Availability, Condition and Management of Necessary Resources for Vision Impaired Kids in Public Sector Special Education Organizations of Punjab Pakistan

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**ARTICLE DETAILS**

**ABSTRACT**

**Objective:** Without the necessary facilities and service no special education institution can achieve its predetermined targets this study is an effort to explore the availability and condition of necessary facilities and services for children with vision impairment in government special education institutions of Punjab.

**Methodology:** It was descriptive quantitative research by nature. Survey method was applied to take information about availability and present condition of necessary facilities and services from randomly selected 53 government special education institutions situated in 28 districts in all over the Punjab. The data was collected using a personally formulated, validated likert-type opinioned. Chronbach alpha has been applied to assess the instrument's reliability and the result was 0.81. The one checklist was responded by any accessible official from each institution. Most of the respondents were teachers. Principle author collected data personally. Researchers used descriptive and inferential statistics for the sake of data collection.

**Findings:** The findings show that some provisions and services, such as free education and a monthly stipend, are adequately provided in public sector organizations for special kids. But, a significant number of essential facilities and services are either absent or in subpar condition in most of the academic organizations working for special kids. Such as the availability of ramps and stairs, easy to use computer lab & library for visually challenged students, and books in Braille when needed, etc.

**Implications:** According to a study, government special education institutions should promptly provide all essential resources and services. Additionally, it’s important to maintain and use effectively the facilities that are available.

**Introduction**

All educational institutions have to provide some necessary facilities and services to facilitate the learners so that they can achieve their academic goals in more effective and productive manner. In other words, without essential arrangements students cannot acquire firm foundation for their prominent performance and academic progress. As Savaci and Tomul (2013), Describe how the educational resources of schools are crucial for reducing the impact of socioeconomic characteristics on academic success and providing all students with equal provision.

The significance of necessary facilities and services, assistive technology and essential arrangements becomes higher in a special education institution because children with special needs cannot take even a single step towards their academic destination without such provisions. Moreover, it would be better to say that the provision of need-based facilities and services is considered as the vehicle in which children with different abilities start their academic journey towards their destination. As Ahmed (2018) further explained, students with disabilities may find assistance technology to be a useful and supportive tool. It aids in the creation of memorable educational experiences for both teachers and students. The researcher firmly believes that every person can learn and develop their academic abilities, but that in order to do so; they must have access to a learning environment.

A study found that institutional barriers like effective teaching methods used in deaf education, the provision of required resources, Students with hearing related challenges had difficulties with instruction, reading curriculum materials, and other aspects of their academic performance. (Mantey, Cobbina, & Hamenoo, 2017). On the other hand, the absence of necessary facilities and services creates a lot of challenges for students with special needs.

Vision impairment is also a common disability child with vision impairment has several unique learning needs. Without adequate and in time fulfillment of such needs children with vision impairment cannot achieve their academic goals. The only way in which these needs could be fulfilled the effective, sufficient and in time provision of all necessary facilities and services. According to the study conducted by, Sefat, Rostami, Amani and Movallali (2016), cooperation, a decrease in low socio economic status, and an improvement in the quality of life for visually challenged learners are all made possible by improving the services offered to individuals having vision limitations in accordance with the adaptation of services to their needs. In this scenario, it was an intense need to conduct some comprehensive studies to explore and evaluate the provision of necessary facilities and services in special education institutions time to time. So that flaws and gaps could be identified and situation could be improved. The current study aims to investigate and assess the availability of essential necessary provisions and resources for kids with vision impairment in state-run special education facilities in Punjab, PK. In this way it is an important study which tries to improve the quality of resources and need based facilities for children with vision impairment in government special education institutions.

**Review of Related Literature**

Educational institutions play significantly important role in the progress and prosperity of a country and nation building. But it is also a fact that no educational institution can survive, sustain and becomes successful without provision of some human and material resources. It can be also said that, without sufficient availability of need-based resources, the quality of an academic organizations and performance of its learners would be compromised. In contrast, an adequate
supply of desired resources assures the significant boost in success rate of pupils. According to Ramli and Zain (2020), a number of factors were important to the academic success of students, including E-learning of System organization, educational equipments and supportive environment of library, residential accommodations, Recreational opportunities and Parking, and Transportation of Infrastructure. The sum of all the variables was about 51.5% of the students' success.

Moreover, many studies elaborated several important factors of discussion about the provision of necessary resources in an educational institution as Gibbs (2017), in this way, it is stressed that teachers need the tools and materials that will allow them to provide fruitful coaching and acquiring knowledge applying diversified strategies and treatments. Instructional arrangements in the lecture hall can support result oriented and individualized learning. In other words, the availability of necessary resources is a requirement for result oriented tutoring.

