CHAPTER—1

Disability: An Introduction

Disability Studies emerged as an interdisciplinary subject in the late twentieth century. Michael Berube asserted that Disability Studies is no longer an emerging discipline because it 'emerged' (Garland-Thomson 915). The subject has derived ample insights from various disciplines right from Social Sciences to Humanities, Natural Science and Modern Technology. Drawing on insights from Philosophy, Law, Literature, Life-writing, and Bioethics, it studies disability from a social construction point of view. G. N. Karna states that Disability Studies is a "discipline which reformulates the study of disability by perceiving the problem of disability as a social phenomenon, social construct, metaphor and culture" (250). It picks up the issue of diversity in disability and acknowledges it as "a civil and human rights issue, a minority identity, a sociological formation, a historical community, a diverse group, and a category of critical analysis in culture and arts" (Garland-Thomson 915). Disability Studies examines representations of disabled persons in writings of positional writers and in their own life writings like autobiographies and memoirs. It values impaired life purely with human rights approach. Alice Hall points out, "Disability Studies does not treat disease or disability, hoping to cure or avoid them; it studies the social meaning, symbols, and stigmas attached to disability identity and asks how they relate to enforced systems of exclusion and expression" (31). This field of inquiry highlights issues of disabled people by depicting their problems in literary narratives. Alice Hall states that disability representation initiates discussions on issues like minority status, citizenship, social care and empathy. Generating opportunities for reading between the lines, they can start literary and cultural history

afresh (1). Disability Studies is believed to be "matrix of theories, pedagogies and practices" (Goodley 10). It is an "academic field of inquiry and an area of political activity" (Davis xv). Disability Studies invents a new perspective to delve deep into the literary texts in order to deconstruct and problematize the time-honoured theoretical paradigms in the world of literary criticism. Importing new insights for the fresh understanding of a text in the light of Disability Studies, it questions the stereotypical representation of disability in literary works like novels, stories, plays, and poems. It believes that disability is not given or natural but is a social construct like gender and caste. Thereby, it problematizes established notions of disability, impairment and handicap. Disability Studies ponders on for-granted values enabling a reader to re-examine the established norms and revise them in line with the universal human model. Disability perspective attends the nuances of difference to accommodate and celebrate them. It has not set the fixed standard to gauge normality of an individual. It rather accepts the norms as a fluid and slippage concept. Alice Hall argues that Disability Studies is founded to challenge social exclusion and social marginalization of disabled people (4). It studies impairment and disability dichotomy from the sex-gender perspective, analogically.

Disability has been part of each culture even before human evolution. Berkson stated that in the prehistoric period impaired apes continued to be the part of the animal group till their impairment doesn't disturb their foraging. There is anthropological evidence which reflects the presence of impaired members among subhuman groups (Gary L. Albrecht, Katherine Seelman, and Michael Bury 13). He argued that like arthritis, disability was common in Neanderthals (ibid 14). Accordingly, disability has been part of literature throughout human history. But there is limited information about the treatment and experiences given to impaired people in

the earliest periods of history recorded in Old Testament which is paradoxical in terms of treatment given to disabled people. On the one hand, it commands upon society to be kind to disabled people and on the other hand, disability is believed to be the wrath of God. Edicts like "thou shall not curse the deaf nor put a stumbling block before the blind, nor maketh the blind wander out of the path" (Leviticus 19:14) shows a positive attitude towards disabled people. But still, there are also some commandments that speak negatively about disability. For instance, "If you do not carefully follow His commands and decrees…all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: the Lord will affect you with madness, blindness and confusion of mind" (Deuteronomy 28:15, 28-29). Old Testament advocated and equated disabled people with prostitutes and menstruating women who were considered polluted. Hence, they were precluded from making religious sacrifices. In ancient times dating back to 2000 B.C.E, impairments of children were used to predict the future of a community. The appearance of a disability condition was understood as an indication of forthcoming events. "In the Babylonian region, ancient Semitic Chaldean diviners of the future maintained a list of birth deformities and the specific prophetic meaning each foretold". (Gary L. Albrecht, Katherine Seelman, and Michael Bury 14)

On account of wars, malnutrition and diseases, in ancient Greece and Rome, the lifespan of people was very short ranging from 37 to 44 years respectively. Therefore, disability and deformity were very common there. So far as the reaction towards disabled people is concerned, the Greeks and Romans reflected a miscellaneous attitude towards them. The cause of a disabled baby's birth was ascribed to their parents' act of displeasing God. The practice of infanticide of disabled children was common among Greeks. In Sparta, the killing of disabled children was legitimized. Their killing was justified on grounds of mollifying God

because they were perceived as the fury of God (Gary L. Albrecht, Katherine Seelman, and Michael Bury 15). In the Roman Empire, intellectually disabled people were kept by well-off people for entertainment purposes. They were provided with guardians to support them in their management affairs. Some impaired people also enjoyed the privilege of power in ancient Greece and Rome. For instance, the Roman Emperor Claudius enjoyed his emperorship despite his congenital deformities and Sparta elected a dwarf man as their king (Gary L. Albrecht, Katherine Seelman, and Michael Bury 15). Moreover, Greeks had a lame God Hephaestus and Jewish Talmud stated that disability is a means to step in heaven. It suggests that the opinion of people regarding disability kept changing across human history. In *The Politics,* Aristotle mentioned that "no deformed child should live."

New Testament documents the attitudes of people towards a disabled person after Jesus Christ. It records Jesus' healing of blindness and paralysis. Jesus said that disability was neither sin of parents nor the sin of the disabled child but it was a method "for God's work to be revealed in him" (Gary L. Albrecht, Katherine Seelman, and Michael Bury 17). In Christianity, people with disability were free to observe religious rituals. According to the early Christian church, faith in religion happened to come from a sense of hearing which excluded the deaf community. It implies that deaf were without faith as per church statements (ibid 14). Disabled people are referred to in Leviticus book of the Bible. They were allowed to participate in religious observance but not as a priest. They were equated with prostitutes or women whose menstruation makes them unclean. It was mandatory to be defect-less to approach God. According to *Encyclopedia Judaica* disabilities like blindness, deformed nose, lameness, humped back and loss of testicle face cultic impurity (Stiker 24). In the Qumran texts of Jewism, it is mentioned that "every person stricken

in his flesh, paralyzed in the feet or hands, lame or blind or deaf or mute…let, not these persons enter to take a place among the Congregation of men of repute…This person shall not enter into the midst of the congregation, for he is afflicted. The defect is linked to sin." (Stiker 25)

During the Middle Ages, hospices were established in Syria, Turkey and France for blind people. These religiously inspired hospices functioned as a refuge for disabled people. Bishop Nicholas undertook the care of intellectually disabled in Turkey during the fourth century. Disabilities like epilepsy, intellectual disability and deafness were believed to have supernatural roots during the Middle Ages (Gary L. Albrecht, Katherine Seelman, and Michael Bury 17). The folklores mentioned the devil as the cause of epilepsy. Mental illness was thought of as a function of demonic possession and religious exorcism was suggested as its treatment. Witch hunting was common and witches were mostly women with mental disability (Gary L. Albrecht, Katherine Seelman, and Michael Bury 18). Indeed there were institutions of care and charity as well. There was a significant relationship between disability and poverty in this period of life. Malnutrition was one of the causes of impairment. Begging, a common profession of disabled people was not stigmatized at all. Spiritual healing of disability like visiting of tombs of St. Louis to seek a cure for their disability was also in vogue and charitable institutions were also there to help them. In the Middle Ages, Arabian people established asylums for mentally disabled people.

In the early modern period ranging from the fourteenth to the eighteenth century, the mentally disabled people were considered to be possessed. Religious reformers John Kelvin and Martin Luther preached about the possession of mentally disabled people. Head beating and head boring was the treatment given to them. The pouring of frying earthworms and goose grease into the ears of the deaf was the

accepted treatment for deafness (Gary L. Albrecht, Katherine Seelman, and Michael Bury 21). In England, county asylums were proposed in 1700 for crippled, blind and idiots and in 1714 laws were enacted only for their confinement.

In the 18th century, eugenics or selective breeding emerged as a hot debate in natural science. Moreover, madhouses and criminal prisons were combined facilities in Germany. Instead of the treatment of 'furiously mad' people, laws were enacted for their confinement. The isolation of mentally disabled people was carried out by families and relatives to avert the dishonour caused by their behaviour. They were also exempted from harsh treatments of whipping etc. Although the institutionalization of mentally disabled people began in the fifteenth century, by the eighteenth-century people with mental illness were accepted along with their required facilities (Gary L. Albrecht, Katherine Seelman, and Michael Bury 25). The eighteenth century also saw the emergence of multiple schools for deaf and blind people in Spain, France and other European countries and the USA.

In the 19th century, there was a flood of literature that frightened the people against disabilities. Residential schools were opened for deaf and the philosophies of manualism and oralism were being contested as to which one fits well to carry out this schooling plan. The schools for physically disabled people were opened, first in Bavaria in 1832 and later in Germany, France, England and Italy. And in 1829, Louis Braille published the explanations of his dot code which proved influential for educating the visually challenged students (Gary L. Albrecht, Katherine Seelman, and Michael Bury 29). Throughout the nineteenth century, freak shows exhibited physically and mentally disabled people in circuses and fairs which were very popular in the USA and Europe. They were even sold to show-organizers who were entitled to exhibit them in their lifespan. The freak shows continued in America till 1940s.

