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# **Library Services, Information Resources Availability and Perceived Academic Achievement of Physically Challenged Students in Ibadan Oyo State**

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## **Abstract**

Physically challenged students are entitled to all the support necessary to succeed in their academic pursuits. However, the reality in developing countries, particularly Nigeria, is that little attention is often paid to physically challenged students. This study examined the influence of information resources and library services provision on the perceived academic achievement of physically challenged students in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. The study adopted a quantitative survey research method. A structured questionnaire was adopted as the instrument for data collection. The study population comprises of 348 physically challenged students from Cheshire Special School Ijokodo, Ibadan, Oyo State. Total enumeration was used due to the manageable size of the population. The findings show that the level of availability of information resources in the library is above average (mean = 2.76) It was also found that library services available to the student is above average (mean = 3.07). Furthermore, hypotheses testing revealed that availability of information resources ( $\beta=0.420$ ,  $t=3.690$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and school library services ( $\beta=1.008$ ,  $t=6.297$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) have a significant have positive influence on the perceived academic achievement by the students. The study, therefore, concluded that the library can serve as a veritable evidence of the importance of school libraries in special education and recommends that other schools also embrace the establishment school libraries.

**Keywords:** Library Information Resources, Library Services, Physically Challenged Students, Special Education, School Libraries.

## **Introduction**

Library services should be as important a factor in the education of physically challenged students as it is for ‘able bodied’ students. According to Eskay, Eskay and Uma (2012), every citizen is valuable in advancing socio-economic development of a nation. In addition, Target two of SDG 10 mandate countries all over the world to take steps to “empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status” by the year 2030 (Ritchie & Ortiz-Ospina, 2018). As a result, the education of physically challenged students should be accorded the same level of attention given to able bodied students. The term, ‘inclusive education’ has become a buzzword for advocates of equitable access to education to all including people with disabilities.

Indeed, the sustainable development goals SGDs advocate for the inclusion of people with disabilities or people with special needs, in all aspect of the society (Ritchie & Ortiz-Ospina, 2018). For physically challenged students to be able to participate in social, economic and political activities in their societies, they must be provided with equitable education. That is, as much attention should be paid to their education as is paid to other categories of students. The term ‘inclusive education has been used to describe this kind of education.

Inclusive education is a practice of ensuring that all student, including those with special needs, learn in similar academic environments and are provided with access to the same information materials to ensure the best academic outcomes (Anupriya & Salim, 2014; Gajendrabhai & Saini, 2020). In addition, Ugwu and Onukwufor (2018) proposes a method that removes barriers to education for people with a wide range of physical

abilities, allowing them to attend local schools alongside their peers without facing limitations. While the practicability of inclusive education as defined by these authors is open to debate (Sijuola, & Davidova, 2022)., this study is concerned with the position of Bhat and Geelani (2017) who submitted that the primary goal of inclusive education is to ensure that people with disabilities have the same opportunities to receive a high-quality education as their non-disabled peers. From this perspective, the focus is on equity and not necessarily equality.

The World Health Organization defines disability as "a physical or mental characteristic labelled or perceived as an impairment or dysfunction" and "some personal or social limitation associated with that impairment" (2012). In addition, Goodley et al. (2019) described disability as 'having sensory, physical and cognitive impairments. These category of people are further described as having hearing, or visual impairments, speech disorders, emotional disorder, mental retardation, physical disabilities and learning disabilities among others. In this sense, students with disabilities can be described as those students with visual, physical, sensory or mental impairment that often require they be educated in a 'special' school configured differently from regular schools (Oladejo and Oladejo, 2011).

The objective of special schools is not totally different from conventional schools. As pointed out by Osakwe (2010), schools in the modern era are expected to stimulate students' social and personal growth, and ensure that they have access to a quality education, that prepare them for the challenges of the future. Physically challenged students should also be provided with an all-round education which prepares them for appropriate roles in the society. The education of students with special needs should also be focused as much as

possible on the development of both the body and mind so that they can be assets, instead of burden, to the society. Adetoro (2009) observed that the Nigerian society often regards physically challenged persons as ill, incapable to work, study, in need of help, and people that deserve pity. The only way to correct this misconception is to empower physically challenged people through education. In this context, library services and the provision of relevant information resources is essential (Ayoung, Baada, & Baayel, 2021).

