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## **Challenges of People with Disability in Public Transportation: A Case Study of People with Disability in Bhrikutimandap, Kathmandu**

***Rajita Uprety***

Teaching Assistant, Department of Sociology, Padma Kanya Multiple Campus, Kathmandu (Nepal) E-mail:<rajitauprety@gmail.com>

### **Abstract**

*The entitled article 'challenges faced by people with disability in public transportation' was on during the summer of 2023. This article discusses about the challenges faced in everyday life by the people with disability. In our daily life, we need different access to deal internal and external environment. Realizing that most public transportation still lack in terms of good design and facilities especially for people with disability. So, researcher have tried to find out the major challenges of people with disability they have been facing during their everyday activity. To facilitate this research, both descriptive and exploratory research design have been applied. The fieldwork was carried out around the Bhrikutimandap, Kathmandu area where most of the people with disability come to visit their office. Similarly, interview method, observation method and questionnaire methods are used as a research tool. According to the filed study, the major challenges faced by the people with disability are worse because of bad condition of road, unmanaged footpath, frequently moving bus stops and lack of disable friendly roads. Because of the bumpy road many of the disable people got accident during their everyday journey.*

### **Keywords**

Disable, People with disability, Problems, Challenges, Transportation.

**Centre For Studies of National Development, Meerut**

Editorial Office : D-59, Shastri Nagar, Meerut - 250 004 (INDIA)

Ph. : 0121-2763765, +91-9997771669, +91-9412200765

## **Challenges of People with Disability in Public Transportation: A Case Study of People with Disability in Bhrikutimandap, Kathmandu**

### **1. Background of the Study**

This paper has been discussed on issues affecting of the transport and mobility needs of People with Disability in Kathmandu valley. The Present condition of the transportation system of Kathmandu valley, there are numerous problems, which has been trying to be tackled by Department of Transportation, and Traffic Police Head office. People are facing many problems related to traffic jam, accidents, pollution and many more which have affected their lives directly. People are not getting transportation services effectively which has negative impacted on their livelihood. The magnitude of this problem has been spiraling day by day. It has become an important issue to be addressed by the Government and Private Sector. As well there may be more difficulties for People with Disability, (Disable) people too.

From the perspective of Health, People with Disability is common term that denotes activity limitation, impairments and involvement restriction. It is a major health problem, which signifies the negative relation between individual condition and individual's environmental factors. (Subedi, 2012). WHO introduce and applied three different term in 1976 impairment or deficiency or abnormality of physiological/body structure. People with any sort of disability is a absence of ability to achieve or perform any activity with a normal human can perform normally in his/her daily routine (WHO, 2005). The World Health Organization revised this definition in 1980 and published the international classification of functioning that the People with Disability and Health. International Classification of Functioning distinguish between bodies function and body structures.

Accessibility is very important aspect of human life especially when dealing with external and internal environment. Public transport stations still lack in terms of good design and facilities. A

serious concern for the matters is needed to safeguard the convenience for all but especially for Disable people. So, many researchers have been trying to find out the challenges faced and impact in the People with Disability in Public transportation. This study may help to identify the problems as well to find out new ideas which they have been facing in everyday life. It may help to explore their freedom and rights. Also, this study might be helpful as preliminary information to policy makers, planner's as well new scholars.

“Any person whose normal bodily or mental functions or both are partially impaired is referred as a Person with Disability”. Earlier, the term for them used to be “Differently Abled People”. Many studies have shown that mobility can be a serious challenge for persons with disability. As they face different types of obstacles and difficulties on the streets or public transport systems. The nature and extent of these difficulties vary according to the type of disabilities. People who are unable to walk or visually impaired usually use wheelchair and white cane. Both wheelchair and white cane users often face several obstacles on the road and public transport facilities. On the road, wheelchair and white cane users find it difficult to negotiate curbs, stairs, steep slopes, long road gradients, narrow paths and uneven road surface with potholes. Similar to public transport vehicles, obstacles for wheelchair users include narrow entrance, steps, and insufficient space to accommodate wheelchairs. Furthermore, public transport services need to have accessible stops, counters, and information. (Subedi, 2013)

For example, a mother with a mobility of People with Disability can be disadvantaged in her opportunities to be there for her children due to limited transportation options. Parent teacher conferences, soccer games, scouting activities, campouts, all of these events are easy for private vehicles to access. Another example, University Shuttle systems could employ students to provide a par transit-type service for individuals with disabilities. Students are more affordable to employ for all hours of the day, and the shuttle system would be a great opportunity to test flexible network strategies.

