

AVAILABILITY AND UTILIZATION OF INFORMATION RESOURCES AND SERVICES IN THE SPECIAL EDUCATION CENTRE LIBRARIES IN SOUTH-EAST, NIGERIA

**Dr. (Mrs.) Pauline Chinasa Iroeze, Chima-James, Ngozi, Agim Nneka
and Dr.(Mrs) Genevive Opara.**

ABSTRACT: *The study focused on ascertaining the availability and utilization of information resources and services in the special education centre libraries in South-East, Nigeria. The study was prompted due to the problems encountered by physically challenged student in the use of normal library services. Six research questions were posed to guide the study, while two hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted survey research design, and used observational checklist and rating scale as data collection instruments. The sample size for the study was 430 comprising five special education staff and 425 special education pupils/students. Two-stage sampling simple random sampling was made. Cronbach Alpha technique was used to ascertain reliability coefficient of .85. Frequency count, standard deviation and mean score were used to address the research questions while the hypotheses were tested using t-test of difference. Results revealed that the number of available information resources for the blind and partially sighted is significantly less than expected in this context. That the number of available information resources for the deaf and hard of hearing is also significantly less than expected. The study also revealed that the available information services for the blind and partially sighted is significantly less than expected, the available information services for the deaf and hard of hearing is also significantly less than expected. The available information resources for the blind and partially sighted are not fully utilized, and the available information resources for the deaf and hard of hearing are not fully utilized. The study concluded that the provision of information resources and services is less than expected. Also the available information resources and services are not fully utilized by the physically challenged groups studied for any significant impact in learning. It was recommended that, there should be provision of information resources, such as Braille resources; tactile or raised surface; sign language books; adaptive or electronic devices. Services like: on-sight support; guided tours; facilities, etc. Every such library should employ librarians who are clearly aware of the nature of work they do. Adequate funding for proper management of the special education centre libraries in Nigeria in such a way as to meet the present day educational demand for these classes of /pupils/students studied, among others. Suggestions for further studies were also made.*

KEYNOTE: Utilization, Information Resources, Education, Students, Libraries, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

The school library is a room or building in a school where books, magazines, journals, periodicals, cassettes, computers among others are kept for student's use. In other words, it is the central laboratory of the whole school, where all books in all subject areas, taught in the school and non-book materials are stocked. Altman (1992) sees school library as a learning laboratory par excellence where learners find the world of knowledge, interact directly with resources, acquire information and develop research skill for lifelong learning.

According to Seth and Parida (2006) libraries can perform an important function in developing a physical challenged person's intellect, imagination and general knowledge by making available books and related information resources. These resources when provided afford them access to private collections, magazines, novels and official information. It also influences them by helping them become independent, and also less of a burden on their family and the society.

Library information resources are central to the provision of services to the patrons in libraries and information centres, without them it would be impossible to meet the information needs of the users. Library information resources can be defined as materials that are available in the library made ready for use. All other information bearing materials that can be found in a modern library which are provided in response to the information needs of users are also called library resources (Edoka, 2000). Information resources are very important in achieving the aim of education of the challenged.

Lawal-Solarin (2012), defines physical challenge as an inability to perform some or all the task of daily life, or a medically diagnosed condition that makes it difficult to engage in activities of daily life. In the view of Gobalakrishnan (2013) physically challenged could be described as those restricted, hindered or prevented to have equal opportunities with their contemporaries due to physical deformity, they include the visual, hearing, mobility, cognitive, language and speech impaired.

According Anjiode (2010), special education is the education of persons who have learning difficulties due to circumstances of birth, inheritance, mental and physical health pattern or accident. It can as well be used to refer to education of people (children and adults) who have difficulties in learning; they could be deaf, blind, crippled, mentally retarded, etc. The purpose and objectives of special education according to Abubakar and Salamatu (2014), are to give concrete meaning to the idea of equalizing educational opportunities for all children, their physical, mental, emotional disabilities notwithstanding, and to provide adequate education for all physically challenged children and adults in order that they may fully play their roles in the development of the nation.

The physically challenged student library users form part of the heterogeneous clientele who seek library services or information to supplement their desire for educational attainment. Regrettably, due to their peculiar nature, their effectiveness to utilize the needed library resources seem to be greatly affected. It is worrisome too that information resources and services meant for this category of users tend to be rarely available for their utilization, and where they are available, they seem to be underutilized.

