

Effects of Information Seeking Behaviour on Accessibility of Library Services by Students with Visual Impairment in Uganda Christian University, Mukono

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ABSTRACT

The major aim of the study was to investigate the effects of information seeking behaviour on accessibility of library services by students with visual impairment. The study was carried out at Hamu Mukasa Library of Uganda Christian University in Mukono, Uganda. The study objectives were to weigh the needs of information to Students with Visual Impairment (SWVI) in UCU library, assess information seeking behaviors of SWVI at UCU library, to evaluate the library facilities and services currently available for SWVI, to interrogate the sources of information for SWVI and to analyze the challenges encountered by SWVI while seeking for information at UCU library. The researcher used a descriptive design confirming about the truthfulness of the matter of fact to give wright answers to the research questions in an understandable manner giving the exact picture of what transpires amidst the SWVI while seeking for information from the Library. The study applied the qualitative together with quantitative research methods venturing into and making use of questionnaires and extracting information from the documents. The target population in the study included SWVI and staff at Uganda Christian University (UCU) Hamu Mukasa library. The study targeted the visually impaired students plus library staff members who serve or train information search skills to the students. A sample size of 100 participants was chosen from the total population of 150 whereby sample size of library staff was 60 and a sample of 40 students with visual impairment. The findings revealed that the library staff have inadequacy skills to allow them understand the needs of SWVI and their information seeking behaviours, thus failure to serve SWVI diligently. In regard to this, the study is mandated to air out the services provided, the facilities available and showing how they are insignificant to suite the information requirements of these particular users of the library. The study was well-timed to handle the assessment on effects of information seeking behaviour while accessing library services by (SWVI) at Uganda Christian University. The study recommended to the government, academic libraries, Non-Government Organisations and other agencies serving visually impaired people; to work together on the strategies to improve library facilities and information services for the visually impaired students.

Key Words: Assistive Technology, Braille Embosser, Closed Circuit Television, Disability, Information Need, Information Seeking, Information Seeking Behaviour, Screen-Reader Software, Special Needs Students

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1. Introduction

Libraries and data centers around the world have created particular information services to meet the library and data needs of their outwardly disabled clientele which include, Braille books, which may be a framework of perusing and composing, whereby raised dabs are utilized to represent letters which are perused by touch; talking books, which are sound adaptations of books that could be recorded on cassettes, CD-ROM, DVD and on the web as e-books and are preferred by the lion's share of the outwardly disabled; talking daily papers; expansive printed materials in form of documents printed in huge textual styles to be utilized by visually impaired users; and Electronic Writings, in form of computer text-files (Babalola, & Haliso, 2011). According to Babalola & Haliso (2011), library administrations to people with visual impairment in libraries of the great nations like Britain, America, Canada, Australia, Finland and Netherlands; are well set up, which the administrations rendered have been enhanced tremendously in volumes and groups of introductions. The state's ideology is that these countries have set up national libraries to people with visual disabilities which guarantee them that their information needs are satisfactorily catered for and gave the case of the UK VISION administrations in Europe which was set up in 2015 to cater for the vision impeded peruses in Britain by harnessing both nearby and national library materials and makes them accessible to borrowers with visual disability.

In most African nations, the measurements of people with visual disability do not exist. In Zambia as one of the cases, Akakandelwa & Munsanje (2012) deplored on the trouble to supply exact figures for the predominance of visual disability. Oyegade (2003) cited in (Ibenne, 2010) puts the Nigerian circumstance in a horrid cast by expressing that the accessibility of library benefit arrangement openings in Nigeria, for the people with visual disability is exceptionally restricted, with fabric suppliers working freely. In Uganda, scholarly library is built up to supply materials, which communicate involvement and concepts from one individual to another and make them effortlessly and openly accessible to all individuals. With this major point, libraries in Uganda are expected to create accessibility to different information assets within the library, hence the concept of library information assets, give fundamental offices that would help to get and utilize the data assets; additionally, giving fundamental administrations that would make the information assets valuable to clients. On that note, Wusasa (2013) asserts that it is famous that the exercises of the library in giving information to its users are complex.

The Information seeking is denoted from the way a person seeks, evaluates, selects and uses information by interacting with people and various information schemes. And it is also the process whereby a person increases or changes his state of knowledge by using the mind to learn and solve problems (Fatima, 2008). According to Wilson, (2013) he refers to the goals oriented in search for evidence to find out the information gap. Whereby he affirms that information seekers use both manual and computer-based information applications to attest themselves with information they need. The study was guided by Dretske's theory developed by Jager (2004) the theory portrays Information and the stream of data established in scientific communication, it is on these grounds that the theory is created and explained into a cognitive and functional matter which depicts information from all corners of numerical communication. It is separately arranged and bargains with the substance of data, which is semantic data. In this study Dretske's theory can be utilized to as an outline of reference in arrangement of clarity, on the information concepts like library and data science, and then as the premise for basic audits of components of the cognitive perspective in library resources, as essentially the idea of "potential information" (Jager, 2004)

