

CHAPTER IX

EMPLOYMENT AND PLACEMENT OF THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

1. Importance

There is a general consensus the world over that employment is the most essential but the toughest aspect of rehabilitation. Employment of the visually impaired is a more potent problem in India due to:

- higher incidence of visual impairment;
- near non-existence of social security benefits;
- higher prevalence of visual impairment in the working age group;
- limited education and training facilities;
- majority of them are illiterate, confined to their homes,
- high rates of unemployment and rampant under-employment.

Most visually impaired persons and their families come from the poorest rungs of society. In fact, studies have revealed a very high correlation between poverty and disability. The cost of maintaining such persons in the family adds to the financial burden. Thus their economic rehabilitation does not remain an individual need; many a times it becomes a question of survival of the family.

1.1 Employment Process

It has been observed that a vicious cycle of the following components is an obstacle to the employment process:

- Absence of identification services

- Lack of job-oriented training facilities
- Irrelevant training
- Lack of training of employment officers
- Lack of an implementing machinery and absence of a system of delivery of services
- Ignorance of employers
- Apathy of employers and Government officials.

To expedite the employment process, it is essential to:

- direct all efforts at breaking the vicious cycle at some stage;
- extend appropriate job-oriented training and career counselling facilities;
- prepare a person for suitable employment;
- convince the employers to extend him employment;
- counsel family members and community in this regard; and
- involve Government machinery actively in the process.

1.2 Explanation of the term “Employment”

It is essential to expatiate the term ‘employment’ which has different connotations for different people. Employment *per se* does not mean formal, secured or regular employment only. It also means:

- any trade, economic activity or profession;
- in the organized as well as unorganized sector;
- any trade that would provide with some monetary remuneration.

The term employment used by rehabilitation planners generally ignores a vital aspect that the community itself offers a wide spectrum of opportunities where visually impaired persons may be absorbed in gainful occupations. Rehabilitating a 50 year old lady in a remote village in

India, for example, means helping her to take care of her household activities as she used to perform prior to her visual impairment or more importantly to perform the same tasks that the sighted women perform. Majority of women in rural areas are expected to perform the following activities:

- Cook meals for the family
- Perform household activities
- Take care of children and the elderly
- Fetch water
- Undertake rural occupations or the family trade

Thus they enable the other family members to undertake income generating activities and in the process they contribute indirectly towards family earning. This is what is meant by gainful occupation and thus economic rehabilitation.

Work is essential for every human being, not only for the sake of money and for economic independence, but also because it contributes to self esteem and self dignity leading to an abiding joy for life. For persons with disabilities, it is still more important as the self esteem and financial gains generated out of it would offset to a great extent the negative impact of disdainful attitude of the society. (Pandey & Advani, 1995)

1.3 Explanation of the term “Economic Rehabilitation”

Economic rehabilitation aims at developing and enhancing the functional abilities of a person with disabilities so that he/she is gainfully occupied resulting in economic contribution to self and the family. In fact, economic rehabilitation is the principal objective of the existing approach to CBR - a concept initiated and promoted by Rural Activities Committee of the National Association for the Blind all over the country. Economic rehabilitation includes any trade, economic activity or profession which enables an individual to make any tangible or intangible

contribution; any monetary or non-monetary service support to the family or community in the organized as well as unorganized sector.

1.4 Income Generation

The income generation activities on the other hand are a subset of economic rehabilitation and these mean direct monetary or tangible gains derived on a regular basis for services rendered or goods provided. Vocational training should generally lead to promotion of income generation or many a times economic rehabilitation. In general parlance, vocational training aims at promoting open employment of the individual. It refers to skill development through a structured and formal training programme which aims at placement of a person in open competitive wage employment in the organized sector.

1.5 Vocational Rehabilitation

Vocational rehabilitation is an outcome of the employment process. It may be achieved through open, self or sheltered employment, gainful occupation or income generation.

ILO Recommendation No. 99, Paragraph 1 (a) reads:

“For the purpose of this recommendation the term ‘vocational rehabilitation’ means that part of the continuous and coordinated process of rehabilitation which involves the provision of those vocational services e.g. vocational guidance, vocational training and selective placement, designed to enable a disabled person to secure and retain suitable employment”

2. Production Potentials

A visually impaired person is generally considered:

- unproductive and lacking in production skills; and
- a burden on the society.

Remaining idle and unemployed are probably the major causes for the resultant isolation, depression and rejection in him. It has been established that a visually impaired person can perform competitively in various professional, semi-professional and industrial jobs; rural crafts, trades and agricultural operations. It has been observed that when incentives for work motivation and recognition of high performance are available, his performance is comparable to that of a normal person provided that the job does not require visual discrimination or the same has been compensated for.

3. Avenues of Employment

3.1 Unorganized Sector

- 3.1.1 Self Employment
- 3.1.2 Professional Employment
- 3.1.3 Home-workers
- 3.1.4 Cooperatives
- 3.1.5 Community Based Rehabilitation

3.2 Organized Sector

- 3.2.1 Open Employment
- 3.2.2 Special Employment
 - 3.2.2.1 Sheltered Workshops
 - 3.2.2.2 Transitory Employment Workshops
 - 3.2.2.3 On-the-job Training Centres

3.1 Unorganized Sector

In India, the employment opportunities for visually impaired persons in the organized sector, particularly in the rural areas are almost non-existent. This employment crisis, both for the visually impaired as well as the sighted, has resulted due to exclusive dependence on the organized sector which accounts for only a small proportion of the work-force. The unorganized sector which is the major avenue of employment for the sighted,

may prove to be the most appropriate avenue of employment for the visually impaired also, if suitably exploited through:

- a coordinated approach;
- need based training, and
- an effective system of delivery of services.

