Perception of Teachers about Educational Provisions for Students with Disability in Higher Education Institution

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Abstract: Higher education system is an important stage to create a knowledge based society. So higher education should access all types of students, especially differently able student though it provide employment, social inclusion and poverty improvement. For the first time Indian government enacted legally the right of access the PWD Act, 1995. With reference to gaps revealed from the past researches in the area of inclusive education in general and educational facilities for students with disability in particular, the study seeks to obtain the perceptions of teachers about availability of educational facilities/provisions for students with disability in higher education institutions and whether the students come across with any problem in accommodation with environment over different areas of educational facilities like enrolment process, environmental accessibility, curriculum and teaching learning material, transaction mode of classroom learning, student support services, examination procedure and placement facilities. Descriptive survey procedure was employed in carrying out the study. A sample of 50 teachers, who were directly or indirectly come to the contact with students with disability, were selected through purposive sampling technique from varied departments of Ravenshaw University, Cuttack. The tools such as questionnaire for teachers and observation schedule to observe the availability of facilities in the campus were developed for collection of data. Both quantitative (percentage analysis) and qualitative (thick description) techniques were followed for analysis of the data. The findings revealed that majority of teachers (76%) responded by agreed with the policy that was being followed by institution though it was the enactment of PWD Act-1995. Majority (80%) of teachers

viewed that there were special facilities in hostel and (14%) viewed there were no hostel facilities for students with disabilities i.e. there were no separate hostel with special facilities for them but it was observed by the researcher that though there were no separate hostel for them in general hostel no establishment fees have been taken from them. The facility of Flexible space for mobilization & special library were available as majority (>60%) of teachers reported. Majority of teachers (>80%) viewed that elevators/lifts & special; laboratory were not there. There were very small number (26 %) of respondent viewed about availability of Special TLM corner and majority of teacher revealed non availability of those facilities. It was observed by the researcher that there is a special library in the institution but the materials are not sufficient to meet the needs of all students. and 66.67% viewed negligible. Majority of teachers (>70%) viewed annual function, debate and song competitions were organised for SWD.

Keywords: Educational Facilities, Perception, Students with Disability, Teachers of Higher Education Institution.

Introduction

The term inclusive education formally introduced at the UNESCO world conference held in Spain in 1994. Inclusive education should create opportunities for all learners to work together. This requires the recognition that learning is enhanced when individuals with different abilities, skills and aspirations can work together in a joint enterprise (Aspis, 2000). Thus inclusive education is concerned with providing appropriate responses to the broad range of learning needs in formal and non formal education settings. It is an approach that looks into how to transform education system in order to response diverse needs of the students. The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and full Participation) Act, 1995 has come into force since February 7, 1996. This law is an important landmark and is a significant step for ensuring equal opportunities for differently able student and their full participation in nation building. This act provides both preventive and promotional aspects of rehabilitation like education, employment and vocational training, job reservation, research and man power development, creation of barrier free environment, rehabilitation of persons with disability and special insurance scheme for differently able employees and establishing of homes for persons with severe disabilities. Higher education is a significant stage for development in educational as well as social efficiency. It also promotes skill for getting employment in job market and it helps for harmonious development of every student to live a prosperous life. It is clear that there has been considerable progress in universities to include students with disability with disabilities. So to meet diverse needs of the student in education particularly in higher education there is a need for proper accommodation of environment.

Inclusion is not an experiment to be tested but a value to be followed. All the students with disability and normal children have the right to education as they are the future citizens of the country. In the prevailing system of education in India resources are insufficient even to provide quality mainstream school for common children; it is unethical and impracticable to put children with special needs to test or to prove anything in a research study to live and

