

ISSUES IN INFORMATION RETRIEVAL AMONG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

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Abstract

This study was carried out to study the issues in information retrieval among people with disabilities. Respondents comprising of staff in the resource center department were used. Quantitative technique was used in this study aimed to obtain detailed information. This article begins with an introduction of the background of people with disabilities. This is followed by analysis of the factors that lead to difficulties in information retrieval. Throughout, the article will focus on how to produce measures to overcome the problems faced by people with disabilities. Overall, the problems faced by people with disabilities can be overcome if all parties are aware of their roles and responsibilities.

Keywords: Issues, Information Retrieval, People with Disabilities

INTRODUCTION

There is a group of people with disabilities occur in every community around the world. From the observation, it is estimated that there are around 15% of the world population that have certain types of disabilities (WHO AND World Bank, 2011). Actually, the number of disabilities in Malaysia is increasing year by year because of these data are inadequate as registration of persons with disabilities (M.Rezul Islam, 2015). The rights of people with disabilities including education field are always in observation. This is one of the important alternatives to responsibilities person in identifying those who lead in information retrieval problems.

ISSUES

Issues in information retrieval are important to recognize especially among people with disabilities because this group of people sometimes is being left behind without proper guide from a right person. A person with a disability is not defined by their condition but each of them actually is a unique individual. Thus, a good alternative to understand them is actually started from understanding the factors that influencing people with disabilities.

Based on Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, it was stated that disable person have specific categories of disabilities that have been registered. From the data stated, it will help all parties in finding a solution according to their uniqueness. Simultaneously, disability people are actually a diverse group of people that need a wide range of attention. There are two types of people with disabilities which are certain cannot be hidden and certain may difficult to see them only based on their physical appearance.

There are several issues regarding people with disabilities committee especially on information literacy. Some of the limitations are:

- i. People with disabilities are not interacting with technology provided to them properly.
- ii. Low levels of public thinking do not supported disabilities people to do their daily activities.
- iii. The impact of learning technique from media and technology in education.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Even it is increasingly acknowledged that the needs of disabled people must be addressed by mainstream development initiatives, but it is also recognized that the initiatives depicted are not easy to do. This issue happens when there is a lack of information and research. Problem statement is summarized as followed:

- i. What is the background of people with disabilities?
- ii. What are the factors that lead to difficulties in information retrieval among people with disabilities?
- iii. How to overcome the problems faced by people with disabilities?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Detailed below are the objectives of the research:

- i. To explain the background of people with disabilities
- ii. To analyze the factors that lead to difficulties in information retrieval
- iii. To produce measures to overcome the problems faced by people with disabilities

LITERATURE REVIEW AND PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

This section of the research paper indicates all relevant issues including policy, legislation and background of people with disabilities. Next, the article also gives an overview of factors that lead to difficulties for people with disabilities in information retrieval. Lastly, it will widely recognize the availability to produce measures to overcome the problems faced by people with disabilities. It was measured important part in this paper to describe the status of research paper.

A. Policy, Legislation and Background of People with Disabilities

The Law of Malaysia in Online Version of Update Text and Reprint was released as at 1 July 2014. It was recommended by Laws of Malaysia (2008) to address their concern on these issues:

“An Act to provide for the registration, protection, rehabilitation, development and wellbeing of persons with disabilities, the establishment of the National Council for Persons with Disabilities, and for matters connected therewith”

[7 July 2008; P.U. (B) 268/2008]

The rights of people with disabilities are always in observation including their need in education field. This is important to the responsibilities person to identify those who lead to difficulties in information retrieval. Specific attention needs to be given to people with disabilities to ensure for their own right.

In this world, there are few categories of people with disabilities that have already been discussed in previous research. A first category is physical disabilities that refer to physiological, functional and also mobility impairments. This physical disabilities include muscle, nerves skin, or bones that lead to difficulties in moving about in performing daily activities such as wearing, eating, housework and others.

Second categories are visual disabilities which refer to a loss of sight that might be total or partial. Third, there are mental disabilities categories which based on cognitive, psychiatric and learning disabilities problem. Besides, there are also intellectual disabilities that characterized by intellectual development and capacity that also significant with person's ability to learn. Categories of disabilities include hearing that describes an individual who in problems in hearing a spoken language and following with a verbal instruction.

