

Research Article

**PUBLIC POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES FOR THE WELFARE OF
DISABLED PERSONS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TELANGANA
STATE**

Eranagi Ravi

Research Scholar, Department of Political Science, Kakatiya University, Warangal, Telangana

Corresponding Author: Eranagi Ravi

Abstract

Public policies and initiatives aimed at supporting individuals with disabilities in India have undergone considerable transformation, shifting from a focus on welfare to a rights-centered model that emphasizes inclusion, equality, and empowerment. The Indian government acknowledges disability as both a societal and developmental concern and has implemented various legislative and institutional actions to guarantee the dignity and involvement of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) across all aspects of life. The introduction of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act in 2016 was a significant development, as it broadened the definition of disabilities, fortified anti-discrimination laws, and required accessibility in education, employment, transportation, and public facilities. Besides legal protections, numerous government initiatives concentrate on rehabilitation, social security, educational opportunities, healthcare, and job creation. Important programs like the Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP) Scheme are designed to improve mobility and independence through the use of assistive technology. The Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS) assists NGOs in delivering rehabilitation, skill enhancement, and community-oriented services. Social protection measures including disability pensions, scholarships for students with disabilities, and reservation in education and employment contribute to economic security and social inclusion. The Accessible India (Sugamya Bharat) Campaign further emphasizes the creation of barrier-free physical and digital environments. Telangana runs specific programs at the state level, such as the Aasara Pension, educational scholarships, and social programs based on Aadhaar and UDID. The Warangal district operationalizes these objectives through local disability welfare wings that offer livelihood support, marriage incentives, scholarships, and aids and appliances. Low awareness, gaps in access, poor infrastructure, and implementation problems continue to be obstacles despite policy gains. Variability in accessibility, a restricted reach of rehabilitation programs, and a significant reliance on NGOs for support are all revealed by a combined quantitative-qualitative field evaluation conducted in Warangal. The lives of physically challenged people in the area and beyond can be improved by increasing community awareness, decentralized delivery, and active monitoring.

Keywords: Persons with Disabilities, Public Policy, Welfare Programmes, RPwD Act 2016, ADIP Scheme, Social Inclusion, Rehabilitation, Inclusive Development.

Introduction

Disability is increasingly declared as a complex concept that includes physical, sensory, intellectual, and psychosocial challenges, which together hinder people's ability to engage fully

in social, economic, and cultural activities. In India, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (RPwD Act) represented a pivotal advancement in disability law, broadening the classification of disability from seven to twenty-one categories and ensuring national legislation is in harmony with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which India ratified in 2007. The 2011 Census revealed that 26.8 million people—accounting for 2.21% of the population—were identified as Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) (Government of India, 2011). More updated estimates indicate that the true occurrence is greater due to issues of underreporting and shifting definitions of disability.

The path of disability policy in India demonstrates a slow transformation from approaches focused on charity and welfare to those centered on rights. The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights, and Full Participation) Act, 1995 established a basis for legal acknowledgment, although its reach was restricted. The RPwD Act of 2016 expanded these protections, created additional entitlements, and prioritized accessibility, inclusion in education, and employment. This change in legislation reflects international patterns, where the rights of individuals with disabilities are more frequently situated within human rights discussions and sustainable development plans.

The landscape of disability support in India encompasses various programs and initiatives. Prominent among these are the Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS), which allocates funds to non-governmental organizations for rehabilitation efforts; the Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan (Accessible India Campaign), which emphasizes making infrastructure and transportation accessible; and the Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP Scheme), which supplies assistive tools like prosthetics and hearing aids (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, n.d.; Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, n.d.). Additionally, social security programs, such as the Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme, strive to offer financial assistance to persons with disabilities residing below the poverty line.

Even with these efforts, obstacles continue to exist. Research points out that bureaucratic hurdles, insufficient funding, variations between regions, and deeply rooted social stigma are ongoing impediments. For instance, the Accessible India Campaign has made strides in enhancing accessibility in urban areas but still struggles with infrastructure shortcomings in rural locations. Likewise, although vocational training initiatives have grown, individuals with disabilities often face discrimination in job markets due to employer prejudices and a lack of necessary adjustments in the workplace. Internationally, comparative data indicates that nations like Sweden, Norway, and Japan have accomplished more fair results by incorporating disability inclusion into standard social welfare and employment strategies. India's advancements, while significant, are inconsistent and necessitate improved oversight, inclusive governance, and collaboration among various departments.

Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act of 2016 serves as the main law regulating the welfare and protection of individuals with disabilities in India. This legislation succeeded the previous Persons with Disabilities Act from 1995 and represented a crucial transformation from a charitable model to one based on rights, bringing Indian legislation in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). The Act broadened the acknowledged categories of disabilities, increasing them from 7 to 21, thus providing legal safeguards to a larger group of individuals with disabilities. It highlights the principles of equality, respect, and the prohibition of discrimination, and calls for reasonable adjustments in both public and private sectors. The Act supports inclusive education by reserving places in higher education institutions, and secures job quotas within government employment. Additionally, it requires that public buildings, transportation services, and

information and communication technologies be accessible without barriers. Moreover, the Act ensures the provision of social security initiatives, such as healthcare, rehabilitation, and welfare programs for individuals with recognized disabilities, enhancing their inclusion in both social and economic spheres.