3.1.1 Self Employment

a. *Definition:* The term self employment generally implies self initiated, developed and regulated income generating opportunities where the individual plays the role of the investor, employer and employee.



Self employment as a petty shop owner

b. *Importance*

- Vast employment potential
- Could be carried out with the active involvement of the family members who could play a complimentary role to each other
- Requires low investment resulting in speedy returns

- Availability of bank loans, subsidy and financial incentives
- Training can be availed in the house or the village itself.

c. *Factors Responsible for Success*

- Business acumen, foresight and knowledge of occupation
- Capacity and willingness to work
- Understanding environment and the individual needs
- Availability of training facilities
- Compatibility between training facilities and the specific requirements of the venture
- Level of support from the family and community
- Existence of an organizational net-work
- Availability of a launching grant
- Coverage of the occupation under the existing schemes
- Prevalence of occupation in the area
- Financial viability of the venture

d. *Illustration*

- Physiotherapy and massage
- Computer programming and operation
- Marketing, salesmanship and trading
- Petty shop keeping, vending stall
- Music
- Courier services
- Insurance agency
- Touch typing, stenography
- Public call office-telephone operating
- Internet and E-mail

- Plastic moulding, motor rewinding, furniture repairing, chair caning
- Bicycle repairing and hiring out
- Travel agency

3.1.2 Professional Employment

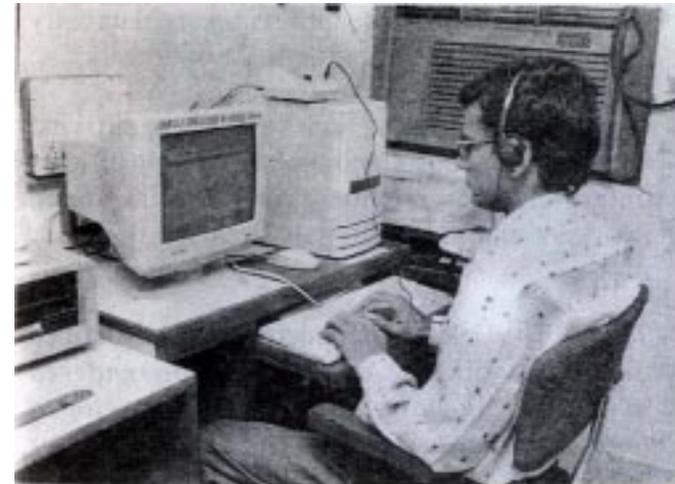
Definition: Professional employment refers to open employment or self placement of qualified and trained individuals in various professions

a. Importance

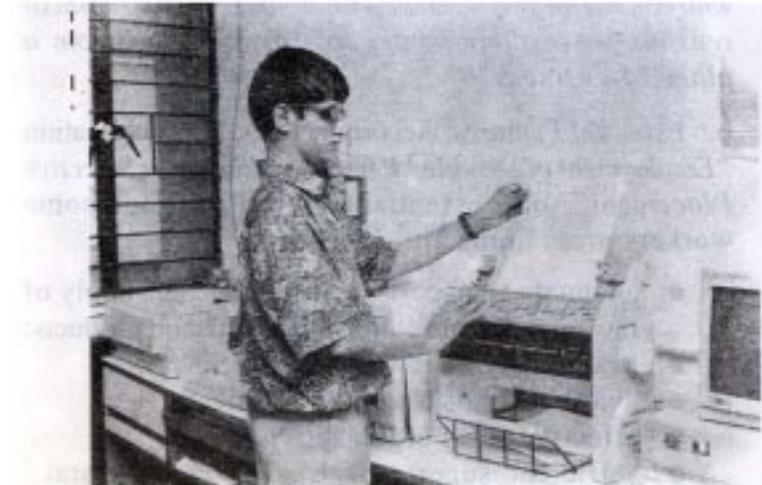
- Ideal avenue for educated persons
- Higher social status
- Easy social acceptance
- Higher earning
- Appropriate use of skills
- Better chances for formal placement and self-employment
- Easy career growth

b. Factors Responsible for Success

- Initiative and hard work
- Good mobility, suitable orientation
- Acquiring of specific skills through higher education and appropriate training
- Availability of appropriate assistive devices, adaptations and techniques
- Involvement and coordination of research, industrial training and higher education institutes and universities in the process
- Support from the National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation
- Recognition of courses by accredited agencies
- Governmental, administrative and institutional support.