At the beginning of the 20th century, disability was institutionalized. These institutions were established by the developed nations of the world for intellectually disabled people. The total number of established institutions was 171 by twenty-one nations of the world. Of these institutions, twenty-five were all alone set up by the USA till the end of 1900 century. In the time period from 1880 to 1925, intellectually disabled people were considered as deviants and intellectual disability was thought incurable disease. The deaf community was fighting for the usage of sign language in schools. Eugenics era gained momentum and social reformers suggested a prohibition of procreation by disabled people. The process of sterilization of disabled people was at the peak. U.S., Germany and Denmark entitled their states to sterilize disabled people. Around 1950, friends and families of disabled provided special services to disabled people throughout the world. Schools and international associations were formed to prevent people with disability from harsh treatments. From 1970 onwards, disability activism addressed the issues and concerns of disabled people.

Coming to Disability Studies, it took a long time for this discipline to emerge as a popular discipline in various developed countries. As an interdisciplinary academic field, Disability Studies is a very recent subject in terms of origin and history. Its historical journey from activism to academic discipline is not linear because of its multidisciplinary nature. In 1966, Paul Hunt initiated his book, *Stigma: The Experience of Disability,* with the statement, "This is an uncomfortable book. Firstly, it is uncomfortable because it reveals how inadequate the existing services for the disabled in Britain are" (1). He further reveals, "The Problem of disability lies not only in the impairment of function and its effects on us individually, but also, more importantly, in the area of our relationship with normal people" (146). Hunt's foundational text of Disability Studies set some issues and concerns into motions

which formed the core of the 1960s and 1970s disability activism. He differentiated between functional impairment and social processes which rendered him disabled. Locating the origin of the problem, he argued that the problem lies more in the social system than in the individual. He emphasised on the need of raising disability issues and concerns and their subsequent shift from private to public sphere.

Later on, many new texts embedded with personal experience resonated with disabled voices preparing the ground for disabled activism (Hall 20). For instance, in her book, *Claiming Disability*, Simi Linton states, "We have come out, not in those brown wool lap robes over our withered legs, or dark glasses over our pale eyes, but in shorts and sandals…straightforward, unmasked, and unapologetic" (3). The voices of Hunt and Linton evolved into activism that began to challenge social barriers. Being disabled themselves, their voice showed solidarity with disabled people as a community. It led to the formation of separate disabled identity. Both of them were very active in disabled campaigns. In the United Kingdom, Hunt is distinguished as the founding member of Union of the Physically Impaired against Segregation (UPIAS) while as Linton champions the cause of independent living and freedom from institutional confinements. The disability campaigns date back to World War II when there was desperate need to treat wounded soldiers and compensate for their losses. On the one hand, the campaigns were further boosted by Vietnam War of the 1960s which left thousands of American war veterans disabled while on the other hand, the then ongoing race, gender and sexuality movements of the 1970s further encouraged disabled campaigns. These campaigns ensured them the civil rights model, giving them the opportunity of thinking about their rights. The response of campaigns is the legislation of the Architectural Barriers Act 1968 in the United States which ensured that all buildings like hospitals and universities must be

accessible to disabled people (Hall 20). All these campaigns took up the shape of the Disabled People's Movement and each one of them focused on new issues. For instance, Frank Bowe's raised the issue of barriers to social inclusion in his book, *Handicapping Americans* (1978). He highlighted that social inclusion of disabled people is obstructed by six major barriers which include attitudinal, occupational, architectural, educational, personal and legal barriers besides lack of resources and stigma of impairment. With their agenda of social and political rights, all the disability campaigns had started informing academic disciplines by the end of the 1980s and 1990s.

Prior to 1980s, disability was exclusively confined to medicine, social work and psychology. After the 1980s, there was a paradigm shift in thinking with regard to disability because scores of other academic disciplines such as cultural studies, humanities, sociology, education and social policy showed interest in it. These disciplines and disabled rights movements felt the needfor proposing an alternative model of disability in opposition to the dominant Medical Model. The joint effort of scholars and activists proposed Social Model of disability in response to Medical Model. Social Model blames the system which disables people with impairments. For instance, wheelchair-users are disabled by building with no ramps and a person with hearing impairment faces problems while communicating in sign language. With the introduction of the Social Model, Disability Studies changed the whole discourse of disability and impairment calling disability as social and impairment as biological in nature. The barrier-free environment campaigns of disabled activists mounted pressure to the extent that in 1980 World Health Organisation (WHO) issued an official document on disability called as International Classification of Impairment,

Disability and Handicap (ICIDH). It as well recognised the distinction between disability and impairment. (Hall 22)

In 1990, the legislation of the American Disability Act gave further impetus to the formation of Disability Studies. This act prohibits discrimination of disabled people and acknowledged that "disability depends upon perception and subjective judgment rather than on objective bodily states" (Thomas Garland 6). This American legislative development with respect to disabled people was followed by the Australian Disability Discrimination Act, 1992. Later on, the United Kingdom introduced Disability Discrimination Act, 1995 which was replaced by Equality Act, 2010. These Acts extended civil rights law ensuring that discrimination of disabled people in fields of education, transport and employment is illegal (Hall 23). The emergence of Disability Studies is an outcome of the activism of disabled people and the subsequent legislation in favour of their claim. Lennard J. Davis states:

> It is not as if Disability Studies has simply appeared out of someone's head at this historical moment. It would be more appropriate to say that Disability Studies has been in the making for many years, but, like people with disabilities, has only recently recognized itself as a political, discursive entity. (xvi)

Thus, the institutional recognition of Disability Studies around the 1980s and 1990s along with Women's Studies and African American Studies reflects a close connection between activism and the world of academia. For instance, the foundation of 'Society for Disability Studies' was laid by the United States in 1982 (Hall 24). Several groups showing interest in disability emerged in the form of Modern Language Association (MLA), American Anthropological Association (AAA) and the American Educational Research Association (AERA) (Goodley 10). Lennard Davis

finally proclaims its beginning by writing an introduction to Disabilities Studies Reader. He stated:

> When I wrote the introduction to the *Disability Studies Reader* about ten years ago, I was announcing the appearance of a new field of study. I dourly noted that "it has been virtually impossible to have a person teaching about disability within the humanities… It is gratifying to note that after less than a decade, all that has changed. Disability Studies is taught throughout the United States, the United Kingdom, and the world. (xiii)

These identity-based fields' theorized inclusion and equality followed by their practice in the academic institutions. Disability Studies shouts slogan of liberation like 'Piss on Pity', 'Disabled and Proud' and 'People First' and is committed to a Social Model which attends the issues of disabled people positively. Believing that disablism is rooted in psyche, culture and society, it highlighted the importance of understanding disability from the perspective of sociology, literature and cultural studies. (Dan Goodley 10). Garland-Thomson proposed that 'recuperation' and 'revelation' were used as tools of inquiry in the first wave of disability (916). Recuperation reflects upon the ignored history of disabled people in academic disciplines like literature, history and culture. It traces out roots of disability and ability construction across time and revelation exposes stigmatizing stereotypes perpetuated through representations in the literature (Alice Hall 24). Paul Longmore, the disability historian, classified disability history into three phases what he called 'waves'. Phase first includes campaigns for civil rights ending with American Disability Act 1990. The second phase is the evolution of activism into Disability Studies as an independent discipline. And now it has stepped in the third phase in

which Disability Studies experience 'fissures' around concepts like disability and impairment. (Adams 496)

However, Disability Studies has failed to emerge as an independent field of inquiry in Indian schools, colleges and universities. The vibrant growth of Disability Studies in developed economies couldn't make an impact on its Indian counterpart. In India, Disability Studies form part of syllabi only in few subjects like Medical Science, Bio-Technology, Special Education, Social Work, Rehabilitation Medicine etc. It may also be found in traces in other subjects like humanities and social sciences where rigid compartmentalization of disciplines deters cross-flow of ideas among subjects. Its failure in engaging academicians and policymakers obstructs its emergence into an independent field of study (Karna 241). Although the flood of journals and periodicals are published by developed countries, there is hardly any academic development in India in this regard except few journals such as *Indian Journal of Disability and Rehabilitation*, *Disabilities and Impairments*, *Asia Pacific Disability Rehabilitation Journal*, *Action aid Disability News/Newsletter* and *International Journal of Disability Studies*. Being parochial, all these journals focus on specific aspects without employing the interdisciplinary insights for exploring the grey areas of disability study (Karna 247). As far as legislation for disabled in India is concerned, it includes some developments viz. Indian Lunacy Act, 1912, Mental Health Act 1987, Persons with Disabilities Act (PWD), 1995 and Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. Indian Lunacy Act, 1912 simply classified people with mental and intellectual disabilities as lunatics and worked for guardianship (Kothari 4). It was later replaced in 1987 by Mental Health Act. Mental Health Act, 1987 doesn't mention the rights of disabled people except for their institutionalization and guardianship. It focused on welfare measures instead of measures of anti-

discrimination. Moreover, it referred to them as 'physically handicapped'. It wasn't uniform across the country. The PWD Act, 1995 was remarkable in terms of addressing the rights of disabled people. However, the problem with PWD Act, 1995 is its medical definition of disability, no reference to non-discrimination, equal protection of rights and equal citizenship (Kothari xxi). Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 addresses freedom of choice, non-discrimination, respect for difference, inclusion and accessibility. Moreover, it included some new disabilities enlisting twenty-one in its fold (Disabilities Act, 2016). Despite these legislative provisions, Articles 14, 15 and 16 ignored disabilities from becoming one of the social markers of discrimination (Kothari xxi). In nutshell, Disability Studies revolves around the core concept of disability. Therefore, it is germane to explore it extensively.

