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LIBRARY RESOURCES FOR DIFFERENTIALLY DISABLED PERSONS IN INDIA

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1.ABSTRACT:

This study focuses on the existing sceneries of the library services for the differentially-abled students being provided by some university libraries in India. It provides result of the study. Till now academic library services for these persons are inadequate. Recently some university libraries have taken steps in this regard. Unesco and ifla have issued guideliness to provide equal library services to all including people with disabilities. The government of india and

university grants commission have also issued guidelines in this regard. This Study highlights the special equipments. infrastructure and services that the libraries expected to provide for disabled pupil.

2.KEYWORDS: Differentially abled Persons, Library, access of Library, Resources, ICF, etc.

3. INTRODUCTION

Access to information is a major problem for the differentially-abled in India. There are quite a number of challenges faced by the visually and physically challenged persons in accessing the library services. Education is for all, therefore the accessibility to the library services should be accessible to all. The available facilities in the libraries are not sufficient to meet the information needs of the physically challenged children. They are not able to access information directly from libraries like other children. So, the libraries should start new services to meet their information needs,

as they have the same right to information as other children. They also have equal rights to education and to information. The libraries need to be committed to ensure full access to their range of services and facilities to their user community. Disabled persons should get equal access as compared to their counterparts. But in reality, they are ignored from our society.

Different types of disability require different types of specialised services. Library services for the blind must enable them to have access to equipment's such as Braille printers, Braille embosser and tape duplicators, etc., For the physically challenged the library must be barrier free to wheel chairs and other mobility devices and ensuring that all

devices including door handles are designed for easy manipulation. In order to create an efficient and effective library programme for the disabled, libraries need managers who are up-to-date and are aware of the latest developments that are likely to have profound effect on their services. It I their collective responsibility to promote quality services by gaining a good insight into the problems faced by the disabled. Library staff must recognize that some disabled persons have no control over their behaviour and must be competent enough to handle difficult situations. They must be prepared to give individual attention so as to understand their strongest communication mode. Therefore, the following aspects are essential to develop a model library programme for

them by the way of:

- Training the library staff
- Developing user assistance schemes
- Offering special services

The entrance to any inaccessible built environment should plan to have ramps that will be designed and built to enhance the imposing frontage that will attribute that it will be welcoming to people with acute impairments. The physically challenged persons vary from mild to acute impairment. The library building should be friendly to the physically challenged persons, so that they can access books directly from the library itself.

Library needs an online catalogue which is accessible to both visually and physically challenge persons with speech synthesizer. Visually impaired can access the catalogue and able to select independently what they require from the library. The library should be accessible to all. Visually and physically challenged persons should be provided with good environment and books in the form that they are comfortable in reading E.g.: Braille, large print, etc. All print books in the library should have the same copies in Braille for the visually challenged persons. The library should have a talking computer for use by the visually challenged persons in accessing the database. Qualified Brailists should be assigned to the library. The library should have a recording studio to record books used by the visually challenged persons.

4. PREVIOUS STUDIES

A lot of studies were made about the information needs of visually and physically challenged students mainly in foreign countries. The review of literature shoes that there have been very few studies on this area in India.

Varatharajan and Chandrasekhara¹ described software and hardware, facilities and services for the visually challenged users at IGM Library, University of Hyderabad. A study report² summarises the recommendation of a group of experts on how UNESCO could assist its member states in facilitating social inclusion of persons with disabilities through Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), Angadi and Koganuramath³ studied the state-of-the-art ICT facilities and services and learning resource centre, library services for visually impaired people, etc.,

Koganuramath and Chaukimath⁴ contributed a paper suggesting Learning Resource Centre (LRC) for the visually impaired students in the universities to foster inclusive education. In the paper the views and concerns about achieving the goals of inclusive education in the Indian higher education system through the computer and assistive technologies of a learning resource centre for the visually impaired students was presented. Maina⁵ made a study about the problems and solutions faced by visually and physically challenged persons in accessing library services and lecture halls in Kenya. He pointed out that the physically and visually challenged persons face a lot of problems in getting access to library and lecture halls. The lack of pure physical ground space available to library makes physical access difficult to achieve.

