

Perceptions of Students on Implementation of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 in Secondary School Students of Mizoram

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Abstract

Education is the most effective way to give children a chance to attend a school, learn and develop their skills. According to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), inclusive education is essential to realizing the right to education for all without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunities, including for persons with disabilities. The constitution of India provides Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 to protect and promotes the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities in different aspects of life. The present study aims to find out the perception of differently-abled students of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 of Mizoram. 36 samples was collected using purposive sampling technique. Self-constructed perception questionnaire was used to collect the data. Mean, S.D and t-test was used to analyse the data. The study found that majority of the differently-abled students had average perceptions of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016. It was also found from the study that no significant difference was found between male and female. Moreover a significant difference was found between the perceptions of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 of rural and urban students.

Keywords: *Perceptions, Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016, Secondary School students*

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I. Introduction:

Education is a right of every child, whether she/he is disabled or non-disabled, as education equips children to meet life's challenges. All Indian citizens, including those with disabilities, have a right to an education under the country's constitution. It guarantees everyone's equality, freedom, justice and dignity and implicitly calls for a society that is inclusive of everyone, including people with disabilities. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 is a law intended to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and address issues that are additional to or incidental to it.

The Acts contains 17 chapters with 102 sections. It protects and promotes the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities in different aspects of life such as educational, skill development and employment, social security, health, rehabilitation and recreation, special provisions for persons with benchmark disabilities, duties and responsibilities of appropriate governments, registration of institutions for persons with disabilities and grants, certification of specified disabilities, legal, economic, cultural and political. It applies to government, non-government and private organizations. The disabilities that are included under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 were- Blindness, low vision, leprosy cured persons, hearing Impairment, Loco motor disability, Dwarfism, Intellectual Disability, Mental illness, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, Chronic Neurological Conditions, Specific Learning Disabilities, Multiple Sclerosis, Speech and language Disability, Thalassaemia, Haemophilia, Sickle Cell Disease, Multiple Disabilities including deaf-blindness, Acid Attack victims and Parkinson's Diseases.

The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, was implemented in Mizoram with effect from 2nd February, 1996. The PWD Act 1995 was replaced by the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 on December 28, 2016, and came into force on April 19, 2017. One thousand one hundred eighty-one differently-abled students were enrolled in secondary schools of Mizoram in 2020-2021.

Rationale of the study:

The purpose of the study is to find out the perceptions of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 among the differently-abled students of secondary schools in Mizoram. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016) defines “inclusive education as a system of education wherein students with and without disability learn together, and the system of teaching and learning is suitably adapted to meet the learning needs of different types of students with disabilities”. Every child has a right to free education compulsorily up to the elementary stage of schooling as per the Right of Children to free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 (RTE Act, 2009). The Right to Education is built on the principles that all children should be in school.

Considering the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 and its importance, it is required to conduct a comprehensive research study that explores numerous angles and elements of implementing the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 in Mizoram. The results may help us to understand the importance of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 and use the information for educational purposes.

Objectives of the study:

1. To find out the perceptions of differently-abled students about Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 in secondary school students of Mizoram.
2. To compare the perceptions of differently-abled students about Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 in secondary school students of Mizoram with respect to their Gender.
3. To compare the perceptions of differently-abled students about Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 in secondary school students of Mizoram with respect to their Locality.

Hypotheses:

1. There is no significant difference in the perceptions of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 of differently-abled secondary school students with respect to their gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the perceptions of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 of differently-abled secondary school students with respect to their locality.

Operational Definitions of the Key Terms:

The key terms used in this study are given below:

Perceptions: Perceptions in this study refer to how students view and respond to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 in the secondary schools of Mizoram.

Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016: This study refers to the provisions given in chapter 3 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act.

Secondary School Students: It refers to the students studying 9th and 10th standards operationalized under Mizoram Board of Secondary Education (MBSE).

Delimitation of the Study:

Due to limited time and resources, the present study was delimited within three districts.

Method of the Study:

The study was largely descriptive in nature and quantitative data collection (survey) was used.

Population:

The population of the study included all the differently-abled secondary school students in Mizoram.

Sample:

Sampling was done using purposive sampling technique. The sample consisted of 36 differently-abled secondary school students from Aizawl, Mamit and Kolasib District.

Tool:

A self-constructed perception questionnaire was used to access the perception of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016.

Procedure of data collection:

The questionnaire was administered after taking the consent of the respected Headmasters and sample students.

Data Analysis:

In order to analyse the data collected, inferential statistics like mean, standard deviation and t-test were used.

Data interpretation and discussion:

Objective No. 1: Perceptions of differently-abled students about Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 in secondary school students of Mizoram.

