A Study to Assess the variety of services providing by public libraries to disabiled people in Selected Districts of Costal A.P.

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Abstract

In a society, all people have the right to benefit from all the rights and opportunities provided by nature, society and the state. In addition, the people and the state must provide this right to everyone. But it has been noted that some people cannot enjoy those rights properly and equally due to the loss of functional capacity resulting from the impairment of organ which causes physical or mental disability. Disabled persons are therefore often being neglected in a society in spite of their disability. Most of the disabled persons in the world live in villages and belong to poor communities where they never see a rehabilitation expert. But this does not always mean that they have not gone through the process of rehabilitation. In many villages and homes, family members, local artists, doctors and disabled people found ways to rehabilitate disabled people and enable them to move more easily.

Key Words: Andhra Pradesh, Government, disabilities, public libraries

Introduction

Disabled persons of India have been subjected to direct and indirect discrimination for centuries. They need to pass legislation that will eliminate discrimination against them. As human rights groups gain attention and are followed by observers at home and abroad, more and more countries are actively developing policies that benefit people with disabilities.

To bring disabled village children into the main stream of the society, each and every one has equal role to play. In order to provide equal opportunity and to protect rights of persons with disabilities, different legislation and acts have been passed Such as**"Rehabilitation Council Act"1992, Person with disabilities (equal opportunities, protection of Rights of Full participation) Act 1995, "National Trust Act"1998.** These acts provide number of benefits, concession and reservation for the disabled persons. It is our foremost duty to create an awareness among the village people about information for disabled persons. In this connection it is to be stated here that "On February 7, 2013, the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Mr. Mallikarjun Kharge introduced the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2014 in the Union Assembly. This bill repeals the Persons with Disabilities (Protection of Rights, Integration and Full Participation) Act 1995.

It is clear that a society must have the necessary infrastructure to provide adequate education to everyone, and libraries and educational institutions are important tools in this regard. Libraries can never provide more information to all of us, through libraries people can get books, magazines, newspapers, magazines, newspapers, nature, newspapers, scientific journals etc. they can acquire and contribute to the improvement of people's lives. Today, with the emergence of digital libraries, manuscripts are stored in digital format and can be accessed via computers. Each & everyday, a library meets different groups of people in question for their knowledge. Gradually people from the disabled group tried to come in the limelight of the society's main stream. The uses of libraries by such group have been increasing recently all over the world. Parents of disabled persons also should have access to such libraries & information centres for the development of their disabled member/person.

Mainly the library is committed to be self-evident in providing a learning environment which supports the information needs of every part of the society. But the manager of every regional library must consider two things: services and equipment. The quality and quantity of libraries in each region will vary greatly. Librarians and library staff can do their part and undoubtedly carry out the socialization process of individuals with disabilities.

In this study, I have attempted to highlight the different aspects of disabled persons including their social, mental, physical and educational condition. I have tried to get the overview of the following areas in my research topic on "**Role of libraries for the empowerment of disabled people with special reference to the selected areas of Kostaandhra, a region of Andhra Pradesh.**

1. Whether all the services prescribed for the disabled persons are available at the libraries & information centres of Kostaaandhra or not,
2. Whether these services are effective or not,

3. What type of new services are to be implemented for their sake,

4. What type of policies are to be framed for providing such services to them,

5. What are the drawbacks in implementing such policies,

6. Whether the financial help from the Government is available or not,

7. In what extent NGOs or Governments organizations (central, state or rural) are eager to provide support for such implementation.
8. How to get back them to the main stream of livelihood by providing proper services.

ABOUT THE AREA:

Andhra Pradesh is a state in the southern coastal region of India. It is the seventh-largest state with an area of 162,970 km^2 (62,920 sq mi) and the tenth-most populous state with 49,577,103 inhabitants. It has shared borders with Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and the Bay of Bengal. It has the second-longest coastline in India at about 974 km (605 mi). After existence as Andhra State and unified Andhra Pradesh, the state took its present form on 2 June 2014, when the new state of Telangana was formed through bifurcation. Amaravati is the capital of the state, with the largest city being Visakhapatnam. Telugu, one of the classical languages of India used by the majority of people, is the first official language.