There is no single definition of disability which is universally accepted by all disabled people willingly. Despite the definitions proposed by the World Health Organization (WHO), disability definitions vary across the world. It has been defined across time by numerous legislative acts and reports evincing its diversity of meanings based upon multiple interpretations and perspectives. These definitions of disability are based on criteria established by different reports exhibiting its shifting and non-essentialist nature. In 1976, the World Health Organization (WHO) came up with a document on disability called International Classification of Impairment, Disability and Handicap (ICIDH). This document classified human conditions into three categories viz. impairment, disability and Handicap.

ICIDH defines handicap as, "a disadvantage for a given individual resulting from an impairment or a disability, that limits or prevents the fulfilment of a role that is normal (depending on age, sex, and social and cultural factors) for that individual"

(182). It results out of discord between the individual's performance and the expectations of his social group. It denotes socialization of impairment and disability of an individual on grounds of social, cultural, environmental and economic consequences stemming from disability and impairment. The disadvantage in handicap occurs out of incompatibility with norms and 'survival roles' of an individual's universe. Handicap is the outcome of circumstances in which disabled people find themselves at disadvantage in comparison with their peers. (ICIDH 182)

ICIDH defines impairment as, "any loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological, or anatomical structure or function" (47). It points out that the nature of loss or abnormalities of organ, limb or mental function may be temporary or permanent. It denotes exteriorization of internal pathological condition either at the organ or body level (47). Impairment encompasses the individual functions of the body parts. Union of Physically Impaired against Segregation (UPIAS), 1976 defines impairment as, "lacking part or all of a limb or having a defective limb, organ, or mechanism of the body." (Hall 21)

The third important category dealt in detail is 'disability'. To begin with, Oxford Dictionary of English defines disability as, "a physical or mental condition that limits a person's movements, senses, or activities; a disadvantage or handicap, especially one imposed or recognised by the law" (497). ICIDH defines disability as, "any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being" (28). It encompasses the integrated activities of the individual body as a whole. Disability is the objectification of functional limitation, that is, the process in which functional limitation expresses itself while interacting with the reality of life. The WHO definition of disability is based on Medical Science. Drawing on insights of medicine,

it doesn't take into account the role of the social system in disabling an individual. It targets individual for being unable to perform an action normally evincing its unacceptability of difference. ICIDH implicitly points at a social system which offers restriction and the 'lack' which resides inside the individual. It anticipates the multi-dimensional nature of disability having its source both inside and outside the individual. Union of Physically Impaired against Segregation (UPIAS), 1976 as well throws light on the concept of disability. It defines disability as, "the disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by a contemporary social organisation which takes no or little account of people who have impairments and thus excludes them from participation in the mainstream of social activities" (Hall 21). UPIAS definition seems more disabled-friendly than ICIDH definition because it accepts the location of impairment inside the body but simultaneously negating the bodily origin of disability. UPIAS argues about the social origin of disability believing that it comes about as a result of interaction between the impaired individual and the environment which is generally non-disabled friendly. It is the society that disables an individual by developing barrier ridden infrastructure. The nature of barrier varies ranging from affective, sensory, physical, speech, visual to learning barrier. For example, wheelchair-user has mobility impairment but society transforms it into disability by developing infrastructure without ramps, thereby making it inaccessible to them. Likewise, the hearing impairment of an individual is turned into disability by not developing, documenting and teaching sign language. UPIAS definition explicitly rejects the medical understanding of disability and gives due space to social understanding. This paradigm shift in thinking about disability made a huge impact on the lives of disabled people. Social contextualization of disability is underpinned by the American with Disability Act, 1990, recognizing that "disability depends upon

perception and subjective judgment rather than on objective bodily states…the law concedes that being legally disabled is also a matter of "being regarded as having such an impairment." (Garland Thomson 6)

According to American Disability Act (ADA), 1990, a person is entitled as disabled if he suffers from "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual; a record of such an impairment or being regarded as having such an impairment" (Kothari 33). The United Kingdom Disability Discrimination Act, 1995 almost defines disability on the pattern of ADA, 1990. It proposed that a person is said to be disabled if "she has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and a long-term effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities." (Kothari 33)

In 2006, the United Nations framed an international human rights treaty in the form of Conventions of Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) in order to safeguard the rights of disabled people. In India, it anticipated the Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016. Article 1 of CRPD states that "persons with a disability include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments, which in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others" (Kothari 34). This definition is broader in scope as it involves both medical and social model perspectives to understand disability. It is inclusive in terms of classifying all the people suffering from long-term impairments such as HIV and AIDS as disabled.

Coming to Indian legislation, it enacted two important documents regarding disability viz. Persons with Disability (PWD) Act, 1995 and the Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016. PWD Act, 1995 states that "person with a disability means a person suffering from not less than 40 percent of any disability as certified by a

medical authority" (Kothari 35). It recognized only seven disabilities namely blindness, low vision, leprosy cured, hearing impairment, locomotor disability, mental retardation and mental illness and excluding all those having impairments other than the seven mentioned ones. Moreover, it is a medically oriented act because it mentioned clinical criteria to certify the claim of a claimant. It takes no account of social barriers for disabling a person evincing its narrowness with disability recognition and definition. PWD Act, 1995 is highly exclusive because it excluded conditions like HIV/AIDS, Cancer, Heart diseases, cerebral palsy etc. And mental illness is also excluded from the PWD Act, 1995 because there is not such a tool to quantify the mental state of an affected person. There is no certification for mental illness depriving them of the benefits of the PWD Act, 1995.

The moment Convention of Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) was adopted in 2006 by the United Nations, India being its signatory was supposed to overhaul the outdated PWD Act, 1995 in consonance with CRPD. This rethinking gave birth to the Rights of Persons with Disability Act (RPD), 2016 in India. RPD Act, 2016 states that "person with benchmark disability means a person with not less than forty per cent of a specified disability" (3). This Act increased the number of disabilities from seven to twenty-one enfolding new categories like cerebral palsy, acid victims, speech and language disability, specific learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, haemophilia, thalassemia, and sickle cell anaemia. The nomenclature, mental retardation, was replaced with intellectual disability. The Act assures disabled people with the right to equality, life with dignity, no discrimination and respect for integrity (4). Given the discourse on disability by various Acts and Conventions in a holistic manner, it appears that disability is closely associated with impairment. Disability alone is not the function of impairment but, at times, it arises

out of discrimination at the hands of ablest society. The conventions as well show that disability is not inbuilt within an individual rejecting its individual nature rather it is rooted in the socio-cultural environment. For instance, architectural barriers engender disability substantially. To reduce the degree of disability, immediate steps should be taken to design disabled friendly buildings. In skyscrapers, the facility of elevators should be made available and ramps must run parallel to stairs. For persons with visual impairment, tactile surfaces should be part of buildings. This all must be underpinned by legislation so that, whenever in future their rights are denied and their space is encroached, the court will work as their constitutional guardian.

Moreover, the socio-political campaigns for barrier-free atmosphere and discrimination policy may also bring about positive changes in already established legislative laws. Disable activism has the potential to pressurise state authority for the revision and revisiting of legal discourse regarding disabled people. The legal system must distinguish among disability, impairment and handicap as has been done by International Classification of Impairment, Disable and Handicapped (ICIDH) in 1980. Historically, disability is understood from an essentialist perspective which defines disability in terms of fixed attributes. Anita Ghai states that "essentialism attributes fixed essential characteristics to disability" (226). It identifies disability with certain inherent traits such as dependent, burden, emotional and introvert. These traits or attributes have become first their stereotypes and later turn to be their defining features according to essentialist view. The attributes become the cause of their stigmatisation which in turn excludes and marginalizes them. Essentialism believes disability as an individual tragedy which can be treated only through medical aid. It denies and denounces the social roots of disability. Disability is given a

treatment different from the rest of the social markers like gender, caste, race and sexuality.

Being rooted in numerous cultures, disability cannot be understood from a single perspective. There is a need to sneak into the problem of disability inmultiple ways because there are diverse cultures with varied traditions and faiths and even different discourses of understanding of disability. It is on these grounds that some cultures trace their roots either within the individual's past deeds or within the person himself/herself. It is hailed as a flaw, lack, want, defect or something unwanted with human bodies. Accordingly, different religions treat disability differently.

According to *Karma Theory* perspective, disability is a sort of penance and retribution for the past deeds of the person embodying disability (Ghai 28). This perspective is so judgemental and biased that it underestimates its social, cultural, genetic and human causes. The religious stigmatization of disabled people underscores the construction of their negative identity further distancing them from normality. In this way, the gulf between non-disabled and disabled community is further widened in societies where perfection is valorised and made a benchmark to describe and measure the degree of deviance of everything. Disability may be defined as an attitude of disqualification of qualities and talents of impaired people with the surfacing of at least one impairment of visible or invisible type. It begets the facts that a person with an orthopaedic or mental impairment is also asexual despite being sexually normal. Likewise, the person with deformed body structure is deprived of many essential attributes like sexuality, leadership competence and gender. It is the disbelief of the performance of an activity undertaken by an impaired person. The person is socially considered impaired in all aspects despite his single impairment looking at the human body

through a general perspective. The instances entail genius of Ashtavakra, a person with eight deformities. (Ghai 66)

Disabled people are generally supposed as non-contributors to the community because the state system believes that they may not help in building a healthy nation. Likewise, their family regards them economically dependent and burden and therefore, non-productive in nature. This becomes eventually one of the causes of their social discrimination where they are helped in terms of charity instead of their rights and entitlements. Persons with disability are disqualified even from their self-responsibility and independence. Since the beginning of the universe, there have been differences among human beings in terms of physical and cognitive status. To ascribe these differences or disabilities to evil has been practised across ages and are still prevailing. Disabled people are believed to be abnormal because they are unable to fit into the hegemonic discourse of normality which is not a standard in itself, but is again a relative term which is defined against deviance and difference. It, thus, excludes and weakens the disabled community from mainstream society. This social disregard denies them their voice, privacy and even their social presence. Instead of making the system conducive for them, they are viewed through the lens of the prevailing system and are expected to adapt themselves to the mainstream parameters.

