



**PROVISION AND USE OF LIBRARY RESOURCES AND SERVICES BY PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED STUDENTS IN ADEYEMI COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ONDO**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The paper focused on provision and use of library resources and services by physically challenged students in Adeyemi College of Education Ondo. Physically challenged students in this paper were restricted to the blind (visually impaired). The library is expected to provide inclusive resources and services to all and sundry. Visually impaired persons have the same information needs as sighted people. Just as sighted people might read a newspaper, listen to a CD or download electronic information from the Internet. It was observed that the College graciously admitted qualified visually impaired undergraduates into departments and they are expected to make use of the resources and services of the library for their academic advancement and recreation. The provision of relevant resources and services for the visually impaired students in the College will enable them to utilize the library resources; and compete with their sighted colleagues in the same department academically. Survey research design was used for the study. All the four visually impaired students, administrative officer in-charge of the visually impaired in Counselling and Human Development Centre and 11 librarians in the College were the population and sample of the study. Interview and questionnaire were the instruments used for the students/administrative officer and librarians respectively for the study. Five research questions were answered. Tables and simple percentage were used to present collected data. The study found among others that: braille textbooks, braille journals, braille printer, tactile or raised surface, past question papers, braille scanner and laptop/desktop were not available for the use of the visually impaired students in the library and loan of braille textbooks/talking books, magazines and newspapers on braille, library friendly environment services for the visually impaired students were not available for them. The study concluded that library resources and services to the visually impaired students in Adeyemi College of Education was hindered due to non-availability of information resources in braille and no formal training for librarians on services to visually impaired.*

**Keywords:** Resources; Services; Library; Physically challenged; ACE students



## **Introduction**

Library is an institution where information resources are systematically selected, acquired, stored and made available to needed users. Resources of the library consist of books, journals, reference sources, newspapers, magazines, theses, dissertations, audio, visual, audio visual, projects, grey materials, conference proceedings, workshop and seminar papers. Library resources can be in form of physical and or virtual. All these resources are expected to be used in rendering services to users in a particular library. Similarly, library services to users include loan, reference, reprography, bindery, Internet, reservation, research, orientation, library education, indexing and abstracting. It is important to note that library resources and services most especially in academic libraries are expected to be accessed and utilized by all students without any hindrance. Library resources should be inclusive where both the physically fit and physically challenged will benefit from the resources in the format usable to them. According to International Federation of Library Association and Institutions (IFLA) 2012), libraries are community's 'portal' to information, knowledge and leisure, and their services need to be made accessible for the use of everyone in the community.

Physically challenged persons are people who have substantial, adverse and long term effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities (Eze, 2014). Furthermore, Eze stated that physically challenge is any restriction or lack of ability to perform an activity considered normal for able-bodied persons. Physically challenged is used interchangeably with impairment, handicapped and disabled. Anjiode (2010) defined disability as the consequence of impairment in functional performance and activity, handicap is the consequence which is reflected in interaction with, and adaptation to the surroundings. Physically challenge in this study focused on visually impaired students.

According to Rayini (2017), visually impaired is a general term used to describe people who are partially sighted and completely blind. There are about 314 million visually impaired people globally with 45 million totally blind. This special set of people needs to be provided with resources required to accomplish their academic endeavours in libraries especially academic libraries. Akolade, Tella, Akanbi-Ademolake and Adisa (2015) opined that despite the fact that academic libraries put their effort to satisfy the needs of their users, they however still neglect some group of users (physically challenged) in the information and service provision. The observation of these authors is germane and the neglect of information resources provision and services to the physically challenged in the library will make their challenges to be doubled. To encourage the physically challenged to make use of the library resources and services, libraries should provide those resources and services in the format useable to them.

For effective library service to the visually impaired to be achieved, Anjiode (2010) listed the following resources for the use of the visually impaired in the library: braille printers, braille embosser and tape duplicators, Kuzweil reader (a text- to speech reading machine with synthesized speech output), closed circuit TVs for magnifying regular text, PCs with CDROMs, power macs with CDROMs, large print typewriters, special track tape recorders, computers that are having adaptable equipment such as voice eyes. If the equipment is available in the library, visually impaired students will definitely visit and make use of the library.