According to (Seyama, 2004), integrating all round service provision to library users should be a norm, nevertheless it is not actualized to disadvantaged groups such as the persons with visual impairments who continue to have inadequate or inappropriate information and library services. Individuals with special needs are always left behind towards accessibility of information thus affecting them to meet their information satisfaction. The demanding situations that the students face, factors to the want for the library personnel to evaluate the extent and nature of visually impaired students' needs. The educational institutions are very crucial in playing a role of supporting visually impaired information needs (Jubb, 2007). Therefore, librarians at universities such as Uganda Christian University, Kyambogo University, Makerere University, extra have undertaken an ethical responsibility to make material obtainable in repackaged formats to meet the needs consumers regardless of their background. The emphasis is on information systems which are both electronic like OPAC and manual catalogue, embosser, talking books CCTV and reading software plus other resources offering users different presentations of facts towards material gaps (Malheiros & Da Cunha, 2018).

Visual impairment may be an extreme ophthalmological challenge that a few individuals are born with or develop at some point in life due to a number of differing causes. Among the Physiological and related morbidities, visual disability is considered to be as one that presents the foremost handicapping threats since it limits physical development (Seyama, 2004). He further shows that the handicap it presents in all situations, places people with visual impairment at the state of wanting help or assistive gadgets to reach wanted information. In other words, visual disability is considered as a devastating physical and passionate condition with grave socio-economic implications such that all over the world individuals with visual difficulties ought to confront various difficulties. The information gaps differ amongst library users. For example, (Seyama, 2004), describes that students have different impairments which do require unique information services to accomplish their information requirements. East Africa has a policy regarding persons with special needs. As matter of consideration for PWDs' rights to access information as enshrined in the constitution and PWD Act, it is on this basis that the librarians' admission to associate information material needs accompanied with searching behavior of all library users as a prerequisite for effective collective service provision and information accessibility (The Persons with Disability Act, 2019). Nevertheless, many libraries such as Uganda Christian University (UCU) Library are not in full respect of the law, when it comes to information seeking and accessibility amongst the visually impaired students.

Therefore, this has led strange effect on information seeking behaviors and information needs of vulnerable groups including students with visual impairment. It is on this context that the researcher conducted a research study at Uganda Christian University (UCU), which is a private University owned by Anglican Church of Uganda. The University is located in Mukono District, about twenty-three (23) kilometers from Kampala City, on the main road to Jinja. Born out of Bishop Tucker College, it is committed to the apostolic faith, practice and devotion. It has a constituent colleges and study centers in Kabale, Mbale, Arua, Namugongo and Kampala (UCU prospectus, 2008). UCU library was first named Bishop Tucker Library but later changed to Hamu Mukasa Library. Today library collection at UCU comprises both print and non-print information materials. It accommodates over 2,000 students including learners with special optical needs, whereby 30 reported having optical challenges and manned by 65 staff (UCU prospectus, 2008). The university has over 100 visually impaired persons, however, in its report (2018) the report showed many issues regarding provision of inclusive information formats still hanging, yet the visually impaired students are entitled to access information in all formants. On the same note regarding Uganda's (2005) Information Act, the 1995 constitution as amended in article 41 makes access to information a right for every person. The Access to (INFORMATION ACT, 2005), emphasizes how information in public institutions should be

accessed. (*The Persons with Disabilities Act, 2006*, 2006), under article 21 entitles PWDs right to information. However, many institutional libraries are without the above stated aspects of the laws. This has affected information seeking behaviors and information needs of people with disabilities including those with visual impairments.

2. Statement of the Problem

According to Hart, (2018), the key characteristics of information seekers including thinking about thinking (metacognition), thinking flexibly (being comfortable with multiple perspectives), thinking interdependently (collaborating), questioning and posing problems, gathering information through all senses (being an observant researcher), striving for accuracy (choosing accurate or evidence-based sources), applying past knowledge to new situations (transferring skills), persisting (growth mindset); creating, imagining, innovating (looking at information in new ways). Communicate with clarity and precision. Libraries are among the key sources of information important to ordinary and persons with disabilities including Students with Visual Impairment (SWVI). Ndumbaro, (2019) made an observation that in Uganda, library and information services are provided without considering the needs of individuals with visual impairment. The services appear to be based on the presumption that individuals with visual impairment do not exist, or don't require the service. Staff's involvement in understanding SWVI's fate on the seeking and need for information at Uganda Christian University library it is commendable that there is need of get services and facilities that meet desires of students with visual hitches.

Libraries are among the key sources of information importantly to ordinary and persons with disabilities including Students with Visual Impairment (SWVI) (Hart, 2018). However, at Uganda Christian University, the Special Needs Project report (2016) presented that seeking behavioral challenges of students with visual constraints from utilizing information materials, is that they are not adequately handled by the library management. According to Nagita and Mugawe (2016), over 65% of SWVI at UCU have not been able to access information services because the sources and facilities are not appropriate to serve them. Nagita and Mugawe (2016), pointed out that in higher institutions of learning library staff are not skilled enough for serving students' information needs with visual impairment which has negatively impacted on their information seeking behavior.

