

Bridging the Gaping Levels of Information Entree for Visually Impaired Students in the Sri Lankan University Libraries

Authors : Wilfred Jeyatheese Jeyaraj

Abstract : Education is a key determinant of future success, and every person deserves non-discriminant access to information for educational inevitabilities in any case. Analysing and understanding complex information is a crucial learning tool, especially for students. In order to compete equally with sighted students, visually impaired students require the unhinged access to access to all the available information resources. When the education of visually impaired students comes to a focal point, it can be stated that visually impaired students encounter several obstacles and barriers before they enter the university and during their time there as students. These obstacles and barriers are spread across technical, organizational and social arenas. This study reveals the possible approaches to absorb and benefit from the information provided by the Sri Lankan University Libraries for visually impaired students. Purposive sampling technique was used to select sample visually impaired students attached to the Sri Lankan National universities. There are 07 National universities which accommodate the visually impaired students and with the identified data, they were selected for this study and 80 visually impaired students were selected as the sample group. Descriptive type survey method was used to collect data. Structured questionnaires, interviews and direct observation were used as research instruments. As far as the Sri Lankan context spread is concerned, visually impaired students are able to finish their courses through their own determination to overcome the barriers they encounter on their way to graduation, through moral and practical support from their own friends and very often through a high level of creativity. According to the findings there are no specially trained university librarians to serve visually impaired users and less number of assistive technology equipment are available at present. This paper enables all university libraries in Sri Lanka to be informed about the social isolation of visually compromised students at the Sri Lankan universities and focuses on the rectification issues by considering their distinct case for interaction.

Keywords : information access, Sri Lanka, university libraries, visual impairment

Conference Title : ICMHSS 2017 : International Conference on Management, Humanities and Social Sciences

Conference Location : London, United Kingdom

Conference Dates : January 19-20, 2017