Computer operator



Operating Braille Embosser

c. Illustrations

- teachers, music teachers, vocational instructors
- masseurs, physiotherapists

- stenographers, computer programmers, data entry personnel, internet and E-mail operators
- lawyers, solicitors
- business managers, marketing executives, management consultants, public relation officers
- interpreters, employment interviewers, social workers and psychologists

3.1.3 Home Workers :

a. *Definition:* The Helen Keller International has defined industrial home work as “A service to be rendered by an accredited agency - designed and developed with the intention of adhering to health and labour laws - to offer regular work training and remunerative work opportunities to those eligible disabled persons who cannot for physical, psychological or geographical reasons leave their homes to travel to and from a place of business”.

b. *Essential Features:* According to the ILO publication “Employment of Disabled Persons - Manual on Selective Placement” some essential features of a good home workers programme are:

- adequate transport facilities for the supply of raw material and collection of finished products;
- availability of raw material;
- availability of training facilities;
- effective sales organization;
- sufficient supervisory staff to visit the stake holders at their homes;
- variety of suitable work to suit skills and aptitude of workers;
- support of family members and community.
- prevalence of occupation, production activity or craft in the area;
- adequate remuneration for the work.



Caning of chairs

c. *Some other features may be added*

- Financial viability
- Professional approach
- Availing of following benefits:
 - * bulk buying
 - * low cost of investment
 - * financial assistance for initial training
 - * incentives, subsidy, low-interest rate loan from the Government
- Identification of occupation specially for the visually impaired
- Legislative support to the activity
- Institutional and administrative support to the activity.

d. *Importance*: Home-work is the most important avenue of economic rehabilitation for the visually impaired who are home-bound due to:

- nature of their disability,
- age,
- lack of mobility,
- physical incapacity,
- social constraints, particularly in case of women.
- lack of education or specific production skills

e. *Limitations*: In a module initiated and implemented at the Blind People's Association, Ahmedabad for the training and employment of persons with disabilities of all categories in domiciliary occupations as home workers, the following problems have been identified:

- Limited choice of products
- Scattered target group
- 83 percent visually impaired persons are above the age of 45, hence lack of motivation amongst them
- Non-availability of space at home for carrying out production activity
- Lack of uniformity of quality of finished products
- High cost of material distribution
- Lack of availability of any Government assistance and no coverage of such schemes under the Central Scheme of Assistance to Voluntary Organizations
- Pilferage of finished products
- Damage to products in transit

3.1.4 Cooperatives

a. *Definition*: The ILO publication "*Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of the Disabled : A Glossary*" defines cooperatives of the disabled as an

association of the disabled which aims to promote their vocational and social rehabilitation by their gainful employment in a common enterprise run on co-operative self management lines within the frame-work of the national economic plan, and also to engage in social and educational activities for the purpose of:

- preserving and enhancing physical efficiency;
- restoring them to social activity;
- enabling them to earn a living;
- satisfying the social needs, and
- improving standards of living.

b. *Important Features*

- Unity of ownership
- Forming a self controlled organization
- Voluntarily joining together to achieve a common end
- Similarity in production activities
- Proximity of work place
- Bulk buying and bulk selling
- Making equitable contribution to the capital required
- Accepting a fair share of risks and benefits
- Statutory recognition to the duly constituted cooperatives
- Availability of incentives, credit and other facilities.

c. *Limitations*: In India, cooperatives of the sighted have generally succeeded in credit, consumers, housing, dairy, irrigation, agriculture and allied pursuits only. The cooperatives in the industrial sector have not performed satisfactorily. The cooperatives exclusively for the visually impaired have not performed well, probably, due to following limitations:

- Scattered target group
- Limited choice of products
- Diversity in backgrounds of the target group
- Lack of unity of operations
- Lack of initiative, risk taking ability, awareness and self confidence
- Lack of infrastructure and organizational support
- Lack of special scheme of encouraging cooperatives of the visually impaired.

3.1.5 Community Based Rehabilitation : (Refer to Chapter on CBR for definition, importance, components and distinguishing features of the CBR)

3.2 Organized Sector

The realization of the dream of economic independence of the visually impaired person would necessitate their employment in the organized sector. It requires preparing them for employment and convincing the employers to extend them suitable employment opportunities.

3.2.1 Open Employment

a. *Definition:* Open employment refers to the placement of a person in open competitive wage employment in the organized sector viz.

- with State as well as Central Government;
- institutions, corporations and companies;
- establishments, factories, production units;
- schools, colleges, universities and research organizations;
- other such establishments.

b. *Characteristics:* Open employment has the following characteristics:

- Wage employment

- Competitive employment
- Employment is not due to charity or pity, it is due to production skills, abilities and qualifications
- All usual benefits available to the sighted persons are available to a visually impaired person also
- Conditions of employment and services conditions are the same for the visually impaired and the sighted
- Same terminal benefits are available to them

c. *Factors Affecting Open Employment*

i. *Government intervention in terms of :*

- augmenting training facilities;
- encouraging placement services;
- enacting and enforcing suitable laws on employment;
- supporting production cum training centres;
- extending administrative support.

ii. *Institutional support for :*

- developing training programmes;
- seeking Government intervention;
- creating public awareness;
- developing vocational guidance and counselling services;
- motivating the visually impaired to compete for open employment.

iii. *Involvement of following agencies for extending employment opportunities :*

- Trade Unions
- Employers' Federations
- Local administration

- Service Clubs

iv. *Availability of :*

- suitable employment aids; and
- adaptations in production processes and tasks.

d. *Merits*

- Social integration of the visually impaired into the community
- Full industrial wages and all other benefits including terminal benefits
- Financial security and possibility of savings
- Diversified avenues of employment matching with individual expectations
- Public awareness regarding their potentials
- Possibility of new employment opportunities and spreading the concept of open employment
- Confidence among the fellow workers and the employers regarding their production potentials.

e. *Illustrations*

(Source: Captain H.J.M. Desai's *Planning Employment Services*)

S.N.	Industry	Operations Suitable for the VIP
1.	Textile	Cellophane wrapping, packing, ribboning, labelling; bobbin cleaning; borah stitching; sorter- waste department, stamper; packers, hoistmen
2.	Machine Shop	Machine Operators - capstan lathe, central lathe, drilling, power punch, hand fly press, hand tapping, threading, milling, shaping, shearing, plastic moulding; coil winders, filing; inspection, core makers, assemblers, tube benders.

