



Workshop on ‘Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Lived Realities: Experiences of Persons with Disabilities in Indian Society’

January 15, 2022

Coordinator: Dr. Kalyani Talvelkar

Title: Workshop on Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Lived Realities: Experiences of Persons with Disabilities in Indian Society

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Date: January, 15, 2022 (It was originally planned in December, 2021 in hybrid (online as well as offline) mode; however due to the resurgence in the cases of COVID and ill health of one of the resource persons, was postponed to January, 2022 and was made online).

Time: 5.30 pm – 8.00 pm

Venue: Online Mode. Zoom Platform

Objectives of the Workshop:

1. Sensitize the students about disability issues and challenges faced people with disabilities and their families in Indian society
2. Initiate a discussion about the interventions needed to make Indian society an inclusive one, in the true sense of the term.

Resource Persons: Three resource persons were invited for the workshop.

1. Mr. P. S. Burde: Mr. Burde is the Vice President, PARIVAAR, National Confederation of Parents' Organizations for PwIDDs and EC Member, PARIVAAR SAHYADRI, the Apex Council of Parents of Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in Maharashtra and Goa). He is a parent of a son with disability.
2. Ms. Poonam Pardesi: Ms. Poonam Pardesi completed her Bachelor of Arts in Social Work from College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan and Master of Social work from Tata Institute of Social Sciences. She is currently working as a Programme Officer in the Programme Development and Support Unit at Aide et Action International.
3. Ms. Dipti Gandhi: Ms. Dipti Gandhi is the Founder CEO of Muskan Foundation, a foundation that works for children with multiple disabilities. She is an educational and low vision consultant. She is a master trainer and mentor for multiple disabilities at the national level. She is on the Education committee of the National association for the blind.

Details of the Participants:

Fifty eight people registered for the workshop. Though majority of the participants were from Maharashtra, there were a few participants who were from other States of India such as:

- Kerala,
- Manipur,
- Uttar Pradesh and
- Manipur.

Within Maharashtra, participants hailed from districts such as:

- Mumbai (Majority of the participants within Maharashtra were from Mumbai)
- Thane
- Palghar
- Raigad
- Satara
- Nagpur
- Jalgaon
- Yavatmal and
- Ahmednagar

Nearly all the participants were students of social work, with two exceptions. One was a science graduate and the other was a commerce graduate. One participant had completed graduation in social work.

Synoptic Overview on the Contents:

The workshop started with a welcome note by Dr. Lidwin Dias, Principal of College of Social Work (Autonomous), Nirmala Niketan. Dr. Kalyani Talvelkar explained in brief, the objectives of the workshop and its schedule. After the welcome and introduction to the resource persons by her, they talked about the rights of persons with disability and lived realities, based on their personal and professional experience.

The Sessions gave information about different types of disabilities. The intellectual disability, developmental disabilities and multiple disabilities were discussed more in detail. The workshop also gave insights into the challenges faced by persons with disability and their families.

There was 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. Mr. Burde also shared how he and his wife ensured that their son, Mr. Pranay Burde, gets maximum opportunities to participate in activities and learn things that he likes, irrespective of lack of accessible structures, negative social attitudes and other barriers. Mr. Pranay shared his experiences at his job place and how he learn nuances of his job over time. He has received National Award as a 'Role Model' from the President of India.

The workshop also gave inputs on the disability legislations, especially the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. The discussion covered salient features of the Act including disabilities covered, rights and entitlements, guardianship, establishment of authorities and penalties for offences.

The last session was on challenges faced by persons with disabilities. People with multiple disabilities face challenges such as:

- These children are not easily identified, only one disability over the other is given importance.
- They need an array of rehabilitation services and have to go under different roofs to avail of the services.
- They do not get certified for more than one disability, thus cant avail of concessions pertaining to more than one disability.
- The medical professionals and paraprofessionals are unable to prescribe various rehabilitation services.
- Parents have to spend large amounts on assessments and treatments
- Very little awareness about multiple disabilities in the society, people either pity them or shun them.
- Educational and rehabilitation services are not available in all places.
- The impact of one disability on other is not well understood and they often get services that are not tailor made to their special needs.
- Accommodations and accessibility options are not easily available for them.
- Special services like counselling and parent empowerment training is not offered to the parents.

The resource person also explained the work of the NGO – Muskan. The needs of children with multiple disabilities with visual impairment (MDVI) are very different from a person with one disability. From the diagnosis to interventions, at each stage children with MDVI need a unique approach that takes into account their personal strengths and needs and there are hardly any organizations which offer this kind of support. Recognizing this glaring gap in the field of disability interventions, Ms. Gandhi started Muskan in 2007 and now it runs 5 centres all over Mumbai.

The workshop was concluded with a very fruitful discussion on the role of a rehabilitation professional and a social worker in this context. Mr. Burde highlighted the importance of parents' association for the empowerment of persons with disability and their parents. Various government schemes were also discussed and how social workers can connect people with disabilities with these schemes.

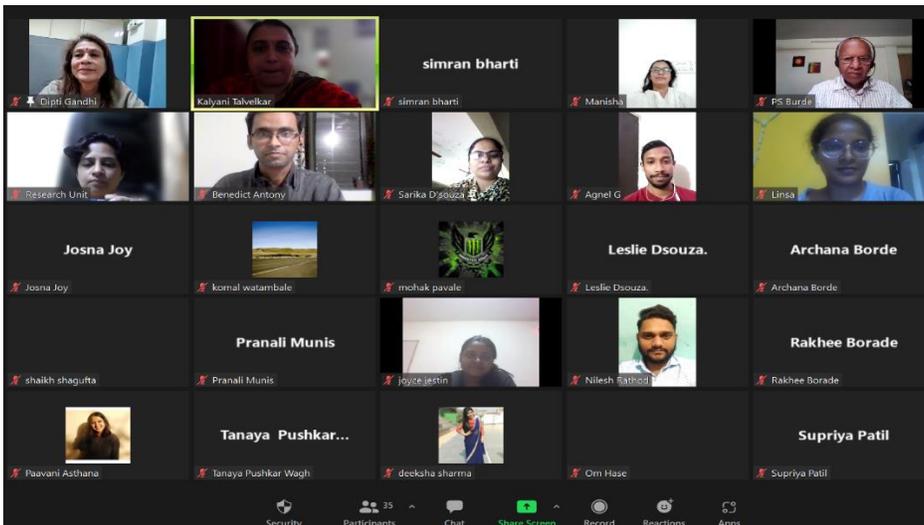
Feedback of Participants:

Participants were given feedback forms (google forms) at the end of the workshop to fill in and submit. The feedback form included questions pertaining to relevance of the topic, presentations and sharing by the resource persons, level of interaction among participants and resource persons, clarification of queries by the resource persons, overall learning and usefulness of the workshop.

All (100%) participants said that the contents of the workshop matched with their expectations, were relevant. All the participants, with one exception, said that it was a great learning experience. All of them said that the workshop was very insightful and 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 future 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.

Photographs:





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ONLINE WORKSHOP ON RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND LIVED REALITIES: EXPERIENCES OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN INDIAN SOCIETY

OUR KEY SPEAKERS:

15 JANUARY 2022
5:30 PM - 8:00 PM
ONLINE LIVE SESSION ON ZOOM

For further details
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REGISTRATION:

<https://forms.gle/xn3Musowvcq9jn787>



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MS. DIPTI GANDHI

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