The state of Andhra Pradesh has 26 districts spread across three cultural regions: Uttaraandhra, Kostaandhra and Rayalaseema.

Uttaarandhra consists of Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Parvathipuram Manyam, Alluri Sitharama Raju, Visakhapatnam and Anakapalli districts.

Kostaandhra comprises Kakinada, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Konaseema, East Godavari, WestGodavari, Eluru, Krishna, NTR, Guntur, Palnadu, Bapatla, Prakasam and Sri Potti Sriramulu Nellore districts.

Rayalaseema consists of Kurnool, Nandyal, Anantapuramu, Sri Sathya Sai, YSR, Annamayya, Tirupati and Chittoor districts.

Geographical profile of Kostaandhra:

Coastal Andhra or **Kostandhra** is a geographic region in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. Vijayawada is the largest city in this region. Region share borders with Uttarandhra, Rayalaseema and Telangana. It was part of Madras State before 1953 and Andhra State from 1953 to 1956. According to the 2011 census, it has an area of 91,915 square kilometres (35,489 sq mi) which is 57.99% of the total state area and a population of

34,193,868 which is 69.20% of Andhra Pradesh state population. This area includes the coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh on the Circar Coast between the Eastern Ghats and the Bay of Bengal, from the northern border with Odisha to Rayalaseema in the south.

Coastal Andhra is a fertile region suitable for agriculture, which is facilitated by the rivers Godavari, Krishna and Penna. The prosperity of Coastal Andhra can be attributed to its rich agricultural land and an abundant water supply from these three rivers. Rice grown in paddy fields is the main crop, with pulses and coconuts also being important. The fishing industry is also important to the region.

The area had a total population of 34,195,655 as per 2011 Census of India. Coastal Andhra is predominantly Hindu (around 93%). Estimates of the Christian population are around 1.51% of the Coastal Andhra population. The main and most spoken language is Telugu.

Kuchipudi is the classical dance form of the state, which was originated in the Kuchipudi village of Krishna district.

Rice is the staple food in the coastal cuisine and is usually consumed with a variety of curries and lentil soups or broths. The cuisine of Coastal Andhra is influenced by various seafood varieties.

LIBRARIES IN KOSTAANDHRA:

There are Almost 178 Libraries in Andhra Pradesh as of January 09, 2024

BACKGROUND:

My thrust area covers the various aspects of disabled persons with proper information support. For this purpose, I have made a survey of villages located in the area of kostaandhra region in Andhra Pradesh. I have found that disabled persons of this area do not have proper opportunities and there are no choices to improve their quality of life. The benefits of services offered by the government and non-government organizations towards the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities are not being fully availed by the target group due to lack of awareness among the community.

Objectives of the study:
The following objectives are taken into consideration:

1. To assess the variety of services providing by public libraries in kostaandhra region in Andhra Pradesh to the people with disability
2. To know the trained qualified library staffs for assisting the disabled people in the libraries.
3. To identify the level of existence of library & information centres at the locality of disabled persons.

SCOPE & COVERAGE OF THE STUDY:
Obviously, there cannot be any development if there is no proper information. Neither the government nor the libraries can do miracles. Their efforts have to be supplemented by the people living in villages. In fact, a village can progress only when every resident tries to develop him or herself. Information support is therefore required not only the organization level, but also at the individual level. While organization requires basic & background information for drawing and implementing realistic development scheme the citizens require information about education, healthcare & their avocation to improve their life. Such information support is awfully inadequate in our country. It may be mentioned that the information which are normally required for socio-economic development of any area are of two categories:

1. Information that is pivotal to the question of economic & social development

2. Information that has been generated for the different purposes but which is relevant to the aims & objectives of the development of community.

For providing the necessary support required for disabled persons, a proper information infrastructure has to be developed. This includes development of appropriate

1. Information products & services

2. Information Dissemination   mechanisms

Information dissemination is solely dependent on the availability of information product & services. Little efforts are made to collect the scattered primary information which is of vital importance. We still have to depend on age old product & services of the second kind. This naturally cannot provide the needed information support resulting in very slow progress of disabled development.