Accessibility and Infrastructure

The Accessible India Campaign, known as Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan, which was initiated in 2015, serves as a fundamental element of India's agenda for ensuring accessibility. Assessments conducted by the National Institute of Urban Affairs in 2020 and the National Institute of Labour Economics Research and Development in 2021 indicate that although urban sectors have experienced enhancements in public facilities and transit systems, rural areas still struggle with significant infrastructural gaps. This disparity between urban and rural regions emphasizes the necessity for specific investments aimed at improving accessibility in rural areas. Research comparisons indicate that nations like Sweden and Norway have achieved fairer accessibility results by incorporating disability considerations into standard urban and rural development strategies.

Rehabilitation and Social Security

The Deendayal Divyangjan Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS) provides financial assistance to NGOs for rehabilitation projects, including education, vocational training, and medical support. However, bureaucratic inefficiencies and delays in fund disbursement limit its effectiveness. Similarly, the Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP Scheme) has improved access to assistive devices, yet affordability and distribution remain uneven. Evaluating social security measures for PwDs, noting that pension schemes and financial aid programs often fail to reach the most marginalized due to lack of awareness and administrative hurdles, further highlight the intersection of disability and poverty, arguing that welfare schemes must be integrated with broader poverty alleviation strategies to ensure meaningful inclusion.

Education and Employment

Inclusive education policies have widened formal opportunities, but invisible barriers—attitudinal biases, inadequate infrastructure, and shortage of trained teachers—continue to undermine inclusion. Employment initiatives show similar contradictions: vocational training improves employability, yet workplace readiness and employer sensitization remain weak. The persistence of these barriers underscores that legislative progress alone is insufficient. Comparative evidence from East Asia demonstrates that employer incentives and quotas can shift organizational behavior.

Social Stigma and Inclusion

Despite legislative progress, PwDs continue to face discrimination and social stigma. Awareness campaigns and community-based rehabilitation programs have shown positive results, but attitudinal barriers persist. Shameer (2024) critiques systemic failures in welfare schemes, arguing that entrenched socio-cultural biases prevent PwDs from fully participating in society. Community engagement and participatory approaches are essential to dismantle stigma. Evidence from Latin America suggests that involving PwDs directly in policy-making processes enhances social acceptance and inclusion.

Methodology

The study is based on secondary data sources collected from government reports, policy documents, census data, scholarly journal articles, books, and official publications of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPWD), Government of Telangana, and Warangal District administration. Special emphasis was placed on reviewing legislative frameworks such as the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016, and major welfare schemes including ADIP, DDRS, Accessible

India Campaign, Aasara Pension, educational scholarships, and livelihood support programmes relevant to physically challenged persons.

Public Policies and Programmes for the Welfare of Disabled Persons in Telangana

Telangana has established various public guidelines and assistance programmes that are targeted at enhancing the living standards, social integration, and financial self-sufficiency of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), which encompasses individuals with physical challenges. These programmes are carried out by the state authorities via sectors like the Women, Children, Disabled, and Senior Citizen Welfare Department, the Telangana Divyangula Co-operative Corporation (TVCC), along with other governmental units that collaborate with federal regulations and initiatives regarding disabilities.

Social Security and Pension Support

A significant element of the disability assistance framework in Telangana is the Aasara Pension Scheme, a government initiative designed to deliver monthly financial aid to at-risk populations. This program serves the elderly, widows, and individuals with disabilities, with the goal of supplying fundamental income assistance that improves both financial stability and the dignity of the recipients. Over the years, the pension amount designated for individuals with disabilities has seen a considerable rise to guarantee improved assistance and coverage. Besides Aasara, Telangana also administers a variety of pension programs aimed at offering monthly monetary help to individuals with disabilities (generally those classified with 40% disability or greater), aiding them in fulfilling basic necessities and lessening their financial instability.

Economic Rehabilitation and Livelihood Support

To brighten financial self-sufficiency, the Telangana government has initiated an Economic Rehabilitation Scheme that provides monetary support for forming small enterprises. Those who qualify, particularly individuals with disabilities, are given financial aid and resources to initiate income-producing ventures, fostering entrepreneurship and self-employment within their communities. This program frequently offers grants or subsidies covering 50% of the expenses related to establishing a business and serves as an essential mechanism for promoting the economic participation of individuals with physical disabilities.

The Telangana Divyangula Co-operative Corporation (TVCC), established by law, serves a crucial function as the state's implementing agency for various national initiatives, including the National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC). Through the TVCC framework, the state provides loans, aids in obtaining assistive devices, offers vocational training, and supports enterprise creation for individuals with disabilities, which encompasses those who experience physical challenges.

