

ANALYSIS OF QUALITY OF LIFE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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ABSTRACT

People with disabilities continue to be marginalized in society and face several obstacles as a result of participation restrictions. Students with disabilities are those identified with some form of physical, mental, or emotional disability that makes it difficult for them to participate in the educational process. So, this study aimed at to analyze the QoL of students with disabilities. Purposive sampling methods were used to collect the data from 25 student at Gandhigram Rural Institute. The result of the study revealed that the QoL, the environmental condition is most consistent, followed by physical health, psychological health, and social relationships. In the aspect of physical health, the scores shows females are far better than males. Also, there was no significant differences found in other aspects of QoL in both male and female respondents. The respondents expressed that privileges such as accessible transport facilities, barrier-free environment, fellowships and increasing reservation at schools, colleges, job, etc., could possibly increase the QoL of the students with disabilities.

KEYWORDS: Students with disability, Quality of life (QoL), Environmental domains, Higher Education

INTRODUCTION

As per the 2011 World Report on Disability, over one billion individuals globally are affected by disability, accounting for over 15.0% of the global population. 2.68 Cr people, or 2.21% of India's 121 Cr population, are physically or mentally impaired. 44% (1.18 Cr) and 56% (1.5 Cr) of the impaired population are female. In India, 20% of people with disabilities are unable to move, 19% are blind or visually impaired, and another 19% are hearing impaired. Eight percent have several impairments.

Disability is a reflection of challenges someone may have in social interactions and physical motions, not merely a health issue or personal trait. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines 'Disability' as "an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. Impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations. Thus, disability is a complex phenomenon, reflecting an interaction between features of a person's body and features of the society in which he or she lives" (Kuvalekar Ketal., 2015).

Quality of life (QoL) is the total of a number of objectively measured living situations that a person experiences, such as physical health, personal circumstances, social interactions, functional activities and hobbies, as well as effects from larger social and economic systems (Lin J.D et al., 2009).

World Health Organization (WHO) in defining QoL as 'An individual's perception of their position in life, in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live, and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns' (WHO).

"Quality of life" is currently receiving a significant attention in public health and rehabilitation fields. The creation of more effective legislative mechanism which guarantees the quality of life in the modern society is a prerequisite for sustainable development. A poor quality of life can have an adverse effect on students' health and wellbeing, which can then result in problems with academic performance, professional success, and physical and mental health. Among college students, it has been discovered that disability-related symptoms have a negative influence on health-related quality of life. (O'Shea A et al., 2021).

The number of disabled students attending universities is rising. Studies have shown that these students had low levels of independence, difficulty finding employment, and poor quality of life after graduation. Furthermore, the shift to higher education and employment is a challenge for every person. Furthermore, studies revealed that disabled students are viewed as a minority group and that they encounter numerous obstacles that prevent them from participating fully in higher education. The requirements of this expanding population should be better understood. Research on disabled students in postsecondary institutions is, still limited (Al-Zboon & Sheikh Theeb, 2014)

Assessing the quality of life of students with disability, and how they have quality of life regarding their physical health, psychological, social relationship and environmental context which will help them achieve their best potential, thus making inclusion a reality. In spite of increasing number of students with disabilities in universities, there is limited research on quality of life of these students. In order to address these issues the researchers carried out the study titled on "Analysis of Quality of Life of

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To know the personal background of the students with disabilities.

2. To identify the disability profile of these selected students with disabilities
3. To analyse the quality of life among the students with disabilities
4. To invite the suggestions from SWDs for strengthening the quality of life of

METHODOLOGY

Dindigul is a district in the Tamil Nadu state. It has 362 Village Panchayat and 34 towns in Dindigul District. The study was conducted at Gandhigram University in Dindigul district of Tamil Nadu. The Gandhigram Rural Institute – Deemed University is one of the ten institutions at the national level by UGC under the ninth plan to implement the Scheme for Higher Education for Persons (Disabled) With Special Needs (HEPSN) in order to provide special assistance to disabled students to facilitate better accessibility in higher education system. This scheme is in operation at Gandhigram Rural Institute – Deemed University since April 2001. Under this scheme totally 29 students were enrolled in at the time of survey. But, 4 students were discontinued. The purposive sampling methods were used to collect the data from 25 students who are studying at present in Gandhigram rural institute. The collected information was coded, analyzed and presented in the table form. Simple statistical measures such as average percentage had used.

Table 1
Sample studied

S.No	Type of disability	Students with Disabilities n= 25	
		No.	%
1	Locomotor disabilities	17	68.0
2	Visual impairment	4	16.0
3	Hearing impairment	2	8
4	Specific learning disabilities	2	8
Total		25	100

The table shows the distribution of 25 students with disabilities by type of disability. 68 percent of the students with disabilities had locomotor disabilities. Followed by visual impairment (16%), hearing impairment (8%), and specific learning disabilities (8%). There is a clear predominance of locomotor disabilities compared to other types of disabilities in the group.

