

An Evaluative Study of the Library Services Provided by the Libraries of Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) and Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University (BBAU) to Specially-Abled Users

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The present study is an attempt to find out the provisions of library services provided by BHU, AMU, and BBAU libraries to specially-abled users. The study investigated the resources and accessibility of the LIS services and other special materials of these libraries. For the purpose of conducting the present study, a survey of the specially-abled users was conducted, including interviews of them for the authentication of data to produce the actual findings of the study. In fact, this type of user needs specially designed and developed customised LIS services and needs to develop adequate infrastructural facilities for the delivery of library services to them in the most effective and efficient manner. The study suggested improving the existing ICT infrastructure, especially the internet facilities of all the three libraries under study.

Keywords: *Library services, Specially-Abled users, BHU Library, AMU Library, BBAU Library, ICT facilities, Differently-Abled.*

1 INTRODUCTION

A library is a storehouse of knowledge and extends its information resources to its users irrespective of caste, creed, and religion providing equal access. Libraries are meeting users' informational needs of its users in the best possible way to satisfy the information hunger of the users and also tries to develop customized library services for special category of users such as specially-

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abled (Physically Disabled) users. Disabled people are an important portion of our society. They have all equal rights on all resources of society. Society consider every person as equal and therefore, it is the duty of the social institutions and the respective governments to protect the rights of the specially-abled o physically disabled people. Therefore, the libraries need to ensures people with disabilities who face substantial obstacles to access the library services. The international institutions and oragnisations such as World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations etc. have set standards of disability Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (UNREOPwD). In India. Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MSPI), also do have framed and implemented rules related to specially-abled people. Libraries have immense wealth of information that users may access to fulfill their informational need in a variety of formats, including periodicals, books, journals, patents, standards, newspapers, conference proceedings, CD-ROMs, reports, and more. Users are not just those who are physically and psychologically capable of going about their daily lives and pursuing their academic needs. Apart from general users there is a part of specially-abled users that need special attention to fulfill their information need. In context of academic libraries, particularly selectuniversity libraries initiated to provide appropriate facilities to disabled users.

World Health Organization¹. “any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being”.

Merriam Webster². “a physical, mental, cognitive, or developmental condition that impairs, interferes with, or limits a person’s ability to engage in certain tasks or actions or participate in typical daily activities and interactions”

Oxford Dictionary³. “A physical or mental condition that makes it difficult for somebody to do some things that most other people can do”

The present study covers the libraries of three national and internationally known universities situated in State of Utter Pradesh of India namely BHU, AMU and BBAU in respect of making an assessment and evaluation of the libraries information resources and services designed and developed for the specially-abled users.

2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

(i) To study the types of Information resources of the libraries under study for specially-abled users. (ii) To study the different facilities specially the ICT infrastructure available for specially-abled users. (iii) To study the equipment and devices used by the specially-abled users to access their information resources. (iv) To study what types of online training programs are conducted by the libraries for the specially-abled users of the libraries under study (v) To study the challenges that specially-abled users confront in using library services.

3 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Chaurasia and Singh⁴ comprehensively talked about the assistive technology through which libraries and disabled users can get benefits from assistive technology. The resources and correct use of this assistive technology should be considered by library management. It also calls for the appointment of a specialist to meet the needs of users with impairments. He also puts emphasis on government organisations such as the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the National Knowledge Commission (NKC). Libraries are important collaboration spaces for people with impairments who use different technology.

Nandi, A.⁵ stated that increasing users' population and expansion in education sector, the number of specially-abled library users are increasing. University Librarians should provide them with specific library services even though that may operate independently, effectively, and without difficulty. The author gives an introduction to Equitable University Libraries. The author attempts to shed light on a number of other connected ideas such as disability acts / laws, technological advancement, building structure and barriers.

Patil, R. R., & Kumbar, B. D.⁶ authors get disappointed by the result: 69.77 percent of the information needs of the specially-abled remain unmet, which is really unsatisfactory. The lack of alternate reading materials, special services, and mobility aids with computer access are the key issues that differently abled people encounter. The research concludes with several key recommendations for improving the CCL's library services and infrastructural amenities, in addition to delivering better facilities and strengthening the collection to meet the requirements of people with disabilities.

Daniel and Naazi⁷ said that Academic libraries in Ghana's Upper East Region, have made accommodations for individuals with impairments. The findings showed that university libraries in the Eastern Region of Ghana have failed to implement Ghana's recently enacted Persons with Disabilities Act. They also emphasis on governmental organisations should provide funds and library investments to support the information needs of individuals with disabilities

Chandrakanth, H. G., & Reddy, K. R.⁸ In Karnataka, university libraries has taken measures to create appropriate unique substitutes for specially-abled users. Physical access is given in several libraries in the form of parking spaces, clear walking paths, flexibility of circulation counters, adaptive furnishings, toilets, and so on. First most commonly supplied service in terms of services and connections was staff awareness training and an informational pamphlet, closely followed by postal services.

