

COURSE GUIDE

LIS 213

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Course Team

Dr. Angela Ebele Okpala (Course Writer) - NOUN
Dr. Ifeoma Abigail Ajie (Course Editor)- NOUN



NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

National Open University of Nigeria

Headquarters

University Village

Plot 91, Cadastral Zone,

Nnamdi Azikiwe Expressway

Jabi, Abuja

Lagos Office

14/16 Ahmadu Bello Way

Victoria Island, Lagos

e-mail: centralinfo@noun.edu.ng

URL: www.nouedu.net

Published by

National Open University of Nigeria

Printed 2020

ISBN:

All Rights Reserved

CONTENTS	PAGE
MODULE 1: DEFINITION AND CONCEPT OF PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS	
Unit 1: The Concept of Persons with Special Needs	
Unit 2: Models of Persons with Special Needs	
 MODULE 2: PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND THE SOCIETY	
Unit 1: Societal Predispositions towards Persons with Special Needs.	
Unit 2: Models, Decisions, and Policies	
Unit 3: Stigma and Social Construction of Disability	
Unit 4: Law against Discrimination of Persons with Special Needs	
 MODULE 3: LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES TO OLDER PEOPLE	
Unit 1: Characteristics of Old People	
Unit 2: Information Needs and Information Seeking Behaviour of Old People	
Unit 3: Bibliotherapy	
Unit 4: The Role of Libraries	
 MODULE 4: LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES TO OTHER PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS	
Unit 1: Introduction to Library and Information Services	
Unit 2: Library and Information Services to the Blind and Visually Impaired	
Unit 3: The Wheelchair Mobile User	
Unit 4: Access to Library/ Information Services to Persons with Special Needs	
Unit 5: Library/Information Resources for Persons with Special Needs	

MODULE 5: (ICT) INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AND PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- Unit 1: ICT Access and use by Persons with Special Needs
- Unit 2: Mobile Device/Radio and TV Set
- Unit 3: Emerging ICTs and Persons with Special Needs
- Unit 4: Barriers/Challenges Militating Against the Use of ICT

MODULE 6: INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEED

- Unit 1: The Concept and Definition of Information Systems
- Unit 2: The Importance of Information Systems
- Unit 3: Physically Challenged Persons Information Systems

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to LIS 213: **Library and Information Services for Persons with Special Needs**. LIB 213 is a two unit course that has minimum duration of one semester. It is suitable for all students of the department of library and Information science.

It examines in details the concept of information services for persons with special needs. It covers such diverse topics as the meaning and paradigm of the concept of persons with special needs in the society, the determinants, characteristic and predisposition of persons with special needs, persons with special needs and the society, the information needs and information seeking behaviours of persons with special needs, information systems resources and services for persons with special needs and the best practices in the provision of library and information services for persons with special needs. All of these topics are addressed in this course in addition to others.

The course guide tells you briefly what the course is all about, what you are expected to know in each unit, what course materials you need to use and how you can work your way through these materials. The course guide also emphasises the necessity for self-assessment exercises.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS COURSE

The overall objective of LIS 213: Library and Information Services for Persons with Special Needs is to expose you to the diverse information needs of persons with special needs. It will also equip you with information on all available resources to meet the needs of persons with special needs.

COURSE AIMS

The basic aim of this course is to expose you to different types of disabilities with the individuals peculiar information needs. It is also to expose you to available resources specially produced for persons with special needs to enable them meet their information needs. In this present era, where the world is a global village, the course is also geared towards exposing you to the various Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and assistive technologies for persons with special needs.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

There are several objectives for this course. In addition, each unit has specific objectives. The unit objectives can be found at the beginning of each unit. You may want to refer to them during your study of a particular unit to check on the progress you are making. You should always look at the unit objectives at the completion of each unit, in this way you can be sure that you have covered what is required of you in that unit.

AT THE END OF THIS COURSE, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

- Define the concept of persons with special needs
- Discuss the different types of disabilities
- Discuss the different disability models
- Differentiate between medical and social disability models.
- Explain the nature of discrimination against persons with special needs in Nigeria
- Explain your understanding of bio-psychosocial models.
- Discuss ways of stopping discrimination against persons with special needs in Nigeria
- Explain the epistemic and moral authority of persons with special needs.
- Identify the information needs of persons with special needs.
- Discuss the role of the library in meeting the information needs of older people.
- Explain the concept of bibliotherapy
- Discuss the role of ICT and assistive technology in meeting the information needs of persons with special needs.
- Identify the challenges militating against service delivery to persons with special needs.

WORKING THROUGH THIS COURSE

To complete this course successfully, you are advised to read the study units, read recommended books and other materials provided by **NOUN**. Each unit contains self-assessment exercise, and at some points in the course you will be required to submit assignment (TMAs) for assessment purposes. At the end of the course, there will be final examination. The course should take you about 20 weeks to complete. You need to allocate your time in order to complete the course successfully and on time.

COURSE MATERIALS

The major components of the course material are:

1. Course guide
2. Study units
3. Textbooks and References
4. Assignment file
5. Presentation schedule

STUDY UNITS

There are six (6) modules and 22 study units in this course as follows:

MODULE 1: DEFINITION AND CONCEPT OF PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- Unit 1: The Concept of Persons with Special Needs
Unit 2: Models of Persons with Special Needs

MODULE 2: PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND THE SOCIETY

- Unit 1: Societal Predispositions towards Persons with Special Needs.
Unit 2: Models, Decisions, and Policies
Unit 3: Stigma and Social Construction of Disability
Unit 4: Law against Discrimination of Persons with Special Needs

MODULE 3: LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES TO OLDER PEOPLE

- Unit 1: Characteristics of Old People
Unit 2: Information Needs and Information Seeking Behaviour of Old People
Unit 3: Bibliotherapy
Unit 4: The Role of Libraries

MODULE 4: LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES TO OTHER PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- Unit 1: Introduction to Library and Information Services
- Unit 2: Library and Information Services to the Blind and Visually Impaired
- Unit 3: The Wheelchair Mobile User
- Unit 4: Access to Library/ Information Services to Persons with Special Needs
- Unit 5: Library/Information Resources for Persons with Special Needs

**MODULE 5: (ICT) INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION
TECHNOLOGY AND PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

- Unit 1: ICT Access and use by Persons with Special Needs
- Unit 2: Mobile Device/Radio and TV Set
- Unit 3: Emerging ICTs and Persons with Special Needs
- Unit 4: Barriers/Challenges Militating Against the Use of ICT

**MODULE 6: INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR PERSONS WITH SPECIAL
NEED**

- Unit 1: The Concept and Definition of Information Systems
- Unit 2: The Importance of Information Systems
- Unit 3: Physically Challenged Persons Information Systems

Each unit contains a number of self – assessment exercises in general. These self – tests question you on the materials you have just covered or require you to apply it in some way and, thereby assist you to evaluate your progress as well as reinforce your understanding of the materials. These exercises will assist you in achieving the stated learning objectives of the individual units and of the course in general.

Assessment

There are two main forms of assessments in this course that will be scored: the continuous assessments and the final examination. The continuous assessment (TMA) shall be computer based and will be given in accordance to university academic calendar. The timing must be strictly adhered to. The Tutor Marked Assessments (TMAs) shall be scored a maximum of 10% each. On the whole continuous assessment will be 30% of the total marks while the final examination written at the end of the course will be 70%.

TEXTBOOKS AND REFERENCES

Dee, M. Bowen, J. (1986). Library Services to Older people Dover, New Hamshire: USA

Dietrich, T.M. (1984). Library use instruction for older adults. Canadian Library Journal, 41(4).

Machell, J. (1984). A county library services to the elderly, sick and disabled. Health Libraries Review, (I).

Nanta, M. (1983). Library services to elderly people in Hertfordshire. Medical Health and Welfare Librarians Group Newsletter.

Altman, B. (2001). Disability definitions, models, classification schemes and application. In G.L. Albredht, K.D. Sedman, and M. Bars, Handbook of disability studies (pp 97 – 122). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Babrett, I. (2001) Health care professionals and their attitudes towards decisions affecting disabled people. In G.L. Albrecht, K. Sedman and M. Bury (eds), Handbook of Disability studies (pp 450 – 467), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Brock, D (2005)** Preventing genetically transmissible diseases while respecting persons with disabilities in D. Wasserman, R. Wachbroit, and J. Bickenbach (eds) *Quality of life and Human Difference: genetic testing health care, and disability* (pp 67 – 100). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Boorse, C. (2010).** Disability and medical theory. In D.C. Ralston and J. Ho (eds), *Philosophical Reflections on Disability* (pp 55 – 90). Dordrecht: Springer.
- Shakespeare, T. (2006)** *Disability rights and wrongs*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Terzi, L. (2004).** The social model of disability: a philosophical critique. *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, 21 (2), 141
- Terzi, L. (2009).** Vagaries of the natural lottery? Human diversity, disability and justice: a capability perspective. In K. Brownlee and A. Curetan (eds), *Disability and Disadvantage* (pp 86 – 171). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Wasserman, D. (2001).** Philosophical issues in the definition and social response to disability. In G.L. Albrecht (ed), *Handbook of Disability Studies* (pp 219 – 251). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- World Health Organization, (2001)** *International Classification of Functioning, disability and health (ICF)*. Geneva: World Health Organization.
- Reindal. S.M. (2000).** Disability, gene therapy and eugenics: a challenge to John Harris. *Journal of Medical Ethics*, 26, 89 – 94.
- Harris, J. (2000).** Is there a Coherent Social Conception of Disability? *Journal of Medical Ethics*, 26, 95 – 100.
- Adebowale, K.O. (2009).** Housing the physically challenged people in Nigeria: the Challenges and way forward.
Retrieved from [http://docs.google.com/viewer](http://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:KpwQRTXrT6QJ:niesvorg.ng/NIESV%2520)
a=v&q=cache:KpwQRTXrT6QJ:niesvorg.ng/NIESV%2520.
- Adesina, E.R. (2003).** Towards meeting the library and information needs of the handicapped in Nigeria. In T.A Adedaja and T. Ajobiwe (eds), *Coping with Disability* (p35) Ibadan: Spectrum.
- American with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). (2011).**
Check list for building and facilities.
Retrieved from <http://www.acesboard.gov/adang/checklist/a16.htm/>
- Dada, O.O. (2005).** Wheelchair accessibility of public building in Ibadan, Nigeria. *Asia Pacific Disability Journal*, 16; 115
- Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)(2011).**

Retrieved from [www.webcredicle.co.uk/ user-friendly-resources/web-accessibility/uk website-legal-requirement.shtml](http://www.webcredicle.co.uk/user-friendly-resources/web-accessibility/uk-website-legal-requirement.shtml)

Okoye, U.O. (2010). Support system and coping strategies available to physically challenged student in University of Nigeria Nsukka

Retrieved from <http://does.google.com/viewer? a=v&q=cache:TnTjIAJ-Z64J:intersjournals.org/ER /pdf/2010/December/Okoye>.

Viney, D. (2006). The impact of the disability equality duty on our services to users.

In All Change Delivery Library Services to Disabled Students in a changing context.

Retrieved from <http://does.google.com/viewer?>

a=v&q=cache:HpYEtW2qr-

cj:www.sconul.ac.uk/publications/news/letter/38/39

The World Book Encyclopedia (2004). Chicago: World Book Inc. D(5), 218.

Wunsch, M. (2011). Disability: can disability be maintained in development?

Retrieved from <http://lup.lnp.in.se/luur/download? fun=download file. & record>

Atinmo, M.I. (2000). Including the excluded: the Challenges of library and information services for visually handicapped readers in Nigeria in the new millennium. In M. Eskay and J.N Chima (eds), Library and Information Services Delivery for the Blind and Physically Challenged in University of Nigeria Nsukka Library.

**MODULE 1: DEFINITION AND CONCEPT OF PERSONS WITH SPECIAL
NEEDS**

Unit 1: The Concept of Persons with Special Needs

Unit 2: Models of Persons with Special Needs

UNIT 1: The Concept of Persons with Special Needs

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 The concept of Persons with Special Needs

3.2 Types of Physical Challenges

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall examine the concept of persons with special needs, noting the various definitions provided. We shall also look at the various classifications of persons with special needs.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Define the concept of persons with special needs
- Examine the conflicts on the various terms used in describing individuals with disabilities
- Explain the different classifications of persons with special needs

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Definition and Concept of the Persons with Special Needs

Lawal-Solarin (2010) in an article titled “Banks and the Physically Challenged” quoted MSN Encarta Dictionary which defines disability as an inability to perform some or all the tasks of daily life or a medically diagnosed condition that makes it difficult to engage in the activities of daily life. According to the World Book Encyclopaedia (2004), "some people are born with disabilities, while others develop them later in life. There are however, many types of challenges or disabilities; both physical and mental, and they vary greatly in causes, degrees and treatments. Common disabilities include blindness, deafness, and deformity, loss of limbs, mental illness, mental retardation, muscular, nervous and sensory disorders".

Historically, “disability” has been used either as a synonym for “inability” or as a reference to legally imposed limitations on rights and powers. Indeed, as late as 2006, the Oxford English Dictionary recognized only these two senses of the term (Boorse, 2010). Two common features stand out in most official definitions of disability, such as those in the World Health Organization (2001; 1980), the U.N. Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for People with Disabilities, the Disability Discrimination Act (U.K.), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (U.S.): (i) a physical or mental characteristic labelled or perceived as an

impairment or dysfunction and (ii) some personal or social limitation associated with that impairment.

Persons with special needs tend to be offended when referred to as “handicapped or disabled”. There is a great deal of disagreement as to what should be considered offensive or derogatory by people with or without disabilities. However, these views vary with geography and culture, over time, and among individuals. Furthermore, terms such as, "retarded" and "lame" are regarded as deliberate insults. Also the term "wheelchair-bound" is inherently negative. Although, the word "handicapped" is considered by some people to be derogatory, others see it as a synonym for "a person with a disability", and it is still being used by some people with disabilities. Certain people are offended by such terms, while others are offended by the replacement of such terms with what they consider to be euphemisms (e.g. 'differently able or 'special needs'). In addition, some insidious words such as retarded, invalid, sufferer, defect etc can cause harm to them. Finally, some people believe that terms should be avoided if they would offend people, while others hold the listener responsible for misinterpreting terms used in a non-offensive context (Wasserman, 2001).

The conflicts on the various terms used in describing individuals with disabilities, have led to various authors accepting the term “*special needs*” as the functional descriptive term for individuals with various forms of disability like blindness, deafness, loss of limbs, and mental retardation, as well as other forms of muscular, nervous, and sensory disorders (Ilayaraja and Manoharan, 2012).

3.2 Classifications of Persons with Special Needs

Persons with special needs are usually classified as those with:

(i) Hearing disability (the deaf and hard- of-hearing persons): These are persons who have problems in hearing day to day conversational speech when hearing aid is not used. There are different degrees of hearing challenge.

(ii) Visual disability (the blind and persons with low-vision): These are persons who do not have any light perception on both eyes. The persons with visual challenge may be categorised into two broad groups namely: those with blindness and those with low vision.

(iii) Mental retardation: These are persons who have difficulties in understanding routine instructions. They exhibit behaviours like talking to self, laughing/crying, staring, violence, fear and suspicion without reason. The mentally challenged persons are categorized into two groups viz. mentally retarded and mentally ill.

When persons with mental challenges manifest this behaviour from birth or childhood but before 18 years of age and these persons were late in talking, sitting, standing or walking, they are classified as ‘mentally retarded’ The other group of people with mental disability are classified as “mentally ill”

(iv) challenges in movement/locomotors challenge(those with limb amputations, limb paralysis etc): These are persons with (a) loss or absence or inactivity of whole or part of hand or leg or both due to amputation, paralysis, cerebral palsy, deformity or dysfunction of joints which affects his/her “normal ability to move self or objects” and (b) those with physical deformities in the body (other than limbs), such as, hunch back, deformed spine, etc. regardless

of whether the same caused loss or lack of normal movement of body. Thus, dwarfs and persons with stiff neck of permanent nature who generally do not have difficulty in the normal movement of body and limbs are also to be treated as persons with special needs.

(v) speech/language disorders (those with conditions such as stammering, cleft palate, voice disorders, articulation disorders as well as those with speech or language defects resulting from hearing loss, culture or dialect setbacks, deprivations or delays of speech or language skills acquisition.): These are persons with speech disorder causing them not to speak like normal persons.

(vi) Chronic health impairment (those with severe heart, blood, muscular or bone disorders

(vii) Learning disability (those experiencing difficulties in learning processes which are not caused by disabilities of hearing, sight or mental retardation.

4.0 CONCLUSION

This first unit of our course has tried to help you understand the meaning of the concept ‘special needs’ and the misconceptions of the various terms used in describing individuals with disabilities. This unit has also helped you to understand the different groups into which persons with special needs are classified. In the next unit, we shall be looking at the different models of disability.

5.0 SUMMARY

We have discussed the concept of persons with special needs. We have seen disability as an inability to perform some or all the tasks of daily life or a medically diagnosed condition that makes it difficult to engage in the activities of daily life. Persons with special needs tend to be offended when referred to as “handicapped”. We must therefore be careful in the way we address them. Persons with special needs are usually classified as those with:

- (i) hearing disability(ii) visual disability(iii) mental retardation(iv) challenges in movement/locomotors challenge(v) speech/language disorders(vi) chronic health impairment(vii) learning disability.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1. Discuss the concept of persons with special needs
2. Explain the different classifications of persons with special needs.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Wasserman, D. (2001). Philosophical issues in the definition and social response to disability. In G.L. Albrecht (ed), *Handbook of Disability Studies (pp 219 – 251)*. Thousand Oaks, (A: Sage Publications).