But are they readily available for everyone and everywhere? How can we provide this access in a flexible way? Could we better plan land use to provide all of these opportunities in more accessible locations? Or is it the transportation systems that are easier to change? Utilizing planning and universal design we need to address

these social issues while we can, before they become more difficult to manage. Transportation planners need to identify ways to be flexible with the services they provide.

The purpose of this study was to examine and to identify the major challenges of individuals of disable people in relation to their access to transportation. To address this purpose the following two research questions are made:

- What are the impacts and challenges when the people with disability faced in transportation?
- What are the reasons behind those challenges?

## **2. Review of Literature**

### **2.1 Medical Models of People with Disability**

This Models of people with Disability especially deals or relate with pathology. If a person born with the disability of hearing or cannot hear is consider as a disabled. But in this model the person or individual who has any sort of disability is treated or viewed as a defect of his organ and can or have to be treated my medical professional. Medical Models of the People with disability take the individual through pathology and identify the circumstance and level of disability, this result the action of describing the severe ness of disability which helps them for qualifying to get aid, accommodations, and social security identification. (WHO, 2005)

### **2.2 Social Model of People with Disability**

An individual with vision weakened or disabled is not disabled by the vision incapacity, but by Environment not offering or providing the suitable resources to the individual. This model is proven by the medical model who have been branded other Models. Social Models are defined as individual ability of freedom and functioning. (WHO, 2000)

The social model of disability says that disability is caused by the way society is organized, rather than by a person's impairment or difference. It looks at ways of removing barriers that restrict life choices for disabled people. When barriers are removed, disabled people can be independent and equal in society, with choice and control over their own lives. Disabled people developed the social model of disability because the traditional medical model did not explain their personal experience of disability or help to develop more inclusive ways of living.

### **2.3 The Individual-Environment Model of People with Disability**

The Individual Environment Model of People with Disability emerge with broad concept of disability in 1980, WHO release new concept on model of people with disability which is known as ICIDH (International Classification of Impairment, Disability and Handicap). International Classification of Impairment, Disability and Handicap has revised time to time. The latest restatement International Classification of Impairment, Disability and Handicap was defined in 2002. ICIDH examined the interaction between the health and functioning to define the rate and range of disability at individual's medical, social and environmental level of Disability. Individual Environment Model of People with disability function system of organ level is measured, Activity is measured at individual level, and social level is compared with the individual's participation ability. External environmental factors and in internal factors are included in circumstantial factors. Basically Medical Model and Social Model of People with Disability is consider to formulate the ICIDH by WHO. (Mike and Oliver, 1980)

### **3. Methodology**

To accomplish the research objectives, descriptive and exploratory research designs were used. For the data collection, researcher had conducted the study with the visitor around the Bhrikutimandap area because all the major and government organization dealing with Rights of People with disabilities is located in this area. Total 20 respondents were taken where 12male and 8 females were taken for the interview. Purposive sampling was used to collect data.

Both qualitative and quantitative data has been collected and analyzed for further detail information. As well as both primary and secondary data has been used in this study. Primary data has been collected from field survey through observation, case study, interview and questionnaires and secondary data has been collected from various published and unpublished reports published and unpublished articles, research reports etc.

The data have been collected by using two set of interview questionnaires: one for the data collecting interview and other for case study.

## 4. Data Presentation and Analysis: Challenges of People with Disability in Public

### 4.1 Transportation

In the current scenario of the transportation system of the valley, there are multiple problems, which are trying to be tackled by the Department of Transportation, and Metropolitan Traffic Police. People with Disability have been facing problems of traffic jam, road side accidents, pollution and many more which have affected their lives. People are not accessing transportation services effectively which has impacted on their livelihood. The magnitude of this problem has been spiraling every day. It is a crucial issue to be addressed by the Government.