S.N.	Industry	Operations Suitable for the VIP
3.	Pharmaceutical Assemblers	droppers, cartons; packers and labellers; bottle washers and bottle sealers; conveyer belt operators and wooden case nailers; tailors.
4.	Telephone	Operators - power press, pin-vice hand drill, kicker press; Assemblers - armature, wiper, single and double piercing; riveting, gagging, rumbling springs, fixing and removing coils to plate;swaging.
5.	Cycle	Assembly - hub, brake, pedal; wrapping - mudguard, frame
6.	Match	Dozen packeting; inner and outer cover making, chemical grinding
7.	Plywood	Operating hand cutting machine, feeding veneer gluing and drying machines
8.	Electrical	All sorts of assembly
9.	Tea	Packeting, packing, operating drying machine, dhool fermenting
10.	Metal Box	Wadding and lidding, inspection of can tops, counting and packaging, assembly of necks and shoulders.
11.	Soap	Operating die stamping machine, counting and packing.

Based on this list, similar production operations may be identified in other industries. It is pertinent to mention that with suitable adaptations, it is possible to employ the visually impaired in a variety of other operations. Similarly jobs can also be identified in the commerce, management and professional areas for extending their open employment.

3.2.2 *Special Employment* :The 200 odd centres providing special employment in our country could be classified thus:

3.2.2.1 *Sheltered Workshops*

3.2.2.2 *Transitory Employment Centres*

3.2.2.3 *On-the-job Training Centres*

The first two categories have been the most commonly initiated. There are other centres which have initiated training in a few trades which are certificate level courses recognized by the relevant governmental authorities. The vocational training centres offer training which is generally informal, not very structured, is traditional and not very systematic. The stipend offered to trainees is just enough for sustenance. The latest trend which is welcoming is to admit the blind persons in regular ITIs, technical school or professional training centres which ensure integration of the individual.

The following issues need detailed discussion and consideration:

- a. Recognition of the training courses
- b. Viability of the training centres or the individuals
- c. Employment potential on completion of training
- d. Categories of disability to be covered
- e. Vocation or task-oriented training
- f. Level of integration during training and post training
- g. Cost of such training and level of grants etc.
- h. Evaluation of existing vocational training facilities and improvement thereof
- i. Futuristic Approach:

For the special workshops to be more effective, some realistic and researched tips are:

- To reduce per capita cost on training, vocational training should be time limited, placement oriented and realistic.
- Focus at development of appropriate skills of the individuals and enhancing production of the centre.
- Apply for sales tax benefits on the purchase of raw material and sale of finished products,
- Encourage bulk and direct purchases, talk to manufacturers and get raw material at ex-works.

- Introduce proper inventory control
- Try for preferential sale to State departments, mass production, effective marketing etc.
- Proper production planning and man-job balancing is essential for efficiency.
- Muti-category approach would also render the training more cost effective.

3.2.2.1 Sheltered Workshops

a. *Definition:* Sheltered workshop is a work-oriented rehabilitation facility with a controlled working environment and individual vocational goals which utilizes work experience and related services for assisting a visually impaired person to progress towards normal living and a productive vocational status.

It is also considered a permanent, or semi-permanent vocational placement for individuals who are unable to find jobs in the community. It is to be considered a job and a place to go to work every day. It is a vocational setting, geared to take advantage of whatever vocational assets a client might have. It is meant to provide a resource in which an individual can make a contribution to the community.

b. *Distinguishing Features:* A placement in Sheltered Workshop is generally not accompanied by a complex of therapeutic services. Minimal help is generally available for minimal problems. An individual in this setting is treated as a worker, a worker who is making positive contribution towards production. He is made to feel he is in a job, a job in which he should take pride. He is engaged in a productive work, a work he should enjoy doing (Manual). This endeavour has the following distinguishing features:

- Suitable for a visually impaired who due to age, other disability or physical constraints cannot avail of open employment
- Keeps him confined without any hope for integration in society
- Advocates ‘segregation and over-protection’ and has a limited coverage
- His limited admission due to capacity constraint
- Limited choice of production activities and products

c. *Limitations*

- Lack of legal status
- Trades selected have no compatibility with the existing job scenario due to controlled environment
- Most undesirable and undignified way of providing rehabilitation to the visually impaired who are, otherwise, capable of availing open employment. In other words, it restricts open employment opportunities.
- This approach is suitable for the aged and severely visually impaired persons with multiple disabilities.