Even if required, information product & services are available these cannot reach the end users unless there is a good mechanism. Information needed for disabled persons" development are disseminated by various agencies either through formal publication or through designated official such as Gram Sevakas, Health worker & some NGOs or through Library & Information Centers. But the mechanism are not well established and well developed. As a result, the available information often does not reach the end user at proper time.

In this study 6 distructs in kostaandhra region of Andhra Pradesh state were selected to carry out this research work. The selection of these districts was based on two major reasons. The first reason is that these districts are under-privilege to a great extent and there is no proper information about disabled persons. Hence there is a remote possibility of getting any information about the Government Schemes.

Other major reason for the selection is based on the convenience sake for conducting such a study under local cooperation.

The known popular libraries are:They arranged various identification camps and numerous children come from these blocks; the sample of the study has been drawn from several families of all the blocks.

In order to provide necessary support required for disabled persons, a proper information infrastructure has to be developed. Even if, required information products & services are available, these cannot reach to the end users unless there is a good mechanism.

The selection of the particular area was based on two purposes. Firstly, the above mentioned blocks are not properly developed and hardly there is any adequate information about disabled persons. Another major reason is that the researcher is very much acquainted with the particular area of study.
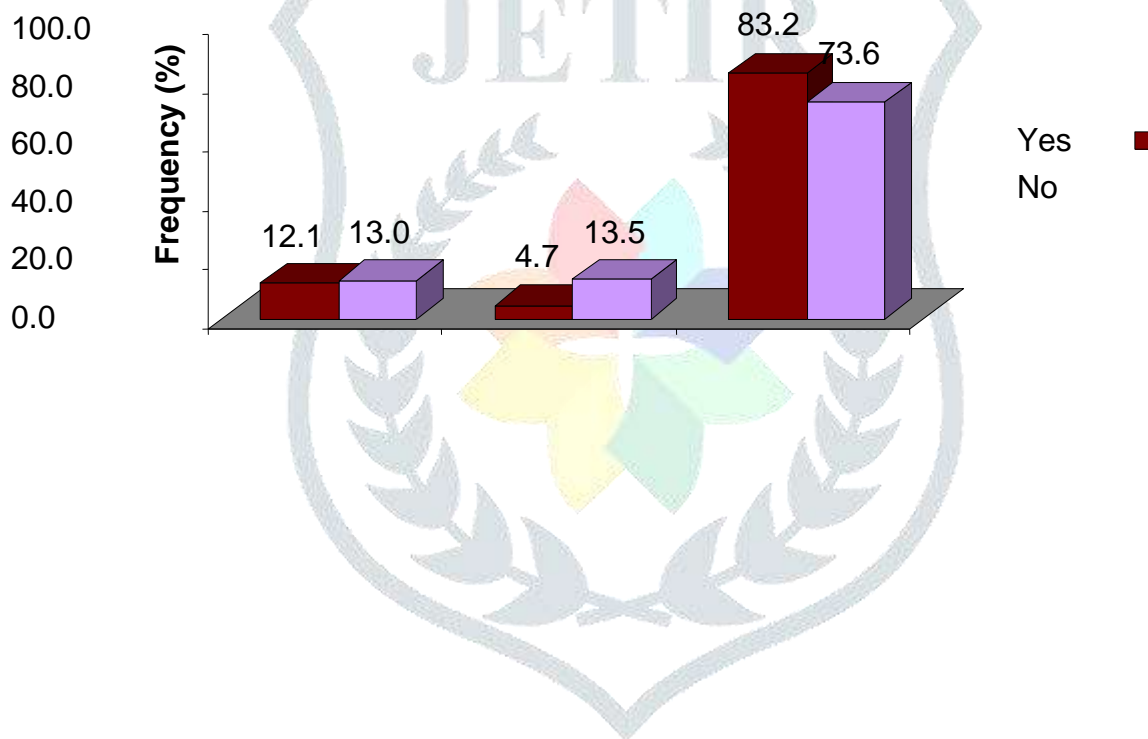
The scope of the present study is concerned with the analysis of the response of the disabled persons during the period 2020-2024, which would support and sustain the present scenario of the existing condition of the kostaandhra region, for the disabled persons and formation their future & career empowerment with the supports of Libraries, family, government & NGOs etc.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 5.4: Distribution of any aid/support from Government/NGO of

disabled people (n=1300)

