Availability of Library Resources and Services for the Physically Challenged Users in Academic Libraries in Ogun State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The knowledge society does not have the physically challenged people excluded from its pronouncement that all people should have full access to needed information. This work investigates the operations of academic libraries in Ogun State and their compliance with the pronouncement of the knowledge society. The various types of physically challenged were also enumerated. The work discussed the need for libraries to cater for the information needs of the physically challenged just like every other set of people. The operations and services of academic libraries in Ogun State were also considered to determine the availability of library resources and services for the physically challenged in those libraries. Findings of the study revealed that physical challenged people are present in all sphere of life and tertiary institutions in Ogun State are not left out. The study also revealed that only a few library in Ogun State planned for the physically challenged right from inception. This work thereby concluded that there is ability in every disability and libraries are advised to help the physically challenged in nourishing their abilities in their respective disabilities.

Keywords: Academic Libraries; Library Resources; Library Services; Nigeria Ogun State; Physically Challenged People

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The operations and services rendered by Libraries of all types are usually structured to support the attainment of the vision and mission statements of their parent bodies. Traditionally, libraries are attached to a parent body (organization) that have several units working together to achieve a common goal. Though each unit might operate differently,

their objectives are usually drawn from the general aim and objectives of the organization as a whole. Libraries attached to educational institutions are usually structured to research, reading and learning activities while those attached to governmental agencies structured their operations towards the attainment of the scope of their respective agencies. Kumar (2007) posited that library does not exist for its own sake, it exist to serve the needs of a community and its objectives drawn from its parent body. The library is thereby one of the arms of an organization that is meant to contribute tremendously to the growth and development of the organization.

The community meant to be served by Libraries comprise of people that are diverse in their mode of understanding, physical, mental and moral wellness. An in-depth understanding of the fundamental principles that guide the operations and services of libraries painted the library as a unit that is meant to treat all users (community members) fairly without prejudice. Aina (2004) opined that users of the library are those who avail themselves of the services offered by a library in a community. As such, the library need the users as much as the users need the library because the essence of establishing a library is to meet with the information needs of the users who can hardly survive without necessary information.

Library users are of different categories and its division vary between libraries. Nwalo (2003) grouped library users into specialists, students, disadvantaged majority and the indisposed. As a user-oriented centre, libraries serve all manners of people and it has become imperative for the library to ensure that the information needs of the people are continuously satisfied for them to remain in business. The Library Science Principles posited that all users should be given their books and every book should be linked to their users. Libraries are meant to acquire information / information materials in varying formats to ensure that the information needs of their users are satisfactorily met. Libraries shouldalso not relent in their efforts in continuous acquisition to justify the purpose of their existence.

Libraries were primarily established to satisfy the information needs of some set of people classified as primary users. Though studies (Aina 2004; Nwalo, 2004) have it that discrepancies exist within the libraries primary users. Nwalo (2003), and Aina (2004) presented library users as rational beings with variations in their respective mode of reasoning, their information needs their respective mode of satisfaction. The degree of information needed by people will continue to vary for as long as no two individual reason in the same way. As such, libraries are left with no

other choice than to provide information materials in different formats and form to ensure that the library capture materials needed by a substantial number of library users. Some library users prefer information materials in electronic form while others prefers theirs in print format. Library users are rational beings that makes decisions with their own interest in mind in the first instance

As an information unit, the library continuously strike to meet-up with the information needs of all users irrespective of the huddles required to get this done. Naturally, libraries commerce operations with a clear description of whom their primary users are but it has been proven by literatures that libraries rarely consider the change in the status of their users that might crop-up unexpectedly. Except for few libraries that are set-up for physically challenged people, most libraries (especially) in Nigeria do not have adequate provisions for the physically challenged. Eze (2014) posited that there are some groups of people in Nigeria that do not to have same privileges to the library due to their physical, mental and social condition. These people include the physically challenged persons who are also labelled handicapped, disadvantaged or disabled (Mackie, 2009).

Physically challenged individuals are presented by Eze (2014) to be victims of unfortunate circumstance that could have happened to anyone. Poor provision and use of information resources and services have a resultant effect on the quality of life of library users of all categories and the society at large. It is therefore imperative for libraries to ensure that the physically challenged members of the society are well catered for in terms of their information needs in their respective operations and services.

