022**  
**05:00 PM - 8:00 PM**

**REGISTER NOW**

<https://forms.gle/RSS6xcny7SGii5AQ6>

**OUR KEY SPEAKERS:**

**Dr. Madhura  
Nagchaudhuri**

*Assistant Professor, Centre  
for Disability Studies and  
Action, School of Social  
Work, TISS.*

**Ms. Poonam  
Pardeshi**

*Programme Officer,  
Programme Development  
and Support Unit, Aide et  
Action International.*

**Ms. Mangala  
Ambekar**

*Administrative Staff  
Member, Canara Bank*

**Coordinating Team:**

Dr. Kalyani Talvelkar  
Ms. Anna Assisi  
Ms. Shama Sawant  
Ms. Apurva Shinde

For further details kindly contact:

**Coordinator:**

Dr. Kalyani Talvelkar

+91 9820714876

@kalyanitalvelkar@gmail.com

