University Libraries: Support for Blind and visually Impaired users: A Survey"

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ABSTRACT

The paper deals with the study of knowing the number of visually impaired users of different university libraries of India. Also examine the collection available in libraries for these differently abled users. To know the different types of services available for blind and visually in every universities. To find out the productivity and quality of support for blind and visually impaired users. Finally identify the problems faced by these users in libraries.

INTRODUCTION

Today in the technological age, libraries are exploiting latest techniques to facilitate their users and capable to provide access all information to their nearest end. Through the internet, any user can access any information from any corner of the world. The internet have made the world so small, users may acquire and share the knowledge each other even those who are totally unknown to each other. Information Technology have given the opportunity to provide equal library facility to all including visually impaired users, we the LIS professionals should not ignore the needs of the blind user and should have fare attitude towards these special users, it is we who just only have to understand the technology and users. These users should be able to use the libraries as a platform of source or gateway to national and international information, knowledge and leisure.

In India, the broad definition of visual impairment as adopted in the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 as well as under the National Programme for Control of Blindness (NPCB) is given below:

Table 1.1 :Categories of visual impairment

Category	Corrected VA-better eye	WHO Definition Standard*	Working#	Indian Definition
0	6/6-6/18	Normal	Normal	Normal
1	<6/18-6/60	Visual Impairment	Low Vision	Low Vision
2	<6/60-3/60	Severe Visual Impairment	Low Vision	Blind
3	<3/60-1/60	Blind	Low Vision	Blind
4	<1/60-PL	Blind	Low Vision	Blind
5	NPL	Blind	Total Blindness	Total Blindness

The standard WHO definition is used in medical reports and publications and is solely based on visual acuity and does not take into account functional vision.

The WHO working definition has been adopted since WHO Consultation in 1992. This working definition is solely used for reporting purposes and should not be used for eligibility of services.

The WHO standard definition defines blindness as visual acuity of less than 3/60 in the better eye with the best possible correction as compared to that of 6/60 in India. The WHO functional definition, however, considers blindness starting at light perception or when a person has no usable vision. Similarly, a person with visual acuity better than 360 but equal or less than 6/60 is graded as "blind" in India, while WHO grades him as low vision.

In India a person with a VA < 6/60 is legally blind, which enables to receive certain services and financial benefits. However, a person who is legally blind can still have useful vision to do certain tasks, as can be seen in the working definition. This refers to the fact that they still have functional vision, which is the use of vision for a particular purpose.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In review of pervious studies is an important aspect for every research work. It helps the investigator to go deep in to the problem on the one hand any study the different sides of the problem on the other. Knowledge of the previous studies provider the researcher an insight into what is already done and what is still to be done. Since effective research is based upon past knowledge, such step will help to eliminate the duplication of what has been done and will provide useful hypothesis and suggestions for significant investigation. Whatever the objective or motivation for research may be study of relevant literature is extremely useful in understanding the problem of any research of study.

DOUGLAS (Graeme) and GAMBLE (Alan) 1994, Teaching establishments of visually impaired children were sent questionnaires (spring 1994) to establish the presence of computers and associated peripherals. The following article considers the results of this research in terms of the types of computers used in different teaching contexts – special schools for the visually impaired, units attached to mainstream schools, and the peripatetic teaching service.

ASHLEY (Anne) DAVIS (Jo) and BEST (Tony) 1994, All residential establishments for children have to be inspected by social services, particularly in relation to the Children Act 1989. This article describes how the inspection process could be implemented to take account of the special needs of children with visual impairments. These needs affect the way in which policies are carried out. They also have an influence on which policies are critical to the effective management of an establishment. It is suggested that effective inspection requires an orientation for inspectors, with the most constructive inspections achieved through a partnership between inspectors and establishments.

LINDSTROM (Jan-Ingvar) 1994, This article discusses current and future Information Technology and Telematics and their applications for visually impaired and deaf blind people in Sweden. It considers systems for stop announcements on buses and trams and queuing systems in shops and banks. The use of text-telephones with information transfer centres for people who are deaf or deafblind, as well as methods used to make daily newspapers available to visually impaired people are reviewed. The involvement of disabled persons in

the use of data bases and home terminals is also discussed. Ideas for subtitles for films, simultaneous translation of interviews and speeches, and picture communication are presented. Filnally, some thoughts about future possibilities are outlined.

STEER (Michael) and CHEETHAM (Leonie) 2005, Free library service is a component of the foundations of democracy, citizenship, economic and social development, scholarship and education, in progressive societies. The evolution of libraries for people who are blind or vision impaired is briefly discussed and an innovative project, a talking book and daily newspaper delivery system that transfers digital information to the user via satellite, is described.

