



INFORMATION SEEKING AND USE AMONG VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NORTH- WEST, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Seeking and use have been the major preoccupation of people experiencing the need for information to achieve various purposes. Accordingly, this study investigates the information seeking and use of visually- impaired students in special education secondary schools in North- west zone of Nigeria. The study covered four special education secondary schools that are available in the zone at the time of conducting the study. Quantitative research methodology, using a survey research design was adopted for the study. Three hundred and forty visually- impaired students constituted the respondents for the study. Data was collected using the questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, using frequency counts and percentages was used to analyze the data. The study found that the information needs of the visually- impaired students comprised of information on the curricular and extracurricular offerings of their schools, for their professional and personal developments. Their information seeking pattern involves the informal source and searching strategy. The study conclude that the information needs, seeking and use of the visually- impaired students have not been given the consideration they deserved in special education secondary schools in North- west zone of Nigeria. Therefore, the study recommends that functional library should be established in every school as primary source of information, the provision of a minimum guideline or standard and the allocation of substantial amount of money for the provision of information resource and services.

Key words: *Information, Information seeking, Information use, Visually-impaired students, Secondary schools*

Introduction

Information refers to facts and ideas recorded in voice sound, written in text, produces in Braille dots or represented in symbols or images that convey meaning/knowledge about the issue in context. Today information is undeniably a critical factor for achieving whatever people intends to do, instructed to do and satisfying the thoughts and dilemmas of mind; because, one needs to be informed before completing a task or sway the inquisitive of mind. Information creates and increases awareness, change and develop the current state of knowledge, help address a need and solve problem. Meanwhile, the need for information is not a vague and new thing. Therefore, seeking and using information are critical and important activities especially in school environment where all its programs and activities are geared towards acquiring and imparting knowledge, and no doubt, knowledge passes through information.

Accordingly, secondary school is the stage just immediately after early elementary education that aimed at developing critical thinking, moral/ethical values among other things for better upcoming life and higher education pursuit. One cannot imagine achieving these goals without information on how to do so; therefore, the need for information is felt in school regardless of individual's social conditions like visual impairment. Visually-impaired students are those whose eye sight/vision is either completely unable to see in any degree of sight or able to see in a limited degree of sight or vision categorized as legally blind and partially sighted and considered as special needs people. Visually- impaired students' ability to learn and acquire knowledge and skills are therefore all issues that require exact information in a very detail (quantity and preciseness) level. This is simply because, these students due to complete inability or limited ability to see effectively cannot learn in the same way as unimpaired normal students; but, they can learn when accurate information (exact in

a very detail level) is provided in the source (e.g. Library, online services, or information centers), resources (such as Braille dots or embossed, audio recorded and assistive technology devices) and other learning facilities that take into cognizance their visual impairment.

However, it is observed that the attention that is giving to the issue of information need, seeking and use of visually- impaired students is more of charity approach than a fundamental human rights of access to information, due to the neglect of authorities and concern individuals in the provision of relevant learning facilities, information resources and other assistive technology devices and services. Available data according to the study by Šehić and Tanacković (2014) revealed that the portion of visually- impaired students is relatively low in the total of visually- impaired. This is the result not only of the fact that majority of people who are vision impaired (blind) tend to be older people, but also of the fact that many visually- impaired persons decide not to go to school and pursue education, because, they face too many difficulties in their primary and secondary school education. This study investigated the information seeking and use of visually- impaired students in special education secondary schools in North west, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. investigate the information needs of the visually- impaired students in special education secondary schools in North West Zone of Nigeria;
2. assess the information seeking pattern of the visually- impaired students in the schools under study; and
3. identify the factors affecting the information seeking and use among the visually- impaired students in the schools under study.