Interview schedule was used to elicit information regarding their personal background, family details and disabilities details of the respondents. To assess the quality of life of students with disabilities, the researcher used World Health Organization Quality of Life (WHOQOL-100) tool. It consisted of 24 questions under four domains, namely physical, psychological, social relationships, and environment. Five points are assigned to each item (1 being extremely poor, 2 being poor, 3 being neither poor nor good, 4 being good, and 5 being very good. The data were coded, analysed and presented in frequency tables by using SPSS which is Average, mean, Standard deviation of statistical method was used for analysing the data collected from the field survey.

IV RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study have discussed under the following headings:

- Personal profile of the selected respondents.
- Disabilities profile among the students with Disabilities.
- Quality of the life among the selected respondents.

Personal profile of students with Disabilities

Table 2
Personal profile of students with Disabilities

S.No.	Variables	SWDs(N=25)				Total	
		Male No.	%	Female No.	%	NO.	%
1.	Gender	17	68	8	32	25	100
2.	<u>Age in years</u>						
	15-20	7	28	3	12	10	40
	20-25	6	24	4	16	10	40
	25-30	4	16	1	4	1	4
	Above30		6	-	-	4	16

3	Marital status	2	8	2	8	4	16
	Married						
	Unmarried	15	60	6	24	21	84
4	Educational status						
	Undergraduate	8	32	3	12	11	44
	Postgraduate						
	Research scholar	5	20	3	12	8	32
		4	16	2	8	6	24

The table shows that general information of the selected respondents, totally there were 25 students with disabilities among them 68 percent were male, and 32 percent were female. The age wise distribution of the responders. The majority of the students are between the ages of 15-30 years. Specifically, 28 percent of the students in the age range between 15-20 years. Followed by the age between 20 -25 (24%), 30 years (16%) . Only a small percentage (4%) is between 25-30 years the average age of the students was 23.36 years. Marital status of the SwDs. 84 percent of the SwDs were unmarried among them 60 percent of them were male and 24 percent of them were female. 16 percent of the SwDs were married, among them eight percent they were males and eight percent of them were females. The educational status of SwDs shows that 44 percent are studying at the undergraduate level, with 32 percent being male and 12 percent female. Additionally, 32 percent of SwDs are pursuing postgraduate studies, comprising 20 percent male and 12 percent female. Regarding research scholars, 24 percent of SwDs are engaged in research, with 16 percent being male and 8 percent female."

Thus, the analysis reveals the majority of the male and female were unmarried. Students with disabilities are studying in the institution may be one of the factors for unmarried. As a result, the study shows that the majority of respondents both male and female were between the ages of 15 and 25. The respondents were 23.36 years old on average (Mean).

As a result, the data shows that one-fourth of SwD male and female Ph.D. candidates and approximately one third of SWD are both male and female postgraduate students. The degree of schooling between men and women is the same.

Table 3
Religion and Community wise Distribution of Students with Disability

S.NO.	Religion And Caste	Total	
		NO.	%
1.	Religion		
	Hindu	23	92
	Christian	2	8
	Muslim	-	-
2.	Community		
	BC	13	52
	MBC	7	28
	SC	5	20

Table 3.1.4 shows that the Religion and community wise distribution of the SwDs. 92 percent of the SWDs belonged to Hindu religion. Only eight percent of the SwDs belonged to Christian none of the respondents were from Muslim. Regarding community wise distribution of the SWDs shows that nearly half of the respondents belong to Backward Community (BC). 28 percent of the SwDs belongs to (MBC) Most Backward Class and rest of them were belongs to (SC) scheduled caste).

The findings of the table revealed that 92% of SwDs belong to the Hindu religion. Nearly half are from the Backward Community (BC).

Table 4
Disability Profile of Selected Student with Disabilities

S.NO.	VARIABLES	SWDs (N=25)				TOTAL	
		Male No.	%	Female No.	%	NO.	%

1.	Types of Disability						
	Locomotors Disability	11	44	6	24	17	68
	Hearing Impairment	3	12	1	4	4	16
	Visual Impairment	2	8	-	-	2	8
	Learning Disability	1	4	1	4	2	8
2.	Percentage of Disability						
	40-60%	12	48	6	24	18	72
	61-80%	3	12	1	4	4	16
	Above80%	2	8	1	4	3	12
4.	Causes of Disability						
	From Birth	9	36	7	28	16	64
	Accident	8	32	1	4	9	36

Tables 3 show that disabilities profile of the selected SWDs, disability wise categorization of Swds show that 68 percent of the SWDs enrolled in University were locomotors disabilities, among them 44 of them were male and 24 of them were female. 16 percent of students had hearing impairment, among them 12 percent of them were male and 4 percent of them were female. Eight percent of visual impairment and four bloods disorder had only male Swds. Four percent of the femal had learning disabilities none of them were male.

