

## WOMEN WITH DISABILITY AND EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA

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### **Abstract**

*The focus of this paper is to spotlight the current states, of the empowerment of women with disability in India. Women represent nearly 50% of the world's population. However India has shown disproportionate sex ratio whereby the female's population has been relatively less than males. Nowadays also gender discrimination is a privilege in India. In such case population of women with disability are more vulnerable to different types of exploitation and crime against women with disability. Whereas, estimates vary, there's growing proof that folks with disabilities comprise between 5- 8 % of the Indian population (around 55-90 million individuals), concerning 48 % of them are women. About two-third of the world's female population is in properly treated by their spouse. Women with disabilities are at particularly high risk of abuse exploitation and domestic violence, both through typical forms of violence (physical, sexual, and emotional). The method of authorization won't solely be able to improve their skills and access to productive resources, however additionally enhancing their quality of life, dignity and respect full social states. The central government, state government, NGO's and local bodies need to work jointly thru different strategies empowerment of women with disability in India. Also it presents reviews of the current researches in this field. Recommendations outlined by authors shall provide a basis to revise the future research, policies and implications of such policies to enhance the quality of life of women with disability in India.*

**Key words:** *women disability, social states, quality of life*

### **Introduction**

The Indian constitution does not do any discrimination among able and disabled. But the attitude of society towards persons with disabilities has been changing with time. As per Census 2011, in India, out of the 121 Cr population, about 2.68 Cr persons are 'disabled' which is 2.21% of the total population out of which 1.18 Cr are female. Women with disability are unspecified to have less of human needs at all level- physical, biological & psychological. There are pressures as per convenience by people around and with same casual manner dumped away. Women with disability are more marginalized and discriminate in the society which has been taken care of in the present study.

In case of employment also, people with disability are facing problem, particularly women.

The disabled men's condition is also measurable. The employment rate in India according to Census 2011 highlighted that, nearly one third of the total disabled persons are working. At all India level, 36% of the total disabled persons are workers. Among the male disabled persons, 47% are working and among female disabled, only 23% are working. In rural India, 25% of the female disabled are working, while in urban India, the corresponding figure is 16%. Among the disabled persons who were workers, 31% were agricultural laborers. The situation is far worse in the private sector. The sector has few incentives for hiring disabled people. Employment of people with disability among large private firms was only 0.3% of their workforce. Among multinational companies, this was a mere 0.05%. Financial assistance too has hardly reached those in

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need. The National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation disbursed assistance 20,552 disabled persons between 2015 and 2016. There is no such special reservation for WWDs. Everyone can understand very well the real condition of helplessness of women and be marginalized in society. Being disabled is not their mistake. There are several factors dependable for causing disability like genetic disorders, Congenital disturbances, injury at pre-natal, natal or Postnatal stage, traffic accidents, occupational accidents, malnutrition of expectant and nursing mothers and children, infectious diseases, environmental pollution, natural and man-made catastrophes are the apparent factors responsible for different types of disabilities varying in degrees and dimensions. But they are the largest alternative in the world. So we have to bring them to the mainstream for our inclusive growth.

### **Back Ground**

First World Conference on women in 1975 did not mention disabled women at all. Second World Conference on women in 1980 asked Governments to "Direct special attention to the needs of elderly women, women living alone and disabled women." Third World Conference on women in 1985, disabled women activists convinced Governments to include women with disabilities in the "Nairobi Forward-looking strategies for the advancement of Women". Conventions on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) that came into force in September 1981 initially had no mention of women with disabilities. This committee recommended that 'every State Party to the Convention have to report on the status of women with disabilities in their countries. In common usage, the terms impairment, disability, and handicap are tended to be used interchangeably. However, according to the authorities in this area,

these terms can have different connotations in different cultural contexts (Report of United Nations, 1964). Women with disabilities are always neglected and subject to violence (Abramson et al., 2000). There was a study by (Alexander et al., 1998) about the relationship between sexual and/or physical abuse, health care utilization, and pain medication usage in female patients with fibromyalgia. The study revealed that 57% of women with fibromyalgia were sexually and physically abused. Women with disability are subject to domestic violence and social oppression as a result of gender disability in society. There are certain government schemes being implemented in India for people with disability. The important schemes are discussed below:

### **Samarth Scheme**

This scheme is for residential services-both short term (respite care) and long term (prolonged care). Vocational training is mandatory under the scheme. The facilities in the home shall be available to both males and females on 50-50% basis. It has a provision for person of all income groups like lower income and below poverty line category Samarth centers have up to 30 residents and are encouraged to extend support to adults and destitute children.