B. Factors that lead to difficulties in information retrieval

In this section, we will briefly explain the factors that lead to difficulties in information retrieval among people with disability. Almost all people with disabilities face hardships and difficulties anytime and anywhere in their daily activities. But for people with disabilities, barriers can be normal and have greater impact to them. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines barriers as being more than just a physical problem. WHO define barrier is issues in a person's environment through their absence or presence limit functioning and produce disability. Normally there are numerous barriers that can make it extremely difficult for people with disabilities to function.

i. A physical environment that is not accessible

The fully described information in previous studies of problem faced by disable people is about the physical environment around disability person itself. Ability or inability for them to carry out the activities of daily life is one of the core issues to focus. Physical environment is the structural obstacles in natural environment that block or stop mobility to access all around the conditions. Examples of physical environments include steps that may avoid a person with mobility impairment from entering a building, technology equipment that requires a person with disabilities to get help from others and so on.

Moreover, sometimes this abilities person takes time for them to receive information due to the lack of awareness among public. This is because there are some people who

take advantages from the facilities provided to the disabilities group. They do not ever feel guilty to use equipment provided for the disabilities. Some of them also just ignore when disabilities people ask for help. For instance, person with mobile impairment ask for a help to get a book on a shelves in a library, but librarian take time to help those people to get materials. This factor influence people with disabilities to retrieve information.

ii. Negative attitudes of people towards disability

There are numerous common barriers occurs at a time including negative attitudes toward the people with disabilities. One of the barriers that are familiar with them is bad attitudes from publics. This barrier is the most important and lead to other barriers. As we know there are many groups of people nowadays that may not be aware with the difficulties of the disabilities to settle down their in routine activities. Examples of bad attitude that lead to difficulties in retrieval information include unrespect habit from ordinary person. Unrespect occured when publics sometimes have low perception towards people with disabilities by assuming them having low level of quality of life and they are one of unhealthy group of people because of their impairments.

iii. Services, system and policies that are neither non-existent of all people with a health condition in all areas of life

The section is structured as follows. First, motivate the study and then briefly explain about people with a health condition such as dyslexia and the factors that effect on information retrieval with their conditions. Then, the research follow by an analysis of the data collected from previous study. A conclusion at the end of research will provided together with further work required in this issue.

It is important to understand the effect of dyslexia on the information searching process. A study in A. MacFarlane et al (2010), dyslexia might be classed as one of the specific health conditions that affect learning difficulty, the term of dyslexia itself includes a few conditions such as dyspraxia or motor difficulties and dyscalculia or mathematics difficulties. On the other hand, Ministry of Education also prefer the term "specific learning difficulties" as it have more problems in learning skills especially when reading, writing, spelling and manipulating numbers which are not typical of their level of performance.

iv. Lack of relevant assistive technology

Based on research from previous study, it briefly describe people with disabilities might face namerous challenges when they using technology. For instance, when they retrieving information using the Internet Interfaces networking. Person who having visual impairments may have problems due to a lack of compatibility of Web content with the screen reader they use, a software application gives computer synthesized speech output of items come out on the screen. Retrieving information intends to modify the content and the method of delivery so that it has value and meaning for people who

experience with learning disabilities. In this part, designers normally fail to put necessary text tags on link, tables, graphics or forms.

Second, people who have motor impairment such as partial or no use of their body's part are difficulties due to a disorder layout and buttons where the size are too small as well as another important navigability considerations that may unusable for people with disabilities. Individual with hearing impairment, normally having a problems based on lack of textual equivalents of audio content and may not have the potentials in order to use it well. People who having cognitive impairments such as dementia, autism or traumatic brain injury may also problem with computer layout and design as well as navigability that make the difference whether they have ability to use a site or not. For people who have communication impairment also, they also face with interactive Web chats and other conferencing features.

In information retrieval process, there are various complexities associate in a digital environment. Based on Sudatta Chowdhury et al. (2014), the paper is argued that uncertainty may be caused in particular by:

- i. The growth of diverse electronic information channels and sources and the associated mechanisms to access or retrieve them properly.
- ii. Lack of awareness and unfamiliarity with the appropriate channels and sources of information
- iii. Questions related to the quality of the channels and sources itself

C. Measures to overcome the problems faced by people with disabilities

Basic skills of reading, writing and calculation are most important skills toward a new globalization era of technologies. All kinds of society are included to have the skills. From the article Ahmed Elhassan et al (2015), the researcher describes that there are the problem solving are necessary to show to a people who have the right skills to determination these problems and the personal strength to face the challenges and pressure that may bring.