Several studies have found a strong link between school library services and information resources provision and academic achievement of students (Suleiman, Yusuf; & Tanslikhan, 2018; Oji & Abana, 2012; Chukwueke, & Onuoha, 2018; Ukpanah, Ebong, & Enang, 2018). The studies have attributed the ability of school libraries to influence academic achievement to a combination of services provided by school librarians and the depth of information resources provided to support the curriculum. School librarians have been reported to be heavily involved in stimulating reading habit among students, teaching the use of information technology and other range of skills that can boost the cognitive ability of the students. In addition, the school library also provides additional information resources for self-directed study as well as recreational activities. (Oyetola & Adio, 2020)

The school library is designed to provide teachers and students with resources beyond textbooks to support instructional activities, knowledge updates, and leisure activities. It also gives students the tools they need to make informed career decisions and improve their chances of continuing their education. (Ayanlola, 2014). For physically challenged students, the library provided a great opportunity for self-paced learning that allow students with different level of cognition to learn at their own pace. It also provides recreational tools and resources which can make learning fun for the students (Farooq, & Manzoor,

2021). The school library in special schools is even more important. This is because the special reading materials such as braille, audiobooks, sign language books and other information resources peculiar to the use of physically challenged students, all of which may not be available to individual students, are available in school libraries from which the students can benefit (Sambo, Rabi, & Shaba, 2016).

However, studies have shown that library services to physically challenged students often fall below the expected standard. Researchers have found low level of library service provision to physically challenged students. Many of the libraries designed for the use of physically challenged students, even in some special schools lack accessibility features that facilitate easy navigation by all kind user. Many physically challenged students are often embarrassed when library buildings lack the necessary accessibility features making it difficult to access library services unassisted. When such students have to be carried or assisted at every corner of the library, they may feel embarrassed and stay away from using the library (Okoli Cosmas, 2010). In addition, a library for physically challenged students without a professional trained in the serving special needs client would struggle to have any meaningful impact on the academic performance of students.

Scholars such as Eskay, Eskay and Uma (2012); Adigun, (2018) have decried the handling of special education in Nigeria. It is observed that, while there are laws, policies and frameworks to guide effective provision of special education in Nigeria, cultural prejudice, lack of political will and inefficiency has led to a practice of treating people with disabilities as lesser people and their education handled with levity. Ola (2020) observed that, despite the provision for library funding in the Nigerian education policy, investment in library services provision at all level of education still remain low.

According to Ponera (2015) physically challenged students are rarely given consideration in the planning and building of libraries. This is evident in the fact that libraries expected to serve both the able and the physically challenges students lack accessibility facilities such as adjustable shelves, chairs, audio visual and multimedia services, and ramps that make libraries easily accessible to students with physical disabilities. In addition, Iroeze, Umunnakwe, and Eze (2017) reported a dearth of information resources, including braille books, talking books, moon books, sign language books, text books, and other resources in South-East Nigerian libraries. The library amenities required by physically challenged students, according to Echezona, Osadebe, and Asogwa (2011), all observe the lack of trained staff to serve physically challenged students in many Nigerian libraries, even those established in special schools. This begged the question of the relevance of the library to academic achievement of the students, especially physically challenged students.

### **Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this study was to investigate the influence of information resources management and perceived academic achievement of physically challenged students in Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria.

The specific objectives were to:

1. ascertain the information resources available for physically challenged students in Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria;
2. identify the level of library services provided for physically challenged students in Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria;
3. determine the influence of information resources available on perceived academic achievement of physically challenged students in Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria;
4. ascertain the influence of library services provision on perceived academic achievement of physically challenged students in Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria;

## **Research Questions**

The study endeavors to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the information resources available for physically challenged students of Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria?
2. What is the level of library services provided for physically challenged students in Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria?

## **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**Ho1:** There is no significant influence of Information Resources on Perceived Academic Achievement of physically challenged students in Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria.

**Ho2:** There is no significant influence of library services on Perceived Academic Achievement of physically challenged students in Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria.

## **Methodology**

The study adopted a survey research design. The population of this study comprised of the physically challenged students of Cheshire Special School Ijokodo, Ibadan, Oyo State. The school was selected because out of over seven schools, the Ibadan metropolis, it is the one that has a functioning library. According to the data obtained from the office of the principal as at July 06 2021, there are three hundred and forty-eight (348) students enrolled at the Cheshire Special School. Total enumeration was adopted due to the population of the selected school. As a result, the study sample included all the physically challenged students of Cheshire Special School Ijokodo, Ibadan, Oyo State.

A structured questionnaire titled Questionnaire on Information Resources Management and Perceived Academic Achievement of Physically Challenged Students of Cheshire Special School, Ijokodo, Ibadan used to collect data. The instrument was administered on the students by the researcher and other four research assistants (who are teachers in Cheshire High School) after all necessary consents have been signed by parents and guardians.