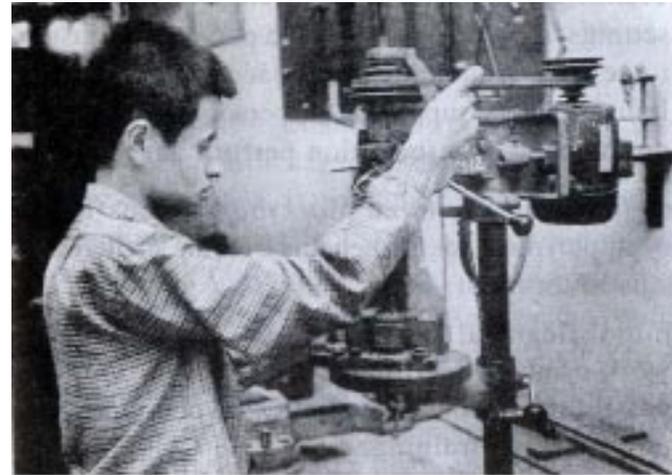
3.2.2.2 Transitory Employment

a. *Definition:* A transitory workshop is a work related rehabilitation approach within a controlled working environment with the ultimate objective of open employment.

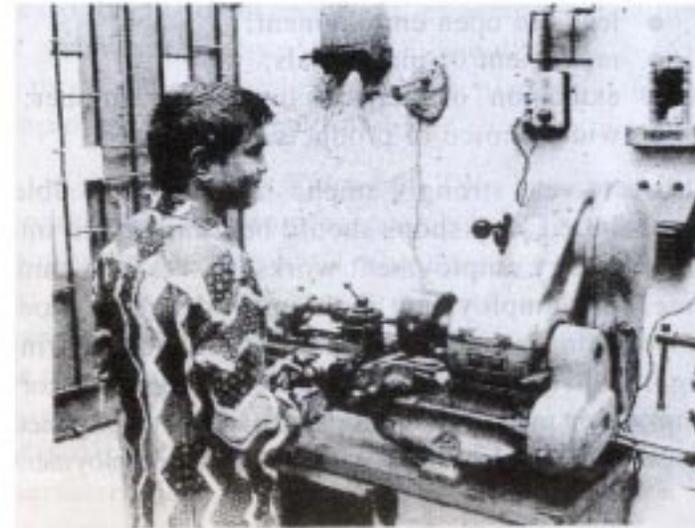
b. *Distinguishing Features*

- Emphasis on movement of the individual whether his destination is the open labour market or extended employment
- Specifically structured as a work setting leading to open employment

- Offers vocational exploration and intensive on-the-job training
- Middle path approach of providing on-the-job training for a limited duration.



Operating Drill Machine



Operating a Lathe

c. *Merits*

- Encourages open employment provided the trades selected are compatible with the employment opportunities.
- Training is provided in simulated industrial settings, it becomes easier for a person to adjust to new environment when placed outside.
- Initial financial support as the person is rewarded on the basis of production performance.

d. *Benefits over Sheltered Workshops:* Thus the transitory employment has the benefits over the sheltered workshops in terms of:

- initial financial assistance;
- work-oriented facilities;
- possibility of social integration on completion of on-the-job training;
- compatibility between training facilities and employment opportunities;
- leads to open employment;
- movement of individuals;
- extension of facilities to a higher number;
- wider choice of products.

This is to very strongly emphasize that, if possible, the sheltered workshops should be transformed into the transitory employment workshops. At the same time, open employment is the most desirable mode of providing economic rehabilitation and restoring dignity to visually impaired persons . The transitory employment must not be considered a type of employment in itself. It is merely a tool of expediting open employment.

3.2.2.3 On-the-Job Training Centres

a. *Explanation:* The On-the-Job training centre aims at providing work placement in a simulated industrial settings. It is a production activity and resembles an industrial set-up which has a primary objective of imparting employment oriented and task-based training to the individuals.

It is a step ahead of sheltered workshop in respect of nature of placement and training opportunities. In this case, placement is provided for a limited duration which depends upon nature of production activities or skills of individuals. Its major focus is imparting skill training and actual work experience to individuals who due to lack of requisite qualification and age cannot be enrolled under the formal vocational training programmes. This programme is designed to provide actual work experience for individuals who have not been able to get jobs due to limited vocational potential, lack of employment opportunities and poor condition of general economy (Manual). The ultimate goal is to prepare the individuals for open placement or self employment on completion of on-the-job training.

b. *Distinguishing Features:* This approach is a programme which provides training on a developmental continuum for individual who does not yet possess the motor skill necessary to perform work tasks. It provides progressive and appropriate training until the individual is ready to take a competitive employment or ready to live and operate in a vocational community (Manual). Such approach has the following distinguishing characteristics:

- Rehabilitation agency assumes the financial obligation during the period of training.
- Purpose is to impart specific job-oriented training for a limited duration.
- Such programme is supported with employment & placement services.
- Individual is expected to perform production and services activities similar to a formal production unit.
- The programmes undertakes sale of its products on preferential or competitive basis.
- It tends to be economically viable.
- The production activities at the centre are in consonance with the open employment opportunities
- The centre generally extends training activities to persons with all categories of disabilities.



