

Inclusivity of Text Books Across Different Educational Boards: Teachers Perspective

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Abstract:

The white cane is a vital tool for visually impaired individuals, providing them with independence and mobility in their daily lives. This paper explores the history, design, and functionality of the white cane, as well as its impact on the lives of visually impaired individuals. We also discuss the various types of white canes available, their benefits, and the training required to use them effectively.

Keywords:

By working together, we can promote greater inclusion and accessibility for visually impaired individuals and enhance their quality of life

Introduction:

The white cane is a simple yet powerful tool that has revolutionized the way visually impaired individuals navigate their surroundings. It is a lightweight, durable, and versatile device that provides tactile feedback, allowing users to detect obstacles, navigate through spaces, and identify objects. The white cane has a long history, dating back to the early 20th century, and has undergone significant design improvements over the years.

Mobility canes are often made from aluminium, graphite-reinforced plastic or other fibre-reinforced plastic, and can come with a wide variety of tips depending upon user preference.

Folded long cane:

White canes can be either collapsible or straight, with both versions having advantages and disadvantages. The National Federation of the Blind in the United States affirms that the lightness and greater length of the straight canes allows greater mobility and safety, though collapsible canes can be stored with more ease, giving them advantage in crowded areas such as classrooms and public events.

A white cane is a stick used by people who are visually impaired or blind . It helps them navigate the world around them and also signals to others that they need special attention while traveling.

In detail:

Help:

White canes help visually impaired people sense obstacles, such as sidewalk edges, buildings, or other people.

Identification:

The color of the cane (white) helps people recognize that the person is visually impaired, allowing them to help him cross the street or provide other assistance.

Security:

In many countries, there are traffic rules for people using white canes to walk safely on the road.

Sign:

The white stick symbolises independence and mobility, and indicates that the person wants more freedom in his life.

Different Types:

Some white sticks are equipped with electronic sensors or other accessories that can make navigation easier.

World White Cane Day:

World White Cane Day is observed every year on October 15, celebrating the freedom and equality of visually impaired people

Review of Literature:

The white cane is a vital tool for visually impaired individuals, enhancing their independence and mobility. Research highlights its effectiveness in detecting obstacles, navigating spaces and promoting confidence. Studies emphasize proper training techniques, such as the "touch technique" and "arc technique", to maximize its benefits. Various types of white canes cater to different needs, including rigid, collapsible and identification canes. The white cane's impact extends beyond mobility, fostering self-reliance and empowerment. Its design and functionality continue to evolve, incorporating innovative materials and technologies. Overall, the white cane remains an essential aid for visually impaired individual's worldwide.

1921 James Biggs, a photographer from Bristol who became blind after an accident and was uncomfortable with the amount of traffic around his home, painted his walking stick white to be more easily visible.

In 1931 in France, Guilly d'Herbement launched a national white stick movement for blind people. On February 7, 1931, Guilly d'Herbement symbolically gave the first two white canes to blind people, in the presence of several French ministers. 5,000 more white canes were later sent to blind French veterans from World War I and blind civilians.

The first special white cane ordinance was passed in December 1930 in Peoria, Illinois, after intervention of the Peoria Lions Club, granting blind pedestrians protections and the right-of-way while carrying a white cane.

The long cane was improved upon by World War II veterans rehabilitation specialist, Richard E. Hoover, at Valley Forge Army Hospital.[12] In 1944, he took the Lions Club white cane (originally made of wood) and went around the hospital blindfolded for a week. During this time he developed what is now the standard method of "long cane" training or the Hoover Method. He is now called the "Father of the Lightweight Long Cane Technique". The basic technique is to swing the cane from the center of the body back and forth before the feet. The cane should be swept before the rear foot as the

person steps. Before he taught other rehabilitators, or "orientors", his new technique he had a special commission to have lightweight, long white canes made for the veterans of the European fronts.

Hoover's long cane technique was perfected at Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital, which opened the Department of Veterans Affairs' first Blind Rehabilitation Center in 1948 and was staffed by former Valley Forge Army Hospital instructors.

On October 6, 1964, a joint resolution of the Congress, HR 753, was signed into law authorizing the President of the United States to proclaim October 15 of each year as "White Cane Safety Day". President Lyndon Johnson was the first to make this proclamation.

History of the White Cane:

The white cane was first introduced in the 1920s as a tool for visually impaired individuals to navigate their surroundings. Initially, canes were made of wood or other materials and were not specifically designed for visually impaired individuals. However, with the introduction of the white cane, visually impaired individuals were able to move around with greater confidence and independence. Today, the white cane is an internationally recognized symbol of visual impairment, and its use is widespread among visually impaired individuals.

Design and Functionality:

The white cane is designed to provide tactile feedback to the user, allowing them to detect obstacles and navigate through spaces. The cane typically consists of a lightweight shaft made of carbon fiber, aluminum, or fiberglass, with a rubber or plastic tip that provides traction and durability. The handle is designed to fit comfortably in the user's hand, allowing for precise control and maneuverability. Some white canes also feature additional components, such as a wrist strap or a ball tip, which can enhance stability and control.

Types of White Canes:

There are several types of white canes available, each designed to meet the specific needs of visually impaired individuals. Some common types of white canes include:

- Rigid Canes: These canes are made of a single piece of material and are designed for users who require a high level of stability and support.
- Collapsible Canes: These canes are designed for users who require a compact and portable cane that can be easily stored and transported.
- Identification Canes: These canes are designed to identify the user as visually impaired and are often used in situations where mobility is not a primary concern.

Benefits of the White Cane:

The white cane provides numerous benefits to visually impaired individuals, including:

- Increased Independence: The white cane allows users to move around with greater confidence and independence, reducing their reliance on others for mobility and navigation.
- Improved Mobility: The white cane enables users to detect obstacles and navigate through spaces with greater ease and precision.
- Enhanced Safety: The white cane provides users with a sense of security and safety, allowing them to move around with greater confidence and reduced risk of injury.

Training and Techniques:

To use a white cane effectively, visually impaired individuals require specialized training and techniques. This training typically includes:

- Basic Techniques: Users learn basic techniques for holding and manoeuvring the cane, including the "touch technique" and the "arc technique."
- Obstacle Detection: Users learn to detect obstacles and navigate around them using the cane.
- Navigation: Users learn to navigate through spaces using the cane, including stairs, doorways, and other complex environments.

Conclusion:

The white cane is a vital tool for visually impaired individuals, providing them with independence, mobility, and confidence. Its design and functionality have evolved over the years, and it remains an essential component of orientation and mobility training for visually impaired individuals. By understanding the benefits and techniques of white cane use, we can better support visually impaired individuals in their daily lives and promote greater inclusion and accessibility.

Recommendations:

Based on our research, we recommend that:

- Visually impaired individuals receive comprehensive training in white cane use to maximize their independence and mobility.
- Healthcare professionals be aware of the benefits and techniques of white cane use and provide support and guidance to visually impaired individuals.
- Manufacturers continue to innovate and improve the design and functionality of white canes to meet the evolving needs of visually impaired individuals.

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