This study therefore is focused on finding solutions to these pressing issues by ascertaining the availability and the utilization of information resources for the physically challenged deaf and partially hearing in the special education centre libraries in the south-East, Nigeria.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The declaration of the rights of physically challenged persons by the United Nations General Assembly (1975) stated that physically challenged persons have the right to education which will enable them to develop and hasten the process of their social integration. This is reflected in the Special Education Unit of the NPE (2004) where provision is made for special education.

Uchime (1998) posited that special education is the education of children and adult who have learning difficulty, they could be blind, partially sighted, deaf and dumb, mentally retarded, etc. due to circumstances of birth, social positions, mental and physical health pattern or accident.

Special education system relies heavily on the instructional materials, Uchime (1998) in affirmation, observed that the provision of appropriate educational services requires that the school system maintain information describing the availability and location of regular and special education resources including instructional and supportive, personnel, organizational arrangement, and physical facilities.

The concept “Book for All” which is the theme chosen for the International Book Year (IBY), 1972 was aimed at providing books for all classes of people. It also means conquering all kinds of isolation prevalent in the society. No physically challenged person may be cast aside as hopeless case. To this effect, books and other related resources should be made available and accessible to this special group through the library. This will enable them view the world from a wider perspective.

Smith (2007) from the educational perspective, viewed deaf education as the education of students with a variety of hearing levels which addresses their differences and individual needs. They could be mild, moderate, severe, profound or deafness. He added that, this process involves individual-planned, systematically-monitored teaching methods, adoptive materials, accessible settings and other interventions designed to help students achieve a higher level of self-sufficiency and success in the school. Oluremi (2015) however gave some suggestions as to approaches to follow in order to provide deaf education. Which are as follows?

- a. Inclusion education
- b. Mainstreaming education
- c. Segregation
- d. Exclusive

Inclusion education: in this method, deaf students spend most of the school day with non-deaf students and it requires considerable curriculum modification. It is considered best practice for mild and moderately deaf student.

Mainstreaming: He said this refers to the education of deaf students in class with non-deaf students for specified time periods. The author notes that, based on the deaf student skills, deaf students learn in separate class for the remainder of the school day.

Segregation (in a separate classroom or school): In this method, deaf students spend no time in non-deaf class. Segregation students may attend a school where non-deaf class are provided, but spend their time in a separate classroom for students with special needs.

Exclusion: This is another special school for the deaf in which a student who is unable to receive instruction in any school is excluded from school. Oluremi (2015) maintains that deaf students who have historically been excluded from school and exclusion may still occur where there is no legal mandate for special education services (such as developing countries). The author concludes that, mainstreaming and inclusion deaf education is considered best

modification, specialized services, it can also be provided inside or outside the regular classroom.

Haven established a library for the physically challenged, a library for the physically challenged is faced with the challenge of acquiring resources to facilitate use, which is the end result of all library efforts. In stressing the essence of information resources provision to the physically challenged Momodu (2013) reported that there exists lack of library resources and facilities for individuals with physical challenge and suggests that the provision of specialized library resources and facilities be part of the minimum requirement for the establishment of libraries in the special education centres. This could be the reason Lawal-Solarin (2012) stressed that for libraries to add to advancement of knowledge; they must provide resources and also ensure that the resources are effectively used. This implies that information resources enable the library to fulfill its objectives of meeting the information needs of its users. It is the duty of the librarians to ensure that books and other relevant information resources are selected and acquired for the library. According to Kerscher (2006), beautiful buildings, well trained library staff and modern information storage and retrieval systems can only be appreciated if excellent services are rendered to users; that these services cannot be provided without live collection.

The IFLA Guidelines for Development of Public Library Services (2005) stated that the development of collections should be based on the principles of access for all and include access to format appropriate to specific client groups and these include: deaf and hard of hearing persons who use sign language books and other hearing aids.

These resources are produced and provided by focused librarians for the deaf. IFLA further notes that new technologies have opened up new areas of reading, the deaf can access computer programmes, internet and digital resources using Braille display; Screen magnifying monitors; screen magnification; scanning software with optical character recognition (OCR); screen reader; speech synthesis and so on.