The word 'representation' has multiple meanings in multiple contexts. According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, representation means "the act of presenting somebody or something in a particular way; something that shows or describes something" (1296). It suggests that representation involves some manipulation and interpretation which effects meaning. It stands for capturing experiences in terms of known symbols like language. *Oxford Dictionary of English* defines representation as, "The description or portrayal of someone or something in a

particular way; the depiction of someone or something in a work of art" (1508). However, there is always a chasm between representational symbols and the external world it represents because Plato said that art is thrice away from reality. In addition to these, Ferdinand de Saussure also holds the same view, saying that there is an arbitrary relationship between the signifier (representational language) and the signified (concept or world). It means that the meaning of the representational system is based on a common assumption between the artist and the reader. It implies that meaning is constructed but not inherent in words, symbols and images.

Representation resorts to politics of selection out of an infinite number of available signs in order to carry forward a specific notion. It can narrow down the subjectivity of an individual by enclosing him/her in stereotypical roles. The process of meaning derivation from an image depends upon the background of a reader because each reader understands an image in the light of his cultural knowledge. Without going into the problematics of the term, representation simply denotes the idea of "stands for, or in place of, another". Despite acknowledgement of linguistic arbitrariness, it is assumed that the term 'representation' contains originality of reality, faithfully and photographically (Josephine 12). Chris Barker points out that representation denotes the process of involving signifying practices to portray objects of the real world. It works as a mirror to reflect the outer independent world. Besides being a reflection of the world, it constitutes meaning based on selection and organization (177). Rosemarie Garland-Thomson observes: "Representation structures rather than reflect reality. The way we imagine disability through images and narratives determines the shape of the material world, the distribution of resources, our relationships with one another, and our sense of ourselves." (523)

Subjectivity and identity are often used synonymously, though there is a subtle difference between them. *Oxford Dictionary of English* defines identity as, "The fact of being who or what a person or thing is; the characteristics determining who or what a person or thing is" (869). Chris Barker points out that identity deals with cultural delineations of individuals we are emotionally attached to. Being a cultural construction, identity is believed to be the function of discourses and social processes like acculturation. Without language, conceptualization of identity will be an incomprehensible effort. Identity denotes the systematic process by which an individual accepts the subject position which is constructed discursively. Essentially, it represents the true self we possess and can be revealed to us. Though being the essence of self, identity is recognizable through beliefs, attitudes, tastes and behaviours. Identity expresses itself through descriptions and is understood in terms of similarity and difference like gender, Indian, black and blind. It is not a fixed category but is shifting in nature which gives way to multiple fractured identities. (94)

Identity may be defined as the attributes or prominent traits of any group or individual which distinguish them from the rest of the individuals. It is not natural, inborn or biological in nature but it is the outcome of the social construction of a society where labellization like crippled, lame, deaf and dumb are the common labels. The identity of disabled evolved through the confrontation and engagement with able-bodied individuals and is discursively represented as binary opposites in literature. Able-bodied are portrayed as all that the disabled are not. Disability is developed discursively as abnormal and is seen and sighted as different and this difference is negative and defective. Thus, disabled becomes a contrasting image and idea of an abled person. Able-bodied identity as normal is born

out of contrast with the disabled. Thus, disabled itself is integral to the formation of the identity of abled. The discourse of disabled i.e. ideas, opinions and knowledge that tactfully constructed them as defunct, defective or abnormal is purely an under-representation of disabled people.

Coming to subjectivity, it is relevant to refer to Donald Hall's definition of subjectivity. He states:

> Subjectivity more accurately denotes our social constructs and consciousness of identity. We commonly speak of identity as a flat, one-dimensional concept, but subjectivity is much broader and more multifaceted; it is social and personal being that exists in negotiation with broad cultural definitions and our own ideals. We may have numerous discrete identities, of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc., and a subjectivity that is comprised of all of those facets, as well as our own imperfect awareness of our selves. (134)

Chris Barker observes that subjectivity is the condition of being a person and the process by which we become a person; that is, how we are constituted subjects (biologically and culturally) and how we experience ourselves (including that which is indescribable) (219). Subjectivity is equivalent to self-identity that is the verbal conception we hold about ourselves and our emotional identification with those self-descriptions. Identity is equivalent to social identity that is the expectations and opinions that others have of us (220). "Both subjectivity and identity take narrative or story-like form when we talk about them. To ask about subjectivity is to pose the question: what is a person? To explore identity is to inquire: how do we see ourselves and how do others see us?" (Barker 220).

Cultural studies believe subjects as the products of discourse. Thereby, breaking the myth of unified nature and perpetuates its fractured essence. (194)

The undertaken research project has the following three objectives:

- o To explore representation of disabled characters in the selected texts.
- o To examine disabled identity and subjectivity portrayed in selected novels and autobiographies.
- o To highlight voices and concerns addressed in selected texts.

This research study is based on the problem that literature generally misrepresents disabled people in terms of their identity, subjectivity and ignores their issues in spite of disability legislation and conventions that guide otherwise. The existing stock of literature shows that despite the widely accepted Social Model of disability, disabled people are identified and labelled solely from a medical perspective. The continuous stigmatization of disabled people in literature firms up their stereotypes which can be countered and constructed positively through literature. It probes into language use which is instrumental in labelling or identifying disabled people. The roles reserved exclusively for disabled people as monsters, villains and ghosts make them vulnerable to stigmatization and defamation. Their selfhood hardly finds expression because disabled people are given to understand that there is a transcendental connection between them and their monstrous roles. Literature is rarely used to raise and address disabled issues. Therefore, the current study explores the literary representation of disabled people with reference to their subjectivity, identity and issues by Indian writers. This research project is undertaken to highlight the role of literature in making and marring the image of an individual with a disability. Indeed, policies, legislation and disabled conventions improve material conditions of

people but these cannot redress mental set up of people. However, literature is an important tool to reverse stigmas and stereotypes of disabled people which in turn will affect their identity and selfhood.

The problem of disability has been explored to some extent in subjects like Sociology, Economics, Political Science and History. But as far as literature is concerned, it has remained at the margins of the subject wherein characters with disability have hardly attracted the attention of researchers. The texts chosen for the study have already been explored from different perspectives but none has so far studied them in the light of Disability Studies. The researcher is determined to explore this unexplored zone of the given texts. Therefore, the study will include writings of both non-disabled and disabled people and the approach adopted to study them will be multidisciplinary in nature. Representation of people with disability is an inseparable part of literature, be it human literature or divine scriptures. However, they are most often represented negatively in every form of writing. These writings perpetuate their stereotypical images as monsters, villains, fearful objects and cheats. The process of representation is highly political in selecting words and organising them in a particular way.

Generally, positional intellectuals use repulsive language in their narratives of disability. And language matters a lot because it shapes the opinions of people. It affects identities of disabled people through the usage of stigmatising language like deaf, dumb, blind and retarded. Language communicates disability concepts and models wherein language difference changes disability image altogether because every model uses specific language to represent disability agency and experience. The representational system like language evokes fear among readers with regard to disabled people. Such oppressive representation and stigmatising labels of deaf,

dumb, lame or blind calls into question their identity and subjectivity. Language is not merely naming or labelling because it connotes deeper meanings. It plays an instrumental role in shaping the identity of a person. Therefore, offensive language adversely affects their identity. It even determines the thought of a person as is proposed by Benjamin Whorf Hypothesis. Representation of disability in literature is mostly based on medical epistemology, medical perspective and medical language ousting Social Model perspective altogether. While writing a literary piece in the form of a novel, poem or a play from a medical perspective, it is absolutely impossible to expect an attitudinal change in public for disabled people. Therefore, there is a need even to change the stance of writing, that is, shift viewing them from Medical Model to Bio-Psycho-Social Model of disability.

The character representation of disabled people in literature is fearsome. They are most often given a negative role or image in the novel, play and poem which sends out the notion that role performer is as bad as the role is. At times, they are pushed towards margins of literary texts. It implies that characters with disability face textual exclusion by having either a marginal and negative role or their complete absence from the text. Even their representation in the texts evokes fear and builds a negative perception in the minds of readers which, in turn, affects their employment status, education, marriage, good treatment, assistive technology and other living facilities. Garland Thomson says that characters with disability remain on the margins of fiction as complicated figures or exotic aliens whose body configurations operate as spectacles, eliciting responses from other characters. They are often defined by their impairment, treated as 'other', and suspected as incomplete.

