

# Information Needs and Seeking Behavior of Physically Challenged Students in Adamawa State, Nigeria

Murtal Aliyu and Abubakar Mohammed

Department of Library and Information Science

Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Adamawa State, Nigeria

E-Mail: muraliyu@yahoo.com, amkareto@gmail.com

(Received 8 February 2018; Revised 23 February 2018; Accepted 11 March 2018; Available online 18 March 2018)

**Abstract** - This study is an investigation of Information Needs and Information Seeking Behaviour of Physically Challenged Students in Adamawa State. The research design adopted for the study was survey research design. 472 physically challenged students in the school formed the population of the study. Sample size of 214 was used. 214 structured questionnaires were administered and 200 was returned and used for the study. Major findings of the study are that the physically challenged student needs information to meet educational, recreational, social and personal development purposes; they seek information occasionally; and that acquisition of new knowledge and the desire to be in tune with trending issues are what often trigger them to seek information; majority of respondents reveals that problem of what type of information resources and services to be provided physically challenged student are the challenges faced when determining the kind of information needed by physically challenged students; similarly, majority of respondents reveals that inadequate library resources and absence of assistive technology are some of challenges faced by the school in meeting the information sought by physically challenged students. The study recommended that adequate library resources and services should be made to the physically challenged students in the school to curtail almost all the problems associated with information needs and information seeking behaviour of physically challenged raised in the study.

**Keywords:** Information Seeking Behavior, Physically Challenged Students, Adamawa State

## I. INTRODUCTION

Information is a vital resource for individual growth and survival. The progress of modern societies as well as individuals depends a great deal upon the provision of the right kind of information, in the right form and at the right time. Information is needed to be able to take a right decision and also reduce uncertainty. A businessman needs information to be able to improve in his existing business just like a specialist also need information to be up-to-date and well informed in his area of specialization. If information is this valuable, it must be put to proper use, i.e. made available to people or group of people who need it, after ascertaining the group's information needs and seeking behavior. For any meaningful information to be provided, certain relevant information sources must be consulted. It is only through such sources that information seekers can obtain information that is ideal for a meaningful decision-making leading to increase in productivity. For the researcher, patrons and various users to elicit data on the

information sources used for needed information, the various information sources needed includes books, journals, magazines and newspapers, annual reports, handbooks etc.

Every library user needs information of increasing variety and diversity of levels, frequencies, volumes and with ease. Therefore, information need stems from a vague awareness of something missing and as culminating in locating information that contributes to understanding and meaning. Library patrons seek information because they need information resources to survive in all sectors of life (Ajiboye and Tella, 2011, Fiankor and Adams, 2010, Fatima and Ahmad (2010).

The information need (or need for information) is a factual situation in which, there exists an inseparable interconnection with "information" and "need", information needs can therefore be said to be the amount of positive information an individual or group of users need to have for their work, recreation and many other like satisfaction. Thus, information need arise wherever individuals find themselves in a situation requiring knowledge to deal with the situation as they see fit. In other words, lack of information needed to accomplish a task results in information need which several authors have variously described and explained (Singh and Satija, 2011; Fiankor and Adams, 2010; Adeniji, 2009).

The physically challenged group in the society have been condemned and deprived of some fundamental rights that every human ought to enjoy. Their conditions have been used to stigmatize them and this creates social, psychological and emotional imbalance to their socio-economic growth and development. Their information need is often times not attended to; likewise, their information seeking behaviour is not being properly studied so that they could derive satisfaction in whatever information desire for use.

It is against this backdrop that the researchers prioritize to study the information needs and seeking behaviour of the physically challenged students in Adamawa State with the good intention to understand the problem facing the subject and ensure judicious recommendation is suggested to correct the anomalies discovered.

## II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following are the research questions of the study:

1. What are the types of information needed by physically challenged students in Adamawa State?
2. How do the physically challenged students seek for information in Adamawa State?
3. What are the challenges faced in determining the information needs by physically challenged students in Adamawa State.
4. What are the challenges faced in seeking for information by physically challenged students in Adamawa state.