### **Remote Area Funding Scheme**

The objective of the scheme is to stimulate National Trust activities in remote districts are not covered by any national Trust Registered NGO. These districts include area of tribal, hilly or desert region which are difficult to access. 100 such districts are mapped under the scheme with a plan to cover 30 districts every year. Support will be provided for running the existing programs/scheme in the areas with additional grant of 20%.

### **Sahyogi**

Under the scheme, Care givers will be trained at different levels to offer a career path and motivation.

Training of caregivers and their deployment will be done through a Care Givers Cell

(CGC) established in selected NGO centres. Two agencies, one for developing curriculum and training the trainers and second for administering the program have been set up. Enrolment of Care Givers and Care Seekers are being done by respective CGCs.

### **Nirmaya**

'Nirmaya' is a Health Insurance Scheme to provide affordable Health Insurance to persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities. The scheme is implemented in all the districts of the country (except J&K). The health insurance cover under the scheme is provided up to Rs.1.0 lakh.

### **Gharaunda**

'Gharaunda' is a lifelong shelter and care scheme for providing assured minimum quality of care services throughout the life of persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities.

### **Gyan Prabha (Scholarship) Scheme**

GyanPrabha scheme is for pursuing any post school vocational training/professional courses for enhancement of skill of person's with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities.

### **Udyam Prabha (Incentive) scheme**

UddyamPrabha scheme is for promoting income generating economic activities for self-employment of persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities through incentives. Under the scheme incentive will be provided for availing loan for any income generating economic activity.

### **Arunim**

Arunim (Association of Rehabilitation under National Trust Initiative of Marketing), is a

Marketing Federation for development and marketing of products made by persons with Disabilities. Its objective is to facilitate marketing of products made by persons with disabilities in the domestic and international markets.

### **Aim/objectives**

The specific objectives of the study are as under:

1. To highlight the issues of women disability.
2. To identify the development programs rarely address the needs of disabled women or include them in community development programs.
3. To explore the concept of women empowerment and also to identify ways in which the wellbeing of Indian women could be further enhanced.
4. To identify the challenges behind women's empowerment in India.

Although the Persons with Disability Act have been initiated since 1995 in India, it has failed to bring about any desired change in the life of women with disability. Lot of modifications and amendments are required time to time as per the changes of societal norms and preferences. The present study has tried to highlight the issues and to bridge the gap there in.

### **Review of Related Literature**

In common usage, the terms impairment, disability and handicap are tended to be used interchangeably. However, according to the authorities in this area, these terms can have different connotations in different cultural contexts (United Nations, 1964). Women with disabilities are always neglected and subject to violence (Abramson, Emanuel & Hayden, 2000). There was a study by (Alexander, Bradley, Alarcon, Tirana-Alexander, Aaron, Alberts, Martin & Stewart, 1998) about relationship between sexual and/or physical abuse, health care utilization, and pain medication usage in female patients with fibromyalgia. Participants were

75 women with fibromyalgia. It was found that 57% reported a history of sexual or physical abuse. Women with a disability continue to experience social oppression and domestic violence as a consequence of gender and disability dimensions. The study of Mays, J. M. (2006) explains the domestic violence and disability inadequately explain several features that lead women who have a disability to experience violent situations. May's article argues that material feminist interpretations and disability theory, with their emphasis on gender relations, disabilities and poverty, should be used as an alternative tool for exploring the nature and consequences of violence against women with a disability.