Nagita and Mugawe (2016) noted that the existing UCU library services seem to be ineffective to support access to required information for SWVI. Whereas the UCU's strategic plan 2012/18 emphasized equity and inclusion of SWVI, no study has been conducted to show progress towards attainment of this strategic objective. Therefore, there is need to establish the levels of equity and inclusion particularly in the University Library services for SWVI. Library services may continue to be offered in an environment that disadvantages SWVI. If this situation continues to prevail, the SWVI could still lag far below the pace of dynamic global village, which is negatively impacting on their academic performance, and their contribution to the socioeconomic development of the country. It is upon such an experience that the study assessed the effects of information seeking behaviors on accessibility of library services by SWVI so as to address the gaps in inappropriate services and facilities.

3. Objective of the Study

The major purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of information seeking behaviour on accessibility of library services by students with visual impairment at Uganda Christian University, Mukono.

The objectives below were formulated to guide the study:

- i. To establish the needs of information to Students with Visual Impairment (SWVI) in UCU library.
- ii. To assess information seeking behaviors of SWVI at UCU library
- iii. To evaluate the library facilities and services currently available for SWVI at UCU library.
- iv. To examine the sources of information for SWVI at UCU.
- v. To analyze the challenges encountered by SWVI while seeking for information at UCU library.

4. Theoretical Framework

The study adopted the information behavior model stipulated by (Wilson, 2013). It pointed out the necessity for exploring knowledge seeking in its own context. This facilitated individuals to conceptualize individual elements as well as social elements that are relative to cases of disability. According to (Wilson, 2013), several factors influence information needs. Take an example of Savolainen, (2019), which establishes the information practices model which studies consumers' opinions and practices. The researcher proposed that, this model could be of value if it is put into application to venture among participants who are currently in Uganda specifically at UCU library. Assessment's intention was to launch legitimacy regarding adaptation in reference to information model (Wilson, 2013). The model assisted the researcher in ascertaining information needs, seeking behaviours, services and facilities, resources and the challenges faced by SWVI at Uganda Christian University Library.

5. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for study is presented by in Figure 1.

