

tion framework
d) Opportunities to promote life-long learning and skill development

professional associations and licensing authorities. The biggest beneficiaries of such a framework are the learners who

and strengthens accountability of qualifications – for the benefit of individual learners and employers.

systems, creating possibilities for credit accumulation and transfer, or developing quality

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CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN DISABILITY REHABILITATION

Dr. Siddhant Kamal Mishra

Ever since living beings came into existence, disability has been there in one form or the other. Indian laws on disabilities recognize ten types of disabilities, namely, Blindness, Low vision, Leprosy-cured, Hearing impairment, Loco motor disability, Mental retardation, Mental illness, Autism, Cerebral Palsy, and Multiple Disabilities. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that about ten per cent of the world's population has some disability. However, as per the latest Census conducted in India in 2011, 2.21 per cent of the total population has some disability. In absolute numbers there were 2,68,10,557 persons with disabilities in India in the year 2011.

Due to variations in the definition of disability and interpretation of disabling conditions by various countries, prevalence of disabilities varies from country to country. It may be as high as 19 per cent in some of the developed countries. However, in developed countries longevity is a major contributing factor for higher disability prevalence.

In order to educate and train the persons with disabilities for making them self dependent, certain types of specialized disability rehabilitation professionals are required. These rehabilitation professionals facilitate mainstreaming of persons with

disabilities who, if left unattended, remain isolated and dependent. Some of these professionals include Special Educators, Audiologists, Speech Pathologists, Clinical Psychologists, Rehabilitation



Psychologists, Rehabilitation Counsellors, Rehabilitation Social Workers, Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapists, Orthotists and Prosthetists and so on.

In India, disability rehabilitation profession received recognition after the enactment of Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) Act in the year 1992. Prior to this, professional training courses in disability rehabilitation were very few in our country and they were not standardized. The RCI Act, inter-alia provides that disability rehabilitation courses must be standardized,

institutions offering these courses must be recognized and professionals must register with RCI before they start practising or take up a job. RCI recognizes over 600 institutions which include universities, colleges, NGOs, and National Institutes for offering certificate, diploma, PG diploma, Bachelors; Masters and M.Phil level programmes in disability rehabilitation. There are about 60 such courses available in disability rehabilitation across the country. Some of these courses are being offered in distance mode by State Open Universities. After completion of the courses and registration with RCI, these trained professionals either start practising privately or take up jobs in hospitals, clinics, NGOs, educational institutions, special and general schools, geriatric centres, old age homes, sports centres, health clubs, day care centres; etc. Since, Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists do not come under RCI purview they are not required to register with RCI.

The field of disability rehabilitation offers tremendous opportunities for those who have passion for serving the marginalized and less privileged section of the society. Broadly rehabilitation professionals engage in activities related to prevention, early identification, early intervention, and inclusion. Each disability has different

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needs and requires different strategies to manage it depending on the type and severity of disability. For example, a special educator for visually impaired needs to know Braille, apart from other pedagogical skills to teach the students with blindness. Likewise, special educators for hearing impaired must know Sign language or alternative modes of communication. Thus, for each disability, separate courses are available in special education at D.Ed., B.Ed., and M.Ed. levels. About 440 Institutions across India are offering special education courses in Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), Cerebral Palsy, Deafblindness, Hearing Impairment, Learning Disability, Mental Retardation, Multiple Disabilities, and Visual Impairment. Attempts are also being made to introduce cross disability special education courses of longer durations. While many private schools have started employing special educators for promoting inclusive education, some State Governments have also initiated recruitment of such teachers in their regular schools.

Almost all States have private or Government Institutes offering courses in special education and disability rehabilitation. Most of the institutes admit students on their own, based on the admission guidelines provided by RCI. Some Universities / institutes conduct entrance tests and viva-voce for admission to some courses. Barring institutes offering courses in Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy, list of institutions with their contact details, courses offered by them and validity of recognition are available on RCI website (www.rehabcouncil.nic.in). Admission seekers must ensure the validity of recognition of the Institutes before applying for admission. Courses in Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy are offered by a number of universities / institutions in the country, prominent Government Institutes offering these courses are:

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Institute for Persons with Physical Disabilities (Divyangjan), New Delhi	All India Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Mumbai
Swami Vivekanand National Institute of Rehabilitation Training and Research, Cuttack	National Institute for Locomotor Disabilities (Divyangjan), Kolkata

Professionals in Audiology and Speech Language Pathologists are specialized in screening, diagnosis, assessment and management of speech, language and hearing disorders. Bachelor and Master degree courses in Audiology and Speech Language Pathology are offered by number of universities and institutions in the country and some of them are listed below:

Ali Yavar Jung National Institute of Speech & Hearing Disabilities (Divyangjan), Mumbai and its Regional Centres at Kolkata, Secunderabad, and Noida	All India Institute for Speech & Hearing, Mysore
Topiwalla National Medical College, Mumbai	Shri Ramchandra University, Chennai
Bharati Vidyapeeth, Deemed University, Pune	SRM Deemed University, Kancheepuram
Manipal Academy of Higher Education (Deemed University), Manipal	Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh
Regional Institute of Medical Sciences, Imphal	Madras Medical College, Chennai
Vinayaka Mission's Research Foundation (Deemed University), Puducherry	Sweekar Academy of Rehabilitation Sciences, Upkar Complex, Upkar Circle, Birkat, Secunderabad

Prime Minister calls upon youth to accomplish country's dream to transform into a cashless society

Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi addressed the nation on the 26th edition of his monthly radio broadcast Mann Ki Baat on 27th of November. On the backdrop of the Government's decision to demonetize Rs. 500 and Rs. 1000 notes, the Prime Minister called upon youth of the country to embrace mobile banking technology and



invited them to be part of this change. He sought their active participation to move forward to a cashless society. He said, despite having all facilities the country has not explored the options of cashless society. He added that it is not necessary that this system has to work on a high technology platform, even it can work on simple feature phones. The Prime Minister urged young generation to not only have all applications of cashless transactions in their phones but also take the effort to make at least 10 people in their vicinity understand about nuances of applications so that the nation move forward to the cashless society. He commended the contribution being made by young men and women in positively taking the mission forward so that the country reaches to new economic height. He said, a hundred percent cashless society is not possible. However, the

country must embark on the journey to create a 'less-cash society. Citing facilities like digital banking and mobile banking being provided by banks these days, Mr. Modi said every bank has its wallet which simply means an e-purse. He said various types of cards are avail-

able and under Jan Dhan Yojana, crores of poor families in India have Rupay Cards. Used scarcely earlier, after 8th November the poor people have started using Rupay Cards and this usage has seen almost 300 percent surge. Prime Minister added that just as there is a prepaid card for mobile phones, prepaid cards are also available in banks to facilitate expenditure. Describing Unified Payment Interface or (UPI) as useful platform for carrying on trade activities which enables one to make purchases, send money and even receive money, he said this procedure is as simple as sending messages through WhatsApp and cash can be transferred even with a phone with ordinary features. He invited youth to work for the mission individually and collectively in every school, in every college, in every university, in NCC and in NSS.

Orthotists and Prosthetists are trained to assess, prescribe and provide orthosis and prosthesis to a patient / person with locomotor disability (disability in the movement of limbs). These professionals undergo rigorous training for designing, fabrication and fitting of calipers, artificial hands, feet, limbs, collars, etc. Diploma, Bachelor and Master level courses are available at following institutions:

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Institute for Persons with Physical Disabilities	All India Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
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Manipal Academy of Higher Education (Deemed University), Manipal	Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh
Regional Institute of Medical Sciences, Imphal	Madras Medical College, Chennai
Vinayaka Mission's Research Foundation (Deemed University), Puducherry	Sweekar Academy of Rehabilitation Sciences, Upkaar Complex, Upkaar Circle, Picket, Secunderabad
Dr. S. R. Chandrashekar Institute of Speech & Hearing, Bangalore	Holy Cross College, Tiruchirapalli
Helen Keller's Institute of Research and Rehabilitation for the Disabled Children, Secunderabad	JSS Institute of Speech & Hearing, Dharwad

Clinical Psychologists and Rehabilitation Psychologists are trained to deal with persons with mental illnesses and disabilities respectively. Master degree in Psychology from a recognized university is a pre requisite for admission to M.Phil in Clinical Psychology as well as M.Phil in Rehabilitation Psychology. These M.Phil courses are of two year duration offered in clinical settings. Some of the institutions offering these courses are:

M.Phil Clinical Psychology

Shri Ramchandra University, Chennai	Manipal University, Manipal
SRM Deemed University, Kancheepuram Dist.	Ranchi Institute of Neuro-Psychiatry & Allied Sciences, Ranchi
Institute of Human Behaviour & Allied Sciences, Delhi	Institute of Mental Health and Hospital, Agra
Lokopriya Gopinath Bordoli Regional Institute of Mental Health, Tezpur	Sweekar Academy of Rehabilitation Sciences, Secunderabad
University of Calcutta, Kolkata	Amity University, NOIDA
Mental Health Institute, Cuttack	National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities, Muttukadu, Kancheepuram Dist.

M.Phil Rehabilitation Psychology

National Institute for the Mentally Handicapped, Secunderabad	Ali Yavar Jung National Institute of Speech & Hearing Disabilities (Divyangjan), Mumbai
Sweekar Academy of Rehabilitation Sciences, Secunderabad	

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Swami Vivekanand National Institute of Rehabilitation Training and Research, Cuttack	National Institute for Locomotor Disabilities (Divyangjan), Kolkata
Indian Spinal Injuries Centre, New Delhi	Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi
Mobility India, Bangalore	Govt. Prosthetic & Orthotic College, Ahmedabad
Composite Regional Centre for persons with Disabilities, Srinagar	Christian Medical College, District - Vellore
Regional Institute of Medical Sciences, Imphal	Chakradhara Institute of Rehabilitation Science, Bhubaneswar
Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti, Jaipur	Schieffelin Institute of Health - Research & Leprosy Centre, Vellore Dist.
Ishwar Institute of Prosthetics & Orthotics, Chennai	Dr.Shakuntala Misra National Rehabilitation University, Lucknow

Rehabilitation Social Workers and Rehabilitation Counsellors

Rehabilitation Social Workers and Rehabilitation Counsellors are trained to render services to the persons with disabilities and their family members for mitigating the impact of disability through guidance and counseling, networking with various agencies for early intervention, education, training, employment, matrimonial alliances, recreation, community awareness etc. Following Institutions are offering courses in Rehabilitation Social Work and Rehabilitation Counselling under RCI recognition:

Rehabilitation Social Work

Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai

Rehabilitation Counselling

National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development, New Delhi

Thus, Disability Rehabilitation sector offers immense opportunities for the professionals for providing rehabilitation services to the persons with disabilities whose number has increased by over 49 lacs in India in a decade from 2001 to 2011 as per Census reports. Though Disability Rehabilitation is still an emerging field in our country, it is evolving very fast. At present there is a pool of over one lac registered Rehabilitation professionals, a study conducted in the year 2009 by National Institute of Labour Economics Research and Development, an autonomous Institute under NITI Aayog, Government of India (formerly Institute of Applied Manpower Research), estimated the need for 1.82 lac trained professionals in the country.

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Views expressed are personal.

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