Aid/Support from Government/NGO	Visual		Hearing		Locomoto		Total		χ^2 value	p value
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%		
Yes	3	2.1	5	4.7	89	83.2	07	85.7	6.02	0.049
No	25	3.0	26	3.5	42	73.6	93	64.3		

Disability wise distribution of any aid/support from Government/NGO to disabled people

Frequency (%)

100.0
80.0
60.0
40.0
20.0
0.0

12.1   13.0   4.7   13.5   83.2   73.6

Yes ■
No

Visual   Hearing   Locomotor

Fig. 4.4. Disability wise distribution of any aid/support from Public Libraries by disabled people.

Table 5.4 summarised the distribution of any aid/support got from public libraries to disabled people. A total, only 107 (35.7%) disabled people aid/support from public libraries of which 12.1% were visual, 4.7% were hearing and 83.2% were locomotor. Whereas 64.3 % disabled people never got any help from the public libraries.

Comparing the frequency of aid/support from libraries of three groups, chi-square (χ^2) test showed significantly different frequency of aid/support from public libraries among the group
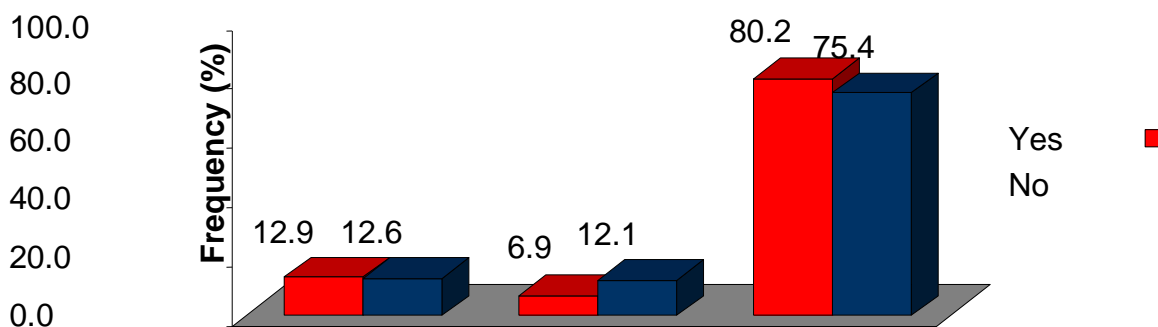
(χ^2=6.02, p=0.049).

Awareness about rehabilitation home

Table 5.5: Distribution of awareness about rehabilitation home among disabled people (n=1300)

	Visual		Hearing		Locomotor		Total		χ^2 value	p value
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%		
Yes	13	12.9	7	6.9	81	80.2	101	33.7	1.91	0.384
No	25	12.6	24	12.1	150	75.4	199	66.3		

Disability wise distribution of awareness about rehabilitation home among disabled PEOPLE

Visual   Hearing   Locomotor

Fig. 5.5. Disability wise distribution of awareness about rehabilitation home

Table 5.5 shows the distribution of awareness about rehabilitation home among disabled people.
A total, 107 (35.7%) disabled people had awareness about rehabilitation home of which 12.9%
were visual, 6.9% were hearing and 80.2% were locomotors working disabled people.

Library Buildings for Persons with Disability

we can assume that, the buildings of most of the public libraries have been designed and
developed after 2000s, which is a good sign in perspective of serving persons with disabled.

