

South Eastern University Arts Research Session 2014

Opportunities and Issues in Empowering Differently-Abled People into Productivity: A Study Based on Ampara District, Sri Lanka

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Disability is a normal phenomenon in the sense that it exists in all societies, affecting predictable and identifiable proportions of each population. Disability activities are economic activities, which generate economic output and income just like other economic activities. Nevertheless, expenditures on disability are typically viewed as constituting an economic burden. This likely stems from the fact that most expenditures on disability have traditionally come either from government budgets, making them burdensome to taxpayers, or charitable remittances, making them charity, which necessarily implies a burden. Integrating disabled people into the labor force in a productive manner is a challenging but important step. Empowerment is all about giving official authority to an individual to do something and/or promoting the self-actualization or influence of someone by making someone stronger and more confident. Development oriented disability empowerment policies, programs and strategies are those that seek to reduce the economic costs of disability by increasing the functionality of people with disabilities and reducing the barriers that impede their access to social and economic opportunities. This research has attempted to study the available opportunities to empower disables and to identify the issues which are significant threat to empowering disables which in turn increase the cost of families with disabled persons and government expenditure to protect these disabled persons.

Keywords: Disability, Empowerment, Labor force, Economic activities, Opportunities, Issues

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