GENTLE (Francer), STEER (Michael) and HOWSE (Josie) 2012, In this article the authors will outline and describe the recent implementation of Unified English Braille (UEB) in Australia's complex school systems. The New South Wales Department of Education and Communities (NSW/DEC) played a leading role in the process. The education sector at all levels in Australia appears to have embraced the introduction of UEB with enthusiasm, and Braille teachers and students have taken a positive approach to learning the new Braille code.

STOCKLEY (Jennifer) 1994, This article describes a study (1992) in which a group of students from RNIB Redhill College were given a programme of teaching in social skills with emphasis on the social use of language. The aim was to assess whether systematic training over a one-year period would enhance self-confidence and improve social interaction skills. The expectation was that students would find real social situations less threatening or demanding if they had been given specific training in how to handle them. This programme appears to indicate promising results.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To find out blind and visually impaired students in universities.
2. To know the collection for blind and visually impaired.
3. To know the different types of services available for blind and visually in every universities.
4. To study the impact of so many resources and services on the academic work of the faculty members of blind and visually members.
5. To know the productivity and quality of support for blind and visually impaired users.
6. To identify the problems faced by these users in libraries.

SCOPE

This study is related with "University Libraries: Support for blind and visually impaired users: A Survey." It covers the collection, services and facilities for blind students in University of Delhi (South Campus), Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, Ch. Charan Singh University, Meerut and University of Delhi (North Campus).

METHODOLOGY

The questionnaire method is followed for the present study. A well designed questionnaires for librarians and users separately were distributed to collect the data. The collected data is presented in tabular form for investigation.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table-1: General Information

S.No.	Institutional Name	C.C.S.	DU.S.C.	DU.NC	J.N.U.	J.M.I.	S.U.
1.	Name of the Library	R.M.P. Library	South Campus Library, University of Delhi	Braille Library University of Delhi	Central Library	Dr. Zakir Husain Library	Central Library
2.	Year of establishment	1965	1973	1881	1976	1920	1996
3.	Year of establishment of special library for the blind	2007	No	1974	1976	1920	No

Table 1 shows that Raja Mahendra Pratap Library of Ch.Charan Singh University Meerut was established in the year 1965. R.M.P. Library has started library services to visually impaired student in the year 2009. The central library of University of Delhi (South Campus) was established in the year 1973 and it has not started library services to visually impaired student. Central library of the University of Delhi (North Campus) was established in the year 1881 and it has started library services to visually impaired student in the year 1974. Central library of Jawaharlal Nehru University was established in the year 1976 and has started library services to visually impaired student in the year 1976. Dr. Zakir Husain Library of Jamia Millia Islamia was established in 1920 and has started library services to visually impaired student in the same year. Subharti University Central Library was established in 1996 and it has not started the services yet.

Table-2 : Provision of library services to visually impaired

S.No.	University	Provision existing	We have plans if there is extra funding
1.	CCSU	Yes	No
2.	DU(SC)	Yes	No
3.	DU(NC)	No	Yes
4.	JNU	No	No
5.	JMI	No	No
6.	SU	Yes	No
	Total	3	1
	Percentage	50%	17%

Table-2 shows that only 3(50%) university libraries in the present study are providing services to the visually impaired students. These are Delhi University (North Campus), Jawaharlal Nehru University and Jamia Millia Islamia. However Delhi University (NC) has planned to start the service if the funds are provided.

Table-3: Provision for documents in alternate formats for Blind students

S.No.	University	Braille	CDs	Online	Audio	Dairy format	Any other
1.	C.C.S.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
2.	DU.SC	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
3.	DU.NC	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
4.	J.N.U.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
5.	J.M.I.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
6.	S.U.	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Total	5	5	5	3	2	1
	Percentage	83%	83%	83%	50%	33%	17%

Table-3 shows that almost all university libraries provide documents in different forms for blind students. These include Braille collection, CDs and online information resources. Only Subharti University library does not have such kind of provision. The study shows that among all university libraries JNU library has the maximum services for blind users. DUSC, DUNC and JNU library are having audio material for the benefit of blind.