Plastic Moulding

c. *Merits:* Such programme is more desirable - socially as well as financially. It has following advantages as compared to sheltered workshops as well as transitory employment:

- Economically more viable.
- Promotes appropriate self as well as open employment.
- Enables selective training and placement of individuals.
- Provides training on a developmental continuum.
- Provides progressive training until individual is ready to seek appropriate employment.
- Results into realistic vocational development.
- Ensures instilling social behaviour and social integration.
- Encourages training motor capabilities necessary to perform requisite works tasks.

d. *Limitations:* Despite all its merits, on-the-job training is provided under simulated or sheltered conditions. It may always not be possible to find appropriate competitive wage employment for every individual. Such programme has the following limitations:

- The programme may give more importance to its profitability than quality of training
- The quality of on-the-job training may not be upto the mark
- The nature of training may not be in tune with employment opportunities
- Such programme may tend to emerge either as sheltered workshop or merely a production centre

- Such programme may attract provision of Indian Factories Act, Minimum Wages Act, Industrial Disputes Act or other such labour and industrial laws.
- Many a times, it may be difficult to sell products of such centres at remunerative prices.
- Higher overheads due to training activities may render it difficult to attain economic viability of the programme.

This approach, however, is more superior as compared sheltered to employment as well as transitory placement.

3.4 Futuristic Approach

Like integrated education, the existing placement services in the organized sector must emerge as centres of excellence for initiating, promoting and coordinating integrated training of the target group. This should be our ideal but, it should be progressively achieved on a time bound programme in the following sequence:

- a. Wherever possible, sheltered workshops must redefine their roles and progressively emerge as skill development centres aimed at promotion of gainful occupation of the individual.
- b. A nation-wide study on evaluation of the existing employment services must be carried out for establishing and evaluating their objectives and the strategies. The centres should redefine their objectives, modify their strategies and approach to emerge as employment oriented, skill development, economically viable units. It may require introduction of new vocations, new equipment, new curricula and new procedure of evaluation and certification. These centres should emerge as skill development cum placement centres.

c. A time bound Plan of Action should be evolved to convert these Skill Development Centres in a phased manner to be promoters of integrated training, they becoming resource centres.

d. New programmes of vocational training, income generation or economic rehabilitation should adopt integrated approach from the beginning itself. In this case, developmental organizations for the visually impaired should become the resource centres, programme implementation centres, advocacy agencies or support systems. The placement centres should develop and supply special equipment, carry out task analysis and provide information, extend individual preparatory services and coordinate admissions, supply of educational material and promote appropriate employment.

These centres must emerge as properly equipped, well maintained, appropriately staffed training and placement centres with structured training and suitable certification. There should be in-built provision for continuous evaluation and self-monitoring of the process and outcome of the activities. While core staff should be appointed on regular basis, part time and visiting professionals should be involved for upgradation of services.

4. Modern Placement Techniques

The economic independence and social integration of the visually impaired should generally be achieved through their competitive and open employment. It certainly requires preparing them for appropriate employment through suitable training and exploring all avenues of employment. Apart from administrative measures and legislative, constitutional and institutional support, it requires adoption of the following appropriate, result-oriented and relevant modern placement techniques:

4.1 Vocational Assessment and Work Preparation

Vocational rehabilitation may be achieved with or without work testing, aptitude testing, psychological testing, extensive and prolonged vocational guidance, reconditioning or vocational training.

4.1.1 Services: The promotion of vocational rehabilitation in the organized sector will necessitate provision of the following services:

- a. *Assessment:* Obtaining a clear picture of a person's remaining physical, mental and vocational abilities and possibilities.
- b. *Evaluation:* Evaluating level of skill, aptitude, functional and occupational abilities.
- c. *Guidance:* Advising the person accordingly in the light of vocational training and employment possibilities.
- d. *Training:* Providing any necessary reconditioning, toning-up or formal vocational training or work preparation.
- e. *Assistive Devices:* Organizing appropriate vocational assistive devices to enhance mobility, functioning capabilities and capacities of the individual.
- f. *Placement:* Assisting individual to find appropriate and suitable work or service opportunities in the open or sheltered environment.
- g. *Follow up* until complete rehabilitation is achieved.

4.1.2 Outcome: Vocational assessment of this nature can:

- evaluate work performance under actual work conditions;
- indicate the degree of work tolerance, the hours a person can work without fatigue, his ability to stand noise and other environmental stresses, interruptions etc.;

- assist to develop his self-confidence, self-reliance and personal adequacy;
- assist the person to realize and accept his own potentials and limitations;
- assist in vocational orientation.



Training in motor rewinding



Training in Braille Shorthand

4.1.3 Aims: The procedure followed for vocational assessment, work preparation and placement would achieve the following objectives:

- To assist a person to gain or recover the habit of work
- To give advice on any social problems which emerge in the process
- To provide physical reconditioning
- To provide medical, physical, psychological and vocational assessment of work capacity.
- To build up person's morale, help him to recognize his abilities and to think positively about his future
- To place the person in employment or in suitable course of vocational training as a prelude to employment.

4.1.4 Pre-requisites: In order to benefit from the procedure of promoting employment in the organized sector, an individual should:

- be of a working age, or approaching it, but not too old to secure appropriate placement at the end of the course;
- have, or likely to have at the end of the procedure, the physical and mental capacity to work;
- have reasonable prospects of getting a job at the end of the course.

The benefits of vocational assessment and work preparation would be lost unless the person concerned obtains appropriate placement on termination, either with or without suitable vocational training.

4.2 Selective Placement

- a. *Introduction:* The selective placement involves:
- using all the normal services and provisions; and
 - adjusting them as necessary to their known and carefully assessed needs.

