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## Library Services and Users' Satisfaction: The Physically Challenged Students in Federal Universities in South-West, Nigeria

Olajumoke williams-ilemobola

*College of Law Library, Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti*

Vincent Enyeribe UNEGBU Dr.

*Babcock University, Ilishan- Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria*

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**Library Services and Users' Satisfaction: The Physically  
Challenged Students in Federal Universities in South-West,  
Nigeria**

**By**

**Williams-Ilemobola, Olajumoke.B.**

**Afe Babalola University, Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State**

**&**

**Unegbu, V.E.**

**Babcock University, Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State**

## **Abstract**

This study examined the Use of library services and User satisfaction of the physically challenged students in Federal Universities in South-West Nigeria. A survey research was done. A total of 302 copies of self-structured and validated questionnaires were administered but 252 copies were retrieved making a total response rate of 82.8%. Based on the study, it was revealed that the physically challenged students are aware of various services rendered in the university library. Advisory service and Consultancy service is the most used services. Photocopying and lending of library materials is also used by the physically challenged students, followed by the use of joystick. The major problems facing the physically challenged students in the use of library services are current awareness service, inadequacy of relevant materials, problem of entering the library because of stair cases, lack of current books and journals. The study recommended that there is need for Federal University Libraries to lay more emphasis on current awareness services. Adequate survey of user's satisfaction should be carried out frequently to determine the value of services and the area that needs improvement. The library management should frequently organize library programmes that will be creating awareness to users on various services being rendered in the library. This will assist in promoting the image of the library thereby users (especially the physically challenged users) will be aware of various benefits they can derive from using the library services.

**Keywords:** Library services, physically challenged students, Nigerian Federal Universities, South-West Nigeria

## **Introduction**

The library welcomes users to its general reference facilities and endeavors to offer the widest possible use of its collections consistent with their preservation and with its obligation to serve all its users. Without a library the university's academic work will not be successful, because the libraries provide services that help in teaching, research and learning. Library service is provided to meet the needs of users. As library exists to support the parent organization (the university) in achieving its objectives, in the same way the use of library and library services will help students, researchers and other library users to overcome the barrier and discouragement to information access and use to achieve their academic pursuit. Hence, the quality of education depends on the use made of the library, its resources and services. Students are faced with challenges of information need in diverse ways for couple of reasons. First, mass production of information also known as information explosion makes it hard to know what to access; second, students are faced with challenges of information need(s) in diverse ways - assignments, researches, recreation, projects, and term papers, among others. Third, the library is the largest and complicated piece of educational equipment that students and non-students encounter and many are discouraged in its complexity and in most cases they are frustrated. Therefore, it is pertinent to know the routines and practices involved in library services to avoid frustration and discouragement. Without the study on how to use the library and library services, the five laws of library science formulated by Ranganathan (1931) cited in Madukoma (2014) will be of no use, (i) Books are for use (ii) Every reader his (or her) book (iii) Every book its reader (iv) Save the time of the reader (v) The library is a growing organism. Therefore, if students are not taught how to make use of the library resources, the acquisition and organization of these resources become of no value to users.

Library users could be classified as normal or physically challenged. In this research, the use of library services by the physically challenged students will be addressed. Library services include personal assistance provided to users in pursuit of information. How well a university library is able to render effective services such as lending, referral, microfilming, indexing and abstracting, current awareness, document delivery, photocopying, E-mail, facsimile, bindery, translation, consultancy, on-line database searching, user education, current contents listing, technical writing, selective dissemination of information and data processing has functional relation with the resources available at its disposal. The university library also renders services like library orientation, bibliography services, literature search, reservation of documents, inter-library loan, holding library exhibition including display of new addition to the library, maintains clippings, reprographic services and translation services. The success of such library services depend on the caliber of staff and their information handling skills, adequate finance, materials and availability of equipment for information acquisition, processing, storage and dissemination.

### **Statement of Problem**

University libraries are libraries attached to universities; these libraries have very vital role to play in meeting the multi-dimensional demands for information and knowledge of students, teachers and research scholars. University library invests huge amount of money every year on the purchase, process and storage of information resources to serve its user. Physically challenged students and other students in Federal Universities are the most important segment of user communities. It is the duty of the library professional to conduct periodic study of library users to know the users' needs, satisfaction with library's available resources and services (especially for the physically challenged students).