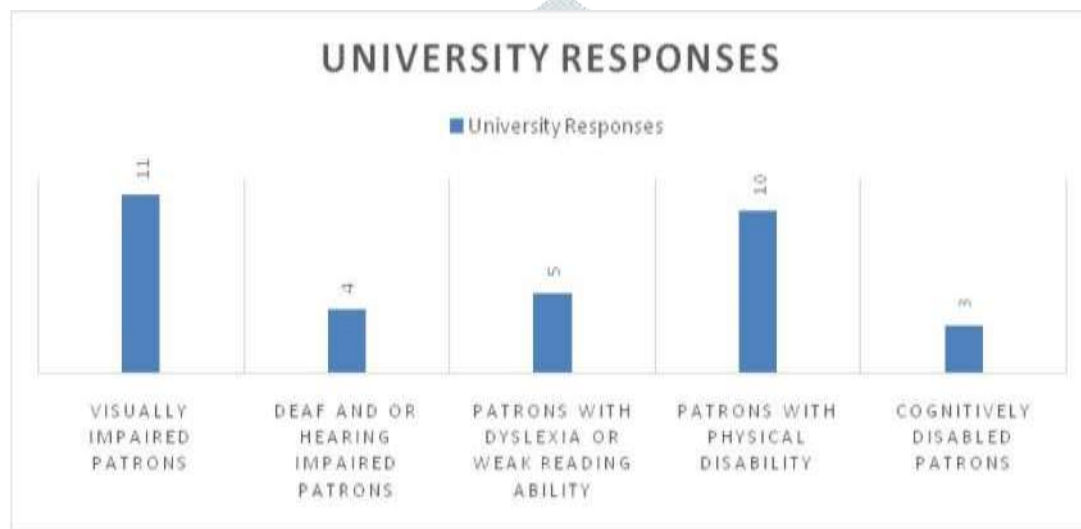**Library Buildings for Persons with Disability**

	Number of Libraries	Per Cent
Fully Friendly Building	08	57.14
Partial Friendly Building	04	28.57
Not Friendly	02	4.29

Out of total selected libraries more than 50% of libraries (57.14%) have fully friendly building
for persons with disability. However, 20% of libraries are partially friendly building for the
persons with disability. Only 20% of libraries , who are currently developing, have responded
about   non- compatible for the person with disability, which will be obviously develop its
infrastructure as and when their building come in the full functional shape.

Type of Dis ability / Service or facility	Large Print	Tape/ DAISY CD/DVD	Braille	Web site	Videos with subtitles / sign lanuage	Text Telephone	Esay to read
VISUAL	X	X	X	X			
HEARING				X	X	X	X
Locomotor	X	X		X	X	X	X
SPEECH		X		X	X		X

MENTALLY RETARTED		X		X		
Multiple disability		X		X		X

The above Table shows various types of assisting technologies required by different types of disability group persons. The Table visualizes that the person with visually impaired persons need large printing aid, Tape/Daisy/CD/DVD formats, Braille books and website assisting tools. However, on the other side, the person with cognitively disability will be requiring to get tools based on Tape/Daisy/CD/DVD formats, website based assistive tools and easy to read formats.

The responses visualize that out of fourteen law university libraries, eleven libraries are well versed to serve patrons with visually impaired patrons. However, libraries of ten law universities consent serving patrons with physical disability. However, special services for deaf and hearing impaired patrons are provided by four libraries. Rest of the disabilities like dyslexia or weak reading ability and cognitively disabled are supported to serve to five and three libraries respectively.

Conclusion:

The study emphasizes over a number of efforts made by public libraries India within the sphere of laws enacted by parliaments to support disabled. The efforts of public libraries are commendable to implement a number of assistive technologies in lieu of services to special class of patrons. The study of public libraries suggests a number of points to support executing services to serve best to persons with disabilities. Responses from selected regions in costal andhra state that Special space with all types of digital tools to access library is important for this category of users. However, suggestions from the public libraries of krishna, Guntur and Nellore districts, states that the software, equipment and infrastructure and acquiring of E-recourses including E-books are must to better serving persons with disability. On the other side, the library at Vijayawada and Nellore suggests that the Library should offer Internet classes or workshops for visually impaired patrons and library staff for best services to persons with disabilities. However, the library at Guntur agrees that a Separate library section, for persons with various

disabilities, having sitting facility with connected washrooms; Computers with hearing aids, Reading Content/Books etc. & Brail Books for the visually disabled persons must be in plan while designing library building. A library professional must serve their clientele with disabilities supporting sayings of

Vikas Khanna "Disability is the ability to see ability" and the disabled persons contribute the world more with their super vision which a normal person cannot pensive. Obviously for the society and world, "never ignore somebody with a disability, you don't realize how much they can inspire us".