learn in the mainstream of school and community (Das , Kuvini & Desai, 2013). Education is a powerful instrument of social change, and often initiates upward movement in the social structure. Thereby, it is very essential for helping all to bridge the gap between the different sections of society. The educational scene in the country has undergone major change over the years, resulting in better provision of education and better educational practices. In order for inclusion of differently able student to be successful, educational institution should accept diversity. All the participants in the field of education should believe in that. The participant should believe that the students with disability are able to successfully in the learning process (Alqaryouti, 2010). Also inclusive education policies should be consider the vast range of diverse and balancing the pedagogical strategies that can respond to the needs of each student in the regular education situations. Various studies have been conducted about attitudes and perception of teachers about availability of educational facilities for differently able students. The studies have been conducted in various dimensions of educational facilities and also the problem arises in inclusion of differently able student in mainstream education system. From the study conducted by Arya (2012) founded that there was no provision for special education as an compulsory or optional paper in B.Ed. syllabus of different universities in teacher training institution in Chhattisgarh. In D.Ed. course, the course mostly focused on only mental retardation while other types of disabilities are left. There was shortage of manpower who can deal with the problems of students with disability and the teaching techniques, aids, appliances and technology used by persons were also traditional and insufficient. In the same way study conducted by Holt & Mckey (2000) conducted the study with the objectives of factors affecting the learning of students with disability in post graduate level. It was found that most of the students (65%) stated that they were receiving supervision and one third of the respondent stated as their disability affected their relationship with their supervisor. Reed (2003) conducted a study with the objective of study the make –up of students in Canadian post secondary institutions and the barriers that exist in accessing higher education. The findings revealed that administrators viewed as students with visual impairment may not try to access higher education because they were unaware about the facilities available for them. The majority of administrators reported that there were disability counsellor, e-text/text on tape/CD, exam accommodations and adaptive technologies (Zoom text, JAWS, Dragon), tape recorders, laptops and study/exam rooms. It also found from the respondent view that students were not receive accessible material in a timely manner and they were not trained for using technologies. So they faced problem in accommodation with the environment. A study conducted by Soni (2003) on Perception of parents, teachers and students about education of disabled children. It was found that special facilities for disabled students were not adequate. The parents, teachers and students were not aware about the provisions of facilities under Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) organisation of awareness programme for community to promote the education of disable students. Martin (2004) in a study found that there was a few significant differences between higher and lower inclusive schools. It was also revealed from the perceptions, beliefs and attitudes of principals that all staffs and administrators were provided training by co-teaching model. Principals in highly inclusive schools supported inclusion through release time, financial support for training. Principals were instrumental in determining whether inclusion was implemented in their schools and the extent to which it is

accomplished. Zwald (2008) conducted a study and found from the teachers view that lack of physical activity create additional barriers for academic success and proper social relationship. Physical education classes were not appropriate for accessing students with visual impairment. Physical education teachers were not prepared for accommodating those students and parents would not allow their child to participate in physical education class and asked administrators for exemption from the class. In a study carried out by Ekwelem (2013) it was found that the electronic resources i.e. taped books and online public access catalogue (OPAC) available in library have not been fully used. It was also found that the physical design of the library served only for those who were non physically challenged users and there was insufficient knowledge of the need of those who could not use the library. Most university libraries were still unaware about the need of disabled students. Study carried out by Safder, Akhter, Fatima & Mallick (2013) with the objective of to find out problems and difficulties faced by students with visually impairment in inclusion at higher education level. It was found that Students with visual impairment were encountering problems in orientation & mobility, transportation, academics, mode of examination and in use of information technology etc. It was revealed from the study that the teachers and principals have a positive attitude towards differently able student. The faculties had lack of knowledge about disability resources. Most university libraries were still unaware about the need of disabled students.

Teacher is the builder of a knowledgeable society as well as a pillar also. They can change the society if they want. So in a higher education institution the teachers should welcome and accommodate all types of student into their classroom in a friendly manner. It is a challenge for all teachers to make classroom accessible to all and provide conducive environment in classroom to facilitate learning of differently able student. Providing education to the students with disabilities is a great challenge for all (i.e. teachers, policy makers and parents).Higher education systems also have greater responsibilities for accommodate the facilities for students with disabilities in institutions. It is also very essential for the part of higher education to make the SWDs for their future living with a prosperous life with employability.

Therefore the following questions need to be answered:

a) Are the higher education institutions well equipped for accessing differently able student?

b) How the teachers of students with disability perceives about the facilities available for students in higher education institutions?

c) Are there any barriers to accommodate students with disability in educational institution's building or grounds?