Roy and Bandyopadhyay⁶ conducted a study offering suggestions about designing barrier free services for visually challenged persons in the Academic libraries in India. The paper aims to design a barrier free environment in University libraries by producing proper equipment's, technologies and providing proper infrastructural facilities and need based services for visually disabled. Pillai⁷ in her paper tried to analyse the need for a centralized resource centre for visually handicapped in India. The author gives details of some of the technologies and the barriers to access them. The paper also talks about legislation and the need for a better legislation in India at par with order countries. Technology is a boon for visually handicapped in India. She says that, people who are handling them should be trained and should utilize the maximum resource available so that a visually impaired will not be a burden to the society.

Davies⁸ presented an overview of international research into the library and information needs of visually impaired people. Williamson⁹ contributed an article on information seeking by blind and

sight impaired citizens: an ecological study, in which the information seeking by blind and sight impaired people, with particular emphasis on the role of the internet is described.

Alemna¹⁰ presented a brief overview of the existing library provision for the blind in some African countries. He explained that there are signs of improvement in the educational and social services for the blind, various challenges faced by the librarians in their attempts to provide services for the blind are outlined, and the implications of these challenges also discussed. Thomsen¹¹ narrated that visually challenged people all over the world should be given the same opportunities for education, vocational training and employment as well as for taking active part in the general cultural and political debate in the society as their sighted peers.

5. TYPES OF DISABILITY

Physical disability: a physical disability is a limitation on a person's physical functioning, mobility, dexterity or stamina. Other physical disabilities include impairments which limit other facets of daily living such as respiratory disorders, blindness, epilepsy and sleep disorders.

Sensory disabilities: sensory impairment is when one of your senses; sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste and spatial awareness, is no longer normal. Examples – if you wear glasses you have sight impairment, if you find it hard to hear or have a hearing aid then you have a hearing impairment.

5.1.1 Vision impairment.

5.2.2 Hearing impairment.

5.2.3 Olfactory and gustatory impairment.

5.2.4 Somatosensory impairment.

5.2.5 Balance disorder.

5.3 Intellectual Disabilities.

5.4 Mental health and Emotional disabilities.

5.5 Pervasive developmental disorders.

5.6 Developmental disability.

5.7 Nonvisible disabilities.

6. DISABLED POPULATION AND TYPE OF DISABILITY

Census 2001 has revealed that over 21 million people in India are suffering from one or the other kind of disability. This is equivalent to 2.1% of the population. Among the total disabled in the country, 12.6 million are males and 9.3 million are females. Although the number of disabled is more in rural and urban areas. Such proportion of the disabled by sex in rural and urban areas. Such proportion has been reported between 57-58 percent for males and 42-43 percent females. The disability rate (number of disabled person per 100,000 populations) for the country as a whole works out to 2130, this is 2.36 in the case of males and 1,874 in case of females.

Among the five types of disabilities on which data has been collected, disability in seeing (48.5%) emerges as the top category. Other in sequence are: in movement (27.9%), mental (10.3%), in speech (7.5%) and in hearing (5.8%). The disabled by sex follow a similar pattern except for that the proportion of disabled females is higher in the category in seeing and in hearing.

Across the country, the highest number of disabled has been reported from the state of Uttar Pradesh (3.6 million), significant numbers of disabled have also been reported from the state like Bihar (1.9 million), West Bengal (1.8 million), Tamilnadu and Maharashtra (1.6 million each). Tamilnadu is the only state, which has higher number of disabled females than males. Among the states, Arunachal Pradesh has the highest proportion of disabled males (66.6%) and lowest proportion of females disabled.