Khowaja, Sufia & Fatima, Nishat⁹ suggested that libraries should provide training workshops for visually challenged patrons. To efficiently serve visually impaired people, universities should share their resources and collections, and

libraries will be able to attract foreign donors through this system. University Libraries must spend into assistive technology since it is essential for specially-abled people to access information in this era of information. In his findings most of the central universities of India are not providing the basic facilities to visually impaired users.

Khan, K. M., & S, A. K.¹⁰ introductory sessions for the visually impaired should be conducted on a regular basis at libraries. Staff that contact with visually impaired students in libraries should be aware of their requirements. Staff must also be educated on how to utilise assistive technology. This will guarantee that services for the visually impaired run smoothly. Present assistive technology, which consists of a variety of hardware and software solutions, is a boon to visually impaired students and teachers, including researchers, since it allows them to read material instantly and without help.

Kumar Singh, P.¹¹ He highlights the BHU central library's digital resource offerings for visually challenged pupils. Students with visual impairments use digital resource services to obtain higher education. For BHU's visually challenged students, the library has created digital course materials in digital auditory. Visually challenged learners are comfortable with digital course content. He also talked about needs of digital collection for disabled users.

B.Solanki, S., & Mandaliya, S.¹² The current status of library services for specially-abled students by university libraries are currently insufficient. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Federation of Library Association (IFLA) have established recommendations to ensure that everyone, including individuals with disabilities, has access to equitable library services. In this regard, the Indian government and the University Grants Commission (UGC) have established guidelines. The particular equipment, infrastructure, and services that libraries are supposed to offer for impaired..

4 METHODOLOGY

For data collection, different methodologies were used. The most prominent one was the survey method. A structured questionnaire, an interview, and an observation approach were used to collect data from the respondents. Texts, journals and articles, the Internet, official documents, and other documentary sources are deeply reviewed. Apart from this, content analysis of library websites is also used to understand the actual condition of library services. The Sayaji Rao Gaekwad Central Library at BHU, the Maulana Azad Central Library at AMU, and the Gautam Buddha Central Library at BBAU are among the libraries. The obtained data is reviewed and interpreted using diagrammatical (tables and figures) representations.

5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of present study is limited to the special users of university library system which is called specially-abled (physically disabled). This is comprehensive study of select three central university libraries of Uttar Pradesh. Following academic libraries particularly university libraries covered:

(i) Sayaji Rao Gaekwad Central Library at BHU. (ii) Maulana Azad Central Library at AMU. (iii) Gautam Buddha Central Library at BBAU.

The selections of specially-abled users for data collection are based on Disabilities norms as defined by the Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation (MSPI) is considered. (i) Hearing impairment; (ii) Intellectual retardation; (iii) Leprosy-free; (iv) Low vision; (v) Loco-motor handicap; (vi) Mental disease and (vii) Visual impairment.

6 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

61 A BRIEF PROFILE OF SELECT CENTRAL UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Table 1 contains fundamental details of the three libraries, such as their year of establishment and address.

Table 1: Brief Profile of Select Central University Libraries

S.N o.	Library Name	Location	Abbreviation	Year	URL
1	Sayajirao Gaekwad Central Library, BHU	Varanasi	SGL, BHU	1917	https://www.bhu.ac.in/lib/index.html
2	Maulana Azad Central Library, AMU	Aligarh	MAL, AMU	1877	https://www.amu.ac.in/libraries/maulana-azad-library
3	Gautam Buddha Central Library, BBAU	Lucknow	GBL, BBAU	1998	https://www.gbl.bbau.ac.in/

62 LIBRARY USER CATEGORY AND INFORMATION NEEDS

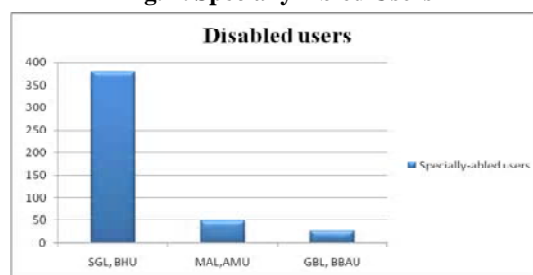
Table 2 shows that the different category of users according to their level of education and it also shows their informational needs and purpose of library visit. Maulana Azad Library, AMU , the Sayajirao Gaekwad Library, BHU and the Gautam Buddha Central Library, BBAU all of these has the collection and accessibility of resources for UG to Research.