World Health Organization, (2001) International Classification of Functioning, disability and health (ICF). Geneva: World Health Organization.

Altman, B. (2001). Disability definitions, models, classification schemes and application. In G.L. Albrecht, K.D. Sedman, and M. Bars, *Handbook of*

disability studies (*pp* 97 – 122). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Shakespeare, T. (2006) Disability rights and wrongs. London, UK: Routledge.

UNIT 2: THE MODELS OF PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Models of Disability

3.2 The Medical Model of Persons with Special Needs

3.3 The Social Model of Persons with Special Needs

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit you will be made to understand the different models of disability theory. Both the medical model and the social model of disability will be well explained. Also in this unit, we shall discuss the reasons for the shift from medical model to social model and address other related issues to the medical and social model.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Discuss the medical model of disability
- Discuss the social model of disability
- Distinguish between medical and social model
- Explain the medical issues in disability

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Models of Disability

The world of disability theory is currently divided between those who insist it reflects a physical fact affecting life quality and those who believe disability is defined by social prejudice.

In the medical model, a person with special needs is one that has certain physical, intellectual, psychological and mental conditions(impairment)regarded as abnormal that interferes with his or her ability to perform activities of everyday living. According to the medical model, disability lies in the individual. This can be visible (physical) or invisible (cognitive, mental or sensory).

In contrast, the social model shifts the focus to the society, and undue restrictions on behaviour of persons with impairment are seen to be imposed by;

- dominant social, political, and economic ideologies
- cultural and religious perceptions regarding persons with disabilities

- paternalism in social welfare system
- discriminations by society
- the inaccessibility of the environment and information
- the lack of appropriate institutional and social arrangements.

In the social perspective, disability does not lie in the individual, but in the interactions between individuals and society. In this case, the physically challenged are right holders, and are entitled to advocate for the removal of institutional, physical, informational and attitudinal barriers in society. Some examples of this type of physically challenged are: the old/ retired people in the society, the very poor in the rural areas, Women in purdah, etc. From this definition, the social definition of disability is broader and all encompassing. It does not exclude impairment as a result of medical issues but it includes exclusion due to social, economic and political status.

3.2 The Medical Model of Persons with Special Needs

The medical model views disability as a feature of the person, directly caused by disease, trauma or other health condition, which requires medical care provided in the form of individual treatment by professionals. Disability, in this model, calls for medical or other treatment or intervention, to 'correct' the problem with the individual.

Critics of this medical model, simply see it as inappropriate to see disability as a medical issue. This is because; disability as has been presented by the social model is a social condition and not a medical condition. Medical doctors cannot manage disability because they are not trained for that. Rather, they are trained to diagnose, treat and cure illnesses, not to alleviate social conditions or circumstances.

There is a clear distinction between illness and disability. The fact remains that some illnesses may have disabling consequences and many people with disabilities have illnesses at various points in their lives. Doctors can have a role to play in the lives of persons with special needs by trying to stabilise their initial condition, treating any illnesses which may arise and which may or may not be disability related

There is a problem when doctors try to use their knowledge and skills to treat disability rather than illness. Disability in persons with special needs is a long-term social state and is neither treatable nor curable. Hence medical intervention is seen as inappropriate, and, at worst, an oppression of persons with special needs. The society has compelled the doctors into believing that they are “experts “and as such it becomes difficult for them to admit that they cannot handle social problems. Consequently they feel threatened and fall back on their medical skills and training, inappropriate as they are, and impose them on disabled people. They, then appear bewildered when disabled people criticise or reject this imposed treatment.

The doctors impose their decision on persons with special needs thus infringing on their fundamental human rights on where they should live, whether they should work or not, what kind of school they should go to, what kinds of benefits and services they should receive and in the case of unborn disabled children, whether they should live or not.

Persons with special needs are increasingly demanding acceptance of the way they are by society, not as society thinks they should be. It is society that has to change not individuals. The best way to establish this change is through political empowerment of group of persons with disabilities and not through social policies and programmes delivered either by politicians

and policy makers or through individualised treatments and interventions provided by the medical and para-medical professions

3.3 The Social Model of Persons with Special Needs

Disability can be defined in terms of a social discrimination that limits the opportunities of persons of difference. From another perspective, disability may be regarded as a negative variation from the physical norm that necessarily puts at a disadvantage the life and quality of life of persons who are physically distinct.

The differences underlying both perspectives appear to be fundamental. Proponents of the social definition of disability insist on the importance of a physical difference which lies solely in discriminatory social reaction to or ignorance of the effects of that difference. It is believed that the reactions to these conditions, not the inherent limits they may impose, are their signal feature. Advocates of this position typically see themselves in opposition to those advancing a “medical model” which defines disability as the presence of a physical or cognitive difference that deviates negatively from a “mundane” norm (Terzi, 2004).

The social model of persons with special needs sees disability as a social construct than a medical reality. Disabled activists, such as Tom Shakespeare (2002), argued that although their impairments may cause them pain or discomfort, what really disables people as members of society is a socio-cultural system which does not recognise their right to genuine equality. Thus the social model of persons with special needs demands a political response, since the problem is created by an unaccommodating physical environment brought about by attitudes and other features of the social environment.

The social model of persons with special needs has been highly influential in the development of the politics and the theory of persons with physical disabilities.

Several organisations of persons with physical disabilities and academic institutions have based their actions and philosophy on the social mode in an attempt to address the needs of persons with special needs.

On the part of persons with special needs, they accuse the society of disabling them by unnecessarily isolating and excluding them from full participation in the society. Disability is seen as being imposed on their impairment by the society. They see themselves as being oppressed by the society. In this light impairment and disability can be redefined as the lack of part or all of a limb, or having a defective limb, organism or mechanism of the body while disability is the disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by a contemporary social organisation which takes little or no account of people who have physical impairments and thus excludes them from participation in the mainstream of social activities. Thus the social model has successfully dissociated disability from mental and physical incapacitation. Persons with physical challenges are seen as oppressed social group. Disability therefore is a social oppression and not a form of impairment.

According to Shakespeare and Watson (2001) the social model has become the litmus test of disability politics. This means that if a work draws on the social model then it is seen as progressive, if it does not it is seen as deficient. In general, writings and research in this paradigm focus on the disabling environment - the physical and social barriers which exclude persons with physical challenges and render them powerless and voiceless. They document the

barriers to include unequal participation and opportunity in education, unequal health service provision, unemployment, lack of housing, lack of transportation, lack of a well built environment and leisure/social activities.

All recent research work on persons with the physical disabilities presents evidence of the systematic discrimination against persons with special needs. It is clear that persons with special needs are treated unequally in almost all aspects of their lives.

This discrimination pervades both the public and private spheres and challenges those who suggest that disability should be seen as an individual experience arising as a consequence of unfortunate personal circumstances. Studies on persons with special needs have separated impairment and disability, the former physical and the latter social and cultural. The new shift from the medical/individual model to the social has proved to be a powerful tool in political campaigns for change.

The social model at the political level has turned discussions on issues of persons with special needs from personal inadequacies and professional competence to issues of rights and citizenship. At the political level, the government must make concerted effort to create an enabling environment for persons with special needs since the problem is no longer on the individual but on the society.

However, some authors (Watson, 2011) have criticized the social model as inadequate. They opined that it is an over-simplification of the complexity and diversity of persons with special needs' life experiences.

The social model is said to be an 'over-socialised' conceptualisation of the processes involved in producing disability. It is, by so doing presenting only a partial picture of the experiences of disability. This partial picture of basing all challenges of the disabled on environmental factors (ie lack of enabling environment) is as potentially damaging as the focus on 'bodies-to-be rehabilitated' found in the medical model.

The two models of persons with special needs are not adequate on their own. Both are partially valid. In fact disability is a complex phenomenon. It is both a problem at the level of a person's body, and primarily, social phenomena. Disability is always an interaction between features of the person and features of the overall context in which the person lives. However, some aspects of persons with physical challenges are almost entirely internal to the person, while another aspect is almost entirely external. In other words, both medical and social responses are appropriate to the problems associated with persons with special needs. Therefore, we cannot wholly reject either kind of intervention.

A better model of disability, in short, is one that synthesizes what is true in both the medical and social models. This more useful model of persons with special needs is known as the **biopsychosocial model** as suggested by International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF). This is an integration of medical and social models. This model presents a coherent view of different perspectives of health: biological, individual and social.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In the first unit of this module, we outlined the different definitions of persons with special needs. This led us to the second unit where we discussed the different models of disability

which formed the basis of the definitions of persons with special needs. The social model has been particularly useful in decision making on issues concerning persons with special needs. In the next unit we shall be discussing the predispositions of the society towards persons with special needs.

5.0 SUMMARY

We have discussed in detail, the two basic models of disabilities. We saw how the medical model viewed disability as a feature of the person, directly caused by disease, trauma or other health condition, which require medical care. The concept of eugenics as proposed by the medical model was extensively discussed. This unit also explained the social model to be a social discrimination that limits the opportunities of persons with special needs. A third model was proposed, which is an integration of both the medical and social models, known as the **biopsychosocial model**

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1. Discuss the medical model of disability
2. Discuss the social model of disability
3. Critique the social model.
4. Explain what you understand by the term **eugenics**

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Boorse, C. (2010). Disability and medical theory. In D.C. Ralston and J. Ho (eds), *Philosophical Reflections on Disability* (pp 55 – 90). Dordrecht: Springer.

Shakespeare, T. (2006) *Disability rights and wrongs*. London, UK: Routledge.

Terzi, L. (2004). The social model of disability: a philosophical critique. *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, 21 (2), 141

MODULE 2: PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND THE SOCIETY

Unit 1:	Societal Predispositions towards Persons with Special Needs.
Unit 2:	Models, Decisions, and Policies
Unit 3:	Stigma and Social Construction of Disability
Unit 4:	Law against Discrimination of Persons with Special Needs

UNIT 1: SOCIETAL PREDISPOSITIONS TOWARDS PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS.

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Societal Attitude towards Persons with Special Needs

3.2 Persons Coping with Special Needs

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we shall examine the attitude of society towards persons with special needs and the effects of discriminatory behaviour on their lives.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the attitude of the society towards persons with special needs
- discuss the effect of the society's negative attitude to persons with special needs

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Societal Attitude towards Persons with Special Needs

Societal attitudes towards disability and the resulting prejudicial behaviour affect the lives of persons with special needs. Attitudes towards people with special needs are learned, emotionally toned predispositions that represent values and beliefs. The attitudes and

behaviours of lay community members, health professionals, and the behaviour of clients are interconnected in ways which have impact on the way persons with special needs interact with their external environment. Studies of both health and welfare professionals and administrative personnel of medical and welfare professions indicated positive attitudes towards persons with special needs.

Apart from the health professionals, the lay man in Nigeria has a general notion that persons with special needs are cursed; demon possessed and carriers of ill luck. Persons with special needs in Nigeria, therefore, face serious prejudice and discrimination. This is gradually changing as knowledge is increasing.

The menace of unemployment is biting hard in Nigeria. Graduates are unemployed, how much more persons with special needs. This category of people in Nigeria, due to unemployment and some other reasons such as lack of special education and ignorance of available services for them are poor and they are mainly beggars. This is the more reason why the society looks down on them. Persons with special needs also lack free access to information. They may not know where job vacancies exist. Even when they know that vacancies exist and are qualified, they may not be easily employed, because of their disability.

Persons with special needs in an organization are affected by personal characteristics (e.g attributes of the disabled person, attributes of the observer), environmental factors (i.e legislation), and organizational characteristics (e.g, norms, values, policies, the nature of jobs, reward systems). These factors affect the way persons with special needs are treated in an organization

3.2 Persons Coping with Special Needs

Many persons with special needs are talented and they are excelling. They have learned to cope with their diverse disabilities and have carried on with life. Examples of such persons are **Stevie Wonder, Albert Einstein, Helen Keller** etc

Stevie Wonder who was born blind on May 13, 1950, in Saginaw, Michigan, is today, a singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist. Steve made his first recording at the age of 12 and recorded his first hit single in 1963. Over the years, Steve recorded several hit songs, including "Living in the City," "Boogie on a Reggae Woman" and "Isn't She Lovely", "I Just Called to Say I Love You" and "Ebony and Ivory." He was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1989.

Steve, through his music addressed social issues and he spearheaded a movement to create a national holiday in honour of Dr Martin Luther King Jr. He is married with seven children and has numerous awards amongst which is the Second Library of Congress Gershwin Prize for Popular Song.

Steve influenced an international treaty to provide for the blind and visually impaired worldwide by promising a concert, which he fulfilled in 2013

Another example is Albert Einstein. He was born in Ulm, Württemberg, Germany in 1879. He developed the special and general theories of relativity. In 1921, he won the Nobel Prize for

physics for his explanation of the photoelectric effect. Einstein is generally considered the most influential physicist of the 20th century. He died on April 18, 1955, in Princeton, New Jersey. Albert Einstein had a speech defect, where he'd to pause to consider what to say next. At some point in his life, he felt alienated and struggled with his education. He in fact dropped out of school in 1894 but soon recovered and re-enrolled into a special school. He graduated in 1894 from high school. He was married and had children.

Einstein was invited to lecture at international meetings and he rose rapidly in the academic world. He was offered a series of positions at increasingly prestigious institutions, including the University of Zürich, the University of Prague, the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, and finally the University of Berlin, where he served as director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Physics from 1913 to 1933.

Helen Adams Keller was born on June 27, 1880 in Tuscumbia, Alabama. In 1882, she fell ill and was struck blind, deaf and mute. In 1886, Keller's mother came across a travelogue by Charles Dickens, *American Notes*. She read of the successful education of another deaf and blind child, Laura Bridgman. This motivated Helen's mother to seek help for her daughter. Helen was sent to Perkins Institute for the Blind in Boston, Massachusetts. Beginning in 1887, Keller's teacher, Anne Sullivan, helped her make tremendous progress with her ability to communicate and in 1890 she started a speech class at the Horace Mann School for the Deaf in Boston. From 1894 to 1896 she attended the Wright-Humason School for the Deaf in New York City.

In 1896, she attended the Cambridge School for Young Ladies, a preparatory school for women where she met a famous writer, Mark Twain, who was very impressed with her. They became friends. Twain introduced her to his friend Henry H. Rogers, a Standard Oil executive. Rogers was so impressed with Keller's talent, drive and determination that he agreed to pay for her to attend Radcliff College. There, she was accompanied by Ann Sullivan her instructor from Perkins Institute for the Blind in Boston, Massachusetts. Sullivan sat by her side to interpret lectures and texts.

With the help of Sullivan and Sullivan's future husband, John Macy, Keller wrote her first book, *The Story of My Life*. This book was used as the basis for 1957 television drama *The Miracle Worker*. In 1959, the story was developed into a Broadway play of the same title, starring Patty Duke as Keller and Anne Bancroft as Sullivan. The two actresses also performed those roles in the 1962 award-winning film version of the play. It covered her transformation from childhood to 21-year-old college student. Keller graduated from Radcliffe in 1904, at the age of 24 and she received many honours in recognition of her accomplishments during her life time.

She became a well-known celebrity and lecturer by sharing her experiences with audiences, and working on behalf of others living with disabilities. Throughout the first half of the 20th century, Keller tackled social and political issues, including women's suffrage, pacifism and birth control. She testified before Congress, strongly advocating for the improvement of the welfare of blind people. In 1915, along with renowned city planner George Kessler, she co-founded Helen Keller International to combat the causes and consequences of blindness and malnutrition. In 1920, she helped found the American Civil Liberties Union and was appointed counsellor of International Relations for the American Foundation of Overseas Blind. Keller died in 1968 as an accomplished woman at the age of 88 years.

4.0 CONCLUSION

This unit has helped us to understand that there is a general negative attitude towards persons with special needs in Nigeria. This attitude is coloured by our values and beliefs. The effect of this negative attitude is devastating on them. However, in the western world, there are histories of individuals who have surmounted their challenges and are living close to normal lives. This trend is gradually creeping into Nigeria. In our next unit we shall be looking at the opinions of persons with special needs on discriminatory attitude towards them.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have discussed the attitude towards people with special needs. We have seen that the attitudes are learnt and they represent the values and beliefs of the society. We have seen that while the health professionals have a positive attitude towards them, the non-health professionals have a relatively negative attitude towards persons with special needs. This unit also highlighted the life histories of some individuals with special needs that have overcome and are living close to normal lives like Stevie Wonder, Helen Keller and Albert Einstein

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1. Discuss the societal attitude towards persons with special needs?
2. Explain how the negative attitude of the society has affected the quality of life persons with special needs are living?
3. Some people with special needs are living close to normal lives. Discuss

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Babrett, I. (2001) Health care professionals and their attitudes towards decisions Affecting disabled people. In G.L. Albrecht, K. Sedman and M. Bury (eds), Handbook of Disability studies (*pp* 450 – 467), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications

Onyekwere, J. (2009). Protest of disabled persons.
Retrieved from:<http://www.newswatchngr.com/editionall/allaccess/Special/10615141958.htm>

Shakespeare, T. (2006) Disability rights and wrongs. London, UK: Routledge.

