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# Evaluation of Provision and Support for Disabled Students in Libraries of Special Education Professional Degree Awarding Institutions (DAIs) and Rehabilitation Centers (RCs).

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## Introduction

Disabled students suffer from exclusion, isolation, and discrimination in society (Hall, Healey & Harrison, 2002). Their varied requirements deter them from effective interactions (MacArthur, 2012). That's why, they, not only, face serious short comings in their learning and development (Madriaga, et al., 2010) but also their civil rights come on hazard (Szymanski & Bilius, 2011). Voices of justice are heard from different horizon, many preventive measures are designed at various levels (Konur, 2000), but disabilities keep disabled persons aloof from the social context (Griffiths, et al., 2010).

Inclusion of special community in social fabric cannot be denied in a healthy society (Konur, 2000). It is accepted that disabled patrons deserve special supports in education, in both, policy and practice (Tinklin, Riddell & Wilson, 2004). But often, equal opportunity provision statements remain to be moral and more ambiguous in educational institutions (Vickerman & Blundell, 2010). Consequently, disabled students experience a challenging situation to cope with their educational issues in counter with their specific impairment (Holloway, 2001). A bulk of literature has come to the scene that elaborates the different needs and requirements of disabled students in their education. But there is a lot to do in educational institutions for disabled students in terms of resources and capacity building rather than sympathetic feelings and statements (Shah, 2007).

Libraries are a part and partial of education system as hub of information resources and services. Therefore, at one side, trained and well managed library staff, resources, and services, with special reference to disabled students, is the need of hour. While on the other side, frequent and easy access to library, information resources, and services, in accordance with varied requirements of disabilities, are from the basic requirements of disabled students. In addition, library and information system need to fill the gaps of communication and interaction to check the problems faced by disabled library users and students (Beaton, 2005).

Statistical figures present disability as the biggest minority group in the world. UN reports 10% of the total world population with almost 650 million persons with some disability while the joint report of World Health Organization and The World Bank (2011) describes 15% of the total world population with 785 million persons with disabilities. In developed world, 54

million Americans – 19 percent of non-institutionalized population, suffers from some physical or cognitive disability, with 13% of people 25 plus with a disability (1.8% of mobility device user) have a bachelor's degree or higher educational qualifications, while 28% of people 25 plus with a disability (10.9 % of mobility device users) have less than a high school education (Neudel, 2011). Similarly, 11 million adults in UK are disabled that comprises 20% of the total population, 21% disabled people, of age 16-24, have no educational qualifications as compared to 9% of their non-disabled peers of same age group (Papworth Trust, 2011).

UN Development Program (UNDP) casts figures of eight percent disabled persons living in developing and third world countries (UNDP, 2008). Similarly, World Bank reports that twenty percent of the poorest population on globe has any disability. Disability prevalence in Pakistan as per World Health Survey 2002 – 2004 was 13.6 % while as per world report on disabilities was 9.6% in 2004 while, official reports declare 2.49% disabled population in Pakistan. In absolute numbers, Pakistan census (1998) data illustrates, nearly 3.2 million people in Pakistan are disabled. Out of which 1.99 million are males and 1.37 are females. 37.2 percent of them are of age group 0-14 (Jamy, 2008). These low official figures are due to the adoption of different definition of disability in Pakistan. Anyhow, statistical indicators present a frequent increase in disability on earth (Beard & et al., 2012). Therefore, many government and private sector organizations have prioritized their working on the needs and requirements of disabled people.

This study evaluates the provisions and supports for disabled students in libraries of special education professional Degree Awarding Institutions (DAIs) and Rehabilitation Centers (RCs) working in Lahore, under standard guidelines provided by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). Furthermore, this research identifies library services to students with special needs, in general. In particular, a special emphasis is on library services for students with Physical, Visual and Hearing impairment. Research results present an overall picture of library services for above mentioned students with special needs in geographical circumstances, of Pakistan.