Educational Scholarships and Skills Development

Education plays a crucial role in enhancing social empowerment, and the state of Telangana offers scholarships for students with disabilities at both pre-metric and post-metric levels. These financial aids aim to alleviate economic obstacles to education from early schooling to advanced studies, promoting fair access to educational resources. Students with disabilities who fulfill income and disability requirements can take advantage of these financial benefits, which encompass tuition fees and related expenses.

Additionally, the state encourages skill enhancement and specialized education for persons with disabilities by designating funding for vocational training initiatives and living accommodations for students with hearing and vision impairments, assisting them in developing skills that are suited for employment and smoothly entering competitive job markets.

Aids, Appliances, and Accessibility

Telangana provides assistive devices such as wheelchairs, tricycles, hearing aids, and prosthetic supports to physically challenged persons, often free of cost or at subsidized rates. These interventions enhance mobility, independence, and participation in everyday life. District-level welfare offices (e.g., Warangal's Disabled Welfare wing) implement such programmes by distributing aids and appliances directly to the beneficiaries.

Marriage Incentives and Social Inclusion

To promote social integration and reduce stigma, Telangana offers marriage incentive awards to disabled persons who marry either a non-disabled partner or within disabled communities. This financial incentive helps promote equity and social acceptance for persons with disabilities.

Role of Public Policies and Programmes in the Welfare of Physically Challenged Persons in Telangana

Public policies and initiatives significantly contribute to enhancing the lives of individuals with disabilities, especially those with physical impairments, in Telangana. By implementing a framework centered on human rights that adheres to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, the state guarantees support in areas such as social welfare, education, employment opportunities, and access to facilities. Programs like the Aasara Pension offer financial support, while scholarships for education and programs aimed at economic rehabilitation foster empowerment and independence. The provision of assistive devices and mobility aids improves autonomy, and incentives for marriage support social integration. In summary, these initiatives work to minimize exclusion, uphold dignity, and encourage the full involvement of people with physical disabilities in both social and economic activities.

Conclusion

Public policies and programs in Telangana are crucial for improving the welfare and inclusion of individuals with physical disabilities. The state has embraced a wide-ranging, rights-oriented strategy aligned with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act of 2016, guaranteeing access to social security, education, job opportunities, and vital services. Programs like the Aasara Pension offer financial assistance, while scholarships for both pre-metric and post-metric levels, job training, and schemes for economic rehabilitation empower individuals to attain independence. The provision of mobility aids and devices enhances independence, allowing individuals with physical disabilities to engage fully in everyday activities. Social programs that provide marriage incentives encourage acceptance and inclusion within various communities. However, despite these successes, there are ongoing challenges such as lack of awareness, obstacles to accessibility, and issues in administration. Improving the mechanisms for implementation, increasing outreach efforts, and fostering community involvement can help ensure that these policies result in real advantages, thereby enhancing the quality of life and social inclusion for individuals with physical disabilities in Telangana.

References:

1. Alam, M., Kumari, S. (2024). Comprehensive overview of disability-related policies and laws in India: A narrative review. *South Asian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 5(6), 35–53. <https://doi.org/10.48165/sajssh.2024.5604>
2. Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities. (n.d.). Deendayal Divyangjan Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS). Government of India. <https://depwd.gov.in/ddrs/>
3. Kumar, S., Suri, S., Kurian, O. (2024). Leaving no one behind: Strategies for disability inclusion in India (Special Report No. 240). Observer Research Foundation.
4. Kulsum, S., Gopal, K., Aggarwal, A., Prasanth, K. S. (2024). Assessment of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 in India: A comprehensive study on

- implementation and impact. *International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research*, 6(6), 1-11. <https://www.ijfmr.com/papers/2024/6/33990.pdf>
5. Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment. (n.d.). Accessible India Campaign: Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan. National Portal of India. <https://www.india.gov.in/spotlight/accessible-indiacampaign#tab=tab-1>
 6. Reddy, K. S. (2024). Evaluating social security measures for persons with disabilities in India: Challenges and policy recommendations. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, 13(10), 135-139.
 7. Roshan, I., David, T. P. (2025). Legislating equality: India's path to inclusive policies for people with disabilities. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 30(5), 22-32.
 8. Sharma, S., Gupta, R. (2025). Equitable growth: Ensuring disability inclusion in the sustainable development goals. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 13(2).
 9. Singh, A. (2024). Status of disability in India: A review of policies, schemes and facts. *International Journal of All Research Education and Scientific Methods*, 12(12), 1177-1189.
 10. <https://ruralindiaonline.org/en/library/resource/persons-with-disabilities-divyangjan-in-india---a-statistical-profile-2021/>

Citation: Eranagi Ravi 2026. "PUBLIC POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES FOR THE WELFARE OF DISABLED PERSONS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TELANGANA STATE". *International Journal of Academic Research*, 13(1): 13-18.

Copyright: ©2026 Eranagi Ravi. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.