Libraries attached to tertiary institutions are generally referred to as academic libraries and their primary aim is to support reading learning and research processes. Oyegunle (2013) posited that academic librariesare libraries that are attached to academic institutions above the secondary level, serving the teaching and research needs of students and staff. Academic libraries acquire resources and render services to the tune of the mission and vision statement of their respective parent bodies. Though their resources and services are tied to the mission and vision statement of their parent bodies, they usually operate a wider range of service compared to other types of libraries.

Abubakar (2011) opined that academic libraries are at the forefront of providing information services to their respective communities which comprises of students, lecturers, and researchers in order to support their teaching, learning and research needs.Much like their counterparts

across the world, all tertiary institutions in Ogun State have an operational academic library that is meant to service them. The Southwestern State in Nigeria is a front runner as far as the educational system in Nigeria is concerned. Table 1 below present a cross distribution of tertiary institutions in the state.

Table 1: Distribution of tertiary Institutions in Ogun State

	Federal	State	Private	Total
Universities	1	3	11	15
Polytechnics	1	5	1	7
Monotechnics & Others	2	3	7	12
Total	4	11	19	34

Source: National Universities Commission - www.nuc.edu.ng
National Board for Technical Education - www.web.nbte.gov.ng

Table 1 above presents a distribution of tertiary institutions in Ogun State. From the table, a total of 15 Universities, 7 Polytechnics and 12 monotechnics plus others are spread across the shores of Ogun State. A more comprehensive list of the tertiary institutions in Ogun State is present as Appendix 1.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Physically challenged dwellers in a community need Library and Information services like every other member of the community. Iroeze et. al. (2017) reported that between 75 and 90 percent of physically challenged people live below poverty line due to years of neglect by the society, especially their lack of access to information and information resources. Neglecting this set of people is a breach of their fundamental human right as stated in "Nigerians with Disability Decree (NWDD) of 1993" and by the "United Nation General Assembly 1975". Eze (2014) posited that neglecting the physically challenged in the community is tantamount to underutilization and wastage of human resources and underutilization of services. Libraries as an information centre are meant to support the society in building resourceful human resources without fear or favour. Physically challenged people in a community need information for self and societal development like their able counterpart and the library should give them the opportunities needed to access resourceful information materials. Physically challenged members of the

society aspire to make something out of life rather than confine themselves to their disabilities. It is therefore pertinent for libraries to play their roles to all members of the community fairly.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to investigate the availability of Library Resources and Services for the Physically Challenged in Academic Libraries in Ogun State, Nigeria. Other objectives of the study are;

i. to identify the types of libraries resources that are available to the physically challenged in Academic Libraries in Ogun State, Nigeria;

ii. to identify the types of libraries services that are available to the physically challenged in Academic Libraries in Ogun State, Nigeria

iii. to identify the level of awareness created for the available libraries resources and services to the physically challenged by Academic Libraries in Ogun State, Nigeria

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study is guided by the following research questions;

i. What are the Library Resources that are available for use by the Physically Challenged in Academic Libraries in Ogun State, Nigeria?

ii. What are the Library Services that are provided to the Physically Challenged by Academic Libraries in Ogun State, Nigeria?

iii. What is the level of awareness of the libraries resources and services to the physically challenged by Academic Libraries in Ogun State, Nigeria?

METHODOLOGY

This work adopted the use of descriptive survey to describe the existing situation in academic libraries in Ogun State as it concerns the Physically Challenged. The choice of Academic Libraries in Ogun State is to enable the researcher to conduct an in-depth research within the period of conduct of this study. The study area comprises of 34 academic libraries attached to institutions that are owned by Federal Government, State Government and Private individuals and groups. Librarians working in this academic libraries automatically serve as the population of the study. A census of all the Librarians in this institution was taken as the population since it is less than 100, and therefore manageable. A structured questionnaire was used in eliciting responses from the field.

Telephony and short interviews were also conducted to get quick response from the field. Copies of the questionnaire were administered via electronic email to all Librarians in the state within two weeks and at the end of the second week, 72 responses were gotten from Librarians across the academic Libraries in Ogun State. Data collected were analysed and presented using simple percentage, tables, and bar charts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

CONCEPT OF PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED PERSONS
Physically challenged is a term that is used to denote people with various forms of disabilities that is debilitating them from executing normal activities that are expected of them. They are usually in different degrees ranging and it comes in different dimensions. Blindness, deafness, loss or weakness of limbs, mental retardation and lot of others are some of the forms that people could be physically challenged. Forrest (2005) posited that physically challenged persons are people who have substantial, adverse and long term effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Muya (1996) sees it as any restriction or lack of ability to perform an activity considered normal for able-bodied persons. Physically challenged is a dysfunction that occurs in different ways. Some are born with this trait while some others suddenly become challenged during the cause of their existence. Echezona. et. al. (2009) posited that the causes of physical challenge among people in Nigeria includes malnutrition, communicable diseases and accident which is responsible for about one-third of all disabilities.