## **Statement of the Problem**

The main challenge that was addressed in this study is non-utilisation of library resources and services by physically challenged students in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. Library resources and services are expected to be used by all categories of students and staff in any higher institution of learning all over the world. It was observed that the College Management graciously admitted qualified blind undergraduates into various departments in the college and they are expected to make use of the resources and services of the library for their academic advancement and recreation. Non-utilisation of resources and services by the physically challenged students is a major concern to the researchers which need to be investigated and appropriate solutions proffered so that they could make use of the library. In



view of the foregoing reason, the study focused on provision and use of library resources by physically challenged students in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study is to investigate the provision and use of library resources by physically challenged students in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo while the specific objectives are to:

- i. identify the resources available for the visually impaired students in Adeyemi College of Education (ACE) Library, Ondo;
- ii. ascertain the services rendered to visually impaired students in ACE library;
- iii. examine the frequency of library use by the visually impaired in ACE library;
- iv. identify the training programmes undergone by librarians in rendering services to the visually impaired students in ACE library;
- v. identify the challenges confronting the visually impaired students in the use of ACE library; and
- vi. ascertain the challenges confronting librarians in rendering services to the visually impaired students in ACE library.

### **Research Questions**

Research questions answered in the study are the following:

1. What are the resources available for the visually impaired students in Adeyemi College of Education (ACE) Library, Ondo?
2. What are the services rendered to visually impaired students in ACE library?
3. What is the frequency of library use by the visually impaired?
4. What are the training programmes for librarians to provide services for the visually impaired students?
5. What are the challenges confronting the visually impaired students in the use of ACE library?
6. What are the challenges confronting librarians in rendering services to the visually impaired students in ACE library?

### **Scope of the Study**

The study focused on the provision and use of resources and services by the visually impaired undergraduates in Adeyemi College of Education library. Visually impaired students and administrative officer in Counselling and Human Development Centre (CHDC) were interviewed while librarians in the College library answered questionnaire.

### **Significance of the Study**

The study is expected to improve the provision and use of library resources and services by visually impaired students in Adeyemi College of Education Ondo. The findings and recommendations of the study will assist the library to formulate a policy on services to the visually impaired in the College which will in turn help the Management in providing the needed resources, equipment and facilities to the visually impaired students in the library. The implementation of the recommendations by the College Management may assist the visually impaired students to make use the library and encourage inclusive education. The outcome of the findings may encourage the government at all levels to plan for inclusive education with library service delivery to assist the physically challenged in their educational attainment. The study will add to body of literature on library services to the physically challenged and inclusive education.



## **Review of Related Literature**

### *Library Resources and Services for the Visually Impaired*

The library needs of people with print disabilities are generally the same as those of sighted people. However, people with print disabilities cannot use conventional print materials. They depend upon large type, audio (spoken word), tactile (such as Braille), and or mechanical or optical aids or a combination of these (Eid, 2015). Eid listed collections for people with print disability to include: talking books, audio magazine and newspapers; audio tape, CD/DVD, or in DAISY format; computer files of texts; large prints books; braille and other tactile materials with audio-descriptive videos. Eid stated that libraries should consider acquiring or facilitating access to illuminated CCTVs (magnifiers using a television screen to display print of varying sizes and contrasts), microfiche enlargers (magnifiers using a television screen to display enlarged microfiche). Other equipment, which could be considered for inclusion in libraries are braille-output devices, braille printers with voice output, large print, versa-braille and typewriters. These resources are very important which a serious library must provide for the use of the visually impaired.

In line with Eid's presentation for visually impaired users in the library, Irvall and Nielsen (2005) listed the following resources for the use of the blind users: information in large print, information on audio tape, CD/DVD, or in DAISY format, information in Braille and information on the library's accessible website. International Federation of Library Association and Institutions-IFLA (2012) recommends that all library and information providers, as part of their core services, put in place services, collections, equipment and facilities, which will assist individuals users with a print disability to access and use resources that meet their particular needs for information.