Disabled women are seen imperfect, incomplete, inferior, asexual, and non-productive and denial recognition as women and human beings. In a discussion of efforts to reduce global poverty, Yeo and Moore (2003) noted the marginalization of people with disabilities. Meekosha (2002) revealed that there are three realms of social being - individual, society, and the state - interact in the making of the identities of disability. Morris (1991), a disabled feminist and activist, provides a feminist analysis to the study of the experiences of women with disabilities. Basing her arguments on the feminist principle that the personal is political, Morris eloquently challenges such issues as prejudice, abortion, and the notion that people with disabilities lead lives that are not worth living. *Pride against Prejudice* is a commentary on political activism and rights, and stresses the need to fight back against the prejudice, stereotypes, and oppression of an ablest culture. Morris (1993) further discusses that there is absence of women with disabilities from feminist scholarship and feminist theory. She discusses her anger and frustration with feminism in two ways: first, that disability is generally invisible from feminism's mainstream

agenda, and second, that when disability is a subject of research by feminists, the researchers objectifies disabled people so that the research is alienated from their experiences rather than attempting to understand the experiences of disabled women.

So, there is a need of research done by the disabled women themselves across the globe so that the real picture can be uncovered. There are differences of issues in the women disabilities in view with education, economic status, categorization, culture and government policies of every state and country. Language and communication are the basis of all development. But researchers are gradually addressing to the problems, particularly for MR in India. Rao (1992) has developed manual improving communication skills in 300 mentally retarded children in terms of language disorder and articulation disorders, voice disorder, fluency disorder.

### **Methods**

The present study was based on Indian disabled women. This is survey method research based on content analysis. The sources of data were used in the study was taken from various research papers published in journals, reports from newspaper, web sites, NGO and the government of India.

### **Empowerment of Women with disabled in India**

Empowerment of women with disabled, being a worldwide slogan and one of the Millennium Development Goals, aims at empowering of women with disabled in different sphere of life. Women with disabled groups, non-governmental development organizations, activists, politicians, governments & international agencies refer to empowerment as one of their goals (Suri, 2007). The phrase is used in two broad senses i.e. general and specific. In a general sense, it refers to empowering women with disabled to be self-dependent by providing them access to all the freedoms and opportunities, which they were

denied in the past only because of their being women with disabled. In a specific sense, women empowerment refers to enhancing their position in the power structure of the society (Bhuyan, 2006). The word women with disabled empowerment essentially means that the women have the power or capacity to regulate their day-to-day lives in the social, political and economic terms- a power which enables them to move from the periphery to the centre stage.

The Central Act, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, was passed in 2005. It took half a decade for the state government to pass a similar act in the deferent state in India. Keeping in view the growing incidents of domestic violence, the state government passed the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA) in 2010. Economic empowerment has been recognized as the dominant one because it exerts a strong influence on all other components of empowerment. It is a reality that if women gain economic strength they will gain visibility and voice at home, workplace and the community. Thus it is imperative for women to know their economic role and increase their power and command on material resources. The following are Schemes for Women's Empowerment in India.

1. Umeed: the hope, a Government of India funded flagship project to empower women in conflict ridden Kashmir, was launched by Congress scion Rahul Gandhi in June 2013. The scheme was made possible only after a group of students from Kashmir University visited Ameet (UP) to study the model and its successful implementation. Umeed scheme is aimed to empower women in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of India. The project is aimed at encouraging rural women to make small savings so that their SHGs will eventually become bankable at reduced rate of interest.
2. National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC): Women belonging to Minority Community viz. Muslims, Buddhists, Sikhs, Christians and Zoroastrians are being financed under this scheme at a nominal rate of interest 6% p.a simple to be liquidated within a period of 5 years. Maximum loan amount for an individual beneficiary is Rs. 1.00 lakh.
3. National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation (NBCFDC): Women belonging to backward & other classes as prescribed under State SRO 126 are being financed under this scheme at a very low rate of interest 4% p.a up to Rs 50,000/- & 6% p.a up to Rs.1.00 lakhs for which the repayment period is 5 years.
4. National Handicapped Finance & Development Corporation (NHFDC): Handicapped Women with 40% disability. Are being financed under this scheme at a very low rate of interest 3% up to Rs. 50,000/- and 4% p.a up to Rs. 1.00 lakh which is to be liquidated within a period of 7 years.
  - Educational Loan: Education loan is also provided to the women beneficiaries under each of the above mentioned schemes for professional/ technical trainings.
  - Micro Credit loan: Micro Credit facilities are also provided to Self Help Groups (SHGs) at the rate of 5% for which repayment period is 3 years.
5. Sher-I-Kashmir Employment and Welfare Programme (SKEWP): In addition to the above mentioned centrally sponsored schemes the social welfare department is also implemented "Empowering Skilled Young Women, 2009" scheme taking a lead role in the implementation of Sher-I-Kashmir Employment and Welfare Programme (SKEWP) envisaged by the