This research study has attempted to find out the major challenges faced by the People with Disability in Public transportation and also the current scenario of the public transportation of the valley. An important body of this rapid growing society is transportation. Public transportation provides people with mobility. It plays vital role in development of any particular nation as we are aware that most of the modern and developed countries are giving great emphasis on transportation facilities by knowing its important and role for the sustainable development.

After finding the current scenario and the challenges this study might be helpful as the guidelines for further plan and policy about the transportation and road ways. Also, it might be helpful to new learner.

### 4.2 Types of Disability of Respondents

Disability refers to any kind of differently able capacity. According to World Health Organization, disability is any restriction or lack of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for human being. Biomedical model of illness is actually implied in it in this definition.

**Table-1 : Respondents by Disability Type**

Disability Type	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Blind	10	50.0	50.0	50.0
Wheelchair User	10	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Source : Field Survey, 2023.

Data contained in Table-1 show that out of 20 respondents half of them were blind and another half were wheel chair user. While choosing the respondents in this research study researcher select the respondent equally.

### 4.3 Gender of Respondents

Gender is a biological concept which refer to the social and cultural differences a society assigns to people based on their sex. It is the biological traits that society associates with being male or female. It is one of the widely used compositions of respondents in the research the composition of the respondent on the basis of Gender is present in following table:

**Table-2 : Gender of Respondents**

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	12	60	60	60
Female	12	60	60	60
Total	20	100.0	100.0	

**Source :** Field Survey, 2023.

The above table, which depicts data on the composition based on gender of the respondents, reveals that six out of the total respondents are male and remaining four out of ten are females. This distribution shows the disable percent is more among males as compared to that of females.

**Table-3 : Gender and Disability Type of Respondents**

Gender	Disability Type	
	Blind	Wheelchair User
	Frequency	Frequency
Male	8	4
Female	2	6

**Source :** Field Survey, 2023.

It is evident from the data contained in the above table that out twelve male respondents, eight were blind and four were wheel chair user. Similarly, out of 8 female respondents, two were blind and 6 were wheelchair user.

#### 4.4 Educational Status

As we all know that education is most important thing for everyone. Education brings positive changes in the attitude of any human being. Education only can bring positive change in the eye of community and can raise living standard of any human being.

**Table-4: Respondents by Educational Qualification**

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Never gone school	4	20	20	20
Primary education	1	5	5	25
Lower secondary	1	5	5	30
Secondary	4	20	20	50
Higher secondary	7	35	35	85
Bachelors	2	10	10	95
Masters	1	5	5	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

In the above table one-fifth of respondent have never gone school before, one in each twenty (5%) have received primary education, and same proportion of them have education upto lower secondary. One-fifth (20%) respondents have completed secondary level, 7 (35 %) respondents have completed higher secondary level, 2 (10%) of them have completed Bachelors and 1 (5%) respondent has done upto Master's level.

#### 4.5 Mode of Travel

The different modes of transport include air, water, and land transport, which includes rails or railways, road and off-road transport. However, travelling may be a challenging task for a disabled person. Barriers are everywhere, but a disabled person faces lot of difficulties while travelling. The data collected in the field situation is as under:

In this section, different questions related to reservation, human response, campaign, socialization awareness, facilities, challenges are asked to the respondents, presented and described below respectively.



Table-5: Respondents' Mode of Travel

What Mode of Transportation do you use the most?	Do you travel every day?	
	No	Yes
	Frequency	Frequency
Drive your personal vehicle	—	2
Ride with others	—	—
Public transportation	2	13
Social and volunteer service	—	—
Other	—	3

Source : Field Survey, 2023.

The above table shows that among the total respondents, 18 respondents (90%) travels every day. 2 respondents (10%) do not travel every day. 10% of them have personal vehicle 75% travel in public vehicle 15% percentage use other means of transportation. Other means of transportation means now a days online booking bike and taxi are popular. So some of them use online transportation which is cheap and easy to use.

