

Murthy: My wife and I, we contribute every year, but I don't like to talk about it. I personally believe that philanthropy should not be talked about much.

India Knowledge@Wharton: Do you see yourself becoming involved in any government role?

Murthy: In my own small way I am already involved. I am part of the committee for creating employment for youth in Jammu and Kashmir. I am on the prime minister's council on trade and industry. I was on the committee for financial inclusion, and others, too.

India Knowledge@Wharton: Would you be interested in playing a larger role in social building or with the government in any way?

Murthy: Any opportunity that will allow me to speak to youngsters about how they can make this a better country, a country that the whole world can be proud of, how they can make sure that the poorest child has access to the basic needs -- that's what I would be very happy doing.

India Knowledge@Wharton: What would be your advice to young people in India who want to become entrepreneurs?

Murthy: They have to follow what was so well conveyed by Shahrukh Khan [Hindi film actor] and his team of hockey players in [the Hindi film] Chak De India -- about meritocracy, discipline, teamwork, subordinating one's ego in favor of the community or the team. I think if our youngsters did all of that, we would be a wonderful country.

N. R. Narayana Murthy is the founder & chairman emeritus of Infosys Technologies Limited. He shared his thoughts in an interview with India Knowledge@Wharton. This interview has been reproduced with kind permission from Knowledge@Wharton published in May 05,2011. Website - <http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/india/article.cfm?articleid=4595>

QUOTES

A lot of companies have chosen to downsize, and maybe that was the right thing for them. We chose a different path. Our belief was that if we kept putting great products in front of customers, they would continue to open their wallets.

Steve Jobs

A lot of people in our industry haven't had very diverse experiences. So they don't have enough dots to connect, and they end up with very linear solutions without a broad perspective on the problem. The broader one's understanding of the human experience, the better design we will have.

Steve Jobs

Again, you can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something - your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. This approach has never let me down, and it has made all the difference in my life.

Steve Jobs

Identifying and implementing social infrastructure for social inclusion of people with disabilities in India

Dr. Ketna Mehta, Ms Vandana Garware, Suyash Deshpande

Abstract: Architectural studies indicate that the old forts built by the Rajputs, Moghuls and Marathas had slopes and broad doors and even the elephants who carried food supplies and ammunition could pass through conveniently. In the 21st century civilization however with advanced technological development a child with disability and on wheelchair cannot go to school due to infrastructural inadequacies. People with disability constitute a significant section of population in developing countries, including India. This action research paper identifies and lists the various projects which need to be categorized as social infrastructure enabling the inclusion of people with disability in the mainstream, thus giving them equal opportunities to grow, prosper and contribute to the nation's progress- economically, culturally and socially. Implementing these social infrastructure projects within a given timeframe, recommending stakeholders to operationally see through the successful completion of these enabling environments is the focus of the study.

Keywords: Disability, Social Infrastructure, Social Inclusion.

Introduction:

Some succinct and hard-hitting statements to ponder:

"It is a matter of pride and joy to us that we have created our own niche, contribute to our families and communities and enjoy our work-life balance just like anybody else, despite our disabilities."

These are words of Ratna More a 35 year old data entry operator in the Central Government's Census Department, who values her independent living, her job, the barrier-free environment in Goa, where she is based for the last 6 years on account of transfer from Mumbai. Married to an agriculturist, Ratna treasures her friendships

Acknowledgement: Pooja Khedekar, Research Assistant Welingkar Research Centre, We School, Mumbai

and family connections. She has polio and uses calipers and crutches.

"We are continuing to manage challenges, thanks to supportive people and institutions, certain user-friendly policies and amenities facilitated by the Government, the private sector, and of course, our own determination!"

Vijay Bisht, a Manager in the Contracts Department of Tata Motors, is a lively and warm person who spends a considerable amount of his time and energy in designing innovative interventions to help deal with condition of paraplegia. Vijay was diagnosed with paraplegia when he was thirteen. He lives in Lucknow with his wife, son and parents,

enthusiastically dabbling in different social activities when not at work.