Eze (2014) reported that increase in road crash in recent times has led to more accident victims who become physically challenged. The pitiable conditions of the road coupled with the use of motor cycle (popularly known as Okada) in Nigeria is not helping matters at all. Momodu (2013) described physically challenged as a term used in describing people with various forms of disabilities like blindness, deafness, loss or weakness of limbs and mentally retardation etc.

ICF (2017) reported that disabilities can affect people in different ways. It could be physical and mental impairments that can hamper or reduce a person's ability to carry out his day to day activities. There are many types of disabilities, such as those that affect a people's
- Vision   -   Hearing
- Thinking   -   Learning
- Movement   -   Mental Health

- Remembering - Communicating
- Social relationships

ICF (2017) also broke down "Disability" into a number of broad sub-categories, which are;
1. Mobility and Physical Impairments:
   + Upper or Lower limb(s) disability   + Manual dexterity
   + Disability in co-ordination with different organs of the body
2. Spinal Cord Disability:
3. Head Injuries - Brain Disability (Acquired or Traumatic Brain Injury)
4. Vision Disability
5. Hearing Disability
6. Cognitive or Learning Disabilities
7. Psychological Disorders
8. Affective Disorders:
9. Personality Disorders - Defined as deeply inadequate patterns of behavior and thought of sufficient severity to cause significant impairment to day-to-day activities.
10. Schizophrenia: A mental disorder characterized by disturbances of thinking, mood, and behavior.
11. Invisible Disabilities: disabilities that are not immediately apparent to others.

The Quality Assurance Agency (2010) reported that the physically challenged that are more prevalent in regular tertiary institutions in Nigeria are physical and mobility impairment, visual impairment (total blindness) and hearing impairment (deaf and dumb).

PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED PERSONS AND CARE OF THE LIBRARY
People with disabilities have the right to information like every other set of people. The United Nations General Assembly (1975) clearly stated the need to care for the physically challenged and the Federal Government of Nigeria also emphasise the need to cater for the needs of the physically challenged in the National Policy on Education (1977). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)posited that the basic tenets of democracy is characterized by principle of equality, freedom of information and expression. As such, the physically challenged persons in every state deserves the right to information and education much like every other set of people that lives in the state.

Nigerian libraries started rendering some forms of services to the physically challenged since the early 1990s. According to the finding of

Iroese et al. (2017), libraries for physically challenged started in Nigeria in the early 20th century and this was commensurate with the establishment of schools for the blinds in Jos (Plateau State), Oji (River State) and Lagos in 1952 and 1958 (last two) respectively. The materials needed for the teaching of the physically challenged in this institutions are rare and it became imperative for management of the institution / government to assist in providing access to the needed study materials. As such, the few study materials that the management / government could provide for their study was thereby deposited at the library for access and use by both students and tutors in the physically challenged academy.

Iroeze et. al. (2017) also reported that the most advanced library for the blind was established by Inlacks Foundation in 1960 at the Southern Eastern part of Nigeria. They also reported that the location of the library established by Inlacks Foundation serves as the main reason for the low patronage of the library. Aside the libraries that were established in the schools and that established by some organizations, the Federal Government of Nigeria also rose up to the occasion and established a National Library for the blind in Lagos in 1963.Since then, some Nigerian libraries considered the physically challenged right from the very start where some are yet to see the need for such considerations.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table 2: Physically Challenged Amidst Primary Users in Academic Libraries in Ogun State.

Fig. 1

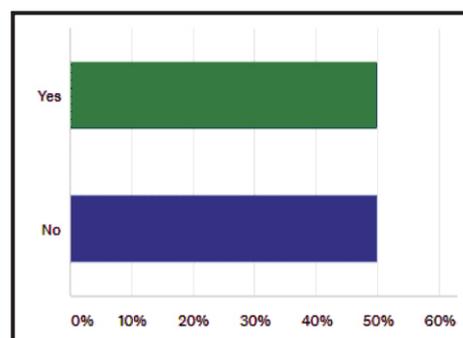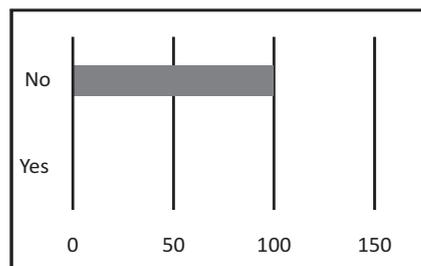|	F	%
Available	25	50.00
Unavailable	25	50.00
Total	**50**	**100.00**