Literature Review

Concept of Information, its Significance and Information Needs of Students

Pervasiveness, context, occupational differences, departmentalization of knowledge and formats, made the term ‘information’ to be understood and conceptualized differently by various individuals, discipline or field of knowledge. The concept ‘information’ is often considered and referred as ‘symbol’, ‘signal’, ‘data’, ‘fact’, ‘idea’, ‘factual data’, ‘knowledge’, and ‘resource/materials’ and so on. It is also, considered in banks as ‘accounts held and other financial data’; in medical field, ‘it is the readings from the human body as recorded by a variety of sophisticated instruments’; in the legal environment, ‘it is considered as property’; in economic, ‘it is perceived as commodity’; in philosophy, ‘it is perceived as what can be known’; while, in library, ‘it is considered as collections’ (Lester & Koehler, 2007). Therefore, information is multidimensional and a consequence of what we sensed, heard, felt, smell, taste or experienced. It can be physically touched as material and transformed from one format to another. Its meaning depends on the context in which it is perceived and referred to. It is therefore, both the intellectual content and means through which it is brought especially in libraries, for the fact that, you cannot give a user the content without the means.

Meanwhile, the significance of information can never be estimated, quantified or measured. Mohammed (2011) maintained that, information is an essential resource all human beings irrespective of nations, societies and communities need to have access and utilize at all times to survive, develop and advance in all forms of endeavor. It is therefore an indispensable tool for achieving whatever goal of whomever in all human activities. Hence, the significance of information may range from economic, medical, scientific, technological, geographical/environmental, religious, political, recreational and educational activities. So meeting every need is information dependent. In economic activities for example, which its main portent is planning, production and consumption; those involved in these activities would need information for planning and financing what to produce, why it should be produced, where it should be produced, how it should be produced, who would consume it, as well as the outcome. This is also applies to the other activities.



However, medical professionals need information about the patient and how, when and where the illness started; while scientists need experimental and observational information in order to discover the behavior, structure and nature of a thing, such as the physical and natural world and society. Somewhat similar, the technologist needs information of the scientific discovery, in order to invent and develop things. On one hand, geographers/environmentalists need information about the people, their activities, and those of their environs, and the physical terrains of the environs so as to map out how to protect their internal and external environments. Moreover, religious and political followers need information about do's, don'ts, as well as the ethical issues about their political and religious affiliations and creeds. It is also the same thing with recreational activities where people at their leisure time need an imaginary information about events and other people; as well as information on how to do physical exercise in order to be entertained, emotionally radiant and physically active; hence, devoid of being lonely. In school, where its cardinal preoccupation is teaching and learning in order to acquire knowledge and achieve other personal goals, information is therefore highly needed because knowledge passes through information.

The study of Safahieh (2007) found that students essentially need different types of information for five broad purposes, namely: (i) the fact finding information, for obtaining answers to specific questions; (ii) the current awareness information, for news and updates; (iii) the research information (critical thinking as the case may be), for investigating a new field (phenomena) in depth; (iv) the background information about an issue, for briefing and understanding the situation; and (v) the stimulus information, for ideas to obtain stimulus. It can therefore be stressed that students (visually- impaired students inclusive) exclusively need information on their schools' curricular offerings, extra-curricular and other personal issues; for their professional and personal developments such as writing assignment, text and exams; as well as developing critical thinking, moral/ethical values and reading to prepare for competition and obtain spur.

Information Seeking Patterns

To seek is a verb that denotes asking for, or trying to find or get something. Thus, Wilson (2000) describes information seeking as the way and manner of seeking information in recognition of some needs (perceived by the user). That, behavior (pattern, manner and way of seeking information) may take several forms: in that, user may make demands upon formal systems that are customarily defined as their information source (such as libraries, online services, pestle or information center), or upon system which may perform information functions in addition to a primary non information function... which may be used to obtain information. Alternatively, the user may (also) seek information from other people rather than from the systems... In any of those cases of information seeking pattern, 'failure' may be experienced, but of course, it may be more experienced when seeking information from the source other than the customarily primary source purposely design for the intended users.