## III. METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted for the study was survey research design. The population studied was the entire 472 physically challenged students of Remi Educational Foundation, Yola and Special School, Jada as shown in Table I below.

TABLE I DISTRIBUTION POPULATION BY SCHOOLS AND CATEGORIES

Categories of Student	Remi Educational Foundation, Yola	Special School, Jada	Total
Nursery	5	0	5
Primary	27	155	182
Secondary	54	231	286
Total	86	386	472

Source: Principals, Remi Educational Foundation, Yola and Special School, Jada, 2017

The sample size for the study was 214 physically challenged students of Remi Educational Foundation, Yola and Special School, Jada as shown in Table II below.

TABLE II SAMPLE SIZE DISTRIBUTION BY CATEGORIES OF STUDENTS

Categories of Students	Population	Sample Size
Nursery	5	5
Primary	182	95
Secondary	286	114
Total	472	214

A structured questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The questionnaires were completed and returned within a period of three (3) weeks. The data collected was analyzed using frequency and simple percentages which was presented using table.

## IV. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

### A. Response Rate

A total number of 214 questionnaires were distributed to the physically challenged students in Remi Educational Foundation, Yola and Special School, Jada, out of which 200 were returned giving a response rate of 93.5%.

### B. Bio data of Respondents

This comprises respondents' biographical/ demographic information that were collected and analyzed purposely for the study as shown in tables below:

TABLE III GENDER DISTRIBUTION

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	136	68
Female	64	32
Total	200	100

Table III displays the gender distribution of physically challenged student in Remi educational foundation, Yola and special school, Jada. 136 respondent who represented 68% were male while 64(32%) were female.

TABLE IV AGE DISTRIBUTION

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1-9 years	24	12
10-19	122	61
20-25	54	27
Total	200	100

Table IV reflects the respondents' age grade distribution. 24 students representing 12% of the population were within the age grade 1-9 years, while 122(61%) of the respondents were within the age grade 10-19 years. 54(27%) respondents were within the age bracket 20-25 years.

TABLE V CLASS CATEGORY

Class	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Nursery	10	5
Primary	40	20
JSS1-3	72	36
SSS1-3	78	39
Total	200	100

Table V shows the class category of physically challenged students in Remi educational foundation, Yola and special school, Jada. 10(5%) of the respondents were in nursery 1-3, while 40(20%) were in primary 1-6. 72(36%) of the respondents were in JSS 1-3 and those in SSS 1-3 were represented by 78(39%) of the population. The result indicates that SSS1-3 students were more than other levels.

TABLE VI DISABILITY STATUS

Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Physically handicapped	70	35
Visually impaired	52	26
Hearing Impaired	58	29
Mentally retarded	4	2
Multiple handicapped	16	8
Total	200	100

Table VI indicates respondents' assertion of their disability status. 70 students representing 35% of the sample were physically handicapped, 52(26%) were visually impaired while 58(29%) responded to the challenged with hearing difficulty. 4(2%) of the students were mentally retarded while 16(8%) multiple handicapped.

TABLE VII DO YOU HAVE SPECIFIC INFORMATION NEED?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	200	100
No	-	-
Total	200	100

Table VII reflects the responses of physically challenged students of Remi educational foundation, Yola and special school, Jada when they were asked if they have specific information need. 200(100%) replied "Yes". The result shows that every student in the schools has specific information needs.

TABLE VIII DO YOU NEED INFORMATION FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	200	100
No	-	-
Total	200	100

Table VIII indicates an overwhelming 100% reply when the total 200 physically challenged students of Remi Educational Foundation, Yola and special school, Jada responded to desire information for educational purposes.

TABLE IX DO YOU NEED INFORMATION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PURPOSES?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	200	100
No	-	-
Total	200	100

Table IX shows that the physically challenged students of Remi educational foundation, Yola and special school, Jada needs information for social development purposes going by the response given by the 200(100%) respondents.