Helen Keller (1880-1968) Biography.
<http://www.biography.com/people/helen-keller-9361967>

Stevie Wonder (1950-) Biography
<http://www.biography.com/people/stevie-wonder-9536078>

UNIT 2: MODELS, DECISIONS, AND POLICIES

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Models, Decisions, and Policies
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Self- Assessment Exercise(s)
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit you shall be introduced to the reasons why persons with special needs should be involved in policy making and research that concerns them. We shall also see the common characteristics and differences in the character of persons with special needs.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain why it is important to involve persons with special needs in policy making and research that concerns them.
- Explain why the experiences of some persons with special needs may be different from others.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Models, Decisions, and Policies

The disability rights movement has long complained that the perspectives of people with disabilities are too often ignored or discounted. Persons with special needs must be in policy making and research concerning them. The truth of the matter is that they have both a unique perspective to bring to those activities and a right to take part in them. Persons living with disability have a lot in common which can be brought to bear in research and in policy making. What persons with special needs share in common can be viewed from two aspects of impairments recognized by most disability theorists (Crisp, 2002). : These are structural or

functional impairment. These two aspects of impairment roughly correspond with two distinct types of disability experience:

1. The experience of living with a structural or functional impairment at different physical, sensory, cognitive, or affective levels than does the majority of the population.
2. The experience of facing stigma and discrimination based on one's structural or functional impairment

There may be more commonalities in one kind of experience than the other and greater relevance to specific research or policy issues.

The types of questions that elicit the experiences of persons with special needs are framed as follows: “What is it like to” have moderate or profound deafness? Use a wheelchair to move? Be legally or totally blind? Be unable to hold or manipulate objects with one's hands? Have a typical speech? Have a learning disability or a mood disorder? Such questions are sometimes requests for factual information about how one manages tasks with one's disability. Other questions are “how do you do x if you are in a wheelchair?” In other cases, they may be requested to give a self-report about their feelings/ experiences being in a particular state—“what does it feel like to get around in a wheelchair?”

Many individuals with special needs may get accustomed to their impairments and as such may have little to report about “what it feels like” to have them until it is called to their attention. The experience of loss and frustration becomes less salient with time, peer and professional support, as they get more immersed in going about day-to-day life.

Even when persons with special needs report about what “it is like” to have their impairments, those reports may vary considerably. The most obvious reason is that there is tremendous variation in the sensory, physical and functional states of which “impaired” or “disabled” people are capable. A person who can see but not hear has very different sensory experiences from a person who can hear but not see who in turn has very different experiences from a person who can see and hear but cannot move his legs.

Moreover, even two people with the same impairment label might give different reports of how they do things or how they feel as they go about life with their impairment. This could be due partly to differences in the character or extent of their impairment. Factors that cause differences in experience are: the family and neighbourhood in which one grows up or now lives; one's disposition or personality; the financial resources at one's disposal; or one's education, religion, sex, or race.

The experiences of persons with special needs living with diverse impairments are most times ignored, or given insufficient weight, in the design of the physical and social environment. In constructing buildings, transit systems, and work schedules, they often fail to listen carefully to what people with various impairments say about their experiences of daily living.

4.0 CONCLUSION

We have seen in this unit that persons with special needs have a lot in common. However, there are still some differences in their experiences due to some factors such as family background, neighbourhood in which they grew up or now live, their financial status etc. In the next unit we shall be examining the type of stigma and social construction of disability.

5.0 SUMMARY

We have discussed the involvement of the persons with special needs in policy making and research that concern them. We have also discussed the issues/features that they share in common. The unit also explained the differences in their experiences and factors that may cause this. Finally, we saw why it is imperative not to ignore the experiences of persons with special needs in the society.

6.0 SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE(S)

- 1 Why is it important to involve persons with special needs in policy making and research that concerns them?
- 2 What are the factors that can cause experiences of some persons with special needs to be different from others?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Crisp, R. (2002).A counselling framework for understanding individual experiences of socially constructed disability. *Disability Studies Quarterly*.22, 20-32
- Okoli,C.I (2010).The plight of disabled Nigerians and the need for mass enlightenment. *Mobility Aid and Appliances Research and Development Centre (MAARDEC)*.

UNIT 3: STIGMA AND SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF DISABILITY

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Stigmatisation of the Persons with Special Needs

3.2 Epistemic and Moral Authority

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we shall discuss the stigmatisation, discrimination, and the imputation of inferiority complex on the persons with special needs by the society. We shall also consider the case of women who are disabled, who are disproportionately affected by society's obsession with gender disparity.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to explain:

- The nature of rejection, isolation, and maltreatment faced by persons with special needs from other members of the society
- The state of women with disability in the society

3.1 Stigmatisation of Persons with Special Needs

Okoye (2010) submitted that in situations where persons with special needs are not able to cope, it results in stereotyping, derogatory labelling and depersonalization. This opinion was supported by Adesokan (2003) when he noted that most individuals with special needs suffer rejection, isolation, and maltreatment from other members of the society. He opined that these individuals are shown negative attitudes and in the Traditional Yoruba society terms such as "Abirun" meaning handicap, "Didinrin" meaning imbecile, "Abami" meaning strange person, and "Alawoku" meaning mentally imbalanced are used to refer to them. They are seen as objects of ridicule, shame and pity.

There are overt stigmatization and discrimination against persons with special needs by the public such as: being treated as a social outcast, losing out on jobs, friends, or partners, because other people do not want to interact with a person with a disability, or enduring grossly inadequate accommodation because reasonable accommodation is thought too costly or designed in complex way.

There are also less overt ways that society makes living with a disability difficult. Simply being different from the majority of the population can make people with special needs feel isolated or alienated. Within the social context, the common social experiences of people with special needs are Stigma, discrimination, and imputations of difference and inferiority complex. The

society thinks that they always need help, even when what they need is to be accepted and loved. A simple “hello” will make them feel good rather than “do you need any help?” and having virtually every aspect of one's interests, tastes, and personality attributed to one's disability are also parts of the disability experience. Disability becomes a “master status,” preventing people from playing any adult social role irrespective of their sex, race, age, occupation, or family). People with special needs are perceived to be globally helpless based on their need for assistance with some facets of daily life. Whereas visibly disabled people must deal with being instantly classified as “different” and inferior, people with invisible disabilities are often placed in the stressful and exhausting position of having to convince others that they are “really” disabled and not asking for special treatment. The alternative is to keep quiet and forgo needed assistance, which carries other costs, such as the stress of keeping a secret or trying to decide if a particular disclosure is safe. In addition, disabled people who are also members of other stigmatized groups may experience a distinct kind of stigmatization that is “more than the sum of its parts.” For example, women with some form of disability are disproportionately affected by society's obsession with gender disparity. These women must confront sexism and prejudice against disabled people. They are thought of as those who are incapable of performing the typical female role of nurturing.

In as much as one would argue that people with disabilities have distinct and common experiences, it is still believed that the experience of being female differs in important ways from being male, regardless of cultural position, discrimination, or political and economic power. In general different impairments shape experience in very different ways. Clearly, “the experience of disability” is complex, and usefully compared to the experience of other stigmatized minorities.

3.2 Epistemic and Moral Authority

Stigmatization confers two sorts of authority on people with special needs. The first is epistemic. The concept of epistemic is that information on persons with special needs should be generated from them based on their personal experience. It should not be based on the opinions of people that are not physically challenged. For example, discussions of well-being that do not take into account the perspective of persons with special needs may assume that their level of happiness or satisfaction is much lower than it is. They may also attribute the reason for their low level of happiness to difficulties due to impairments rather than to the attitudes of the public and other social barriers. The question is, what about those who are mentally unstable, should we rely on their opinions of their status? There are persons with special needs who are members of these stigmatized minorities. Their opinions must be heard for their experiences may be different from the general conception of the physically challenged. There is a tendency for the public to dismiss their self-appraisals as reflecting ignorance, self-deception, defensive exaggeration, or courageous optimism.

Epistemic authority thus provides a good reason for encouraging people with disabilities to speak about their experiences and for nondisabled people to listen when they do. But there is another reason as well: people who suffer stigmatization, disrespect, and discrimination have a moral claim to be heard that is independent of the accuracy of their testimony. Even if someone lacking those experiences could convey them accurately and vividly, she would not be an adequate substitute for those who had the experiences. The experience of stigmatization, like the experience of other forms of oppression, calls for recognition, and thereby may impose a duty on those fortunate enough to have avoided such experiences to listen closely to those

who have had them. To settle for second-hand accounts of those experiences or to ignore them altogether seems disrespectful to the victims. There is a strong conviction that the oppressed have a right to a hearing. It also helps explain the frustration faced by victims of crime and torture who are denied an opportunity to tell their stories, even when their oppressors receive punishment without their testimony.

In some cases however, victims may not want to be spokespeople or witnesses, or not for very long; they may want to move on. It is important to recognize both the moral authority of victims to testify and their prerogative to decline that role. In fact the ideal situation is for persons with special needs in both the marginalized and the dominant group to share their experiences. Otherwise, the experiences of the dominant group will be left unarticulated, unexamined, and unexplored.

4.0 CONCLUSION

There is an overt stigmatisation and discrimination against persons with special needs by the society. The government must put up a good fight against this through enacting and enforcing laws against discrimination of persons with special needs. The next unit will explain the importance of a discrimination law.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit has discussed the stereotyping, derogatory labelling and depersonalization faced by persons with special needs in the society. This has made living with any form of disability difficult in Nigeria and some other parts of the world. This unit also highlighted the case of women with disabilities, who faced worse situation because of gender discrimination coupled with their disability.

6.0 SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE(S)

1. Discuss the concept of stigmatisation and discrimination of persons with special needs.
2. Discuss the state of women with special needs in the society

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Onyekwere, J. (2009). Protest of disabled persons.

Retrieved from:<http://www.newswatchngr.com/editional/allaccess/Special/10615141958.htm>

Lawal – Solarin, E.O. (2010). Banks and the Physically Challenged

Retrieved from:<http://www.tribune.com.ng/Index.php/component/Content/article/11550>

Okoli, C.I (2010).The plight of disabled Nigerians and the need for mass enlightenment. Mobility Aid and Appliances Research and Development Centre (MAARDEC).

UNIT 4: LAW AGAINST DISCRIMINATION OF PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Discrimination Law and Persons with Special Needs

3.2 Nigeria and Persons with Special Needs Discrimination Law

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall discuss the steps to take to stop the stigmatisation and discrimination of the persons with special needs. This brings us to the topic; ‘Persons with Special Needs Discrimination Law’. Nigeria should be encouraged to have a powerful discrimination law to protect citizens with special needs from stigma and rejection.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Discuss the discrimination law protecting persons with special needs
- Discuss the application of the discrimination law in different sectors of the society.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Discrimination Law and Persons with Special Needs

The purpose of a discrimination law is to prevent unequal treatment which is rooted in stereotypes and stigma. With respect to persons with special needs, non admittance of disability as a human difference has been analyzed as a major source of discrimination against these individuals. In the employment sector, persons with special needs are seen as persons unable to work or unable to compete in the open labour market. It opined that workers who have special needs disturb the normal process of work in any enterprise and constitute a health and safety hazard to other employees. They are stigmatized as unproductive and economically undesirable. The fact that most work sites and work environments are inaccessible to many employees with special needs is the result of neglect of persons in this category.

The law against discrimination of persons with special needs sends a powerful message to the general public. It is based on the assumption that discrimination is wrong and a major problem for persons with special needs. These persons should not be seen as a problem but as right holders. The law against discrimination of persons with special needs endorses the social

model of such persons. This is because it locates the problem of disability outside the individual person. Prejudice and stigma against persons with special needs assume that the abnormality or impairment in a person causes the society to discriminate against such a person. For example, a person confined to a wheel chair may not be employed as a waiter in a restaurant. Again, the neglect of differences due to impairment also results in discrimination. Neglecting that paralysed people move on wheels instead of on legs, or neglecting that blind persons read Braille instead of black and white print leads to inaccessibility and exclusion. A person with only one arm may be denied the job of a marketer even though she can perform all the essential functions of the job without any difficulty.

3.2 Nigeria and Persons with Special Needs Discrimination Law

The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that there are approximately 19million people with disability in Nigeria. Furthermore, Yeo, (2005); Barron and Amerena et.al (2007) affirm that disabled people constitute one of the poorest, socially excluded and marginalised groups within the Nigerian society. On 30th March, 2007 the Government of Nigeria signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, yet, no disability discrimination legislation has been enacted within Nigeria despite the fact that two bills have been introduced into the National Assembly. Also, the common view, held by policy makers and the public at large, is that persons with special needs and disability issues are Charity and Welfare matters and not Human Rights (DFID, 2008). Findings by Okoli (2005) also corroborated this and in his findings he revealed that disabled people in Nigeria are living in an environment that is hostile to their yearnings and aspirations.

Students with special needs encounter barriers in their quest for education. Viney (2006), rightly noted that they encounter physical access limitations such as retrieving books from the library shelves. Okoli (2010), observed with horrors our architectural buildings which have discouraged persons with special needs from having education. Bradley (2006) opined that students with special needs start out with the same qualifications and aspiration as normal students, but because they encounter barriers, they perform poorer. Crisp (2002) affirms that, disability can lead to frustration in some cases, and can adversely degenerate to a level that an individual may not be able to actualize his aspirations. Moreover, the inability to cope portrays them as helpless, mindless, suffering and deserving sympathy and alms. However, researchers concluded that factors such as age, gender, type of disability etc determine the coping strategy adopted by individuals with special needs (Babar et al., 2004, Elzubeir et al., 2010).

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, without persons with special needs discrimination law in Nigeria, individuals with any form of disability will continue to suffer undue hardship. The Nigeria government must enforce this law for it to make sense.

5.0 SUMMARY

We have discussed the concept of persons with special needs discriminating law. We have seen the purpose of this law, which is to prevent unequal treatment rooted in stereotypes and stigma

against individuals with special needs. Stigmatisation causes workers to be unproductive and economically undesirable.

6.0 SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE(S)

- Explain the concept of discrimination law against persons with special needs?
- What is the relationship between persons with special needs discrimination law and the social model of disability?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Burgdorf(Jr),R., &Bell,C.G (1984).Eliminating discrimination against physically and mentally handicapped persons: a statutory blueprint
Mental and Physical Disability Law Reporter, 8(1),64-71,75

MODULE 3: LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES TO OLDER PEOPLE

Unit 1:	Characteristics of Old People
Unit 2:	Information Needs and Information Seeking Behaviour of Old People
Unit 3:	Bibliotherapy
Unit 4:	The Role of Libraries

UNIT 1: CHARACTERISTICS OF OLD PEOPLE

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction
2.0 Objectives
3.0 Main Content
3.1 General Overview of the Elderly people
3.2 Elderly People and Retirement
4.0 Conclusion
5.0 Summary
6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)
7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we shall discuss how library and information services are delivered to the old who are disabled due to old age and its associated impairments.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you shall be able to:

- Discuss the characteristics of old people
- Discuss old people and retirement

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 An Overview of Old People.

Older people are somehow isolated from the general society. They are not considered when policies are made. Therefore some library policies actually inhibit these people from using library facilities. During the construction of library buildings and information centres, older people and other persons with one type of impairment or the other must be put into

consideration. Barriers to their use of leisure facilities must be considered and adjustments made for them where necessary. Library services should include home services to the older people; women in purdah and other persons with special needs. The wide range of resources of the library and information centres is left untapped by these categories of individuals.

It is imperative for library professionals to identify client groups and their related services. It is frequently said that “We don’t make any distinctions, we serve everyone” This mentality sprang from two sources. The first is the old mentality which defines the library’s community in terms of everyone living or working within the community. The second is a view of library services which is still primarily custodial.

Older people by virtue of their exclusion from the work force, experience relative poverty and added to this is physical deterioration as they grow older which may ultimately cause them to be virtually housebound. In order to reduce cost for the older people charging policies on overdue books must be reviewed. Speed post delivery services to the housebound must be initiated. Taped books, CDs and videotext information services should be employed. As library professionals are trying to reach out to these older people through the mentioned strategies caution should be employed as this may lead to them being isolated from the public completely. Older people must be considered a priority and resources must be consciously allocated to them. Libraries in providing resources for the older people must put into cognisance the variety of needs amongst them. In general the older people require special consideration.

The libraries in Nigeria hardly engage the services of other social agencies in addressing the needs of elders and other persons with special needs. There is a need for more professional-oriented service provision for both active and inactive old people. Social agencies can help train librarians in handling older people and other persons with special needs. Library and Information Services to Persons with Special Needs is just a new concept in library schools in Nigeria and as such is still at its teething stage.

Maslow’s theory of self actualization provides librarians with the best model for conceptualizing library and information services for elders and other persons with special needs. In other words basic needs have to be satisfied before self esteem can emerge and self actualization can take place. Librarians must educate themselves and others of the socio-economic position of the majority of old people in the society and provide services which reflect an awareness of the needs of older people in contemporary Nigeria.

3.2 The Old People and Retirement

Retirement is viewed and recognised as a reward for a lifetime of hard work. It is presented as a social status to be looked forward to, a time for leisure, hobbies and all those things there has never been time for. However, reference to the economic plight of most retired people indicates a fundamental contradiction because most retirees cannot afford to pursue leisure activities, thus making the idea of retirement a reward, something of a monumental myth.

In the actual sense there are implications of retirement. First, there is a strong correlation between poverty and retirement. In fact two-thirds of older people live in, or on the margins of, poverty. Secondly retirement brings a downward shift in status so that older people must take lower status unskilled work, which means low earnings for older workers. Thirdly, the duration of retirement is a key factor in the creation of deprivation. Most workers are for the most part ignorant of the realities of retirement until it is too late.

There is an obvious role for libraries which are in a position to fill the gap for those people with no prospect of preparing for retirement. Many of the medical problems which assail retired persons are the result of many years of physical neglect. What is needed is a positive approach to personal health for all ages. This means an educational programme to inform people how to maintain good health.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The library professionals must understand the peculiarities of the older/retired persons. They must obtain appropriate training to be able to know how best to deliver information services to the older people.