Literature and observation suggest a decline in use of library services by the physically challenged students as some of these students may not be taking advantage of the resources provided by the university library because of their disability. Where such is the case, physically challenged students may find it difficult coping with the rigors of academics. Also, studies in Nigeria and other parts of the world have shown that issues that have to do with accessibility of library buildings, access to information resources and services tailor-made for physically challenged students are some of the major constraints faced by those that are physically challenged (Alqaryouti, 2010, Das, Kuvini& Desai, 2013;Ekwelem, 2013).

To develop need based on collection and service that would always meet the information needs of the physically challenged students, an investigation on use of library services and users' satisfaction have been undertaken to measure the library resources/services in terms of its value and use by the physically challenged students.

### **Objectives of the study**

1. To investigate what the physically challenged students use the library services for in Federal Universities in South-West Nigeria.
2. To find out the types of library services used by the physically challenged students in Federal Universities in South-West Nigeria.
3. To determine the level of satisfaction of the physically challenged users towards library resources and services in Federal Universities in South-West Nigeria.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Williams (1995) surveyed Canadian undergraduate library service use, and found that active learners who participated more in class, and who read, write and study more are regular and active library users. Fowowe (1989) cited in Anthonia, Boma, and Itohowo (2008) found differences in the frequency of library use by faculty and students, and that 94.8% of students use library facilities. Olanlokun (1982) found that students use the library for class work, research, discussions, leisure, and other purposes. Guskin (1996) reports that use of library services promotes active learning and thus contributes to students' ability to think critically and work well independently and in a group. Ajayi (1993) notes that students who do not appreciate the value of the library services are at a disadvantage, and may visit the library to only read for examinations. Unomah (1996) finds that faculty has the major responsibility for students' use or lack of use of the library and its services. Whitemire (2001) contends that changes in user patterns have implications for university library services. The efficiency of the use of library service can be measured only by the degree to which its resources are utilized. For researchers like Oyesiku and Oduwele (2004); Oluwadare (2006); Yusuf and Iwu (2010), even though libraries and library services are being used, they are, however, reduced to seasonal places of reading as most students make use of the library when preparing for examinations.

In situations where libraries were seen to have recorded high patronage, evidence abound that users face a variety of challenges including, but not limited to, difficulty in catalogue use, obsolete materials and poor shelving (Okere&Onuoha, 2008; Amkpa, 2000). Osinulu (1998) investigated patterns of library use at Ogun State University, Nigeria, by scrutinizing user records and data, the result of that study revealed low use of library and subsequently, low use of library services, which was attributed to lack of awareness. Akin and Ajayi (2008) while studying the use of Federal University of Technology Library in Nigeria equally found out that out of 475 students,

only 82 use the library and its services on daily basis. In a study of accessibility and use of library resources/services by undergraduates in Nigerian State University of Technology Oyewusi and Oyeboade (2009) observe that LAUTECH undergraduates appreciate the role of library to their studies. Therefore, university libraries, according to Olofinsawe and Oyeniya (2010) should build strong collection of information resources/services in physical and digital formats to cater for knowledge requirements of their users. Not all library users do make use of library services, and in some cases students are not aware of the services the library put in place for them.

In Nigerian universities, library services provided to the physically challenged students are lending, referral, current awareness, document delivery, photocopying, bindery, translation, consultancy, on-line database searching, user education, current contents listing, provision of large print materials. Braille collections, Braille machines, provision of talk books, provision of walking stick slot, provision of read loud machine, elevators, provision of ramps at the entrance, technical writing, selective dissemination of information and data processing are other services rendered or that are supposed to be rendered to the physically challenged students. Provision of all these services to the physically challenged users at ease will motivate and encourage their patronage in the library. The physically challenged students in this research work are the deaf and dumb, the blind, or partially sighted and students using wheelchair, crutches and braces for mobility.