Agbaje (2000) lamented that no provision of reading materials is made to equalize educational opportunities of the deaf or hard hearing children with the normal children. On this note, it is imperative that in providing access to the library for special need students, such issues as information resource should be considered

These libraries should also collect journals, newsletters of societies for the physically challenged, directories of charity organizations in-charge of the welfare of the persons with special needs within and outside the nation. Information about physically challenged persons who overcome their physical challenge should also be readily accessible to encourage this special group (Day, 2000).

Information Resources for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

It is a widely held assumption that people who are deaf or hard of hearing do not have any special difficulties in using normal libraries. This could be true for some people who are deaf or hard of hearing, but may not be true for all. Perhaps that is why Day (2000) stressed that, a collection on hearing impaired is the most essential area of collection development and such a collection should take into account the diversity of hearing impaired people. He also said that no matter the level of hearing impairment (mild, moderate, severe or deafness), such people may require information resources that will suit their information needs in a specialized manner.

Consequent to this, Day (2000) recommended some of the library information resources to be provided for this group of people to include:

- a. Collection of materials related to deafness and deaf culture that will be of interest to both deaf and hearing clientele, such materials would include current and historical materials related to deafness, works by and about deaf uplifts and other famous deaf people, and also materials related to the curriculum in case of a school.
- b. Assemble and provide access to a collection of high interest / low reaching level materials of interest to deaf people, written purposefully with direct and simple vocabulary and heavy illustration where appropriate so that they may be easily understood, such as maps, illustrations, diagrams, pictures etc.
- c. Assemble and maintain a collection of video tapes and/or films in sign language and provide sufficient equipment necessary to view them e.g translation of television programmes, fairy tales, deaf folktale, news programmes, sign language instructions etc.
- d. Provide local deaf-related information resources in its online community and referral database
- e. Provide an unbiased variety of deaf related electronic links in their online database
- f. Sign Language Resources: This is another important library information resources which should be provided for deaf and hard of hearing students. Sign language is a system developed in France in 18th Century to be used by deaf-mutes. It is a system of using gesture as the medium of communication, showing a degree of systematic organization comparable to that of spoken language, enabling written words to be spelled out by the finger position

There are also other visual non-print library information resources to be provided in school for deaf children which Day (2000) and Anjiode (2010) in their separate publications recommended as:

Decoder: They described Decoder as a machine which when attached to or built into a telephone, translates the electronic signals of a closed caption video program into words printed on the screen along with the rest of the video images, and it is recommended for use by the hearing impaired library clientele

Easy-to-Read-Books: This is a high interest/low reading level materials, including captioned media for all groups with reading or comprehension problems regardless of age.

Text-Telephone (TTY): is another important adaptive technology device with an electronic text display and a keyboard that allows persons with hearing or speech disabilities to have a visual two-way telephone conversation.

Assistive Listening Devices: This is also another good adaptive technology device recommended by the authors. Assistive listening device is used to serve the hard of hearing or mild and moderate hearing library users. It is a hearing enhancement system consisting of an aid, designed to eliminate the background noise interface caused by extraneous factors.

Audio Loop: This refers to films or video programs where the dialogue is also shown in print on the screen along with rest of the picture. The printed dialogue may be either ways visible (open captioned) or visible only with the addition of a decoder machine (closed captioned) that translates the visible signal into visible print. This is also used to serve the deaf and hard of hearing pupils and students, and other hearing impaired library users.

Assistive Real-Time Captioning and Computer Assistive Note Taking: These allows deaf and other hearing impaired who do not benefit from interpreters or assistive listening devices to see a running text of information as it is being shared. This means that, by using these adaptive technologies, many deaf and head of hearing pupils and students can better understand lectures, lessons and programs. And in this case, as communication is changing rapidly, libraries serving disadvantaged persons should gear efforts towards insuring that these information resources are made available for the physically challenged clientele.

Factors

The special education centre libraries in Nigeria especially in South-East are faced with diverse problems despite the impact they made in their parent institutions in providing information resources and services to achieve their set objectives in teaching, learning, research and leisure or recreational activities. Insufficient funding is a major handicap in these special education libraries. This must have prompted Mbagwu and Nwachukwu (2006) and Kanu (2007) to stress that inadequate finance is the greatest among all the problems facing special library services. They stated that financial resources as we know are the life wire of every organization and special libraries are no exceptional. Again, research findings show that finance allocated to special libraries is inadequate (Kanu, 2007). Perhaps that makes it impossible for libraries to meet the demands of making available adequate resources, services and facilities for effective utilization of same.