Regarding the percentage of the SwDs were, 72 percent of the student's percentage of disabilities was 40-60 among them 48 percent of them were male and 28 percent of them were female. Followed by 16 percent of the SwD had 61-80 percentage, among them 12 percent of them were male and four percent of them were female. 12 percent of the Swd had percentage of disability above 80, among them eight percent they were male and four percent of them were female. Each and every SWDs had Disability Identity card. It enables people with disabilities to take use of the advantages, conveniences, and discounts provided by various government schemes. This document, which is typically issued by the appropriate medical authorities, attests to the existence and severity of a person's disabilities. In terms of the causes of disability, 64% of them had been disabled from birth on; among them, 36% of them were men and 28% of them were women. The remaining 26% of them were injured in accidents, and of those, 32% and 9% were male and female, respectively.

Thus, the analysis reveals the majority of the males and females had locomotors impairments. Every single SWD has an identity card. The majority of male and female respondents who reported having been born on reported having disability. Regarding the percentage of the disabilities majority of the SwD had 40-60 percentage of disabilities.

QUALITY OF LIFE

The Quality of Life of Persons with Disabilities based upon WHOQoL BREF. It contains a total of 26 questions and 24 facets. There are four dimensions which are physical health, psychological, social relationships and environment. The overall Quality of Life were discussed followed by the relationship each dimension has on each other and the determinants of Quality of Life and Personal characteristics of the respondents.

TABLE 5
Overall Quality Of Life and General Health Of The Selected Students With Disabilities

S.NO.	Quality of life	Mini	Max	Mean	S.D.
1.	Quality of life	1	5	3.60	1.118
2.	General health	1	5	4.08	1.187

As shown in the table 5 the overall quality of life and general health status of SwDs. SwDs' of the quality of life was rated as moderate (mean=3.60) and their general health was rated as good (mean=4.08). Thus, analysis shows that the quality of life of university-enrolled disabled students is unaffected by the general health and quality of life.

TABLE 6
Mean Comparison of Various Aspects with Physical Health

S.NO.	Physical Health	SWDs(N=25)			
		Mini	Max	Mean	S.D.
1.	What extend do you feel Physical body pain	1	5	2.72	1.400
2.	How much need Medical Treatment	1	5	2.20	1.354
3.	Enough Energy to work	1	5	3.92	1.320
4.	How well able to get around	1	5	3.92	1.256
5.	Satisfaction of sleep	2	5	4.00	1.041
6.	Ability to perform your daily Activities	2	5	4.08	.997
7.	Satisfied with Capability to work	2	5	4.04	.978

The table presents data on various aspects of physical health among the students with disabilities. The highest mean values were reported in satisfaction with daily activities (mean = 4.08±1.041). Followed by work capability (mean = 4.04, ±.978), and sleep satisfaction (mean = 4.00, ±1.041). This indicates that the respondents generally feel capable and satisfied in these areas. The lowest mean values were reported in physical pain (mean 2.72,±1.400) and the need for medical treatment (mean 2.20,±1.354). This indicated that while respondents do experience some pain, the need for medical treatment is relatively low.

In conclusion, the data highlights that students with disabilities generally report high levels of satisfaction in physical health, particularly in their ability to perform daily activities, work capability, and sleep satisfaction. On the other hand, the lower mean values for physical pain and the need for medical treatment indicate that while some discomfort is present, the demand for medical intervention remains moderate. Overall, the respondents demonstrate a positive outlook on their physical health, despite some challenges with pain management.

TABLE 7
Mean Comparison of Various Aspects with Psychological domains

S.NO.	PSYCHOLOGICAL	SWDs(N=25)			
		Mini	Max	Mean	S.D.
1.	Enjoyment of life	2	5	4.20	.913
2.	What extend feel meaningful life	1	5	4.00	1.384
3.	How well able to concentrate	1	5	4.16	.987
4.	Acceptance of bodily appearance	1	5	3.84	1.491
5.	Satisfied with yourself	2	5	4.16	.898
6.	How often have negative feelings	1	5	2.56	1.557

The table presents data on various aspects of psychological well-being among 25 students with disabilities. High mean values were reported for enjoyment of life (Mean = 4.20, ±.913), followed by the ability to concentrate (Mean = 4.16, ±.987), and satisfaction with oneself (Mean = 4.16, ±.898). This indicates that students generally have a positive outlook on life and feel good about themselves. Lower mean values were observed for acceptance of bodily appearance (Mean = 3.84, ±1.491) and the frequency of negative feelings (Mean = 2.56, ±1.557). The lower score for bodily appearance acceptance and the higher variability in negative feelings suggest more mixed experiences in these areas.