### *Training for Librarians Serving Physically Challenged Users*

Stuart (2003) found that many librarians are not trained in the needs of patrons who are blind or otherwise disabled. Untrained staff in rendering services to a particular set of users may not be likely served them effectively. Therefore, there is need for librarians to be trained in handling special users in the library in order to satisfy their information needs. Provision of library and information services to students with visual impairment at the University of Ghana is hindered in the absence of specially trained librarians to serve them (Ayiah, 2007). Trained librarians in the art of serving visually impaired users in the university library are very important in achieving effective service delivery to the users. In his research, Eze (2014) suggested proper training of the librarians by the universities for effective service delivery to the visual impairment students in the university libraries in Enugu State. Bashir, Fatima, Malik, Younus and Ali (2017) highlighted the importance of trained and well managed library staff, resources, and services for individuals with special needs. Librarians need to be trained in the art of providing services and resources to the visually impaired students for effective service delivery.

## **Challenges Confronting Services to the Physically Challenged Persons in the Library**

Anjiode (2010) averred that information resources and services provided for the physically challenged were not suitable in special educational institutions in Plateau State. Suitable and relevant information resources should be acquired and organised for the physically in order to encourage them to make use of the library in these selected schools. International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions-IFLA (2012) discovered that lack of access is the biggest barrier for persons with a print disability to fully and effectively participate in all aspects of society. Therefore, it is advisable that librarians and administrators should provide easy access to relevant information resources needed by persons with print disability in library and information centres.

Eze (2014) in his study on availability and utilization of library facilities by students with visual impairment in universities in Enugu State found that students with visual impairment do not utilize library facilities because of inadequacy of resources. Adequate resources and facilities should be provided for the

students to encourage them to use the library. Akolade, Tella, Akanbi-Ademolake and Adisa (2015) discovered that non-inclusion of the physically challenged students in the decision making process of the library and unavailability of specific information materials that suits the disability of the physically challenged students in the library were the challenges found confronting the physically challenged undergraduates' satisfaction with library and information services in Kwara State higher institutions. Physically challenged inclusion in decision making process in library and information matters will enable them to suggest ways they could be served effectively.

Ekwom (2014) discovered that factors that hinder the utilization of the library facilities by students with visual impairment in universities in Enugu State among others are poor orientation on the available library facilities by the library staff, inadequate specialized personnel to handle students with visual impairments in the library, inadequate braille books, screen readers, talking calculator, encyclopaedia and dissertations. The challenges should be looked into by the university authorities at improving service delivery to students with visual impairments in the various institutional libraries. Inadequate libraries, resources and services were among the challenges hindering library services to the physically challenged in South East, Nigeria (Iroeze, Umunnakwe & Eze, 2017). Establishment of more libraries with adequate provision of resources and services to the physically challenged will improve library service delivery to the physically challenged in the South East region in Nigeria.

### Methodology

Survey research design was adopted for the study. Eleven (11) librarians, four (4) visually impaired degree students and Administrative officer II in Counseling and Human Development Centre (CHDC) constituted the population of the study. The population was small, therefore all of them constituted the sample for the study. Librarians answered the questionnaires presented to them. Interview was used for the four (4) visually impaired students and Administrative Officer II since they were not able to answer printed questionnaires. Tables and simple percentage were used to present collected data.

### Data Analysis

Table 1 is the response of the Librarians to the questionnaire administered on them.

**Table 1: Librarians' Administered Questionnaire**

No. Administered	No. Returned	No. Valid	Percentage
11	10	9	82%

Table 1 reveals that out of 11 questionnaires administered to the librarians, 10 were returned but 9 (82%) were valid for analysis. Table 2 is the demographic variables of the librarians.