Therefore, information seeking pattern comprised of formal and informal source of information; systematic and flexible strategy of searching information in the customarily defined formal sources such as the library, online services or information centers as well as the alternative informal source through flexible strategy that is not strictly systematic; which is prone to failure and so many hitches due to inefficiency tendencies. In the case of students in school, which is a highly structured environment with everything in well planned (systematic) way; therefore, their information seeking pattern should involve formal source (i.e. the library) and systematic searching strategy in library or any customarily provided source or service. This means that students should only alternatively involve informal source and searching strategy due to failure of their customarily formal primary source. Meanwhile, the success of students is largely dependent on the efficiency of their school library in the provision of accurate information, as well as the appropriate information services, leading to actual use of information and satisfaction of the perceived needs.

Information Use

Having sought the needed information, the next step is making use of it in order to satisfy the perceived needs. It is therefore the bridge that links the core elements of information needs and information seeking. According to Safahieh (2007), information use could be noticed as the information that individuals actually use or consume. For this reason, Collin (2003) observed that if you use something, you do something with it in order to do a job or to achieve a particular result or effect; your use of something, is the action or fact of your using it; if you have a use for something, you need it or can find something to do with it; if something has a particular use, it is intended for a particular purpose; if you have the use of something, you have the permission (access) or ability to use it; a use of something is a particular importance it has or a particular way in which it can be used. Ganaie and Khazer (2014) noted that the significant factors influencing information use was found to be related to awareness, information literacy, organizational and environmental issues, source and information formats characteristics.

Lester and Koehler (2007) stress that, recognition of information problem, desire to resolve it, analysis of the kind of information that would be useful in resolving the uncertainty, knowledge of the availability of such information, access to the information needed, and skill necessary to locate and interpret the information constitutes information use. Jaeger (2007) emphasized that without access to information there can be no information use. Moreover, a study by Mwatela (2013) identified awareness and familiarity of library and information resources, including their organization and retrieval tools, library skills and information literacy as the main factors that influence the information utilization.

Furthermore, a study by Seyama (2010) revealed that visually- impaired students attested needing orientation on how to access the resources, apply search strategies in library and use the information as in the norm with sighted library users. Therefore, the information that is accessible or made accessible is more likely to be used by information seekers (Safahieh, 2007). Moreover, a study by Young and Seggern (2002) revealed that accuracy, ease of use, reliability, availability, currency, and cost were the main factors influencing the use of information. Other terms that student mentioned as being important to them were trust, quality, credibility, validity, and completeness. Mostert and Ocholla (2005) maintain that, for information to be useful, it should be appropriate, reliable, accurate, and in a format that is suitable to the specific information needs. Al-Muomen, Morris and Maynard (2012) noted the influence of accessibility of various types of information and the information literacy as Factors that have great impact on information use.

Therefore, lack of library and information skills, which are the basis for empowering users with information literacy competencies of identifying, locating, and using of information, is the source of detriment to effective information use. Hence, the needs for information skills that will enable them to identify, access, evaluate and use information effectively.

Factors Affecting Information Seeking and Use among Students

To every success there are some factors leading to its attainment, so also to its failure. It is an often conviction that information seeking is an individual's effort and process of sourcing and gathering information in order to use to satisfy the perceived need, which involved the source of obtaining information, the strategies applying to search it, the resources that contains it and services that provides it; therefore, the successful information seeking and use is particularly adjudicate by the efficiency found in those mentioned preconditions. Meanwhile, as the issue that comprised (involve) all those elements; its success may be affected by the failure of one or of all the mentioned elements.