In conclusion, students with disabilities generally report positive psychological well-being, particularly in life enjoyment, concentration, and self-satisfaction. However, there are mixed experiences regarding bodily appearance acceptance and negative feelings, with greater variability in these areas.

TABLE 8
Mean Comparison of Various Aspects with Social Relationship domains

S.NO.	Social Relationsh ip	Swds(N=25)			
		Mini	Max	Mean	S.D.
1.	Satisfied your personal relationship	2	5	4.32	1.030
2.	Satisfied with sex life	1	5	2.68	1.676
3.	Satisfied with Support from your friends	2	5	4.32	1.108

The table presents data on various aspects of social relationships among 25 students with disabilities. High mean values were reported by the PWDs in both satisfaction with personal relationships and support from friends (Mean = 4.32, ±1.030 and Mean = 4.32, ±1.108). This indicates that students generally feel well-connected and supported in their social circles. Lower mean values in satisfaction with sex life (Mean = 2.68, ±1.676) suggest that this is a less satisfactory area for many students, with substantial variation in their experiences. In conclusion, the data on social relationships among students with disabilities shows strong satisfaction with personal relationships and support from friends, indicating that students generally feel well-supported and connected in their social environments. However, satisfaction with sex life is notably lower, with substantial variation in experiences.

TABLE 9
Mean Comparison of Various Aspects with Social environmental domains

S.NO.	ENVIRONMENT	Swds(N=25)			
		MINIMUM	MAXIMUM	MEAN	S.D.
1.	Safety feelings	1	5	3.76	1.422
2.	Healthy environment	1	5	3.64	1.440
3.	Enough money for needs	1	5	2.96	1.306
4.	Reachability of information	2	5	3.96	1.136
5.	Enough leisure time	1	5	3.96	1.136
6.	Condition of living places	2	5	4.40	0.866
7.	Satisfaction of health services	3	5	4.32	0.900
8.	Satisfaction of transport	1	5	3.84	1.179

The table presents data on various aspects of the environmental well-being of 25 students with disabilities. The highest mean values were reported by the SWDs for condition of living places (Mean = 4.40, ±0.866) and satisfaction with health services (Mean = 4.32, ±0.900), indicating strong satisfaction in these areas. Lower mean values were reported by the SWDs for enough money for needs (Mean = 2.96, ±1.306), suggesting that financial resources are an area of concern for many students.

TABLE 10
Overall Quality Of Life among Gender

S.NO.	DOMAINS	SWDs(N=25)				TOTAL	
		Male		Female		Mean	SD
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
1.	Physical health	24.235	3.326	26.250	6.541	24.880	4.558
2.	Psychological	22.823	4.050	23.125	4.703	22.920	4.172
3.	Social relationship	11.764	2.704	10.375	2.615	11.320	2.703
4.	Environment	30.822	5.475	30.750	6.318	30.840	5.642

Table 3.4.6 shows 44 percent of them reported on the community level received support were negative. Lack of attention and support of disabled people may effect on quality of life and increase the problems of

this vulnerable group. Social support emphasizes relationship with whom that provides support and availability of support resources when are needed. Social support creates mutual obligations, in which, an individual feels loved, cared for and valued.

SUGGESTION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

TABLE 11
Suggestion Given By The Students With Disability

S.No	Suggestions	Total Swds (N=25)	
		NO.	%
1.	Scholarship Need for higher studies	17	68
2.	Barrier free environment (buildings)	17	68
3.	Provide appropriate Aids/Appliances	16	64
4.	Increase Reservations Categories	23	92
5.	Accessible Transport Facility needed	25	100

- Multipleresponses.

Table 11 revealed that suggestions given by the SWDs increasing the facility for their future needs. 68 percent of the SWDs expressed that need scholarship for spending amount for their higher studies. 68 percent of the swDs suggested that barrier free environment needed for accessing all places especially studying institution. An accessible barrier-free environment is a very important step towards fulfilling the rights of people with disabilities to participate in all areas of community life. 92. percent of the SWDs suggested that increase the percentage of reservation for disabled persons. Every SWDs suggested that accessible transport facility needed for their mobility.

Thus, the analysis reveals that the suggestion given by the SWDs for their better quality of life were accessible transport facility, barrier free environment, and increases reservation categories for disabled for their better quality of life.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, students with disabilities generally report high satisfaction in areas such as daily activities, work capability, and support from personal relationships. However, challenges like pain management, financial resources, and satisfaction with sex life persist. To enhance their quality of life, students recommend accessible transport, a barrier-free environment, increased reservations for disabled persons, more scholarships for higher education, and improved social support systems. These measures are essential to fostering inclusion and ensuring better opportunities for students with disabilities.

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