It is the next step after assessment, vocational guidance, vocational training or on-the-job training and involves three distinct processes:

- Knowing the individual
- Knowing the job
- Matching following qualities of the individual with the job:
 - Educational background, work experience and age
 - Family background, economic and social status and occupation
 - Level of training in orientation and mobility and activities of daily living.

b. *Basic Principles*

- Meeting the physical requirements of the job
- Compatibility between the training availed and job provided
- Matching between the potentials of the individual and job requirement
- Placement not resulting to any occupational hazard or risk to the visually impaired or fellow workers
- Enhanced social integration
- Conducive working conditions and environment
- Placement on grounds of suitability for the job, not pity, charity or sympathy.

4.3 Job Clubs

- a. *Introduction:* A group of visually impaired persons meets everyday, in a structured meeting supervised by a counsellor using a 'lesson plan' schedule of daily activities. Half a day is spent in obtaining job leads

and interviews in the office; the other half is spent in going out to these interviews. The counsellor closely observes and supervises as the client is engaged in obtaining leads, calling employers and writing letters.

b. *Essential Features*

- Train the counsellor to provide adequate counselling.
- Emphasize creation of job leads.
- Encourage a person to maintain the job once he is placed.
- Rapidity of obtaining job is dependent upon:
 - * consistency of attending sessions
 - * number of new job leads created
 - * number of interviews attended
 - * interest of counsellor
- Involve other employment agencies, concerned Government departments, voluntary developmental organizations and employers' federations actively.

4.4 Work Stations

a. *Introduction:* The Work Station is a step between open placement and the training or the sheltered employment. The aspirant is placed under the conditions of actual employment but without formal employment. He is expected to:

- perform actual work;
- follow all the rules as applicable to other workers in terms of:
 - * timings
 - * uniform
 - * work performance
 - * other conditions of employment

However, the employer has no obligation in terms of:

- payment of wages
- maintenance of attendance cards
- incidental expenses
- compensation for hazards
- insurance coverage

The payment in terms of stipend, local transport, incidental expenses and insurance coverage may be provided by the local implementing agency or the Government department. At the end of the training, it has been observed that the employer normally absorbs the person in his firm or unit.

b. *Merits:* It serves as an excellent arrangement wherein a person is under direct observation of the prospective employer who gets an opportunity to study his potentials, talents and adaptability to the job. The approach has the following merits:

- Demonstrates production potentials of the visually impaired.
- Convinces the co-workers regarding his production skills
- Enables the employment officers to:
 - * perform task analysis
 - * do individual planning
 - * assist the VIP to adjust to the job
- Economical and cost effective as compared to other modes of training
- Ideal for a person who had no formal training
- Reduces the gap between on the job training or transitory employment and open placement

- Establishes direct contacts between the trainee and the prospective employer and improves chances of open employment

c. *Factors Affecting Success:* While the work station approach seems to be practical, result-oriented and cost effective, its success depends upon the following aspects:

- Proper selection of the job depending upon:
 - * ability
 - * skills
 - * potentials and
 - * interest
- Proper supervision by the employer and the placement officer
- Willingness of the employer to extend open employment on completion
- Involvement of the concerned officials
- Willingness of the implementing agency to incur expenditure on stipend, transportation and incidentals
- Most important, adoption of this approach by the:
 - * employment exchanges
 - * vocational rehabilitation centres
 - * district rehabilitation centres
 - * voluntary placement organizations

4.5 Social Reinforcement

a. *Definition:* The Social Reinforcement approach portrays the employment process as an informal job information net-work in which the person with early knowledge of job openings selectively passes this information on to unemployed persons who are then

likely to reward the job informants in a social way.

b. *Merits :*

- Prevalent for employment in unorganized sector, small units where recruitment process has not been streamlined
- Effective where employment *per se* does not pose a very serious problem
- May be adopted as a supplementary tool for encouraging employment
- May enable the aspirants to seek employment under legal provisions for which they are otherwise eligible

4.6 Job Camps

a. *Definition:* It involves inviting the prospective employers and unemployed disabled persons *en masse* and providing them appropriate conditions for mutual interaction for expediting the employment process. It has been adopted by special employment exchanges and the disabled welfare voluntary organization for the person with disabilities.

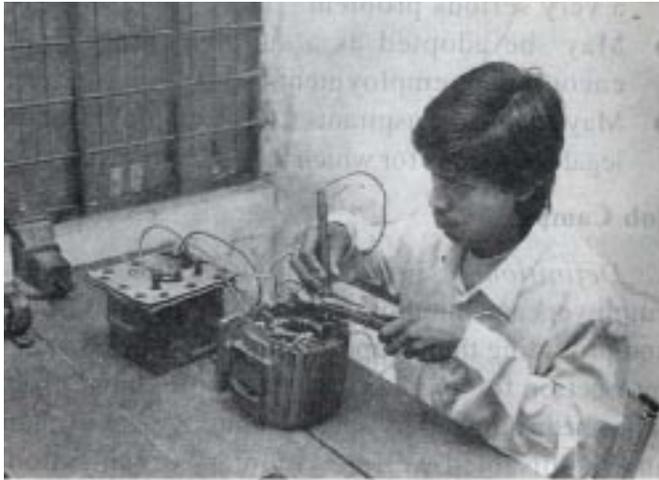
b. *Merits:*

- Employer gets to meet, examine and interview a large number of disabled persons and to select the most suitable ones
- Person with disability faces a large number of interviews on the same day
- Suitable for developing countries where there is lot of unemployment and lengthy selection procedures are involved.

c. *Limitations:*

- A strong 'employer-pull' is essential
- Not a complete process by itself
- Merely one aspect of the employment process
- Incentives, motivation and follow-up are essential

4.7 Institutional Placement Services



Use of continuity tester



Training in telephone operating

a. *Procedure*

- Circulate a detailed resume of the individual giving following details among the prospective employers:
 - * educational qualification
 - * past experience
 - * area of specialization
 - * age and areas of interest
- Display the offers received from the employers
- Encourage the individuals to apply for the job
- Provide facilities and infra-structure for the interviews
- Arrange initial interviews.