"The flip side is that there still exist innumerable physical and attitudinal barriers, systemic flaws and loopholes which stand in the path of millions of Indian citizens with disabilities. These barriers are a blot on our country's commitment to social justice, to human rights and to inclusive growth."

Suryakant Walunj, a graphic designer at Repro India Pvt Ltd, Navi Mumbai is a mild mannered young man who has been perseveringly grappling with restrictions posed by lower limb polio, socio-economic difficulties and frustrations of not being able to access college education. He is married, has a daughter and lives in a joint family, successfully locating himself in a better habitat and living conditions through his own efforts as the main breadwinner of the family.

All the three travel independently - Ratna uses a mobike, Vijay a specially designed car and Suryakant in a motorized tricycle.

Ratna, Vijay and Suryakant's experiences mirror the lives of thousands of youth with similar impairments. However what is tragic to them is our society's inadequate response to the pain, the difficulties, the apartheid they face, everyday of their lives, not so much their impairment.

The above caselets only point out the fact that India can very well be called a land of dichotomies, inequalities and lopsided development. Mumbai, the financial capital of India boasts of two rich stock exchanges, yet scores a low 2.5 out of 7 as a wheelchair friendly place. The city does not have a single world class rehabilitation centre for people

with spinal injuries. The richest temple of Padmanabhaswamy in Thiruvananthapuram in India has treasures worth USD 20 Billions and yet millions of Indians die every year due to inadequate healthcare facilities and lack of access & rehabilitation. The construction sector is booming & by 2030 it is estimated that there will be 80 mega cities and townships in India. Yet accessible built space with universal design principles are not considered a priority for the new infrastructure. There are 4000 Management Schools in India till date and yet less than 0.01% of them are accessible to prospective students with locomotor impairments. The sale of the luxury sedan BMW in 2010 was the maximum from India, having sold 6,246 units. Yet there are not many modified vehicular user friendly public transport systems or private services.

Social Development with its tomes of theories, methods and measures conjures a completely new dimension in this land of diversity which is India. And one of the most visible forms of social development is our social infrastructure and more importantly our inadequate response to it. It is this burning problem which we are highlighting in our paper. Equally important is our deliberation on identifying appropriate interventions to this particular problem.

This research paper lends salience to a very important management thought focusing on India. The current generation of human society has to perform significant dual tasks. One is to retain the glory of our planet, save our environment and reverse climate change influences. And the other is to care and nurture for the existing marginalized sections of the society; uneducated youth and the economically disadvantaged people with disabilities.

The first will give results for the future generation of human society and the second will motivate the present generation, giving them a level playing field for participating as contributing citizens, who are empowered to lead a good quality of life, with respect and dignity.

Background & Literature Review:

Some of the recent research in the field of disability indicates that estimated 85 to 90% of global population of persons with disabilities resides in developing countries (Hiranandani, 2010). Further as per the United Nations estimations more than 1.3 billion people live in abject poverty in the global South, 600 million of which are disabled (Yeo, 2005). Again in India there are no clear estimates or projections on number of people with disability. Besides considering the stigma surrounding disability, many individuals with severe impairments, mainly women and rural disabled, are unconsciously excluded from census and surveys (Jeffery & Singal, 2008). This is also the result of dilemma and lack of adequate definitions of disability resulting in and thereby compounding the problems of measuring disability. Lack of definition translates into disparity and reconciliation issues in disability numbers. For instance the 58th round of the National Sample Survey (NSS) reported there were 18.5 million persons with disabilities in 2002 (NSSO, 2003) compared with 21.9 million reported by the Census of 2001 (Registrar General of India, 2001). The Census of 2001 did not adopt any particular definition of disability, rather it included a functional limitation question that asked respondents about their type of functional limitation (e.g., in seeing, hearing, movement). In contrast, the NSS considers a person as disabled if she or he has

restrictions or lacks the ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being. The NSS thus defines disability as an activity limitation (Hiranandani, 2010). In this context the Persons with Disabilities Act (PDA), 1995 comes across as path breaking legislature, considering that it honours challenges associated with disability and provides guidelines for education, employment, physical infrastructure, social security etc.

