QUEST FOR INFORMATION BY THE
EMPLOYED VISUALLY HANDICAPPED
READERS IN LIBRARIES AROUND NAIROBI
AREA: A SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

This thesis has not been submitted for examination prior to
a degree in any other university.

BY

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION
(LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES) AT
KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

1995

Kenyatta University Library
DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

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This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as University supervisor.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The completion of this study has been made possible through the assistance and cooperation of many persons, both within and outside Kenyatta University. Therefore, it would be ungrateful not to express my gratitude to them.

First, I wish to express my gratitude to my supervisors namely Milkah N. Mathu and E.W. Muya who supervised this work with a keen sense of duty. To them I am heavily indebted for constructive criticisms, valuable suggestions and persistent encouragement in writing the thesis. Thanks are also due to my lecturers in the department, J.R. Njuguna, M.K. Mukuvi and P.G. Mwathii.

Much appreciation is extended to Kenyatta University for awarding me a scholarship and granting me study leave through the University Librarian, Mr. J.M. Ng’ang’a, to pursue postgraduate studies in the University leading to the completion of this study.

I am also indebted to a large number of persons who provided me with information and material assistance during the field work and data collection. I am especially grateful to John M. Kilonzo of K.U.B for helping me to identify the employed visually handicapped persons and where they can be found, Chomba wa Munyi of African Union of the Blind for invaluable information and useful suggestions towards the completion of this study.

Sincere thanks go to my colleagues; Mbuu, Nyantika; Kavulya and Anyango for their concern and moral support
throughout the two years of study.

I wish to extend a lot of gratitude to the word processing expertise of Ms. Alice K. Mbwika for completing the work in time.

Lastly, my heartiest thanks go to my wife Agnes Katungwa Nzyoka and our four children, Mwikali, Kalunde, Wambua and Ndila for enduring in a most understanding manner with the conditions at home during the two years of study when it was not possible to fully play the role of loving husband and father. Their patience, understanding and persistent encouragement is highly appreciated, and to them I dedicate this work.
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ABBREVIATIONS

O/M : Orientation and Mobility
KUB : Kenya Union of the Blind
KIB : Kenya Institute of the Blind
KSB : Kenya Society for the Blind
RNIB: Royal National Institute of the Blind
RCSB: Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind.
ABSTRACT

When planning and establishing public libraries, academic or special libraries, there is one section of the society which is usually overlooked, that is, the section of the employed visually handicapped or the blind. In the schools and training centres, they are taken care of, but as soon as they finish their formal education and are employed, there is no provision for their information needs.

This study is meant to create awareness of the existing scarcity of information to the working class visually handicapped readers. It is believed that the planners can make relevant intervention to alleviate this situation if they were made aware of the problems that the visually handicapped are experiencing at the moment. The study will offer suggestions to libraries and policy makers on how the situation could be corrected.

To facilitate the collection of data, the visually handicapped themselves who will be chosen at random will be asked to fill questionnaires. They will be expected to fill in their personal experiences. The libraries too will fill in the questionnaires to indicate what they are doing about the situation.

It is expected that if the blind working class readers are provided with the necessary opportunities in the accessibility to information like the sighted, they will realise their talents.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

1.1.1 Causes

Although the government is committed to promote reading habits amongst the public, it is evident, the visually handicapped who are part of the public are not explicitly considered at the planning level. The National Development Plan of 1994-1996 has a subsection about libraries and information centres. It stipulates that there is a plan to promote reading facilities. It states:

During the period, it is intended that these facilities will be expanded to cater for sections of the society. In particular, improvements will be made on records management and administration of public archives and the National Documentation and Information Retrieval Services. Efforts will be made to include children books in public libraries (National Development Plan, 1994-1996:95).

From the above quotation, it is clear that the planners have indicated the areas where special emphasis will be placed but the facilities for the visually handicapped are not mentioned. The planners indicated that they will provide children’s books in public libraries, but they do not specify whether the books will be in braille so that the visually handicapped peers may find something to read whenever they visit a library.
Public libraries and information centres where the working class visually handicapped can go to seek for information do not have provision for those who are in quest of information. However, libraries keep on getting materials for the sighted readers. The donors and the government give assistance to institutions and schools as well as the organisations which publish braille books such as Kenya Institute of the Blind (KIB), Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) and Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE). The reading materials that they produce are given to schools and other related institutions but not to the public libraries and information centres, so the employed visually handicapped persons find themselves in difficulties.

Since the libraries and information centres in Nairobi area are stocked with print books, the blind may not find braille books and the low vision readers do not find large print or magnifiers with which they can read normal print. So they always do not get materials in the media, they are able to read for themselves. Although they can visit the libraries in the company of a sighted guide who can tell them what is written in print books, this is not the same as when someone reads for oneself.
It is important to note the nature of the handicap of this group and the limitations it imposes. This places an individual in a difficult situation in activities of daily living. This, in its general sense, include, orientation and mobility. The blind do not find it easy to get about in the libraries which have no adaptations to suit the blind and low vision. For instance, it may be difficult for them to use the high shelves, narrow and crowded corridors, toilets, etc. Due to that problem the blind may not be willing to go to the libraries or information centres because they will be subjected to difficulties of locating what they want.