Table-4: Provision for Asstive Technology

S.No.	Academic status	Speech synthe-sizer	Comp-uter	Braille Display	Braille Printer	OCR	Large magni-fiers	Any others plz specify
1.	C.C.S.	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
2.	DU.SC	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
3.	DU.NC	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
4.	J.N.U.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
5.	J.M.I.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
6.	S.U.	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Total	1	4	2	3	1	1	Nil
	Percentage	17%	67%	33%	50%	17%	17%	

Table-4 shows that all university libraries of the present study provide asstive technology in different forms for blind students. These include computer, Braille display and Braille printer information resource. Subharti University and Delhi University (SC) does not have such kind of provision. The study show's that among all university libraries JNU library has the maximum services for blind students DUNC, JMI and JNU library also having large magnifiers for the benefit of blind students.

Table-5: Provision for library services for visually challenged student

S.No.	Academic status	Special area for computer access	Availability of volunteer readers	Transcription service	Recording in to audio taper	CD writer	Provision of reading machines	Provision of OPAC terminal with voice and large screen output
1.	C.C.S.	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
2.	DU.SC	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
3.	DU.NC	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
4.	J.N.U.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
5.	J.M.I.	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
6.	S.U.	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Total	2	2	3	3	4	1	1
	Percentage	33%	33%	50%	50%	67%	17%	17%

Table-5 shows that all university libraries of the present study provide visually challenged material in different forms for blind students. These include computer access, volunteer readers, transcription service, recording in to Audio Tapes and CD writer information resource. Delhi University (SC) and Subharti University does not have such kind of provision. The study show's that among all university libraries Jawaharlal Nehru University Library has the maximum service for blind students. DUNC, JMI and JNU library also having provision of reading machines material for the benefit of blind students.

Table-6 :Budget Provision

S.No.	Academic status	No Separate Budget	Separate Budget (Total Rs. …. Spend on this current academic) year for collection development Rs….. spent on computers and other technologies
1.	C.C.S.	No	No
2.	DU.SC	No	No
3.	DU.NC	No	Yes
4.	J.N.U.	No	Yes
5.	J.M.I.	No	Yes
6.	S.U.	No	No
	Total	Nil	3
	Percentage		50%

Table-6 shows that all university libraries of the present study provide budget provision for blind students. These are separate budget for collections development spent on computers and other technologies Delhi University (SC), Subharti University and C.C.S. University does not have such kind of budget. The study show's that among all university libraries Jawahar Lal

Nehru University DUNC and J.M.I. Library has the budget for blind students.
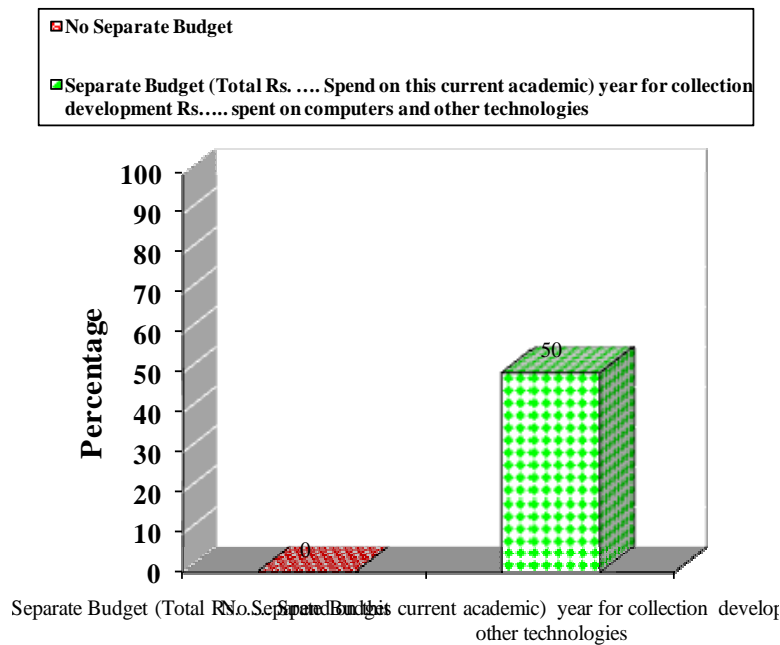
Table-7: Staff

S.No.	Academic Status	Trained Staff
1.	C.C.S.	No
2.	DU.SC	No
3.	DU.NC	Yes
4.	J.N.U.	Yes
5.	J.M.I.	Yes
6.	S.U.	No
	Total	3
	Percentage	50%

Table-7 shows the provision of library staff for blind students. Delhi University (SC) Subharti University and C.C.S. University does not have such trained staff. It is revealed that 50% of the libraries are having trained staff to provide library services to visually challenged in the libraries of DU(NC), JNU and JMI and JMI, the visually impaired students are not able to access resources on websites due to lack of awareness about accessibility.