5.0 SUMMARY

We have looked at the general overview of the elderly with their peculiarities and character traits. We saw that they could be poor because of retirement; they could be disabled due to old age; they could be living in rural areas where they have no access to basic amenities. It was therefore emphasised that the librarians must receive training to cope with their needs.

6.0 SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE(S)

1. What are the characteristics of the old people?
2. Explain the effect of retirement on old people

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Duner, A. and Nordstrom, M (2005) Intensions and Strategies among People: Coping in Everyday Life. Journal of Ageing Studies, Vol.19, Pp 437-451
- Zhu, X.J (2012) Aging Society and the Construction of Livable Communities. Social Works, Vol.3, pp1672-4828

UNIT 2: INFORMATION NEEDS AND INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF OLD PEOPLE

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Information Needs of Old People
 - 3.2 Rural Areas
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we shall be discussing how the elderly people seek information and how to meet their information needs.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Discuss the information needs and information seeking behaviour of old people.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Information Needs of Older People

Older people prefer their information verbally rather than written and almost as many get their information from informal sources as from formal sources. They need information on their welfare benefits. The present passive “come and get it” approach of the system discriminates against those who cannot or don’t know where to come and get it. Even though millions of leaflets are produced and disseminated, only a small proportion of old people see them and even fewer bother to read them. There should be more innovative methods of disseminating information to older people. A personal approach should be adopted in disseminating information to older people. Such personal approaches could be: taking information into the persons own home as well as utilising public libraries.

Nigeria in general is still struggling to obtain a good reading culture. It is therefore expected to have a low reading culture amongst the older people. Since social work in Nigeria is gradually gathering momentum, the use of new technologies can be adopted in helping the social worker or Non Government Organisations (NGOs) to keep a comprehensive database of older people with their complete profile. With this information, libraries, information centres and social workers can serve older people better.

The extended family system in Nigeria has kept the older people relevant and loved. Most times, their children and other extended family members take care of them. There is a saying in Africa, that “the words of elders are words of wisdom”. In fact, youth in some cultural setting in Nigeria move very close to the older people in order to be impacted with wisdom. These old people in some communities establish the council of elders that decide the affairs of the

community. These are old people that are active and they would need information for diverse purposes.

Most libraries and information centres in Nigeria have failed to recognise problems peculiar to ethnic old people because of their generalist approach to the situation. Services are produced for the minority and majority alike. Indeed any special provision may be considered as discrimination. Some of these old people in the community cannot speak English. Their lack of command of the use of English can get them isolated. This is because English language is a major factor in influencing their opportunities for social integration. Public libraries in Nigeria must have a section of the library dedicated to ethnic minorities' materials and special collection of appropriate books. All fines on overdue books should be waived for old people. The atmosphere of trust must be created in the library and information centres and counselling sessions should be provided by library staff. Libraries can organise activities to include English language classes; craft sessions; drama and excursions to assist this category of people.

Librarians in public libraries can produce a range of pamphlets which explain the various cultures, traditions, religious beliefs and practices of various ethnic groups. Ethnic minority unit can provide a range of publicity leaflets in the different languages to promote library services and special activities.

For elders with disabilities, libraries must be sensitive to the physical accessibility of the library and its contents, including awareness of the problems caused by steps, weak lighting, small print, large or heavy books and high and low shelving. Attention should also be drawn to the increasing incidence of deafness and blindness which may come with age and can be severely debilitating.

3.2 Rural Areas

The information need of older population in the rural areas is scarcely investigated and is poorly covered in the literature of information science (Zhu, 2012). This should not obscure the importance of research on information needs of old people in rural districts, especially in terms of its contribution towards a more effective tailoring of the content of information services and systems to meet the old people's requirements.

Care of the older people is one of the most important aspects of primary health care. In order to increase the safety needs and love needs of the elderly, proper concern in the economic, political and social efforts are necessary. Religious teachings are often used to reinforce and support the cultural imperatives of caring for the elderly. Knowledge promotion and scientific mastery of elderly people in the rural community affect the progression or retardation of society (Duner and Nordstrom, 2005)

Current trends at all levels suggest an increasing demand and emphasis on keeping a watchful eye on old people. This is because of the increasing number of old people in our population and the high proportion of migration of young people from rural to urban areas to seek employment due to lack of public infrastructural service and low level of income in a vast majority of rural areas.

Furthermore the situation of those older people in the rural areas is complex because of geographical remoteness coupled with the fact that libraries and information centres are far away in the cities. Therefore, there is the problem of access and provision. Some challenges

faced by people in rural areas are: housing; transport, employment, and cost of living. Added to all these challenges is poverty and deprivation which have left the old people in rural areas in a worse situation than her urban counterpart. Unemployment in rural areas affects the entire community.

Considering all these challenges faced by older people in rural areas, information services in rural areas must include the following five elements within their provision: diagnosis, information giving, counselling giving, referral and advocacy. Some librarians may have to reconsider their roles as information providers.

4.0 CONCLUSION

We have seen the peculiarities of the old people, particularly those in the rural areas. Equal attention should be given to all. Information services must get to the grass root.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit we treated the information seeking behaviour and needs of the old people. We particularly focused on the old people in the rural areas because most of the old people from the city eventually relocate to their villages after retirement.

6.0 SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE(S)

1. Discuss the information needs of the elderly
2. How different are the information needs of the elderly in the city from those in the rural areas?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Duner, A. And Nordstrom, M (2005) Intentions and Strategies among People: Coping in Everyday Life. *Journal of Ageing Studies*, Vol.19, Pp 437-451
- Zhu, X.J (2012) Aging Society and the Construction of Livable Communities. *Social Works*, Vol.3, pp1672-4828

UNIT 3: BIBLIOTHERAPY

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 General Overview
 - 3.2 The Role of the Bibliotherapist/Librarian
 - 3.3 Occupational Therapist and Bibliotherapy
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)
- 8.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall define bibliotherapy. We shall also explain the different roles of the librarian as a therapist and the role of the occupational therapist

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Give the definition and the concept of bibliotherapy
2. Describe the role of the librarian as a bibliotherapist
3. Describe the role of the occupational therapist

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 General overview

Bibliotherapy is a form of therapy directly related both to the power of reading and the high incidence of enjoyment people achieve through reading. It is a therapy used by many people as a form of relaxation or escapism. Bibliotherapy gives insight into normal development or changes in emotionally disturbed behavior. The librarian's role in bibliotherapy is to provide materials suitable to bringing healing socially, psychologically and even physically to different individuals. Ailments such as hypertension and depression can be controlled through bibliotherapy. Social vices such as alcoholism, prostitution etc can also be addressed through bibliotherapy.

The librarian has to closely liaise with the clinical team, since he/she is not a trained therapist. However, the librarians' skill in the field of literature enables them to pull out literature people can handle with ease and satisfaction. In many cases this will consist of a range of materials in

different formats complementing each other on a chosen theme. In the public library, groups may be set up for instance with older people and led by the librarian on the theme of problems associated with aging. This can be replicated with other groups of persons with special needs according to their challenges.

Offshoots from the bibliotherapy include reminiscence therapy, book talks, local history and oral history, all of which can take place in the library. The aim of these activities is to aid older people to acknowledge the benefits of looking back on their past achievements and experience. It helps the elderly to realize the contributions they have made in their lives and share same with others. Many libraries can use older people as a resource for their local history archives. This experience also allows the elders to reformulate a sense of identity, in some cases a group identity, as the group provides psychological support, restores their moral and self-esteem. It also reduces feelings of isolation and fosters confidence. It may also help to alleviate depression, promote problem-solving abilities and enrich life experience.

3.2 THE ROLE OF THE BIBLIOTHEREAPIST/LIBRARIAN

The librarian can start a bibliotherapy programme for the elderly and other persons with special needs struggling in any aspect of their lives. The librarian uses a list of books hand-selected to help the elderly and others with special needs through tough times. The librarian, who is the bibliotherapist, consults with persons with special needs and the elderly who discuss their lives, reading history, and problems. These bibliotherapists cum librarians must be ardent lifelong readers themselves to be able to handle this assignment.

Bibliotherapy enables individuals being treated to view their problems through the lens of other people's lives. The people in the books are mostly fictional, though some non-fiction books are also prescribed. Basically, these books are dealing with issues similar to the problems of the elderly and other persons with special needs.

Bibliotherapy, in dealing with inflexible thinking, anxiety and depression presents literature that will reorient and rewire the thought-patterns that reinforce these ailments in the elderly and other persons with special needs. This is an effective and non-medical approach to inflexible thinking, depression, anxiety etc.

3.3 Occupational Therapist and Bibliotherapy

Librarians and others have delightfully shared their success experiences in serving hospitalized patients and persons with special needs with books. Librarians serving persons with special needs often receive help from other people such as individual physicians; occupational therapist, chaplains, nurses and psychologist. These librarians are special and should be specially trained for this job. The librarian must be patient and compassionate. He must be hard working and ready to work with other specialists in order to maximally help his clients. These other specialists can help the librarian in pointing out the needs of the client.

Most hospitals in Nigeria have libraries. However, librarians that are bibliotherapists are not confined to libraries located in hospitals but are in all kinds of libraries since we have several persons with special needs who are professionals and not confined to any hospital.

Occupational therapy is a program of selected activity conducted and treated under medical direction in handling physical and psychological problems. The occupational therapist is professionally skilled by selection and education to administer the programme to meet prescribed objectives. The responsibility of the occupational therapist may include providing library services through acquiring reading materials, setting up and maintaining a simple book loan service, providing book cart service to patients who are bedridden or procuring specific books for individuals either by request from the patient or from his physician. However, with the increase of professional librarians the occupational therapist finds not only that he is relieved of providing a service that he is not satisfactorily equipped to handle but also that a professional person with similar interests and concerns can competently handle. This librarian/bibliotherapist becomes the occupational therapists close associate.

Much of the procedure in occupational therapy which is necessary for persons with special needs may be in itself uninteresting to them. The therapist may not be able to engage the patient's interest in the activity medium required, and thus the curative effect of treatment may be diluted. This is where the service of the librarian is of great consequence through his ability to stimulate and broaden the patient's interest in literature or study.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Under a relaxed atmosphere the librarians can present books that can address the various challenges faced by the elderly and other persons with special needs. This new concept is gaining grounds in the field of medicine and should be embraced by all stakeholders.

5.0 SUMMARY

We have discussed in this unit, the role of bibliotherapist cum librarian in the lives of old people and other persons with special needs. We have seen that this technique is very effective in handling socially related problems of persons with special needs. This unit also discussed how the occupational therapist with the combination of bibliotherapy has achieved results in the rehabilitation of persons with special needs.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is bibliotherapy?
2. How can bibliotherapy be used by librarians and occupational therapist to address the socially related problems of persons with special needs?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Duner, A. And Nordstrom, M (2005) Intentions and Strategies among People: Coping in Everyday Life. *Journal of Aging Studies*, Vol.19, Pp 437-451
- Zhu, X. J (2012) Aging Society and the Construction of Livable Communities. *Social Works*, Vol.3, pp1672-4828

UNIT 4: THE ROLE OF LIBRARIES IN PROVIDING LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES TO THE ELDERLY AND OTHER PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Guidelines for Library and Information Services to Older Adults
 - 3.2 Suggestions
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit we saw the role of the librarian/bibliotherapist in meeting the information needs of the elderly and other persons with special needs. In this unit, we shall be discussing the role of libraries in meeting these needs. Library and information services guidelines for the elderly and other persons with special needs will be highlighted.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Discuss the guidelines for library and information services to older adults
- 2 Explain how to ensure that the special needs and interests of older adults in your community are reflected in the library's collections, programs, and services.
3. Explain how to make the library's collections and physical facilities safe, comfortable and inviting for all older adults.
4. Discuss ways of ensuring that the library is a focal point for information services to older adults.
5. Discuss ways of targeting the older population in library programs and reaching out to older adults in the community who are unable to travel to the library.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Guidelines for Library and Information Services to Older Adults

1. Acquire current data about the older population and incorporate it into planning and budgeting.
 - a. Conduct surveys on a regular basis of the older population and the aging service providers in the community, including their numbers, demographic characteristics, and other information, such as their location and housing; educational, socioeconomic and

- ethnic background; religious organizations and other groups to which they belong; agencies that serve them; and the local media that target older adults in the community.
- b. Carry out surveys with focus groups and user studies among the community's older population to determine their needs and interests and to plan how services, collections and programs might be made more appropriate and relevant to this population.
 - c. Collect data on the specific and varied information needs of older adults due to language, culture, education, income, Internet skills and access, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, and age.
 - d. Harmonize data collected on their specific and varied information needs with the more general informational needs basic to older adults in their everyday lives' such subjects include: health, health care, social security, financial planning, housing, independent living, elder law, care giving (including grand parenting), lifelong learning (including adult literacy and computer skills), community service, civic engagement, and volunteering. The library's collections, programs, and information services should reflect the diverse interests and needs of older adults.
 - e. Ensure that any services that target older adults are an integral and ongoing part of the library's operations and budget. Additional funding may be required for collections, accessibility equipment/software, and the time expended by library staff in services to older adults and community.
 - f. If a special grant or external funding is sought to support a pilot or demonstration program, consider how the program will be integrated into the library's regular budget and services at the end of the grant.
 - g. Involve older adults in the library's planning process by establishing an advisory committee. This committee might include older adults who are regular library users; library volunteers, staff, board members, or members of the library's friends group; and leaders of organizations of older adults and other community organizations.
2. Ensure that the special needs and interests of older adults in your community are reflected in the library's collections, programs, and services.
 - a. Appoint a librarian to act as a coordinator of services to older adults, ensuring that there is at least one designated staff member monitoring and developing the library's collections and services with older adults in mind.
 - b. Consider how the library can be made more visible, more welcoming, and more relevant to older adult users.
 - c. Advertise the library's services and website in local newspapers, magazines, radio or television programs that target older adults in centres for senior citizens, nutrition programs, and residential houses.
 - d. Offer to speak to organizations for older adults about the library's services on a regular basis.
 - f. Collaborate with other libraries and state library agencies that may provide staff training and development and information resources for older adults.
 3. Make the library's collections and physical facilities safe, comfortable and inviting for all older adults.

- a. Evaluate your library's accessibility by older adults with physical, visual, aural, reading and other disabilities, according to the Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
 - b. Consider providing at least one wheelchair in the library for public use.
 - c. Accommodate users for whom prolonged standing is difficult by placing chairs or stools near stacks, information desks, check-out areas, computer terminals, and other areas. If possible, create a "Senior Space," using easy chairs gathered in an area adjacent to books and magazines of interest to older adults.
 - d. Consider placing materials frequently used by older adults on easily accessible shelves.
 - e. Place paperbacks, clearly labelled and well spaced, in areas of the library that are especially well lit, accommodating older adults who prefer paperbacks over heavier and more cumbersome hardback books.
 - f. Ensure that spacing between shelves accommodates users in wheelchairs.
 - g. Ensure that signage is clear, Brailled (where appropriate), and readily visible to all, including users in wheelchairs. Library brochures should be in at least 14-point font type.
 - h. Provide at least one computer station prominently labelled and installed with large type software for older adults with low-vision. If needs warrant and resources are available, acquire other assistive technology such as a stand-alone Reading Machine which speaks the book's text to a blind reader; speech synthesizer and related software; low-tech magnification and other devices.
 - i. Provide teletypewriter (TTY) access, closed-captioned videotapes, and assistive listening systems to older adults with hearing disabilities.
 - j. Acquire and make available books and periodicals in large print.
-
4. Make the library a focal point for information services to older adults.
 - a. Cooperate with local area agencies on aging, senior nutrition programs, senior volunteer programs, and others in the aging service provider network by advertising their service and making their publications and other information more readily accessible. The library can provide an invaluable service by organizing and consolidating information about government and community programs and services available to older adults.
 - b. Consider developing or expanding the library's Web site to provide links to the sites of organizations of older adults, government departments and agencies serving older adults, newspapers and other Web sites whose focus is older adults.
 - c. Ensure that the library's collection includes materials that are pertinent for caregivers of older adults, for their children or other family members, and for professional caregivers in the community.
 5. Target the older population in library programming.

- a. Incorporate adequate funding for programs, materials, and services for older adults in the library's operating budget, and actively seek supplementary funding through partnerships with other agencies, organizations, and foundations interested in serving older adults.
 - b. Plan programs each year that specifically target older adults and enhance their ability to remain independent and skilful library users. Publicizing such programs can heighten the library's visibility among the older population.
 - c. Select themes for programs that deal with specific interests of older adults identified through user surveys, focus groups, or circulation statistics reflecting borrowing patterns by older adults.
 - d. Plan programs for specific age groups or generations within the older population, being aware that interests and information needs vary greatly.
 - e. Include intergenerational programs and participate in intergenerational projects sponsored by others in the community. Consider partnerships with local schools, day-care facilities or community organizations.
 - f. Pursue other opportunities for cooperative programming with partners such as community and senior centres; area agencies on aging and other community agencies; and educational institutions offering continuing educational programs for older adults. Cooperative efforts might involve active participation in planning and delivering programs, assistance in advertising programs, or providing book displays and booklists in conjunction with the library's programs.
 - g. Consider providing computer and Internet courses specifically designed for older adults to accommodate a slower pace of instruction, provide sufficient time to develop "mousing skills," and allow for the possibility that some older adults may have visual, physical, or hearing disabilities. If possible, include individual tutoring provided by peers or others.
 - h. Explore opportunities to provide library services and programming to older adults outside the library, such as in senior or community centres, nursing homes, and senior housing units. Consider offering computer and Internet training in these locations.
 - i. Use library displays to combat ageism or the stereotypes in our society about older adults.
 - j. Provide opportunities for older adults to volunteer in the library.
 - k. Create opportunities for lifelong learning programs.
6. Reach out to older adults in the community who are unable to travel to the library.
 - a. Survey community needs and consider library budget planning to accommodate possible increases in demand for outreach services such as delivery of library materials by mail and mobile library services. Analyze community demographics, population forecasts, and housing trends to plan to meet this need effectively.
 - b. Advertise the library's services through local media, public health agencies, and other agencies that work with older adults.