In order to find out the perceptions of differently-abled school students about Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 in secondary school students of Mizoram, the researcher calculated the mean of the total number of sample as standard deviation of each sample. The raw scores were transformed into Z scores by the principle/formula of $\pm 1\sigma$ from the mean. Those differently-abled students who score more than $+ 1\sigma$ were grouped as high perceptions of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016. Those students who fell between -

1 σ and +1 σ were considered to have average perceptions of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016. Students who scored less than -1 σ were grouped as having poor perceptions of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016.

Table No. 1: Perceptions of differently-abled school students about Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 in secondary students of Mizoram

N	1 σ and below	-1 σ and +1 σ	+1 σ and above
36	0	30 (83.33%)	6 (16.67%)

As depicted in Table No. 1, it was discovered that 6 (16.67 %) of differently-abled secondary school students had high level of perceptions about Rights of Persons with Disabilities act 2016. The majority of students, i.e., 30 (83.33 %) of the differently-abled secondary school students of Mizoram had average perceptions and no students had poor perceptions. Therefore, we can conclude from the study that the majority of the differently-abled school students have average perceptions of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016.

II. Discussion:

The 2016 Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act guarantees differently abled people equal access to opportunities, the preservation of their identities, consideration for their advancing capabilities, non-discrimination, and full and effective inclusion in society. In Mizoram there is less segregation in the general public and each resident as well as the understudies is similarly treated. The majority of differently abled secondary students' average perceptions of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 were not surprising.

Objective 2: Comparison of perceptions of differently-abled school students about RPWD Act 2016 in secondary schools of Mizoram with respect to their Gender.

Table No. 2: Comparison of perceptions of differently-abled school students about Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 in secondary schools of Mizoram with respect to their Gender

Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	df	't' value	Significance (at 0.05 and 0.01 levels of significance)
Male	11	58.82	44.36	14	-0.38	Not Significant
Female	25	57.67	18.06			

Table No. 2 demonstrates that male students have a mean score of 58.82 and a standard deviation of 44.36. Female students have a mean score of 57.67 and a standard deviation of 18.06. At both the 0.05 and the 0.01 levels of significance, the t value is lower than the critical t value, which is -0.38. As a result, it is necessary to accept the null hypothesis, which states that "there is no significant difference between male and female differently-abled school students with respect to their gender." Therefore, it may be concluded that there is no significant difference between the male and female differently-abled secondary school students about the perceptions of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 in Mizoram.

Discussion: It was interesting to found that the perceptions of differently-abled secondary students in Mizoram of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 were unaffected by gender. The discoveries of the review concurred with the vast majority of the discoveries of different states and somewhere else as well. This could be due to the fact that male and female differently-abled secondary students were treated equally, and neither gender is given preference in the classroom or in other areas of life.

Objective 3: Comparison of perceptions of differently-abled school students about RPWD Act 2016 in secondary schools of Mizoram with respect to their Locality

Table No. 3: Comparison of perceptions of differently-abled school students about RPWD Act 2016 in secondary schools of Mizoram with respect to their Locality

Locality	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	df	't' value	Significance (at 0.05 and 0.01 levels of significance)
Rural	10	61.4	42.27	11	2.90	Significant
Urban	26	55.13	6.55			

Table No. 3 demonstrates that rural students have a mean score of 61.4 and a standard deviation of 42.27. The mean score for urban students is 55.14, and the standard deviation is 6.55. The t value is 2.90, which is greater than the critical t value at the 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states, 'there is no significant difference between male and female differently-abled school students with respect

to their locality' has to be rejected. The rural students had a higher mean score than the urban students when their mean scores were compared. As a result, it is possible to draw the conclusion that rural students had a higher perception of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 than urban students did.

Discussion: According to the findings of the study, differently-abled students from urban and rural backgrounds differ significantly. The majority of the country's findings were in line with the study's findings. In the current study, rural students had a favourable perception of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act. The reason could be that there are fewer students in rural areas, teachers are more active, and there are more facilities for students with disabilities in rural areas than in urban areas.

III. Conclusion:

It was interesting to learn from this study that the majority of differently-abled students had average perceptions of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016, that only a small percentage of differently abled students had perceptions that were above average, and that there were no differently abled students who were found to have poor perceptions of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016. In addition, both genders may be assumed to have comparable perceptions of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016. The fact that there were no significant differences between the two groups was remarkable. By comparing their mean scores, it was determined that rural differently-abled students had a higher mean score than urban differently-abled students, indicating a significant difference between the two groups of secondary students. Urban differently-abled students had lower perceptions than rural students with disabilities. As a result, it is reasonable to conclude that secondary students require increased awareness of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act of 2016.

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