

VISUALLY IMPAIRED USER'S PERCEPTION TOWARDS LIBRARY OF
NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED,
DEHRADUN: A STUDY



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Short Profile

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ABSTRACT:

Disability, as we think that people who are not normal by physical form is a disabled one or disability. Is it right to say the person who is not working like a normal person is disabled one? No, all of us are suffering from disability, whether it is minor or major, so it's right to say that all of us are not able one; someone is suffering from physical disability, some are visually impaired, some are facing out

mental disability, not some of us, it is right to say many of us face mental disability. There are many other types of disability, which we are facing in our society. If we all are disable; then, why this special seeing person that ours literature defines disabled person, are neglecting from our society? Why there is not equal right as normal one? It's true that there are many acts; passed by the government to provide equal opportunity for all of them, but the question is that it's really implemented? Let we consider that all of the acts are implemented then, those people which we categorized, disabled person, is find satisfied from themselves as normal one? Are they found any discriminate themselves, still in their mind? And if yes, what are the reasons behind them? These are the question still answering one self. In this research paper, only visual disability has been describe and trying to find out the answer of limited questions from visually disabled patrons towards the library; how frequently the users of

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National Institute for the Visually Handicapped, Dehradun, get their required information and what are their expectation from library, information centre as being a major part of their life.

KEYWORDS

Visually impaired, National Institute for the visually handicapped.

1. INTRODUCTION

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is considered to be disabled if they have "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities" (1)

"According to Oliver (1990, p.7 cited by Williamson & Schauder, 2000), key issues for people with disabilities have been the need to have their voices heard, the need for empowerment, and the need "... to locate the ultimate causes of disability as within the physical and social environments". Oliver criticized the individual/medical model, where disability is seen as a "tragedy" and disabled people as "...the victims of some tragic happening or circumstance" (p.2). The consequences of such attitudes are that the problems faced by disabled people are reduced "...to their own personal inadequacies or functional limitations" (p.7)."

Disability affects person's life in different ways. There are many types of disability. In this research paper, effort has been made to clear the concept of only visual disability. Visual disability, in general sense we call visual impaired to that the person who are blind or low vision, lost of one sense from taste, smell, hear, touch. Or visual impairment "describes a wide range of visual function from low vision to total blindness (2)". "The definition of vision impairment by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says a visually impaired person's eyesight cannot be corrected to a "normal level". (3) And it cannot be corrected by any surgical operation, medication or any optical lenses. There are millions of people that suffer from vision disability. World health organization presented a fact sheet of visually impaired worldwide as 285 million people are estimated to visually impaired, out of this 39 million are blind and 246 have low vision. Census of India 2011 presented data on disability; data on eight type of disability has been collected. It shows that 2.21% of total population was disabled in India till 2011. According to data sheet total number of disable population was 26,810,557 and out of this 5,032,463 was visually impaired. And it is a huge amount of population who suffer from visual disability. It's a duty of our society to bring them equal to all of us as normal one. Person who suffer from disability are full of internal strength, they wants to be chances to prove themselves. They have capacity to do better from normal ones. Helen Keller set a paradigm to become first deafblind person to earn bachelor degree in 1904.

Library is only place which is free from any type of discrimination whether it is age, sex, nationality or disability. All of us have equal right and opportunity in boundary of library. Libraries being a major part in the life of person with disabilities, because it has all of the quality in itself, that everyone is finding in outer world. Library is the best friend which interrelate everyone to historic period to spiritual world. And for the disabled one, "Taking part in activities enables people to develop and broaden their life experience, maintain competences, and increase social interaction. Furthermore, research shows that if people with intellectual disabilities are offered suitable activities, there is a decrease in under stimulation, boredom, and problem behavior, and an increase in engagement and

interaction with the environment (Bradshaw et al., 2004; Jones et al., 2007; Mansell, Elliot, Beadle-Brown, Ashman, & MacDonald, 2002 cited by Putten & Vlaskamp, 2011).

National Institute for the Visually Handicapped, Dehradun: NIVH is autonomous body under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India. Institute has enlightening the life of blind person from 1943. NIVH create milestone in 1951 after establishing oldest central Braille Press of the country, after launching country's first online Braille library in 2012, country's first largest printing press was established in the headquarter of institute. Another activity named as Community FM Radio Service "Hello Doon" also inaugurated in 2012. On Hello Doon, the Institute's programmes are broadcast in the field of education and to entertain. To make visually impaired persons independently or to walk independently in every aspects of life, the institute plays a major role in providing training in independent living skills to manage home, socio- psycho adjustment, personal grooming etc.