Table 2: Library User Category and Information Needs

S.No.	Library User Category	Information Needs and Goals
1	Undergraduate	Need Course related Study material, for project work and assignments, general fascination.
2	Post Graduate	Need Course related Study material, required books and otherreading materials for their project work and assignments, general interests.
3	Research Scholars	Specific in Nature mostly Research and Development in related disciplines.
4	Teachers	They mostly associated with Teaching and research work
5	General Users	They are typically associated with specific and common informational needs.

**63 PERCENTAGE OF LIBRARY USERS WITH SPECIALLY-ABLED
(PHYSICALLY DISABLED)**

Figure 1 shows that the fabrication of library users of select central libraries, the Sayajirao Gaekwad Central Library at BHU has almost 80+ specially-abled users, Maulana Azad Library at AMU has 48+ specially-abled Users, and the Gautam Buddha Central Library at BBAU has 26+ specially-abled users.

Fig. 1: Specially-Abled Users

**64 SPECIALIZED PROFESSIONAL STAFF FOR SERVING THE SPECIALLY-
ABLED USERS**

Following Table 3, the Sayajirao Gaekwad Central Library, BHU and the Maulana Azad Library at AMU has adequate supporting staff for specially-abled users, but the Gautam Buddha central library of BBAU does not have dedicated supporting staff to assist handicap users.

Table 3: Library and specialized staff for assistance of disabled users.

Name of the Library	Yes/No
Sayajirao Gaekwad Central Library, BHU	Yes
Maulana Azad Central Library, AMU	Yes
Gautam Buddha Central Library, BBAU	No

65 UNIVERSITIES LIBRARIES HAVE DIFFERENT WEALTH OF INFORMATION SOURCES.

University libraries aim to meet the needs of its patrons, regardless of their discipline of study. Physically challenged students have a distinct requirement, which in the context of the library includes individuals who are unable to read standard texts. Table 4 highlights the learning resources that a library must provide for physically disabled users.

Table 4: Learning resources and facilities that a library must provide for physically disabled users

S. No	Library	Assistive Technologies	Audio Books	Talking Books	Talking Newspaper	Braille Books	Braille
1	SGL, BHU	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	MAL, AMU	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	GBL, BBAU	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	✓

✓ Means Yes and × means No

As above shown table 4 all the three central university libraries of Uttar Pradesh has perfectly working to fulfill the academic and other informational needs. BHU and AMU's central libraries are one of the best University libraries in India. Gautam Buddha central library of BBAU is also doing perfect to provide best equitable library services to specially-abled users. The Central Library is very well for learners and personnel with disabilities. For PWDs, the library features two ramps on each side of the entrance gates. The library includes two lifts for transferring people from one floor to another, with priority given to PWDs. Above shown informational resources and facilities are not the last and least but these resources are basic facilities for disabled users. Apart from these sources and services there is lots of other advance hardware and software facilities are availed in these select central libraries.

66 UNIVERSITIES LIBRARIES PROVIDING ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR THE SPECIALLY- ABLED.

The investigation examines the assistive devices that libraries purchase for physically challenged patrons special emphasis on visually impaired. Central Library has Next Generation Braille, Screen Reader with Super Nova Software

for Magnifier & Book Reader with Speech, Large Print Key-Board, Clevy Keyboard, Desktop Video Magnifier with Speech (with 17" or above coloured monitor), Computer System with Installation of Speech Software with Internet Connectivity, Refreshable Braille Display (40 cell) with 32 GB SDHC card, Daisy player & Recorder with Hindi TTS, Close-up & Near Distance Digital magnifier with image saving 5HD, Mouse magnifier, Thermoform Machine with 200 Braille on Sheets all of these equipments are well established.

Table 5: Assistive technologies (Hardware and Software) provided by the BHU, AMU and BBAU Central Libraries.