By reviewing the literatures for answering these questions the researchers had a keen interest to conduct this study. The studies revealed that there are many studies conducted about the attitudes of teachers, peers, administrators towards Students with disabilities and also educational facilities and legal policies available for them but less number of studies conducted in the areas of perceptions of stakeholders about educational facilities available for

student with disabilities in higher education institutions. Despite plethora of studies and research being carried out in developed societies, the area of disability studies still remains quite grey and unexplored in India as well as Odisha. So the present study is an attempt to explore the educational provisions available for the students with disabilities, their perceptions , problems (if any) they come across and to propose suggestive measures (if required) for the administrators, policy makers , faculty members and others to view this segment of students   empathically for their   smooth learning. Researcher explored perceptions of teachers and their experiences with students with disability at higher education.

Objective of the Study

This study aimed at studying the perception of teachers about educational facilities available for students with disability in higher education institution. In addition to that the study also aimed at identifying the factors affecting on the way to provide educational facilities to the students with disability in higher education institution.

Research Questions of the Study

Corresponding to the objectives of the study, the following research questions are posed as:

1. What do the teachers perceive about the educational facilities available for students with disability in higher education institution with regard to Enrolment Process, Environmental Accessibility, Curriculum and Teaching Learning Materials, Transactional Mode for Classroom Learning, Student Support Services, Examination Procedure and Placement Facilities?

2. What are obstacles on the way to provide educational facilities to the students with disabilities?

Methodology of the Study

The present study comes under descriptive survey method. The population of the present study consists of the teachers in higher education institution dealing with students with disability in Cuttack city, Odisha. A sample of 50 teachers who teach students with disability was selected from Ravenshaw University, Cuttack, Odisha. Purposive sampling method was adopted in order to select the teachers teaching the students with disability.

A questionnaire for teachers was developed by the researchers and was used to study the perception about the educational facilities available for students with disability. The data pertaining to perception about the educational facilities available for them and also whether they utilizes those available facilities i.e. Enrolment Process, Environmental Accessibility, Curriculum and TLM,   Transactional Mode for Classroom Learning, Students Support Services, Examination Procedure, Placement facilities. The researchers conducted the interview with the participants individually in their respective departments when the class was over with prior permission. An observation schedule, prepared by the researchers, was

used to collect data pertaining to environmental accessibility (in the campus), classroom accessibility (in the classroom) and teaching learning material (in the library) etc.

Data collected from students with disability were analyzed by using both quantitative (percentage analysis) and qualitative (thick description) techniques.

The Results

Enrolment Process

The data pertaining to students' enrolment process were collected from teachers of Ravenshaw University, teaching students with disabilities with the help of questionnaire and data were analyzed and presented below in tabular form supplemented by description in detail.

Table-1: Percentage analysis of responses on Students' Enrolment Process (% in parentheses) (N=50)

Sl. No.	Dimensions	% of responses		Responses on 3% reservation policy followed by institution		
		Yes	No	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree
1	Provision of Reservation facilities	50(100)	0 (0)	38 (76)	8 (16)	4 (8)
2	Fill up of seats by disabled students	37(74)	13(26)	_	_	_
3	Facilities in admission fees	34(68)	16(32)	_	_	_

It was observed from the above table-1 that almost all the teachers agreed to the concept of provision of reservation facilities to students with disability in higher education institution. Almost all the teachers (100%) viewed there were provisions of reservation facilities and no teachers viewed there were not provisions of reservation facilities. Majority of teachers (76%) responded by agreed with the policy that was being followed by institution though it was the enactment of PWD Act-1995. Among the respondents majority (74%) of teachers viewed the reservation seats were fill up properly by disabled students where as less number (26%) of teachers sighted the seats are not filled properly by disabled students. With regarding the admission facilities majority (68%) of teachers out of 50 were responded that students with disabilities given free from admission fees only seminar fees was taken from them and some (32%) of teachers responded that the institution have not being provided the facilities in relation to admission fees.

