

Physical Disability

Physical impairment is a disability that limits a person's physical capacity to move, coordinate actions or perform physical activities. It is also accompanied by difficulties in one or more of the following areas: physical and motor tasks, independent movement; performing daily living functions.

They can be due to accidents, injuries, obesity, infection, or other illnesses. These may also be caused due to genetic disorders. More than 1 billion persons in the world have some form of disability. This corresponds to about 15% of the world's population. Between 110-190 million people have very significant difficulties in functioning.

It restricts the person's participation and involvement in many situations and making them feel isolated. It makes them different from the people and the tasks which are usually very easy to do. Thus, disability is a complex phenomenon, reflecting the dynamics between a person's body restriction and the society in which he or she lives. It greatly affects the individual's self-care, mobility, security, privacy, and dependency. It not only impacts their physical ability but deeply leaves a mark on the confidence and overall mental wellbeing of the person with a disability.

The three most common physical disabilities are

- Arthritis and Other Musculoskeletal Disorders. According to the Mayo Clinic, arthritis is inflammation and tenderness in one or more joints.
- Cerebral Palsy. ...
- Spinal Cord Injuries.

People often look at them with sympathy. Instead of being there to support and care for the physically impaired, they often associate their entire identity with just their disability. Because of this indifference of society, these people are often excluded in social gatherings and they cannot enjoy the simplest things of life like the abled people. It is important for us to remember that; they need just a little extra support from us to achieve their full potential of living life.

Having a physical impairment is should not be their identity. Many fortunate people with disabilities live their lives just like any other able-bodied who can access the assistive devices available in the market. It can help them overcome their physical limitation and earn a decent income to support themselves and their families. They do need support from their families, friends, members of the public, the community to help them to integrate into mainstream

society by accepting who they are. Giving them opportunities at work and treating them like any able-bodied are some of the ways that can help them to live life to the fullest.

Assistive technology has been like the oasis in the desert for persons with disabilities in recent years. It enables them, empowers them, and gives them much-needed confidence to lead a life on their own terms. Leading tech companies are now designing and innovating different assistive devices to help disabled people in their day-to-day life.

According to our recent study as part of the VOSAP Internship program, we looked into the latest trends in assistive technologies. It is believed that the Mobility aids and transportation equipment market is expected to grow from 1.6 billion USD in 2020 to 1.82 billion in 2025. Increasing demand and a huge untapped market especially in developing countries will be key to upgrade the capacity of innovation and availability of assistive devices.

Let us look at some of the excellent examples of assistive devices which are helping millions of people worldwide.