Government to create self-employment avenues for educated unemployed youth. The nominal interest of 6% charged on the credit being provided to prospective entrepreneurs is well taken by the unemployed youth women and in fact the Corporation is getting encouraging response in all parts of the state.

#### Challenges to Empowerment of Women with disabled in India

The Indian government is taking some concrete steps in empowering women with disabled by helping women with disabled to help themselves and their families. A vast population of women with disabled in India is unemployed and another significant section consists of widows and half-widows, the importance of women's economic independence for their overall dignity and even survival is brought out by the fact that there is a linkage between the physical survival of women with disabled and their entry into the workforce. But are these programs sufficient? Are they bringing about a change in the attitude of a patriarchic society? Here are some important challenges of women with disabled empowerment:

- Violence against women with disabled is on leaps and bounds in India.
- Illiteracy or ignorance of people also a constraint in the empowerment of women with disabled.
- Lack of decision-making authority
- Many customs and cultural practices hinder the empowerment of women with disabled. For examples many parents do not send their daughters to schools when they attain puberty.
- Lack of women's participation in political affairs
- Poor and low status of women
- High level of illiteracy among women.

- Lack of awareness
- Inadequate & unorganized health care delivery system

As we see, the challenges we face in empowering women with disabled are far away from the prospects of development programs initiated by our government. Though some of the recent steps taken by the government seem to indicate that these are the right steps to take, but what State really needs right now are sizable leaps! As we progress from a developing nation towards a developed nation, every care must be taken to compositely develop and empower women with disabled along the way to stand true to what our great.

#### Conclusion

Empowerment of Women with disabled in India requires a strong and sustained commitment by governments and other stakeholders, a favorable policy environment, and well-targeted resources. Long-term improvements in education and awareness opportunities will play a positive role in the overall development of women with disabled. In the short term, significant progress can be achieved by strengthening and expanding essential awareness among masses about gender equality, improving policies, and promoting favorable atmosphere for women with disabled. The development of women with disabled in India, no doubt, has been a part of the development planning process right from inception of Five Year Plans. Despite of these attempts, women in India are still left with lot many issues and challenges related to health, economy, education, politics, domestic violence, declining sex ratio, female feticide and infanticide, late marriage, state violence, dowry harassment, eve teasing, unequal wages, child sexual abuse, child labour and sexual harassment at work. To reduce the domestic violence overall society need to take initiative against social evils like dowry, drug addiction, early

marriage etc. Counseling at various spheres like in peer groups should take place regarding domestic violence. Government and Non-government agencies should take positive steps for reducing domestic violence, wherein government can strength their law enforcing agencies, Non-governmental agencies can setup counseling cells, organize community programs, form social groups for reducing violence through group work process.

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## CARA & CORPORATE: A NEW BEGINNING

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### Abstract

Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) is a statutory body of Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India, functioning as the nodal body for adoption of Indian children and is authorized to monitor and regulate in-country and inter-country adoptions. According to United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), India has 29.6 million orphaned and abandoned children. CARA has been designated as the Central Authority to deal with inter-country adoptions in accordance with the provisions of the Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption, 1993, ratified by Government of India and issued by GOI in 2003. CARA primarily deals with adoption of orphan, abandoned, surrendered children. The present paper discusses role and responsibility of CARA in association with corporate world.

**Keywords:** Children, Welfare, Disability, Health, Adoption.

### Introduction

According to official website of CARA functions as the nodal body for adoption of Indian children and is mandated to monitor and regulate in-country and inter-country adoptions. CARA is designated as the Central Authority to deal with inter-country adoptions in accordance with the provisions of the Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption, 1993, ratified by Government of India in 2003. CARA primarily deals with adoption of orphan, abandoned and surrendered children through its associated /recognized adoption agencies. The government's Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) adoption statistics show that in 2010 there were 5,693 in-country adoptions, while in 2017-2018, there were only 3,276 in-country adoptions.