Obiozor, Onu and Ugwoegba (2010) noted that physically challenged students find it difficult to use the library especially where the environment is not conducive. The study carried cited examples of the use of stair cases instead of ramps, high or tall shelves instead of the standard 750 – 2000mm shelves, table size and the arrangement of the library itself. In this case, there is need for institutions of learning to have a means of accommodating the physically challenged students by incorporating their information needs into the library settings. The library is a center



that provides information materials or resources that are necessary to the advancement of knowledge and also to ensure that such information resources are used effectively (Ilayaraja&Manohara, 2012). The people that provide users with the information materials or resources needed are referred to as Librarians or Information professionals.

Librarians or Information professionals provide library services that meet expressed and anticipated needs of the researchers, students and administrative staff of any institution especially through innovative technological means. Yuhfen and Liu (2001) commented that libraries started off as store houses, where books were more preserved than utilized and librarians acted like some form of custodians and their interaction with users were minimal, for example, only in locating books and serving users. Presently, academic libraries and librarians play an important role in providing access to information, organizing it, and helping users to find or retrieve the information they need. Librarians / library staff provide the physically challenged users with the services and information they need. In order to fulfill essential role in facilitating research, academic libraries need to identify the ways in which their users access information (Ismail, 2010). Librarians may encounter lot of challenges in order to provide the needed services to these classes of users. They need strategies in handling these peculiar users; librarians also need to know the kind of services the physically challenged students need in the library. Physically challenged, disabled, impaired students belong to a group of people with impaired vision, impaired hearing, speech handicaps or with orthopedic or neurological impairments (Cruickshank, cited in Echezona, Osadebo&Asogwa, 2011). Sandhu (2001) described the types of physical challenge to include: mobility, hearing impaired, visually impaired and mentally retarded. Mobility is referred to as the set of people who have reduced function of legs and feet and depends on a wheelchair or other aid for mobility in order to move. Visually impaired implies a total or partial loss of the ability to perceive form using

ones sight. Hearing impaired: is an impairment that can affect the whole range or only a part of the auditory spectrum.

The physically disabled student in the words of Gunn, Echezona, Osadebo and Asogwa (2011) is one “who suffers physical or sensory impairment, or chronic sickness which could cause educational disadvantages” (p. 13). This in turn may be regarded as the blind, or partially sighted, hearing impairment, serious speech defect, paralyzed limbs or defective control over limbs or bodily functions through congenital or acquired disorder or disease, and requiring continued attention, treatment or care. There are students with physical challenges/disabilities in all parts of the world and at all levels in every society (Anjiode, 2010). The physically challenged has a substantial long-term adverse effect on one’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

In Nigeria, according to Adamu (2009) cited in Iroeze, Gertrude and Jacintha (2017), there are more than 19 million physically challenged students. Between 75 and 90 percent of them live below poverty line due to years of neglect by the society, especially their lack of access to paid employment. Research by Okoli (2005) revealed that disabled people in Nigeria are living in an environment that is hostile to their yearnings and aspirations. However, through the use of library, they can be rehabilitated, thereby cease to be liability to the society. Libraries as centre of knowledge, whose basic role is to educate the population cannot leave out the physically challenged. The physically challenged needs special library services to limit their obvious inhibitions in the use and exploitation of the information contents of the library. This could be one of the reasons why library for the handicapped was established, to provide information support services to the less privileged in the society. Library services for the physically challenged are therefore defined as collection of information resources and services consisting of alternative formats organized for use by the physically challenged (Lawal-Solarin, 2012). According to

Momodu (2013), physically challenged is the term used to describe those individuals with various forms of disabilities like, blindness, deafness, loss or weakness of limbs and mental retardation. However, within the context of libraries, the physically challenged are defined as those whose health problems interfere with learning to such an extent that special services, training equipment, materials or facilities are required. Libraries as centre of knowledge, whose basic role is to educate the population cannot leave out the physically challenged. The physically challenged needs special library services to limit their obvious inhibitions in the use and exploitation of the information contents of the library.