- c. Eliminate waiting lists for library services through innovative approaches to delivery of materials, a redistribution of personnel, or establishment of a volunteer delivery system.
- 7. Train the library's staff to serve older adults with courtesy and respect.
 - a. Provide sensitivity training to staff at all levels to make them aware of difficulties older adults may have in using the library, and how to make the library a more welcoming and comfortable place for older adults.
 - b. Train staff to recognize and combat ageism and stereotypes about older adults.
 - c. Ensure that all staff is aware of any special services the library offers that may be of interest to older adults, such as home delivery service, a talking books collection, a service to retrieve materials from the stacks, reading aids, or waiving of fines or fees.
 - d. Promote the employment of older adults as professional and support staff members.

3.2 Suggestions

Libraries must change their mode of operation. They must cease to provide passive services. Information centre must undergo transformation in order to provide for immobile or unaware users.

For libraries to survive and remain relevant in this present age they must change their style of management. For libraries to bring about the desired change, emphasis must be on planning, monitoring, and evaluation. The social functions of libraries are archival; educational; cultural; recreational; informational and research. All these functions (except archival) must begin with an assessment of the needs and interest of the people in the community. Once these have been identified, the library must then select relevant materials and disseminate them. Libraries must become more assertive and integrated to a far greater degree in the life of the community. In other words libraries must use available technology and resources to customize their services to communities, neighbor-hoods, organizations, agencies and individuals. Librarians need to add a further function to their 'job description' that of 'stimulation', librarians must arouse the public awareness of the diversity and totality of library services.

Librarians can also be trained on the job to function as counselors. The old people need professional librarians that can listen to them and offer advice to them. For example librarians can counsel them on how to fight for their pension to be paid.

There are three dimensions to the library programmes for the elderly:

1. Knowledge production: - there is a need for you to survey the characteristics of your patrons. This will enable you to know their needs and corresponding services to meet those needs.
2. Knowledge dissemination: - this has to do with providing clients with life maintenance (practical) and life enrichment (cultural) information, providing the community with materials on the reality of ageing, assisting and supporting advocacy groups.
3. Knowledge utilization: - this refers to channeling appropriate information to other service providers, for example:- social services, planning and monitoring.

In the library, elders can be used as story tellers to develop local history collections; some may serve as teachers and advisers. The rewards are reciprocal. The old people are accepted as useful resource persons. This accords them status and self-esteem. On the other hand the library benefits from the knowledge and experience of elders as well as their extra labour. Elders can be encouraged to join library panel in order to advise on library service for elders.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Information needs of older people must be met and all barriers to their having access to information and leisure must be removed. The handling of these older people requires special skills. For libraries to survive and remain relevant in this present age they must change their style of management. For libraries to bring about the desired change, emphasis must be on planning, monitoring, and evaluation. In the next unit we shall be discussing library and information services to the visually challenged persons

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit was devoted to the different guidelines for providing services to the elderly. There are basic expectations and standards that must be met by all libraries.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Explain the characteristics of the old people and how library and information services can be delivered to them.
2. Explain bibliotherapy from the perspective of the old people
3. What are the information needs and information seeking behavior of old people?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), (2000)
Guidelines for libraries serving patients and the elderly and disabled in
Long-term care facilities. In IFLA Professional Reports, 61. The Hague:
IFLA Headquarters
- Zuo, M.Y., Liu, Q.Q. and Liu F. (2009) Study on the Model of the Elderly's
Information Needs: Design and Application. Management Review, **21**
Pp 71-77
- Jiang, L.H. and Huang, J.C. (2011) The Demand of the Aged and Livable
Community Construction. Journal of East China University of Science and
Technology (Social Science Edition), **6**, 87-93.
- Zhu, X.J. (2012) Aging Society and the Construction of Livable Communities.
Social work, **3**, 1672- 4828.
- Rodriguez, T., Fischer, K. and Kingston, J. (2005) Intelligent Services for the

Elderly over the TV. *Journal of Intelligent Information Systems*, **25**, 159-180.

Murray, J.L. (1989) Health Maintenance: Care of the Ageing Patient. *Primary Care*, **16**, 289-303.

Abdulraheem, I.S. (2005) An Opinion Survey of Caregivers Concerning Caring for the Elderly in Ilorin Metropolis, Nigeria. *Public Health*, **119**, 1138-1144.

Duner, A. and Nordstrom, M. (2005) Intentions and Strategies among Elderly People: Coping in Everyday Life. *Journal of Aging Studies*, **19**, 437-451.

Zhang, Z.C. and Cai, J.X. (2013) The Highlights, Difficulties and Countermeasures on the Implementation of the New Urbanization Strategy in Henan Province. *Economic Geography*, **33**, 53-58.

Jian, B.Y., Dong, H.K. and Jian, L.Q. (2011) Study of New Construction of rural Community Organizations under Point of View Combined Urban and Rural Village. *Journal of Gansu Lianhe University (Natural Sciences)*, **25**, 74-76.

Mao, X.O. (2005) Goal-Directed User Study and Design of IT Product for Elders. Dalian Maritime University, Dalian.

Yuan, X.-L., Jia, J.-Z. and Zhu D. (2009) Investigation and Study of Shanxi Province Peasants Information Demand. *Information Science*, **27**, 1194-1198.

Theodorakopoulos, N., Preciado, D.J.S. and Bennett, D. (2012) Transferring Technology from University to Rural Industry within a Developing, Economy Context: The Case for Nurturing Communities of Practice. *Technovation*, **32** 550-559.

Liu, M., Deng, Y.C., He, J. and Liu, Y. (2011) Present Situations of Information Demands of Hunan Rural Area and Its Countermeasure. *Library Journal*, **30**, 44-49.

MODULE 4: LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES TO OTHER PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- Unit 1: Introduction to Library and Information Services
- Unit 2: Library and Information Services to the Blind and Visually Impaired
- Unit 3: The Wheelchair Mobile User
- Unit 4: Access to Library/ Information Services to Persons with Special Needs
- Unit 5: Library/Information Resources for Persons with Special Needs

UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION TO LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 General Overview of Library and Information Services

3.2 Library and Information Services Guidelines

3.3 The History of Library and Information Services for Persons with Special Needs

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we shall discuss the requirements for providing library and information services to persons with special needs according to the American Library Association's Bill of Rights. The onus lies on the library to provide information services to support the educational, recreational, personal and economic endeavours of the members of their respective communities in line with the vision and mission of individual libraries.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the guidelines for providing library and information services
- Narrate a brief history of library and information services to persons with special needs in Library of Congress

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 General Overview of Library and Information Services

Libraries have an inherent obligation to provide information service to support the educational, recreational, personal and economic endeavours of members of their respective communities, as appropriate to the libraries' individual missions. Information services in libraries take a variety of forms including direct personal assistance, directories, signs, exchange of information from varieties of reference sources, reader's advisory service, and dissemination of information in anticipation of user needs or interests, and access to electronic information. All libraries must develop information services appropriate to its community and in keeping with the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights. These services should take into account the information-seeking behaviour, the information needs, and the service expectations of the members of that community. Provision of information in the manner most useful to its clients is the ultimate test of all a library does. In that spirit, these guidelines are directed to all who share responsibility for providing information services, including trustees,

administrators, educators, supervisors, department heads, and information staff in all types of libraries.

3.2 Library and information Services Guidelines

Library and Information Service guideline is a statement of service goals rather than a codification of practices. The reasons for casting these guidelines as goals are two: first so that this statement can enjoy a long life of usefulness to the profession and to those who are served by libraries, and second, to suggest goals to managers and providers of information services. Because these guidelines must serve the needs of all types of libraries, it is recognized that not every statement in the guidelines will apply to a particular library or type of library. Therefore, in applying the guidelines, library staff will need to emphasize those statements appropriate to their particular library, its mission and the community it serves, and they should strive to realize the goals expressed in those statements.

These guidelines address information services from the following perspectives:

1. Services
2. Resources
3. Access
4. Personnel
5. Evaluation
6. Ethics

Services

- The goal of information services is to provide the information sought by the user. Information service providers should anticipate the needs of users as well as meet them. It should encourage users' awareness of available and potential information resources to fulfil their information needs.
- The library should develop information, reference, and directional services in line with the goals of the institution or community it serves.
- The library should strive to provide users with complete, accurate answers to information queries regardless of the complexity of those queries.
- The library should make available user aids in appropriate formats to help users identify items in the collection relevant to their interests and needs. Access guides can list hours, services, floor plans, and other pertinent data about the individual building(s). Guides can also offer assistance in using particular resources or in performing research in a specific subject area.
- The library should provide instruction in the effective use of its resources. Such instruction, for example, can include the individual explanation of information resources or the creation of guides in appropriate formats, formal assistance through tours and presentations designed to provide guidance, and direction in the pursuit of information.
- The library should actively publicize the scope, nature, and availability of the information services it offers. It should employ those media most effective in reaching its entire clientele or selected segments of that clientele, as appropriate.
- The library should survey and assess the information needs of its community and create local information products to fulfil those needs not met by existing materials.

- The library should serve its community by collecting and creating information and referral files that reflect local, regional and state content.
- Based on its clients' known needs and interests, the library should provide information even if it has not been explicitly requested.
- When information is not immediately useful as presented in its original source, the library should add value to that information. This process of adding value can range from simply sorting and packaging the information to reviewing and analyzing it for library clients as appropriate.
- The library should participate in consortia and networks to obtain access to information sources and services it cannot provide on its own.
- When the library is not able to provide a user with needed information, it should refer either the user or the user's question to some other agency, an expert or other library that can provide the needed information. Before referring a user to an agency, expert or other library, information services personnel should confirm that the agency, expert or library to which the user is being referred can provide the information and will extend its services to that user. When a question is referred to another agency, the referring library should follow all local, state, regional, or national protocols in effect, including those governing selection of transmittal forms and communications media.
- The library should use or provide access to the information systems outside the library when these systems meet information needs more effectively and efficiently than internal resources can.
- The library should develop and make available to the public a statement that describes the information services it strives to offer all members of its community.
- The library should develop and make available to the public a statement of its reference service policy.

Resources

- The library should collect or provide access to information resources in line with its mission and reflecting the full spectrum of the population it serves.
- The library should develop an information resources collection and development policy in line with the goals of its institution or community. These information resources should satisfy through content, currency, format, organization, and quantity a diversity of user needs.
- As necessary, information services personnel should reach beyond in-house collections and in-house expertise by drawing on the resources of other organizations that collect and provide information, by consulting individual experts, and by tapping external information sources regardless of their medium.
- The library should provide access to the most current reference sources available in order to assure the accuracy of information.

Access

- The library should arrange information services according to a coherent plan, taking into account ready accessibility to users. The information services workspace should be

large enough to accommodate staff, the collection of information resources, equipment necessary for accessing all communications and other equipment, and users seeking their services.

- The library should make service areas for information services highly visible and accommodate the needs of users, including users with disabilities. Signage should unambiguously direct users to areas where they can obtain assistance in finding the information they seek.
- The library should support state-of-the-art communications methods for access to information resources for all its users.
- The library should provide appropriate equipment in adequate quantities and in good working order for the convenient, efficient consultation of local and remote information resources by staff and the public. This includes communications hardware and software to receive and answer queries for information from users.
- Operation hours for information services should be responsive to the community's needs and behaviour and libraries financial and personnel resources.

Personnel

- The library should make available sufficient qualified personnel during the hours that best meet the information needs and expectations of the community.
- Information services staff should endeavour to communicate effectively with the full range of the library's clientele regardless of a user's age, gender, sexual preference, ethnicity, disability, or language proficiency.
- Information services staff must have knowledge and preparation appropriate to meet the information needs of the clientele the library serves. Personnel responsible for information technology services should be familiar and competent in using information technology and should also possess effective interpersonal communications skills.
- Continuing education of information service personnel is basic to professional growth. It is the responsibility of the individual staff member to seek continuing education and of the employing institution to support its staff's continuing education efforts. If possible, the institution should provide continuing educational programs.

Evaluation

- The library should regularly evaluate its information services to ensure that the service furthers the institution's goals and that the goals reflect the needs and interests of the community served. Formal and informal evaluations should be used to determine the optimum allocation of resources to provide quality service.
- The library should integrate the perspectives of staff and community in the overall evaluation procedure for information service.
- In its evaluation of information services, the library should emphasize those factors most important to the community using those services. Among these are response time; accessibility of services (in terms of physical access, convenience of location, convenience of service hours); the value and effectiveness of services for various groups among the population served; and effectiveness in anticipating its community's needs.

- The library should gather relevant statistics for use in evaluation. The library should conduct evaluative studies using techniques and measures that will yield data comparable to those from similar institutions and addressing such national norms or common standards as may exist, modified if necessary, by local needs.
- The library should evaluate individual resources within the collection based upon professional standards and users' needs. It should also evaluate its information resources as a unified information system, including in-house print and non-print as well as accessible external resources.
- The library should appraise the performance of individual information service staff members and of the collective performance of that staff at regular intervals, using recognized personnel evaluation techniques and instruments agreed to in advance by those to be evaluated and those performing the evaluation.

Ethics

Librarian Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) spelt out in their code of ethics and professional conduct for librarians in Nigeria, the responsibilities of librarians to their users as follows:

➤ Access to Available Information

The librarian should guarantee the user access to available information resources regardless of the medium, without restriction that is not explicitly stated in laws and regulations. They should always make known to the public the resources and services of the library.

➤ Library Collection

Information supplied by the librarian should be versatile, complete, objective and impartial. The librarian shall reject and oppose any form of censorship of the documents gathered and organized as well as the information supplied. He must encourage the free flow of information and ideas without discrimination.

➤ Rendering of Service

In managing the library and its services, the librarian should promote inclusion and should not discriminate against any library user regardless of sex, ethnic group, nationality, social condition, religion or political opinions. The librarian should provide the highest level of service through courteous, prompt, adequate, skilful, accurate and unbiased responses to all requests for assistance to the user.

➤ Confidentiality

The librarian should respect the right of a user to privacy, except where it is in the public interest and should not share confidential information or user data beyond the original transaction.

➤ Users Right and Dignity

Librarians should have respect for the users' right and dignity without prejudice to race, gender, religion, tribe, physical characteristics, age, place of origin, etc.

➤ Corrupt Practice

Librarians should not receive or ask for gifts or gratification for themselves or for others in rendering services to the users. Corrupt practice here includes bribery, hoarding information materials in the wrong shelf, etc.

➤ Responsible for User Education

Librarians should promote information literacy among users, including the ability to identify, locate, evaluate, organize and create, use and communicate information in a legal manner, thereby helping to eliminate plagiarism and other forms of misuse of information. They should teach the user how to use the library facilities, locate information resources and library software to enhance access to information and promote lifelong learning

➤ Transparency

Librarians should support transparency in government, administration and business while recognizing the legitimate sphere of official secrets that may restrict access to defined and limited categories and items of information.

For more information on the code of conduct for librarian's in Nigeria please see the link below <https://www.ifla.org/files/assets/faife/nationalcodeofethics/nigeria-code-of-ethics-and-professional-conduct-for-librarians.pdf>

3.3 History of Library and Information Services to Persons with Special Needs

The Federally coordinated Library Service for Blind and other individuals with special needs as it exists in the United States, had its origin in the Pratt Smooth Act passed by Congress in 1931. This law enabled the librarians at the Library of Congress not only to provide books for the adult blind, but also to arrange for other libraries around the country to act as regional centres for the distribution of such books. In that same year, nineteen libraries were designated as regional distribution centres for Braille books. In 1933 talking books were provided by the Library of Congress and distributed to 24 existing cooperating libraries. In 1952, these services were extended to children and many additional thousands of blind adults became active library users. There was the need for an eligibility code to be enacted preventing sighted persons from using the talking books for readers who are visually challenged.

In 1966 library services to persons with special needs was made free and fund was released to back it up. Within this period, some libraries began wide-area telephone (WATS) line services, or purchased large print books, conducted user surveys or participated in radio reading service using sub channel radio receivers. By 1956 the Library of Congress National Library Services for the Blind and Persons with special needs had increased to 56 regional libraries and over 100 sub- regional libraries and by 1985, about 60 million books and magazines were circulated to 56500 individuals and institutions in the United States.

4.0 CONCLUSION

We have seen that it is a duty, which must be performed by libraries to provide information services to their various communities. This provision of services is systematic and as such must

follow the laid down procedure by American Library Association. However library and information services to persons with special needs are somehow peculiar, because of the patrons with different disabilities. In the next unit, we shall be discussing library and information services to persons who are blind and visually impaired

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit highlighted the American Library Association's guidelines to providing library and information services by different libraries to their respective communities. These guidelines are to address information services from the following perspectives: 1.Services 2.Resources 3.Access 4.Personnel 5. Evaluation, and 6.Ethics. In addition to this, we also discussed history of the Library of Congress information services to persons with special needs.