A study by Qureshi, Iqbal, and Khan (2008) identified these factors as affecting students information seeking and use: awareness of the sources of information, timeliness of information presented, ability to use information access tools, cultural impact, self evaluation and intuition. Also, Ikoja-Odongo and Ocholla (2003) conducted a study on information needs and seeking behavior and found among other things unreliability of source, paucity of information resources, nature of packaging of information and mode of presentation; low education level or information literacy, time needed to search and retrieve information and personal motivation; cost of accessing information; and situational factors e.g. lack of time, uncertainty within the information seekers which leads to limited

capacity to absorb information as barriers to information seeking and use of students. Baro, Endouware and Ubogu (2011) added the problems such as lack of time, the challenge of source and locating 'good citable stuff', inability to use effectively the library, and poor skills in information searching are the information-seeking problems.

Moreover, a study by Seyama (2010) revealed that, in their quest for information and utilizing it, students with visual impairment use to encounter the attitudinal, technological, financial, and source and formats barriers. In view of the attitudinal barrier, it follows that, student with visual impairment encountered problem of lack of willingness and cooperation by staff to go a step further than was needed by sighted students in meeting their needs, hence, acrimoniously hindered their anticipated success in their academic endeavor. In regard to the technological barrier, according to them was in the access to source and information, they stated that, if a visually- impaired student needed to consult information resources such as book from the library, he or she must need help to get the book off the shelves because, the shelves are too high compared to their eye/ sight level.

They further lament that information is also not available through JAWS and that some if not all, the data bases, including the OPAC in the library, do not have Zoom Text option and JAWS software. About the source and formats barriers however, they laments that, much of the print information they needed were in source and formats that are not suitable to their impairments as well as lack of assistive technologies. On one hand, cost implications in providing specialized services to students with visual impairments according to librarians, hinders the effective services for them, hence, constitutes barriers to their information seeking and use. To visually- impaired, in this library, everywhere where information is involve, there is a barrier, therefore accessing information from it is just a nightmare.

Methodology

The study was conducted in the year 2016, on the visually- impaired students in four special education secondary schools with visually- impaired students in North- west zone of Nigeria. The schools are Government School for the Blind (GSB), Katsina; Special Education School Tudun Maliki (SES, TM), Kano; Raji Special School (RSS), Sokoto; and, Alhuda-Huda College (AHHC), Zaria (preliminary survey result, 2015-2016). Quantitative research method using survey design was adopted. Population of the study comprises 348 visually- impaired students of the schools, with GSB,K 191; SESTM,K 78; RSS,S 36; and, AHHC,Z 34. Owing to the rather scanty number, which constitutes the population, total enumeration was adopted as no sample was taken from the population, using the entire population.

Data was collected using a structured questionnaire, with its face and content validated by experts in Special Education and Library and Information Science Departments of Bayero University, Kano. The questionnaire was found reliable at .918 coefficient of Cronbach's Alpha. Respondents were asked verbally to respond to the questions read to them by the researcher (for the legally blind students), and gave out to partially-sighted to complete at their time and later return to the researcher. The data collected was presented in tabular form and analyzed using descriptive statistics and frequency counts and percentages by the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 16.

Results and Discussions

A total of 348 copies of the questionnaire were administered to respondents for the study in their schools; out of which 340 copies (98%) were duly completed, returned and found useable for the study. Meanwhile, 98% response rate is very good enough to provide a highly credible and reliable result of the study. Therefore, data for this study was analyzed based on the 340 returned copies of the questionnaire.

The respondents were asked about their gender, age, class of study and nature of visual impairment.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage%
Gender of Respondents		
Male	235	69%
Female	105	31%
Total	340	100.0
Age of Respondents		
12-13 Years	62	18.2%
14-15 Years	73	21.5%
16-17 Years	48	14.1%
18-19 Years	69	20.3%
20-21 Years	65	19.1%
22-23 Years	23	6.8%
Total	340	100.0
Class of Study of the Respondents		
JSS1	62	18.2%
JSS2	73	21.5%
JSS3	48	14.1%
SSS1	69	20.3%
SSS2	65	19.1%
SSS3	23	6.8%
Total	340	100.0
Nature of Visual Impairment		
Low Vision	-	-
Partial Sight	126	37.0%
Legally Blind	214	63.0%
Total	340	100.0