Environment Accessibility

The perception of teachers about environment accessibility was collected with the help of questionnaire as presented below:

Table- 2: Percentage analysis of responses on environment accessibility (N=50)

Sl. No.	Dimensions	Number and % of responses (% in parentheses)		
		Yes	No	Don't know
1	Ramps	25 (50)	12(24)	13(26)
2	Special Hostel Facilities	40 (80)	7(14)	3(6)
3	Flexible space for mobilization	31(62)	11(22)	8(16)
4	Medical facilities	27(54)	10(20)	13(26)
5	Special sanitation facilities	7 (14)	23(46)	20(40)
6	Elevator/Lift	0(0)	40(80)	10(20)
7	Special library	43(86)	3(6)	4(8)
8	Special laboratory	0(0)	45(90)	5(10)
9	Special TLM corner	13(26)	27(54)	10(20)

Table-2 reveals that half of the teachers (50%) reported about availability of ramps in University campus but 24% of the teachers responded about the non-availability of sufficient ramps for physically challenged students. Majority (80%) of teachers viewed that there were special facilities in hostel and (14%) viewed there were no hostel facilities for students with disabilities i.e. there were no separate hostel with special facilities for them but it was observed by the researcher that though there were no separate hostel for them in general hostel no establishment fees have been taken from them. The facility of Flexible space for mobilization & special library were available as majority (>60%) of teachers reported. Majority of teachers (>80%) viewed that elevators/lifts & special; laboratory were not there. There were very small number (26 %) of respondent viewed about availability of Special TLM corner and majority of teacher revealed non availability of those facilities. It was observed by the researcher that there is a special library in the institution but the materials are not sufficient to meet the needs of all students.

Organisation of Curricular Activities and Teaching Learning Materials

The perceptions of teachers about organisation of curricular activities and availability of TLMs were analyzed and presented in the following table:

Table-3: Percentage analysis of responses on Organisation of Curricular Activities (N=50)

Sl. No.	Sub-Dimensions	Yes	No	If Yes, % of responses in their participation (% in parentheses)		
				Frequently	Sometimes	Negligible
1	Sports & Games	30 (60)	20(40)	0(0)	4(13.33)	26 (86.67)
2	Dance	12(24)	38(76)	0(0)	4(33.33)	8(66.67)
3	Annual function	36(72)	14(28)	5(13.89)	16(44.44)	15(41.67)
4	Debate	46(92)	4(8)	35(76.09)	11(23.91)	0(0)
5	Song competition	50(100)	0(0)	35(70)	15(30)	

It was observed from the table-3 that majority of teachers (60%) viewed institution provide the opportunity for participating in sports/games but that was negligible as perceived

by majority (86.67%) of teachers out yes category. Majority (76%) of the respondents viewed that there were no provisions for dance for such students; out of the teachers having positive disposition very less (33.33%) responded sometimes it was provided and 66.67% viewed negligible. Majority of teachers (>70%) viewed annual function, debate and song competitions were organised for SWD.

Table-4: Percentage analysis of responses on availability of TLMs (N=50)

S. No	TLMs	Yes	No	Don't Know	If Yes, % of responses (% in parentheses)		
					Adequately available	**Inadequately available**	**Negligible**
1	Tape recorder	0(0)	37(74)	13(26)	_	_	_
2	Braille printer	40(80)	4(8)	6(12)	0(0)	15(25)	25(75)
3	Braille slate	25(50)	16(32)	9(18)	19(76)	6(24)	0(0)
4	Audio cassette	0(0)	26(52)	24(48)	_	_	_
5	JAWS & Kurzweil	45 (90)	2(4)	3(6)	10 (22.23)	35 (77.78)	0(0)
6	Scanner	42(84)	3(6)	5(10)	0(0)	24(57.14)	24(57.14)
7	Computer	50(100)	0(0)	0(0)	38(76)	12(24)	0(0)
8	Head phone	30(60)	8(16)	12(24)	6(20)	24(80)	0(0)