Objectives: The present study conducted to find out how frequently the library users of National Institute for the Visually Handicapped, Dehradun get their required information and what are their expectations from library, information centre as being a major part of their life?

Method: Schedule and interview method has been adopted to fill the questionnaire for data collection. 80 questionnaires have been distributed among users; out of 80, 75 were received back. From filled questionnaire 47 were filled by visually impaired through schedule method and 27 were filled by normal ones and 1 was filled by differently abled. So, for this study 47 questionnaire were used for analysis of data.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

Table 1: Frequency of visiting the library

Frequency of visit to library	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Daily	11	23.4%
Weekly	23	48.94%
Monthly	9	19.15%
Fort-Nightly	4	8.51%
Total	47	100%

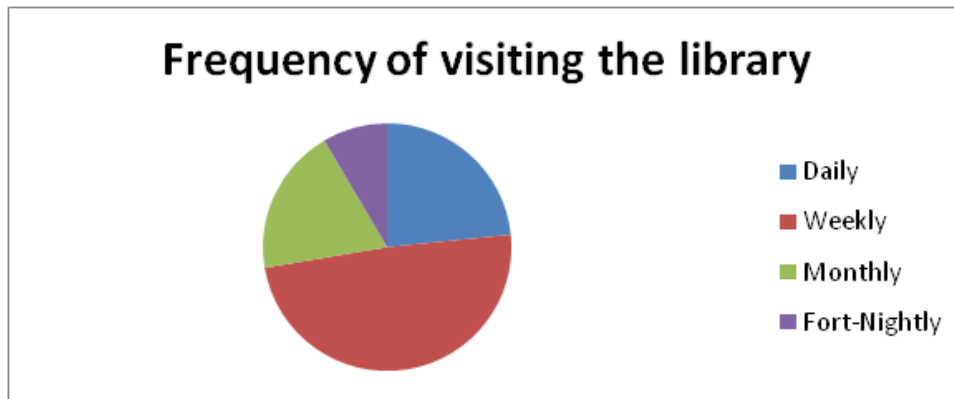


Table 1 show that 48.94% (highest) users go to the library in a week. 23.4% users prefer daily to go in the library. 19.15% users go to library in month. The ratio of fort-nightly visitors of library is low i.e.8.51%.

Observation shows that users want to go to the library in daily basis, but there are some restrictions on them, though frequency of visiting daily in the library is low.

Table 2: Purpose of visiting the library
Note: Multiple answers were permitted

Purpose of visiting the library	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Update Knowledge	44	94%
For Entertainment	4	8.5%
To Read Newspaper	7	14.9%
To communicate with others	4	8.5%
To meet the library staff	0	0%
For Photocopying of materials	2	4.3%

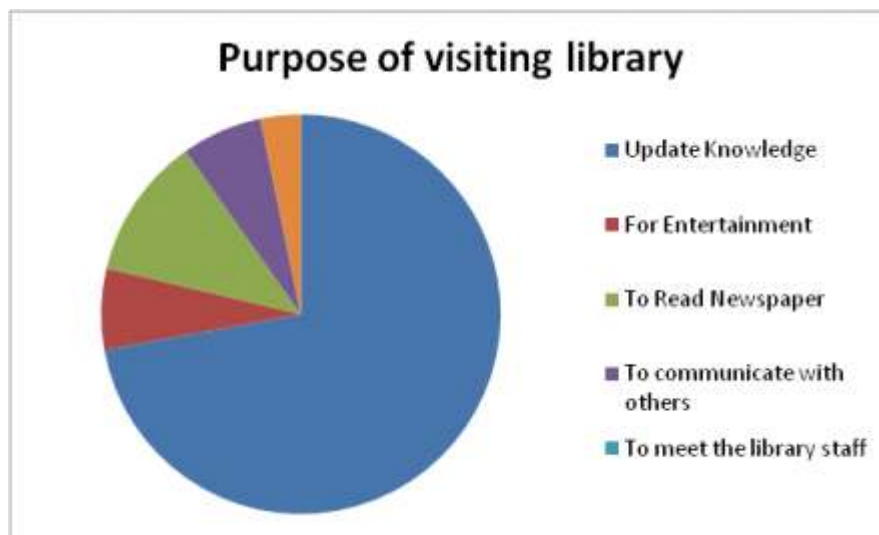


Table 2 represents that almost 94% user go to the library to update their knowledge. 14.9% users go to read newspaper, 8.5% users go for entertainment and to communicate with others, 4.3% go for taking photocopying of materials.