Another challenging factor that needs urgent attention is the growth shortage of specialized personnel of the library. Most of the libraries in the special education centers are being managed by the school teachers who are merely custodians of the books, which may have contributed to the non-inclusion of library period in the school timetable, non-provision of relevant information resources, unfriendliness of the staff to the patrons etc. These problems and many more may have prompted many authors who are physically challenged such as Ibronke (2007) to support the opinion of earlier authors like Atinmo(2000), and Iroze(2004), whose studies have mainly focused on the need for specific qualifications and trainings expected of a staff serving special need student library users. With the present population explosion in these schools, showing that the physically challenge have some abilities, needs, and interests as the rest of the population. There is greater likelihood that there may be paucity of physically challenged library personnel qualified to tackle the expected increase in library demand in the nearest future.

Accessibility and utilization are other major problems affecting resources and services for the physically challenged persons. Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) and Aghauche (2007) in their different studies noted that, some items may be available but are not accessible probably due to physical and environmental barriers and sometimes due to bureaucratic bottlenecks and that some materials are not accessible because they are not available. The issue of availability and utilization problem made Bassey and Iyishu (2007) to note that an accessibility of information resource in academic library encourages the students both normal and challenged to read and

make references towards preparing for their examinations. This implies that availability goes with utilizations for the users.

Unavailability of statistics on routine operations of the library is another problems affecting resources and services provision for the deaf and hard hearing library users. Hammed (2004) opined the use of user feedback mechanism to determine the quality and relevance of such services rendered to its clientele therefore becomes an indispensable tool. And the tool is obtained through records of accurately collected data of activities called 'statistics' which library renders to its pre-determined user over a period of time.

Dearth of availability of information resources to the physically challenged is another problem confronting the provision of information resources. This was in confirmation with earlier research by Atinmo (2000) when she observed that there are few producers of materials in the required specialized formats, for instance, there are very few large print publishers in Nigeria. For recorded materials, a soundproof studio might be needed in addition to readers willing to volunteer time and energy to record materials. The author adds that, provision of fund on regular basis to necessitate for the purchase and maintenance of equipment are all factors combine to create difficulties in the provision of accessible reading materials for the physical challenged who pick their information only in alternative format.

Inadequate provision of internet services, digital resources and adequate technology is another challenges faced by libraries serving disadvantage people. Basharu (2002) confirmed this when he lamented that libraries serving physically challenged persons in Nigeria are grossly ill equipped to cope with the yearnings of the special need persons. Okpe and Unegbu (2012) also noted that there is considerable recognition that information is not easily accessed by large number of people with physical challenges especially the visually and hearing impaired.

Another challenge faced by these libraries comes from the kind of relationship that exists between some of them and their management. Some managerial bodies do not see any need for libraries to subscribe for resources, especially the internet and digital resources packaged in an alternative format for persons with special needs. The issue of the relationship that exist between libraries and their management probably made Iroeze, Umunnakwe and Eze (2017) to note that some managerial bodies of libraries for the physically challenged appear to be preoccupied with the task of paying staff salaries from the subventions they receive from government and fail to appreciate that e-resources are major tools for learning in the modern age.

Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study is ascertain the Availability and extent of utilization of information resources for the physically challenged deaf and partially hearing at special education centres.

The specific objectives are;

1. What information resources for the deaf and hard of hearing are available in the special education centrelibraries in South-East, Nigeria?
2. To what extent are the available information resources for the deaf and hard of hearingbeing utilized in the special education centre libraries in South-East, Nigeria?