TABLE X DO YOU NEED INFORMATION FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PURPOSES?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	200	100
No	-	-
Total	200	100

Table X displays a convenience response of 200(100%) by physically challenged students of Remi Educational Foundation, Yola and Special School, Jada when they were asked if they need information for personal development purposes.

TABLE XI DO YOU NEED INFORMATION FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	140	70
No	60	30
Total	200	100

Table XI shows 140(70%) respondents asserting that they need information for recreational purpose, while 60(30%) physically challenged students of Remi Educational Foundation, Yola and special school, Jada says they do not need information for recreational purposes.

TABLE XII ARE YOUR INFORMATION NEED ALWAYS ATTENDED TO?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	70	35
No	130	65
Total	200	100

Table XII displays response given by physically challenged students of Remi Educational Foundation, Yola and Special School, Jada on whether their information needs are always attended to. 70 respondents representing 35% replied "Yes", while 130(65)% insisted that their information needs are not always attended to.

TABLE XIII HOW OFTEN DO YOU SEEK INFORMATION?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Daily	92	46
Occasionally	102	51
Not at all	6	3
Total	200	100

Table XIII indicates that 92(46%) physically challenged students of Remi educational foundation, Yola and Special School, Jada seek for information daily, while 102(51%) does so occasionally. 6 respondents representing 3% of the population however asserted that they do not seek for information.

TABLE XIV WHAT OFTEN TRIGGERS YOUR SEEK FOR INFORMATION?

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Acquisition of new knowledge	110	55
To be in tune with trending	74	37
All of the above	16	8
None of the above	-	-
Total	200	100

Table XIV shows respondents view on the question: What often triggers your seek for information? 110(55%) physical challenged students Remi educational foundation, Yola, and special school, Jada replied that acquisition of new knowledge was that always trigger then to seek information. 74(37%) replied that being in tune with trending issue was what triggers seek for information. 16(8%) asserted that the two options above were what triggers their seek for

information, while none the “none of the above” option as response thereby indicating that the physically challenged students are triggered by one factor or the other to seek information.

TABLE XV DOES THE SCHOOL LIBRARY PROVIDE YOU ADEQUATE AND UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION SOURCES YOU DESIRED?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	36	18
No	164	82
Total	200	100

Table XV shows respondents opinion on whether the school libraries in Remi Educational Foundation, Yola and Special School, Jada is providing adequate and up-to-date information sources to the physically challenged students.36(18%) responded “Yes”, while 164(82%) responded “no” thereby indicating that the libraries in these schools do not provide students adequate and up-to-date information sources desired.

TABLE XVI DOES THE INFORMATION RESOURCES PROVIDED TO OFTEN WEEK INFORMATION YOU SEEK?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	18	9
No	182	91
Total	200	100

Table XVI reflects the views of physical challenged students of Remi Educational Foundation, Yola and Special School, Jada on whether the information resources provided them do meet the information they sought. 18 respondents representing 9% replied “Yes” while 182(91%) replied “No” thereby indicating that there used to be little to no material that could address the information they seeks.

TABLE XVII IN WHAT FORMAT ARE THE INFORMATION RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO YOU FOR USE?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Prints	170	85
Non-prints	20	10
All of the above	10	5
Total	200	100

Table XVII indicates that 170 respondents representing 85% of the population affirms that information resources available to them for use were usually in prints, while 20(10%) asserted that it used to be in non-prints. 10(5%) physically challenged students of Remi educational foundation, Yola and special school, Jada says they are being provided information materials in both prints and non-prints format.

Table XVIII displays response given by physically challenged students Remi educational foundation, Yola and Special School, Jada on whether they were being assisted by librarians, when retrieving information material from

library.80 respondents representing 40% says “Yes” they were always being assisted by librarians while 120(60%) says “No”, thereby indicating that the large population of students in these schools were not always assisted by librarians in the school library.