The attitude that the society have towards the visually handicapped has a bearing towards the problem. This problem is not confined to one particular country. It is common in the developing countries whereby the concept of the care for the handicapped has not been taken seriously. For instance, Narasmhan (1990) in his study which he carried out in India observed that:

Handicapped individuals in the country generally lead a passive life without doing any useful work for the community. This is essentially due to the neglect shown by their own families as well as by society at large side by side with an improvement of their skills to take up specific jobs, it is essential to create a positive attitude in their
employers. In a developing country like India, continuous commitment and support from the government is vitally important for any measure to augment employment aspects for the disabled (Narasimhan, 1990:105).

Although the situation in Kenya may not be strictly similar it cannot be denied that there is an element of slack attitude of the society towards the visually handicapped in the field of information. This is evident in some libraries where the workers may not want to deal with the blind because they are not competent enough to do so. In other words, the information workers and the librarians may know what to do with the sighted readers but are at a loss when they are to serve the blind and low vision. This can be attributed to lack of training on the part of library personnel in order to serve the blind better.

1.1.2 Effects

Indeed the visually handicapped have a feeling that their fundamental rights are not fully met. In a press release by the task force on the disability movement of Kenya, the visually handicapped made it clear to the public, the government, as well as the whole world that they were not happy with the way they are getting services. They demanded that their individual liberties and rights be incorporated into the legal and political system on the basis of the general provision of the human rights charter and the
international instruments promulgated by the United Nations System and the international community. The press release added:

...that they would like to be afforded the right to medical and social rehabilitation, education, vocational education, training and rehabilitation and counselling, placement services and other services which will enable them to develop their capabilities and skills to the maximum and will hasten the process of their social integration or re-integration (Press release by the Task Force on the Disability Movement in Kenya, 1992:1). This emphasis on the rights is a reflection of deprivation of some basic rights such as information services to them. From the mood of the press release, it is evident that the visually handicapped do not get services from an assortment of fields such as education, vocation, social re-integration, etc. The services of libraries is part of the many services that the visually handicapped do not get. The main cause of such a problem can be attributed to the priorities that the government has placed which can be said to be overlooking the information needs of the blind.

Generally, this problem of lack of information to the blind is evident in developing nations. For instance, in Uganda, members of the Uganda National Association of the Blind (UNAB) laments how information was not reaching their members. They felt that there was no coordinated system to
disseminate information to the members. Concerning this Isiko (1993) says:

During the early years of UNAB, the organisation revolved around the general assembly which met every three years. With no programmes, the organisation main direct contribution to the membership was the distribution of white canes and writing slates when they were available. On occasions the leaders attended international conferences, but no programmes were coordinated to disseminate information to the general membership. (Isiko, 1993:34)

The main concern here is that there is a problem of information dissemination. This is an indication that, had it not been for the lack of information among the members of UNAB, the union would have progressed.

This problem has distinct primary effect such as the attitude the visually handicapped persons develop towards the use of libraries in quest of their information needs. The visually handicapped readers abandon visiting the libraries and depend on the other sources for their information. Since they feel their quest for information will not be met in the libraries, they opt to keep away.

The visually handicapped readers enjoy reading books for entertainment. If the libraries do not stock their libraries with books in braille which the blind may read for pleasure then they feel deprived of their right to read books
for relaxation like the sighted. To them the library does not serve the purpose. For that reason they prefer sitting idle at their houses or places of work since they would not benefit by going to cinemas like the sighted.

In addition, they have no way of advancement and self fulfilment. Instead they only wait for people to tell them what is around them. The employers usually prefer employees who are well informed and competent in keeping up with the modern trends of development. Promotions are hard to come by for those people who do not read beyond formal education. Due to lack of reading and adding knowledge, the visually handicapped remain ignorant of their environment and the world at large. They stand a danger of lapsing back into illiteracy.

These primary effects lead to secondary effects. For instance, the totally blind persons become more handicapped due to lack of orientation because his world is limited to only his place of work and home and few other places such as the supermarkets, etc. If he was exposed to wide range of reading, his world would open up. Those restrictions he experiences due to lack of reading would be minimised tremendously. He would find that going to libraries and reading a variety of books enhances knowledge about himself,
people around him and the whole environment.

Moreover, reading exposes the reader to the problems of others. Lack of reading may lead to self pity for the blind people. If they read books they will not think that they are the only ones with peculiar problems. They would read of others who have had such problems and they were able to overcome. Using the libraries and information centres provide the blind with opportunities for sharing experiences with other fellow blind people who visit such places. They also get to overcome the feelings that they are too disabled to do something. They feel a strong urge to emulate the characters they read about in the books who succeed in life. This can only come about if the libraries have books written in the media that can suit the visually handicapped readers, i.e. braille for the totally blind and large print for the low vision readers.

Lack of reading by a working visually handicapped person has effects on their families. For instance, if a blind person who has a family does not read to further his education, he does not progress at his place of work. If the blind is married to a sighted wife, as is often the case, she may be expecting the blind husband to be financially stable like the sighted. This results if the wife has an
attitude that the husband must do as well as the other husbands, without admitting that visual handicap has limiting effects on a person. Although such a reaction may not be overt, it is usually an unconscious effect that may affect the employed person adversely. Some of the working blind persons testify of wives who take all the money after the blind person has earned it.

Again failure to read the current trends of development about family planning and the available methods about family planning leads to large families which the blind person may not be able to cope with. In the long run, the children may lack jobs thus making them beggars. This problem can be stemmed by creating opportunities for the blind, just like the sighted to read in libraries pamphlets and booklets, besides, hearing over mass media about family planning.