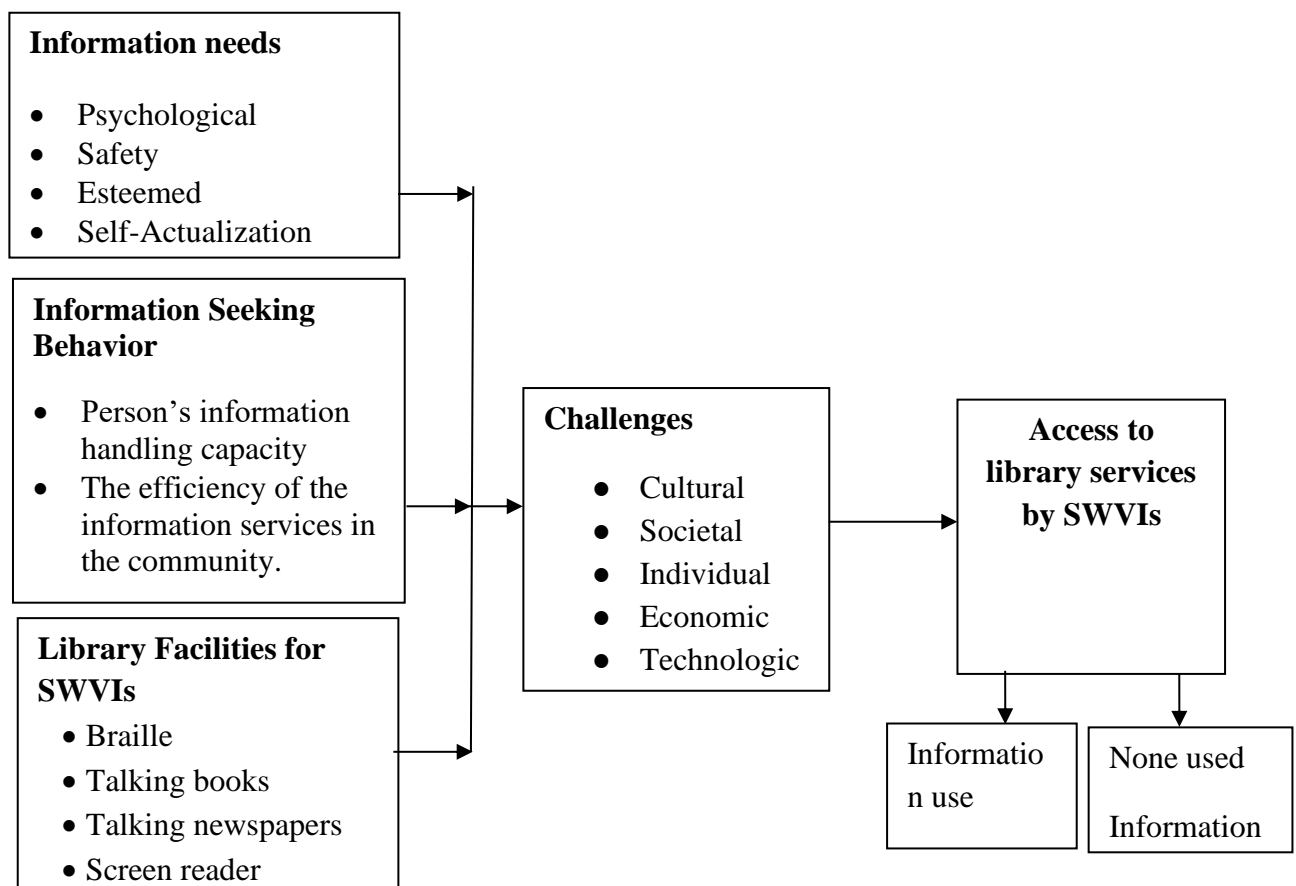


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

6. Research Methodology

The study utilized a descriptive study approach which is suitable when analyzing and recognizing a variety of circumstances and issues involved in the event before taking conclusion or solution for the specific event. Likewise, the current study determined the quantitative and qualitative methods interchangeably which helped to describe or interpret the topic under study. Descriptive design was used for data sources including persons such as students and library staff concerning the research questions. This study adopted quantitative research methods which included self-administered and interviewee administered questionnaires and extracted information from documents. The purpose of adopting these research methods was to acquire different views which could be based on for more accurate assessment of knowledge access and practices thus drawing conclusion about the research problem at UCU Library. The study was carried out at Hamu Mukasa, Library of Uganda Christian University located in Mukono district, 23 Km from Kampala along Tororo Kampala highway. This library was selected because it accommodates very many people and all the required items are available for library users which was the major aim of the study. The study participants included 60 Library staffs and 40 visually impaired students of UCU library totaling up to 100. In this study, a purposeful sampling was applied in the process of selecting research participants. The collected data was sorted for consistency. There was checking of quantitative data to ensure regularity and accuracy; this would be relevant due to the fact that, the researcher had to ensure that the study the effect of information seeking behavior on accessibility of library services by SWVI was addressed. The researcher used a linear regression model to predict the relationship between variables.

7. Data Analysis Results

7.1 Information Needs of SWVI

The study aimed at determining information needs of SWVI. Table 1 shows the results obtained.

Table 4.1: Frequency about the Information Needs of SWVI.

Characteristic		Total (N=75)	Proportion (%)
Purposes for which SWVIs have described their need for information from the library.	For academic research purposes	41	55
	For personal use	7	9
	For writing lecture assignments	13	17
	For writing seminar papers	2	3
	For writing essays	3	4
	For examinations purposes	9	12
Format of information that SWVIs usually ask for from the library	Braille format	31	41
	Electronic format	17	23
	Both print and electronic	9	12
	PDF format	13	17
	Other (please specify)	5	7

Characteristic		Total (N=75)	Proportion (%)
How Librarian, were helping SWVIs in meeting their information needs	Librarians help to ensure information exchange	46	61
	The Library locates information sources	9	12
	The library works hard to improve the available information systems	8	11
	It helps them in using the audio library	6	8
	Librarians helps SWVIs in the usage of library materials	6	8

Source: Primary data

The study examined the purposes for which SWVIs have described their need for information from the library. Findings showed that out of the seven alternative options, majority of the (55%) students stated that for academic research purposes. This could have been because SWVIs gave more Information Needs of Visually Impaired students for examinations purposes, and for writing lecture assignments among others. Information seeking behavior is a purposeful seeking for information as a consequence of a need to satisfy some goal. It is also important to note that the primary goal of libraries is to increase their global visibility and the ultimate purpose of information seeking is to provide greater access to their collections to promote research activities. The findings have an implication that there are various reasons why SWVIs seek for library services. The researcher found it critical to assess the format of information that SWVIs usually ask for from the library. In the study findings, respondents were asked of the format of information that SWVIs usually ask for from the library. A significant number (31%) of the respondents used the braille format. These are used to renders text as tactile braille cells. However, there were less significant responses such as both print and electronic, PDF format, used other categories such as voice recognition software, screen reader, and screen magnifier. Being exposed to different formats of communication among SWVIs allowed the student-interface for the efficient and user-friendly display of information. The information could be arranged in any fashion, depending on the needs of the students. Another substantial number of respondents stated that they used electronic format. This is because they had no knowledge on other types of formats.

The librarians were asked about how they are helping SWVIs in meeting their information needs, more than half (61%) of the Librarians helped SWVIs in the usage of library materials for information exchange. This implies that librarians majorly worked to support SWVIs to access the essential information that they needed so as to participate effectively in the emerging information society. The findings are in line with Babalola and Haliso (2011) who stated that librarians have a moral obligation to make information available to all categories of students regardless of their gender, age, race, political affiliation or disability. From the responses recorded in table 1, a less significant number of respondents denied the library's location for information sources, the responses showed that the library worked hard to improve the available information systems, helped SWVIs in using the audio library, and librarians ensuring information exchange. The findings concur with the World Health Organization (WHO, 2010) which stated that the onus is on librarians to make information available in alternative formats

like audio, braille or large prints that can easily be accessed by the students with visual impairment.

