



Status of marginalized women in Indian society: A contemporary analysis

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Abstract

Marginalized women face triple discrimination (based on gender, caste and disability) which is a neglected part of the society in a paradigm shift. The present research was conducted in remote areas of Union Territory, Chandigarh to upgrade the status of marginalized women. The study analyzed that weaker sections of the society did not have enough money for their treatment. Furthermore, the study found that same number of marginalized women belongs to ravidasia and majhbi sikh castes. Moreover, less than one fourth of the specially abled victims reached to higher secondary while very few did graduation. Subsequently, more than half i.e. 55 percent of the respondents had no occupation which depicts their pain and patience during covid 19 in year 2020. The most prominent social and psychological needs among victims were lack of medical care (65%), treatment from charlatan (40%), remote education (58%) etc. which were not fulfilled timely because of social exclusion. Moreover, counteraction (100%), abandoness (90%), suspicion (46%) and untameness (42%) were some of the eminent problems faced by the marginalized women. The study revealed the stressful life of discriminated women due to which they always disconsolate in society.

Keywords: status, marginalized, society, contemporary, analysis

Introduction

Exploited on account of their caste, class, gender and disability marginalized women remained invisible and largely negligible (Subberwal and Menon 2019). Not only rationally but individuality too is a myth and it takes a tribe to invent a tool, solve a conflict or cure a disease (Harari 2018). Although disability is a typically distressing experience, accompanied by stigmatization that often leads to socio-economic disparities and social exclusion but also seen as a stopping point on a continuum of health, rather than as counter category of “abled bodied”. Moreover, disability is socially constructed insofar as there are cross-cultural variations in its definition, experience and management (Agman et al 2016).

Suffer Mental or Physical Infamy rather than Dishonesty.

The most prominent and artful difference is that people deals according to their own right but not by the preconceptions others may have due to age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion and disability (Darcy 2002). As per stated by Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, people with disabilities are one of the most marginalized segments in society of many of them faced deprivation of gainful employment (Gehlot 2018). National Federation of Dalit Women has organized and participated in several national and international conferences like the one on ‘Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance’ organized by the United Nations Humans Rights Commission at Durban in 2001 representing this most vulnerable section (Subberwal and Menon 2019). At the global level, the literacy rate of PWD is estimated at 3 percent while the literacy rate of girls and women with disabilities is recorded at 1 percent (Moswela and Mukhopadhyay 2018). The disabled are perceived as “less capable” members of society and are divided into two categories i.e. Naturalistic and Constructionist. Naturalistic is a disability as a biological property whereas constructionist holds that it is at least in part, a socially constructed phenomenon (Jenkins and Webster 2020).

Understanding Marginalization from a Disability Perspective

Disability, Marginalization and gender is a triple face discrimination generally faced by the women in the patriarchal society in India. Understanding marginalization from a Disability perspective is a predominant factor of lower status of women in the society as it is defined as a cause of disease, illness or trauma. The “individual model” of disability became the dominant paradigm shift amongst historic groups working with disabled people including medical professionists, therapists, social work and day caretakers. Moreover, the social model of disability was developed as a direct challenge to the medical model through the essential difference in definitions between impairment and disability.

The study examined the grim picture of status of women in Indian patriarchal society and will further discuss the problems of triply discriminated women in respective of gender, marginalization and disability in both the contexts. The relevant literature related to the research problem was examined to obtain a clear in-depth understanding of the problem. Agmon *et al* (2016) explored that in western societies persons with disabilities are

one of the most marginalized group and these inequalities are manifested through several psychological, cultural and economic domains in Israel. This paper aims to make dual contribution in the society. It explained the experience of individuals who have become specially abled in adulthood and undergone through symbolic diminution and social exclusion.