Table 2and figure 1 above reveals that the percentage of the respondents that are aware that some of their primary users are physically challenged. Invariable, this shows that not all Librarians are aware of the presence of physically challenged in the community where

they serve. As such, research question one, two and three could not be addressed here because library resources and services cannot be procured for users that are not know to the management of the Library. Creation of awareness is also meant to be done for available resources and services.

Table 3: Availability of Disability Officer(s) in Ogun State Tertiary Institutions' Libraries

Fig. 2

	F	%
Available	0.00	0.00
Unavailable	50	100.00
No response	22	
Total	72	100.00

Bar chart prepared with Survey Monkey

Table 3and figure 2 above reveals that none of the academic libraries in Ogun State have engaged the service of any disability Officer. With the result, it could be taken that none of the libraries has given special preference to physically challenged persons and it is essential that this is done because physically challenged persons have to be cared for specially in order to meet their information needs.

Table 4: Availability of Library Resources and Services for the Physically Challenged

	Available	**Unavailable**
Ramps	(38.89%)	(61.11%)
Adaptive / Adjustable Carrels	(26.32%)	(73.68%)
Disability Officer (3)	(0.00%)	(100.00%)
Braille Books / Braille Library Guide	(17.65%)	(82.35%)
Library Guide in Audio form	(15.79%)	(84.21%)
Computer Braille	(22.22%)	(77.78%)
Large Print books	(50.00%)	(50.00%)

	Available	Unavailable
eBooks	(88.89%)	(11.11%)
CDS / DVDs	(94.12%)	(5.88%)
Talking drums / Talking Computers	(22.22%)	(77.78%)
Optical Aids (Magnifiers)	(23.53%)	(76.47%)
Aisles between Shelves up to 60 inches	(31.58%)	(68.42%)
Special / Accessible Reading Area	(57.89%)	(42.11%)
Kik Steps	(42.11%)	(57.89%)
Good Lighting	(89.47%)	(10.53%)
Audiological devices	(16.67%)	(83.33%)
Extended loan Service	(78.95%)	(21.05%)
Borrowing by Proxies	(38.89%)	(61.11%)
Document Delivery Service	(50.00%)	(50.00%)
Search Request Assistant	(94.44%)	(5.56%)
Selective Dissemination of Information	(84.21%)	(15.79%)
Volunteer Reader Services	(44.44%)	(55.56%)
Braille Production Services	(11.11%)	(88.89%)
Book by mail	(22.22%)	(77.78%)
Current Awareness Services	(75.00%)	(25.00%)

Data analyzed using Survey Monkey (www.surveymonkey.com)

Table 4 above provided answers to research question "i" and "ii" by listing some library resources and services that are expected to be rendered by libraries to the physically challenged persons. Most academic libraries in Ogun state have architectural barriers that prevents some physically challenged persons from accessing the resources. Only a few academic libraries in the State made provision for ramps that could be used to access Library building and move around the library. Data

sourced from respondents to this study revealed that only 38.89% of the libraries in the state made provisions for ramps while a significant numbers of libraries 61.11% do not made provision for ramps.

The spacing (Aisle) at the point of entry, between the shelves, carrels in most of the academic libraries in Ogun isnot wide enough for swift movement of some physically challenged. Aisle in most of the libraries are less than 60 inches and this will hinder some physically challenged persons from accessing needed materials from the shelves. The findings of the study revealed that only 31.58% of the libraries surveyed have the aisles around the library to be up to 60 inches while a significant number of the libraries (68.42%) do not have the adequate spacing to facilitate easy flow of movement in the libraries.

As captures in table 4 above, none of the academic libraries in Ogun State make special provision to acquire resources for the physically challenged in their operational budget in the last three (3) years. And this is an indication that most of them will not have adequate resources to cater for the special material needs of the physically challenged persons. The table also reveals that none of the academic libraries in Ogun State have staff that are specially trained to attend to the physically challenged users.