7.2 Information Seeking Behaviour of SWVI

Another objective was to determine the Frequency about the Information Seeking Behaviour of SWVI. In order to achieve this objective, the researcher asked student and librarians to indicate their opinion of whether SWVIs seek for information from the library and the results are as per Table 2.

Table 2: Frequency about the Information Seeking Behaviour of SWVI.

Characteristic		Total (N=75)	Percentage (%)
Opinion of Librarian on whether SWVIs seek for information from the library	Yes	53	71
	No	10	13
	Not sure	12	16
Where SWVIs seek for information	manual catalogue	42	56
	Online catalogue	8	11
	Bookshelves	16	21
	Directly from the Librarian	9	12
Opinions of Librarians whether SWVIs seek for assistance from this library	Yes	55	73
	No	11	15
	Not sure	9	12
The regularly of SWVIs in asking for assistance from the librarians in accessing information from the library	Very regular	48	64
	Regular	21	28
	Rarely	6	8

Source: primary data

The findings showed that more than a half (71%) of the respondents agreed that they seek for Information. This could be attributed to the availability of library services such as Braille format PDF format, both print and electronic, electronic format among others which could facilitate the usage of library services. However, a small significant number of respondents stated that they were not sure of their needs to seek for information from the library. This is a good indicator to the library management that it is possible for the library students who have visual challenges to use library resources and that those who are not able to use them can be facilitated and supported once their challenges of access are known.

Students and librarians were asked whether the Information Seeking Behavior of SWVI portray very much in enabling them to improve their knowledge and accessibility of library services by students with visual impairment in the university. Findings presented the number of those that stated manual catalogue constituted 56% of the respondents. This implied that students seek information purposively to broaden their subject knowledge, to enhance their course work and

assignments, prepare for examinations and tests, as well as their lecture notes. Another significant (21%) number of respondents showed that there are bookshelves. However, a less significant percentage of respondents stated that they use an online catalogue and others got information directly from the Librarian.

The researcher asked librarians if SWVIs were seeking for assistance from this library. To ascertain this, most (73%) of the study participants agreed that they relied on the librarians in order to access and utilize the information from the library. This is attributed to the various barriers SWVIs experience, such as architectural, inadequacy of appropriate reading materials in the library, inadequate braille materials, lack of context and information overload, lack of persistence and in a search environment, and the inadequate trained manpower such as librarians to handle the SWVIs, lack of special storage facilities for braille materials, and limited mobility by the SWVIs who need to be guided when accessing library resources and services that hinder the provision of library services to this category of students. On the other hand, a less significant number of respondents did not acknowledge the need for seeking for assistance from librarians. These were those SWVIs who had visual impairments that could enable them to access the library without assistance.

The study by Shunmugam (2002) revealed the different cultural values prevent visually impaired people from admitting problems or asking assistance for using libraries and information sources. Shunmugam suggests that the visually impaired should be considered and assisted as one of user groups in academic libraries since a lack of experience about them would lead to a frustrating encounter for both the librarian and the visually impaired students. So, the need for assistance in order for SWVIs not to be excluded from making informed decision and gaining the necessary knowledge.

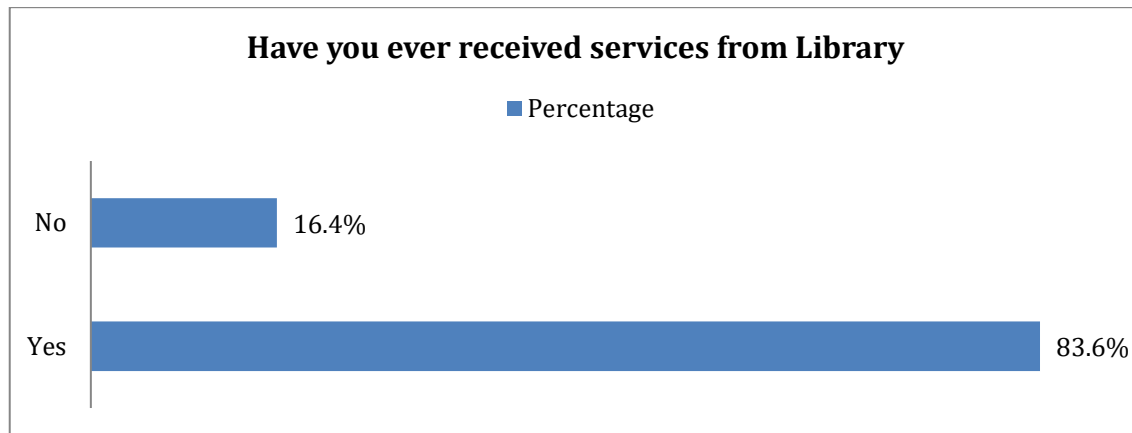
The findings also indicated that more than a half of the students asked for assistance from the librarians while seeking for library services. This could be attributed to the various barriers SWVIs experience such as architectural, inadequacy of appropriate reading materials in the library, inadequate braille materials, lack of context and information overload, lack of persistence and in a search environment, and the inadequate trained manpower such as librarians to handle the SWVIs, lack of special storage facilities for braille materials, and limited mobility by the SWVI who need to be guided when accessing library resources and services that hinder the provision of library services to this category of students. However, a small but significant number of study respondents indicated that, they do often ask for assistance and others rarely sought for assistance from librarians. This was a good indicator that seeking for assistance helped students with visual impairments to fit in a library environment filled with barriers. This was also a good sign that SWVIs can be able to get services and use facilities that support their information access and utilization, thus improving their information seeking behaviors.