6.0 SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE(S)

1. Discuss the American Library Association guidelines to providing library and information services in the following perspective:
 - A Services
 - B Access
 - C Resources
2. Discuss the American Library Association guidelines to providing library and information services in the following perspective:
 - A Personnel
 - B Evaluation
 - C Ethics
3. Give a brief history of information services to persons with special needs by the Library of Congress?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

1. Reference and User Services Association (2000). "Information Services for Information Consumers: Guidelines for Providers."
2. Wilson, Andrew (2003) "History of services for the blind and physically handicapped".
Retrieved from:http://www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan/0,2351,7160-19270_28958-79831—.00.html
3. Librarian Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct for Librarians in Nigeria
<https://www.ifla.org/files/assets/faife/nationalcodeofethics/nigeria-code-of-ethics-and-professional-conduct-for-librarians.pdf>

UNIT 2: LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES TO PERSONS WHO ARE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Library and Information Services Available for Persons with Special Needs

3.2 Information Needs of Persons who are Visually Impaired

3.3 Meeting the Reading Needs of Persons with Impairment through Assistive Technology

3.4 Challenges Militating Against Service Delivery for the Blind in Nigeria

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall be discussing information needs of persons who are blind and visually impaired. We shall also learn ways of meeting their needs using available resources and services. The challenges militating against service delivery to persons who are blind and visually impaired shall be extensively explained.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you shall be able to:

1. Discuss the information needs and services for persons who are blind and visually impaired
2. Discuss the challenges militating against service delivery to persons who are blind

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Library and Information Services Available for Persons who are Blind and Visually Impaired

Libraries and information centers around the world have developed specialized information services to meet the library and information needs of their patrons who are visually impaired. Babalola and Haliso (2011) identified these to include:

- (1) Braille books- Braille is a system of reading and writing whereby raised dots are used to represent letters which are read by touch. Braille books are appropriate for users who have both visual and hearing impairment.
- (2) Talking books- these are audio versions of books that could be recorded on cassettes, CD-ROM, DVD and on the internet as e-books. Talking books are preferred by the majority of the visually impaired.
- (3) Talking newspapers- audio recordings of news articles in the dailies.

Atinmo (2000) reported that only three out of the 36 state libraries in the Federation have library and information services for the blind. In Nigeria, library and information services to

the visually impaired are largely undertaken by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Government intervention, on the other hand, is very minimal and focuses more on establishment of special education schools where teachers of children with special needs are trained rather than provision of library materials for persons who are visually impaired (Atinmo 2000). The NGOs are highly committed to the education and empowerment of the visually impaired students. They produce textbooks in Braille and sell them to blind secondary school students at cost price of the printed copies.

3.2 Information Needs of Persons who are Visually Impaired

On the issues of coping with disability and relevance of Information to persons with special needs, Adesina (2003) itemised the under listed as the information needs of these categories of people:

1. Information for educational development: This is of paramount importance. As a student, additional information would be needed to build on what was taught in the classroom.
2. Information for social and personal development: Information is needed on assistive devices that could aid mobility.
3. Information for recreational purposes: These may include materials for light reading.

Shon (1999) asserted that persons who are visually impaired exhibit a spectrum of special needs as a result of their sensory limitations. The range of such needs is manifested in the series of differences demonstrated by the person's abilities, attitudes, learning styles and motivation. The number of individuals with visual impairment is growing, most of who demonstrate various development, postural and behavioural problems. McCarthy (2002) views that not only do persons with visual impairment need access to an adequate collection of materials, but they need to learn information literacy skills as well. Many do not receive even rudimentary instruction in area such as the arrangement of the library, the library classification system – Dewey or LC or even the differences between fiction and non- fiction.

Students who are visually impaired must be taught how to utilize a wide variety of resources, both print resources in the library and on-line resources including the internet and periodical database, just as their sighted peers do. In order to allow visually impaired students to use materials that are available only in print, they might need access to an optical scanner and optical character recognition programme such as open book or a CCTV for students who have low vision. It is important to have at least a small browsing collection for students who are visually impaired in the library. Many school libraries, media centres, have a small collection of audio books, listening library and record books that can benefit these students. If the library is automated, assistive technology as JAVA'S, Zoom text should be loaded on a computer. Many automated library catalogues can be used to give access to students who are visually impaired to search for library materials.

What are the information needs of persons with visual impairment and in what ways are those needs being met? What is the role of the internet and digital information in meeting their needs, what are the barriers to the use of nanotechnologies and to having access to the computer and the web? A literature search revealed a poverty of studies about information need and information seeking behaviours of this group of people. Williamson (1998) explored both

information needs and preferences of sources of information in 2002 older people, many of which had visual disability. He discovered that the most important information need is media sources, newspapers, television, or radio. The University of Alberta (Canada) survey of the information needs of visually impaired citizens in the province of Alberta revealed that they have their conceptual framework based on studies which have emphasized the need to explore information seeking behaviour or activities.

3.3 Meeting the Reading Needs of Persons with Visual Impairment Through Assistive Technology

As Lucky and Achebe (2013) described, the assistive technology devices include:

- ☐ Screen reader
- ☐ Braille translation software
- ☐ Braille writing equipment
- ☐ Closed-circuit television
- ☐ Braille embosser
- ☐ Scanners

Screen reader: This is a software program that works in conjunction with a speech synthesizer to provide verbalization of everything on the screen including menus, text and punctuation. It gives persons with visual impairment direct access to the world of print. It also creates independence in reading to persons who are visually impaired. It helps a person who is blind to read freely at his/her own pace without assistance.

Screen magnifier: this is software that allows text or graphics on computer screen to be magnified up to sixteen times the original.

Voice recognition software: this allows the user to input data into the computer by voice.

Braille translation software: Translate text and formatting into appropriate Braille characters and formatting.

Braille writing equipment: Used for creation of paper Braille materials; it can be manual or electronic devices.

Closed circuit television: Magnify a printed page through the use of a special television camera with a zoom lens and displays the image on a monitor.

Braille embosser: A Braille printer that embosser's computer-generated text as Braille on paper.

Scanners: Device that convert an image from a printed page to a computer file. Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software makes the resulting complete file capable of being edited. With the help of ICT, persons who are visually impaired have been rendered special attention to fully participate in the world by providing them with best possible support necessary to bridge gaps between accessibility and literacy. More importantly, careers in science are now within the reach of the visually impaired and some of them have become successful in many scientific fields, including engineering, physics and chemistry.

3.4 Challenges Militating against Service Delivery to Persons who are Blind in Nigeria

One of the major challenges for librarians in their attempts to provide services to persons who are blind in Nigeria is the lack of reliable figures for the number, age, sex, and educational level of the blind. Statistical data has always been a problem for African countries, generally.

This makes it difficult to draw up a programme based on specific targets. Other challenges include:

1. Limited financial and human resources in this aspect of library services.
2. Lack of production and distribution facilities for reading materials.
3. Lack of properly trained library personnel. Library staffs are therefore often unable to handle the need of patrons who are blind.
4. Architectural barriers. Most of the libraries (especially university libraries) were built long before the libraries ever considered providing materials for patrons who are blind. Therefore such barriers are: steps, high book shelves, narrow doorways and lack of elevators are still prevalent in libraries. These obstacles can be extremely frustrating, if not impossible for patrons who are blind to cope with.
5. Inadequacy of appropriate reading materials. Most libraries in Nigeria don't have sufficient materials in Braille.

4.0 CONCLUSION

We have seen that there are specially developed resources for patrons who are blind and visually impaired. However, they need special training to be able to make effective use of the available resources. The government of Nigeria is not doing enough in providing these resources and training for persons who are visually challenged to be able to use these resources. The non-governmental organisations have taken up this challenge but should not be left unassisted by the government. In the next unit, we shall be looking at access to library/information services for persons with special needs.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we studied the two major formats for packaging information for persons who are blind and visually impaired-Braille books and talking books. The information needs of persons who are blind include literacy skills. In meeting their numerous information needs, assistive technology is employed. These are screen reader, Braille translation software, Braille writing equipment, closed-circuit television, Braille embosser and scanners.

6.0 SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE(S)

1. Discuss the various specialized library and information services available for patrons who are blind and visually challenged.
2. What is assistive technology? How can this technology help individuals who are blind and the visually challenged to meet their information needs?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Adesina, E.R. (2003).** Towards meeting the library and information needs of the handicapped in Nigeria. In T.A Adedaja and T. Ajobiewe (eds), *Coping with Disability (p35)* Ibadan: Spectrum.
- Atinmo, M.A. (2000).** Including the excluded: the Challenges of library and information services for visually handicapped readers in Nigeria in the new millennium. In M. Eskay and J.N Chima (eds), *Library and*

Information Services Delivery for the Blind and Physically Challenged in
University of Nigeria Nsukka Library.

Alliance for Technology Access (2004) Computer Resources for People with
Disabilities: A guide to assistive technologies, tools and resources for people of all
ages. Alameda: Hunter House Inc Publishers

UNIT 3: THE WHEELCHAIR MOBILE USER

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 The Wheelchair Mobile User: The Search for Information

3.2 Challenges Faced by the Wheelchair Mobile Users in Nigeria

3.3 Strategies for Improving Information and Services to the Wheelchair
Mobile Users in Nigeria

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, we discussed the library/information services for persons who are blind and visually impaired. In this unit we shall discuss the library/information services for the wheelchair mobile library users

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you shall be able to:

1. Discuss the information seeking needs and behaviour of wheelchair mobile users.
2. Discuss the challenges faced by the wheelchair mobile users in Nigeria
3. Discuss the strategies for improving information services to the wheelchair mobile users in Nigeria

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Wheelchair Mobile User: The Search for Information

Wheelchair mobile students need assistance while in the library. Viney (2006) noted that they encounter limitations due to lack of physical access such as, inability to retrieve books from the higher reaches of the library shelves. They seek information to promote academic excellence which could be achieved by reading textbooks, periodicals, browsing, consulting abstracting and indexing materials in the library, online bibliographical sources, audio-visual materials etc. Furthermore, wheelchair mobile users like other persons with special needs could need information on education, health services, employment, politics, economy and other public services. Each of them has his/her individual information needs borne of their unique life experiences. They yearn for achievement and wish to improve their skills. But they suffer social discrimination and cultural bias which have negative impact on their information seeking behaviour. This is because the society generally viewed them as abnormal. Therefore

serious efforts must be made by the government, libraries, institutions, as well as Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to ensure that their information needs are met because persons with special needs have fought for long to be heard and have found it hard to make their plights known (Amamgbo, 2009).

3.2 Challenges Faced by the Wheelchair Mobile Users in Nigeria

In a developing country like Nigeria, accessibility to information is limited for the wheelchair mobile users because they have no access to the numerous public services being provided such as libraries. Their needs are not usually incorporated in the architectural designs of buildings. Quite a few studies (Amamgbo, 2009) have been carried out on the wheelchair mobile users and it was discovered that they have been neglected by the Government of Nigeria and they also suffer isolation, rejection, and maltreatment from members of the society. Hamzat TK and Dada OO (2005) affirmed that wheelchair mobile users in Ibadan, Africa's second largest city can only gain access to 20% of public buildings which have facilities that provide basic services for health, recreation, social, financial, employment, and education needs. Also it was revealed that many academic libraries in developing countries such as Nigeria unlike academic libraries in Europe and America, lack wheelchair ramps, elevators, wide doorways, suitable doors, and low library shelves for wheelchair mobile users. Moreover, most of the libraries are not spacious enough to accommodate the wheelchair. Shortage of staff also hinders the ability of the library to render adequate assistance. Lawal-Solarin (2010) in an article titled 'Banks and the physically challenged' noted that the wheelchair mobile Nigerians lack access to the banking halls due to the anti-metal cubicles at the entrances to banks in Nigeria thus denying this disadvantaged group the opportunity of planning for their future investment. Moreover, they have problems of mobility because the public transport system available in Nigeria is not equipped for wheelchair entry. Adebowale (2009) in a study investigating the nearness of public places like schools, banks, hospitals, recreation sports, offices etc from the residence of persons with special needs and noted that on the average about 40% of them are not satisfied with the distance they have to cover. Okoye (2010) observe that in situations a disabled person is not able to cope; it results in stereotyping, derogatory labelling and depersonalization. The public and policy makers must adopt a human rights approach in addressing issues of disability instead of treating disability as a charity or social welfare matter.

The following are resources available to meet library and information needs of the wheelchair mobile users.

1. **Wheelchair Ramps:** Should lead to the entrances of libraries. The ramps should be moderate and permanent.
2. **Doorways:** The doorways should be wide enough to accommodate wheelchair users
3. **Doors:** Automatic doors are appropriate for wheelchair easy access.
4. **Space:** Libraries should be spacious enough for wheelchair mobile users to move around.
5. **Elevators:** Libraries should ensure that their elevators are always functioning and comfortable enough to accommodate wheelchairs.
6. **Tables and Chairs:** Comfortable chairs and tables are necessary in the library and they should be adjustable to wheelchair height.
7. **Longer loan periods:** Unlike normal students, they should be given longer loan periods.
8. **Library staff:** Well trained library staff who are always willing to render assistance to patrons with special needs should be employed as library staff.

9. **Signage:** Signage should be available and visible to all library users.
10. **Paths:** The accessible entrances are to be linked with paths.
11. **Toilets:** Toilets should be neat and comfortable.

3.3 Strategies for Improving Information and Library Services to the Wheelchair Mobile Users in Nigeria

1. There should be a forward looking view of how the wheelchair mobile users can have access to information and services provided in public buildings, such as Banks, Libraries, Hospitals, Schools, Social/ Recreational buildings, Offices etc through the cooperation of all stakeholders: Librarians, Government (Federal and state), and NGOs among others.
2. **Finance:** There should be adequate fund to provide better facilities and services to the less privileged in the society. The Federal Government is to ensure that local and state governments are adequately funded for this purpose and there should be a policy for prudent management of available fund.
3. **Legislation:** Government must ensure that the UN Conventions on the rights of persons with special needs are not treated with levity; the same seriousness attached to the country's laws should be extended to the international convention on the rights and dignities of persons with disabilities.
4. **Architecture:** The architectural design of many public buildings should take cognisance of the needs of the wheelchair mobile users. The Government should enact laws, which mandate accessibility of public buildings and should ensure that the laws are strictly adhered to. The use of ramps, elevators, wide paths and doorways, or automatic door with card-swipe for access control both in and out of public buildings, will assist the wheelchair mobile users to move around and meet information needs.
5. **Assistance:** There is a need for public enlightenment on how the wheelchair mobile users should be treated in the public.
6. **Signage:** The use of signage for direction within public buildings, especially buildings with upper floors is essential. Signage must be written in bold print and placed at a level that is visible.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The Federal and State Governments need to articulate policies that seek to remove the barriers faced by the less privileged in the society. UN Conventions are not to be treated lightly but with the same seriousness attached to the country's laws. This same seriousness should be extended to the international convention on the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities. Moreover, libraries, schools, banks and other public institutions must ensure that the wheelchair mobile users gain access to information and services they provide. In the next unit, we shall be discussing access to library/information services for persons with special needs.

5.0 SUMMARY

We have seen that just like most persons with special needs; the wheelchair mobile students need special assistance to be able to use the facilities in the library particularly because they encounter limitations caused by lack of physical access to library materials. Remember that they have similar information needs and seeking behaviour as any other person. The lack of incorporation of their peculiar situation into architectural design of the library buildings and inadequate support from the government coupled with discrimination by the public militate against their progress.

6.0 SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE(S)

1. Explain extensively, the information needs and seeking behaviour of the wheelchair mobile users in Nigeria?
2. Discuss the challenges faced by the wheelchair mobile users in Nigeria
3. Discuss the strategies for improving information services to the wheelchair mobile users in Nigeria

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Adebowale KO (2009). Housing the Physically Challenged People in Nigeria, The Challenges and Way Forward. Available at [http://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=Cache: KpwQRTXrT6QJ: niesvorg.ng/NIESV%2520Conference](http://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=Cache:KpwQRTXrT6QJ:niesvorg.ng/NIESV%2520Conference)

Adesina ER (2003). Towards Meeting the Library and Information Needs of the Handicapped in Nigeria. In *Coping with Disability*, edited by Adedaja, T.A and Ajobiewe, T Ibadan: Spectrum. p. 35.

Amamgbo OC (2009). Nigeria Planning for Golden Jubilee? Consider the Physically Challenged. Available at [http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:fiJLm1nEelcJ :nigeriavilla gesquare.com/articles/obian](http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:fiJLm1nEelcJ:nigeriavilla.gesquare.com/articles/obian)

Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) (2011). Checklist for Building and Facilities. Available at <http://www.access-board.gov/adaag/checklist/a16.html> New Construction

Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) (2011). Available at [www.webcredible.co.uk/user-friendly-resources/web-accessibility/uk-website -legal-requirements.shtml](http://www.webcredible.co.uk/user-friendly-resources/web-accessibility/uk-website-legal-requirements.shtml)

Hamzat TK, Dada OO (2005). Wheelchair Accessibility of Public Buildings in Ibadan, Nigeria. *Asia Pacific Disability J.* 16: 115.

Lawal-Solarin EO (2010). Banks and the Physically Challenged. Available at [http://www.tribune.com.ng/Index.php/component/content/article/11550-banks- and-the-physically-Challenged](http://www.tribune.com.ng/Index.php/component/content/article/11550-banks-and-the-physically-Challenged).