**Table 2: Demographic Variables of the Librarians**

Variables	Items	Frequency	Percentage
Highest Qualification	BLIS	4	44%
	PGDLS	-	-
	MLIS/ MSC	3	33%



	Ph.D	2	22%
Total		9	99%
Years of Work Experience			
	0-4 years	2	22%
	5-9 years	3	33%
	10-14 years	3	33%
	15 years and above	1	11%
Total		9	99%

Table 2 reveals that majority 4(44%) of the respondents have BLIS while 3 (33%) have 5-9 and 10-14 work experience. All the librarians in the College library are qualified and have considerable work experience. Table 3 is the response of the respondents on available library resources for the visually impaired.

**Answer to Research Questions**

**Research Question 1:** What are the resources available for the visually impaired students in Adeyemi College of Education (ACE) Library, Ondo?

**Table 3: Availability of Resources for Visually Impaired Students**

Items	Available	Not Available
Braille Textbooks	-	9 (100%)
Braille Journals	-	9 (100%)
Braille Printer	-	9 (100%)
Large Print	2 (22%)	7 (78%)
Talking Books	-	9 (100%)
Optical Aids	-	9 (100%)
Tactile or raised surface	-	9 (100%)
Audio Materials on various Courses	2 (22%)	7 (78%)
Past Question papers in Braille	-	9 (100%)
Braille Scanner	-	9 (100%)
Laptop/Desktop for physically challenged students	-	9 (100%)

Responses of the 9 (100%) respondents in table 3 reveal that braille textbooks, braille journals, braille printer, tactile or raised surface, past question papers, braille scanner and laptop/desktop were not available for the use of the visually impaired students in the library. Non-availability of resources will lead to non-use of the resources; what is not available cannot be used. Therefore, the visually impaired students may not use the library since braille information resources are not available in the library. Table 4 is the librarians’ response on library services to the visually impaired students in the library.

**Research Question 2:** What are the services rendered to visually impaired students in ACE library?

**Table 4: Library Services for Visually Impaired**

Items	Yes	No
Loan of braille textbooks/talking books	-	9 (100%)
Reading	1 (11%)	8 (89%)
Special Reading Room	1 (11%)	8 (89%)
Reference Service	2 (22%)	7 (78%)
Library Orientation	3 (33%)	6(67%)
Internet services	3 (33%)	6 (67%)
Assisting them to search for relevant materials	1 (11%)	8 (89%)
Loan of audio materials	1 (11%)	8 (89%)
Relaxation : Magazines, Newspapers in Braille	-	9 (100%)
Library friendly environment for the visually impaired	-	9 (100%)

Table 4 reveals that 9 (100%) respondents stated that loan of braille textbooks/talking books, magazines and newspapers on braille, library friendly environment services for the visually impaired students were not available. The response to the question confirms that without available resources, services cannot be rendered to the users in the library.

**Research Question 3:** What is the frequency of library use by the visually impaired?

The result of the interview conducted reveals that none of the 4(100%) respondents made use of the College library. The four (4) visually impaired students and Administrative Officer II in Counseling and Human Development Centre (CHDC) were interviewed and responded to the questions posed to them. 2 (50%) males and 2 (50%) females constituted the visually impaired students while the Administrative Officer II was a male. 3(75%) of the visually impaired are in the Department of Educational Foundations and Counseling (EFC) and 1 (25%) in the Department of Social Studies. 3 (75%) respondents are in 200 level while 1 in 300 level. 3 (75%) respondents were totally blind while 1 (25%) was partially blind.

**Research Question 4:** What are the training programmes for librarians to provide services for the visually impaired students in ACE?

The finding reveals that none of the 9 (100%) respondents have formal training on library services to visually impaired. Formal training is needed for the librarians in order to be able to render effective services to the visually impaired students in the College Library.

