

Inclusion of Disability Related Item in the National Census of India

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By

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Introduction

- Decennial Census has taken place uninterruptedly in India since 1872
- Census Questionnaire called “House Register” included questions on physically disabled, intellectually disabled and persons affected by leprosy
- The practice discontinued after 1931 Census
- No question on disability was included between 1941 –1971
- After a gap of 50 years which also coincided with the UN International year of the disabled i.e in 1981 questions included in Census asked people if they were, Totally dumb, totally blind or totally crippled.
- Outcome of the census was that, at the National level only 0.16% of the population was disabled out of which not even a million people were from rural areas and 149547 persons from urban areas
- In 1991 census inclusion of the question in the census discontinued
- In 1995 Persons with disabilities for equal opportunities, full participation and Protection of rights Act was passed by the parliament. The act came into enactment on 17th February 1996.
- The same time government of India Promised the inclusion in Census 2001
- On 3rd December 1999 it was found that the question did not appear in the preliminary questionnaire for the census.

Problem Statement

Lack of accurate and reliable database regarding the extent and prevalence of disability in India.

Objective

- **To ensure the enumeration of persons with disabilities under a separate category in the Census of 2001.**

Activities

- **Unified lobby for inclusion in the Census by cross disability groups.**
- **Workshop with the DPOs and NGOs to develop a strategy for creating awareness among masses.**
- **Participation at master trainers and training of trainers programs for sensitizing the enumerators.**

Process

- **Close follow up with the Chief Census Commission, Prime Minister Office, Ministry of Home Affairs.**
- **Creating awareness among :**
 - **disability organizations,**
 - **beneficiaries and parents of persons with disabilities**
 - **master trainers,**
 - **supervisors and enumerators.**

- Access - Result: Output

- **Disability related Items included in Census questionnaire 2001.**
- **Bureaucracy at district and the block level became aware too.**
- **Involvement of high level political leaders for inclusion.**

- Access - Result: Output

- **Reached to over one million population in India with over 10,000 people with disabilities participating in the movement**
- **Wide coverage by the media**
- **Wide publicity by disability organization regarding the need for enumeration and developing a database**

- Access - Result: Outcome

- **Cross-disability unity**
- **Census 2001 results are yet not out, but there is an expectation of a reliable and an accurate database on prevalence of disability in India.**
- **Resource allocation based on the above information would be realistic.**
- **Database would provide a rationale for planning, policy framing and decision-making.**