TABLE XVIII ARE YOU ALWAYS ASSISTED BY LIBRARIANS WHEN RETRIEVING INFORMATION MATERIAL FROM LIBRARY?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	80	40
No	120	60
Total	200	100

TABLE: XIX DO YOU OFTEN DESIRE SATISFACTION ACCESSING INFORMATION MATERIAL AVAILABLE IN THE LIBRARY?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	56	28
No	144	72
Total	200	100

Table XIX reflects the view of the sampled population of physical challenged students in Remi educational foundation, Yola and special school, Jada on whether they do derive satisfaction from accessing information materials available in the library. 56(28%) replied “Yes” regarding the satisfaction rate, while the bulk population 144(72%) responded not to always derive satisfaction from accessing information materials available in the library.

TABLE XX ARE THERE CHALLENGES WHEN DETERMINING THE KIND OF INFORMATION YOU NEED?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	194	97
No	6	3
Total	200	100

Table: XX indicated that there were challenges when determining the kind of information needed by physical challenged students in Remi Educational Foundation, Yola and Special School, Jada as given by 194(97%) of the respondents. 6(3%) respondents were of different opinion when they say “No” there were no challenges when determining the kind of information they need. The result however shows that there are challenges when determining the kind of information need of physically challenged students.

TABLE XXI WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE CHALLENGES YOUR TEACHER/LIBRARY STAFF FACES WHEN TRYING TO MEET YOUR INFORMATION NEEDS?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
The kind of services to provide	62	31
The format of the resources to provide	88	44
All of the above	50	25
None of the above	-	-
Total	200	100

Table XXI displays respondents view on the possible challenges that teachers/library staff faces when trying to meet information needs of the physically challenged student. 62(31%) of the respondents say the kind of service to provide them is the challenges teacher/ library staff faces, while 88(44%) replayed that the challenges is always in the format of the resources to provide them. 50(25%) were of the opinion that both the kind of services and format of resources were always the challenges teacher and library staff do face when meting they information needs.

TABLE: XXII DO YOU FACE STIGMATIZATION WHEN TRYING TO ACCESS LIBRARY RESOURCES TO MEET YOUR INFORMATION NEEDS?

Reponses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	96	48
No	104	52
Total	200	100

Table 420 indicates that only 96 (48%) respondents asserted to be stigmatized, when accessing library resources to meet their information needs, while 104(52%) responded not to face stigmatization of any form. This does not however push away the fact that physically challenged students of Remi educational foundation, Yola and special school, Jada do not face stigmatization when accessing library, resources and services to meet their information needs.

TABLE XXIII DO YOU FACE CHALLENGES WHEN SEEKING FOR INFORMATION?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	186	93
No	14	7
Total	200	100

Table XXIII shows 93(93%) physically challenged students from Remi Educational Foundation, Yola Special School, Jada asserting that they do face challenges when seeking for information while 14(7%) respondents have a different opinion that they do not face challenges when seeking for information. The result however reflects that physically challenged students face challenges when seeking for information.

TABLE XXIV IS YOUR SCHOOL LIBRARY FACED WITH CHALLENGES OF ACQUIRING THE RIGHT MATERIAL TO MEET THE INFORMATION YOU SEEK?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	144	70
No	54	27
Total	200	100

Table XXIV indicates the responses given by physically challenged students of Remi Educational Foundation, Yola and Special School, Jada on whether their libraries is faced with the challenges of acquiring the right material to meet the information they sought. 144(73%) responded in the affirmative “Yes” while 54(27%) replied that “No” the

library do not face the challenges of acquiring the right material to meet the information they sought.

TABLE XXV WHAT DO YOU THINK IS/ARE THE POSSIBLE CHALLENGE(S) THE SCHOOL LIBRARY FACE THAT INHIBIT THEM TO MEET THE INFORMATION YOU SEEK

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Inadequate library resources	70	35
Ill-skilled/unqualified personnel	24	12
Absence of assistive technology	70	35
All of the above	36	18
None of the above	-	-
Total	200	100

Table XXV displays respondents and opinion on what they thought were the possible challenges in the school library faces that inhibit them to meet their information they sought. 70(35%) respondents it was the inadequacy of library resources, while 24(12%) responded it was the unskilled/unqualified personnel in the libraries. 70 respondents representing 35% of the population sample says absence of assistive technology is a challenge. 36(18%) replied that the above mention three options combine were the challenges, while none-tick the “none of the above” box thereby indicating that the libraries in Remi educational foundation, Yola and special school, Jada faces challenges that inhibit them to meet the information sought by the physically challenged students.