Okoye UO (2010). Support System and Coping Strategies Available to Physically Challenged Student in University of Nigeria Nsukka. Available at <http://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:TnTjlAJ-z64J:intersjournals.org/ER/pdf/2010/December/Okoye>

UNIT 4: ACCESS TO LIBRARY/INFORMATION SERVICES BY PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Access to Library/Information Services
 - 3.2 Physical Access
 - 3.3 Outside the Library
 - 3.4 Getting into the library
 - 3.5 Access to Materials and Services
 - 3.6 Department for Persons with Reading, Hearing and other Disability
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Self-Assessment exercise(s)
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Everybody should be able to use the library, whether the person has one form of disability or not. In this unit we shall be discussing the basic standards/guiding principles in making possible equality of access for all persons in the library.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you shall be able to:

1. Discuss the standard/guide lines for assessing existing levels of accessibility to building, services, materials, and programmes
2. Discuss the checklist for libraries to ensure that a person who is blind with a cane or a guide dog should be able to enter the library without encountering obstacles.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Access to Library/Information Services

Accessibility according to Iyoro (2004) has been identified as one of the pre-requisites of information use. But all the libraries this researcher visited were designed essentially to cater for normal students rather than the challenged. There are no ramps, no elevators, Moreover, all the libraries extended to upper floors. Some are with bad railings. In addition, most of the libraries were not spacious for students on wheelchairs to move around. Redeemer University library was found to have low shelves, others libraries had high shelves. Ramps in front of the library buildings stopped at the corridors.

In many countries all over the world, Nigeria inclusive, physical access to libraries for patrons with disabilities is not common. Equal opportunities must be given to all library users. This

means that from inception, at the level of planning, persons with special needs must be put into consideration in developing the building plan, as well as services and programmes.

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) developed a checklist for Libraries Serving Disadvantaged Persons (LSDP) for assessing existing levels of accessibility to building, services, materials and programmes.

To attain IFLA standard in a developing country like Nigeria may cost money. However, with very small amounts of money, many improvements can be achieved. What is often needed is a change of attitude. Change often occurs slowly – but the main thing is to focus on the most important issue now: Making equality of access for all persons regardless of disability the guiding principle, whether evaluating existing buildings and services or planning new ones. Remember that it is your responsibility to make persons with disabilities feel welcome in the library.

3.2 Physical Access

As earlier mentioned everybody should be able to use the library. For this reason the surroundings of the library, the entrance, restrooms, stairs, elevators and special rooms should be accessible for persons with different kinds of disabilities. A person in a wheelchair should be able to reach all departments, a person who is visually impaired should be able to walk with a cane or a guide dog and find his/her way without bumping into obstacles. A person who is deaf should be able to communicate with library staff. A person with an intellectual impairment should be able to easily find books and other suitable reading materials.

3.3 Outside the Library

People with disabilities should be able to arrive at the site, approach the library building and enter the building easily and safely. If the main entrance cannot be made accessible, a secondary accessible entrance should be provided, equipped with automatic door opener, a ramp, and a telephone. There should be:

- Sufficient parking spaces marked with the international symbol for persons with disabilities
- Parking close to the library entrance
- Clear and easy to read signposting
- Unobstructed and well lighted access paths to the entrance
- Smooth and non-slip surface at the entrance
- If needed, a non-slip and not too steep ramp with railings next to the stairs.
- Railings at both sides of ramp
- Entry phone accessible for patrons who are deaf

3.4 Getting into the Library

A person in a wheelchair or using crutches or a walker should be able to enter through the door and pass through security check points. A person who is blind with a cane or a guide dog should also be able to enter without encountering obstacles. There should be:

- Sufficient space in front of the door to allow a wheelchair to turn around
- Entrance door wide enough to allow a wheelchair to enter

- Automatic door opener reachable by a person in a wheelchair
- No doorsteps -- for easy wheelchair access
- Glass doors marked to warn visually impaired persons
- Security checkpoints possible to pass through with a wheelchair/walker or other mobility aides
- Stairs and steps marked with a contrasting colour
- Pictogram signs leading to elevators
- Well lighted elevators with buttons and signs in Braille and synthetic speech
- Elevator buttons reachable from a wheelchair

3.5 Access to Materials and Services

All parts of the library should be accessible to persons with special needs. Service desks should be located close to the entrance. Wheelchairs should be able to move around inside the whole library. There should be a lift for wheelchairs or a ramp, if the library has more than one level. There should be no doorsteps and all doors should have automatic openers. A certain number of tables and computer workstations should be adapted for persons on wheelchairs. At least one toilet should be reserved for persons with special needs.

3.6 Department for Persons with Reading, Hearing, and other Disabilities

The library should offer guided tours of the library for both individuals and groups of persons with special needs. Many of these patrons may have difficulties reading information about the library. Information about access, services, materials, and programs should therefore be available in the alternative formats listed below:

Patrons with reading disabilities need special attention when they visit the library. The library staff should be knowledgeable about various disabilities and how to serve patrons with these disabilities. Materials specifically produced for persons with reading disabilities should be easy to find. These materials may include talking books, easy-to-read books, Braille books and large print books.

The library should have a centrally located department with talking books and other materials for persons with reading disabilities.

4.0 CONCLUSION

From the point of building a library, the issue of accessibility to all especially persons with special needs must be put into consideration. They must not be ignored resulting from discrimination or ignorance of the society. In the next unit, we shall be considering available resources for persons with special needs.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit available checklists for libraries for assessing accessibility to building, services, materials and programmes were discussed. In this regard, we discussed topics such as: physical access; outside the library; getting into the library; access to materials and services; and the department for persons with reading, hearing and other disabilities.

6.0 SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE(S)

1. In building a library that will admit all persons what are the features to be considered?
2. Explain how the architectural design of a library can discourage a person with special needs from using the library?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Okoye, Uzoma. O (2010). Support Systems and Coping Strategies Available to Physically-Challenged Students in University of Nigeria Nsukka.
<http://interesjournals.org/ER/pdf/2010/December/okoye.pdf>

UNIT 5: LIBRARY/INFORMATION RESOURCES FOR PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Media Formats
 - 3.2 Special Media Formats for Persons with Disabilities
 - 3.3 Persons with Visually Impairments
 - 3.4 Persons with Hearing Impairments
 - 3.5 Persons with Reading Difficulties
 - 3.6 Persons with Physical Disabilities
 - 3.7 Persons with Cognitive Disabilities
 - 3.8 Recommendations
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit access to the physical building and resources was considered. In this unit, we shall discuss the different formats of resources for persons with special needs. This includes the special media formats such as talking books; large print books; easy-to-read books; Braille books; video/DVD books; E-books; tactile picture books etc.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you shall be able to:

1. Discuss the special media formats for persons with disabilities such as
 - a. Persons with visual impairments.
 - b. persons with hearing impairments
 - c. persons with cognitive disabilities

2.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 MEDIA FORMATS

Libraries should acquire talking books, video/DVD books with subtitles and/or sign language, Braille books, accessible e-books, easy-to-read books or other non print materials. Library staff should know how to borrow such materials from other libraries. The following section lists material formats useful for persons with disabilities:

3.2 Special media formats for persons with disabilities

- Talking books, talking newspapers, and talking periodicals

- Large print books
- Easy-to-read books
- Braille books
- Video/DVD books with subtitles and/or sign language
- E-books
- Tactile picture books

3.3 For persons with visual impairment

- Information in large print
- Information on audio tape, CD/DVD, or in DAISY format
- Information in Braille
- Information on the library's accessible website

3.4 For Persons with Hearing Impairment

- Information in subtitled and/or sign language videos
- Information via text telephones and/or email
- Information on the library's accessible website(audio information should also be available as text)
- Easy- to- read text for patrons who were born deaf or became deaf before acquiring language skills

3.5 For persons with reading difficulties (persons with dyslexia or weak readers)

- Information written in an easy-to-read text
- Information on audio/video tape, CD/DVD, or in Daisy format
- Information on the library's accessible website

3.6 For persons with cognitive disabilities

- Information in an easy-to-read format
- Information on audio/video tape, CD/DVD, or in DAISY format
- Information on the library's accessible website

3.8 Recommendations

In order not to frustrate students on braces, crutches and wheelchair in their quest for academic pursuit, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. UN Convention on the rights and dignities of persons with disabilities are to be strictly adhered to. Government must ensure effective implementations.
2. The use of library guide, ramp, elevator, good hand railings, pathway, low level light switches and sockets, are necessary to attract the students to use the library.
3. Good communication between the library staff and the challenged students.
4. Constructed library shelves to be at wheelchair accessible height.
5. Suggestion box to be made available in the library for comments or questions.

6. Specially trained library staff to be employed to assist and monitor students with special needs in the library.
7. Adjustable chairs and tables specially made for persons on wheel-chair and persons with crutches are recommended for use in libraries to cater for them.
8. The use of wide doorways and powered door with card – swipe for access control both in and out of the library is recommended.
9. Provision of intercom telephone, mobile or e-mail is recommended for use by persons with special needs. This is to enhance communication with the library staff and to make reservations when necessary. Through a request form they could ask the library to photocopy materials for them. Payment would be made when the materials are delivered.
10. Signage should be large, bright and mounted at a level that can be seen by students in wheelchair.
11. Wireless hotspots are recommended to be provided on campus to ease access to internet usage.
12. Architecture of library buildings must take care of their needs.

4.0 CONCLUSION

We have seen that persons with special needs demand special attention. These needs must be considered in the architectural design of the library building and in the different formats of resources. This is to enhance their access to information.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit explained the different formats of packaging information for persons with visual impairments such as: Information in large print; Information on audio tape, CD/DVD, or in DAISY (the Digital Accessible Information System) format; Information in Braille; Information on the library's accessible website. The DAISY format is the emerging world standard for digital talking books for people who are blind or have a print disability. Also discussed are ways of packaging information for persons with hearing impairments such as Information in subtitled and/or sign language videos; Information via text telephones and/or email; Information on the library's accessible website (audio information should also be available as text); Easy-to-read text for patrons who were born deaf or became deaf before acquiring language skills. Finally, ways of packaging information for persons with cognitive disabilities were listed.

6.0 SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE(S)

1. What are the special media formats for persons with visual impairments?
2. Discuss the different special media format for persons with hearing impairments?
3. Explain the special media format for persons with cognitive disabilities?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Health Organization, (2001) International Classification of Functioning, disability and health (ICF). Geneva: World Health Organization.

Adebowale, K.O. (2009). Housing the physically challenged people in Nigeria: the Challenges and way forward. Retrieval from
Retrieved from:<http://docs.google.com/viewera=v&q=cache:KpwWRTXrT6OJ:niesvorg.ng/NIESV%2520>.

Adesina, E.R. (2003). Towards meeting the library and information needs of the handicapped in Nigeria. In T.A Adedoja and T. Ajobiewe (eds), *Coping with Disability (p35)* Ibadan: Spectrum.

**MODULE 5: (ICT) INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION
TECHNOLOGY AND PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

Unit 1: ICT Access and use by Persons with Special Needs

Unit 2: Mobile Device/Radio and TV Set

Unit 3: Emerging ICTs and Persons with Special Needs

Unit 4: Barriers/Challenges Militating Against the Use of ICT

UNIT 1: ICT ACCESS AND PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 The Use of ICT and Persons with Special Needs

3.2 Internet Facilities

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall discuss the use of ICT by persons with special needs. Technology has made human life comfortable by providing services and information at the same time. It has simplified life for people with disability. ICT has given persons with special needs the opportunity to access information along with others. The choice of a technology by persons with special needs is based on need, ability and ease of usage.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Explain how the cell phone and the internet can help meet the information needs of persons with special needs.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Use of ICT and Persons with Special Needs

The Inclusion of persons with special needs in all spheres of societal life is one of the remaining challenges of the global development agenda. The use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) allows the removal of many of the remaining barriers faced by persons with disabilities.

The importance of ICTs lies in their ability to open up a wide range of services, transform existing services and create greater demand for access to information and knowledge particularly to persons with special needs.

ICTs are already providing access to key public services, with widespread implications for social progress and economic growth aimed at eradicating poverty and promoting inclusive societies and sustainable development. Accessible ICTs have the potential to provide persons with disabilities with unprecedented levels of access to education, skills training and employment, as well as the opportunity to participate in the economic, cultural and social life

of their communities. As at April 2013, 15 per cent of the world's population that is about one billion people have a disability that affects their access to modern communications. It is therefore important to improve access to ICTs for persons with disabilities (ITU and G3ict, 2012). ICT can and has indeed improved the social and economic activities of persons with special needs in the following areas: healthcare, education, lifelong education, employment, independent living, government services, participation in political and public life etc. For instance, the use of mobile phones has been instrumental in allowing the independent living of persons with disabilities also the television set and services are used by them as a tool to access government services and information. Other range of access technologies, are radio, satellites, fixed lines, computers, network hardware and software.

3.2 Internet Facilities

The advent of the Internet has ushered in a new age not only of information sharing in general, but of the proliferation of web-based services that serve persons with special needs and other citizens alike in communities. The Internet enables users to remotely participate in a range of activities such as tertiary, professional, lifelong education, employment, economic, government services and consumer activities. Opportunities for social participation also include social networking, news access, online interest groups, video, audio and text communication, cloud-based sharing and media interaction. For persons with special needs, these services and content are made further accessible through both computer-based and web-based accessibility applications such as screen readers, speech recognition, video communication (for sign language communication and video relay interpretation), voice to text services (open and closed captioning, both real-time and embedded) and visual assistance. Websites can provide visual, audio and text output on demand thus offering multimedia input opportunities to users. For persons with special needs, a multi-functional online environment is the best. It can help streamline services and move the status quo away from dependence on single-function, cost-prohibitive and often non-accessible devices.

Websites and web applications have proven to have a greater impact in improving persons with special needs' access to socio-cultural, educational and economic activities than any other ICT with the exception of mobile phones. It is important to recognize that accessibility of websites is enabled by the combination of accessibility technologies in the PCs and devices used to access them as well as the accessible design and planning that goes into the development of websites themselves.

Without access to ICTs, which include assistive technologies or specially developed ICTs, people with special needs will be denied right to equal access to education, culture, and everyday service. This ends up restricting their job opportunities and their possibility for independent living.

4.0 CONCLUSION

ICT is providing opportunities and making life easier for persons with special needs through the use of internet facilities and computer-based and web-based accessibility applications.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit we saw how the internet gave persons with special needs, the opportunity for social participations which has been further made possible through computer-based and web-based accessibility applications such as screen reading, speech recognition, video communication and voice to text services.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

1. Discuss the importance of ICT to persons with special needs

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Broadband Commission (2013). The ICT Opportunity for a Disability-Inclusive Development Framework. United Nations General Assembly.

UNIT 2: MOBILE DEVICES/RADIO AND TV SET

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Smartphones
 - 3.2 Radio and TV Set and Services
 - 3.3 Best Practices
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall discuss how persons with special needs can use smartphones, radio and TV set to meet their information needs.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Discuss extensively how the smartphone, radio and TV set have helped meet the information needs of persons with special needs.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Smartphones

Mobile devices and services have by far the greatest impact on independent living for persons with special needs than any other ICTs in use today. At the basic level, feature phones provide a means of on-demand communication for the user through both SMS and voice calls. This in itself can enable independent living by ensuring that emergency services, family members, personal aides, assistive and everyday services are just a call or text away.

At a more sophisticated level, smartphones address the unique sensory, physical and cognitive needs of individuals with disabilities. A variety of smartphones are rated for hearing aid compatibility. People can enjoy open or closed-captioned multimedia content and use face-to-face video chat applications or dedicated video relay services to communicate via sign language. They are also able to access content non-visually through screen reading applications, customize alert settings to use a combination of audible, visual and vibration alerts and take advantage of voice-commands, adjustable font sizes, predictive text and a range of other innovative features, accessories, and third-party applications.

Furthermore, mobile devices are designed to be portable and are easily worn or carried by a user, unlike a laptop computer or television set. For persons with special needs, having a mobile device increases independent living not only because of the wide range of services that

can be accessed, but also because this type of device allows access to those services (including emergency services) immediately at the time of need and from anywhere in the network.

However, device and software cost is a huge consideration when it comes to access to ICTs. While complex, function-specific devices may be cost-prohibitive for many persons with special needs, operator-subsidized smartphones and tablets offer high-quality, portable, easily-customizable systems for a fraction of the cost of a new computer. Increasingly, these devices are appearing on the market with accessibility systems built-in. The prevalence of free applications on the most popular apps also enables low- to no-cost software options for assistive and other services.

3.2 Radio and TV set and services:

In some ways, radio and TV services have enhanced the social inclusion of persons with special needs. For instance, radio has long been an indispensable means for persons with sight disabilities to access information.

Television sets and broadcasting services on the other hand, have continued to provide visual, audio and text output through closed captioning. Digital TV has the capacity to expand the range of features and functions that can be enabled for persons with special needs. For example, there is an integration of sign language interpretation or voice over audio channels in the signals broadcast, allowing users to opt-in for these services at any time.

3.3 Best practices

There should be a clear definition and accessibility guidelines in the development and utilization of ICTs by persons with special needs. This is to ensure the ease of use of ICT by persons with special needs. For instance, the introduction of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and the new ISO/IEC standard are some of the best practices on how to maintain accessibility principles in the case of web content. Implementation of these guidelines is already reducing and removing significant accessibility barriers precisely in the internet service for persons with special needs. In fact the adoption of these guidelines improves user experience and accessibility for all persons, regardless of disability. Wider range of population is now using the internet because of accessibility guidelines that bring about ease of use.

Another major development should be in the standardization of ICT globally to ensure that newly developed technologies/standards contain the necessary elements that make services and features usable by all. Standards describe how different types of equipment interact with each other and define the quality necessary for media to be usable by all devices. These standards should also describe suitable methods of media delivery for persons with special needs.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Radio, TV set and smartphones have enabled the social inclusion of persons with special needs. ICT manufacturers should produce accessibility guidelines to ensure ease of use by persons with disabilities. In our next unit, we shall be looking at the satellite network and other emerging ICTs such as assistive technology for communication.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit we discussed how smartphones are being used to address sensory, physical and cognitive needs of persons with special needs. We also explained how TV sets and broadcasting services provide visual, audio and text output through closed captioning.