This study also contributes for better attitudes, interactions and understandings in library towards disabled students. Furthermore, this research works for students with special needs to prevent and respond to bullying and harassment in routine library dealings that ultimately

enhance the wellbeing and academic achievement of students with special needs. It also enhances community engagement among students with special needs. In broader perspective, this study helps to foster long term positive attitudes towards persons with disability in our community. The ultimate object of this study is the projection of specified needs for students with special needs in the libraries of professional degree awarding institutions and rehabilitation centers. This study will also be useful for librarians, policy makers, and apex administration of all educational institutions, in general, and special education institutions and rehabilitation centers, in particular to meet the special needs of students with disabilities.

### **Literature Review**

Various definitions of disability have been propounded by different persons and organizations but there is lack of unanimity in defining 'disability'. Like the definition of 'disability' there is hardly any unanimity in stating types of disability, so, numerous types of disabilities hinder the ability of an individual to function normally. Baxamusa (2011) had not only categorized types of disabilities in adults and children but also classified special education types of disabilities. Likewise, Harrison (2001) also stated different types of disabilities commonly found in children and adolescents. Similarly, Smith (2006) classified and defined various disabilities in an exhaustive way. Hence, keeping in mind the views of different authors and organization, broadly speaking there are four types of disabilities; namely Physical disability, Visual impairment, Hearing impairment and Mental retardation. This article deals with three types, excluding mental retardation. World Health Organization (1980) classified impairments, disabilities, and handicaps at minute level ranging as disease, impairment, disability, and handicap. This study deals with physical, visual, and hearing issues and problems in general, rather than discussing slight variations with and within one or more disabilities at a time.

There is no scarcity of literature on library services, resources, and support to disabled patrons now a day. Huang (2009) and Murray (2000) in their researches emphasize on well planned training of library staff for better understanding about disabilities and disabled users in library. Velleman (2011) in his bibliographic study calls attention to the specified collection development for disabled library users. Ineson & Morris (2006) reported the provisions for

disabled and the quality of facilities to disabled in education sector with variances in both quality and quantity across the education sector. Similarly, many others inked some specified aspects of library services, support, and provisions for disabled library users.

Many legislative and protective attempts have been introduced for handicapped community. On global canvas, 'the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' by the United Nations Organization (UNO) has been signed by the big majority of countries that protects and enhances the rights and opportunities for disabled population on earth as the first human rights treaty of twenty first century. Moreover, disability rights are on priority agendas of subsidiary bodies of UNO. Similarly, *Ley de Igualdad de Oportunidades* (Law of Equal Opportunities) in France, Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) of 1995, its extension in 2005, and its refinement as Equality Act of 2010 in the United Kingdom, and in USA, Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 are vital examples of milestones for support to disabled population. These legislations safeguard equal rights to education, health, employment, culture, access, inheritance, and other all facilities. Pakistan also had signed and ratified conventions on disability rights. National constitution denies discrimination at all level. Onward settings, policies and legislation for disabled community like 'National Policy for Persons with Disabilities (2002)', National Plan of Action (2006), National Labor policies of 2002, 2010, Ministry of Social Welfare and Special Education, National Council for the Rehabilitation of Disabled, 'The Pakistan Persons with Disabilities Act 2008, and 'The persons with Disabilities Act 2008' are vital examples in this context. Many additional relaxations and facilities have been announced and are in practice at many federal and provincial departments (NOWPD, 2012).

Thus, disabled community has a lot of special privileges, supports, and relaxations, in all walks of life, in Pakistan. Drastic increase in disability budget, in recent years, has obviously positive signs toward the rehabilitation and support of disabled community in Pakistan (UNICEF, 2003). Directorate General of Special Education revealed data of schools, training centers and institutions for disabled students, in 2006, to be 531 in total - 276 for more than one disabilities, 95 for hearing impaired children, 54 for visually handicapped children, 43 for mentally retarded, 40 for physically handicapped, and 23 for multiple disabilities (DGSE, 2006). There is hardly any statistical data for disabled library users in Pakistan. National Library and

