



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

CONTRIBUTIONS OF ABILITY FOUNDATION FOR DISABLED: A CASE STUDY

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Research Scholar in Islamic History, Department of Kerala Studies, University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram

Dr. P. Nazeer

Supervising Teacher Associate Professor and HOD of Islamic History Mannaniyyah College of Arts and science Pangode, Thiruvanthapuram

ABSTRACT

Disability is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Islam provides a general understanding of the view on disability by observing its primary sources, the Quran, and Sunnah. These sources give valuable information about health, illness, and disability. But Quran and Sunnah do not mention one specific term to include impairments associated with disability. The paper attempts to investigate contributions of Ability Foundation for Disabled: A case study among the differently-abled people. Malabar is one of the Muslim majority regions in the state of Kerala. It provides Islamic monotheism among the hearing impaired people, and it conducts jumua khutuba in sign language. Moreover, Islamic inscriptions transmitted into brail script for blind people.

Keywords: Ability foundation. Disabled, Contribution, Islam,

INTRODUCTION

Differently-abled people and socio-economic and cultural background are linked systematically with their counting of developmental phenomena. We show that differently-abled people's status is very low in educational acquirement, and high unemployment rates, worse living conditions and higher poverty rates. Our leaders do not listen to these types of peoples about 50 years ago. The terms of these marginalized people are pathetic, and they need equal opportunities in all walks of life. However, there are several NGOs and other institutions which work tirelessly towards the empowerment of the differently-abled population.

Ability Foundation for Disabled is a non-government organization established for the empowerment of all types of differently-abled people, and it located at valiyaparmba, Pulikkal in Malappuram district of Kerala. It registered under Act XXI of 1860. Their vision is to note their different abilities, not their disabilities. It put forward all the opportunities for their development. It gave valuable education for them. They offered sufficient access to rehabilitation services. It provides Islamic monotheism among the hearing impaired people, and it conducts jumua khutuba in sign language. It also transmits Islamic inscriptions into Brail script for blind people. It is an active organization working in the Malabar region for the 20th century in promoting differently-abled people's rights and access services. They contribute the number of educational facilities' to differently-abled persons in Malabar, including different categories of disabled students learning in special schools. Although several governmental and non-governmental bodies has been working for empowering of social status of differently abled persons this paper mainly focuses on the contributions of this non-governmental organization.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In Kerala state, an extensive survey of differently-abled people was undertaken by the Kerala Social Security Mission in 2015. According to the survey, 7.94 lack of people equivalent to 2.32 of the total population of the state is differently-abled. There is no history of the institutionalization of the differently abled persons like many in Western countries. But we also know that Indian family structures are changing, and there is a growing demand for institutional facilities for differently-abled persons.

Moreover, Indian Muslim scholars recognize people with disabilities for their social, economic, and educational development. The highest number of differently-abled persons is in Malappuram. Most of them are from the Muslim community. In the case of their religious education become very low, Religious educational institutions do not allow these types of persons in Kerala.

In Kerala, mainly, a few Muslim institutions are working for the development of differently-abled persons. But the Ability Foundation for the Disabled is the only organization in Kerala that work for all development of the said people. This organization conducts the jumakuthuba in sign language.

STATEMENT OF THE TOPIC

This investigation is trying to trace out the Contribution Of Ability Foundation For Disabled: A Case Study, how it treated, what are the perspectives and supports from the Islamic religion, and how the society holds up such community. Though the study has much relevance for the development of the differently-abled in the Malabar, it may provide many advantages for the disabled people for their rehabilitation is concerned.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Various studies have conducted in the early period based on differently-abled people's several fields, such as their standard of living, causes, issues, and other factors. We used different types of literature related to disability studies like available textbooks, articles, and other materials.

HYPOTHESIS

- In the early period, differently-abled were ignored by society and all authorities.
- Now they are called as differently able.
- Many remedial programs helped for the Islamic empowerment of differently-abled persons.

OBJECTIVE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The objective of the research summarizes what is absorbed by this study.