	Population	Percentage
Total Population	1,028,610,328	100.0
Total Disabled Population	21,906,769	2.1
Disability Rate (per lakh population)	2,310	-
Type of disability		
(a) In Seeing	10,634,881	1.0
(b) In Speech	1,640,868	0.2
(c) In Hearing	1,261,722	0.1
(d) In Movement	6,105,477	0.6
(e) Mental	2,263,821	0.2

Table: Number of disabled population and type of disability.

7. ADDRESSING LIBRARY SERVICES FOR PERSON WITH DISABILITIES

All library materials should ideally be accessible for all persons with disabilities. There are various ways to achieve this goal. Libraries should acquire talking (books, newspapers, periodicals), video/dvd books with subtitles and/or sign language, braille books, large print books, accessible-book, easy-to-read-books, tactile picture books or other non-print materials. Improve and facilitate access to alternative-format library materials for persons with disabilities collections of alternative-format library materials for readers with disabilities exploring ways to create and improve library services and resources for people with print disabilities and meet their changing needs. Providing information and expertise to the general community and organizations about the provision of library services to person with disabilities.

7.1 Library Services for people with Print Disabilities

The library needs of people with print disabilities are generally the same as those of sighted people. However, by definition, people with print disabilities cannot use International journal on information science and techniques (IJIST) vol.6, No.1/2, March 2016 conventional print materials. They must depend upon large type, audio (spoken word), tactile devices (such as braille) and /or mechanical or optical aids – or a combination of these.

Collections for people with print disabilities should include:

- Talking books, audio, magazines and newspapers;
- Audio tape, cd/dvd, or in daisy format;
- Large-print books;
- Computer files of text;
- Braille and other tactile materials;
- Audio-descriptive videos.

7.2 Library services for people with deaf or hearing impaired.

Basic collection of materials in formats that are readily accessible to deaf and hearing impaired, so we need to development services to assist them, the primary goal of any specialized program to the deaf and hearing impaired must be to provide equal access to all programs and services that are enjoyed by the library's hearing clientele.

- Books and pamphlets on sign language, dictionaries of signs; high-
- Interest/low-vocabulary reading materials;
- DVDs contain sub-titles as a standard feature and illustrated materials;
- Films and videos including closing caption video;
- Loop system, audio loop and counter loop;
- Telecommunication devices.

7.3 Library services for cognitive disabilities

People who are cognitively delayed may need types of support. Planning for libraries can often include individuals with cognitive disabilities because many functions at a fairly high level. They have preferences and can articulate them, and they can give insight into the problems they have in using a library. Every library should provide a basic collection covering a broad range of information as an integral part of the library collection. People with cognitive and intellectual disabilities will benefit from access to:

- Books in enlarged print;
- High-interest, low-vocabulary materials and books;
- Books on tape-and-text kits;
- Illustrated materials (picture books), audio materials, and music collections;
- Spoken-word collections;
- Audio and video tape in daisy format.

7.4 Library services for persons with physical disabilities

Persons with physical disabilities may need assistance in doing some of the physical tasks that are involved in using the library. They need access computers for reading at the library with the following software:

- Voice recognition;
- Word prediction;
- Screen enlargement;
- Software for converting print documents;
- Scan and read programs;
- Text highlighting and advanced reading in different formats.

7.5 Problems Faced by the Physically Challenged in Libraries

The entrance to the library is always an obstacle to the physically challenged persons. It does not have a ramp or lift to enable persons with disabilities access to the library using wheel chairs. The entrance to any inaccessible built environment should plan to have ramps that will be designed and built to enhance the imposing frontage that will attribute that will be welcoming to people with acute impairment. The physically challenged persons vary from mild to acute impairment. The library building should be friendly to the physically challenged persons, so that they can access books directly from the library itself. The institution should ensure that disabled students are able to access academic text necessary to their studies and thereby avoid serious prejudice. The institution should ensure that all new construction work carried out in respect of built environment is physically accessible to all. If fairness is supposed to be seen, it is the role of the institution architecture to enforce any party contracted in support of new construction work with consultative support regarding the needs of people with disabilities in general. The institutions should be commended on doing as much as it is possibly can under difficult circumstances to achieve reasonable access.