7.3 Library services and facilities currently available for SWVI.

The results in figure 2 about the library services and facilities currently available for the SWVI shows that there are specific information services and inadequate library facilities ever received by SWVI. The researcher queried if there are specific information services ever received by SWVI students. The outcomes indicated that majority (83.6%) of the respondents agreed that they had ever received information related to SWVI. Libraries and information centers around the world have developed specialized information services to be able to meet the needs of their visually impaired clientele Junaid (2017). However, quite a smaller percentage from the above results did not agree and these were making a negligible percentage of 16.4%. The findings approved an implication that library services to students with visual impairment specified the importance of inclusive library services. This aspect of inclusive library services involves eradication of physical barriers from the library, conversion of material into required accessible

formats, and the significance of trained and sensitized library staff towards the issue of serving SWVI.

Figure 2: Library services and facilities currently available for SWVI.



Source: Primary data

The findings on the frequency about the Library services and facilities currently available to SWVI obtained are as per Table 3.

Table 3: Frequency about the Library services and facilities currently available to SWVI.

Characteristic	Responses	Total (N=73)	Proportion (%)
How these services are given in order to help SWVIs in acquiring knowledge with the available library facilities	From manual catalogue	47	63
	Online catalogue	9	12
	Bookshelves	15	20
	Directly from the Librarian	4	5
How SWVIs use the library services	They use Braille	52	69
	They use student readers	6	8
	They use screen readers	14	19
	There use screen magnifiers	2	3
	Others	1	1
Provision of training on the use of Assistive Technologies	Weekly	39	52
	Monthly	11	15
	Annually	15	20
	On request	4	5
	When joining University	6	8
The types of assistive facilities are available in the library	Braille	46	61
	Talking books	7	9
	Talking news materials	11	15

Characteristic	Responses	Total (N=73)	Proportion (%)
	Large, printed materials	5	7
	Others	6	8
The rating of the use of assistive technologies for SWVIs in accessing library resources	Very useful	51	68
	Useful	13	17
	Somehow useful	8	11
	Not useful	3	4
The rate of knowledge is the library staff in serving the Students with Visually Impairment with assistive technology	Very knowledgeable	41	55
	Average knowledge	15	20
	Little knowledge	12	16
	Not sure	7	9

Source: primary data

The findings showed that more than a half (63%) indicated that they use manual catalogues. The reason for the use of manual catalogues was because they are the commonest facilities available in the university library as compared to the other facilities. Another significant number (20%) of students agreed that they use bookshelves as facilities to access library services. However, a small but significant number of student and librarians indicated that they directly inquire from the Librarians and online catalogue; about information resources and inadequate numbers of computers this is attributed to the little physical space of the section having no room to add other facilities and computers to accommodate online catalogues.

Findings from table 3 clearly show that majority (69%) of the students with visual impairments use the library services through braille. This is due to the fact that many of the students lacked knowledge on how to use assistive technology available in the library like screen readers, and screen magnifiers among others because these were inadequate at the university library. A significant number indicated that the use of braille was very useful compared to other resources. This could be used as a base in the provision of more assistive technology software and facilities in the library since it proved useful to those who knew how to use it. Findings revealed that slightly more than half of the students i.e., 52% indicated that librarians often take a week to provide training on the use of Assistive Technologies to students with visual impairment at the University library. This showed that the librarians are taking possible steps to ensure that students are motivated to seek for information for various benefits. This has policy implications in that the librarian needs to ensure provision of adequate electronic facilities as well as the required software for speech and magnification so as to further motivate the students as well as facilitate their easy access to the bank of knowledge in electronic resources. The provision of training in assistive technologies such as adaptive, enabling, or access to technology, it ensures that students with visual impairment are capable of accessing on-screen information and receiving output in a way that is appropriate to their needs. It is important to note that only 5% of the total number indicated that they provide training to students with disabilities on request. This could have been due to low interest in seeking for information from the library.

The largest number of librarians indicated that there are various types of assistive facilities available in the library with digitized information facilities aimed at improving access to information with various simple advanced searching techniques and retrieval facilities. Also,

digital information can be accessed simultaneously by many students at a very low cost. However, more than half of the students (61%) indicated that they used braille as an adaptive technology. In this case, the duty is on librarians to make information available in alternative formats of braille that can easily be accessed by the students with visual impairment. Another significant number of students also noted that they used talking materials such as books and news materials.

