

Inclusive academic examinations for people with disabilities

Persons with disabilities (PWDs) face unique difficulties during academic examinations. Traveling to unfamiliar exam venues, maneuvering in the new location and using sanitary facilities are among the common issues faced by those with difficulties related to mobility. Those with visual disability are sometimes not allowed to use talking watches at the examination halls, have difficulty finding helpers to write answers on their behalf, and are placed at a disadvantage when questions contain illustrations. Simple awareness- and ICT-related solutions can help overcome these issues and make academic examinations more inclusive.

Summary of Recommendations

Immediately: Allow PWDs to take examinations at their familiar educational institutions. Provide targeted awareness on special needs, examination rules and assistive devices for invigilators overseeing PWD candidates.

Short term: Provide alternative questions for candidates with visual disability when there pictorial illustrations are used.

Long term: Allow candidates with visual disability to answer examination papers through computer typing.

The Research

- LIRNEasia conducted a nationally representative survey among 15-65-years-old PWDs in Nepal to understand ICT access and use. Four hundred PWDs from 400 households in 100 wards in all 7 provinces were interviewed between August and October 2018. The questionnaire was designed based on the Washington Group on Disabilities Questions. The results are nationally representative with 95% confidence interval and ± 9.8 margin of error.
- LIRNEasia conducted qualitative research in Provinces No. 1, 2, 3 and 5 in urban and rural locations. The research was designed to understand how ICTs can help ensure independent living for PWDs in Nepal. Grounded theory was applied to identify key themes emerging in interviews of 174 PWDs and nine key informants.

Key Findings

- 1.6% of the population aged 15-65 reported as a PWD
- 54% had no schooling, and 26% had only primary education.
- Examination conditions was an issue among PWDs:

“We get stuck if the question is in pictures and mathematics. Since we cannot see, we cannot know what the question is about.” -- Visual disability, Male, Palpa

“It would be very helpful to us if the government takes the computer typing for the blinds during the exams into action and implements it.”
-- Visual disability, Male, Kathmandu

More Information: <http://bit.ly/NPtech4PWD>

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