Resource Center (NLRC) has been serving as a resource center for print and audio-visual material on special education and disabilities since 1986 (NOWPD, 2008). Concept of special provisions and library services to disabled persons is not a new idea in Pakistani librarianship. But, just a few studies on the subject have come to the scene that could present the holistic picture of provisions and supports for disabled students in their rehabilitation centers and special education professional degree awarding institutions where there is better awareness about different impairments and about disabled patrons. Anyhow, disabled patrons have 2% to 5% job quota in employments and at least 2% reserved seats in public sector educational institutions of higher education (NOWPD, 2012). Although, disabled students have privileges of, at least, 2% enrolment in higher education institutions, yet there are hardly any special arrangements in these institutions for catering the individualized needs and demands of disabled students. Similarly, there are less understandings regarding their needs, facilitation patterns, and inter personal communications in library. So, it is assumed that special education professional degree awarding institutions (DAIs) and Rehabilitation Centers (RCs) have comparatively better understandings regarding disabled students' issues. Thus, there can be better provisions and supports for disabled students and other library users. Hence, on the basis of this assumption, following research questions were designed for this research.

### **Questions of the Study**

1. If there are provisions and supports in libraries available to the persons with special needs as per their needs.
2. If there are provisions and supports in libraries available to the persons with hearing impairment as per their needs.
3. If there are provisions and supports in libraries available to the physically handicapped persons as per their needs.
4. If there are provisions and supports in libraries available to the persons with visual impairment as per their needs.
5. If there is association between provisions and supports available in libraries of different types of Institutions (DAIs and RCs) with specific type of disability.
6. If there is association between provisions and supports available in libraries of different sectors (Public and Private) with specific type of disability.

## Method

This research was conducted in 2012. Population of this study was comprised of following special education professional Degree Awarding Institutions (DAIs) and Rehabilitation Centers (RCs).

- 1) University of the Punjab, Lahore.
- 2) Government Training College for Teachers of the Blind, 31-Sher Shah Block, New Garden Town, Lahore.
- 3) Government Training College for Teachers of the Deaf, 40-T, Gungmahal, Gulberg-II, Lahore.
- 4) University of Management and Technology, C-II, Johar town, Lahore.
- 5) University of Education, Bank Road Campus, Lahore.
- 6) University of Education, Lower Mall Campus, Lahore.
- 7) University of Education, Township Campus, Lahore.
- 8) Hamza Foundation Academy for the Deaf, 152-J-1, Johar town, Lahore.
- 9) Inayat Foundation Academy for the Deaf, 232-A3, Gulberg-III, Lahore.
- 10) Aziz Jahan Begum Trust Institute for Blind, 11-Awasia housing society, Lahore.
- 11) National Special Education Center for HIC, 45-B/II, Johar town, Lahore.
- 12) The Pakistan Society for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled, 111-Ferozpur Road, Lahore.
- 13) Government Degree College of Special Education, 40-T, Gungmahal, Gulberg-II, Lahore.
- 14) National Special Education Center for Physically Handicapped Children, 45-B/II, Johar town, Lahore.

Only those DAIs were included in this study that offers, at least, Masters Degree in Special Education and/or further higher studies in this subject. Similarly, in selecting rehabilitation centers, only those were selected where there is better infra-structure and an independent library to facilitate the disabled students. Census approach for results was applied rather than sampling. Population of this study covered six from public and one from private sector DAIs. Similarly, four RCs from private and three from public sector were selected for study. Responses on research instrument were from Librarians working in these degree awarding institutions and rehabilitation centers. Librarians, in Pakistan, are those who have, at least,