1. To observe the policies and programs to the development of differently-abled.
2. To examine the influence of Friday sermon delivering in sign language on a hearing-impaired person.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted for this study based on analytical and descriptive methods. A qualitative interpretative method with semi-structured interviews was used for data collection. The data for the study will collect from the primary sources, like official records, and secondary sources like studies, relevant books, research papers, project reports, newspaper/popular writings, etc.,

ABILITY FOUNDATION FOR THE DISABLED- EMPOWERING THE ABILITY OF THE DIFFERENTLY ABLED.

In Kerala, disabled persons consist of a significant portion of society, and they are marginalized and neglected. The term disability has become a contentious one, mainly because different conditions, physical, mental, psychosocial, and sensory impairments are considered disabilities.^{vi} Many disabled and physically disabled persons are discriminated in society, socially, educationally, and economically. There is a lack of educational institutions suitable for their total rehabilitation. There are no adequate vocational training centers for the disabled in Kerala; hence, they are facing great hardship to secure a job. Due to lack of employment, most of the disabled persons are loitering in the street, and few become culprits in the hands of anti-social elements. Parents are not in a position to impart necessary moral education to the disabled population.

Muslim scholars argue that equal opportunities should be given for the development of disabled persons. Islam has a very perspective of disability and impairment. Islam gives a message for all disabled persons, which is one of hope and patience. Allah does not burden a soul beyond capacity. (2.286) Allah says that through another ayah, “O men, We created you from a male and female, and formed you into nations and tribes that you may recognize each other. He who has more integrity has indeed greater honor with God. Surely God is all-knowing and well –informed.(49.13)God’s value of human beings eligible depends not on physical appearance or form of physical structure, but He looks to man’s heart.

Islam considers the disabled person. For example, the history of Abdullah-Ibn-umm-Maqtloom.

Islam provides equality and liberty among all men and women in society. “The word disability does not use in Islamic studies. Although different words used for various types of disabilities in Islamic sources like a’raj, a’ma, To understand Islamic view of the origin of disability, it is worthwhile to dwell first on the Quranic stand on the background of diseases”. As disadvantaged people used to be abused by before Islam, Islam provides Muslims with theoretical and practical examples to show the importance of providing protection.

According to the World Health Organization, “the concept of disability is classified as one of three: impairment, disability, and handicapped. Impairment refers to the reduction or loss of normally existing physical, psychological, or behavioral structures”. (Gosh, N. (2016). *Interrogating Disability Theory and Practices*. Kalkatta: Springer Publication.)

(. Disability refers to the functional impairments resulting from primary damage, and the effect of the loss of in daily life is thus the handicap”. (Rispler-Charm, V. (2007). *Disability in Islamic Law*. Netherland: Springer Publications.) Disability, as defined by the Act (Person With Disability Act 1995), covers blindness, low vision, leprosy, hearing impairment, locomotor disability, mental retardation and mental illnesses well as multiple disabilities. The Act does not cover disability like Autism or Learning disabilities. However, it includes all definitions and concepts of disability (K.C, P. (2002). *A Hand Book for Parents of Children With Disability*. (P. C. Government of India, Ed.)

One can categorize disabled persons, hearing impaired, visually impaired, physically, and mentally challenged. The constitution held the fort and provided remedy and reliefs to differently-abled persons when their rights violated or denied. Under the Indian disability Act (1995), a person with a disability is anyone who suffers at least 40 percent impairment from a medical issue such as blindness, low vision, leprosy, hearing problems, and mental illness. The number of problems faced disabled people in our society. Islamic scholars in India give equal opportunity to other persons.

Governmental and non - Governmental organizations provide social welfare programs for the development of disabled persons. About twenty institutions were working in Malabar for the educational development of the disabled persons. But they are not supported for the higher education of hearing-impaired people in Malabar. Hearing loss negatively affects social-emotional development, literacy,

language, and speech as well as learning abilities. This defect may prevent them from religious and physical education. Religious teachings to for all humankind, including deaf people, are a communal duty for Muslims. In the current situation available numerous methods to assist religious practices among peoples with hearing impairment spread throughout the world. Web-based educational materials online classes, and smartphone applications are available for them. But not extensive range use this assistance our differently-abled people of Malabar.