Key: JSS= Junior Secondary School, SSS = Senior Secondary School

Table1 revealed the gender, age distribution, class of study, and nature of visual- impairment of the respondents. The data show that 235(69%), that is, more than two third of the respondents are male; while, only 105(31%) were female. This indicates that there were more male visually-impaired students than the female in the secondary schools under study. On one hand, the age distribution of the respondents indicates that majority, that is, more than two third were within the Nigeria’s minimum secondary school age of twelve/thirteen to eighteen/nineteen years. Meanwhile, only 19.1% and 6.8% put together 25.9 were between 20 – 23 years of age. Somewhat similar to the age, the data further show that the respondents were cut across all the levels of study, and majority were those in JSS 2, 73(21.5%); SSS1, 69(20.3%); SSS2, 65(19.1%); and JSS 1, 62(18.2%).

This shows that the enrolment status of the visually- impaired students is progressing by year in the zone under study, which is an indication of the need for functional school library well equipped with appropriate information resources, assistive technology devices and other services for their smooth progressing to higher education. The data also revealed that majority of the respondents were legally blind, that is those that are completely unable to see in any degree of sight or vision. Table 2 shows the types of information needed by the respondents

Table 2: Information Needs of the Respondents

Information Needs	Yes	No
a) Information on all subjects being taught in the school	340(100)	-
b) Information on health matters	332(97.6)	8(2.4)



c) Information on world news	324(95.2)	16(4.8)
d) Information related to recreation and entertainment	328(96.4)	12(3.6)
e) Information relating to religion and politics	324(95.2)	16(4.8)

The respondents were asked to indicate the type of information they needed. Table 2 revealed that they need various types of information. Comprising information on all subjects being taught in their schools; health matters, news, religion and politics; as well recreation and entertainment, among others. Notwithstanding needing information on all subjects being taught in their schools and other skills acquisition activities by the visually- impaired students is not surprising due to the fact that the essence of being at school is to learn and acquire knowledge and skills. So also, needing information on health issue, because the visual impairment that they are suffering is equally a health matter whereby they need information on the causative factors, preventive measures and medication. However, needing recreational and entertainment information is as well very significant to them so that they would learn how to do physical exercise in order to become physically active and emotionally stable; hence devoid of being lonely and isolated.

Table 3 shows the various purposes for the need of information by the respondents

Table 3: Purpose for which the Information is Needed by the Respondents

Purpose	Yes	Nso
a) I need information for the purpose of learning	340(100)	-
b) I need information in order to know more about health issues	332(97.6)	8(2.4)
c) I need information for writing assignment	323(95)	17(5)
d) I need information to read in order to prepare for test and exams	323(95)	17(5)
e) I need information to read in order to prepare for competitions and discursions	321(94.4)	19(5.6)
f) I need information to read in order to develop critical thinking skills	329(96.7)	11(3.3)
g) I need information to read in order to derive pleasure	327(96.1)	13(3.9)

The respondents were asked to state the purpose (s) for which they need information. Table 3 indicates that no purpose for the need to use information received less than 90% response. Meanwhile, the visually- impaired students need to use information for the purpose of learning, knowing more about health issues, developing critical thinking, writing assignments, tests, and examinations and reading to prepare for competition and discussion, as well as for deriving pleasure.

The respondents were asked to indicate the sources through which they are seeking information.

Table 4: Respondents’ Sources of Seeking Information

Sources of Information	Yes	No
a) I seek information through the School library	-	340(100)
b) I seek information through Resource center	154(45.3)	186(54.7)
c) I seek information through Book shops and material production centers	327(96.1)	13(3.9)
d) I seek information through Oral source	329(96.7)	11(3.3)
e) I seek information through Lecture notes	325(95.5)	15(4.5)
f) I seek information through Computers and software	155(45.6)	185(54.4)
g) I seek information through the Internet	-	340(100)

Table 4 indicates that more than 90% respondents revealed that, they seek information through oral sources, bookshops and material production centers; which are the alternative informal sources, compared to school library and the Internet platform.