The linkages between disability and poverty have been increasingly recognized in international development literature (Yeo, 2005). The relationship between poverty and disability has been referred to as a vicious circle (Elwan, 1999; Yeo, 2005). Various literatures suggest that disability is not simply matter of physical movements but is caused by social exclusion, just like poverty which is not merely an impact of disparity in income. However before any correlation between disability and other societal factors is established, it is even more important to understand this construct thereby resulting in standardization of the definition of disability.

Definitions, Hypothesis and Purpose of our Research:

Definition of Disability

The World Health Organization in 1976 defined distinction between impairment, disability and handicap and indicated that an impairment is any loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological or anatomical structure or function, a disability is any restriction or lack of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being, whereas a handicap is a disadvantage for a given individual, resulting from an impairment or a

disability, that prevents the fulfilment of a role that is considered normal (depending on age, gender and social and cultural factors) for that individual.

There was a wide spread criticism of the World Health Organization's definition and activists claimed that disability actually refers to socially imposed restrictions, that is, the system of constraints that are imposed on those with impairments by the discriminatory practices of society.

The Union of the Physically Impaired against Segregation defined impairment as lacking in part of or all of a limb, or having a defective limb, organ or mechanism of the body and disability as the disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by contemporary organizations which take no or little account of people who have physical impairments and thus excludes them from the mainstream of social activities.

The term "Disability" according to the United Nations Standard Rules on "The Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities", summarizes disability as a great number of different functional limitations occurring in any population, in any country of the world. People may be disabled by physical, intellectual or sensory impairment, medical conditions or mental illness. Such impairments, conditions or illnesses may be permanent or transitory in nature.

Globally, accident policies and insurance sector define disability as partial or permanent dismemberment and/or paralysis which covers hands or feet, sight of one or both eyes, speech and hearing in one or both ears, quadriplegia, paraplegia and hemiplegia.

In India, the Ministry of Welfare, Government of India issued orders in 1986, prescribing a

standard set of definitions along with standard tests for the purposes of certification of disability. For major categories of disability, the definitions include visually handicapped, locomotor, hearing handicapped, mental retardation. The Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992 provided a comprehensive definition which again covered hearing handicap, locomotor disability, mental retardation, visually handicapped and orthopaedic or neurological disorder. The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, defines disability as encompassing blindness, low vision, leprosy cured, hearing impairment, mental retardation, mental illness, locomotor impairment and cerebral palsy. This study focuses on people with loco-motor impairments with reference to their rights and needs for social infrastructure, so that they are rightfully included in terms of social inclusion.

Definition of locomotor impairment and cerebral palsy:

As per the Persons with Disabilities Act [Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation] Act, 1995, "loco-motor disability is disability of the bones, joints or muscles leading to substantial restriction of the movement of the limbs or any form of cerebral palsy".

A 40% degree of impairment as per an assessment by governmental norms is presently the basis for facilities / concessions provided by the Central / State governments.

Locomotor impairment has an impact on mobility. Specifically, mobility impairment comprises of a wide range of impairments which affect a person's independent

movement, partially or fully. It could be a consequence of cerebral palsy, stroke, arthritis, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, polio, amputation or spinal cord injury.

The person may experience muscle weakness, nerve damage, stiffness of the joints, lack of balance and coordination; mobility therefore can be indirectly / directly be affected due to these conditions.

Definition of Social Infrastructure:

Social infrastructure is a sub-sector of a region's infrastructure, which essentially comprises the basic physical systems of a country's or community's population, considered essential for enabling productivity in its economy.