Masters degree in Library and Information Sciences. This was factual survey based study. So, quantitative approach was adopted. Questionnaire was used as research instrument for data collection. This questionnaire was a modified and reshaped form of International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) checklist for access to libraries for persons with disabilities (Irwall & Nielsen, 2005). An e-mail request was put up to IFLA headquarter, to use this checklist guidelines for research that was duly accepted on grounds of research ethics. This comprehensive checklist was compressed, modified, and reshaped into a short questionnaire of dichotomous 'closed ended questions'. This questionnaire had two sections – biographical data section and evaluation questions section. Lateral section was divided into three further sub-sections – physical access issues, media formats, service and communication. These three sub-sections had twelve direct statements and the same number of indirect statements with further eighty five items for individual responses on library provisions and support to disabled patrons. 'Paper and pencil questionnaire administration method' with personal presence was used for responses from libraries of described sample. Contact details of these DAIs and RCs were collected from telephone directory. Concerned officials were contacted for 'to the point' appointments. All concerned officials filled the questionnaire and delivered it back to the researcher. Thus, response rate was 100% (14 responses) – 7(50%) DAIs and same number of RCs i.e. seven (50%), each DAI or RC constitutes 7.1% of research population. In overall population, DAIs and RCs dealing with hearing impairment are 4 (28.6%), with physically handicapped 2 (14.3%), visually handicapped are 2 (14.3%), and dealing with more than one to all areas are 6 (42.9%). In respondents, there are 4 (28.6%) male and 10 (71.4%) female, 9 (64.3%) from public sector and 5 (35.7%) from private sector. Similarly, 10 (71.4%) of respondents are Librarians while 4 (28.6%) are others who are not Librarians but are actively involved in library related issues and concerns.

## **Findings**

Frequency analysis of collected data for library services for different types of disabilities in subject – Skewness ( $-2 < -.31 < 2$ ), Kurtosis ( $-2 < -1.8 < 2$ ), Mean and Median ( $2.7 < 3.0$  - positively skewed data) showed that it was not normally distributed. Values of Mean, Median, and Mode (2.7, 3.0, & 4.0) were also not equal.



In the same way, frequency analysis of collected data about sector (public and private) – Skewness ( $-2 < .67 < 2$ ), Kurtosis ( $-2 < -1.9 < 2$ ), Mean and Median ( $1.36 > 1.0$  - negatively skewed data) showed that it was not normally distributed. Values of Mean, Median, and Mode (1.36, 1.0, & 1.0) were not equal; it also presented non-normal distribution of data.

Similarly, frequency analysis of collected data regarding types of institution in subject (DAIs and RCs) – Skewness ( $-2 < 0 < 2$ ), Kurtosis ( $-2 > -2.4 < 2$ ), values of Mean, Median, and Mode ( $1.5 = 1.5 > 1.0$  – positively skewed data) showed that it was not normally distributed. Values of Mean, Median, and Mode (1.5, 1.5, & 1.0) were not equal; it also presented non-normal distribution of data.

As data was not normally distributed, so non-parametric analysis were used.

Table 1(a) presented results for Chi-square analysis as;

There was 1(14.3% of DAIs) degree awarding institution dealing to each of hearing impairment and visually handicapped. On the other side, there were 3(42.9% of RCs) rehabilitation centers dealing with hearing impairment and 1(14.3% of RCs) from rehabilitation centers was dealing to visually handicapped.

In the same way, none from the degree awarding institutions was dealing to physically handicapped area. But 2(28.6% of RCs) were dealing to the physically handicapped.

Similarly, there were 5(71.4% of DAIs) degree awarding institutions dealing to more than one disability area. In rehabilitation centers, there was 1(14.3% of rehabilitation centers) rehabilitation center dealing to more than one disability.

These results made it clear that provisions and supports in libraries of DAIs and RCs were not specified to any disability area. A general or multiple disability approach was adopted for provisions and supports for students with disabilities in libraries of DAIs and RCs.

*Table 1(a). Chi-square Analyses of Relation between Types of Institution and Type of Disability*

Institution	Degree Awarding Institution	Count	Disability Area				Total
			Hearing Impaired	Physically Handicapped	Visually Handicapped	More than one to all	
			1	0	1	5	7
		% within Institution	14.3%	.0%	14.3%	71.4%	100.0%
	Rehabilitation Center	Count	3	2	1	1	7
		% within Institution	42.9%	28.6%	14.3%	14.3%	100.0%
Total		Count	4	2	2	6	14
		% within Institution	28.6%	14.3%	14.3%	42.9%	100.0%

Tables 1(b) presented Chi-square analysis between types of institution and types of disability. There was no relationship between types of institution and the type of disability regarding provision and support in libraries of subject:  $\chi^2(3, N=14) = 5.67, p = .129$ .

*Table 1(b). Chi-square Analyses of Relation between Types of Institution and Type of Disability*

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.667a	3	.129
N of Valid Cases	14		

a. 8 cells (100%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.00.