The community in which a blind person lives and works has an effect on the welfare and self reliance of a blind person. If a community creates avenues for the blind person to operate freely without stumbling blocks such as negative attitudes, rejection, stigmatization, etc., the employed person can function effectively. But that is not always the case. A blind person once expressed her dissatisfaction in the way the community consider the blind. The Sunday Times reported:
The chairperson of KUB women wing Mrs. Catherine Mwayonga said that pity expressed for the disabled had been abused by being taken that they were also mentally handicapped. "We cannot allow this to continue" (Sunday Times, March 15, 1992:3).

This is an indication that the blind persons themselves are affected by the way the community consider them. They feel that their fundamental rights are violated by the way the community consider them.

Usually an employed person does not only satisfy his financial needs, but also serves the community and the society at large. Lack of reading renders the blind ineffective in their service to the society. Whereas the sighted employed person are exposed to a variety of reading materials in the libraries, it is not the case with the blind persons. This effect may be attributed to the attitude that the society has towards the blind. For instance Narasmhan (1990) revealed the attitude of some charitable organisation which only concentrated on the short term effects thus neglecting the long term problem of making blind persons independent and self reliant. He says:

These charitable organisations confined their activities to granting succour and solace to the afflicted. Services were confined to providing food and shelter, but did not improve their social and economic conditions. The handicapped were still considered objects of charity or pity rather than individuals who could lead normal lives.

(Narasmhan, 1990:72)
Although this situation was experienced in India, it is applicable here. It is usually easy to provide the blind with temporal benefits rather than the long lasting benefit such as sources of information and knowledge i.e libraries and information centres.

The problem of not adequately meeting the quest for information by the blind has an effect on the nation. While there are clearly defined policies of acquisition and storage of information for the sighted, it is not so with the blind. The schools and other institutions of learning i.e training colleges receive materials from Kenya Institute of the Blind, and some funds from the government and charitable organisations. But this does not happen to libraries where the employed visually handicapped person go to read. The problem is that the blind persons do not get the reading materials in the library while in turn it discourages him from visiting the public libraries and information centres. In such a situation blind persons with potentialities do not get reading materials. This anomaly has an effect on the nation as a whole because some would be visually handicapped contributors of national development do not get the opportunity to do so. Instead they continue being a liability to the nation and add economic burden. If this section of the community, i.e the visually handicapped were
well catered for in the provision of information, a nation would have balanced citizenry who would equally contribute to the overall development of the nation.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Quest for information is an innate tendency in man that cannot be suppressed. The visually handicapped, albeit their impairment in utilizing the sense of sight optimumly are endowed with that tendency. This is more evident in working class visually handicapped persons who need the information to increase and improve their skills. The working class visually handicapped readers need information for entertainment as well as continuing education for self fulfilment.

The problem occurs when the visually handicapped go to visit libraries and information centres. They hardly get what they are looking for. Whereas the visually handicapped who are in schools and institutions are taken care of by the government and donor agencies, it is not the case with the working class visually handicapped readers.

The visually handicapped like their sighted counterparts in any society are entitled to basic human rights such as the right to access information and therefore the right to know.
As was aptly stated by Trehan (1992) while elaborating on the UNESCO manifesto, he said:

The library services for the visually handicapped present the only opportunity for the blind to access not only the written work but also to all other types of information and to the literature available (Trehan, 1992:147)'

However, it is fairly evident that the current set up in most Kenyan libraries and information centres do not fulfil this wish. They are only designed to cater for the sighted readers. At the same time there is clear paucity of empirical data which attempt to address the quest for information by employed blind readers in these libraries.

To expand on the background to the problem, it is important that the problem tree that has primary and secondary causes as well as primary and secondary effects is used to illustrate the problem. It can be noted here that one of the primary cause is lack of clauses that can guide implementers to stock public libraries and information centres with braille reading materials. This has continued to perpetuate lack of information facilities for the blind.
Lack of Orientation and mobility skills

Attitude of the society

Planning and implementation

Lack of adaptations

Nature of handicap

Lack of reading materials

PROBLEM:
Lack of information for the employed visually handicapped readers

Ignorance

Lack of self fulfilment

Lack of recreation through reading

Negative attitude towards libraries

Self pity

Lack of promotion

Secondary causes

Primary causes

Primary effects
1.3 PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

1.3.1 Purpose

The study is aimed at understanding the behaviour exhibited by the working visually handicapped readers in quest of information in libraries and information units which are available, yet the visually handicapped users do not make full use of them because they are fundamentally designed for the sighted readers. The main concern in this study is therefore to establish the problems and offer suggestions of how they can be alleviated if not fully solved.

Specifically, the objectives of the study can be stated as:

i) To create an awareness to the planners that the visually handicapped users of libraries and information centres ought to be considered at the planning level.

ii) To offer suggestions as to how libraries and information centres can make provisions for the visually handicapped readers.
iii) To inform libraries and information unit workers of the existing problems that the visually handicapped readers face when they are in quest of information.

1.3.2 Significance

In National Development all citizens ought to be involved. A nation cannot be considered to be fully developed if it does not cater for the disadvantaged section of the community. The visually handicapped have a potentiality that can be developed and tapped for the overall development of the nation. For the intellectual output in the visually handicapped to be exploited, they need to keep abreast with the current trends of development of knowledge. How else can this be accomplished unless there are provisions for them in the libraries and information centres?

Quest for information is an urge within an individual whose intelligence functions normally. The blind are endowed with that urge. It can be frustrating for a visually handicapped person who is responding to that urge when he visits a library or information unit only to find that there are no provisions for him. He may get somebody to read for
him the printed books, but it cannot be the same if he reads for himself or listens to a talking book. He understands better and the impression is long lasting.