Social infrastructure covers the social aspects of growth. It can be defined as "A system of social service, networks and locations that support people and communities." Thus social infrastructure would cover: Shelter, Health, Education, Income (Employment / Enterprise), Safety, Recreation and Leisure, Cultural Expression.

In the context of this study, social infrastructure implies:

- Accessible public places and physical in-built infrastructure :

Airports, railway stations, banks, post offices, shops/malls, road surfaces, kerb cuts, footpaths, places of tourist interest, places of worship, parking areas.

Ramps, railings, disabled-friendly classrooms, auditoriums, amphitheatres, cafeterias and canteens, administration offices.

All corporate offices including government, public, private and other spaces to be

accessible for people with disabilities.

All nursing homes, hospitals, diagnostic centres, rehab units, private medical and therapy clinics, fitness gyms, yoga and meditation centres, optometrists, clinics of dentists, ayurvedic, homoeopathy and naturopathy centres and obesity clinics.

Playgrounds, marriage/party halls, movie halls, parks, restaurants, pubs, auditoriums, stadiums, museums, art galleries, gyms, dance schools, hobby classes, sports arenas, clubs.

● *Transportation :*

Buses, taxis, trains, metro, aircraft, cruise, ferries, motorized transport, modified vehicles.

● *Reasonable Accommodations :*

Assistive technology, user-friendly systems and appliances, modified furniture, workstation modifications, and user-friendly in-built fixtures.

Definition of Social Inclusion:

Inclusion is the act of including or the state of being included. There is another dimension to the state of being included, viz, social inclusion.

By definition, social inclusion refers to a policy designed to ensure that all people are able to participate in society regardless of their background or specific characteristics, which may include: race, language, culture, gender, disability, social status, age, and other factors.

This particular concept of inclusion, in the context of disability based on the Social model of disability (as against the earlier medical Model/Approach, involves breaking down barriers, modifying built environments, promoting positive attitudes and perceptions,

providing information in accessible formats, and ensuring that laws and policies supporting non-discrimination and full participation. Health, education, livelihood and social empowerment comprise key areas for intervention by governments, civil society organizations, including organizations of / for disabled people.

In India, social inclusion of people with disabilities is increasingly being recognized by the Government of India which has been a signatory to international declarations, in the last two decades. Disability-rights groups, social sector activists and professionals, academia, and most importantly, self-advocate and their allies across India have been demanding legislative reforms, political will and policy actions in the disability sector.

As a consequence, there is an emergence of visible changes in the above areas. However they are scanty, scattered and inadequate; the simplest of barrier-free environment features are seen in a few public spaces, mostly in the big metros.

Of special significance are the following suggestions made by the Amendments Committee, PDA, 1995, in the context of foreseen developments in India:

"All persons with disabilities have the right on an equal basis with others to the physical environment, transportation, information and communications, including appropriate technologies and systems, and other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas. A National Disability Rights Authority is envisioned for purposes of regulating standards of accessibility in reference to proposed implementation.

The following spaces have been specified for the same:

- a. *All buildings and facilities used by the public*
- b. *Permanent, temporary, emergency conditions*
- c. *All new community residential places and private*
- d. *Pedestrian infrastructure*
- e. *Ports and harbour*
- f. *Road based transport ; Aviation; Railways; Maritime transport; Rural Public Transport System; and all other modes of transport so as to ensure that persons with disabilities travel in safety and comfort."*

Facilities for persons with disabilities at stations, airports, human assistance where no modifications are possible and rural modes of transport/accessible roads are among other measures outlined for state governments.

This preliminary study therefore, attempts to highlight:

- a. Illustrations of "islands of excellence" as manifested in barrier-friendly public spaces and systems
- b. Emerging accessibility concepts and principles being considered in India.

From this research of secondary data emerge specific recommendations for consideration of all the key stakeholders in the social, particularly, the disability sector.