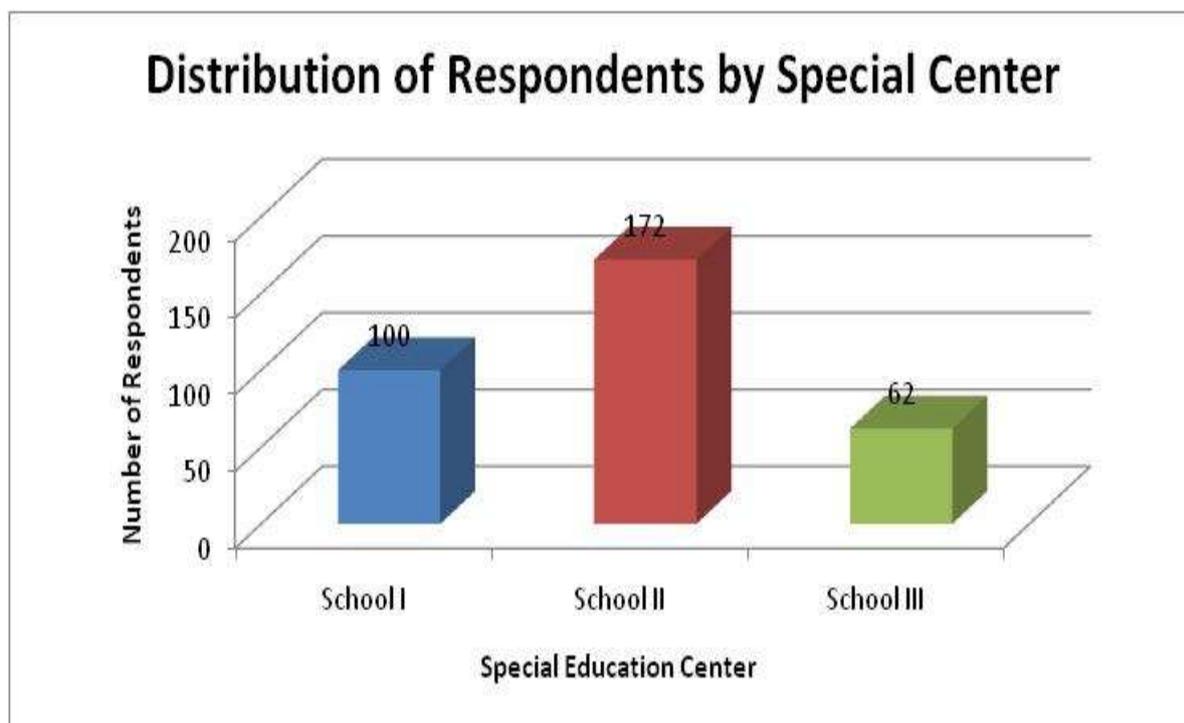
METHODOLOGY

This researcher adopted the survey research design, involving the use of observational checklist and rating scale. The population of this study is 855. This is made up of 850 pupils/students and five library staff of the five special education centres in South East States. This is according to the statistics collected from the administrative offices of the Special Education Centres. The sampling technique employed was multistage sampling technique involving cluster, proportionate and simple random sampling techniques.

To ensure the reliability of the instruments, 30 copies of the instruments were distributed to 30 special education centre pupils and students. The administration of the instruments was done on a one shot method while the reliability coefficient was computed for internal consistency using Cronbach alpha. A reliability index of .85 was obtained and judged to be high enough for the study.

In analyzing the data that were collected, frequency counts, standard deviation and mean score, were used to answer the research questions, while t-test of difference between sample and population was used to test hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULT



What information resources for the deaf and hard of hearing are available in the special education centre in South-East, Nigeria?

Table 1: Information Resources Available for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

S/ N	Items	School I			School II			School III		
		A	NA	QTY	A	NA	QTY	A	NA	QTY
1	Sign Language Book	√		107	√		169	√		115
2	Sub-title DVD	√		5	√		7	√		7
3	Assistive listening device	√		4	√		6	√		5
4	Specialized alerting device		√	0		√	0		√	0
5	Technological communication aids		√	0		√	0		√	0
6	Computer assisted real-time captioning		√	0		√	0		√	0
7	Induction loop		√	0		√	0		√	0
8	Decoder		√	0		√	0		√	0
9	Audio descriptive videos		√	0		√	0		√	0
10	E-books		√	0		√	0		√	0
11	Story Books	√		11	√		8	√		16
12	Textbooks	√		322	√		510	√		117
13	Craft books	√		16	√		31	√		18
14	Encyclopedia/Reference Materials		√	0	√		7		√	0
15	Toys	√		18		√	0	√		12
16	Wall Maps	√		3	√		2	√		5
17	ICT/Internet Facilities		√	0		√	0		√	0
18	Kuzeweil Reader		√	0		√	0		√	0
19	Picture Books	√		28	√		20	√		24
	Total	9	10	514	9	10	760	9	10	2101

Key: A –Available, NA –Not Available, QTY –Quantity

Table 1 shows the available information resources for the deaf and hard of hearing. It can be seen that nineteen (19) information resources (items) were considered during the research conducted using three special education centres, school I, school II, and school III.