Data collected from the respondents was analysed with the use of statistical package for social sciences (IBM SPSS). This was done through the use of descriptive statistical measures such as percentages, mean and standard deviation to analysed research questions 1 while hypotheses was tested using inferential statistics such as regression analysis. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

### Data Presentation and Analysis

#### Research Question 1: What are the available information resources for physically challenged students of Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria

**Table 4.2: Available information resources for physically challenged students of Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria**

| Information Resources  | VGE            | GE            | LE            | VLE           | Mean |
|--|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------|
| Visuals (pictures/ diagrams, illustration aids)  | 139<br>(71.6%) | 32<br>(16.5%) | 16<br>(8.2%)  | 7<br>(3.6%)   | 3.56 |
| Printed Information Resources (text books, newspapers, story books etc.)                       | 137<br>(71%)   | 22<br>(11.4%) | 11<br>(5.7%)  | 23<br>(11.9%) | 3.41 |
| Sign Language Book   | 126<br>(64.9%) | 16<br>(8.2%)  | 30<br>(15.5%) | 22<br>(11.3%) | 3.27 |
| Reference Information Resources (dictionaries, maps, directories, atlases, encyclopedias etc.) | 114<br>(58.8%) | 30<br>(15.5%) | 10<br>(5.2%)  | 40<br>(20.6%) | 3.12 |
| Talking books  | 63<br>(32.5%)  | 17<br>(8.8%)  | 28<br>(14.4%) | 86<br>(44.3%) | 2.99 |
| Braille books  | 105<br>(54.7%) | 24<br>(12.5%) | 20<br>(10.4%) | 43<br>(22.4%) | 2.99 |
| Audio (news, recordings, listening aids etc.)  | 80<br>(41.2%)  | 31<br>(16.0%) | 20<br>(10.3%) | 63<br>(32.5%) | 2.66 |
| ICT/ Internet Facilities   | 78<br>(40.6%)  | 15<br>(7.8%)  | 36<br>(18.8%) | 63<br>(32.8%) | 2.56 |
| Audio- Visuals (VCDs, DVD)   | 70<br>(36.1%)  | 32<br>(16.5%) | 26<br>(13.4%) | 66<br>(34.0%) | 2.55 |

|                                  |               |               |               |                |             |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|-------------|
| Subtitled DVD                    | 76<br>(39.6%) | 13<br>(6.8%)  | 30<br>(15.6%) | 73<br>(38.0%)  | 2.48        |
| Specialized alerting device      | 69<br>(35.8%) | 14.5<br>(28%) | 9<br>(4.7%)   | 87<br>(45.1%)  | 2.41        |
| Technological communication aids | 52<br>(26.8%) | 13<br>(6.7%)  | 20<br>(10.3%) | 109<br>(56.2%) | 2.04        |
| E-books                          | 32<br>(16.7%) | 20<br>(10.4%) | 35<br>(18.2%) | 105<br>(54.7%) | 1.89        |
| <b>Average mean</b>              |               |               |               |                | <b>2.76</b> |

**Source: Field survey, 2021**

**Decision Rule: 2.50**

The level of availability of various information resources necessary in the education of physically challenged students are analysed and the results presented in table 4.2. The responses from the respondents clearly outlined those resources that are available and those that are not. Going by the mean scores of each item, Visual materials such as pictures, diagrams, illustration and graphical teaching aids (3.56) are the most available followed by various printed information resources such as textbooks, newspapers etc (3.41). furthermore, the library is well resourced in reference materials Information Resources (3.12) sign language books (3.27); talking books (2.99), braille books (2.99); Audio recordings, listening aids etc (2.66); ICT/Internet Facilities (2.56) Audio- Visuals (VCDs, DVD) (2. 55). While the responses obtained showed that all these were available, the other essential resources such as; Subtitled DVD (2.48); Specialized alerting device (2.41); and Technological communication aids (2.04); and e-books ( 1.89) were reported to be not adequately available. However, the average mean score of the available resources is 2.76 which indicate that the available resources go a long way in making up for the unavailable ones.