The responses of the respondents on reserved seat on public transportation is mentioned in the following table:

Table-6 : Reserved Seat on Public Transportation

Reserved Seat	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	20	100.0	100.0	100.0
No	—	—	—	—

Source : Field Survey, 2023.

The table above shows that 100% respondents gets reserved seat on public transportation. This is good point of this field survey. They are happy by getting reservation facility.

Table-7 : Disability Id Card issued by Government

Id Card issued	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	1	5	5	5
Yes	19	95	95	100
Total	20	100	100	

Source : Field Survey, 2023.

Data contained in table-7 show that among the respondents, 19 respondents (95%) holds the disability ID Card issued by the government and 1 respondent (5%) doesn't have disability ID Card issued by the government. It also shows that the awareness level has significantly increased.

**Table-8: Discount Provision by showing Identity Card**

Discount Provision	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	1	5.0	5.0	5.0
Yes	19	95.0	95.0	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Source :** Field Survey, 2023.

The above table show that 95% of the respondents gets discount by showing people with disability ID Card issued by government on public Transportation while remaining 5% claims not getting discount in public vehicles. The government of Nepal has provided the Identity Card to each person with disability. They can get privilege in any hospital, education and hospital sector by showing that card.

**Table-9 : Accident while Travelling**

Accident	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	7	35	35	35
Yes	13	65	65	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	

**Source :** Field Survey, 2023.

The above table reveals that among the total respondent 65 % have had accident while travelling and 35% had not been to any short of accident. This is serious problem occurring nowadays. Day by day such accidents were increasing rapidly because of improver road construction and not having enough disability free roads. Public transportation do not follow the rules and compete to collect only the passenger which harms to the disables in pick up and drop. Government should focus on it and reduce the rate of accidents.

#### 4.6 Challenges

Being disable itself is a great challenge and surviving in under develop and developing country like Nepal. Socially, everyone should have equal access of everything but after this study it may be said that the disability is great loss of life and very hard to describe in individual sense of view. Most of them have very bad impact and few of them have normal. While researching and interviewing researcher has found lots of challenges faced by disable people. Different questions related to reservation, human response, campaign, socialization awareness, facilities, challenges are asked to the respondents, presented and described below respectively. Major challenges are shown below.

**Table-10 : Challenges faced by People with Disability while Traveling**

Challenges Faced	Frequency
Bad road ways	3
Bad behaviours of public transportation operator	2
bus stop finding	1
Finding vehicle is great problem	1
Lack of disable friendly transportation	1
Lack of information	1
Parking problem	1
Road and footpath	1
Road and pavement are very bad	1
Road are very bad	1
Road are very bad	1
Road public toilet	1
Road system	1
Unmanaged Bus Stop	1
Unmanaged Washroom in long travels	1
Unsafe road	3
Unsafe roads, unfriendly people	1

**Source :** Field Survey, 2023.

The above table clearly shows that the major problem of public vehicles for People with disabilities are facing everyday. Bad Road

condition is the major challenging factor which leads them to accident and makes impossible for mobility.

The another challenging in transportation is bus stop around the Kathmandu valley. Major causes of facing those problems are because of negligence of public transport operation and improper bus stops in Kathmandu city. Finding vehicle is little more hard in Kathmandu valley for the people with disability due to high population and more public vehicle user. The major problem faced by them is while getting on or off from the vehicles due to not having disability free bus stairs. Public transportation don't have any short of audio visual information system in waiting station which brings issues in finding their destination.

Unmanaged parking is major issues in urban area due to unmanaged urbanization and centralization of hospital, government offices etc without willingness of people and without the authorities of government body. Tactile pavement is not made in each city by targeting to the blind. Many of the respondent were suffering in public transportation because of above challenges.

**Table-11 : Involvement of Respondents in Disability Campaign/Organization**

Involvement	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	10	50.0	50.0	50.0
Yes	10	50.0	50.0	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Source :** Field survey, 2023.

The above table shows that among total respondent 50% of them are seem to be engaged in any short of campaign or activities related to people with disability and 50% are ideal.