The present age, we have stepped in, is the era of postmodernism in which marginalities are brought to be the centre; voiceless give voice to their thoughts and in

other words, a complete paradigm shift has taken place in epistemologies. For instance, the charity-based approach has given way to a rights-based approach and there is a shift from the medical paradigm to the social one. Such approaches are instrumental in shifting the focus of world academicians from personal deficit notion towards structural inequities and unfair distribution of rights and opportunities. Moreover, postmodernism believes in inclusion and involvement of marginal sections of the society along with the celebration of their differences.

One of such ignored sections include people with disability, whose number is rising due to the ageing, risk factor and the global growth of diseases like cancer, AIDS, diabetes etc. They are thought as the largest minority among all minorities. Yet they are denied to enjoy any such privilege. They face problems like poor health condition, poverty, low education and least economic and social participation throughout the world on account of the barriers created in their way to access the services and facilities. This is one of the major concerns that need to be highlighted and represented in various literary writings. Moreover, people with disability form a significant proportion of every developed, developing and under-developed society. Their population score of one billion at the world level implies that they comprise at least fifteen per cent of the world's total population. World Report on Disability mentions, "more than one billion people in the world live with some form of disability, of whom nearly 200 million experience considerable difficulties in functioning" (xi). It is a fact that the traces of the disabled population exist in every country. Indeed, India has some disabled population indicated by its census report. The Indian Census 2011 helps us to understand its demographic profile exhibiting that there are about 26,810,557 people in India with a disability, out of whom 14,986,202 are males and 11,824,355 are females. This is equivalent to 2.11% of the total Indian

population. Historically, persons with disabilities suffered numerous discriminations and lived through experiences distinct from those of non-disabled. Viewed negatively, their rights are over-looked, voices are suppressed and their opportunities for survival are threatened. It snatched from them the chance of living a better life and their participation in society.

Negative perceptions towards persons with disabilities have always remained a barrier to their inclusion and integration in mainstream society and a key to their marginalization. They face multi-layered discrimination as they are disadvantaged economically, socially and psychologically more in comparison to non-disabled people. The present research work is based on the hypothesis that disability is generally ignored across all disciplines. In case disabled people are involved and represented, they are depicted in stereotypical images and in poor light. Therefore, there is a need to rethink and critique their issue of misrepresentation in literary writings. To redress the discriminatory and biased approach against disabled people is the dire and desperate need of the hour.

The undertaken project employed qualitative research methodology to conduct the research on disability representation in literature. It used textual analysis method for exploring the issues concerning persons with disabilities as portrayed in select novels and autobiographies. The textual analysis drew on the Medical Model, Social Model and Cultural Model of disability. Postmodern, post-human and postcolonial approaches have also been applied wherever required. Moreover, some insights have been borrowed from Benjamin-Whorf' Hypothesis, I.A. Richards theories of metaphor and Michel Foucault's 'governmentality'. The ideas of Amartya Sen's 'capability approach' and Pierre Bourdieu's 'social capital' have been brought to bear on the selected autobiographies. It has drawn on existing books, journals and research

papers related to a disability. Last but not in any respect the least, this study used the ideas from various other disciplines as well.

The study is limited to analysis of the selected Indian writing in the light of qualitative research methodology which comes up with generalisation based on a few samples. It is mostly confined to textual analysis and there isn't the way to move from texts to real life through interviews, questionnaire, schedule etc. It is also limited to writings of Indian origin people only to study region-specific thinking about intellectual and physical disability. The study is mainly confined to Indian writings only, though some inter-textuality has been incorporated into it. However, some case study samples have been added to elicit information that qualitative research cannot provide. Information collected from speech, newspaper cuttings and movies enabled the scholar to generalise the misconceptions about disability. The texts depicting disabilities like deafness, blindness and slow learning couldn't be the central point of the study. Besides, the present study has focused on the existing language which is medicalizing and stigmatizing in nature.

The undertaken research is based on the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between disability and its representation in literary texts where it is generally misrepresented. Their identity and subjectivity get its meaning, status, role and function from the interaction that takes place between an individual and the society. The hypothesis holds that disability is not intrinsic but it is an extrinsic phenomenon. As far as the representation of disabled characters is concerned, the proposed hypothesis has come true. However, with reference to its social phenomenon exclusively, the hypothesis seems not to be justified because disability appeared an outcome of interaction among biological, psychological and social factors, collectively.

Disability scholar, Ato Quayson, believes that disability suffuses literature so commonly that it has become a defining feature of literature (Hall 3). Disability and literature are highly interconnected to each other in terms of representation and language. The two subjects seem two faces of the same coin. Literature works as a medium for fictional representation of disability and the condition of disability offers itself as a subject for such representation. Academically, Disability Studies borrow a lot of theoretical insights from literary theory. Literature maps out the existing debates and discourses on disability and has the power to represent and misrepresent disability. It has a wider audience, that is, it circulates disabled image and stigma across wider readership. Moreover, literary representation shapes opinions of readership towards disabled people in a particular way. Disability theorists believe that disability fires the imagination and becomes the rich source of narration. Michael Berube remarks that "disability demands a story" (Hall 3). Literary representation of disability has a wider implication, that is, it reflects social anxieties and establishes norms as well. For instance, the common norm of characterisation in the novel, play, short story or poem is that characters are non-disabled and heterosexual which reinstates and reinforces the idea of normality. Lennard Davis argues that norm formation functions not only at the level of characterisation but also at the level of genre. To him, the novel has an inbuilt element of the norm in it and possesses the capacity to change the perception of a person. Lennard Davis remarks, "I am asserting that the very structures on which the novel rests tends to be normative, ideologically emphasizing the universal quality of a central character whose normativity encourages us to identify with him or her." (11)

The literary writings like novels, plays, short stories and poems strengthen the oppressive ideas of normality. This leads to the fossilization of stereotypes against the

disabled. It is one of the tasks of literary scholars to identify such works and challenge such stereotypes and focus on the works which lead to social and political campaigns for the equalization of disabled people. Problems arise as soon as the understanding of normality sets its benchmarks from the able-bodied perspective and employs it as a measuring yardstick to gauge the normality or abnormality of a person. Those who positively conform to this able-bodied symmetry standard is said to have normal structure and those who exhibit deviance from such paradigm are labelled as abnormal. The concept of norm sneaked into the English language in the middle of the nineteenth century.

Foucault claims that this period of history underpinned the ideas of norm through eugenics and statistics. The novel is a product of social-cultural construction which is hegemonic in nature as it generally gives normal and average roles to normal protagonists. The moment a disabled character plays this role beautifully, he is replaced in order to reinforce normality. This sense of the novel as a normalizing force is also articulated by Rosemarie Garland Thomson in her seminal essay, "Extraordinary Bodies".

In literature, the presentation of disabled people as ugly, evil, and villainous reinforces their stereotypical images. To identify and problematize such stereotypical characterization and discriminatory attitude towards disabled people is again the task of the scholars engaged in literary, disability and cultural studies. Stuart Murray argues that the archetypal representation of disability through literary texts is a misrepresentation of disabled identity and their experience. These stereotypical narratives promote the concept of disability from the ablest point of view. They are exploited as a tool to unfold the mystery of non-disabled characters. (Hall 32)

Thomas Couser states that somatic deviations inspire narratives through marked cases like "scar, the limp, the missing limb, or the obvious prosthesis" while as normal beings, the unmarked cases, may pass without narration (457). Writers like David Mitchell and Sharon Snyder pointed out that it is invisibility and 'unknowability' of disability that gives rise to the need for narration (Hall 3). Literature, in turn, is informed by disability as well. Disability perspective in literature is meant to challenge the marginalized space of people with disability. It attempts to bring their issues and concerns to the centre of literature and literary theory. It gives its due focus to the invisibility of disability in literature and attempts to revise and revisit the literary canons in order to give the proper visibility and 'knowability'. Disability representation in literature is sometimes used in a metaphorical sense signifying wider social unrest like a burden, imperfection, and abnormal. Though disability has become a "defining feature of literature" the characters with a disability still face marginalization in plot either in the form of negative role or no role at all. Putting it differently, it can be surely said that disabled characters face textual exclusion in novels, stories, plays and poems. They are given marginalized roles such as sweepers, villains, and are kept at bay from the heroic roles.

They are portrayed as if they cannot do anything on their own and hence are shown as dependent creatures. They are depicted as weak, sentimental, dependent, abnormal or victims of past deeds. Such a representation shapes the negative attitude of people towards them. It affects the psyche of people across ages and develops in them a kind of negative notion against the disabled. In this way, psychologically affected people come up with preconceived notions of the negative type against people having any sort of disability, be it orthopaedic, mental or visual. Disability is not comprised of body defects and deficits, rather it is the name given to the multiple

stigmas that are attached to the impaired people. It is to differentiate and identify them as 'other'. This psychological segregation induces disabled people to compare their self with abled-self. As soon as it comes about, inferiority complex seeps in their consciousness. As a result, they begin to disembody and personalize themselves as social deviants in the able-society. This begins the process of their stigmatization. Erving Golfman defines stigma as "undesired differentness from what we had anticipated." (5)

The relationship of literature and disability is underpinned by the belief that disability not only demands a story but also the language that is used to critique, challenge and refashion the stories through which disability is historically and traditionally grasped. The language employed to debate and discuss disability should entail an element of democratization which use expressions like 'temporarily-abled bodied', suggesting that either disabled or having the capacity to be so is one of the aspects of identity that human beings share across the world. This leads to the supposition that disability is not a fixed category, rather it is fluid in nature because any person at any time can become disabled temporarily or permanently. Although the language used in disability is shifting and fluid, it is fundamental in shaping and conceptualizing disability. It captures the experiences of disabled people and seeks to redress their issues concerning identity.

