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## Understanding the Relations of Religion and Disability: A Study of Preeti Monga's *The Other Senses* and Naseema Hazruk's *The Incredible Story*

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### Abstract

This paper aims to analyse the relation between "disability" and "religion", through the reading of selected Indian disabled women life narratives such as *The Other Senses* and *The Incredible Story*. Unlike others, the life of a "disabled" is determined by the family they are born into with different religions, caste and class. In India, other than the common assumptions of disabled persons as being dependent and incompetent in society, the contrasting views on the difference between disabled men and women can be discursively rooted back to Hindu mythologies. Religion also set certain duties to be performed by an individual to fulfil their birth as women and men. Preeti was born in a Sikh family; her disability influenced her life in the events of marriage and her familial role. On the other hand, Naseema was born in a Muslim family, who is already living as a marginalised in her daily life, goes on facing discrimination even when she reaches great heights as disability activist in the name of religion. This paper examines how life writings by disabled women challenge these stereotypes prevalent in Indian society. It is primarily because of certain preconceived notions about 'ableism' and disability that give way to these stereotypical formations. While we do not have major narratives dealing with or reflecting the real-life experiences of disabled community; the ones which exist are either brushed under the carpet or are appropriated as part of certain political strategies. At the same time, this paper studies the crucial import of a religion in which a disabled is born into and the ways the religious practices come to endorse certain myths and stereotypes even firmly, making the lives of disabled more miserable.

**Keywords:** Life Narratives, Disability and Religion, Disabled Women, Disabled Life Narratives.