Intellectual disability has a higher prevalence of physical health problems but experienced disparities in exploring health care. Twenty nine participants were interviewed through semi-structured schedule. More than 50 per cent of the participants demonstrated that patients had been either treated unfairly or been discriminated against by health services. The victims faced maladjustments in accounts of negative staff attitude, behaviour and failure of services as revealed by Ali *et al* (2013).

Aim of the study

The study aims at exploring problems, support systems and needs of women who faced disability thrice in their diminution life period.

Objectives

1. To access the socio-economic status of marginalized women in the Indian Society.
2. To review the people with physical and mental disabilities those who has elevated support needs.
3. To explore the agonizing behaviour of marginalized women.

Hypothesis

It was hypothesized that status of women with disabilities in marginalized sections are at higher risk pertaining to discrimination and needs psychological support from their family members.

Research Methodology

In an Indian context this research paper has been analyzed on the basis of purposive sampling technique. The research was conducted on the basis of pre-structured interview schedule. Total hundred disabled women were got selected from the marginalized sections from the remote areas of Union Territory, Chandigarh and were interviewed purposefully for the contemporary status of women in schedule caste families with physical and mental disability.

Results and Discussions

The present study was conducted to access the status of marginalized women in an Indian society. In forthcoming paragraphs, the results will be discussed.

Socio-Economic Status

Caste

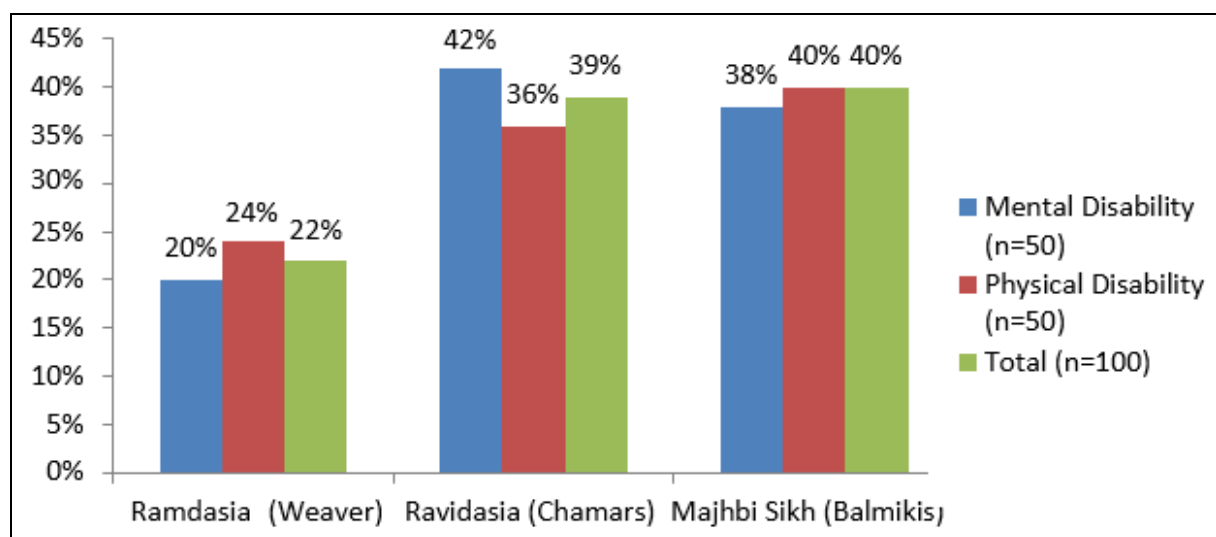


Fig 1

Is there any difference between caste categories in biological perspective? The data reflected that more than one third i.e. 40 percent of the marginalized women belongs to the majhbi sikh caste while same number of respondents belongs to ravidasia sikh. Twenty two percent of the respondents follows the sikh weaver caste (*julahas*). This is pertaining to the fact that majhbi sikh families belong to economical weaker sections of the society, thus, they do not have money for their treatment. Therefore, it is analyzed from table 1.1 that disability spares no one whilst women belong to weaker sections are in more miserable condition due to poverty.