Research Hypothesis:

Ho: An accessible social infrastructure enables

enhanced participation by people with mobility impairments in the economic, cultural and social progress of our nation.

Ha: An accessible social infrastructure does not enable enhanced participation by people with mobility impairments in the economic, cultural, social progress of our nation.

Apart from the above hypothesis the research also aims to highlight:

- The inadequacy of the basic definition of the important Social Infrastructure amongst the policy makers including the Planning Commission, Government of India.
- To propose a definition of Social Infrastructure for the various stake holders in the country and enumerate the same.

Once the Social Infrastructure is listed and identified, the humungous task of complying with the Universal Design norms and making it accessible follows. The end objective is to ensure that the people with mobility impairment and disability as large are no longer an invisible minority; but significant economic, cultural and social contributors of our society.

Research Methodology:

For the purpose of this study we have followed two tools for data collection.

1. Secondary data: An extensive literature review of research projects, research papers and articles was carried out.
2. Insights: Due to the authors' involvement in the disability sector, their past and present activities as well as their connection with disability organizations and persons with disabilities, stories, cases

and challenges faced have also been collated and analysed. This experiential research is at the core of this study giving significant findings and recommendations.

Findings of our Research:

Our research presented islands of excellence and provided brilliant examples of accessible spaces in India. We wish to highlight these islands of excellence and project them as positive role models in a bid to replicate with a multiplier effect across the length and breadth of India.

Chembur Post Office, Mumbai:

The Chembur Post Office offers an exemplary demonstration of an accessible public place, an initiative taken in 2003 - 2004 by the then Post Master. The ramp and railing at the entrance, and free space inside, for easy movement of service-users who use mobility aids, are the features of change. Further improvisation in the form of sales and service counters at a lower level would have been more meaningful.

Nina Foundation:

Nina foundation, a ten year old Mumbai - based self-advocacy organization, an innovative model of service-delivery and advocacy for people with spinal injuries. Members have been engaged in:

- o Employment for people with spinal injuries
- o Information - dissemination through a bi-monthly publication, One World
- o Inputs for access audits of public spaces & creation of public transportation (e.g. wheel chair-friendly BEST buses).
- o Creating a wheel-chair friendly business

school campus (Welingkar Institute of Management Development & Research, Mumbai and other public spaces with Rotary Club of Mumbai, Sion).

- o Networking with civil society organizations in Mumbai like the Rotary & higher education Institutions (IIT - Powai, IIT - Indore, The South Indian Education Society, Whistling Woods) for projects on disability issues. The hall mark of all these endeavours is the "spirit of inclusion".

Academicians, professionals from different disciplines, civic authorities, NGO activists, and corporate leaders have been won over by persuasion and conviction. There is no compulsion as everyone is driven by the same sense of commitment and passion.

VFS Global Services:

VFS Global is the world's largest and most experienced Outsourcing and Technology Service Specialists for Diplomatic Missions with operations in over 62 countries across 5 continents. VFS Global Services world over ensures that the Visa Application Centre (VAC) and its services are fully accessible to disabled people. Information on disabled access to the visa application centres is provided on websites as well as help line numbers for VACs world over. The applicants are made aware of the following points when planning visit to the visa application centre:

Access for mobility impaired visitors at VFS

1. Any applicant with disabilities requiring wheelchair assistance can make an appointment with VFS in advance by calling the helpline number so that VFS staff can escort them from the car drop

area at the main entrance of the building to the visa application centre.