Consequently, library services have become a key element for libraries. The present user's interest is to get the information in need within a given timeframe. Emphasizing the crucial function of a library to its clientele, Lihitkar and Rajyalakshmi (2009) argued that one of the main goals of any information system – library inclusive - is to provide pinpointed, exhaustive, and expeditious information service to its users. Popoola and Haliso (2009) in their view see library services as the activities that libraries and their personnel render to meet the information needs of their users. In the study of the use of library services, there are ambiguities concerning "wants" and "needs." One can understand a user wanting (i. e., desiring) something that he or she needs (i.e., which would solve some problem). However, it is less clear why users sometimes do not seem to desire something they need—at least they may not desire it enough to take action. This can be unsettling for librarians who are uniquely situated to know how the library service could be used to satisfy that need. Hence, users are occasionally believed by librarians to be ignorant or idle in the face of opportunity. Many libraries have recognized the need to adapt their resources, services and techniques to the current requirements of users.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Keeping in view the objective of the study, a structured questionnaire was designed and distributed to collect the necessary primary data among the physically challenged students in federal universities in South-West, Nigeria who visited the library. The survey was conducted during January 2019 to January 2020. The population for this study consists of undergraduate students of the universities who frequently visited the library. Only the physically challenged students were given the questionnaire. According to the association of physically challenged students in the University of Ibadan, there are about 70 physically challenged students in the University of Ibadan, also there are about 100 in University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, there are 2 in Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, 47 in the Federal University of Technology, Akure, 63 in the University of Lagos while 20 in Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. The total number of all the physically challenged students is Three Hundred and Two (302).

## FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

What the physically challenged students use the library services for.

**Table 1: Purpose of Using Library Services**

Students Purpose of Using Library Services	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Mean	Std.D
	Fig	%	Fig	%	Fig	%	Fig	%		
To carryout research	126	50.4	87	34.8	33	13.2	4	1.6	3.34	0.76
To read my notebook	107	42.8	100	40.4	39	15.6	4	1.6	3.24	0.77
To read library information materials (Textbooks, Journals e.t.c)	73	29.2	151	60.4	20	8.0	6	2.4	3.16	0.66
To access internet using library computers	52	20.8	117	46.8	81	32.4	-	-	2.88	0.72

To access internet using my mobile phone / laptop	61	24.4	104	41.6	43	17.2	42	16.8	2.74	1.01
To consult reference materials	47	18.8	90	36.0	113	45.2	-	-	2.74	1.01
For relaxation	41	16.4	119	47.6	80	32.0	10	4.0	2.76	0.77
<b>Average Mean&amp; SD scores</b>									<b>2.98</b>	<b>0.78</b>

**\*\*\*Decision Rule for Table 1 is as presented below, Mean and its meaning:**

1.00 -1.49	Strongly Disagree
1.5 - 2.49	Disagreed
2.5 - 3.49	Agreed
3.5 - 4	Strongly Agree

It was observed from Table 1 that majority of the physically challenged students use the library for the purpose of carrying out research and it is ranked the best with a mean value of 3.34 on a scale of 4, next are those that are using the library for reading of their notebooks with a mean score of 3.24.

Also, the table shows other groups of physically challenged students who use the library for the purpose of reading library information materials (such as Textbooks, Journals etc) with the mean value of 3.16. The average mean value results (Mean=2.98 on a scale of 4) from the above table implies that all the factors stated under the purpose of using library services are more preferred and agreed with as the purposes of using the university library in South-West, Nigeria.

In the area of standard deviation results interpretation for the purpose of using the library, it can be seen that reading library information materials is more consistent with a standard deviation of 0.66. Others are also consistent except one that says “To access internet using my mobile phone/laptop” and “to consult reference material” which have a standard deviation of 1.01 each.