Education

Table 1.2 articulates that everyone has right to education irrespective of sex or location, disability, religion, caste category or creed for comparable quality. It was predicted that forty three percent of the victims were deprived of education. A large number of respondents suffering from mental disability are illiterate. In total less than one fourth of the specially abled victims reached to higher secondary while very few did graduation. In contrary, a little number of marginalized women went school and outstretches matriculation.

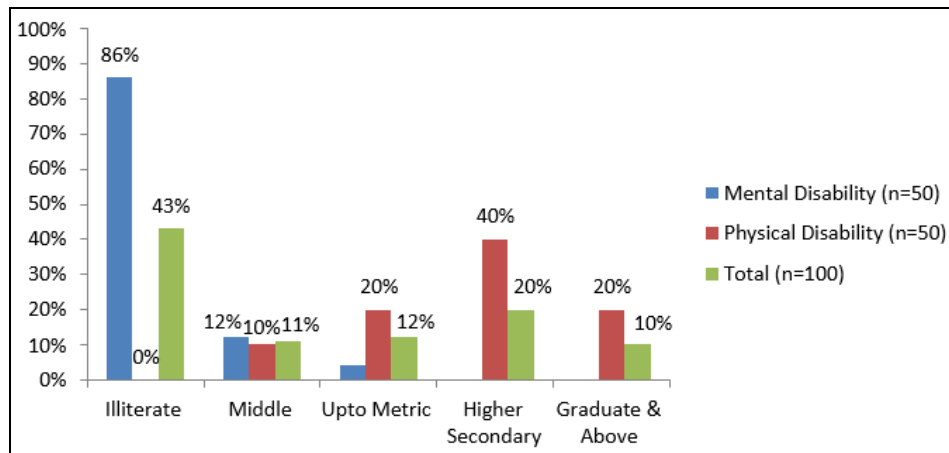


Fig 2

Occupation

The appraisals of the 1.3 depict that an individual become more self-reliant and confident due to their occupation (Kaler 2020). The study demonstrated that more than half (55%) percent of the respondents had no occupation which depicts stress, pain and patience of the victims. Moreover, twenty percent of the respondents were government employees in which ten percent respondents with physical disability only had small business near their surroundings because different variations in their daily lives make them immobile. Furthermore, it was explored that out of total sample fifteen percent of the marginalized women were employed as anganwadi worker.