In school I, from Table I: It can be seen that out of the nineteen (19) information resources (items) considered, nine (9) were available while ten (10) were not available. These available nine (9) information resources comprises: sign language book (107 quantities), sub-title DVD (5 quantities), assistive listening devices (4 quantities), story books (11 quantities), text books (322 quantities), craft books (16 quantities), toys (18 quantities), and picture books (28 quantities). Hence the total number of information resources available in school I is 514. Also, the information resources available are less than those that are not available.

In school II, from Table 1: Out of the nineteen (19) information resources (items) considered, nine (9) were available while ten (10) were not available. The available information resources are: sign language book (169 quantities), sub-title DVD (7 quantities), assistive listening device (6 quantities), story books (8 quantities), textbooks (510 quantities), craft books (31 quantities), encyclopedia/reference materials (7 quantities), wall maps (2 quantities), and picture books (28 quantities). Hence the total number of information resources available in school II is 768. Also, the information resources available are less than those that are not available.

In school III, from Table 1: Out of the nineteen (19) information resources (items) considered, nine (9) were available while ten (10) were not available. It can be seen that the available information resources are: sign language book (115 quantities), sub-title DVD (7 quantities), assistive story books (16 quantities), textbooks (117 quantities), craft books (18 quantities), toys (12 quantities), wall maps (5 quantities), and picture books (24 quantities). Hence the total number of information resources available in school III is 307. Also, the information resources available are less than those that are not available.

The extent of the utilization of the available information resources for the deaf and hard of hearing in the special education centres is not significant.

Table 2: Extent of Utilization of Library Information Resources by the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

S/N	Items	VH 4	H 3	L 2	VL 1	\bar{X}	S.D	REMARK
1	Sign language Books	616	297	130	16	3.17	0.90	High
2	Sub-title DVD and videos	420	426	156	9	3.03	0.81	High
3	Assistive listening device	392	375	154	34	2.86	0.95	High
4	Specialized alerting device	112	201	286	96	2.08	0.90	Low
5	Technological communication aids	80	123	194	176	1.72	0.90	Low
6	Computer assisted real-time captioning	136	228	178	135	2.03	1.02	Low
7	Audio loop	180	114	212	145	1.95	1.04	Low
8	Decoder	224	102	198	145	2.00	1.10	Low
9	Audio descriptive videos	84	234	240	115	2.01	0.91	Low
10	E-books	100	162	196	157	1.84	0.95	Low

11	Story books	132	201	252	108	2.07	0.96	Low
12	Text books	584	339	112	19	3.16	0.90	High
13	Craft books	116	237	176	138	2.00	1.00	Very Low
14	Encyclopedia/reference materials	128	159	156	171	1.84	1.01	Low
15	Toys	176	195	196	127	2.08	1.05	Low
16	Walls maps	248	93	234	124	2.09	1.10	Very Low
17	ICT/internet Facilities	116	141	218	149	1.87	0.96	Low
	OVERALL					2.224	0.490	

Where **VH** means very high, **H** means high, **L** means low, and **VL** means very low.

It can be seen from Table 2 that out of the seventeen utilization of library information resources by the deaf and hard of hearing considered, sign language books, sub-title DVD and videos, assistive listening device, and textbooks give an average utilization of library information resources above 2.50 among the seventeen (17) items considered in this context with an overall significant score of 2.224 showing that there is a level of utilization of library information resources by the staff and the hard of hearing.

Table 3: Summary of Analysis on Extent of Utilization of the Available Information Resources by the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

N	μ	\bar{X}	S.D	t_{cal}	df	t_{crit}	<i>Decision</i>
17	2.50	2.224	0.490	-2.326	16	1.746	Not significant

where **N** is the number of sample or frequency, μ is the mean, \bar{X} is the mean difference, **S.D** is the standard deviation, t_{cal} is the t –calculated value, **df** is the degree of freedom, and t_{crit} is the t –critical tabulated value.