Similarly, over past 60 years ago, the United Nations (UN) has been at the forefront in protecting the rights of persons with disabilities. If there are individuals with disabilities being ignored of their basic rights and if problems occur related with them, such as social discrimination and the access gap are not addressed, the quality of life for persons with disabilities will not improve and social integration will become inaccessible (Hee-Yoon Yoon and Sin-Young Kim, 2011). Because of this issue, International Federation of Library Association (IFLA) takes the best alternative to encourages their services that available to the people with disabilities.

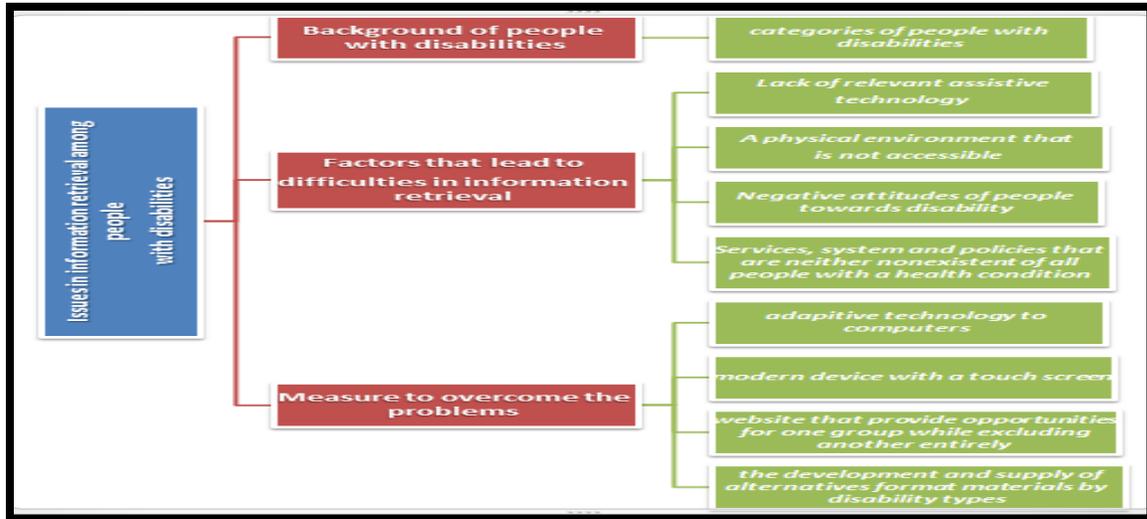


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework.

Based on the framework, the issues in information retrieval among people with disabilities come out with three issues. The first issue is background of people with disabilities. The review has shown that there are numerous categories in disabilities such as physical disabilities, visual disabilities, mental disabilities and so forth. Next, this paper addressing factors that leads to difficulties in information retrieval among people with disabilities. A focus simply on factors that related to difficulties, for instance, lack of relevant assistive technology for them, a physical environment that is not accessible, negative attitudes of people towards disabilities person and also services, system and policies that are neither non-existent of all people with a health condition. Lastly, this framework has shown that there are a lot of alternatives that consist can be measure to overcome the problems. For example, there are adaptive technology computer for this group of disabilities person, modern device with a touch screen that easier for them anywhere and anytime, the website that provide opportunities for one group while excluding another entirely and also includes the development and supply of alternatives format materials by disability types of person.

CONCLUSIONS

This report has been divided into three sections; the first section describes policy, legislation and background of people with disabilities; the second sections describes some factors that lead to a difficulties in information retrieval among people with disabilities and the last section describes the measure to overcome the problem faced by people with disabilities. Defence of the right of life, then implies the defence of other rights which enable the individual with disabilities to achieve the fullest measure of personal development of which he or she is capable. These include the right to equal opportunity in education, in employment, in housing, as well as the right to free access to public accommodations, facilities and services.

In other words, effective services for disabled people depend on a number of factors and principles, but there is no blue-print that applies universally. This paper is likely to be relevant in range of service delivery contexts, but is likely to be more effective where principles of disabilities user consultation and collaboration are in a place.

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