Table 2(a) highlighted the Chi-square analysis as;

There were 2(22% of public sector) public sector institutions or rehabilitation centers dealing to hearing impairment as compared to 2(40% of private sector) private sector institutions and rehabilitation center were dealing to hearing impairment.

In the same way, there were 2(22.2% of public sector DAIs and RCs) public sector DAIs and RCs dealing to physically handicapped, while none from private sector was dealing to physically handicapped.

Further, there were 1(11.1% of public sector DAIs and RCs) public sector DAIs and RCs dealing to the visually handicapped and 1(20.0% of private sector DAIs and RCs) private sector DAIs and RCs were dealing to visually handicapped.

Similarly, there were 4(44.4% of public sector DAIs and RCs) public sector DAIs and RCs dealing to more than one disability, 2(40% of private sector DAIs and RCs) private sector DAIs and RCs were dealing to more than one disability.

These results proved that provisions and supports for students with disabilities in libraries of DAIs and RCs in both public and private sectors were not confined to some specific disability. In other words, there was no association between sector and disability area.

*Table 2(a). Chi-square Analyses of Relation between Sector and Type of Disability*

		Disability Area				Total	
		Hearing Impaired	Physically Handicapped	Visually Handicapped	More than one to all		
Sector	Public	Count	2	2	1	4	9
		% within sector	22.2%	22.2%	11.1%	44.4%	100.0%
	Private	Count	2	0	1	2	5
		% within Sector	40.0%	.0%	20.0%	40.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	4	2	2	6	14
		% within Sector	28.6%	14.3%	14.3%	42.9%	100.0%

Tables 2(b) presented Chi-square analysis between sector and types of disability. There was no relationship between sector and the type of disability regarding provision and support in libraries of subject:  $\chi^2(3, N=14) = 1.659, p = .646$ .

*Table 2(b). Chi-square Analyses of Relation between Sector and Type of Disability*

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.659a	3	.646
N of Valid Cases	14		

a. 8 cells (100%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.00.

Mean values of provisions and supports for students with special needs, and for students with physical, hearing, and visual impairments have been illustrated, for each DAI and RC, in table 3. These values were drawn on means plots in such a way that provisions and supports in libraries for different categories were along Y-axis and DAIs / RCs were along X-axis.

Table 3. Descriptive for Provisions and Supports for Students with Special Needs, Students with Physical Impairments, Students with Physical Impairments, and Students with Visual Impairments in Libraries of Degree Awarding Institutions (DAIs) and Rehabilitation Centers (RCs).

	PU	GTTCB	GTTCB	UMT	UE Bank Road	GE Lower Mall	GE Township	Hamza Foundation	Inayat Foundation	AJB Trust	Shalimar Center HIC	PSRD	Gungmahal College	Shalimar Center PHC
Students with special needs	.52	.42	.22	.08	.08	.16	.02	.44	.40	.42	.55	.42	.40	.41
Students with phy. impairments	.65	.54	.35	.12	.13	.23	.02	.54	.52	.46	.69	.56	.44	.54
Students with hea. impairments	.45	.43	.36	.05	.10	.26	.02	.55	.50	.40	.62	.48	.38	.33
Students with vis. impairments	.48	.41	.26	.09	.09	.24	.01	.40	.39	.40	.48	.39	.43	.33

Figure 1 revealed the situation of provisions and supports in libraries of DAIs and RCs for students with special needs. All values (N = 14) were between .02 and .52 (mean = .33).