Table 5 shows the strategies the respondents employ to search information

Table 5: Respondents Information Searching Strategies

Strategies	Yes	No
a) I search information using ‘Systematic’ (planned) searching’ in the library	-	340(100)
b) I search information using ‘Flexible’ strategies’ (i.e. not strictly systematic)	340(100)	-
c) I search information through the use of Intermediary person	186(54.7)	154(45.3)
d) I search information using Face-to-face enquiries/consultations	329(96.7)	11(3.3)
e) I search information through Borrowing	328(96.4)	12(3.6)
f) I search information through Exchange	328(96.4)	12(3.6)
g) Purchasing the resources	325(95.5)	15(4.5)

Respondents were asked to describe the strategies they employ to search information; data in Table 5 reveal that they are searching information through flexible/informal strategy that comprises the face-to-face enquiries, borrowing, exchange, as well as purchasing the resources. In the same vein, it was also found that the totally unpracticed or unemployed strategy is systematic searching strategy in the library or online services due to unavailability of school library and online information services.

Table 6 shows the types of information resources that are available to the respondents in their schools.

Table 6: Types of Information Resources Available to the Respondents

Available Information Resources	Yes	No
a) Brailled publications	179(52.6)	161(47.4)
b) Talking/voice recorded information resources	76(22.3)	264(77.6)
c) Enlarged characters information resources	43(12.6)	297(87.3)
d) Twin vision or dual language information resources	-	340(100)
e) Internet resources	-	340(100)
f) Curzwel software information resources	-	340(100)
g) Screen reader Magnifier software resources	-	340(100)
h) Audio recording equipment	75(22.1)	264(77.6)
i) Braille writing equipment	265(87.6%)	42(12.4)
j) Braille embosser/transcriber	188(55.2)	152(44.8)
k) Braille mathematical equipment/set	36(10.6)	304(89.4)
l) Job access with speech software (JAWS)	188(55.2)	152(44.8)
m) Talking calculator/mathematical equipment	36(10.6)	304(89.4)
n) Computer, its related systems and software	204(60)	136(40)

Respondents were asked to indicate the types of information resources available to them in their schools; the data indicates that the information resources and assistive technology devices for visually-impaired students were not available in the schools under study; only brailled writing equipment 265(87.6%) and computer, its related systems and software were slightly available. It is however a strange situation in the Information Age to find out that the students, particularly the visually- impaired at the secondary school level, are seeking information through the sources other than the library and other information gate ways in the library.

Table 7 shows the various factors that are affecting the information seeking and use of the respondents.

Table 7: Factors Affecting Information Seeking and Use

Factors	Yes	No
a) Unavailability of established functional school library purposely design for us to seek information in or order meet our information needs	340(100)	-
b) Difficulty in getting the accurate information	332(97.6)	8(2.4)
c) Lack of printed information	332(97.6)	8(2.4)
d) Lack of computers and other assistive technology devices	332(97.6)	8(2.4)
e) Unavailability of internet connectivity to use the online information	331(97.3)	9(2.7)
f) Inaccessibility to information in time of needs	325(95.5)	15(4.5)
g) Uncertainty about the information	324(95.2)	16(4.)
h) People's attitudes	322(94.7)	18(5.3)
i) Cost expensive of the resources	319(98.8)	21(6.2)
j) Lack of information retrieval skills	319(98.8)	21(6.2)

Respondents were asked to indicate the factors that are affecting their information seeking; the data show that various factors were affecting their information seeking; namely the unavailability of established functional school library purposely designed for them to seek information in order to use it to satisfy their information needs. This, according to them, is what makes it difficult for them to get accurate information; including lack of computers, other assistive technology devices, as well as the general unavailability of Internet connectivity to use the online information. They also lamented the inaccessibility to information in time of needs, uncertainty about the information obtained, people's attitudes of lack of willingness to borrow out the resources and listen to them during the face-to-face enquiries, expensive cost of the resources when they afford to buy it for themselves by themselves and lack of information retrieval skills.