Observation shows that visually impaired users have curiosity to gain knowledge. If proper resources are provided to them, then they will come up one step forward from the normal ones.

Table 3: How easy is it to find what you need?

Note: There are total 47 no. of respondents, 2 users have not responded.

Easiness of what they need	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Very Easy	12	26.67%
Easy	15	33.33%
Somewhat Easy	12	26.67%
Not at All Easy	6	13.33%
Total	45	100%



Table 3 shows how it is easy for blind users to get their desired information. Data reported that 33% of users feel it is easy to find what they need, 26.67% of users feel that it is very easy and all the same ratio of 26% feel that it is somewhat easy and 13% observed that it is not at all easy what they need.

Observation shows that due to the hard work, intellectualness of library staff makes it possible, to build library disabled friendly, but there are some steps which should be taken place for betterment of library as became disabled friendly.

Table 4: How often they visit the librarian for assistance?

Note: From the total no. of respondent i.e. 47, 2 users have not responded.

Frequency of taking librarian's assistance	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Every visit	13	28.9%
Some Visit	24	53.3%
Rarely	6	13.3%
Never	2	4.44%
Total	45	100%

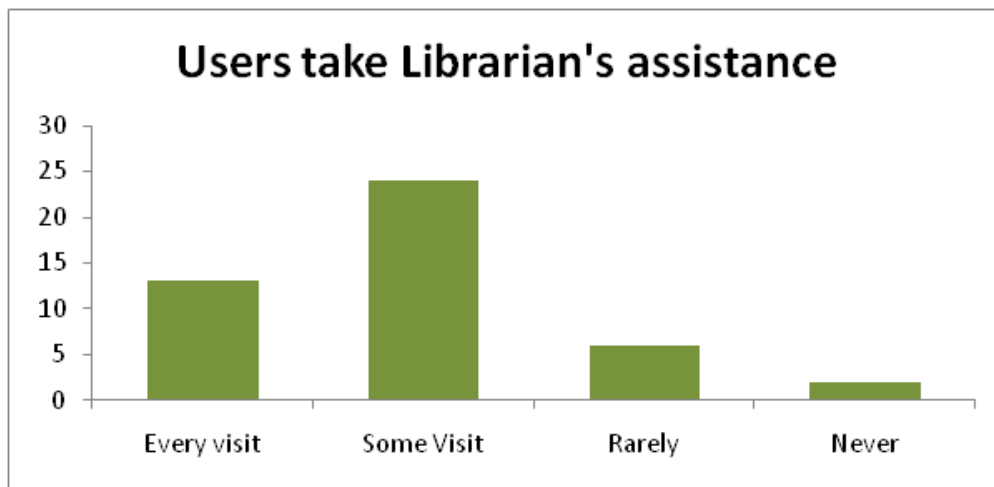


Table 4 represents that 53.3% users visit to the librarian in some visit for the help, 28.9% users go to the librarian in every visit, 13.3% take librarian's assistance rarely and 4.44% users never take librarian's help.

Observation shows that visually impaired users need more assistance than normal one.

Table 5: They asked for Librarian's help Because

Note: Multiple answers were permitted

Reason for taking librarian's help	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
I don't cognize where to look	7	14.89%
To save my time	17	36.17%
To obtain better quality hunt	8	17.02%
It was urgent	11	23.40%
To confirm that I have already found the key Information	8	17.02%