Language is believed to be instrumental in forming the identity of the disabled. It may either misrepresent them by using terminology like crippled, lame or blind. Thereby, stigmatise them by reproducing the traditional notions like 'lame is the devil'. It is because of this misrepresentation that language must be used to chastise, challenge and re-edit what has traditionally remained an oppressed representation of disabled people. The relationship between literature and disability is

dynamic and reciprocal in nature for the change in disability brings about change in disabled literature and vice versa. It may be elicited that each field enriches and affects the other. Disability perspective revisits some of the established boundaries and assumptions of literary criticism and attempts to reconfigure them according to the latest theoretical framework of disability.

Disability representation has been surfacing in literature throughout ages across cultures but literary critics remained insensitive to examine and recognize their visible presence. However, in the late twentieth century and in the twenty-first century, literary disability studies seeks to focus on works written by disabled authors and works of positional intellectuals who engage themselves with disability representation in literature. Thus, both non-disabled and disabled critics begin to analyse fictional characters with disability in terms of their representation and role. They are committed to challenging the stereotypical depiction of disabled characters as the symbols of evil, dependence, feebleness, emotional or physical deficiency. They work with consistency for bringing about change in the attitudes of people towards disability. Such critics have identified how stereotypes are propagated and passed on to the next generation through certain literary texts which misrepresent fictional disabled characters and thereby do a lot of injustice to them. These texts ignore the perspective of the disabled.

The element of disability has constituted an indispensable part of the literary narratives right from the beginning of representation of human experience and existence in verbal formations, either consciously or unconsciously. It is one of the basic forms of human diversity whose representation has rarely influenced literary sensibilities. However, some of the writers like Anita Desai, Salman Rushdie, Firdaus Kanga, Arunimha Sinha and many others wrote and represented disability either out

of experience, sympathy or empathy which needs to be examined meticulously. It has often been found on examination that disability representation in literary writings has been either relegated to the margins of texts or under-represented by writers and researchers. In the case of hegemonic identity (middle class, white, heterosexual and non-disabled male), the condition of disability is often misrepresented whereas they are hyper-represented in high and popular culture.

The tradition of narratives incorporating the condition of disability stretches from religious scriptures to the prevailing dominant writings like a novel, plays, poems and other literary genres. The writings which engage disabled characters include Sophocles' Oedipus, William Shakespeare's Richard III, Herman Melville's Captain Ahab, William Faulkner's Benjy and Mahabharata's *Shakuni Mama*. By and large, literary writings associate disabled characters with evil and villainy, perpetuating the idea that the element of wickedness is inbuilt in them. Kendra Preston Leonard observes:

> A crippled or scarred character, for example, may be assumed to have been traumatized and embittered in the manner of Ahab. Not coincidently such characters are often put to death in punishment of their villainy and so the impression that disabled people are doomed, if not cursed, is reinforced. (15)

The literary representation of disability has remained the sole enterprise of non-disabled writers until the beginning of the twentieth century. They have generally underrepresented the people with disability controlling their images and experiences. However, with the emergence of the life-writinggenre in the late twentieth century, disabled people have given way to an unprecedented boost to disabled narratives portraying their lives, images and experiences. The politics of disability representation

is countered and re-portrayed by disabled writers in their life writings like autobiographies, diaries and memoirs where they speak for themselves from their own point of view. They resist the stigmatized and stereotyped images of literary writings. Sometimes writers depict supernatural beings like witches and other evil characters with a disability which perpetuates wretched representation of disabled people.

In this way, textual representation was accepted as a legitimate field for literary study. This is illustrated in Clive Staples Lewis' novel *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1970) where he draws parallelism between deformed and evil actions. He observes, "There stood Peter and Edmund and all the rest of Aslan's army fighting desperately against the crowd of horrible creatures whom she had seen last night; only now, in the daylight, they looked even stranger and eviler and more deformed" (173). The study of disability in the context of humanities rejects and resists the idea of disability as a medical issue. It rather bestows them with new insight and a fresh critical perspective to look into the established canon in order to analyse and examine into textual predilection and prejudice towards the characters with impairment. It has carved out ways for scholars to access new forms of knowledge in the light of which disabled population interprets the disability narratives.

Technology is said to have a crucial role in deconstructing the traditional conception of disability. It can destabilise the essentialist nature of disability which understands it in terms of a few fixed attributes. It reduces their disability by developing a proper assistive technology such as magnifying glasses, wheelchairs, pacemakers, hearing implants, installation of smart classrooms and many other electronic gadgets. Assistive technology can remove the stigma from disabled people. The traditional literary forms suffer from attention deficit towards disability but

technology has bridged the gap, substantially. It has come up with new narrative forms such as blogs, websites, YouTube videos and tweeter feeds which address the issues of disabled people. It designs new modes of reading like electronic reading machines for visually challenged people and a speech synthesizer for the non-verbal people. Alice Hall states, "New Technologies bring with them new narrative forms and new modes of reading. These technologies have also revolutionised access to reading and writing for people with disabilities" (9). Digital technologies have improved the standard of life of disabled people by giving them chances for publishing their narratives on their own which are innovative in terms of bringing together words, images and performances like Amanda Bagg's autobiography, "*In My Language*" (Hall 10). Some literary writings, especially the traditional forms, like novels, plays, poems and short stories exhibit a form of attention deficit towards disability issues. In case some disabled characters are given space in the text, they are pushed towards the margins of the plot. Generally, they are given minor or negative roles to play.

However, the assistive technology employed by disabled people is given a different nomenclature than the one used by normal human beings. The technological gadgets used by disabled people receive different nomenclature in comparison with the gadgets used by able-bodied persons. The latest assistive technology designed scientifically for disabled people such as wheelchair, canes and braces is termed as mobility aids. However, sports shoes, pads or helmets used by normal society are not stigmatized by such terminology. This difference in nomenclature becomes a space for their harassment, be it psychological or gaze harassment. Institutions like colleges, universities and schools must be equipped with technological devices such as smart classrooms for their participation and empowerment.

A languageis an important tool for identity formation which is instrumental in making and breaking disability stereotypes. It shapes our cognitive processes like thinking and perceiving which implies that negative language is directly proportional to negative identity. It holds good for people with disability as well. The stigmas and stereotypes of disability are the functions of language. To use positive language will change their condition positively. For instance, if an interviewer interviews a person with an orthopaedic disability and asks him what wrong is with him in accessing a building and the second interviewer interviews the same person asking him what wrong is with the building that resists your accessibility. These two statements make a huge difference and implications for people with disability. The first interviewer targets the person locating problem within him. The second statement shifts the target from individual to infrastructure attacking the system for its inaccessible nature.

Expanding further upon words like 'inflicted with', 'suffer from' and 'challenged', it can be inferred that these terms imply the poor quality of life in general. Although disability may affect the wellbeing of some people, still many succeed to manage quality life like Stephen Hawking and Temple Grandin. Therefore, these words can lead us to make general statements based on the wrong usage of words. The statements 'she suffers from cerebral palsy' must take a new form like 'she has cerebral palsy'. The implication of words like 'confine' in 'confined to the wheelchair' is also huge. It gives the notion that someone using a wheelchair is always sitting on them giving forth the image of imprisonment and restriction. But factually it is not true because some wheelchair users even go for activities like swimming, sit on couches and even some do walk. Therefore, statements like 'he uses a wheelchair' will bring about a paradigm shift in thinking. It implies that the

statement made has numerous positive implications. For instance, it describes the condition as it is and hence no chance of nullifying or idealizing the condition.

It further implies that the wheelchair is not exclusively dependent on a wheelchair but he also uses other means of transport. Proceeding further with regard to language impact upon disability, it is relevant to refer to terms like 'disabled people' or 'people with disability'. There is massive controversy about their usage. For example, Europeans especially, United Kingdom, mostly underpin employment of 'disabled people'. The British proponents of the term use the word 'disabled' as participle which is an amalgam of verb and adjective. The term 'disabled person' as a verb in passive voice means that a person is disabled by systems exclusive, inaccessible and barrier ridden nature. 'Disabled' as an adjective points at two things, one positive and second is negative. The positive implication emphasize experience over condition itself and the negative implication is to put the condition first and the person later. This nomenclature is in complete consonance with Social Model of disability which laid the foundation of disability studies. However, the second term 'person with a disability' is also widely used by North Americans. They argue that a person must be preferred over disability which means that an individual is first a person and later a 'disabled'. He must not be defined by his condition but a person in his own right. However, it runs the risk of exonerating system offered obstructions (Rick Hansen Foundation). Therefore, the debate between proponents on their usage is still unresolved. It is felt that the usage 'differently abled' might work better than the above-mentioned terms because it denotes the ability of performance with a difference.

It seems less stigmatising because differences are not sites of tragedies rather sites of possibilities. Moreover, differences are no longer stigmatizing but are

celebrated as per the propositions of postmodernism. To describe people with disability, writers mostly resort to usage of euphemistic words and imagery like similes and metaphors. Associating disability with imagery generates both positive and negative images of 'disabled people'. It depends upon the nature of comparing terms of 'vehicle' and 'tenor' proposed by I. A. Richards. Hence, opprobrious and derogatory words will beget odious representation. People with disability in general and disabled character, Baba, of *Clear Light of Day*, in particular, are highly vulnerable to such usage of imagery. Employment of horrible imagery for people with a disability affects their social life sending out a negative message about their real essence.