Recently a Leading English Newspaper, The Times of India (Nov.11, 2019) reported and drew the attention towards 1,300 special children, awaiting the formal adoption, highlighting the crusader's role of CARA being extremely helpful, generous and

sensitive. The role of CARA is also considered critical in preparation of a detailed module to classify disabilities, health conditions as well as specific needs of the special children across the country.

HOW STATES FARE	
State	In-country adoptions (2018-19)
Maharashtra	695
Karnataka	237
Odisha	208
Tamil Nadu	193
Uttar Pradesh	174
<b>Total in India</b>	<b>3,374</b>

### Research Methodology and Objective(s)

The study is based on secondary data, which has been collected from various sources. This methodology also helped in providing a direction to the research to an area which is apparently

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underexplored. Secondary data is collected from various websites, journals, news papers and reference books. Literature review has shown prior research work done in this area. The present paper discusses role and responsibility of CARA in association with corporate world.

### **The Role & Responsibility of CARA & Corporate World**

The role of CARA is very important w.r.t to proper amalgamation of this sub-categorization so as to ensure proper medical examination across Specialized Adoption Agencies SAAs. Here comes the role of Indian Parents, which is also critical from adoption perspective. Because children need great care with special needs who join as babies, but crossing the age up to 6 years. Therefore, sub-categorization may be viewed as an attempt to further increase the parental confidence levels to adopt such special children.

According to CARA's CEO Shri Deepak Kumar, once the sub categorization is completed /implemented, PAPA's will surely get access to details of Special children's special needs profile. It will be a big landmark development in the better and systematically driven rehabilitation. programmes for such target groups. Such admirable efforts of CARA need more innovative and experimental fearless approach to build a strong database, reasoned with noble cause for better future of such special children, which is the final stake for all stakeholders.

There are as many as 14 sub-categories to facilitate PAPA's [ Prospective Adoptive Parents ] to get well acquainted with their specific needs and boost up chances of systematic adoption. Broadly three categories namely- physical, neurological and others exist. Proposed sub-categories for implementation are as under:-

- Deformities like- club foot,
- Intellectual disabilities,

- Premature birth related high risk conditions,
- Protein-energy malnutrition category, and
- Congenital defects and others.

The role of CARA is very important w.r.t to proper amalgamation of sub-categorization so as to ensure proper medical examination across specialized adoption agencies [SAAs]. Here comes the role of Indian Parents, also critical from adoption perspective. There are children with special needs who usually join as babies, but crossing the age up to 6, therefore, sub-categorization may be viewed as an attempt to further increase the parental confidence levels to adopt such special children. According to CARA's CEO Deepak Kumar "Once the sub categorization is enforced, PAPA's will surely get clarity and clear perspective. PAPA's will provide details of Special needs profile. It will be a big landmark development in the better and systematically driven rehabilitation programs for such target groups. According to the Business Standards, the government needs to stop placing a blur filter on the 30 million orphaned and abandoned children and bring them into focus by urgently realigning its childcare policies to give them a chance at a life of opportunities, or risk wasting them altogether.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Such admirable efforts of CARA need more innovative and experimental fearless approach from Indian Corporate sector especially IT enabled organizations to build and develop strong database, reasoned with noble cause for better future of such special children, which is the final stake for all concerned. It's high time that all corporate firms, organizations and companies from diverse sectors located at multiple venues need to come with such database creation initiatives and involve themselves in providing education to special children with disabilities. Equipping such schools with necessary infrastructure and accessories, corporate companies