TABLE XXVI IN WHAT ASPECT OF LIBRARY PRACTICES IN THE SCHOOL ARE YOU DISSATISFIED?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Service	86	43
Resources	80	40
Physical infrastructure	16	8
All of the above	18	9
None of the above	-	-
Total	200	100

Table XXVI shows that the aspect of library practice in school where respondents are dissatisfied. 86(43%) respondents were dissatisfied with the service being provided, while 80(40%) were dissatisfied with the resources. 16 respondents who represent 8% asserted at the satisfied with physical infrastructural facilities, just as 18(9%)respondents that both services, resources and physical infrastructure of the school libraries does not give them satisfaction of use. None however ticked “none of the above” box, thereby indicating that the physically challenged students of Remi Educational Foundations, Yola and Special School, Jada were faced with one dissatisfaction or the other regarding the library practice.

## V. SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

The following are the summaries of findings from the analysis and interpretation of data collection:

1. The finding reveals that physically challenged student needs information to meet educational, recreational, social and personal development purposes.
2. The finding reveals that the physically challenged student seeks information occasionally; and that acquisition of new knowledge and the desire to be in tune with trending issues are what often trigger them to seek information.
3. Majority of respondents reveals that problem of what type of information resources and services to be provided physically challenged student are the challenges faced when determining the kind of information needed by physically challenged students.
4. Majority of respondents reveals that inadequate library resources and absence of assistive technology are some of challenges faced by the school in meeting the information sought by physically challenged students.

## VI. CONCLUSION

It has been concluded that the physically challenged student exhibits desires for information to meet educational, recreational, social and personal needs; and these information are sought for occasionally when the need for it arises. Adequate information resources and quality library service to meet the information need of physically challenged students has been identified to be major challenges faced in determining their information needs. Equally, lack of assistive technology and poor library service has been discovered to be factors inhibiting quality provision of information services to physically challenged students.

## VII. RECOMMENDATION

In view of the highlighted findings, the researchers thus suggest the following as recommendations:

1. Information to meet the educational, recreational, social and personal development needs of the physically challenged students should be met with adequate library resources and services.
2. The information seeking behavior of the physically challenged student should be understood and their needs be met daily so that they can be knowledgeable and be in tune with currents trends in the information world.
3. Adequate and up-to-date information resources in both prints and non-prints formats as well as quality library service should be provided physically challenged students in other to address the challenges of determining the types of information needed by them.
4. Highly skilled and experienced staff as well as assistive technology devices such as Braille embosser, screen magnifier, lifter and access ramp etc should be provided physically challenged students thereby going a long way to address challenges faced by the schools in meeting the information sought by them.

## REFERENCES

- [1] N. Fatima and N. Ahamed, "Information seeking behaviour of the students at Ajmal Khan Tibbiya, Aligarh Muslim University: A survey", *Annals of Library and Information Studies*, Vol. 55, pp. 141-144, 2010.
- [2] D. K. Fiankor and M. Adams, "Information seeking behaviour and Information use by the students of the department of information studies, University of Ghana, Legon", *Ghana Library Journal*, Vol. 16, pp. 45-60, 2010.
- [3] J.O Ajiboye and A. Tella, "University Undergraduate Students' Information Seeking Behaviour: Implications for Quality Higher Education in Africa", *The Turkish Online Journal of Education Technology*, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 40 -52, 2011
- [4] K. P. Singh and M. P.Satija, "A review of research on information seeking of agricultural scientists: International perspectives", *ESIDOC Bulletin of Information Technology*, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 25, 2011.