Ability Foundation for the Disabled is a nongovernmental organization to build for the empowerment of all categories of differently-abled peoples. It founded in 2009 at Kallayi near the Kozhikode. It also developed by eminent visionaries hailing from different socio-economic and cultural environments considering this service as a self-responsibility. It ensures that it promotes equal opportunities for the development of the differently-abled community. The organization most focuses on the educational empowerment of deaf and dumb students. **(Kutty, A. (2018, November 3). About Ability Foundation For Disabled. (I, Interviewer)**

Sight and hearing are the essential blessings of Allah Almighty. Our society does not provide equal opportunity to get religious education, especially among Hearing-impaired persons. A mosque at Pulikkal holds the Friday prayer in sign language for hearing impaired. It considered as the first mosque in India performing JumaKuthba in sign language. So all Islamic propagation programs all over the world will adopt this system for the propagation of their religion.. There is no history of the institutionalization of people with disabilities like many in Western countries. But we also know that Indian family structures are changing and there is a growing demand for institutional facilities for people with disabilities. Moreover, Indian Muslim scholars recognize people with disabilities for their social, economic, and educational development. They transmitted Islamic scriptures into Brail code.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF ABILITY FOUNDATION FOR DISABLED

In Kerala, mainly, a few Muslim institutions are working for the development of people with disabilities. But the Ability Foundation for the Disable which is situated in Pulikkal is the only organization in Kerala that has been working for all development of the said people. This organization conducts the jumakuthuba in sign language. This foundation attempts to make the public aware of the innate capacities and capabilities of the disabled persons and provide guidance and counseling programs to the differently-abled persons. There is less employment opportunity for them in our society. Keeping this in mind, the Ability foundation for the Disabled provides vocational training to this neglected section and assists in creating self-help groups of differently-abled in this area. These groups are high to help with the rehabilitation. The change should happen within the family. Many families are not ready to provide them better opportunities with fear or ignorance of their other capabilities. Some families are hesitant to introduce their differently-abled members to others.

This foundation tries to change this conviction by giving them family counseling. Parenting is a complicated task doing a parent of a child with differently-abled. Parents also face several problems because of the child's illness and lack of awareness about their disease. Family counseling aims to change the lives of parents and children. This procedure can do better care of children and will be able to increase the quality of life. Family counseling helps them to examine their concerns and emotions and can develop a good relations with differently-abled persons. It assists people to improve well-being, to reduce pain, to fortitude crisis and aptitude to live useful lives. Ability Foundation for Disabled gives better family counseling to enhance all over their life.

Moreover, it gives various types of personality development programs like leadership training, stress management, motivation and goal setting and citizenship training.

The Ability Foundation for the Disabled is not only providing vocational training but also ensure placement and follow up services. Their activities include making chalk, umbrella, bookbinding, File making, fashion designing and aluminum fabrication work etc.

Their institutions are Ability institute for disabled, Ability special schools, Guidance of counseling and Braille transcription center, Certificate in Sign Language Course, Desktop Publishing Leading to Advanced DTP, Dressmaking, Aluminium and Fiber fabrication work, Finishing School and value-based education.

Ability's contributions to hearing-impaired persons

Deaf and mute people are faced numerous problems from our society. In the early period, society viewed that education is not compulsory for differently-abled people, especially to the deaf community. Though, this community becomes very backword people in society in the case of lack of education, it adopts all the issues of these people and giving all facilities for their empowerment. Our culture is not concentrated on providing religious education into these types of communities. The number of religious, educational institutions seen in Malabar, but these institutions do not offer religious education for deaf and dumb students.

The majority of the differently-abled persons are not coming forward because of the lack of awareness of their opportunities. This foundation has special schools for mentally challenged, autism affected, learning disabled, and cerebral palsied people. Even though they are getting special school facilities in our society, life after plus two is a question for them. They contributes excellent centers for providing better education to them. It is ensuring that proper guidance and value-based education to develop them better citizens with high morality throughout their life.