**Research Question 2: What is the level of accessibility of information resources of physically challenged students of Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria**

**Table 2: the level of accessibility of information resources of physically challenged students**

| <b>Items</b>                                       | <b>SA</b>      | <b>A</b>      | <b>D</b>      | <b>SD</b>     | <b>Mean</b> |
|--|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| Reference and reading advisory services            | 134<br>(69.1%) | 22<br>(11.3%) | 17<br>(8.8%)  | 21<br>(10.8%) | 3.39        |
| Reading assistance for visually impaired.          | 121<br>(62.4%) | 28<br>(14.4%) | 21<br>(10.8%) | 24<br>(12.4%) | 3.27        |
| Reading sessions (Bibliotherapy)                   | 110<br>(56.7%) | 34<br>(17.5%) | 24<br>(12.4%) | 26<br>(13.4%) | 3.18        |
| Information literacy education                     | 106<br>(54.6%) | 29<br>(14.9%) | 27<br>(13.9%) | 32<br>(16.5%) | 3.08        |
| ICT use training                                   | 95<br>(49.0%)  | 44<br>(22.7%) | 19<br>(9.8%)  | 36<br>(18.6%) | 3.02        |
| Transcription services (Text to audio, video etc.) | 34<br>(17.5%)  | 27<br>(13.9%) | 67<br>(34.5%) | 66<br>(34.0%) | 2.49        |
| <b>Average mean</b>                                |                |               |               |               | <b>3.07</b> |

**Source: Field survey, 2021**

**Decision Rule: 2.50**

The data presented in table 2 highlight the provided by the library. From the responses to the various services listed, it can be seen that the library offers services such as Reference and reading advisory services (3.39). Also, the library offers reading assistance for visually impaired (3.27) This is often done by reading to them or helping then in reading braille books. The library also conducts reading sessions or bibliotherapy where librarians read to students, to entertain and motivate them (3.18). In addition to this, the library offers Information literacy education to students (3.08). This necessary to equip them with the skills of finding information, evaluating and using information effectively and responsibly. Another service rendered is ICT use training (3.02). The library provides this to ensure students have the skills to use relevant educational and library technologies. Another

services offered, though at a low rate is offers transcription services (Text to audio, video etc.) (2.49). This is often found necessary in order to bring story books and texts not available as audiobooks, to the visual impaired and others whose impairment may prevent them from reading normally as door handles. However, the mean score suggests that this services is not usually provided. Overall, the average mean of 3.07 for library services suggested a high level of services to physically challenged students at the Chesire Special Schools, Ibadan.

**Table 4.5: Influence of Information Resources Availability on Perceived Academic Achievement of physically challenged students in Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria**

| <b>Model Summary</b> |                   |                 |                          |                                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Model</b>         | <b>R</b>          | <b>R Square</b> | <b>Adjusted R Square</b> | <b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b> |
| 1                    | .262 <sup>a</sup> | .069            | .064                     | 10.223                            |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Availability

| <b>Model</b> | <b>Unstandardized Coefficients</b> |                   | <b>Standardized Coefficients</b> | <b>T</b> | <b>Sig.</b> |
|--------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|----------|-------------|
|              | <b>B</b>                           | <b>Std. Error</b> | <b>Beta</b>                      |          |             |
| (Constant)   | 47.676                             | 4.061             |                                  | 11.739   | .000        |
| Availability | .420                               | .114              | .262                             | 3.690    | .000        |

a. Dependent Variable: Academic Achievement

Table 4.5 measures the influence of information resources availability as represented by adequate availability of relevant information resources essential to the teaching and

learning of physically challenged students. From the data presented in the table, it can be seen that availability of relevant information resources ( $\beta=0.420$ ,  $t=3.690$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) has a significant statistical value which indicates that it has a positive influence on the perceived academic achievement by physically challenged students. This means that when libraries serving physically challenged are able to put in place all the necessary information resources, physically challenged students will make use of them and it will enhance their perceived academic achievement. The null hypothesis which states that there will be no significant influence of Information Resources management (availability) and Perceived Academic Achievement of physically challenged students in Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria, is therefore rejected.

**Ho2:** There was no significant influence of Information Resources management (accessibility) on Perceived Academic Achievement of physically challenged physically challenged students in Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria.

**Table 4.6: Influence of library on Perceived Academic Achievement of physically challenged students in Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria**

| Model Summary |       |          |                   |                            |
|---------------|-------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Model         | R     | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1             | .417a | .174     | .170              | 9.646                      |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Library Services

| Model            | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | T      | Sig. |
|------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
|                  | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |        |      |
| (Constant)       | 44.015                      | 3.019      |                           | 14.579 | .000 |
| Library Services | 1.008                       | .160       | .417                      | 6.297  | .000 |