Table 6A presented information on the extent of utilization of the available information resources by the deaf and hard of hearing in the special education centres. The finding showed that only sign language books, subtitled DVD and videos, assistive listening devices and textbooks, with mean responses 3.17, 3.03, 2.86 and 3.16 respectively, are being utilized by the special education students. The data in table 6B revealed that the calculated t-value is -2.326, the critical t-value is 1.746, while the degree of freedom is 16. Since the t_{cal} is less than the t_{crit} the null hypothesis (**H₀**) is accepted. Hence, the extent of utilization of the information resources for the deaf and hard of hearing is not significant at 0.05 level of significance and 16 degree of freedom.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study on the information resources for the deaf and hard of hearing available in the special education centre libraries revealed that very few of the listed information resources are available in the centre libraries. This is evidenced from the result of analysis which showed that the number of the available information resources for the deaf and hard of hearing in the special education centre libraries in South-East was far less than the number of information resources expected. The available information resources for the deaf and hard of hearing are sign language books, story book, textbooks, craft books, encyclopedia/reference materials, toys, wall maps, and picture books. This finding is in consonance with the finding of Okpe and Unegbu (2012) who jointly discovered inadequate provision of information resources in alternative format for the visually challenged in libraries in Ogun State. Akolade, Tella, Akanbi-Ademolake and Adisa (2015), also, found that the information needs of the physically challenged are not being met since the information materials are not available or adequately available in the libraries studied.

The finding also revealed that the information resources available for the deaf and the hard of hearing being utilized in the special education centres are low. This finding shows that very few of the information resources available for the deaf and hard of hearing in the special education centre libraries in South-East are not being utilized. This finding is in consonance with the finding of Anjiode (2010) that though there are no adequate available information resources for the deaf in the special education centres in Plateau state, the available ones are not being utilized by the physically challenged students. Also, the result agreed with the findings of Lawal-Solarin (2012), when she reported that the physically challenged students in academic libraries in Ogun State are not adequately catered for in the educational institutions, even in provision of information resources, services and architectural designs of the libraries

So far as discussed, there are inadequate availability of information resources and services for the physically challenged in the libraries and this indicates that information resources are generally not available in adequate quantities in the special education centre libraries in South-East for any significant impact in learning. Though no standard is recommended for consideration in the information resources and services that should be available in the educational centres, the present research is in line as stated in literature. This is not only common in developing countries as stressed by Atinmo (2000) and Okpe and Unegbu (2012), but also in many countries as reported by Moahi and Monai (2009) and Owino (2012).

This shows that there is only very few of the information resources available in the special education centre libraries for the deaf and hard of hearing, which implies that the students are not properly equipped educationally and are not properly assisted in learning. This will make it difficult for the students to learn and will go a long way in affecting their academic performances. Since these students are disadvantaged they may find it difficult to learn like other students and as a result need the information resources to learn faster and properly.

Recommendations of the Study

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that:

1. The government at all levels should provide more information resources for the the deaf and hard of hearing pupils/students such as sign language books. in the special education, hearing assistive devices in centre libraries in the country due to the

conveniences in their use by these physically challenged because of their special nature and the special services they offer these group in our society is enormous.

2. The use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) should be introduced to the libraries for the physically challenged deaf and hard of hearing in special schools in South-East.
3. Current and relevant information resources should be provided and in alternative formats for the physically challenged deaf and hard of hearing pupils/students in the special education centres in South-Easth
4. They should also ensure that personalized information services like on-sight support, care giving services, counseling services, library literacy skills, organizing seminars, lectures, symposia, exhibitions are provided to user.
5. Every such library should employ qualified librarian/supporting staff who are clearly aware of the nature of work they do. Again, they should be exposed to their personal training from time to time. This will in no doubt, improve their proficiency in dealing with the physical challenged.