**Table 2: Typeof library services used by the physically challenged students**

Type of Library Services Used	Every time		Almost Every time		Sometimes		Almost Never		Never		Mean	Std. D
	Fig	%	Fig	%	Fig	%	Fig	%	igF	%		
Lending Services	32	12.8	37	14.8	15.1	60.4	24	9.6	6	2.4	3.26	0.89
Referral Services	32	12.8	61	24.4	63	25.2	81	32.4	13	5.2	3.07	1.13
Current Awareness Service	4	1.6	88	35.2	136	54.4	13	5.2	9	3.6	3.26	0.74
Document delivery	-	-	67	26.8	83	33.2	85	34.0	15	6.0	2.81	0.90
Photocopying services	21	8.4	73	29.2	90	36.0	62	24.8	4	1.6	3.18	0.95
Bindery services	2	0.8	134	53.6	67	26.8	43	17.2	4	1.6	3.35	0.83
Translation services	2	0.8	99	39.6	103	41.2	40	16.0	6	2.4	3.20	0.80
Consultancy services	81	32.4	84	33.6	19	7.6	62	24.8	4	1.6	3.70	1.21
Online database searching Service	34	13.6	104	41.6	89	35.6	17	6.8	6	2.4	3.57	0.89
User education service	56	22.4	121	48.4	24	9.6	41	16.4	8	3.2	3.70	1.09
Current content listing	77	30.8	32	12.8	71	28.4	20	8.0	50	20.0	3.26	1.47
large print materials	53	21.2	56	22.4	37	14.8	43	17.2	61	24.4	2.99	1.49
Braille collections	-	-	110	44.0	60	24.0	19	7.6	61	24.4	2.88	1.22
Braille machines	2	0.8	20	8.0	80	32.0	94	37.6	54	21.6	2.29	0.92
Talking books	32	12.8	2	0.8	101	40.4	36	14.4	79	31.6	2.49	1.29
Walking stick slot	32	12.8	2	0.8	75	30.0	66	26.4	75	30.0	2.40	1.28
Read loud machine	34	13.6	42	16.8	63	25.2	57	22.8	54	21.6	2.78	1.33
Elevators	9	3.6	35	14.0	66	26.4	80	32.0	60	24.0	2.41	1.11
Ramps at the entrance	-	-	32	12.8	152	60.8	58	23.2	8	3.2	2.83	0.68
Technical writing	-	-	58	23.2	118	47.2	66	26.4	8	3.2	2.90	0.79
Selective dissemination of information	21	8.4	34	13.6	145	58.0	34	13.6	16	6.4	3.02	1.04
<b>Average Mean &amp; SD scores</b>											<b>3.02</b>	<b>1.04</b>

**Decision Rule for Table 2 is as presented below, Mean and its equivalence:**

1.00-1.49	Never/Almost Never
1.5-2.49	Sometimes
2.5-3.45	Almost every time

3.5-4	Every time
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The result on Table 2 shows the type of library services used by the physically challenged students. The study reveals that the frequently used library service by the physically challenged students is user education service and consultancy service with the mean value of 3.70 each. These were followed by online database searching service which has the mean result of 3.57. The least in use is the Braille machine with a mean score of 2.99. Other rarely used services are talking books (Mean=2.49), walking stick slot (Mean = 2.40), and Braille collections (Mean=2.88) all on a scale of 4. User education service and consultancy service is used every time by the physically challenged students in Federal Universities in South-West Nigeria. From their mean scores, the consultancy service, users' education service, bindery service, translation service, current content listing and photocopying service suggest that they have positive effect on students' " frequent use of library services by physically challenged students". The finding in the Table answered the research question two.

**Table 3: Level of satisfaction of users towards library resources and services**

Userssatisfaction of Library Services	Highly Satisfied		Satisfied		Sometimes Satisfied		Never Satisfied		No Response		Mean	Std.D
	Fig	%	Fig	%	Fig	%	Fig	%	Fig	%		
Lending Services	32	12.8	37	14.8	15.1	60.4	24	9.6	6	2.4	3.26	0.89
Referral Services	32	12.8	61	24.4	63	25.2	81	32.4	13	5.2	3.07	1.13
Current Awareness Service	4	1.6	88	35.2	136	54.4	13	5.2	9	3.6	3.26	0.74
Document delivery	-	-	67	26.8	83	33.2	85	34.0	15	6.0	2.81	0.90
Photocopying services	21	8.4	73	29.2	90	36.0	62	24.8	4	1.6	3.18	0.95
Bindery services	2	0.8	134	53.6	67	26.8	43	17.2	4	1.6	3.35	0.83
Translation services	2	0.8	99	39.6	103	41.2	40	16.0	6	2.4	3.20	0.80

