Course Title:

**SW-712 SOCIAL WORK WITH SPECIAL PEOPLE**

**M.Phil. (2nd Semester) 2019-20**

**Lecture: 1**

Topic: Conceptual clarity Definition of Disability, Physical and Mental Disables

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**Sources:**

1. WHO Report, 2011
2. International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) in 2001

**What is a Disability?**

According to WHO (2011), disabilities is an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. An 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.

Disability is thus not just a health problem. It is a complex phenomenon, reflecting the interaction between features of a person’s body and features of the society in which he or she lives. Overcoming the difficulties faced by people with disabilities requires interventions to remove environmental and social barriers.

**According to the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health:**

The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health, also known as ICF, is a classification of the health components of functioning and disability. The World Health Organization (WHO) published the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) in 2001 that covers;

1. Activity
2. Participation
3. Body Structures
4. Body Functions
5. Personal Factors
6. Health Conditions
7. Activity Limitations
8. Functional Limitations
9. Environmental Factors
10. Participation Restrictions

**The ICF is structured around:**

1. Body functions and structure.
2. Additional information on severity and environmental factors.
3. Activities (related to tasks and actions by an individual) and participation (involvement in a life situation).

**Classifications of Disabilities**

Categories of disability types include various physical and mental impairments that can hamper or reduce a person's ability to carry out their day to day activities. These impairments can be termed as disability of the person to do his/her day to day activities. Disability can be broken down into a number of broad sub-categories, which include the following 8 main types of disability.

1. [Mobility/Physical](https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/#mobility)
2. [Spinal Cord (SCI)](https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/#sci)
3. [Head Injuries (TBI)](https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/#tbi)
4. [Vision](https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/#vision)
5. [Hearing](https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/#hearing)
6. [Cognitive/Learning](https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/#learning)
7. [Psychological](https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/#mental)
8. [Invisible](https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/#invisible)

**1 - Mobility and Physical Impairments**

This category of disability includes people with varying types of physical disabilities including:

1. Upper limb(s) disability
2. Lower limb(s) disability
3. Manual dexterity
4. Disability in co-ordination with different organs of the body

Disability in mobility can be either an in-born or acquired with age problem. It could also be the effect of a disease. People who have a broken bone also fall into this category of disability.

**2 - Spinal Cord Disability**

[Spinal cord injury](https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/spinal/) (SCI) can sometimes lead to lifelong disabilities. This kind of injury mostly occurs due to severe accidents. The injury can be either complete or incomplete. In an incomplete injury, the messages conveyed by the spinal cord is not completely lost. Whereas a complete injury results in a total dis-functioning of the sensory organs.

In some cases spinal cord disability can be a birth defect.

**3 - Head Injuries - Brain Disability**

A disability in the brain occurs due to a [brain injury](https://www.disabled-world.com/health/neurology/tbi/). The magnitude of the brain injury can range from mild, moderate and severe. There are two types of brain injuries:

* Acquired Brain Injury (ABI)
* Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

ABI is not a hereditary type defect but is the degeneration that occurs after birth. The causes of such cases of injury are many and are mainly because of external forces applied to the body parts. TBI results in emotional dysfunctioning and behavioral disturbance.

**4 - Vision Disability**

There are hundreds of thousands of people that have minor to various serious [vision disability](https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/vision/) or impairments. These injuries can also result into some serious problems or diseases like blindness and ocular trauma, to name a few.

Some of the common vision impairment includes scratched cornea, scratches on the sclera, diabetes related eye conditions, dry eyes and corneal graft.

**5 - Hearing Disability**

[Hearing disabilities](https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/hearing/) includes people that are completely or partially deaf, (Deaf is the politically correct term for a person with hearing impairment). People who are partially deaf can often use [hearing aids](https://www.disabled-world.com/assistivedevices/hearing/hearing-aids.php) to assist their hearing. Deafness can be evident at birth or occur later in life from several biologic causes, for example Meningitis can damage the auditory nerve or the cochlea.

Deaf people use sign language as a means of communication. Hundreds of sign languages are in use around the world. In linguistic terms, sign languages are as rich and complex as any oral language, despite the common misconception that they are not "real languages".

**6 - Cognitive or Learning Disabilities**

[Cognitive Disabilities](https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/cognitive/) are kind of impairment present in people who are suffering from dyslexia and various other learning difficulties and includes speech disorders.

**7 - Psychological Disorders**

Affective Disorders: Disorders of mood or feeling states either short or long term. Mental Health Impairment is the term used to describe people who have experienced psychiatric problems or illness such as:

* Personality Disorders - Defined as deeply inadequate patterns of behavior and thought of sufficient severity to cause significant impairment to day-to-day activities.
* Schizophrenia: A mental disorder characterized by disturbances of thinking, mood, and behavior.

**8 - Invisible Disabilities**

[Invisible Disabilities](https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/invisible/) are disabilities that are not immediately apparent to others.

It is estimated that 10% of people in the U.S. have a medical condition considered a type of invisible disability.