To illustrate it further, let's cite the example of 'handicapped'. Analysing it into its constituents 'hand-in-cap', it evokes the feeling of a beggar. It suggestively promotes thinking that people with disability are dependent and burden upon society. It highlights as to how the fusion of vehicle and tenor of a metaphor can play an instrumental role in the meaning process. These attached meanings do not only hold on to words but also seep into the minds of readers based on which they construct their specific attitude towards 'disabled people'. I. A. Richards in his book *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* proposes that a metaphor serves not only the rhetorical and deviational functions in language but it also affects the ways of perceiving and conceiving nature. It shapes and restructures the attitude and opinion of people regarding metaphorical vehicle for a tenor (Abrams 213). It implies that people with disability are perceived in terms of metaphors i.e. in case the fair and genuine imagery is employed to describe them, they will be understood in the right context otherwise vice versa. Max Black in his essay entitled "Metaphor" reinforces theory of metaphor. He asserts that the 'subsidiary subject' (vehicle) and the 'principal subject' (tenor)

interacts with and influences the ways of perceiving the principal subject that is a disability. (Abrams 214)

To improve Disability Studies, it is imperative for writers and speakers to be very conscious about the language use. Repulsive words, phrases, idioms and imagery used advertently or inadvertently demeans disabled people. The stigmatising words include gimp, spastic or retard; stigmatising phrases include lame leading the lame, blind leading the blind, turning a deaf ear, turning a blind eye son and so forth. These must be avoided and eliminated from texts. The relationship between literature and social attitudes towards disabilities are imitative in nature and representation. Thus, literature through its various genres forms site and platform where social attitudes towards disabilities find space and visibility. Literary writing may prove instrumental in highlighting the invisible issues and concern and may influence and reshape public opinion towards them. It may devise metaphors and other literary devices wherein they may be shown in a positive light with positive traits irrespective of the form of disabilities. And the writings possessing the hidden element of disability must be brought to the public eye. Sometimes the state authorizes structure legal discourses in a way that denies rights to the people with a disability like the ugly law or unsightly beggar ordinances in the United States. This further leads to medicalise, segregate and finally institutionalize them.

The end of world war first has emerged as the turning point in the history of disability. It gives them visibility because the war left thousands of them injured and impaired. The presence of a crowd of disabled people forced the writers to give them space in their writings and compelled the governmental authorities to think of their rehabilitation. This deliberation about disabled welfare leads to the development of prosthesis which has found space in many fictional writings like William Faulkner's

Soldiers Pay (1926), Dalton Trumbo's *Johnny Got His Gun* (1939) and *The Leg* (1934). Prosthesis, restoration of the impaired body towards the ideal of able-bodied, has been used metaphorically as it means to study the relationship between technology and body and the fluid nature of human. The concept of narrative prosthesis' put forward by Mitchell and Synder means that literary form draws on disability during characterisation, knowingly or unknowingly.

Disabled characters are driven away from the centre of narrative towards peripheries and are portrayed as objects of loss, tragedy disruption and deviance. Therefore, there is no sincerity in disability depiction because it is portrayed in contrast to abled-body. It is presented as a disorder and disruption to emphasize the order of normality. James Coetzee's *Slow Man* represents a disabled narrator Paul who denied prosthetic leg. He refused to pass himself as non-disabled (Hall 71). The absence of disabled characters hints indirectly towards the citizenship which often drives away from its circle the people with disability. Literary writings like novels, play and poems generally take characters which are able-bodied and the disabled are not selectively taken in but they sneak into the narrative unconsciously. Thus, there is often a dearth of disabled characters in literary narratives.

Besides literary writings, cultural production like theatre movies and plays may prove very productive for removing the stigma attached to the disabled bodies by offering them a positive role and displaying them an individual instead of object and subject of suppression. It will work as a platform where human differences find expression. They will deconstruct and challenge disabled stigma and stereotypes. The portrayal of visually challenged characters has an important role in the development of the conception of disability. Their representation with positive and heroic roles may construct their accepted social and cultural identity. Visual impairment can be

corrected through the use of technology like Braille, audio-books, computer scanners and depiction of sounds in writing forms. The literary writing displaying the technological gadgets for the visually challenged person may carve out a smooth way to disrupt their stereotype and will question normality. This will further lead to the disabled writers to come out with memories and give literary expression to their experiences. The visually challenged people have a problem of seeing but their sensory feeling is much stronger than a well-sighted person. Their touch functions as their eye like the antenna in the lower creature. It is because of this sensitiveness of fingers their way of seeing and reading differs from sighted individuals.

It is the state liability to design blind friendly audio-books, touch-books and rest of the facilities to merge them into the mainstream. Their blindness arises a problem as soon as the sight becomes standard and visually challenged are defined against them. Their difference is the difference in area/organ sensitivity. There are different forms of communication like oral, manual, gestures and every communicative form is a valid in its own right and the nuances and differences among them need to be accepted and celebrated instead of imposing and transposing them into each other diseases. The idea of blindness is fluid in nature instead of calling it a fixed category because the range of visual acuity varies from person to person. Moreover, blindness does not originate only from organ dysfunction but it is the result of interaction between an organ and the reflective power of an environment. In case the critic comes with a question it has no connection with the environment reflection, why a well-sighted person becomes blind in darkness. Many thinkers club blindness with darkness but this theorization is out and out rejected because many visually impaired characters give a better description of nature than a sighted person. It is evidenced by Indian poet Surdas.

Such descriptions of blind people deconstruct the stereotype of calling blindness and darkness as one. They claim that blindness is not an organ or individual lack but the whole body is a seer. The use of ideal terminology for the description of blind people will improve concocted attitudes, biases and predictions of normal people regarding blinded ones. It is necessary to redress the languages that are fraught with stigmas for disabled people. At times blindness is stereotypically associated with the show or fumbled walking, dependency and confinement. Understanding blindness from a metaphorical stance, it seems to stand for lack of knowledge because observation is said to be mandatory in knowing the nature of things in an empirical study. Moreover, there are many senses but five of them are said to be basic to know the world the most. Sometimes some sensory organs perform two functions such as in case of blind touch does the work of seeing and feeling as well. It seems as if visual sensitivity has shifted towards the sense of touch. This transfer of sensitivity deconstructs the fixed sensory function and sensory hierarchies. The blinds are very sensitive to the sense of a sound and touch. Their way to sense the world with a new way of consciousness is very different from the way normal people generally sense. They observe the world through their sense of touch using hands to touch, feel and caress things in order to receive knowledge about them. Thus the substitution of sight by touch enables him to believe in signs. The sign memory is more effective and long-lasting than sighted memory. It also destabilises and deconstructs the relationship between seeing and knowing and explores alternative ways of non-visual senses by visually impaired persons. Therefore, it may be inferred from the above discussion that blindness is not only about the visual deficit but it also involves stigmas, stereotype and phobias that are attached to the visually challenged person. These

stigmas may include that he may not read and write, may not know the nature of things, when in reality he does all this but with a difference.

Whenever we talk of disability, it is the physical disability that seems to dominate the discussion and wheelchair becomes the dominating symbol of disability. Although it is explicit that the disability is a cultural, social and political identity instead of a fixed set of physical features, literary works like novels poems, plays concentrate their focus on visible physical disabilities and leave out those unaddressed which are invisible such as cognitive disability. Differences among individuals in terms of their thinking process may be categorised as the cognitive difference. It is very important to take the cognitive difference into account during representation. Cognitive difference reveals that no two individuals are accurately the same. It is utterly difficult to capture and represent another person's point of view.

The literary representation may function as a window through which to look at another person's mental landscape. The Social Model of disability is more appropriately applicable to orthopaedic disability than to the cognitive disability (Hall 107). The disabling factors whether environmental or social can easily be located outside the individual but in case of cognitive disability, it seems to be difficult to locate such disability factor. The character with a cognitive disability will look for an alternative method of narrative which in turn will question the established notions of authorship and narrative. For example, in the case of autism, a person adopts different ways of interaction and shows deviance from the one used by normal beings. Therefore, such autistic people may resort to different sort of narration and the gloss they use as a carrier to capture their experiences (Hall 108). The terminology employed in cognitive disability is in a state of flux and by and large, the commonly used terms include mental retardation, intellectual disability, autism and learning

disability. This problem of cognitive disability got visibility with the introduction of test 'Intelligent Quotient (IQ)' test by the Binet scale in 1908. IQ has given birth to the wide spectrum of labels ranging from feeble-minded to genius. The Binet scale has received further reinforcement from the medical science which is involved coining such terms like idiots, moron, dullard, retarded etc. This began the institutionalization of these persons who fall below the norm line and even their sterilization sometimes. (Hall 109)

Cognitive disability is not a homogeneous category rather it is a range of heterogeneous categories whose IQ falls on different marks on the norm line. Autism is hailed as one of the types of cognitive difference in which a character may even resort to non-verbal communication such as gesture, sound, looking and smelling. So far as autistic communication is concerned, they use pictures instead of words in interaction. Their thinking is pictorial but verbal language especially communicative one seems second to them. They most often resort to autobiographical writing opening a sort of window for us to look into their mind and find out how they feel experiences and view the world. Moreover, technology has designed software to translate word language into visual language.