2. A permanent ramp with handrails is available at the visa application centre's main entrance for wheelchair users to access.
3. A temporary ramp is available at the front security desk for access to the lift area in the lobby.
4. The lift/elevators have been adapted for disabled users.
5. There is easy access from the lift to the visa application centre for applicants using wheelchairs.
6. Parking spaces are available at the visa application centre. There is adequate space for wheelchair transfer from a vehicle in front of the building.
7. Wheelchair users may also access the visa application centre by taking the elevator directly from the car park to the visa application centre.
8. Visa application centres are equipped with toilets that have been specially designed for the needs of wheelchair-users or those with limited physical mobility.
9. Wheelchairs are available in the visa application centre. Applicants, who wish to avail of the services during their visit, can get in touch with member of staff.
10. The public areas, including the counter and biometric room, are accessible to wheelchair users or those with physical disabilities.
11. VACs are well lit, and the floor covering at the visa application centre is safe and even.

12. The visa application centre is fitted with emergency alarms and arrangements are in place for assisting disabled visitors in case of emergency or evacuation.

Access for visually impaired and deaf/hard of hearing visitors at VFS:

1. The visa application centre can be easily identified by the VFS visa application centre signage near the building.
2. The lift buttons are easily accessible and have 'Braille' lettering.
3. Guide dogs and hearing dogs are welcome.
4. If VFS staff is made aware in advance of the arrival of visitors with disabilities; priority will be given in the event of an emergency or evacuation of the building.
5. In future VFS VACs plan to install hearing loops, minicom and textphones, and have an internal interpreter for sign language.

ITC Hotels:

ITC Hotels has taken positive steps in employing people who are differently abled across its hotels. The models it has created have been effective and have succeeded in sensitising other employees to the needs of those differently-abled. ITC-Welcomgroup has employed 120 persons with disabilities (PWD), keeping in mind their specific skills, in diverse functions like housekeeping, teleworking, bakery and as musicians. Special badges for the visually impaired, whistles for hearing impaired employees to use in an emergency and sign language classes for the staff to communicate with them are just a few examples of how ITC Hotels has created an atmosphere of sensitivity and caring.

ITC has also published a handbook for the industry demystifying the perceived complexities in employing persons with disabilities. It regularly conducts infrastructural and accessibility audits to ensure that its workplace follows the norms and guidelines provided in PWD Act as well as international standards. Workplace has also incorporated Assistive devices like Induction Loop Systems, Portable Amplifiers with headphones, Screen Magnification lens, large print keyboards and voice recognition tools. There well documented policies and procedures on recruitment, performance management and career development of persons with disabilities.

Delhi Metro / Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (D.M.R.C.):

Delhi Metro is one of the most disabled friendly public transport systems in India and all stations have ramps from the streets so that wheelchair-bound persons can directly roll up to the lifts.

According to Access expert Shivani Gupta, facilities provided are all at the station level and these include:

- The ticket counter
- Security check
- Entrance gate
- Customer Care office
- Exit gate
- Toilets including accessible toilets

Apart from this, all stations have a parking available within walking distance from the entrance stairs.

Moving forward from these islands of excellence, it is worth while to ponder on the

challenges that current designers and architects are facing in the domain of universal design for India.

Our research indicated that many of our disabled people are still confined to their homes, as attempts to enter parks, buildings, or to be able to travel, etc remain a far cry. Barrier-free environment is a legal right of disabled people and it is important to bring attitudinal changes among policy makers in Government, and among architects, design professionals, manufacturers, etc. Most of people with disabilities, very often visit 'accessible' spaces only to find them being designed in a way that in spite of being signposted as 'accessible', they are unusable or can be used only with tremendous effort and difficulty. The question is how one can complain about poor design of accessible facilities as there are no Standards for infrastructural accessibility that have been adopted by India. This leaves the designers and planners to design based on innumerable guidance available online that may or may not be the best for us.

The three accessibility guidelines brought out by various Ministries include:

- 1: The C.P.W.D. design guidelines published by the Ministry of Urban Development
- 2: "Planning a Barrier Free Environment" published by the Office of the Chief Commissioner, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
- 3: The Accessibility chapter in the National Building Code by the Bureau of Indian Standards.