Since the number of adult visually handicapped learning in colleges and universities is growing, it is high time the libraries and information centres planned how they can provide the blind with reading materials, just as they are doing with the sighted. While a sighted person can walk into any library and get reading materials readily, this is not the case with the blind. Their opportunities are limited.

It is hoped that with the recommendations and suggestions in this study, the employed visually handicapped persons in those professions that require them to continue reading will get materials that can suit them. Examples of such professions include: teaching, law, administration, journalism, etc. In their profession they encounter problems that require them to write scholarly papers and present others in international conferences. Without provisions in the libraries they may not get the information when they need it.

Gone are the days when the blind used to pursue only limited lines of profession. These days there are blind employees who are pursuing journalism, others are chairmen and
secretaries of international organisations, while others are lawyers. With provision of books and audio materials, their upward mobility at work will be possible. The competition is very stiff and will require someone, whether blind or sighted to read beyond school. Just because someone is blind will not earn him promotion. He needs to be well informed in his vocation. So he or she needs to read widely so as to cope with the changing ways of life. In order for the blind to read, libraries and information units ought to make provisions for them. It is hoped that the planners and donors will be sensitized enough to think of the blind as they are planning for the sighted.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As the study starts the researcher need to keep some research questions in mind. The questions will act as a guiding factor when the study is starting and ending. Specifically the following questions need to be set forth as the study progress:

1.4.1 Is there any relationship between frequent use of libraries by the visually handicapped and the availability of reading materials in braille and large print?
1.4.2 Is there any relationship between the frequent use of the libraries and the assistance offered to the blind by the library staff?

1.4.3 Is there any relationship between the adaptations in the libraries to suit orientation and mobility, and the number of blind users who visit the libraries and information centres?

1.4.4 Does employment reduce or increase the number of visually handicapped who use libraries and information centres?

1.4.5 What connection is there between the number of visually handicapped that visit libraries and publicity about the existence of reading materials in braille and large print?

1.4.6 Is there any relationship between the regulations and the number of blind persons that visit libraries and information units?

1.4.7 Does levying of fines for overdue books in libraries have any effect on the numbers of visually handicapped readers visiting libraries and information centres?
1.4.8 Would intervention by the government, donors and local agencies bring about any effect in the numbers of the visually handicapped who visit libraries and information centres around Nairobi area, if they stepped up their assistance for them?

1.5 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1.5.1 Scope

The study concentrated in examining the quest for information by the employed group of the visually handicapped around Nairobi area. Soon after leaving school they join the labour market. Those who are lucky to get jobs do not get enough facilities in the libraries. The libraries and information units that can offer information to the group were to be examined. Although the libraries were not offering the information facilities for the blind at the time of this research, but they are potential sources who may in the future assist the visually handicapped employed people meet their quest for information.

Information about the state of affairs and the situation around Nairobi area was elicited from the visually handicapped users themselves.
The following libraries and information units were visited for information: McMillan memorial Library; Kenyatta University, UNESCO Commission; American Cultural Centre; Kenya National Library Services; Kenya Union of the Blind; Kenya Society for the Blind; Kenya Institute of the Blind; Royal Commonwealth Society of the Blind.

1.5.1 Limitations

The study was planned to take a duration of six months. In reality a study of this magnitude which involves eliciting information from the blind users and the librarians who are supposed to serve them cannot be exhausted satisfactorily within the given time. More so, the schedule was further minimised by class work such as lectures and semester examinations. With such loaded time-line it is impossible to collect all the information needed.

The area chosen, that is Nairobi, was just a small area considering that a great number of blind readers who graduate from universities and colleges are posted out of Nairobi. It would not be rightly asserted that the number of respondents around Nairobi area form the bulk of the employed visually handicapped. It can be said that the chosen area has an ideal concentration of working visually handicapped persons. The
sample taken from Nairobi area was extended to be representative of the whole country.

The literature review may not represent all what there is about the topic. More and more research is still being carried out and more current literature is being generated. At such a fast moving field, it would be unfair to say that the study exhaustively covered all what there is in the field. Nevertheless the available literature that was relevant to the topic was reviewed to give the study a bearing and shun duplication of similar topic. The study can therefore be considered to be another building block in this field of information for the blind.

1.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

On page 23 is a diagram illustrating the conceptual framework of the quest for information by the employed visually handicapped readers.
Soon after the blind join the labour market

Labour market

A number of them are employed.

Employment

Few employed blind persons visit information units.

Information units

Little assistance of materials for the blind to information units.

- Government
  - Donors
    - ILO
    - DANIDA
    - KIB
    - RCSB

KIB produces reading materials

KISE sends materials to schools and colleges

KIE sends materials to schools

Few, blind employed persons visit libraries

Libraries

Little assistance for the blind to the libraries.

Source: Field Study
The diagram depicts the concentrations in the conceptual flow that can facilitate the availability of information for the blind working class starting from the schools and training institutions, it is evident that after completing school, they automatically join the labour market seeking for the jobs. Some are employed, others are self employed while others remain jobless.

Those who are employed do not find it easy to get reading facilities in the libraries and information centres. This may be due to linkage between the libraries and information units with government, donors and local financiers. The diagram shows that the flow of reading facilities from the donors to the libraries and information centres is not effective. Whereas there are reading materials for the sighted there is hardly any for the blind. But as the bold arrow points, donors and the government assist institutions that produce reading materials for the blind and those which train teachers such as KISE. These institutions in turn assist schools and training institutions generate graduands who join the labour market. Those few visually handicapped who get employed find themselves disadvantaged when it comes to reading and quick reference. This leaves the circle of the quest for information incomplete. It could be completed by the government, the local financiers and the institutions
extending assistance to the libraries and information centres so that the blind can find suitable materials for themselves.