Table-4 shows all 74% of teachers viewed as non-availability of tape recorders in the institution and 26% were not aware of this. Braille printer was available in the institution said by majority (80%) of teachers but out of them some says there were available but the number was not adequate and some of them also said very negligible number of Braille printer were available and some of the teachers (20%) out of 50 viewed they were unknown about that facilities. Pertaining to Braille slate it was revealed that the half (50%) of the viewer viewed there were availability of Braille slate but that were not provided by the institution and some of the teachers viewed about non availability of such facilities where as others viewed that they were unknown about such facilities. no teachers viewed about availability of audio cassettes in the institution. Some (52%) of the teachers viewed the facilities was not there where as other (48%) of the teachers said they were unaware about such facilities. Majority (>=84%) teachers revealed JAWs software, Kurzweil and scanner were available in the institution but majority out of them (77.78%) viewed such facilities were not available sufficiently. The number of scanner was very less to meet the differently-able students need as observed by the researcher. All respondents respond computers were available in the institution but out of all 76% stated by adequate availability and it was also observed that the computers were available in the special library with JAWS software. In the view about availability of headphones it was revealed that majority (60%) of teachers responded head phones were available in the institution.

Students' Support Services

The perception of teachers about students' support services was collected with the help of questionnaire as presented below:

Table-5: Percentage analysis of responses on Students' Support Services   (N=50)

Sl. No	Support services	Yes	No	Responses (% in parentheses)		
				Adequ-ate	Inadea-quate	Negligible
1	Sign language interpreter	0(0)	50(100)	--	--	--
2	Braille materials	14(28)	36(72)	2(14.29)	5(35.71)	7(50)
3	Book in alternative format	18(36)	32 (64)	4(19.05)	12(51.14)	5 (23.81)
4	Financial Support services/scholarships	15(30)	35(70)	0(0)	6(40)	9(60)

The above table reveals that that majority (>60%) of teachers viewed that Braille material and books were not available. The financial support i.e. scholarships provided to students as viewed by only 30% of the teachers but that were not provided adequately. Majority (70%) of teachers perceive university does not provide any scholarship but they get it from various schemes of the Govt.

Examination Procedure

The data pertaining to examination procedure have been collected from the teachers at the institution which were analyzed and presented in the following table:

Table-7: Percentage analysis of responses on Examination procedure   (N=50)

Sl. No.	Sub-Dimensions	Yes	No	Don't Know
1	Extended time	39(78)	0(0)	11(22)
2	Extra room	40(80)	2(4)	8(16)
3	Provision of writer for students with disability	50(100)	0(0)	0(0)
4	Provision of writers' fees	50(100)	0(0)	0(0)

The table-7 shows that large number (78%) of teachers out of 50 teachers viewed extended time was given to the students with visually impaired in the institution but not to other disabled student. As perceived by majority (80%) of teachers the differently-able students were given extra room for their examination and 16% of the teachers viewed they were unknown about availability of such facilities. The visually impaired students were allowed to take writer to their exam8ination for which institution provide fees to them.

Counselling and Placement Facilities

The perceptions of teachers about counselling and placement facilities are presented in following table:

Table-8: Percentage analysis of responses on Students' Counselling and Placement Facilities (N=50)

Sl. No.	Sub-Dimensions	Yes	No	If yes...		
				Frequently	**Sometimes**	**Negligible**
1	Counselling programmes	6(12)	44(88)	0 (0)	0(0)	6(100)
2	Vocational training for employment	0(0)	50(100)	_	_	_
3	Placement facilities in institution	36(72)	14(28)	_	_	_

The above table-8 reveals that majority (88%) of teachers viewed no counselling programme have been conducted specially for differently-able students whereas only 12% teachers said there were conducted such programme in the university. Almost all the teachers viewed no vocational training have been provided to the differently-able students for their employment. 72% teachers said that facilities were there but 28% teachers viewed non availability of such facilities in the institution.