The system of instruction known as special education provides specially created lessons and the essential arrangements to fulfill the individual learning needs of students with students having special needs. Additionally, helping aids makes it easier for students with special needs to learn. A large-scale study explains the benefits of helping gadgets for kids having impairments. Educational institutions, families, and instructors frequently advocate for assistive technologies as tools to help students with special needs by offering a compensatory value, to address learning issues, and to encourage self-reliance. Simple spellcheckers, sophisticated speech detecting programs, and e-learning are all examples of such helping tools. The majority of studies found consistently better results, according to the findings. (Moar, Currie, & Drewry, 2011).

Moreover, Peterson-Karlan (2013), supported the above findings in such way assistive technology is a great equalizer in a classroom with diverse learners because it helps the special learners by: assisting them to access school, empowering the special learner to perform physical activities normally, enabling teachers to individualize instructions, and helping teachers in developing effective teaching learning resources. In the same way Rabonye (2020), proved the same reality in another aspect as follows the use of assistive technology has made learning more meaningful in the inclusive education system. Although the importance of necessary facilities and services has been proven for children with special needs but all special education institutions are not equal according to the provision of necessary facilities and services as Lersilp, Putthinoi, and Chakpitak (2015), reported that a category of assistive technologies was provided for students with disabilities, with the highest being "services", followed by "media" and then "facilities". Furthermore, mostly students with physical disabilities were provided with assistive technologies, but those with visual disabilities needed it more.

In the same scenario, Al-Zoubi (2013), told that the goal of his research was to determine the productivity of special education organizations in accordance with worldwide standards. Only one of the eight domains’ programmes and services had a high competence level, in the light of achievement rate. The other three, academic situation, judgment, and management as well as faculty, had average success rate. The other four further disciplines—vision and mission, family cooperation, inclusion and transitional services, and self-assessment—level of poor grade efficiency.

The aim of this study was to assess the effectiveness of institutions and centers of special education according to international standards.
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In addition, many special education institutions working in underdeveloped countries have severe lacks about the provision of necessary facilities, services and assistive technologies. As an other study reveals that specialist teachers were inadequate in mainstreamed public schools in Southwestern Nigeria. Inadequate provision of facilities and materials to mainstreamed public schools would lead to poor academic performances of students with special educational needs. Impact of facilities on academic performance of students with special needs in mainstreamed public schools in Southwestern Nigeria - FAREO Dorcas Oluremi, OJO Olakunbi Olubukola - 19 April 2012. Impact of facilities on academic performance of students with special needs in mainstreamed public schools in Southwestern Nigeria - Oluremi - 2013 - Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs - Wiley Online Library

Meanwhile, many studies elaborate the situation about the provision of necessary facilities and services in special schools of Pakistan as Tassawar and Khurshid (2019), stated that there is lack of facilities in the special education centers, desired services according to the needs of special children are also missing in many centers. It was reported that in many centers furniture fixture and physical infrastructure were not disabled responsive. There is insufficienty of assistive devices and staff (Teaching and non-teaching staff). Similar to this, Khatoon (2019) revealed some information about the vocational training that is offered in Pakistan's institutions for kids with disabilities, showing that institutions include it in their regular curriculum. Prevocational classes are typically taught in primary schools, and vocational classes are taught in secondary schools. However, why don't all the schools have staff members who have received training in career counseling, career evaluation, and job placement?

On the other hand, it is also a reality that the number special schools working for children with vision impairment is significantly low than the number of special schools serving for other disabilities as Nazz and Sulman (2012), reveal thamajority of the special school in Karachi are working in the area of mental retardation (37%), followed by schools for children with sensory impairment, means hearing and visual impairment (18%). Additionally, Malik shared that the study's novelty lies in its choice of the cultural situation of Pakistan, a developing nation where social care and training to global standards are still not offered to the general public who have eyesight related challenges. (Malik, Kalthom, Manaf, Ahmad, & Ismail, 2018).

Objectives
To verify the provision of numerous essential resources for kids having sight related challenges in public sector special institutions of Punjab.
To assess the types and conditions of resources and services offered to kids with vision impairment public special education institutions.
To locate the top-notch, well-kept facilities and services for kids with vision impairment.
4. To illustrate the facilities and services for kids with vision impairment those are the least accessible and poorly managed in Punjab's public special education organization.
Research Questions
Are special institutions organized by provincial government having sufficient resources to accommodate children with vision impairment?
What is the nature and conditions of existing resources in Punjab public sectors special education organizations offer to kids having with vision impairment?
Which are the best available and well-maintained provided resources for children with vision impairment in government special education organization?
Which are the least available and poorly maintained facilities and services for learners having sight related challenges?