REFERENCE

- Abubakar, M.B. & Salamatu, K.G. (2014). Evaluative study of information resources and services utilization for research in academic libraries in Niger State, Nigeria. *IMPACT: International Journal of Research in Business Management*, 2(5), 121-128.
- Agbahuche, E.E. (2007). Availability, accessibility, and utilization of serials in academic libraries: A case study of Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan, *Nigeria Library Link*, 5(2), 103-113.
- Agbaje, S. & Olabode, S. (2000). Resources availability to the visually impaired library users in Nigeria: The way out. *Journal of the Association of Libraries for the Visually Impaired*, 1(1), 3-8.
- Aguolu, C.C. & Aguolu I.E. (2002). *Libraries and information management in Nigeria*. Maiduguri; ED-Linform Services.
- Anjiode, K.J. (2010). Information resources and services to physically challenge in Plateau State Special Educational Institutions. *Samaru Journal of Information Studies*, 10(1&2), 1-11
- Atinmo, M.I. (2000). The library and the public it serves: Need for more dynamic approach to attract patroness *Library Forum*, 8(2), 3-4.
- Basharu, D. (2002). The state of Braille literacy in Nigeria. Proceedings from the International Symposium on Braille in the age of digitations. Held in Denmark, April 16-19. p.18.
- Bassey, B.A. & Iyishu, V.A. (2007). Analysis of book quality cum availability and user satisfaction with services in academic libraries. *Nigerian Library Link*, 5(2), 53-64.
- Day, M.J. (2000). Guidelines for libraries services to deaf people. *International Federation of Libraries Association of Professionals Reports*. Retrieved from <http://archives.IFLA.org/vii/59/ndi/iflapr-62e.pdf> on 10/8/2016
- Edoka, B. (2000). *Introduction to library science*. Onitsha: Palma Publishing and Links Company Ltd.

- Gabalakrishnan, C. (2013). Problems faced by physically challenged persons and their awareness towards welfare measures. *International Journal of Innovative Research & Development*. 2(4), 487-493
- Hammed, A.B. (2004). *Statistical records and its relevance in management: The case of Polytechnics, Ibadan: In E.C. Madu (ed.) Modern Libraries and Information Centre in developing countries.*(pp.332-337) Ibadan: Celeman.
- Ibironke, M. A. (2007).Setting up a computerized catalog and distribution database of alternative format materials for blind and visually impaired persons in Nigeria. *Library Trends*, 4(1&2), 21-36.
- Iroeze, P. C., Umunnakwe, G. C. & Eze, J. U. (2017). Library services to physically challenged in South-East, Nigeria: Origin and challenges. *International Journal of Advanced Library and Information Science*. 5(1), 393-405.
- Iroeze,P.C. (2004).The Study of Special Library Services to visually Impaired Library users: A case study of Imo State Library Board, Owerri: (Bachelors Degree Project). University of Calabar.
- Kanu, J. (2007). Availability and utilization of information materials and services in Federal Medical Centre, Owerri.(Seminar paper). *Abia State University, Uturu*.
- Kerscher, G. (2006). The Essential role of libraries serving persons who are blind and print disabled in the information age. Retrieved from http://www.digitaltalkingbook.com/publications/does/200606/3001101/role_of_libraries.html.on 10/9/2016
- Lawal-Solarin E.O. (2012). Survey of library and information services to physically challenged students in academic libraries in Ogun State, Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-Journal)*Retrieved <http://unilib.unl.edu/LPP/>on 24/7/2016
- Mbagwu, F.C. & Nwachukwu, C.N. (2006). Special library services in Owerri: Problems and prospects. *Nigerian Library and Information Trend, Journal of Nigerian Library Association*, Imo State Chapter, 4(1 & 2), 79-87.
- Momodu, O.M. (2013). The physically challenged and the dearth of relevant facilities in Nigeria libraries. *International Journal of Basic Applied and Innovative Research*. Retrieved from www.arpjournal.comon 12/8/2016.
- Okpe, J.I. & Unegbu, V.E. (2012). Provision of information resource for the visually impaired by libraries in Ogun State, Nigeria. *Delta Library Journal*,6(1), 35-42.
- Oluremi, F.D. (2015). Attitude of teachers to students with special needs in mainstreamed public secondary schools in SouthWestern Nigeria: The need for a change. *European Scientific Journal*, 11(10), 194 – 204.
- Seth, M. K. & Parida, B. (2006). Information needs and use pattern of disadvantaged communities: A case study. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. Retrieved from <http://unilib.unl.edu/LPP/seth.htmon> 20/5/2016
- Smith, P. (2007). Have we made any progress, including students with intellectual disabilities in regular education classroom. *Intellect Dev. Disable*, 45(5), 297-309.
- Uchime F.I. (1998). *The use of libraries by the handicapped in Imo State* (Bachelors Degree Project). Imo State University, Owerri.