1.7 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

In order to elicit the information that would show and confirm whether problems do exist or not, the following tools will be used.

1.7.1 Questionnaires

i) Questionnaires will be sent to the visually handicapped employed persons who will be chosen in a random sampling.

ii) Questionnaires will be sent to a chosen number of libraries and information units.

The libraries selected are:

Kenya National Library Service; Kenyatta University Library; American Cultural Centre; British Council; UNESCO Commission and McMillan Memorial Library
Special Libraries and Information Units:

1.7.2 Interviews

I will make arrangements to interview the following:
- Library staff and information workers in the selected libraries and information centres.
- Visually handicapped workers who will be chosen at random.
- Selected donors engaged in the welfare of the blind:
  - International Labour Organisation
  - Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind

1.7.3 Observation

I will organise my time so that I can conduct some observation sessions in the selected libraries and information centres. The main purpose will be:
To find out whether there are provisions for the blind e.g. Braille books, audio materials, large print for low vision, etc.

To find out whether the staff have an idea how they can help the visually handicapped users.

To find out whether the libraries or information centres are ever visited by the blind.

1.7.4 Secondary Sources

I will consult and review the written literature and apply it to the current study.

1.8 TIME - LINE

The study was planned to take seven months, i.e. from January to July 1995. Within the seven months, nine places were visited; one academic library; five public libraries; three information units. Questionnaires were sent to the places in May and the respondents were expected to return them by June. The analysis and writing was to take one month including binding and presentation. Prior to the
administration of the tools to the respondents, I pretested them at some selected libraries in Nairobi area. I made arrangements with the Kenya Union of the blind who deal with adult visually handicapped persons so that I could go to their places of work to administer the questionnaire and interview them.

Specifically, the following plan of action served as the timeline of the study.

[a] i) Within the first month, i.e January 1995, I reviewed literature to see the extent of the problem as well as checking whether previous studies have tackled the problem. As I reviewed I was getting a clear understanding of the existing gaps which the current study would attempt to fill.

ii) Within the first month I developed the proposal and organised the tools for eliciting information from the blind readers and the libraries.

iii) I conducted a pre-testing of the developed tools at Kenya Union of the blind.
[b] In the month of February the questionnaires were revised and adjusted from the pretesting.

[c] In the months of March, April and May I prepared the questionnaires and started administering them.

[d] In the months of June and July, I compiled the work bound it and did the final touches ready for presentation and evaluation by the examiners.
## Diagrammatic Representation Illustrating the Time-Line Taken in the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JAN</th>
<th>FEB</th>
<th>MARCH</th>
<th>APRIL</th>
<th>MAY</th>
<th>JUNE</th>
<th>JULY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Literature review</td>
<td>Developing the proposal</td>
<td>Developing tools</td>
<td>Pretesting and adjustments of the questionnaires</td>
<td>Administering the tools</td>
<td>Writing and analysing</td>
<td>Binding Presentation</td>
</tr>
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1.9 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Visually Handicapped: The term visually handicapped is being widely used at present to denote the total groups of people who have impairments in the structure of functioning of the visual sense organ - the eye - irrespective of the nature and extent of the impairment. This term has gained acceptance because the impairment causes limitation; that even with the best possible correction interferes with incidental or normal learning through the sense of vision and constitute a handicap (Barraga, 1991:13). In this research report visually handicapped will be used to refer to the total group of adults who require special information provision because of visual problems.

Blind: This term will be used to refer to persons who have only light perception without projection or those who are totally without the sense of vision. A person may be blind at birth or may lose vision sometimes during his school years - and be blinded either by accident or by disease. Educationally, a blind person gets his information through the sense of hearing and touch using braille as a media of writing, and any other related mode without the use of vision (Halliday, 1990).
Low Vision: Persons who have limitations in distance vision but are able to see objects and materials when they are within a few centimetres or maximum of a few metres away are another subgroup. Most low vision persons will be able to use their vision for many activities. Others may need to use tactual materials and possibly even braille to supplement printed and other visual materials. These people should not be referred to as blind but either low vision or partially sighted.

Visual Impairment: This term denotes any clinically diagnosable deviation in the structure of functioning of the tissues or parts of the eye. The impairment may be in the central part of the eye, such as the lens or the area around the macula in which case the person could have very good peripheral vision but have trouble in seeing fine details. Conversely the impairment might be in the structure or cells in the peripheral area, often causing what is referred to as "tunnel vision" at a specific point of focus, but could not see to either side.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Most of the libraries and information centres around Nairobi area do not have provisions for the blind. Some of the blind readers who visit the libraries rely on their sighted guides to be told what the library has. A visually handicapped person may not dare visit a library or information centre alone because staff working there may not know what to do with such a person. In addition, majority of the libraries and information centres do not have braille materials or talking books for blind users. For discussions in this study, some salient problem areas can be cited and subsequent literature that is related to it will be quoted. The problems are discussed below.
2.2 PROBLEMS

2.2.1 Paucity of reading materials for the Visually Handicapped

In a paper presented by Muya (1990), it was learnt that there are no proper provisions offered to the visually handicapped readers in libraries. He noted:

"We must make an immediate attempt putting into consideration their needs and special requirements before it is too late otherwise the Kenyan librarian may soon be accused of ignoring the handicapped communities in general (Muya 1990:2)."