According to a survey undertaken by AccessAbility, only 11% of architects were aware and used either of these to get information about accessible design. Most relied on the internet for information. This is so because all of these guidelines are prescriptive; none are mandated in India. With this background, a welcome step taken by the Ministry of Urban Development (M.U.D.) is the effort to harmonize the three above mentioned documents and update them to the latest design requirements as per international standards. Having Accessibility Standards that are adopted and are applicable to the entire nation is the first step for ensuring appropriate and uniform accessibility throughout.

It is evident from above case studies and success stories how an accessible social infrastructure enables enhanced participation by people i.e. employees as well as customers with mobility impairments thereby having an overall impact on the organization and society at large.

Recommendations

India's growth story is the flavour of the season. Like in China, India too is going to see a massive boom in the infrastructure sector in the coming decade. Historically, Indian civilization has always been admired both for its architectural beauty and its inclusive design. Its time that the policy makers etch out and enumerate the various social infrastructure and at least ensure that the universal design principles are implemented to offer equity and dignity to people with mobility impairments; which is a visible sign of both progress and diversity.

Regarding the existing built environment, India is also known for its "quick fix" innovation sense. There is so much scope to also make the existing infrastructure enabling.

Curriculum in all architecture and interior design institutions must cover principles of universal design as well as best practices in accessible designs for people with disabilities both from Indian and International contexts.

Awards criterion for the major Institutional awards by CII, IMC, FICCI, NASSCOM, ET, etc also need to incorporate accessible features in the nominating organizations as mandatory. This will be a positive factor along with the laws and Acts already in place which will ensure implementation quickly.

Well known NGOs in the field of access like ADAPT, Ability Foundation, AccessAbility, Samarthyam, etc in the four zones of the country to be made Ombudsman to approve the project plans and user friendly features before execution.

Limitations of the Study

In the limited timeframe to do this study, no primary research could be carried out with the institutions responsible to implement barrier-free spaces. It would have been led to significant findings based on primary research as to why they have not being able to implement despite Legislations, Bye laws and Acts. Also the study in its current form only focuses on mobility impairments which is a sub set of disability and hence it would be equally important to extend the study to other impairments that encompass the construct of disability.

Conclusion:

India as a land of diversity can become a role model for fast tracking implementation of social inclusion for people with disabilities in social infrastructure projects. India has the talent, the aesthetic sense and innovative ability to leapfrog as the most disability friendly country in the world. A holistic and empathetic approach to prioritize this issue is the need of the hour.

The number of stories about the abilities and super abilities of people with disabilities in different countries exemplify that they possess indomitable spirit, courage and the determination to overcome their physical abilities and yet reach unimaginable milestones. Our hypothesis that an enabling infrastructure is necessary to bring out the potential of people with disabilities allowing them to participate in the various aspects of our nation building is more than vindicated. India too can produce an intellectual like 'Stephen Hawking' with access to the best education and assistive technology to maximize use of those organs which work, namely the brain. India too can produce a 'Christopher Reeve - Superman' who could produce and act in movies despite being a quadriplegic, paralysed neck down. India too can produce an 'Oscar Pistorius' who is a paralympic champion runner with artificial limbs. However it is time to accept that there are myriad issues or our burgeoning population. There are not even facilities even for the able bodied. As the nation embarks on its transformative journey from a under developed to a developing country it is important that the 'inclusive' growth story also

carries on board talented and significant people with disabilities. This voyage of achievement is possible only with an enabling barrier free environment.

For this there is no additional cost, which has been proved time and again. What is needed is an inclusive mindset, the attitude of holistic growth with no discrimination or differentiation.

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QUOTES

I think we're having fun. I think our customers really like our products. And we're always trying to do better.

Steve Jobs

I want to put a ding in the universe.

Steve Jobs

I'll always stay connected with Apple. I hope that throughout my life I'll sort of have the thread of my life and the thread of Apple weave in and out of each other, like a tapestry. There may be a few years when I'm not there, but I'll always come back.

Steve Jobs