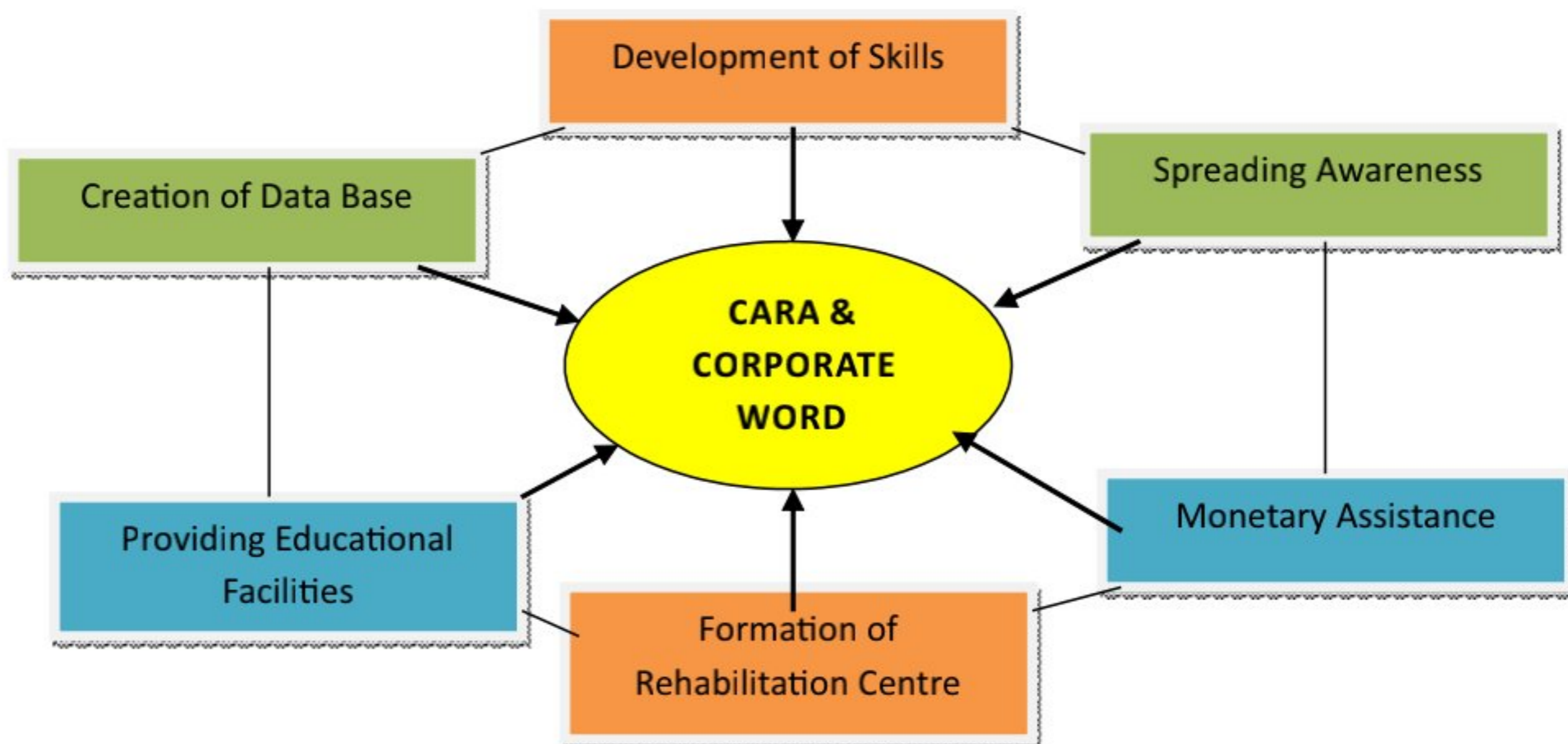
must come forward with monetary assistance. Companies from multiple sectors need to patronage for uninterrupted running of these special children schools.

India Inc. Need to further support such long term initiatives in successfully changing our mindsets even beyond parents so as a matured Nation we become more caring and concerned.

Success stories of many leading corporates like: - Citi Bank, Microsoft, Adobe, GKN Aerospace,

Juniper, Target International, Mahindra, 3M, Deloitte, ANZ, IndusInd, Wipro, Morgan Stanley, VMware, Ciber, SanDisk, Intel, HP, Amadeus need to be highlighted which have taken CSR initiatives in the areas of education, skilling, rehabilitation and sports and more focused integrated efforts also needed for such special children. More corporate houses need to open their homes and hearts to little ones and gift them a better tomorrow.

**HOW CARA & CORPORATE WORLD CAN MOVE TOGETHER?**



**Source: Review of Literature**

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