Table-8 :Web Accessibility

S.No.	Academic status	Accessible websites	Not accessible	Lack of awareness about accessibility
1.	C.C.S.	Yes	No	No
2.	DU.SC	No	No	No
3.	DU.NC	No	No	Yes

4.	J.N.U.	Yes	No	No
5.	J.M.I.	No	No	Yes
6.	S.U.	No	No	No
	Total	2	Nil	2
	Percentage	33%		33%

Table-8 shows that CCS University library has the facility to provide access to different websites relevant to visually impared students. JNU has also such kind of service in its library. However, it is noticed that in DU (NC).

Table-9: Library Policy

S.No.	Academic Status	Separate policy for disabled	No Separate library policy
1.	C.C.S.	No	No
2.	DU.SC	No	No
3.	DU.NC	Yes	No
4.	J.N.U.	Yes	No
5.	J.M.I.	Yes	No
6.	S.U.	No	No
	Total	3	Nil
	Percentage	50%	

Table-9 shows that DU(NC), JNU and JMI libraries have separate policy for providing library services and development of study material for disables students. whereas CCSU library and Subharti University library have no separate policy for visually impaired students.

Table-10 : Future provision of library and information service to blind

S.No.	Academic status	Purchase and updating of equipment	Provision of material in alternate format	Staff training	Promotion of student and staff awareness regarding disability	Improved service	No future plans	If extra funding then we think of having facility for blind and VIP
1.	C.C.S.	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
2.	DU.SC	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
3.	DU.NC	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
4.	J.N.U.	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
5.	J.M.I.	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
6.	S.U.	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Total	2	3	2	1	3	Nil	1
	Percentage	33%	50%	33%	17%	50%		17%

Table-10 shows that DU(NC), JNU have planned to purchase and upgradation of equipment, provision of material in alternate format in near future DU(NC) has also planned to provide training to library staff for improving the library services for blind students. JMI has the provision of providing training of library staff in its future plan. The other university libraries

i.e. CCSU, DU(SC) and Subharti University have no such kind of planning in the days to come.

FINDINGS

1. Maximum users the library visit daily but the less users visit the library weekly.
2. Majority of users spend the time in library less then one hour while minimum users spend the time in library more then three hours.
3. On analyzing from the study maximum users say library staff is always helpful while minimum users have no opinion.
4. Majority of the users require the C.D., Audio, Braille, while minimum users require the Braille Display, OCR and others.
5. Maximum users are aware and use lending service, Internet service, Online search, C.D- ROM search. But minimum users are not aware and use to Audio, C.D.
6. Majority of users using Internet service for online search, special area, for computer access and minimum user using internet for purpose.
7. Most of the users are using the library to barrow, C.D., and Audio, while minimum users, using the library for any other purpose.
8. Maximum users are able to access online database service themselves while the minimum percentage of their access other options.
9. Maximum users say overall function of the library are good and excellent while minimum user says that the overall function of the library are poor.
10. Maximum users say that the problem for access online resources is Internet Connectivity and minimum say that are lack of training.
11. On analyzing the study it is found that maximum users assert that the library is good.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Improvement in provision of reading machines for visually impaired students.
2. Acquisition of CD, Computers, Audio, Braille literature should be made necessary.
3. The opening hours of the library must be increased.
4. Library should appoint the trained staff in library.
5. Library should have a separate policy for disabled students.

Deliberate and non-deliberate suggestions can influence cognition and behaviors in surprising ways. Sometimes suggestions are helpful and improve our cognitions and behaviors, but at other times they are harmful. Suggestion can create response expectancies, the myriad ways in which we anticipate responding automatically to various situations.

CONCLUSION

The study sought to analyses the "University Libraries: Support for Blind and visually Impaired users: A Survey". DU. S.C., DU., N.C, J.N.U., J.M.J, C.C.S., S.U, by the study take the user as sample.

All the popular Braille, C.D., Online, Audio, Dairy for mat for the readers use in the Reading Room of the library for blinds students. The Reference section at the library is used by members.

Most of the objectives are most satisfactorily. But ratio of services used by users is different because it is dependent upon the type of work or library leading and reference services are the

most used services by the library users. Mutual under standing between librarian, library staff and academician will help a lot in sound collection development. Providing personalized information services, encouraging extensions of library orientation programmers, organizing occasional seminars and work shop for blind and disable students as well as library staff will play a vital role in under standing the exact Information requirement to the users. This will help the library to generate interest among library staff and bring closer relation with academics as well as other users. This kind of encouragement, will thus helping better utilization of library resources.

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