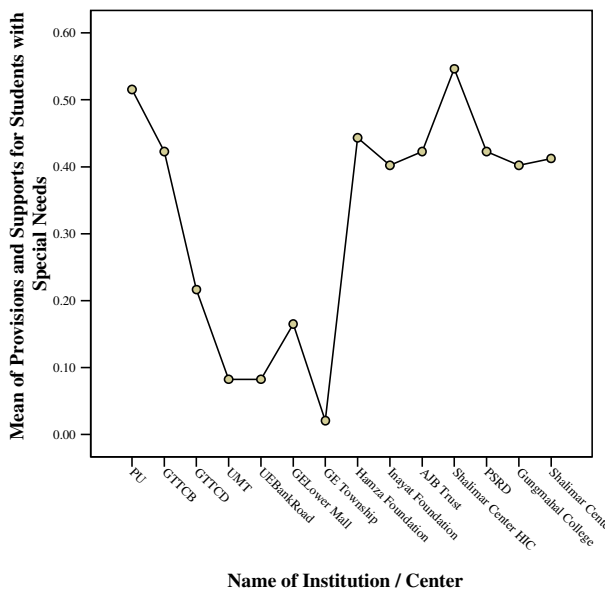


Figure 1. Graphical Presentation of Provisions and Supports for Students with Special Needs in Libraries Against DAIs and RCs.

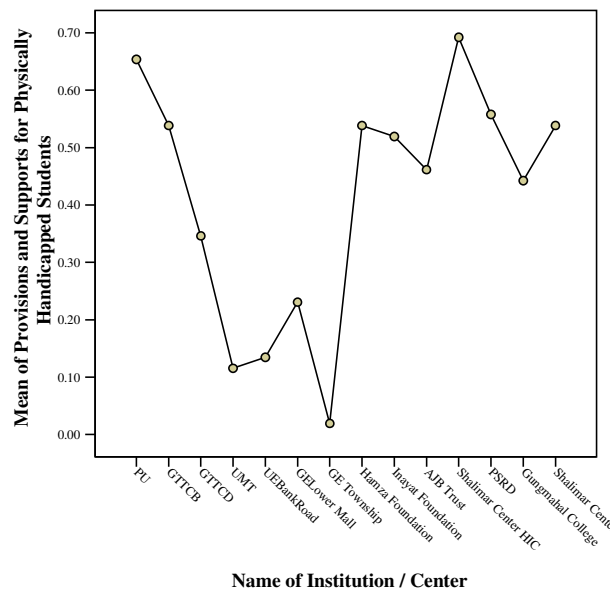


Figure 2. Graphical Presentation of Provisions and Supports for Students with Physical Disabilities in Libraries Against DAIs and RCs.

Likewise, figure 2 described the situation of provisions and supports for students with physical impairments in DAIs and RCs. All values (N = 14) were between .02 and .69 (mean = .41). In the same way, figure 3 explained the condition of provisions and supports for students with hearing impairments. All mean values (N = 14) were between .02 and .62 (mean = .35). Similarly, Figure 4 expressed the position of provisions and supports for students with visual impairments in libraries of DAIs and RCs. All values (N = 14) were between .02 and .48 (mean = .32).

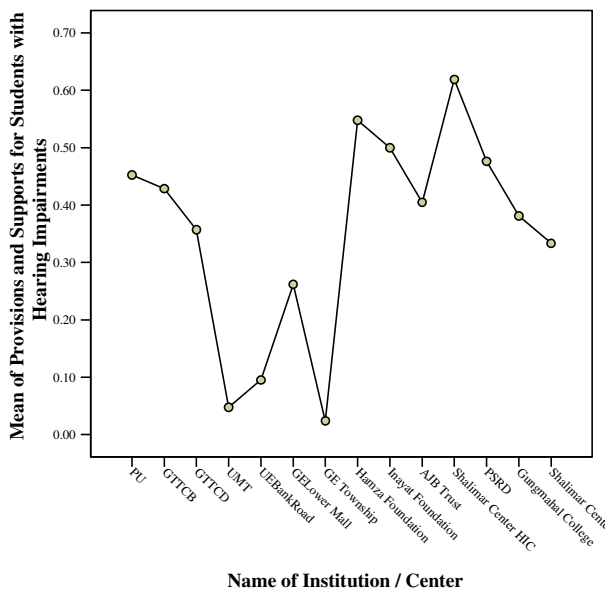


Figure 3. Graphical Presentation of Provisions and Supports for Students with Hearing Impairments in Libraries Against DAIs and RCs.