8. LIBRARY PROVISIONS- INTERNATIONAL STATUS

Developed countries like USA, Canada, UK, and many European nations have started their initiatives to facilitate the persons with disabilities much before. Most of the universities and the institutes in these countries are providing access to information to the disabled persons by way of enhancing the law, by formulating the national policies and funding the libraries and information centres. They have state-of-the-art technologies to assist in the information access. All such institutes have disabled person-friendly infrastructure, information communication tools, facilities and services and trained man-power. The government departments, institutes, libraries, corporate houses, foundations and NGOs have disability friendly websites and portals.

8.1 Universities for differentially-abled persons in India

8.1.1 Bharathiar University Tamilnadu

It has introduced a Talking Book Library. Rotary club has provided help to form the library. The library has started functioning with 1,000 books in the form of CDs and audio cassettes.

8.1.2 Jammu University

Jammu University has opened a Resource Cell for the visually disabled users. A separate software JAWS (Job Access with Speech) has been installed to convert hard copy to voice.

8.1.3 Delhi University

Extended its existing Braille library for multipurpose use. The Braille library is established in the Central reference library. The ABRC (Audio Book Resource Centre) provides recorded cassettes to the visually impaired students. There are three recording studios in the ABRC which is located next to the Braille library in the Central library. ABRC makes an effort to identify the books students might need most and undertakes to record them. It has a collection of several hundred books available for use.

8.1.4 Panjab University

Panjab University has established a special section in the library for visually impaired users where facilities for listening to the contents of books are available by using some special software.

8.1.5 Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU)

Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) has also established a separate section called 'Hellen Keller Unit for Visually Challenged Students'. The unit has twenty computers with special software like Kurzweil, JAWS, etc. These are two screen reading software which allows users to hear text, as it appears on screen.

8.1.6 Lucknow University

Lucknow University has established an exclusive library for visually disabled students (Dr. Manohar Lohia Library).

8.1.7 University of Calcutta

University of Calcutta with the collaboration of National Association of the blind (NAB) is going to open a state-of-art 'Digital Braille Library and Audio recording workstation', in the 2nd floor of the Central Library, college street, where all modern learning equipment's for visually disabled persons will be available.

8.1.8 The U.P Jagadguru Rambhadracharya Handicapped University

This institution was established to provide higher and professional education to person with disabilities.

09. SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE LIBRARY PROVISIONS

Some of the suggestions to improve the facilities for the differentially-abled in libraries

- The library should have a recording studio or record books used by the visually challenged students.
- Academic libraries should modify their existing buildings to accommodate these special users.
- Services should be introduced/developed according to the needs of the library users.
- Awareness programmes on regular basis is required.
- Promotion/marketing of services is also needed.
- Service/facilities are to be monitored.
- Representatives from the users should be there in the managerial decision-making committees.

- Provide access to the academic information sources.
- Explore the utilisation of 'Assistive Technologies'.
- For the physically challenged the library facility must be barrier free to wheel chairs and other mobility devices ensuring that all devices including door handles are designed for manipulation.
- Differentially-abled students should be provided with good environment and books in the form that they are comfortable in reading. E.g. Braille, large print, ordinary print, etc.

10. CONCLUSIONS

Libraries play a vital role in the lives of persons with disabilities by facilitating their full participation in society. Libraries should use strategies based upon the principles of universal design to ensure that library policy, resources and services meet the needs of all people. We need to plan technological solutions and access points for example (telecentre), based on the concepts of universal design, are essential for effective use of information and other library services by all people. Libraries should work with persons with disabilities, local communities, organizations and vendors to integrate assistive technology into their facilities and services to meet the needs of people with a broad range of disabilities, including learning, mobility, sensory and developmental disabilities. Library staff should be aware of how available technologies address disabilities and know how to assist all users with library technology.

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