

Case Study

Interview unique number: 02
Interview date: 22/11/2019
District: Ganjam
State: Odisha

Name: **Jayanti Pradhan**
Age: **28**
Gender: **Female**
Education: **Graduated**
Marital Status: **Single**
Highest education: **Graduated**
Current self-employment/ employment status: **NA**
Type of impairment: **Locomotor (Orthopaedic)**
Any other members with disabilities in family: **No**

Jayanti is a 28-year-old woman with locomotor disability. She has been happy to have a supportive family. The school was only ½ km away. As it was difficult for her to attend school from her own house, hence she used to stay at her uncle's house. Her parents saw a girl in the nearby village using a tri-cycle and talked to their village *Sarpanch* (Head) about the same. She received a tri-cycle from the block office after an year. Jayanti narrates her tri-cycle and school story as follows,

Jayanti stated, "I have a locomotor disability. Up to 5th standard my sister took me to the school on her back. I felt sad as growing up I was heavy and she felt like lifting sack of potatoes!!"

"I waited for one year and finally got the tricycle at the age of ten. The tricycle was big so my friends used to push it till school and then bodily lifted me on the school verandah (corridor). I used to jump on my own on the desk. The toilet in the school was usually dirty and I due to crawling on ground, my hands and dress got dirty, finally i decided for open defecation. During rains I had taken off throughout my schooling days. During periods (menstruation) also I used to go for open defecation and felt uncomfortable and embarrassed. College education was not regular as it was 10kms away from my home. Hence, I gave exams from home."

Jayanti aspires to run a shop in future. She wants to be economically empowered so that she could be productive citizen of the country. She said

"I want to be tax payer, and feel proud about it'.

She is respected in the family and her decision are valued. For example, several marriage proposals came for her but her her family members supported her decision of rejecting those men who were either married/ divorcee or had children.

Jayanti painfully narrated 'being a 'disabled', no one who was my age or was educated proposed me. I felt as if I am not 'wanted'. Disability was a curse, as people around me watched me not only as 'crippled' but as an animal from 'zoo'.

When asked about sexual violence, she stated that, **"it has not happened with me and I have no idea about the same."** She didn't even know what violence means and according to her, anger and neglect are violence.

Jayanti shares the following recommendations:

- Accessibility in built environment and schools is mandatory, if not provided women like me are not educated and remain burden on family and society
- School and public spaces toilets should be accessible and maintained regularly
- Accessible transportation facility should be made available for commuting to schools
- Assistive devices should be available on priority to all persons with disabilities and should be gender and age appropriate
- Awareness and sensitisation of community on disability should be provided at village and block level so that women with disabilities should not be viewed as 'objects of charity or aliens'
- Information and training gender equality and safety for all women with disabilities should be provided starting from pre school and continued till puberty