6.0 SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE(S)

1. How can the smartphone be an added advantage to persons with special needs in seeking information?
2. Explain how the radio and TV set can ensure the social inclusion of persons with special needs?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

The Alliance for Technology access (2004) Computer Resources for People with Disability: A Guide to Assistive Technologies. Tools and Resources for People of All Ages. Hunter House Publishers, Canada. Pp8-119

UNIT3: ICT USE FOR PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AT HOME AND AWAY

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Satellite Network and other Assistive Technologies

3.2 Assistive Technology for Communication

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the last unit we saw how radio, TV set and smartphones can be used by persons with special needs to meet their information needs. In this unit we shall be discussing satellite network and other assistive technologies.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit you should be able to:

1. Discuss satellite network and assistive technology with reference to meeting the information needs of persons with special needs.
2. Identify different types of assistive technology for communication.
3. Identify the factors to be considered when acquiring any type of assistive technology

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Satellite Network and other Assistive Technologies

Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) is a system through which television services are delivered using the internet protocol suite over a packet-switched network instead of being delivered through traditional signals and cable television formats. IPTV is an existing interactive and accessible service provider for persons with special needs. Another new development in broadcasting is the Integrated Broad cast-Broadband (IBB) systems. IBB content delivery allows the representation of access service exactly according to the needs of the persons with special needs without causing any disturbance to those that do not need these services. In this case, the access services can be displayed (video, images, sound, text, graphics and data) either on the main screen (or the main loud speakers) or on a second screen (normally a type of tablet PC). By means of the second screen, persons with special needs are individually served even when watching TV together with their friends or their families.

Satellite network/applications in the Mobile-Satellite service (MSS) can help to remove barriers and promote full participation/socio-economic inclusion of persons with special needs. With Satellite Services a person with hearing disability can sail single-handedly round the globe while staying connected via the satellite network.

3.2 Assistive Technology for communication

For persons who have speaking and hearing challenges, Augmentative or Alternative communication (AAC or augcomm) offers a solution. What this technology does is to store communication messages and express them. There are important factors to consider when making choice of Augmentative communication technology (e.g touch talker)

Assistive technology may be viewed positively or negatively, as a symbol of lost function and abilities. Acceptance of assistive technology can be a difficult task if it's correlated with acceptance of a disability or if it's perceived as a negative social stigma. "I'm not blind, I just can't see" may be the attitude that the person wishes to maintain. Similarly, it's often difficult for an older individual to accept newer technologies, so a search for familiar motifs can help.

In acquiring any type of assistive technology, the library / individuals must consider the following:

1. Know Your Funding Strategies: - Do you have adequate fund to buy the technology? The amount of money you have at each given time, will determine what type of technology to buy.
2. Know What Equipment You Want To Purchase: - you need to select the type of equipment you want. You must also have preliminary discussions with vendors.
3. Know The Laws And Your Rights: - You must be aware of the laws and how they relate to your options for obtaining equipment.
4. Assess Your Technology Needs And Set Your Goals:- You must be clear of what your patrons need to accomplish with the support of the technology .This will help you to determine which technology to purchase.
5. Determine Your Training Needs: - You must identify any training you as a librarian needs. You also have to identify the training needs of your patrons in order to be able to use your equipment. This will influence how well you are able to use your technology and may require additional funds.
6. Determine your needs for technical support: - You must consider the cost of technical support both for the hardware and the software.

4.0 CONCLUSION

We have seen how important both the satellite network and assistive technology are to the persons with special needs in addressing their information needs. We must not forget that there

are important factors to be considered when making choice of any type of assistive technology for use or purchase.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit we treated the use of satellite network such as IP TV and Integrated Broad Cast-Broadband (IBB) system. We saw that both persons with special needs and non-physically challenged can use them perhaps in a home. They enable access service to be displayed on video, images, sound, text, graphics and data on the screen. We also explained how the Augmentative or Alternative Communication (AAC) can help those with speaking and hearing challenges.

6.0 SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE(S)

1. Identify and describe satellite networks and other assistive technologies?
2. Identify different types of assistive technologies for communication?
3. Identify the type and factors to be considered when acquiring assistive technology?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

The Alliance for Technology access (2004) Computer Resources for People with Disability: A Guide to Assistive Technologies. Tools and Resources for People of All Ages. Hunter House Publishers, Canada. Pp8-119

UNIT 4: BARRIER/CHALLENGES FACED BY PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND ICT

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

 3.1 Barriers/Challenges and ICT

 3.2 The Way Forward

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we shall be considering the different barriers to the use of ICT by persons with special needs. Suggestions shall also be given for a way forward

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Explain the barriers to ICT use by persons with special needs.
2. Suggest a way forward to enhance the use of ICT by persons with special needs

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Barrier/Challenges and ICT

One of the barriers to the use of ICT by person with special needs is the cost of assistive technologies. Apart from the cost of the main technology itself, persons with special needs have to also consider the cost of the assistive technology and the training and support services. The total cost is scary and the inability to acquire these technologies prevents people with special needs from fully accessing healthcare services, benefit at all educational levels, be competitive on the labour market and live independently. Persons with special needs are among the most vulnerable groups in the world and 80% of them live in developing countries. This means that the problem of cost of assistive technologies with all of its associated challenges is a serious one which can hinder this category of persons from full participation in all aspects of society.

The overall challenges to the availability of assistive technologies are the lack of awareness and the lack of effective training, support and a services ecosystem in the country. Typically, there are three channels supporting assistive technologies: (i) the education system, (ii) rehabilitation and community centres and (iii) employment support services. Most countries

with low income per capita have limited or nonexistent assistive technology programs in these three areas. There is a linear relationship between the availability of assistive technologies at universities and country income per capita.

Even when ICTs are accessible, they are only available in a fraction of the thousands of languages that are spoken all over the world. The screen readers are available in the principal language of 63% of the countries and they are only available in 19% of minority languages (G3ict, 2012).

This barrier is further compounded by lack of policies which would foster widespread availability of accessible ICTs and the lack of effective implementation of the aforementioned policies. In many cases, policies promoting accessibility may be in place but lack accompanying laws, legislations and regulations to ensure their efficacy.

3.2 The Way Forward

In order to derive a maximum benefit from ICT development, professionals such as librarians should be equipped and trained to use ICTs and assistive technologies to be able to provide professional assistance to users. The provision of public service would require library professionals to develop awareness of the following points and principles during their training on how to assist persons with special needs.

Firstly, they should have a broad knowledge of different digital formats, and their varying accessibility for persons with diverse learning needs. For example, the appearance of text on screen does not necessarily mean that it is accessible. Library professionals ought to be able to access alternative formats of content suited to users' specific needs.

Library professionals should also be familiar with emerging e-reading systems and of what the market is or will be able to provide in terms of e-reading. E-readers vary in their settings and user technology, and librarians should be able to advice on their specificities for readers who prefer not to use printed books. In addition, librarians should have knowledge on specialized libraries (for instance "library of the blind") and other providers that exist to meet the varied demands of persons with special needs.

Finally, they ought to have a general understanding of the ways different disabilities affect reading abilities so as to help persons with such disabilities efficiently. Librarians should receive disability sensitisation and awareness-raising on the rights of persons with special needs as part of their own learning curriculum and continuing education. Librarians must note that the privacy of clients with disabilities must be maintained on an equal basis with that of other clients. Librarians can also be a supplemental source of input to ICT developers, as they can provide ICT developers with valuable information (with user personal data removed) from the perspective of the point of service, use or delivery of some accessible ICTs.

4.0 CONCLUSION

We have seen that the major barrier to the use of ICT by persons with special needs is the cost of the technology itself. Persons with special needs in Nigeria are not rich! They therefore need assistance from the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the Federal Government through the funding of libraries and other stakeholder organisations. In the next module, we shall be looking at Information Systems for persons with special needs.

5.0 SUMMARY

The barriers to the use of ICT by persons with special needs were discussed. These barriers which we considered are: cost, lack of awareness, lack of effective training and lack of support services in the country. The need for the training of librarians to meet with these challenges was emphasised.

6.0 SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE(S)

1. Enumerate and explain the barriers to the use of ICT by persons with special needs?
2. Discuss the way forward?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

The Alliance for Technology access(2004) Computer Resources for People With Disabilities:A Guide to Assistive Technologies,Tools and Resources for People of All Ages.Hunter House Publishers,Canada. Pp8-11.

**MODULE 6: INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR PERSONS WITH SPECIAL
NEED**

Unit 1: The Concept and Definition of Information Systems

Unit 2: The Importance of Information Systems

Unit 3: Physically Challenged Persons Information Systems

UNIT 1: THE CONCEPT AND DEFINITION OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Definition of Information Systems
 - 3.2 Types of information Systems
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall discuss the different types of information systems such as Decision Support System, Transaction Processing Systems, Information Systems in Organisations, Management Information Systems and Expert systems neural networks.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit we should be able to:

1. Discuss the definitions and concept of information systems
2. Explain the types of information system

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Definition of Information System

Information system (s) is the study of complementary networks of hardware and software that people and organizations use to collect, filter, process, create and distribute data.

Any specific information system aims at supporting operations, management and decision making. In a broad sense, the term is used to refer not only to the information and communication technology (ICT) that an organization uses, but also to the way in which people interact with this technology in support of business processes. Although information systems typically include an ICT component but it is not purely concerned with ICT, it focuses instead, on the end use of information technology. Information systems help to control the performance of business processes.

Information system is seen as a special type of work system. A work system is a system in which human beings and / or machines perform work (processes and activities) using resources to produce specific products and/or services for customers. An information system is a work system whose activities are devoted to processing (capturing, transmitting, storing, retrieving, manipulating and displaying) information.

Information systems inter-relate with data systems on the one hand and activity systems on the other. An information system is a form of communication system in which data represent and are processed as a form of social memory. An information system can also be considered as semi-formal language which supports human decision making and action.

Information system for persons with special needs is a combination of hardware, software, infrastructure and trained personnel organized to facilitate planning, control, coordination, and decision making for individuals with special needs.

3.2 Types of Information Systems

There are basically five types of information systems namely:

1. DECISION SUPPORT SYSTEMS

A decision support system helps make decisions by working and analyzing data that can generate statistical projections and data models. This system gives support rather than replacing a manager's judgment while improving the quality of a manager's decision. A decision support system helps solve problems while using external data.

2. TRANSACTION PROCESSING SYSTEMS

A transaction processing system provides a way to collect, process, store, display, modify or cancel transactions. Most of these systems allow multiple transactions to take place simultaneously. The data that this system collects is usually stored in databases, which can be used to produce reports such as billing, wages, inventory summaries, manufacturing schedules, or check registers.

3. INFORMATION SYSTEMS IN ORGANIZATIONS

Information system collects, stores and processes data to give organization real time useful and accurate information. This information system encompasses data gathering information from the people and machine that collect, process, output and store data. It also includes the networks that transmit and receive data and the procedures that govern the way data is handled.

4. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

A management information system is an information system that uses the data collected by the transaction processing system and uses this data to create reports in a way that managers

can use it to make routine business decisions in response to problems. Some of the reports that this information system creates are summary and expectations reports. All this is done to increase the efficiency of management activity.

5. EXPERT SYSTEMS NEUTRAL NETWORKS

Expert systems also known as knowledge –based system is a computer system that is designed to analyze data and produce recommendations, diagnosis and decisions that are controlled. A neutral system uses computers to foster the way a human brain may process information, learn and remember that information.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The concept of personnel is a vital part of an information system. Therefore the term “information system “does not just refer to the ICT but also to the way in which people interact with these technologies to enhance productivity. This brings to light the importance of training of stakeholders.

5.0 SUMMARY

Information system was defined as the study of complementary networks of hardware and software that people and organizations use to collect, filter, process, create, and distribute data. The different types of information systems were also discussed.

6.0 SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE(S)

- 1 Define an information system?
2. What are the different types of information systems?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Sheldon,Alison(2001)Disabled people and communication systems in the
Twenty First Century. PhD Dissertation, The University of Leeds
Al-Rehab Research Group (2013) Rehabilitation Systems for Physically Disabled
Patients: A Brief Review of Sensor-Based Computerized
Signal-Mentoring Systems. Biomedical Research.24 (3); pp370-376

UNIT 2: THE IMPORTANCE OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Communication
 - 3.2 Operations
 - 3.3 Decisions
 - 3.4 Records
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall explain the importance of information systems in communication, operations, decisions making and records management.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Discuss the importance of information systems

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Benefits of Information Systems

To gain maximum benefits from an information system, you have to exploit all its capacities. Information systems gain their importance by processing the data from inputs to generate information that is useful for managing operations. To increase the information systems effectiveness, you can either add more data to make the information more accurate or use the information in new ways.

3.1 COMMUNICATION

Part of management is gathering and distributing information, and information systems can make this process more efficient by allowing managers to communicate rapidly. Email is quick and effective, but managers can use information systems more efficiently by storing documents in folders that they share with those that need the information. This type of communication permits stakeholders to collaborate in a systematic way. Each stakeholder can communicate additional information by making changes that the system tracks. The manager collects the inputs and sends the newly revised document to his target audience.

3.2 OPERATIONS

How you manage your company's operations depends on the information you have. Information systems can offer more complete and more recent information, allowing you to operate your company more efficiently. You can use information systems to gain a cost advantage over competitors or to differentiate yourself by offering better customer service. For instance, sales data give you insights about what customers are buying and let you stock or produce items that are selling well. With respect to persons with special needs, information system will enable you know their basic and specific needs and let you provide such needs instead of spending limited funds randomly.

3.3 DECISIONS

The information systems for persons with special needs can help you make better decisions by delivering to you all needed information to make decision and influence the results of your decisions. A decision involves choosing a course of action from several alternatives and carrying out the corresponding task. When you have accurate, up-to-date information, you can make the choice with confidence. If more than one choice looks appealing, you can use the information system to run different scenarios. For each possibility, the system can calculate key indicators to help you determine which alternative gives the most beneficial result.

3.4 RECORDS

Every organization handling persons with special needs will need records of its activities for financial and regulatory purposes as well as for finding the causes of problem and taking corrective action. The information system for persons with special needs, stores documents and revision histories, communication records and operational data. These records can be organized, processed and presented as useful historical information.

4.0 CONCLUSION

All organisations handling the persons with special needs should have an information system for accurate record keeping, precise decision making, smooth operations, and easy communication.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have discussed in detail the importance of information system in any organisation. Some areas were particularly listed for discussion such as records, decision, communication and operations.

6.0 SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE(S)

1. Describe the importance of information systems for persons with special needs.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Sheldon,Alison(2001)Disabled people and communication systems in the
Twenty First Century. PhD Dissertation, The University of Leeds
Al-Rehab Research Group (2013) Rehabilitation Systems for Physically Disabled
Patients: A Brief Review of Sensor-Based Computerized
Signal-Mentoring Systems. Biomedical Research.24 (3); pp370-376

UNIT 3: INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR PERSONS WITH PHYSICAL CHALLENGES (ISPPC)

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Information Systems for Persons with Physical Challenges (ISPPC)

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise(s)

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall discuss information system that is specially designed for persons with special needs known as “Information Systems for Persons with Physical Challenges” (ISPPC)

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to;

1. Describe the Information System for Persons with Physically Challenges (ISPPC)

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Information Systems for Persons with Physical Challenges (ISPPC)

Information system for persons with Physical challenges (ISPPC) is a web based application developed in Agartala, Tripura for disability and rehabilitation centres and social welfare departments. The main outputs of the system are:

1. On –line issuance of disability certificate to persons with special needs on the same day of medical check-up.
2. The system captures details like personal information, educational, employment information along with image and finger print impression.
3. The information system records the various assistance like Scholarship, Stipend for totally blind, Travelling Allowance e.t.c being provided by the Social Welfare department and other NGO’S
4. Records of Appliances (like Tricycle, calliper, Artificial Limb etc.) issued to persons with special needs by the Disability and Rehabilitation Centre and other organizations.

Training and Rehabilitation details are also maintained in the database. Various Management Information System (MIS) reports are generated for intervention in terms of benefits, training

to be provided by the government. Different organisations in Nigeria handling persons with special needs can design their own information systems to include the above features.

There are many other information systems for persons with special needs such as: 1. The smart house for older persons and persons with physical disabilities. 2. Kinect-based system for physical rehabilitation and 3. A prototype system for non speaking people with physical disabilities. For more information on these systems see the references.

4.0 CONCLUSION

It is of paramount importance to create a web based application that will enable persons with special needs to have access to required information for self development and national growth.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit was devoted to discussing the Physically Challenged Persons Information System (PCPIS), a web based application developed in Agartala, Tripura for disability and rehabilitation centres and social welfare departments.

6.0 SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE(S)

1. Describe the features of the Information Systems for Persons with Physical Challenges (ISPPC)

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Sheldon, Alison (2001) Disabled people and communication systems in the Twenty First Century. PhD Dissertation, The University of Leeds
- Al-Rehab Research Group (2013) Rehabilitation Systems for Physically Disabled Patients: A Brief Review of Sensor-Based Computerized Signal-Mentoring Systems. Biomedical Research. 24 (3); pp370-376
- Chang, Yao-Jen et al (2011) A Kinect-based System for Physical Rehabilitation: A Pilot Study for Young Adults with Motor Disabilities. Research in Developmental Disabilities. Vol. 32(6), November-December. pp 2566-2570
- Todman, J et al (2008) Computer-Aided Conversation: A Prototype System for Non-speaking People with Physical Disabilities. Applied Linguistics Vol. 15(1), pp 45-73