Table 4.6 measures the influence of library services provision on the perceived academic achievement of the students. From the data presented in the table, it can be seen that library services ( $\beta=1.008$ ,  $t=6.297$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) has a significant statistical value which indicates that library services provision has a positive influence on the perceived academic achievement by physically challenged students. This means that when school libraries serving physically challenged are able to provide the necessary services related to learning and information resources use among physically challenged students, it will enhance their perceived academic achievement. The null hypothesis which states that there will be no significant influence of Information Resources management on Perceived Academic Achievement of physically challenged students in Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria, is therefore rejected.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The findings show that the library resources available are above average as the average means of data on the availability of resource is 2.76 which are considered acceptable on a 4-point Likert scale. However, while basic and relevant resources such as Visual materials, printed information resources, reference materials, sign language books, talking books, braille books; Audio recordings, as some ICT based materials are available. The physically challenge students still lack essential materials such as specialized alerting device and Technological communication among other. The availability of these would have added more value to the library collection and make them more useful to physically challenged students.

Scholars have emphasized the need for the availability of adequate information resources in any type of library. It is opined that sufficient and appropriate information resources offer opportunities for individuals such as physically challenged students to get the access which has depended on the availability of emerging technologies as means for creating, storing, and distributing, retrieving, and using information resources the existing literature. It is also suggested by Ternege and Kashimama (2019) that the library is central to the provision of relevant information resources and services for adequate support of teaching, learning and research in any academic environment.

However, similar to the current study, other researchers have also found that Nigerian libraries at all levels are mostly stocked with books at the expense of modern information resources. An evaluation of the availability and accessibility of information resources used by students in libraries conducted by Abubakar (2020) show that most of the information resources that make up the collection of a typical library are books. Kutu and Olabode (2020) also pointed out that, available information resources in libraries are mostly print information resources such as newspapers, textbooks, maps, dictionaries, directories and journal collections.

Contrary to this study, other studies such as the one conducted by Iroeze, Chima-James and Agim (2018), and show that information resources for the deaf and hard of hearing were not widely available. Out of 19 information resources (items) considered during essential for physically challenged students, only nine (9) were available. The authors concluded that many special education libraries in south east-Nigeria only make available a fraction of the information resources needed by their students.

The finding on the library services provided for physically challenged showed that the management, librarians and teachers in the school are working together to ensure that the library meet the needs of the students. This is contrary to what has been reported in previous studies such as Lawal-Solarin (2012) who reported that physically challenged students are often neglected by librarians.

The test of hypothesis revealed that availability of information resources has positive influence on the perceived academic achievement by physically challenged students. This finding is supported by the findings of several other studies across the world. Researchers have asserted that availability of information resources enables students to meet their learning and research needs, enables decision making, help them in solving tricky questions and decrease uncertainty among students. In another study, it was similarly argued that availability of information resources has transformed a collective consciousness, most specifically in advanced societies due to technological evolution in information technology (IT) (Adeleke & Nwalo, 2017). Hence, the secondary school phase is a very significant phase to the students. It plays good basis rested for assistances to the students in selecting numerous professional paths and they must be exposed to the relevant information resources in order to make the best decisions and develop into well-grounded adults (Narasappa & Kumar, 2018). The availability of information resources is also regarded by another scholar as critical in education, science, learning, and community services. The third law, "every book its reader". Knowledge resources, services, and facilities must be made available for effective teaching and learning purposes (Lawal & Kanon, 2021).

Hypothesis two focuses on the influence of library services provision on the perceived academic achievement of physically challenged students. The test of hypothesis also



revealed that library services provision is significant to perceived academic achievement by the students. The library services provision to students' academic achievement was also emphasized in another study which submitted that accessibility of library facilities to students with disabilities cannot be overstated (Narasappa & Kumar, 2018). More than the general student population, physically challenged students require materials and information services in accessible formats in order to meet their information needs and/or achieve academic excellence. Consequently, to contribute fully in academic events, students with disabilities often need information be transliterated into alternate formats such as auditory, large print or braille, as well as supporting technologies. The fact that information is available is not sufficient for students with disabilities as the information needs to be transformed into accessible formats for them (Phukubje & Ngoepe, 2017).

## **Conclusion**

The study has shown that the availability of relevant library resources and provision of the needed library services is essential to high level of perceived academic achievement among physically challenged students. The satisfactory level of information resources and services provision in the library studied is highly encouraging. This is however tempered by the knowledge that the Cheshire Special School is the only one with a functioning library out of several similar institutions in the Ibadan metropolis. School library services to the physically challenged is still far below what is required for an equitable educational opportunity. The expectation is that this study's confirmation of the importance of library and library services to the education of physically challenged students will stimulate more investment in library service provision to the category of library users.

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