He added that it was evident that the blind users have not been given a fair chance to read outside the classroom. Except for some limited provision that is offered by Kenyatta University Library, graduates who have left the university and are working, do not get reading materials for furthering their self education.

The use of non-book-material, i.e. books in cassettes is not well known. Except for recording of books that go on at Kenyatta University Library, the other libraries and information units do not have such a provision. Kenya Institute of Special Education(KISE) which specializes on
materials and training of teachers for handicapped children do not have any provision for recording of non-book materials. Instead they receive recorded materials from overseas. This is true to the other libraries like Kenya Institute of the Blind (KIB) and Kenya Union of the Blind (KUB).

The recording facilities at KUB are complete but they have not yet started recording work due to lack of equipment. Concerning this chief executive officer of KUB says:

There are plans for the future in the department. It was realised that the library serves the whole union. As for now it has very few titles. Therefore more books are needed in braille for the totally blind; large print for the partially sighted and tapes for those who can read neither. The materials will be lent to our members most of whom have no other accessible reading materials. We also do hope to produce at least two newsletters annually in braille (Executive Officer, KUB, 1992:5).9

He continues to add that the braille newspaper will carry popular topics such as Home and Family Care, Good Human Relations; Business Management and Experiences; Social and Political Rights. The newsletter would cover issues in particular of the community and other important ideas will be given prominence. He continued to emphasize that such newsletter would unveil to members many useful ideas communicated every now and then, but they do not have access to them.
Visually handicapped persons have been thought of and considered in other countries. There has been attempts to meet their information needs. For example, in the United Kingdom, there is an exclusive library that is solely built for the visually handicapped known as National Library of the Blind. In a study carried out by Klems (1990) he says that the library provides a free service to the blind and low visioned people. The local authority pays a fee per annum for every library user in this area (Klemz, 1990:89). A close look at the situation in Kenya reveals that the visually handicapped persons do not have such a defined system of library service. Except for a library at KIB which is stocked with braille books, there is no provision for the visually handicapped in quest of knowledge.

A complex for the blind at Embakasi, Nairobi was solely constructed to cater for adult visually handicapped readers. It is under the management of KUB. As mentioned earlier the planners had an idea of library facilities and audio visual studio, but after constructing them, they are yet to be stocked with reading materials. This is an indication that albeit the information needs of the visually handicapped they have not yet been met. Concerning this, report from the union says:
Education information and Training Department was set up in June 1992 and includes among other facilities, a library, and a studio. Its work is geared to enhancing the public image of the blind to the general public and the blind. For the success in this enormous task the members of the union and media must play their full role in the necessary public education campaign (Executive Officer KUB, 1992:5).

This is an indication that the information needs of the working class visually handicapped persons have not yet been met despite the building of the complex. There is a need for the government and the donors to step in and assist in equipping the centre for the benefit of the employed readers.

Along with the scarcity of reading materials for the continuing education, the visually handicapped do not have reading materials for entertainment and leisure. Whereas the sighted readers can walk into a library and read a book for pleasure and general information; the visually handicapped worker in quest of entertainment through reading cannot do the same. Concerning this, Wall(1993) observes that entertainment as well as leisure is:

"...essential for physical and mental well being. Agencies representing the interests of the visually impaired people should accord high priority to the development of leisure" (Wall, 1993:44).
It is important to note that the visually handicapped just like the sighted need the opportunities to recreate their mental capabilities through leisure reading which is visually missing in most of our libraries.

This lack of delivery system that can facilitate and meet the information needs of the blind is prevalent in third world countries. For instance, in a seminar held at Karbarnet School for the Deaf-Blind, 1991, which was attended by participants from Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya, the delegates from these countries lamented the situation in their countries. They said there are not enough provisions for the blind and partially sighted. Their information needs were not fully met in their countries. They said that the initiatives of organising libraries and information centres is portrayed by private organisations. The governments from those other countries are not fully involved.

Indeed, this lack of reading materials is only acute in developing countries. In the developed nations the libraries and information centres are well stocked. They have headed the call by IFLA which advocates for the public libraries to stock their libraries with reading materials for the visually
Public libraries should hold tapes and cassettes and cooperate with national and local agencies providing talking books and other A.V. materials. The same should apply to books in braille. The materials referred to should be available free of charge (IFLA, 1990:).

So when the public libraries and information centres lack reading materials, they are going contrary to the aspirants and recommendations of IFLA. If a library does not have braille books, arrangements should be made to have tapes and cassettes that can provide alternatives for the blind to have their quest of information met. The way it is at the moment is that the libraries and information centres do not have any of the mentioned materials, or if they are there, the visually handicapped employed persons may not be aware.

This lack of reading materials for the visually handicapped has implication on full participation of the employed blind persons. It may prove difficult for them to actively participate in the community. It would be equally difficult to achieve quality performance since they cannot make use of ordinary printed materials, which pervade the community, on account of the visual impairment. Concerning this Muya says:
Their success to knowledge is limited by loss of sight. They read by touch or through hearing. They consequently require materials that they can use their senses of touch or hearing. They need materials in braille, talking books, newspapers, etc. The partially sighted may need materials in large print (Muya, 1990:8).

It is therefore important to stress here that it is the responsibility of the public library, special libraries and information units to make provision of information in such forms that as many visually handicapped as possible may draw their resources. As it is today, only a limited offer of materials adopted for the visually handicapped are available.