Being disable himself is involving in campaign and movement is positive and great step to improve policies and laws as it will help to upgrade the lifestyle of disability. We should also engaged in such campaign and conduct awareness program for the further progress of our society.

#### **4.7 Case Study of Sunita Mahato**

Around 43 years woman, named Sunita Mahato, a wheel chair user is the person who suffered from the road accident. After the frequent follow-up with Sunita Mahato, we have

been able to manage time for the interview. When she was coming to visit National Disabled Fund for her counseling and treatment. She was one of the victim of road accident while she was walking by the side of a road at Siraha. She was taken to the nearby hospital named Saptarishi Nursing Home Lahan and got immediate medical attention. After few hours of surgery, she felt very unusual with her body because her leg was cut. According to her, that was happened negligence of doctors have cursed her with lose of her one leg. They cut her leg without any proper counseling. She is now on the process of implanting artificial leg.

She is independent and challenging woman but never gone school. She is very familia with the rules and regulation of the nation.

**Challenges faced by Sunita Mahato** are as under:

Being a woman is a big challenge in our society she says it is very difficult for her to get in local transportation. She feels that nobody is willingly to help her as she lives in Terai region the behaviour of men are very rude towards her. One of the incident shared by her is that, she has got very bad injury while walking on the street by other people because at that moment the person was talking on mobile phone and pushed her away. From that day, she feels fear to walk on the street. As well public transportation do not stop for her. Vehicle operator also don't care about her situation. So, she told that she used taxi and friend's vehicles to travel.

Other people perception on Sunita Mahato is good and helpful. She cares and respect other. Whenever she needs help and care her friends helped her without any hesitation but her relatives don't give her more attention.

By knowing her challenges, I felt very bad and thought to mention her story in this case study. Being disable in the context of men and women, it's very hard to describe how women is being treated in the society. For men it will be easy to live and survive in the society from every aspect of human nature but for women, they are unequal to other women and nobody cares about them and they can't live happy life due to the societal wrong concept and human behaviour.

## **5. Major Findings**

Out of the 20 informants there were 10 blinds and 8 wheelchair users. Among 18% respondents travel everyday, 2% do not travel everyday and only 10% of them have personal vehicle. 75% of them travel in public vehicle and 15% use other means of transportation like pathao, indrive, tootle. This study shows that 100% respondents get reserved seat on public transportation provided by the government and 90% of the respondent had Identity Card issued by the government of Nepal.

This research also shows 95% of the respondent get discount by showing people with the disability Identity Card on public transportation. Among total respondent, 30% of respondent feel good response on public transportation and 55% of the respondent feel bad, 15% of respondents were satisfied with the response from public transportation operator. While using the public transportation 10% respondent did not get any help and 90% of respondent get help in pick up and drop in public transportation. Out of 20% respondent, 65% respondents had accident while traveling and 35% have not been to any sort of accident.

People with the disability facing so many challenges while traveling in public transportation. Bad road ways, bus stop finding, finding vehicles and lack of disable friendly transportation lack of information, parking problem, road and footpath, public toilet, unmanaged bus stop are the problems faced by the people with the disability. People with disability's everyday life is affected by the challenges among total 35% respondent feel no effect and change in their daily activities. While 65% respondent feel affect or change in everyday life.

## **6. Conclusion**

This study try to explore the challenges faced by the people with disability in public transportation. People with the disability are facing so many challenges in everyday day life which make their life more harder. This study highlights the major challenge for people with disability's is very bad road condition which lead them to accident and make it impossible for mobility. This study shows the other problems of public transportation for disable are footpath, bus stop and frequently moving bus stops or lack of bus stop and condition of road. Another thing is lack of information center, proper

washroom with disable friendly and bad attitude of people toward disable people. Lack of disability friendly stairs people facing problems while on and off. Public transportation do not have any short of audio visual information system in waiting station. It brings issues in finding their destination.

This study highlights the major issues in urban area are due to unmanaged urbanization and centralization and centralization of hospital and government office. Tactile pavement is not made in each city by targeting to the blind.

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