Life Writing of disabled people began with the autobiographies of Helen Keller such as *The Story of My Life* (1903), *The World I Live In* (1908) and *My Religion* (1927). It also includes Christy Brown's autobiography *My Left Foot* (1954) (Hall 131). These life writings give expressions to disabled life from a disabled perspective. Disability writing for people with a disability got visibility on literary page after World War II before which it happened to be part of texts, unintentionally. Their individuality hardly surfaced with almost any textual material available on them during the period. However, towards the end of 20th and beginning of the 21st

century, there was a boom in the writings of disability in myriad forms like memoirs, biographies, somatography and autobiography to note down their experiences. These life writings are written both in the first person and third person narration.

Disability was underrepresented in the mid-twentieth century while as in last twenty-five years disability haven been hyper-represented in life writing genre (Hall 130). It shows a shift in attitudes towards disability as is evidenced by their nomenclature '*Divyang*' addressed by Indian Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi. It is because of this misrepresentation, literary representation and disability theorists felt necessary to give a chance to self-representation drawing on new narrative forms with a new vocabulary (ibid 130). It will affect textual depiction and media, both electronic and print, positively and will raise their dignity and public profile. The writings of disabled people are a source of protest against their misrepresentation, stereotyping, stigmatization and their textual marginalization. This has given birth to the protest literature on the part of disabled under the categorization of disability life-writing. Such writing may disrupt for granted stereotypes of their dependency and vulnerability (Hall 131). The main thrust of disabled authors is to document their social relations, legal and political prejudices against them, their friendships and their literary and cultural representations which are instrumental in their construction of identity.

Disability, a marginal issue whose attention gained momentum after the Second World War, attempts to valorise its various forms (Hall 132). Its average form gives birth to a unique type of narrative drawing on their experiences, sufferings, problems, their issues and concerns. Disable writings like autobiographies, memoirs and somatography work as sites of contestation and resistance against their underrepresentation and hypo-representation and hyper-representation. They raised

the slogan "nothing about us without us" insisting on the significance of self-representation by disabled (Hall 133). The extension of claiming to self-representation has offered them accessibility to public space and publishing world as well. Self-writing and self-representation redefine disability as the summation of social prejudices, stigmas and cultural stereotype. These writings of self-expression challenge the status quo of literary genres and the convention of their writing.

Drawing on disability consciousness, the theme of disability begins to shift from individual to collective and from private to public space. Besides being the carrier of disability consciousness, autobiographies and memoirs emerge as a tool of self-assertion and activism. These life-writings document the discrimination and experiences of disabled people undergo in real life. They document the experiences of being viewed and gazed at since their childhood as if they are aliens and monsters. They always struggle and contest to give voice to their experience through alternative means like gestures, writing either with foot or mouth. This speaking through the body without referring to the oralism may be called embodied communication. It resists social silence raising voices to be heard. Thus, the embodied and multisensory approaches to communication must be taken into account while dealing with people having different disabilities. The way of externalizing their interior thoughts and accumulated experiences require a different mode of embodied expression like touch, and smell.

People with disability face a lot of discrimination both in public spheres like bus stand, railway station and job place. Once they appear in public space, people standing around start gazing at them strangely with an inquisitive eye as if they are aliens. They are treated as others and stared at continuously making them feel uneasy and uncomfortable. This endless staring harasses them and may be termed as gaze

harassment. It is because of this harassment, disabled people always are scared to go for an outing. This, in turn, develops in their psyche a kind of inferiority complex and engenders their confinement to their home and room. There should be proper legislation against gaze harassment so that this community may feel easy in stepping out of their private places and will certainly contribute to the development of a nation.

Moreover, the disabled writers are bound to write their experiences and non-disabled writers are supposed to come up with narratives wherein disability issues and concerns must be at the centre. Persons with disability must be given positive and heroic roles so that the age-old stigma attached to them will be erased and wiped away. Therefore, there is a greater need to raise disability issues and concerns in writings like the legal system and academic writings. This process of intellectual exploration will give them social and cultural space in mainstream society as well. The medical boards take no account of environmental factors and social barriers while gauging the degree of disability. The cut-off basis of 40% is questionable as those with less than 40% are declared non-disabled but society labels them as such. They stay as hung between medical and social labellization. Same is the case with many other forms of disability like HIV, Leprosy, and Cancer, which are not included in Act 1995 and 2016. Disability is a catchall which refers to various differences and defects. It is the nomenclature of limitations that confine to structures of various types the mobility and non-conformist behaviour of an impaired person. Thus, the impaired person face both attitudinal and structural ostracization. Economically depend and physically non-adaptive have become permanent traits of a disability. Socially, they are marginalized and politically non-representative. Family and state believe disability as a burden and state liability. The element of disablement continuously devalues disabled lives.

The aetiology of disability is sometimes located in impairment and at times in social barriers. And the deceptive distance between its portrayal and their real experience is hugely wide. It may be inferred that the disability construction and the experience of living through it are poles apart. It is the condition that is socially undesirable and unwanted because they go through the unmitigated suffering for a prolonged time till their natural death. The negative perception towards disability perpetuates through various cultural means like religion, movie, mythology and folktales. The values like perfection and wholeness have evolved into normal that are employed to gauge normalcy or deviance. Moreover, the failure of unadaptability is boosted with the advent of Darvin's Theory of 'survival of fittest'. This has given birth to biological determinism on grounds of which embryo with female sex or disability is eliminated.

Disability is thought of as a defect and a mistake which is said to be possessed by an individual. Therefore, the entire focus is shifted towards the individual in comparison to the adaption of the system which is thought of as normal and defectless heaping entire blame on an individual. The scientific temper terms every deviance and difference from prevailing normal human standards as disability emphasising its hegemonic nature of normality. The term disability being a continuum is not a homogeneous category as it is a spectrum of various types of disabilities with individual experiences of their own. Disability is often understood as an anti-normality category. The lives of disabled are hailed as useless and worthless. The functional limitations of their body are further limited by social hindrances such as lack of elevators, lifts, ramps, braille and cultural distancing such as inquisitive staring sinners of past life, burden family and state. This repulsive nature of socio-cultural hindrances brings about their discrimination in institutions of both academic

and non-academic type. It indirectly sends out a message that they are unproductive in nature and hence their elimination is justified in today's competition based society. Capitalism has furthered the exclusion of disabled people. It upholds the Darwinian slogan survival of the fittest which disabled fall short off on grounds of normal friendly infrastructure and attitude. It has been instrumental in casting disability as a deficit and lack. It has evoked perfect competition in every field where both disabled and non-disabled are subjected to identical expectations, though the working atmosphere is normal-friendly.

The undertaken research work is divided into six chapters ranging from introduction to conclusion. The first chapter entitled "Disability: An Introduction" introduces Disability Studies and its historical background. It expands upon the various definitions of disability along with its historical background. It incorporates statement and justification of the problem. It introduces us with the methodology that has been employed to work on the given research questions. The chapter mentions the limitations of the study as well. It further enlightens upon the operational definitions of disability, identity, subjectivity and representation. Proceeding ahead, it examines the relationship between disability and language; disability and literature and disability and technology. The chapter concludes with disability life writing.

The second chapter falling under the rubric of "Theoretical Understanding of Disability" highlights the need for theory in disability. It attempts to understand disability from the perspective of Medical Model, Social Model, Cultural Model, Bio-Psycho-Social, Human Rights Model, Charity Model and rehabilitation model of disability. It further enlightens upon disability in the light of insights derived from postmodernism, postcolonialism, post-humanism and feminism.

The third chapter entitled "Portrayal of Disability in Anita Desai's *Clear Light of Day*" is dedicated to introducing synopsis, review and textual analysis of Anita Desai's novel, *Clear Light of Day*. It focuses on the representation of identity and subjectivity of disabled character, Baba. It discusses autistic symptoms, autistic savants, textual exclusion and Baba's stereotypical images. It further throws light on issues and concerns of Baba who symbolises disabled community. The chapter incorporates both medical and social understanding of autism and thereby gives space to the concept of neuro-diversity. It throws light on as to how disability construction is linked with power politics. Last but not least, this chapter examines the interaction of language and disability, the importance of socialization and training through special trainers.

The fourth chapter subsumed under the heading of "Depiction of Disability in Salman Rushdie's *Shame*" introduces synopsis, review, and textual analysis of Salman Rushdie's novel, *Shame*. It incorporates the relationship between disability and stigmatising language. The chapter discusses in detail the politics of textual inclusion of disabled characters. It illustrates the representation of Sufiya Zinobia's character, her identity and subjectivity and the problems she went through. The relationship among gender, disability and magic realism are also given the due space. The usage of literary devices and their impact upon disability are mentioned as well.

The fifth chapter entitled "Experiences and Issues in Firdaus Kanga's *Trying to Grow* and Arunima Sinha's *Born Again on the Mountain*" is meant to discuss Firdaus Kanga's *Trying to Grow* and Arunima Sinha's *Born Again on the Mountain*. The chapter incorporates disability and outward appearance of Brit. The treating methods, his sexuality, experiences, issues and concerns are also discussed in detail. There has been given space to his being of the drum of victimisation. Finally, the

educational opportunity given to him has been viewed in light of the capability approach. Arunima Sinha's *Born Again on the Mountain* incorporates her experiences of scaling the Everest and the problems she faced. Her usage of contacts to promote her interests has been seen in the light of 'social capital'.

The sixth chapter mentioned under the rubric of "Conclusion" is devoted, to sum up the main findings of the thesis based on analysed works. It also includes necessary suggestions in order to redress disability misrepresentation.

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