Research process
The study in your hand was carried out to determine the availability and condition of necessary facilities and services for kids having low vision and blindness studying at primary level in government special education institutions of Punjab. It was descriptive research in its nature and quantitative research approach was adopted to collect and analyze the data. Moreover, survey method was executed to determine the availability and condition of necessary facilities and services for children with vision impairment studying at primary level in 53 randomly selected government special education institutions from all four zones of Punjab. Survey method was preferred as Creswell said that survey grants more authentic data to judge a program or services particularly in educational institutions (Creswell 2012). The availability and condition of necessary facilities and services for kids with vision impairment in government special education institutions were assessed using a self-created validated likert type assessment tool. Infect, the principal author conducted this study as a component of his doctoral research.

Sampling Technique
As it is said that current study is a component of a broad-spectrum doctoral study. So multistage stage sampling strategy was carried out. At first stage the 36 districts of Punjab were distributed in four sectors randomly. At second stage convenient sampling approach was applied to conduct this survey due to the particular circumstances. In-fact the several districts of Punjab were under lock down during this study because of dangerous ratio of Covid-19. Therefore, a large number of institutions were closed. Proportionate of selected institutions from each sector is as follows. sector1 7 institutions (13.2%), sector 2, frequency 26 (49.1%), sector 3, frequency 8 (15.1%), sector 4 frequency 12 (22.6%). Total number of available institutions 53.

Instruments of the Study
A self-developed validated likert type questionnaire named “Checklist of available facilities and services for children with visual impairment at primary level” was applied to depict the situation about availability and status of necessary resources for visually challenged students in public sector special education organizations. This instrument was comprised on two parts. Part-I had five items about the demographic information of institution and data provider. While part-II had thirty-one items about the availability and condition of necessary facilities and services. The quality of services was rated using a five-point Likert scale that ranged from accurate to.

Validity and Reliability
A council of five professionals with extensive experience in the domain of visual impairment validated the questionnaire. Chrombach alpha was used to assess reliability, and the result was 0.81.
Data Collection
The first writer of the paper gathered all the data personally by his visits of special education institutions however due to corona lock down he filled checklists about some institution by telephonic conversation.

Data Analysis
Percentages, mean scores and frequency distribution were executed to analyzed the data ANOVA was carried out to see the differences among demographic characteristics of institutions and respondents.

Finding and Results
Frequency distribution of districts from all 4 zones in which data were collected
Data were obtained from total 28 districts out of 36 districts in the province of Punjab. The biggest number of institutions 7 (13.2%) were taken from district Lahore whereas only 1 institution was taken (1.9%) from 12 districts of Punjab.

Frequency distribution of responses about various facilities and services for children with vision impairment in government special education institutions

Table: 1
Frequency distribution of responses about Purposely Built building

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No</th>
<th>Available Facilities</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Least restrictive buildings</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

28.3% respondents claimed that there institutions have excellent purposely built building. However, 22.6% respondents informed that there institutions have not purposely built building.

Table: 2
Frequency distribution of responses about availability of slope and ramps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No</th>
<th>Available Facilities</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Slopes/elevators</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20.8% respondents reported that their institutions have excellent provision of slope and ramp facility. On the other hand, almost double of this amount 41.5% respondents depicted that there is no slop and ramp facility in their institutions.

Table: 3
Frequency distribution of responses about Accessible washrooms for handicapped children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No</th>
<th>Available Facilities</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Accessible toilets for students with impairments</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17% respondents revealed that their institutions have excellent facility of Accessible washrooms for handicapped students. While 26.4% respondents asserted that their institutions have not accessible washrooms for handicapped children.

Table: 4
Frequency distribution of responses about Accessible library for VI students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No</th>
<th>Available Facilities</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Accessible library for low vision and blind learners</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 3% respondents shared that 5 their institutions have excellent Accessible library for VI students. Whereas 66% respondents clearly stated that there is no Accessible library for VI students in their institutions.
It is a good sign that 50% respondents said that their institutions have excellent Pick and drop services for students. But 9.4% respondents still reported that there is no pick and drop facility in their institution.

Just 11.3% respondents showed that their institutions have excellent facility of Accessible computer lab for VI students. But 60.4% respondents completely denied such provision.

