

May I come in? An accessibility study on shopping malls and their respective movie theatres in Ribeirão Preto/SP

Patrícia Takeno Cologna, Tatiana Doval Amador, Débora Couto Carrijo
Universidade Federal de São Carlos, São Carlos, SP, Brazil

According to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, in Portuguese) (2000) 24.5 million Brazilians have some kind of deficiency or incapacity. Handicapped people are supported by law, giving them the right to be socially included, in accordance with the decree 3.298/99, approved in 12/20/99, that regularizes the law # 7.853, 10/24/89. This decree consists in the National Politics for the Integration of Handicapped people, which consolidates the protection norms and guarantees to the handicapped the plain right to their health, education, habilitation and rehabilitation, work, culture and leisure exercises. However, in practice, this fraction of the population finds it hard to seize such rights. Accessibility means the quality of being "accessible", which in turn means that which can be easily reached, or which it is in one's range. It is part of an occupational therapist's job, licensed by the Federal Council of Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy, his/her training on daily life activities (DLA) and instrumental daily life activities (IDLA). Thus, regarding inclusive proposals, the occupational therapist directly acts on accessibility conditions, aiming its performance and functionality with quality and independency. Hence, the present work sights on checking whether shopping malls and their respective movie theatres in Ribeirão Preto/SP fulfill the request of the law #3.289/99, concerning access of physically handicapped and low-mobility people. Thereby, three locations were visited, and items such as sidewalk and handicap ramps, elevators, floor type and upkeep, local restrooms and sites specifically designated to the handicapped people and their companions were evaluated. It was observed that all the three locations meet the requests of the decree concerning the accessibility norms suggested by the Brazilian Association of Technical Norms (ABNT, in Portuguese); however, the subjective dimension of accessibility is not explicit.