Librarians in the state are not properly trained to attend to physically challenged users in their libraries.F ew provisions made for the physically challenged by academic libraries is as a result of an established demand for such provision and not in anticipation of such demand. None of the academic libraries in Ogun State have specific service mapped out for the physically challenged persons instead, they stocked the library with same set of materials and assume that will serve the interest of all primary users.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Due to the findings of this study that revealed that physically challenged people are everywhere, the study enjoined all libraries to make provisions for the physically challenged right from the very start. Provision of ramps should be made compulsory in all library architectural designs to facilitate access to the library resources and services. The operational policies of libraries should be reworked to accommodate policies that will facilitate access and use of the library by the physically challenged persons. Libraries are encouraged to make their policies flexible to accommodate some of the special demands of the physically challenged users.

Library educational / orientation programmes should be structured in such a way that the physically challenged people are carried along. It is not enough to organize a talk session to introduce library operations, services and resources to different categories of users at the same time. Libraries should endeavour to acquire Blaire and some other rear collections for use of their respective physically challenged persons.

Libraries should make provisions for the physically challenged as they are expected to provide "every user his/her books" and "every book its user". Libraries in should make special provision for the physically challenged in their annual budget. Libraries should endeavour to have trained personnel that will help in attending to the physically challenged users as they demand for special form of services in most cases.
Libraries should look into the spacing right from the entrance and ensure that adequate spacing are made to favour the physically challenged users. Walkways should be up to 60 inches wild to enhance free flow of movement. Usage of library to the physically challenged should not be limited to special libraries as academic libraries are known for the richness of their collections.

CONCLUSION
This work collaborate previous studies (Anjiode, 2010;) that posited that there are physically challenged people in all parts of the world and in all levels of every society. Also, this study also supported the claim that physically challenged persons should not be seen as unwell, unable to work, read neither should they be seen as people that needs help / pity. None of the academic libraries in Ogun State paid particular attention to the physically challenged despite the established roles of this set of people in national growth and development as documented in United Nation Act of 1948. Libraries as centre for all cannot leave out the physically challenged as this is contrary to their guiding principles. It is obvious that physically challenged people need special library resources and services and libraries are thereby implore to provide required resources and services. This work thereby concluded that there is ability in every disabilities and libraries should help the physically challenged to identify and build on their ability in their respective disabilities.

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TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN OGUN STATE   Appendix I

UNIVERSITIES			
1.	Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta	1988	Federal
2.	Moshood Abiola University of Science & Technology, Abeokuta	2017	State
3.	Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye	1982	State
4.	Tai-Solarin University of Education, Ijagun	2005	State
5.	Babcock University, Ilishan-Remo	1999	Private
6.	Bells University Of Technology, Ota	2005	Private
7.	Chrisland University, Owode	2015	Private
8.	Christopher University, Mowe	2015	Private
9.	Covenant University, Ota	2002	Private
10.	Crawford University, Igbesa	2005	Private
11.	Crescent University, Abeokuta	2005	Private
12.	Hallmark University, Ijebu-Itele	2015	Private
13.	McPherson University, Seriki-Sotayo	2012	Private
14.	Mountain Top University, Makogi Oba	2015	Private
15	Southwestern University, Okun-Owa	2012	Private
POLYTECHNICS			
1.	Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro	1979	Federal
2.	Abraham Adesanya Polytechnic, Ijebu-Igbo	2004	State
3.	D.S Adegbenro ICT Polytechnic, Itori-Ewekoro	2004	State
4.	Gateway Polytechnic, Saapade	2004	State
5.	Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, Ojere	1979	State
6.	Ogun State Institute of Technology, Igbesa	2004	State
7.	Allover Central Polytechnic, Ota	1998	Private
MONOTECHNICS AND OTHERS			
1.	Federal College of Education, Osiele	1976	Federal
2.	Government Technical College (Ijebu Ode, Igbesa, et. al.)	1989	Federal

3.	Gateway Industrial Petrogas Institute, Oni	2013	State
4.	Ogun State College of Health Technology, Ijebu -Ilese	1976	State
5.	Tai -Solarin College of Education, Omu-Ijebu	1978	State
6.	Calvary College of Technology, Papalanto	2015	Private
7.	Ifo College of Management & Technology, Ifo	2009	Private
8.	Pogil College of Health Technology, Ogun State	2014	Private
9.	Sagamu Business And Arts Institute, Sagamu	2016	Private
10.	St. Albert the Great Major Seminary	2014	Private
11.	Stars Maritime Academy, Itele	2010	Private

Source: National Universities Commission - www.nuc.edu.ng
National Board for Technical Education - www.web.nbte.gov.ng