11.3% respondents said that there is excellent provision of Magnifying devices in their institutions. Although 41.5% respondents denied the presence of magnifying devices.

24.5% respondents narrated confidently their institution have excellent provision of Accessible playground. But at the same time 22.6% respondents bluntly said that there is no Accessible playground in their institutions.

Only 7.5% of respondents said that their institutions provided excellent vocational training. However, 37.7% of respondents stated that their institutions do not offer VI students any kind of vocational training.

There is an interesting situation about the In time availability of Braille books in special education institutions of Punjab where 18.9% respondents reported that there is excellent situation about In time availability of books. There are 28.3% respondents boldly said that Braille books are not provided in time in their institutions.
Table: 11
Frequency distribution of responses about Free of cost education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No</th>
<th>Available Facilities</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Education without any charges</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>84.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It’s one of the achievements of Punjab special education department 84.9% respondents informed happily there is excellent situation about the provision of free education in their institutions. While not even a single respondent said that free of cost education is not available in their institutions.

Table: 12
Frequency distribution of responses about monthly stipend

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No</th>
<th>Available Facilities</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Monthly stipend</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>77.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It’s another appreciable initiative by Punjab special education department that 77.4% respondents emphasized that their institutions have excellent facility of monthly stipend whereas very little number of respondents 1.9% told that monthly stipend facility is not available in their institutions.

Table: 13
Frequency distribution of responses about Scholarships for needy students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No</th>
<th>Available Facilities</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Financial reward for learners belonging from poor families</td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11.3% respondents narrated that there is excellent provision of Scholarships for needy students in their institutions. However, the heavy majority of respondents 71.7% denied such provision.

Table: 14
Frequency distribution of responses about Scholarships for outstanding students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No</th>
<th>Available Facilities</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Financial reward for high achievers</td>
<td>69.8</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 3.8% respondents claimed that there is excellent provision Scholarships for outstanding students in their institutions. Although 69.8% respondents disagreed with their claim.

Discussion
There are a number of research artifacts in the body of knowledge that this study is relevant to. The current study discovered a lack of adequate human and material resources and discovered infrastructure barriers for kids with various abilities. These results are in line with those of Hafeez (2019), who stated that these are inconsistent political budgetary restraints, economics, and social attitudes. These difficulties lead to problems with administrative, infrastructural, and human resource management, which in turn result in ineffective special education policy implementation. Similar to how the current study details the excellent provision of monthly stipend and free uniform to students with special needs, it also highlights the appalling state of many facilities, including the provision of accessible restrooms for children with disabilities, an accessible library and computer lab, and timely availability of Braille books. These results back up the claims made by Thakur and Abbas (2017), who claimed that although the Punjab Government had taken a number of initiatives, they were being proportionately much more severely hampered in their implementation. This study also highlights the serious shortcomings in current vocational education, and the results support Khatoon's (2019) suggestion that special education institutions upgrade their vocational staff. Additionally, Omar, Mohammed, Knight, and Boptim (2009) provided some information regarding the use of low vision devices in Malaysian special schools in this manner. According to
Omar, Mohammed, Feizal, and Basrul (2009), the majority of children attending blind schools had residual vision but did not have low vision aids. The current study confirmed this in the context of special education facilities operating in Punjab, Pakistan. Only 41.5 percent of special education institutions have access to low vision aids. This discussion could be concluded by saying that on the one hand, the current study is a continuation of earlier research, and on the other, it is a thorough compilation of numerous earlier studies with significant upgrades.

**Conclusion**

For children with vision impairment, Punjabi special education institutions provide some of the necessary facilities and services. A significant number of respondents expressed their extreme level dissatisfaction with the provision of various necessary facilities like slopes and ramps, an accessible library for VI students, an accessible computer lab, low vision devices, timely availability of Braille books, vocational training, mobility training, and provision of free education, monthly stipends, and pick-up and drop-off services. Furthermore, there are facilities that are required in many institutions, but their upkeep and current state are not satisfactory.

**Recommendations**

Essential facilities like purposely built buildings, slope and ramps, accessible and well-maintained playground, accessible washrooms for handicap students, accessible library and accessible computer lab for VI students should be provided in all special education institutions.

In time availability of Braille books should be assured.

Scholarships for needy students and outstanding performers should be granted other than monthly stipend.

Pick and drop service maybe enhanced and upgraded for all students’ even children living in peripheral areas.

Vocational training and mobility training should be reorganized according to the international standards.

Furthermore, available facilities should also be well maintained and properly utilized.

**References**