2.2.2 Lack of Publicity

Some libraries have reading materials for the blind. They are brought from abroad as donations. The presence of braille reading materials is not known to the blind. Although the books are there, they are not fully utilized. For instance, a library in the Ministry of Education run by UNESCO Commission receives such materials, but not many blind readers go to read there. Majority of them are not aware of it. Likewise, there is an Information and Documentation Resource Centre at KISE that deal with information for the handicapped but the blind employed readers are not aware of it.
The problem of lack of publicity makes the blind readers remain like there are no reading facilities for them, whereas there are provisions somewhere. Some of the visually handicapped may choose to remain at their homes without going to the libraries because they do not know where there is any provision for them. This is a challenge to libraries and information centres. They need to publicise and promote their services to the visually handicapped.

2.2.3 Lack of Supportive and Understanding Library and Information Workers

It should be well understood that the way visually handicapped readers are handled in the libraries and information centres has an implication in their psychological feelings. When they are experiencing the problem of not getting enough materials they are again subjected to other psychological torments that make them feel they are truly disabled and a minority. In a study carried out by Muya (1990) he noted:

That the options of the visually handicapped are limited and they lack the range of choice that is available to the able bodied and they need help to do things that others do for themselves. They suffer from frustration and disadvantages of dependence on others regardless of whether they have been educated or not; they suffer from
being treated different; part of the different world of their own disability, they suffer pain and all these problems have implications on their own behaviour (Muya, 1990:6).14

It is true that the visually handicapped persons are part of the handicapped group that the study is referring to. They are prone to a lot of frustrations. The visually handicapped using a library or information centre may be frustrated and agitated by a person who either ignores him or treats him differently showing too much pity as if the user is sick. That unique treatment is rather upsetting and more handicapping to the blind person who need assistance but not too much pity.

A visually handicapped reader visiting a public library or information centre may not easily get his information requirements. The members of staff may not know what to do with such a person. After failing to get what he wants, the visually handicapped person may decide to leave. This problem of not getting what he wants in libraries is coupled by the general national development process. Concerning this Rowland (1993) says:

...often the problem of unemployment is approached in a haphazard way, as if it were merely a question of finding jobs or creating income generating schemes. We have unfortunately failed to recreate a meaningful process of development involving blind and disabled people...(Rowland, 1993:17).15
The quotation above reflects the major problem in the way the blind persons are not supported in the wider community when in employment. This normally has a vicious circle that in turn affects the provision of reading materials and services in libraries and information centres.

The library staff workers may argue that they have not been trained to handle the visually handicapped in a library situation. So whenever they see them in the library they are not confident enough to assist them. Concerning this Muya (1990) offers a suggestion. He says:

The staff should be trained some basic skills which are useful when working with disabled members. They need to be clearly spoken, patient and understanding. They should be able to make the handicapped feel at ease without necessarily patronizing them (Muya, 1990:12).

Due to the feeling that the members of staff are not competent enough to handle the blind, they offer services half heartedly since they do not have reading materials that can meet their information needs. Even if they wanted to stock their libraries with braille books they may not do so since they do not know how to transcribe books in braille.
Except for some school libraries such as Thika Secondary School for the Blind Library, some academic libraries such as Kenyatta University Moi Library and University of Nairobi; and a few other institutional libraries like Kenya Institute of the Blind; Kenya Union of the Blind; and the Kenya Society for the Blind, other types of libraries such as the public libraries, special libraries and information centres do not have trained personnel who can assist in transcribing and serving the blind. Participants in Hellen Keller World Conference (1993) discussed about this problem and passed a resolution. They said:

The number of schools, rehabilitation centres, educational main streaming and community integration support programme, Braille and Talking Books are scarce and are situated in Urban areas and teachers, librarians and other professionals do not have professional training and are inadequately paid (Hellen Keller, 1993:5).

This inability of the concerned organisation failing to train and pay those people who are dealing with the blind has been the underlying reason why employed visually handicapped do not get enough reading materials. Those who are supposed to do the work are lacking adequate motivation.
2.2.4 Omission at the Planning Level

If the blind are not given provision in the libraries and information centres, it leaves them without a hope. This is because they suffer discrimination in employment. However, the government has made efforts to establish and support rehabilitation centres so that the blind and the other handicapped can learn skills that will lead them to self employment. Concerning this, the National Development Plan 1994-1996 says:

It is estimated that Kenya has over 300,000 handicapped people. They suffer discrimination in open employment and hence their potential is not fully tapped. Vocational rehabilitation centres are aimed at training the disabled person... (National Development Plan, (1994-1996):25).

From the above quotation, it is clear that the blind and other handicapped persons do not get fair deal within the labour market. The libraries can make provision for those who are in quest of information to further their skills, get the necessary assistance.

As libraries and information centres are being established and developed, there is necessity of considering the possibility of a visually handicapped user at one time visiting the library. Therefore the provision for them should
be thought of right at the planning level. This is in line with UNESCO Declaration on the development of public libraries in Africa which was discussed and resolved in a conference held in Ibadan, Nigeria in 1953 and revised in 1992. It was stated that one of the main purposes of developing a public library in Africa is to cater for the information needs of the visually handicapped. The declaration was aimed at:

Providing whenever needed adequate services for special groups, women, language groups in order to ensure availability of resources on equal terms to all members of the community (UNESCO, 1992:21).

Again, it is evident that all the groups are thought of at the planning level but when it comes to implementing the decisions, the visually handicapped and other disabled persons are overlooked.