Major Findings

Through the process of data collection the researcher has been collected data from the teacher that are presented as following.

a) Almost all teachers (100%) viewed there were provisions of reservation facilities and no teachers viewed there were not provisions of reservation facilities.

b) Majority of teachers (76%) responded by agreed with the policy that was being followed by institution though it was the enactment of PWD Act-1995.

c) With regarding the admission facilities majority (68%) of teachers out of 50 were responded that students with disabilities given free from admission fees only seminar fees was taken from them and some (32%) of teachers responded that the institution have not being provided the facilities in relation to admission fees.

d) Majority (80%) of teachers viewed that there were special facilities in hostel and (14%) viewed there were no hostel facilities for students with disabilities i.e. there were no separate hostel with special facilities for them but it was observed by the researcher that though there were no separate hostel for them in general hostel no establishment fees have been taken from them.

e) The facility of Flexible space for mobilization & special library were available as majority (>60%) of teachers reported.

f) Majority of teachers (>80%) viewed that elevators/lifts & special; laboratory were not there. There were very small number (26 %) of respondent viewed about availability of Special TLM corner and majority of teacher revealed non availability of those facilities. It was observed by the researcher that there is a special library in the institution but the materials are not sufficient to meet the needs of all students.

g) Majority (76%) of the respondents viewed that there were no provisions for dance for such students; out of the teachers having positive disposition very less (33.33%) responded sometimes it was provided and 66.67% viewed negligible. Majority of teachers (>70%) viewed annual function, debate and song competitions were organised for SWD.

h) Braille printer was available in the institution said by majority (80%) of teachers but out of them some says there were available but the number was not adequate and some of them also said very negligible number of Braille printer were available.

i) Majority (>=84%) teachers revealed JAWs software, Kurzweil and scanner were available in the institution but majority out of them (77.78%) viewed such facilities were not available sufficiently.

j) All respondents respond computers were available in the institution but out of all 76% stated by adequate availability and it was also observed that the computers were available in the special library with JAWS software. In the view about availability of headphones it was revealed that majority (60%) of teachers responded head phones were available in the institution.

k) The financial support i.e. scholarships provided to students as viewed by only 30% of the teachers but that were not provided adequately. Majority (70%) of teachers perceive university does not provide any scholarship but they get it from various schemes of the Govt.

l) Large number (78%) of teachers out of 50 viewed extended time was given to the students with visually impaired in the institution but not to other disabled student and students were given extra room for their examination and 16% of the teachers viewed they were not aware of such facilities. The visually impaired students were allowed to take writer to their examination for which institution provides fees to the writers.

m) Almost all the teachers viewed no vocational training was provided to the SWD for their employment.

Conclusion and Implications

The main purpose of the study was to study the perception of teachers of students with disability about availability of facilities and the problem the students face in accessing in higher education institution. With this objective the research questions were what do the teachers of students with disability perceive about educational facilities available in institution for students with disability and what the problems the students face in accommodating to institution. It was found that the students are admitted without any fees in case of blind students who use Braille for studies, hearing impaired students and dumb students; and orthopedically handicapped students with disability of more than 75% as per the Govt. Of Odisha order issued in 2009. The departments having students with disability must be equipped with special teaching learning material so that the departments can successfully facilitate each student's need. The special trained teacher should be appointed or the existing teachers should be provided training and refresher course for dealing with diverse

students. The findings of the have similarity with the findings in the studies conducted by Holt (2000); Reed (2003); Soni (2003) in which it is concluded that academic achievement of SWDs got hampered due to lack of accessibility, awareness, and learning and financial resources in the educational institutions. Hence, suitable infrastructural facilities should be made available for education of disabled students. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in education as described by Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) (in Massachusetts, US) is to provide (1) Multiple means of representation (the 'what' of learning), (2) Multiple means of action and expression (the 'how' of learning), and (3) Multiple means of engagement (the 'why' of learning) should be followed in all the higher education institutions having students with disability. More number of curricular activities should be organised for them so that they never feel inferior from other. The administrative authorities of institution as well as of higher education should take steps for making the institution disability-hub successful institution. It seems that differently abled students are not aware of the reservation policy. So they should be made aware of availability of facilities for them. SWD should be provided training to acquire computer skill so that they can operate their own system and activate any software i.e. JAWs, Dutch berry etc. The institution should organize different counselling programme and should provided vocational training to them for increasing their chance in job market.

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