This approach has proved very effective for the placement of various professionals, particularly in case of well established and reputed institutions and universities offering professional courses. The development institutions and placement agencies may adopt this technique for expediting employment in the following areas:

- physiotherapy, massage
- stenography, touch typing
- telephone operating
- computer programming, data entry
- social work, office management, marketing

4.8 Legislative Measures

One of the means of creating employment opportunities for the disadvantaged groups is through enactment of suitable legislation in terms of:

- job reservation
- designation of specific types of jobs
- allocation of priorities or preferences in employment

The propriety and need for enacting legislation has always been debated at various platforms:

4.8.1 The arguments in favour of legislation are:

- Creates jobs for the target group
- Demonstrates Government support for employment
- Creates law enforcing agency which may force the employers in this regard
- Recognizes potentials and accords due status to the target group
- Supports other techniques of expediting employment

4.8.2 The arguments against such legislation are:

- Legislative compulsion is wrong in principle
- Against the constitutional right of freedom of employment
- Individuals so placed may feel they are employed on sufferance and not on merit
- May encourage them for the jobs for which they are not suitable
- Effectiveness of legislation as a social measure of promoting competitive open employment is doubtful
- May pre-empt other measures on encouraging employment.

The legislation, by itself, may not result into employment. It needs to be supported by a strong law enforcing agency which may entail considerable expenditure on the public exchequer.

Whatsoever may be the limitations of the legislative measures, their existence and implementation always support other measures.

4.8.3 The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995

The Parliament of India enacted this Act on 22nd December, 1995 to give effect to the Proclamation on the Full Participation and Equality of the People's with Disabilities in Asia and Pacific Region. The President of India gave his assent to the Act on 1st January, 1996 and it came into force with effect from 7th February, 1996.

This Act is very comprehensive and encompasses provision relating to monitoring and implementation machinery, prevention of disability, education, employment, affirmative action, non-discrimination, research and manpower development and recognition of institutions for the persons with disabilities.

The Chapter VI on employment envisages the following provisions:

- Identification of posts in the establishments which can be reserved for persons with disabilities (S-32).
- Job reservation to the extent of 3 percent of the vacancies in every establishments in the posts identified for each disability (S-33).
- Seeking information from each establishment relating to appointments of persons with disabilities in such vacancies (S-34).
- Empowering Special Employment Exchanges to have access to any relevant record or documents in the possession of establishments as regard such reservation (S-35).
- Provision for vacancies not filled to be carried forward (S-36).
- Maintenance of records by the employers as regards filling of identified posts (S-37).

- Formulation of special schemes by the local authorities and the appropriate Governments for ensuring employment of persons with disabilities (S-38).
- Reservation of 3 percent seats in all the educational institutes receiving grants from the Government (S-39).
- Reservation of 3 percent in all poverty alleviation schemes benefits for such persons (S-40)
- Incentives to employers both in public and private sectors to ensure that at least five percent work force is composed of such persons (S-41).

The Persons with Disabilities Act has made very bold provisions for promoting competitive employments for the persons with disabilities. The outcome of these provisions would, however, depend upon its effective implementation.

Similarly a number of State Governments have enacted legislation on job reservation. In Gujarat, reservation of one per cent of jobs in the establishments and undertakings employing more than 250 workers has resulted into employment of a large number of disabled persons.

All these techniques on promoting employment are not mutually exclusive. A combination of various approaches may be very effective in expediting employment. Whatsoever approach is selected, the focus should always be the individual. The client centred approach is most essential. The economic rehabilitation should definitely be the ultimate objective of any rehabilitation programme.

SCHEME OF NATIONAL AWARD FOR THE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India has launched this scheme keeping in view global thinking on the rehabilitation of people with disabilities.

CATEGORIES OF AWARDS :

1. *Best Employees with Disabilities* : 15 Awards of Rs. 10,000 each, a citation, a certificate and a metal medal
 2. *Best Employers of Persons with Disabilities* : 10 Awards with a shield, a citation and a certificate
 3. *Best Placement Officers of Persons with Disabilities* : 4 Awards with a citation, a certificate and a shield
 4. *Best Individual for the cause of Persons with Disabilities* : 5 Awards of Rs. 1,00,000 each with a certificate and a citation
 5. *Best Institution for Persons with Disabilities* : 1 Award of Rs. 1,00,000 with a certificate and a citation.
 6. *Best Technological Innovation for the cuase of Disabled* : 1 Award of Rs. 1,00,000 with a certificate.
- Adaptability of Innovation to provide Cost - Effective Technology* : 2 Awards of Rs. 50,000 each with a certificate.
7. *Outstanding Creative Individual with Disabilities* : 1 Award of Rs. 1,00,000 with a certificate and a citation.
 8. *Outstanding Work in the Creation of Barrier-Free Environment for People with Disabilities* : 3 Awards with a certificate and a citation.

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