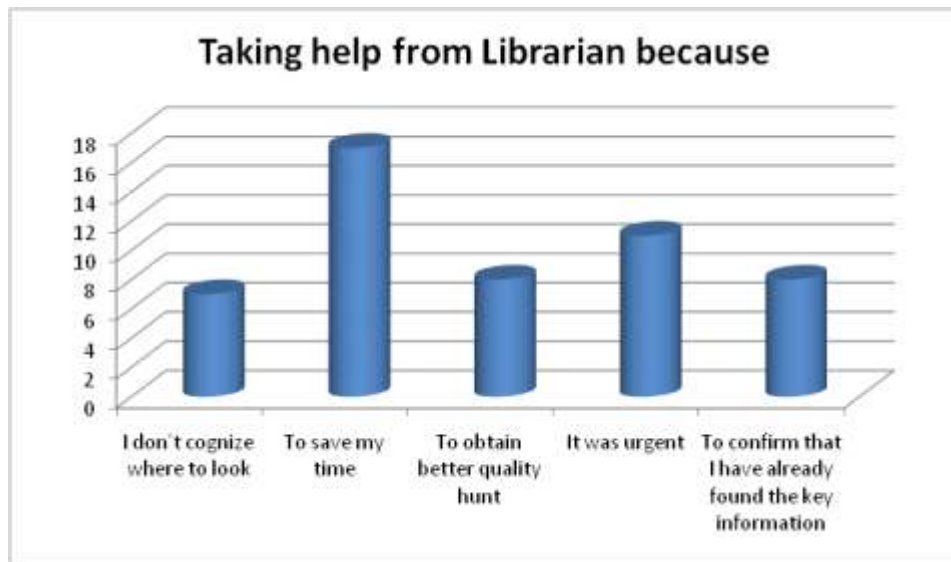


Table 5 shows that 36.17% users asked for librarian's assistance to save their time, 23.4% of users take the help of librarian because it was urgent, 17.02% users call librarian to obtain better quality hunt or to confirm that they found the key information and 14.89% asked for librarian's assistance because they don't cognize where to look.

Observation shows that users want special assistance available 24*7 welcoming them in the library.

Table 6: In the past year, have you faced any problem in serving library?
 Note: From 47 no. of respondents, 2 users have not responded.

Problem faced In past	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	7	15.56%
No	38	84.44%
Total	45	100

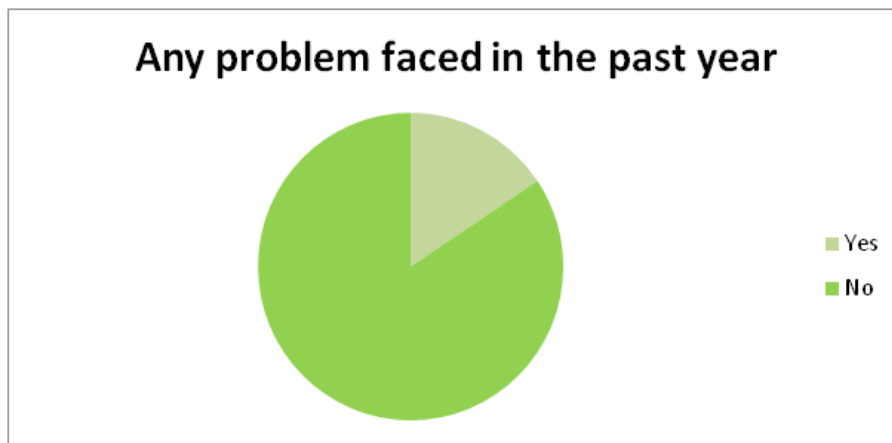


Table 6 represents 84.4% patrons had not faced any problem in serving the library and 15.56% faced problem.

Observation shows that users who faced problem in serving library in past is due to lack of time in using library, sometimes library rules made burden for them, books are not available in desired format.

Table 7: Observation about the atmosphere in the library
 Note: From total no. of respondents i.e. 47, 1 user has not responded

Atmosphere in the library	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Very Pleasant	26	56.5%
Pleasant	15	32.6%
Not Pleasant	2	4.35%
Not at all Pleasant	3	6.52%
Total	46	100%