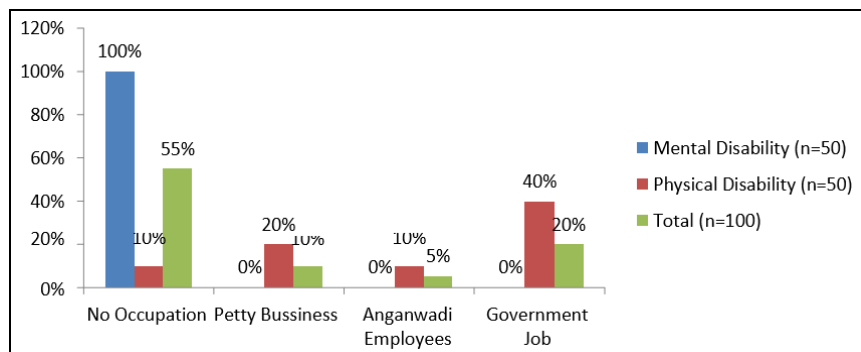


Fig 3

Marital Status

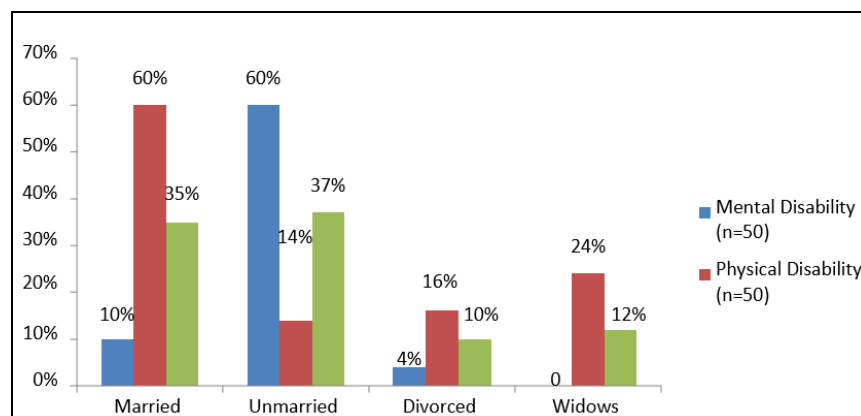


Fig 4

It is evident from the data table 1.4 that marital status of triply discriminated women is not very much acceptable and successful in society. One third of the physically challenged victims were married. In contrast, the same number of respondents was unmarried due to mental infamy. Ten percent of the respondents were widows as their spouses died due to elder age or disability but a few (12%) number of specially abled respondents got divorced because of their incapacibilities.

Socio – Psycho Perspective

Social Problems

Multipurpose Response

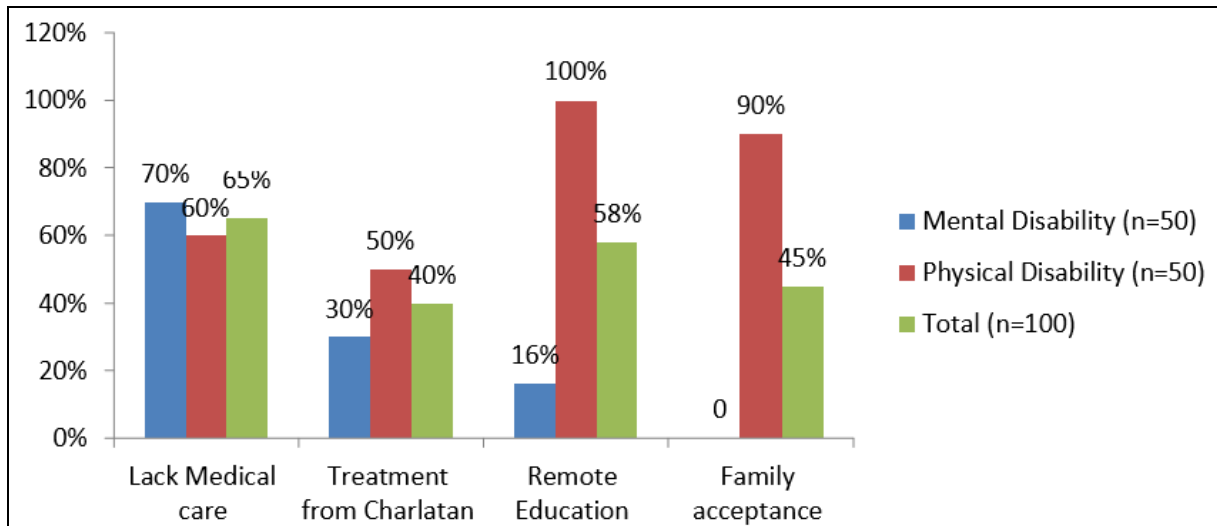


Fig 5

The study demonstrates the social perspective of the gender discrimination among marginalized women in table 2.1 which predicted multipurpose response. More than three fourth of the marginalized women lack medical care because of other household expenses. Fifty eight percent of the respondents get remote education due to lack of mobility. Nearly three fourth of the specially abled women faced inacceptance by their in laws family and spouse. Forty percent of the chronic victims went to charlatans for routine diagnosis. Majority of the respondents lack family acceptance and full number of discriminated girls got education from remote areas. Thus, hypothesis number 2 which stated that people with physical and mental disabilities needs support stands proof.