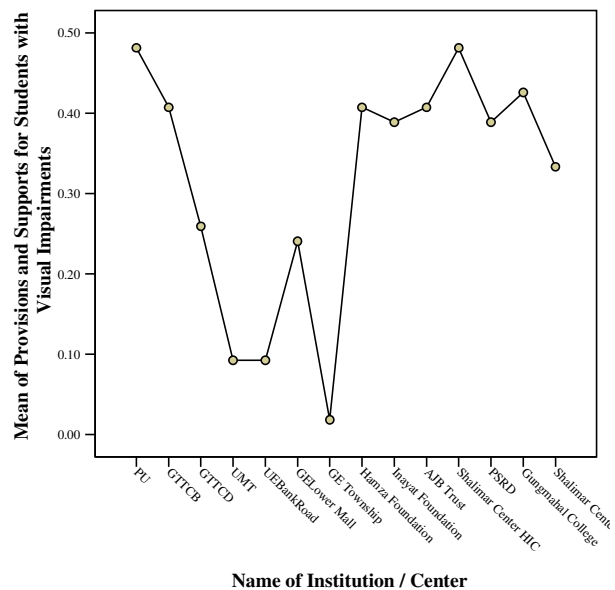


Figure 4. Graphical Presentation of Provisions and Supports for Students with Visual Impairments in Libraries Against DAIs and RCs.

In short, graphical presentations highlighted that the mean of provisions and supports in libraries of DAIs and RCs for a big majority of institutions / rehabilitation centers was below the medium level.

### Discussion

As embarked in literature review, there are numerous privileges illustrated for Pakistani population with special needs. But despite all, there are fewer understandings for facilitation patterns for persons with disabilities in different walks of life. Anyhow, it is reality that in

Pakistan, as being from the community of third world countries, there are increased responses from society towards people with special needs in recent past. Enhanced public perceptions, in general, and awareness about their rights by the actual suffering population – deserving special needs, in particular, are important part for the acceptance and success of policies and frameworks, as were discussed by Hinton (2003) under his discussion of American perspective.

Research results presented a moderate evolutionary outer picture of provisions and supports for students with disabilities in libraries of special education professional degree awarding institutions and rehabilitation centers. These are more or less the same as were presented by Guha (2008) who also focused on these checklist guidelines in suggesting improvements in library services for the people with disabilities. Similarly, Wood-Lamont and Robu (2012) used the same instrument in describing the library provisions and supports for students with disabilities in presenting situation of five different Romanian libraries. Their case study research had no different scenario in geographic circumstances of Romania. However, Burke (2009) in his quantitative research from the persons with physical, mental, and emotional disabilities concluded that efforts to eliminate barriers in public libraries were positive if someone had used the public library in past years.

In short, everywhere on the globe, there are things in process regarding eliminating barriers to libraries, barriers to information resources, and barriers to information itself to facilitate persons with special and varied needs. In realizing these needs of change some are a bit forward and others are a bit late, but all are working on this call of the hour.

### **Conclusion**

Provisions and supports for students with disabilities in libraries and educational settings are the name of change. 'Change' itself is a continuous process. It is accepted reality and need of hour that students with special needs deserve a change in the overall social spectrum from its very beginning to extreme end. Similarly, there is no difference of opinion that students with special needs ought to have a set up where they could survive easily, catering their library and educational needs in counter of their personal troubles. Beyond the views of persons with disabilities, administration always has a bulk of issues to resolve in routine while disability issue is one of them. No doubt, priorities are set on demand. It does not mean that timely low demand

should put disability provisions and supports far behind on things to do chart of administration. Administration should take provisions and supports in libraries and educational setting for students with special needs like organizational resource. So, disability issues should be taken as resource rather than a priority. Furthermore, it is emphasized that universities and rehabilitation centers must enhance disability sensitivity by inclusion of persons with disabilities in planning, projects, policies, and active interactions on aspects of developments. It is proposed that great deal of research should be conducted in this area. This thought pattern and serious concern will obviously set a change for students with special needs. Anyhow, expectations and dreams for overnight change can hardly accomplish in real human world. Having an optimistic view, it is hoped that slow, smooth but steady change will soon present a sympathetic, friendly, and interactive educational environment and better provisions and supports in library and information system for students with special needs.

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