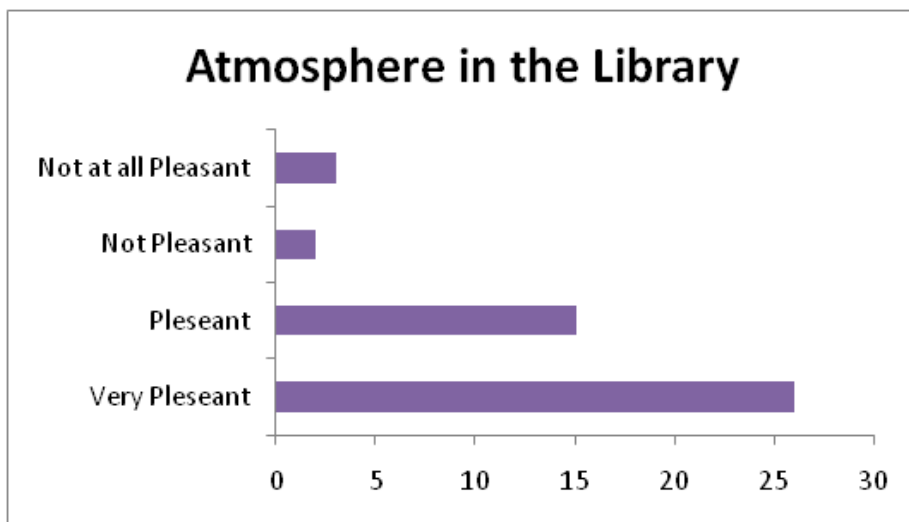


Table 7 shows 56.5% users feel very pleasant atmosphere of the library, 32.6% users observe pleasant atmosphere, 4.35% feel not pleasant in the library and 6.52% users experienced the library atmosphere not at all pleasant.

Observation shows that the reason behind the not at all pleasant of atmosphere in the library is lack of resources, taking too much time in providing desire information.

Table 8: Reason behind to avoid in using the library more frequently.
 Note: Multiple answers were permitted.

Reason for avoiding the library	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Difficult to use	8	17%
Not Interested	3	6.38%
Atmosphere	2	4.26%
Insufficient Training	13	27.7%
Unfriendly behavior of Librarian	1	2.13%
Any other	3	6.38%

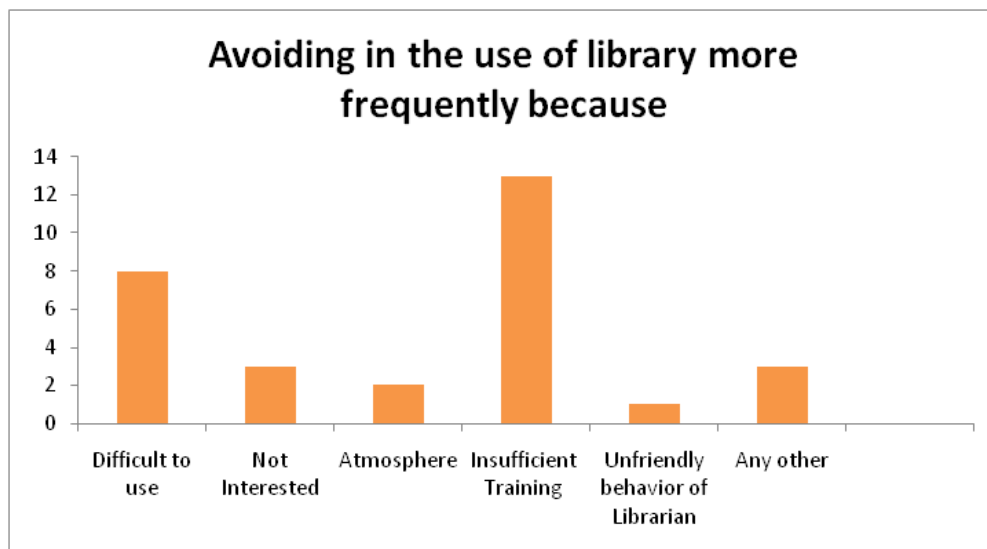


Table 8 represents why the users are avoid in using library more frequently. 27.7% of users are not using library more frequently because of insufficient training, 17% of users said that it is difficult to use, 6.38% of students are not interested in using the library, 2.13% of users avoid library due to its atmosphere and 3.33% users are avoiding due to unfriendly behavior of librarian and 6.38% are avoiding due to any other reason.

Observation shows that to become the irregular users to regular one, the main point to be focus on the training provided to users of library so that they use library more frequently and become regular user of library. The reason of any other is lack of resources.

CONCLUSION:

India is the world second largest country in terms of population. Its current population is 1.27 billion. According to the report of World Blind Union, largest number of people of blind community is in

India. "The problem for blind people is not the disability but the availability of resources, technique <http://www.euroblind.org/> cited by Pandey, V. & Chouhan, N." Library is one and only one place which is free from every kind of discrimination. Everyone is equal in the boundary of library. So users' expectation is raised from library side. It's a duty of every citizen not only of librarian, to give their contribution in making library disabled friendly so they feel in library as their first home because they need an opportunity to prove themselves rather than to show kind hearted. And library is only place which opens all opportunities for all of us.

Helen Keller rightly said that "The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched - they must be felt with the heart."

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