Psychological Problems

Multipurpose Response

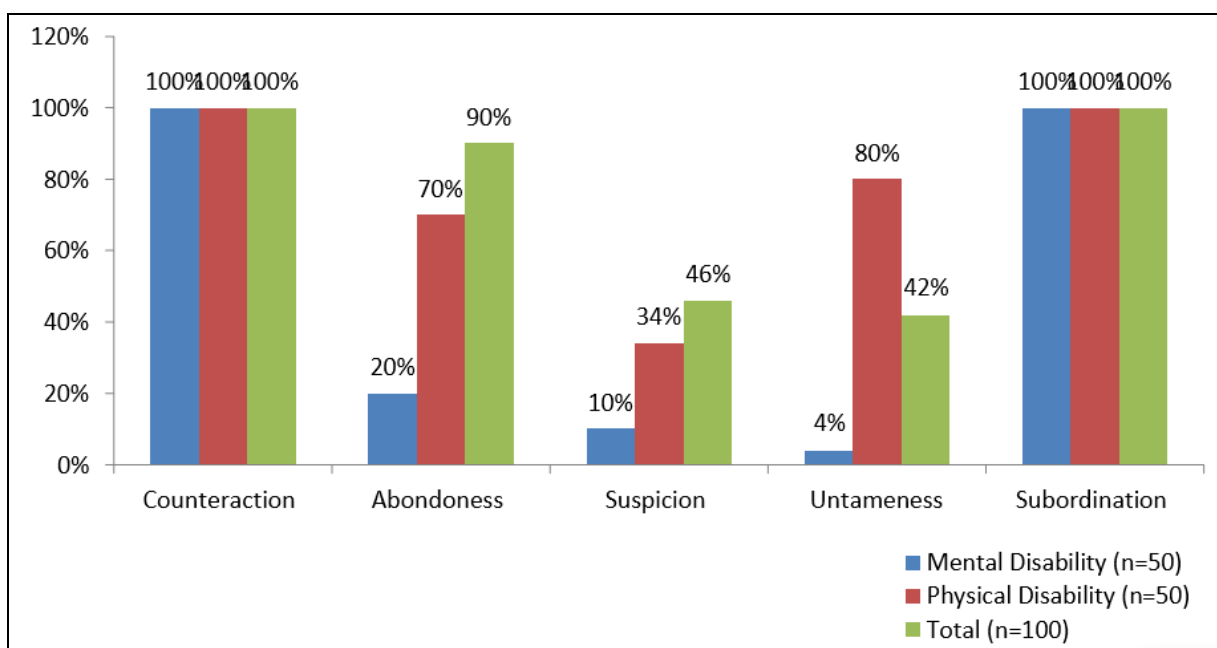


Fig 6

Table 2.2 analyzed that all marginalized women faced counteraction contemporarily due to medicinal effect and unavailability of equipments. Almost all the respondents suffered through abandoness among themselves as they felt discrimination due to their disability and were called by abusive words which was major reason attributing the suspicion against others (desire of mobility and feminism). Furthermore, forty two percent of the discriminated women suffered untameness of their spouses specially in pandemic covid 19 in year 2020. Moreover, sexuality and gender are dominant features of adult personhood which are present within the walls of the center as revealed by Agmon *et al* (2016). On the flipside, all the victims those who has faced marginalization were subordinated by the society and were called by defamatory names.

Conclusion

The study concluded that there is difference in caste, creed, gender and discrimination among education and occupation, but disability spares no one. In this contemporary analysis it was accessed that socio-economic status of the marginalized women in the society is very much poor on the basis of equality. Subsequently, socio-psychological perspective of the study demonstrated petty health conditions, immobility, inacceptance and lack of medical treatment whilst counteraction and subordination were the major factors of psychological dilemma. Lastly, problems such as social exclusion, unfamiliar feelings, defamatory names and oppression need solidarity on broader perspective to release marginalized women from the cage of stigmatization.

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