From the responses, the highest number (68%) of students and librarians rated the use of assistive technologies for SWVIs in accessing library resources as very useful. In this result, assistive technology being a practical skill, the very useful rating can be attributed to continued usage of these skills through the available avenues like at the library. This is an indication that assistive technology is a useful skill to those that have acquired it and therefore can be specifically very useful in facilitating easy access to electronic information resources. It is consequently important for the university secretariat through the library management to come up with a strategy of ensuring that the students who join the university without these skills benefit, and with an acute view on improving access to library services and resources. However, it is important to note that to other students the lower ratings are attached to the view that there are challenges in accessibility, lack of trained librarians in special needs services at the library among others. It is also important to have such issues discussed and prioritized to ensure access to information as a basic human right.

The quality and mode of library service provision is key in aiding SWVI in accessing and utilizing the library services. From the results in the study, responses showed that only (20%) of students rated the knowledge about the use of assistive technologies with the help of library staff. It is important to emphasize the importance of the availability of knowledgeable staff in the necessary areas as per the specific needs of the SWVI is vital. In proper rating of abilities to provide appropriate services, the rating at a very knowledgeable, average knowledge, little knowledge was intended to identify the gaps in service provision at University library for SWVI. The average knowledge on the provision of assistive technology for these students it was attributed to lack of staff support through seminars and workshops on assistive technology. Importantly, there could also be consideration of high staff knowledge of library policies on staff recruitment without keen interest on the staff knowledge about assistive technology for the staff serving in the section of students with special needs.

7.4 Challenges encountered by SWVI while Seeking for Information.

Respondents were asked to give Information about the challenges encountered by SWVI while Seeking for Information in table 4 below.

Table 4: Frequency about the challenges encountered by SWVI while Seeking for Information.

Characteristic	Responses	Total (N=75)	Percentage (%)
The barriers librarians have encountered in providing library services to SWVIs	Inadequate trained manpower in the Library	34	45
	Inadequacy of appropriate reading materials in the library	15	20
	Architectural challenges	11	15

Characteristic	Responses	Total (N=75)	Percentage (%)
	Lack of special storage facilities for Braille materials	6	8
	Limited mobility by the SWVI	9	12
The way that library services for visually impaired students can be improved at UCU	Improve physical accessibility for SWVI library students	10	13
	Develop appropriate reading materials in the library	14	19
	Ensure provision of adequate assistive materials	18	24
	Improve on training for library manpower	28	37
	Locate special storage facilities for assistive materials	3	4
	Others	2	3
The rating of the use of assistive technologies for SWVIs in accessing library resources.	Very useful	35	47
	Useful	24	32
	Somehow useful	7	9
	Not useful	9	12

Source: primary data

The results in Table 4 they are about the challenges encountered by students with visual impairment while seeking for Information. In achieving this objective, assessment was done on the several challenges encountered by librarians when serving students with visual impairments at the library. These challenges were identified during several consultations with students and library staff. In this regard, slightly higher number (45%) of students identified that inadequate trained manpower in the Library was a challenge. It is important to note that students with visual impairments lack awareness of traditional and latest technologies and rely on training to utilize its benefits. However, SWVI lacked independence in using resources and other assistive technology as a key aspect in the access of resources by these students with visual challenges and that illiteracy levels for students and staff are also a key challenge. During the assessment, library staff were also asked about the challenges that they experienced while serving SWVI specifically when accessing and utilizing library services, several other challenges were identified. These were the inadequacies of appropriate reading materials in the library, architectural challenges, lack of special storage facilities for Braille materials, limited mobility by the SWVI. It was also noted that majority of students with visual impairments did not have basic computer skills thus forcing the staff to spend much time with a single student finding the resource for them, thus inability of staff to demonstrate the processes and usage of assistive technology to the students. These impediments are extremely frustrating.

The findings concur with Sugimoto et al., (2011) who posit that there is inadequate trained manpower such as librarians to handle the visually impaired library users, lack of special storage facilities for braille materials, and limited mobility by the visually impaired library users who

need to be guided when accessing library resources and services that hinder the provision of library services to this category of library students. The personal barriers of SWVI that hinder access to library resources and services result from ignorance of the information services available in the library and all these form reasons why the libraries are underutilized by the visually impaired library users (Rayini, 2017).

During the interviews, students and library staff were also asked on their proposals on how the library services for visually impaired students can be improved at UCU. A slightly number (37%) of responses indicated the need to improve on library manpower skilling and recruiting trained personel. Improved trained personnel could motivate innovations, introduction of new services for students with visual impairments who need to access services at the library. If staff is not trained in special needs materials at the library, no new services shall be availed, and this may leave SWVI lagged behind than other students at the university. In the same way, presence of a formal documented policy is important because it serves as a guide in resource acquisition, budget allocation, staff development and appropriate service provision for SWVIs. It equally helps to define the relationship of the library with other departments serving Students with Visual Impairment at the University such as the teaching staff.

Additionally, a significant number of students and librarians indicated that the there are other strategies that can be undertaken to improve service provision for SWVIs at the university. These included the need to improve physical accessibility for SWVI in the library, the need to develop appropriate reading materials in the library, the need to ensure provision of adequate assistive materials and the need to locate special storage facilities for assistive materials. From these findings, it is clear that access to library services for SWVIs can be improved mainly by ensuring adequate provision of assistive devices fitted with assistive technology, conducting organized and frequent trainings on how to access library resources, improving internet connectivity and conducting staff induction on adaptive technology. The university secretariat should therefore consider the above suggestions for improvements in access to electronic resources by students with visual impairment since they are directly congregated from this specific category of students.