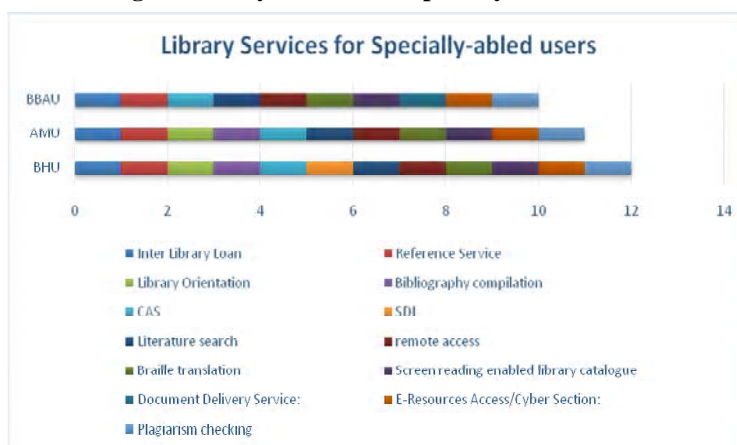
S.No.	Assistive Technologies	SGL,BHU	MAL, AMU	GBL,BBAU
1	Brailler	✓	✓	✓
2	Next Generation Brailler	×	×	✓
	Screen Reader with Super Nova Software for Magnifier & Book Reader with Speech	✓	✓	✓
3	Large Print Key-Board, Clevy Keyboard	✓	✓	✓
4	Desktop Video Magnifier with Speech (with 17" or above coloured monitor)	✓	✓	✓
5	Computer System with Installation of Speech Software with Internet Connectivity, Refreshable Braille Display (40 cell) with 32 GB SDHC card	✓	✓	✓
6	Daisy player & Recorder with Hindi TTS	✓	×	✓
7	Close-up & Near Distance Digital magnifier	×	×	✓
8	Mouse magnifier	✓	✓	✓
9	Thermoform Machine with 200 Braille on Sheets.	×	×	✓
10	Kurzweil reading machine	✓	✓	✓
11	Braille printer	×	✓	×
12	Zoom X scanner	✓	×	×
13	Flatbed scanner	×	✓	×
14	Braille Translation	✓	×	×
15	SARA CE	×	✓	×
16	Digital voice recorder ICUUX70	✓	✓	×
17	Screen magnifiers	✓	✓	×
18	Talk and Zoom	×	✓	×
19	Hindi OCR	×	✓	×
20	OBR Braille Scanning	✓	×	×
21	ABBYY fine reader	×	✓	×
22	Magic Pro Magnification	×	✓	×
23	Dux Bury	×	✓	×
	Total	13	17	11

✓ Means Yes and × means No Above shown data easily

**67 SELECT MAJOR CENTRAL LIBRARY PROVIDE LIBRARY
INFORMATION SERVICES TO SPECIALLY-ABLED USERS**

Develop resources for academics, professors, and researchers in university libraries. The library has structured this material in a systematic manner for patrons to utilise the library sources. The following figure shows diagrammatic representation of the different library services which is provided by the select central university libraries under the study.

Fig. 2: Library Services for Specially-Abled Users



Problems Faced by Specially-Abled users to access library services.

Table 6: Problems Faced by the Specially-Abled Users

S. No.	Problems Faced by the Users
1	Lack of Trained Staff for Specially-abled users.
2	Lack of latest equipments.
3	Lack of Maintenance of assistive hardware and software .
4	Staff behavior.
5	Poor Connectivity of Internet.
6	Non-conducive Environment.
7	Lack of Good Resources.

As above shown key and most common problems that is face by the different specially-abled users of these central university libraries. Finding of the study reveals that AMU and BBAU's central library users are much more satisfied as compare to the SGL, BHU.

7 FINDINGS

The survey findings reveal that BHU and AMU libraries are providing services like Current awareness service (CAS), Remote access service (service

beyond the boundaries of library), and Specialized reference service for specially-abled users, selective dissemination service (SDI), braille translation service and etc. these libraries very well providing library services to its users.

The specially-abled users in Siyajirao Gaekwad central library, BHU have 370+ users and Maulana Azad central library, AMU have 48+ users and Gautam Buddha Central Library in, BBAU have 25+ users. It is just because of it depends on university student strength.

Another important finding of this study is Siyajirao Gaekwad central library users and Maulana Azad central library, AMU has specialized staff to assist specially-abled users. But Gautam Buddha central library, BBAU does not provide specialized staff to specially-abled users.

As we know that universities continuously facing difficulties to serve the users but at the point of view Specially-abled users they facing the some commonly problemsto access library services. Such as lack of proper equipments, lack of physical facilities and lack of informational services.

GBL, BBAU's library is very well performingto serve its specially-abled users. It is very well equipped and building structure is accordingly to specially-abled users.

8 CONCLUSION

The present study reveals that the specially-Abled users have been using the speicalised information resources and customized library services designed and developed by the libraries under study. However, it is also a fact revealed on the basis of evaluation of the facilities and services provided by the libraries under study to the specially-abled users that the ICT facilities are inadequate in term of the developments already taken place in the field of customized gadgets developed by many specialized organizations and industry to facilitate the specially-abled uses and make them more comfortable in accessing the library and information resources, hence, it is found that there is a greater scope for further improvements in terms of technology, facilities, services, and infrastructure for specially-abled users.

The method and system of implementation of the library and information services of the libraries under study need to enhance both resources and services in terms of qualitatively and quantitatively designed and developed services for specially-abled users. Adequate incentives and encouragements also could be provided to the staff of BHU and AMU libraries. The BBAU library need to have skilled staff which at present is not available in this library so that whatever library resources are available in the library for specially-abled users could be provided to them to the utmost level of satisfaction. A few advanced level professional activities like training and orientation programs, workshops, community programs, and extension services are becoming necessary for updating knowledge, developing expert skills in using the library resources

and facilities designed and developed by the libraries over the years for the specially-abled users.

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