Discussion of the Findings

The ubiquity and indispensability of information today makes it to be highly needed by everyone, everywhere and about everything especially by the visually-impaired students at secondary school. This study investigated the information seeking and use among visually-impaired students at secondary school and brings to limelight of the types of information they needed, their source of seeking information, the strategies employing to search information and the factors affecting their information seeking and use. Findings revealed that they need various types of information especially on their schools curricular and extra-curricular offerings, health and recreation and entertainment among others. But, unfortunately, the information resources and assistive technology devices that contain the information were not available in the schools. Which means their information needs have not been given the appropriate consideration. Accordingly, it should be ensured that whatever type of information is needed should be provided in both required quantity and formats. Otherwise, the purpose for which it is needed could not be achieved which, would lead to negative implications on their essence of being at school.

Also, their source and strategies of seeking information were found to be the alternative informal sources and searching strategy such as the oral source, bookshop/material production centers as well as face-to-face enquiries, borrowing and exchange due to unavailability of library to search systematically using search tools. Accordingly, through the school library, the visually-impaired students would find it available in a wide range and easier to locate, the information they need than depending on the other people's memory, depending on what they can only listen and write down during lessons as well as what they were able to purchase by themselves for their own use. By implication, the lack of established functional school library as source of information for the visually-impaired students is a negative indication that their quest for quality education would be burdensome due to unavailability of wide variety and systematically organized information, assistive technology devices (ATDs) and other relevant information services. However, the implication of this situation is that it makes the process of satisfying their information need time consuming, resulting in multitude



of hits, because the source they use to seek information is not customarily designed and purposely available for them; compared to a library and other information gateways in the library.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Today, the sole aim of every human being is to be educated; because it is the bedrock of any meaningful development be it personal or professional. This is true to the findings of this study as it shows that the enrolment status of visually- impaired students into the secondary school is increasing by year; which is an indication of the need for information on their school curricular and extra-curricular offerings that are expected to be provided through an established functional school library well equipped with appropriate information resources, assistive technology devices and other relevant services. Certainly, provision of all these infrastructure, resources and equipment will surely allow them to search information systematically in a more convenient and easiest way.

Unfortunately, the visually- impaired students are seeking information through informal source and searching strategy due to general unavailability of established functional school library as their primary source of information; unavailability of Internet connectivity to use online information resources; as well as lack of brailled, voice recorded, enlarged characters, text to speech software and twin vision or dual language information resources among others. It is therefore concluded that the information needs, seeking and use of visually impaired students have not been given the appropriate consideration they deserved in secondary schools in the zone under study. Therefore, the study recommends that:

1. Visually-impaired students should be provided with relevant information on all subjects being taught in their schools, as well as information on extra-curricular and other personal issues, for their professional and personal development.
2. Functional library should be established in every school as primary source of information especially for visually-impaired students; taking into cognizance their special needs in terms of location, space, information resources/facilities for them to search information systematically in a quick, easy and convenient manner.
3. There should be adequate provision of information in brailled, voice recorded, enlarged characters, text to speech software, twin vision or dual language publications and other relevant assistive technology devices. So also, the prompt delivery of other information services such as current awareness services of current information resources, transcription/translation services, selective dissemination of information, Literature (printed and online) searching (for up to date information) and Reference information services (direct questions and answers), among others.
4. Appropriate actions should be taken to ensure that all factors affecting the information seeking and use of visually-impaired students are overcome in the schools under study; especially through the provision of guideline or standard and the allocation of substantial amount of money out of the fund budgeted by the authorities for secondary schools education, for the provision of information resources and other services for visually- impaired students; as well as continuous supervision and evaluation the resources and services.



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