The findings harmonize with Babalola and Haliso (2011) who asserted that in order to provide equitable library and information services to the visually impaired, the libraries must tackle challenges of visually impaired library users with the involvement and cooperation of all stakeholders. Government and academic libraries, NGOs and other agencies serving visually impaired people, must work together on the strategies that lead to improved library and information services for the visually impaired. Chukwueke et al., (2018) also added that these strategies must aim at provision of adequate funding for libraries, periodical review of policies guiding the implementation of funding the libraries, networking, training and retraining of librarians to handle SWVI at all levels of library services, provision of audio materials in the libraries, and investment in assistive technology.

7.5 Regression Analysis

A linear regression model was run to establish the effect of information seeking behaviour on accessibility of library services by students with visual impairment as discussed below:

Ho: Accessibility of library services by students with visual impairment is independent of information seeking behaviour.

Ha: Accessibility of library services by students with visual impairment is dependent of information seeking behaviour.

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.657 ^a	.789	.822	.46432

a. Predictors: (Constant), Information seeking behaviour

Looking at the adjusted R-square 0.822 implies that 82.2% of the variations in accessibility of library services by students with visual impairment can be explained by changes in the information seeking behaviour while a negligible percentage of 17.8% remains unexplained hence a good fit.

Table 6: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.150	.259		4.446	.000
	Information seeking behaviour	.062	.256	.058	3.631	.002

a. Dependent Variable: Accessibility of library services

From the results in the above table the established regression equation was.

Accessibility of library service = 1.150 + 0.62 Information seeking behaviour

The results depict that a unit increase in the information seeking behaviour could on average lead to certain percentage which increases the accessibility of library service and other holding factors remaining constant. The null hypothesis is that accessibility of library services by students with visual impairment is dependent of information seeking behaviour.

8. Conclusions

In conclusion therefore, there are specific information services provided by the university library to SWVI as their students; Majority of the students with visual impairments use the library services through braille though librarians not often take a time to provide training on the usage of Assistive Technologies to students with visual impairment at the University. The highest number of students and librarians rated the use of assistive technologies for SWVIs in accessing library resources is very vital for them to accomplish their assignments. From the study findings, more than half of the total number of students rated knowledge in serving SWVI with assistive technology by Library staff as average. Furthermore, there is inadequate trainings of special needs services to library manpower to acquaint themselves with skills which could allow them to understand the seeking behaviours of the visually impaired students to be served efficiently and effectively, not to be lagged behind than their counterparts at the university. The largest number of librarians indicated that there are various types of assistive facilities available

in the library aimed at improving access to information with simple advanced searching techniques and retrieval facilities.

9. Recommendations

The management of University library needs to bear in mind that SWVI have challenges in accessing information for learning fast and they usually have problems with effective communication and interacting with the environment such as libraries to ensure that they are given special attention and care. People with visual impairment normally need some assistive devices and services which take into account the level of needs; for example, some people require much specialized eyeglasses therefore as University and its counterparts should always be focused at putting such requirement in place to fulfill all round needs of student.

The seeking behaviours of SWVIs differ depending on the level of their study, particularly the degree programs and age of the students. Consequently, the required information services should also vary according to the students' level of sight impairment as well as the extent to which they personally encounter barriers. Academic information needs of SWVI must be addressed by the major stakeholders of the institution, furthermore, University management prior to enrolling SWVI at the University they should consider inclusive information needs, seeking behaviour and the manner in which these unique needs of students could be met when providing choices for delivering specialized services. Uganda Christian University library should provide equitable and inclusive services by giving special attention and specialized facilities to Students with Visual Impairment (SWVI) to access information resources. The library should be open to all data formats that creates all repackaged sorts of information promptly accessible to its users. The library should be supported and financed by government, church and all other University stakeholders to ensure that it has all the facilities and services catered for the students with visual impairments.

Persons with visual impairment are facing a lot of challenges such as inadequacy of appropriate reading materials which are repackaged to suit their needs in the library, improper storage facilities for Braille materials among others these are a hinderance in accessibility of appropriate library services and facilities. Therefore, University management and the library should venture all possible solutions to eradicate on the challenges that are accruing on accessibility of information services. Another suggestion could be that students with visual impairment should be considered among the priorities of the University students because if they are not considered they do lag behind than their counterparts the sighted one leading to forms of discrimination. Uganda Christian University should also prioritize the needs of SWVI during the budgeting process and adapt to global principles in designing of library facilities and services and the training of staff into special needs skills for efficiency of service delivery.

The Students' inability to locate materials in the library, inadequate provision of assistive technologies as a source for utilization of services which are in a friendly format to their incapability to access information, this should be well addressed by the Uganda Christian university library to improve on the service delivery. The management of the University should stock the library with assistive devices and more braille books, talking online journals and also conduct in-service training for library staff to make them effective and efficient in meeting and understanding information needs and seeking behaviours of SWVI.

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