Students have been studying on this campus from all over Kerala and even from Lakshadweep. About 200 duff and dumb students have been studying on this campus. Ability institute for the hearing impaired put forward various courses like B.Com, Bachelor of computer application. These courses are affiliated to the University of Calicut. It provides various bachelor courses and certificate courses and PSC coaching for them. We can see the absence of trained sign language teachers makes duff students

extremely difficult to comprehend their lectures. Al Masjidu Rahma at Pulikkal is using sign language during Friday kuthuba and azan to help the hearing impaired persons in the religious services. They constructed a large LCD screen on the mosque of the wall. They formed two *mimber* inside the mosque to introduce Friday kuthuba in sign language.

This mosque is on the campus for pursuing their religious practices. The foundation does all the activities by receiving sponsorships from society. Many have come forward to sponsor students to meet their educational and hostel expenses and to provide financial support to self-help groups to establish micro-enterprises of differently-abled people.

Ability's Contributions to visually Impaired Persons

Widely, most of the persons with visually impaired do not have confidence in their abilities and their capacities. "ICT plays an important role in all civil society in their everyday life. Speech-to-text technologies can make a significant contribution to assist the people with disabilities. It gives them a helping hand to live independently of technological developments such as the proliferation of the internet and the availability of digital television such as audio commentary (video commentary)". (Varney, E. (2013). *Disability and Information Technology, A Comparative Study in Media Regulation*. New York: Cambridge University Press Publication.)

. This organization has got its needs and maximum utilization of information communication technologies. Audio devices are another way for blind or visually impaired students to access print and information. These types of devices can help students to capture information. They also provide computer software, hardware accessories, and other tools using for blind students.

They bring the visually impaired person can be advanced in both educational and utilize their employable facilities. It introduces a new chapter for visually impaired persons namely the Ability Institute for Visually Challenged. It distributes several functions for these people, such as computer education, Braille literacy, Braille transition center, Urava audio library, personal services, skill promotion and DivyaDeepthi audio magazine (Abdurahim. (2019, September 10). *About the Ability Foundation*. (I, Interviewer)

Braille literacy program is imparting Braille writing and reading in English, Hindi, Arabic and Malayalam. The transition center establishes for preparing a Braille version of valuable books to transfer audio devices. The next contribution is Urava audio library which aims that ink print books transmitted into audio records and it has been providing to renders across the state. (ibid)

Talking book library which is linked with Malappuram District Library Council provides to blind students and other visually impaired humankind facility to listen to the books.. Three language sources provided through this electronic device. In 1997 the federation of blind also formulated a talking book library and studio at law college junction in Thiruvananthapuram. But these facilities do not implement in the Malabar

area at that period. The Ability Foundation for the Disabled records valuable literary sources such as Magazine, Malayalam literature and other documents and transmits through this facility to visually impaired people. The organization found a particular audio magazine called as Divyadeepthi audio magazine. It contributes Publications and monthly magazine for the sake of print disabled problem. They started with a view to help visually challenged women to become self-reliant a course in Home-Management and teaching orientation & mobility. The Home Management Course is useful for good housekeeping.

Moreover, this organization gives PSC caching and computer coaching to their academic development. We can understand this organization going backward to accommodate all of them because they do not have enough computers. Their Braille transcription center has prepared the Quran written in Braille transcript.

CONCLUSION

The differently-abled population is a neglected section in our society. Their rehabilitation requires a lot of effort from the family, community and the government. Our responsibility is to lead them to mainstream based on providing better education and employment opportunities. Ability Foundation for the Disabled is a great initiative to take them to a healthy life by helping the differently-abled to find their different abilities. They provide education, better employment opportunities, and guidance and counselling. This institution believes that they have to teach Islamic monotheism to people who deprived of it due to different disabilities. Although, despite these contributions, some defects still exist in this organization. Infrastructural facilities would not support a barrier-free campus for disability. Lift facility is not available in the institutions under this organization. Moreover, computer courses are available only for duff and visually impaired students and other differently abled students do not have these facilities. It should ensure better facilities and accommodate all types of differently-abled persons.

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