**Research question 5:** What are the challenges confronting the visually impaired students in the use of ACE library?

All the 4 (100%) visually impaired students stated that non-availability of information resources and equipment in braille form was the major challenge confronting them in the use of the College library. Provision of resources in braille form and equipment are germane before the visually impaired students could make use of the library. Non-availability of these resources will continue to deny the students the use of the library. All the visually impaired students suggested and pleaded for the provision of braille information bearing resources on their courses in the library while 3 (75%) of the respondents suggested the provision of special reading area for their use. 2 (50%) respondents suggested the provision of dedicated librarian to be in-charge of their resources and services with the provision of audio resources for their use in the library.



Other suggestions were the following: library resources and services should be inclusive, purchase of braille information resources, equipment and facilities should be provided with the Library’s TETFund intervention, provision of scanners for the use of all students especially the visually impaired, provision of halogen bulb for the use of partially sighted students, library should be an environment where the students can visit conveniently without pot holes and drainages covered, College bulletins, newspapers and past questions should be in braille form and regular power supply for ease of use of equipment in the library.

The Administrative Officer II in Counseling and Human Development Centre (CHDC) who is also a visually impaired staff gave the following suggestions to encourage the visually impaired students to fully make use of the library: provision of braille printer with software that is able to produce textbooks, newspapers, key points, school bulletins in braille format; provision of laptop system for the visually impaired in the library and scanner; provision of resources on all the courses offered by the visually impaired and soft copies of reference materials should be available which could be produced into braille materials.

Table 5 is the response of the librarians to the challenges confronting them in rendering effective services to the visually impaired students in the College library.

**Research question 5:** What are the challenges confronting librarians in rendering services to the visually impaired students in ACE library?

**Table 5: Challenges Confronting Effective Library Services to the Respondents**

S/N	Items	Yes	No
1.	There is no braille information resources in the library	9 (100%)	-
2.	I do not have formal training in rendering services to the visually impaired	9 (100%)	-
3.	No dedicated staff to attend to the visually impaired students in the library	9 (100%)	-
			1
4.	Inadequate space for the visually impaired in the library	8 (89%)	(11%)
			2
5.	Poor orientation on the available library resources by the librarian	7 (78%)	(22%)
6.	There is no braille facilities/equipment for these students in the library		8
7.	Others,( please specify)	1 (11%)	(89%)

Table 5 reveals the major challenges confronting the librarians in rendering effective service to the visually impaired students as non-availability of braille information resources, no formal training in rendering services to the visually impaired and no dedicated staff to attend to the visually impaired students in the library 9 (100%). 1 (11%) respondent stated that visually impaired students are not included in library policy.

**Table 6: Suggested Solutions to the Challenges Confronting Library Services to the Respondents**

S/N	Items	Yes	No
1.	Provision of relevant braille information resources on courses being offered by the visually impaired students in the library	9 (100%)	-
2.	Provision of special area in the library for the use of the students	9 (100%)	-
3.	Relevant facilities/equipment should be provided for students in the library	9 (100%)	-
4.	Special training programme should be organised for the librarians	9 (100%)	-
5.	Others, please, specify	1 (11%)	8





(89%)

Table 7 reveals that all the four suggestions were agreed by 9 (100%) respondents as solutions for effective library service to the visually impaired students in the College while 1 (11%) respondent suggested that clear cut policy statement and sustained financial coverage should be put in place.

### **Conclusion**

The study established that library resources and services to the visually impaired students in Adeyemi College of Education were hampered by non-availability of information resources in braille form for the students. There was also, no formal training for librarians to render services to the visually impaired.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are hereby made to make library resources and services realizable to the visually impaired students in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.

1. The College Management was magnanimous in offering admission to qualified visually impaired students; therefore, the Management should graciously provide braille information resources, facilities and equipment to enable them to have the same opportunity the sighted students have in the use of library resources and services.
2. Formal training programmes should be approved for some librarians who will in turn train others on library services to the physically challenged most especially the visually impaired.
3. Dedicated and patience librarians should be saddled with the responsibility of attending to the needs of the visually impaired users in the library.
4. Electronic copy of course materials should be made available to the library by course lecturers for the use of visually impaired students.
5. Provision of special area in the library for the use of the visually impaired students for ease of use of their resources.

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