Consultancy services	81	32.4	84	33.6	19	7.6	62	24.8	4	1.6	3.70	1.21
Online database searching Service	34	13.6	104	41.6	89	35.6	17	6.8	6	2.4	3.57	0.89
User education service	56	22.4	121	48.4	24	9.6	41	16.4	8	3.2	3.70	1.09
Current content listing	77	30.8	32	12.8	71	28.4	20	8.0	50	20.0	3.26	1.47
large print materials	53	21.2	56	22.4	37	14.8	43	17.2	61	24.4	2.99	1.49
Braille collections	-	-	110	44.0	60	24.0	19	7.6	61	24.4	2.88	1.22
Braille machines	2	0.8	20	8.0	80	32.0	94	37.6	54	21.6	2.29	0.92
Text Book	32	12.8	2	0.8	101	40.4	36	14.4	79	31.6	2.49	1.29
Reference Service	32	12.8	2	0.8	75	30.0	66	26.4	75	30.0	2.40	1.28
Read loud machine	34	13.6	42	16.8	63	25.2	57	22.8	54	21.6	2.78	1.33
Elevators	9	3.6	35	14.0	66	26.4	80	32.0	60	24.0	2.41	1.11
Ramps at the entrance	-	-	32	12.8	152	60.8	58	23.2	8	3.2	2.83	0.68
Technical writing	-	-	58	23.2	118	47.2	66	26.4	8	3.2	2.90	0.79
Selective dissemination of information	21	8.4	34	13.6	145	58.0	34	13.6	16	6.4	3.02	1.04
<b>Average Mean &amp; SD scores</b>											<b>3.02</b>	<b>1.04</b>

**Decision Rule for Table 3 is as presented below, Mean and its equivalence:**

1.0 - 1.49	Highly Satisfied
1.5-2.49	Satisfied
2.5-3.45	Sometime Satisfied
3.5 – 4	Dissatisfied

The result on Table3shows the level of satisfactionthe physically challenged students derived when using the library services provided. The study reveals the library service the physically challenged students derived satisfaction with most are user education service and consultancy service with the



mean value of 3.70 each. This is followed by online database searching service which has the mean result of 3.57. The least in satisfaction is the Braille machine with a mean score of 2.99. Other rarely used services are talking books (Mean=2.49), walking stick slot (Mean = 2.40), and Braille collections (Mean=2.88) all on a scale of 4. The physically challenged students in Federal Universities in South-West Nigeria are highly satisfied with user education service and consultancy service. From their mean scores, the consultancy service, users education service, bindery service, translation service, current content listing and photocopying service suggest that they are satisfied with the services. The finding in Table 3 has answered the research question three.

## **Conclusion**

The study has succeeded in investigating the library services and user's satisfaction: the physically challenged students in the federal universities. Based on the study, it was revealed that the physically challenged students are aware of various services rendered in the university library. Advisory service and Consultancy service is the most used services. Photocopying and lending of library materials is also used by the physically challenged students, followed by the use of joystick. The major problems facing the physically challenged students in the use of library services are current awareness service, inadequacy of relevant materials, problem of entering the library because of stair cases, lack of current books and journals. Like-wise, inconstant power supply is also identified.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the findings that were revealed in this study, the following recommendations are hereby proffered as the way forward:

1. There is need for Federal University Libraries to lay more emphasis on current awareness services. Adequate survey of user's satisfaction should be carried out frequently to determine the value of services and the area that needs improvement. The library management should frequently organize library programmes that will be creating awareness to users on various services being rendered in the library. This

- will assist in promoting the image of the library thereby users (especially the physically challenged users) will be aware of various benefits they can derive from using the library services.
2. The library management must ensure that there is provision of ramps and elevators as these will help for easy movement of the physically challenged students.
  3. The Library management should ensure that all library staff is trained on how to serve every library users irrespective of their challenges.
  4. Physically challenged students are easily intimidated when they do not get the response properly so to make them familiar with the resources librarian should be more friendly, co-operative and helpful.

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