Although the blind are members of the community but due to the nature of their handicap, they cannot collectively be lumped together with the other members of the community. Addressing the issue of rehabilitation Narasimhan (1990) stressed the need of considering the blind within a wide sphere of human endeavour. He said:
On the other hand occupations in the urban sector demand higher skills, better organisation and greater ability to compete with the rest of the population. It is therefore necessary to make careful assessment of the potentialities of the handicapped individual and the scope of the economy of the area in order to absorb the handicapped person in gainful employment (Narasmhan, 1990:101).

It is therefore clear that the visually handicapped need reading materials to continue reading so as to cope with the wider population. Since in the employment sector competition is inevitable, it requires the blind and partially sighted to read like their counterparts. This can be achieved through reading in libraries and information centres.

When individual governments are not planning for the provision of the visually handicapped and the disabled persons as a whole in libraries and information centres, they are going contrary to the UNESCO manifesto. It is stated in the manifesto clearly that the disabled group of the community must be planned for. The manifesto says:

There is increasing concern with the welfare of the elderly and handicapped people. Problems of loneliness and mental and physical handicaps of all kinds can be alleviated in many ways by the public libraries. Improved means of access provision of mechanical reading aids, books in large print and recorded on tape. Service to the hospitals and institutions and personal service to the home are some of the ways in which the public library can extend its services to those who need it most (UNESCO, 1992:21).
It is evident that in recent years the provision of the handicapped as a whole has been the concern of planners. It remains the part of the individual governments to take up the challenge. The visually handicapped are denied the chance of accessing information in the public libraries because there is no improved means of doing so, there are no books in large print and talking books. Unlike in the developed nations where the visually handicapped receive library services at their homes, it is left for them to fend for themselves in the developing countries.

For libraries and information units to serve the visually handicapped they should incorporate the need as one of their policies to the communities they are to serve in the library. In an article written by Muya (1990) where he quoted United Nations Declaration on the rights of disabled persons. It stipulates that:

Disabled persons are entitled to the measure designed to enable them to become as self reliant as possible (Muya, 1990:1).22.

All groups irrespective of their status and impairment must be planned for. Their needs may vary from simple to very specialised, but considering that they form part of the community, they need to be catered for right at the planning level.
Just because the other members of the community are provided with reading materials and information services does not mean that the information needs of the visually handicapped are also met in the process. Blind people have the same need for information like the rest of the community. So they should be provided for right at the planning level. These omissions at the planning level has made the working visually handicapped persons to depend on what their sighted guide read for them. The government has attempted to overcome the problem by employing reading assistants for them, but that alone cannot be the same as when a person reads for himself. In order to accelerate the pace of their rehabilitation, there is a great need for improving their information facilities and this should reflect from the planning level.

2.2.5 Lack of Adaptation in the Libraries and Information Centres

Most of the libraries are designed with the sighted users in mind. The shelves are high and the corridors are well labelled to enable the sighted to move about and get the materials they are looking for. This is not the case with the visually handicapped. They find it difficult to move about between the shelves, they cannot use well labelled guiding to find their ways to an intended location of materials.
Instead, they make use of the sighted guide or the members of staff. This limits their independence. They feel more handicapped and almost get discouraged from visiting libraries and information centres.

Adaptation in the libraries are useful to the visually handicapped. They make the visually handicapped feel encouraged to visit the libraries. Concerning the significance of adaptations, IFLA says:

Ideally library premises should be located and designed that the visually handicapped people including those using wheel chairs and white cane can make full use of them without assistance or difficulty. In so far as finances allow buildings should have wide passage ways, shelving not higher than five shelves, clear and tactile marking (including a plan of the layout of the library) (IFLA, 1990:4).

Most of the libraries do not have toilets that can be easily used by the visually handicapped. The stairs do not have rails that can be held by the blind as they move up and down. There are no lifts that can substitute for an unadapted stairs. All this and other complicated structures such as guiding that do not have tactile marks which can be used by the blind, cause a lot of difficulties to the blind. The low vision can move with less difficulties.
If an organisation is planning to start a library the visually handicapped must be thought of. The plan of the building should be designed in such a way that adaptations are present in the outline plan of the building. Concerning this issue of adaptations, Muya says:

The aim of considering library buildings is to make them as accessible as possible, particularly to the visually handicapped. These include car park, internal users to library materials, catalogues and toilets. This may involve such minor works like, reducing the gradient on a rammed entrance remarking disabled parking bays, erecting a handrail, bays, delineating step by painting the edge with white paint, provision of a wheel chair lift and providing toilets for the disabled (Muya, 1990:11).

By so doing, the expensive renovation can be avoided in case, a library or information centre decides to include materials and services for the visually handicapped and other disabled users after the buildings have been completed.

2.2.6 Lack of Information Technology (IT) for the Visually Handicapped

It is not only in the physical adaptations within the building that the blind can find difficulties in. The books in the libraries are for the sighted. Since there are not enough experts in putting all the print books in braille, the blind need an adapted machine that can help them to read.
Vincent (1992) says that there is a reading machine known as Kurzweil Reading Machine (KRM). He says it is an interesting adaptation which can be used to produce a reading machine for the blind people. Concerning the machine, Vincent says:

The KRM can read a book to a blind person by tracking over the pages, reading the characters optically assembling the characters into next and converting the text to synthetic speech. The tracking and page selection are controlled by the user. (Vincent, 1992:74)

It is known that KRM can read very fast. the performance is visually highest when the print quality is high and the page layout is simple as in a novel. As a desk top device, the KRM is being used successfully in may libraries. Of course it has limitations in terms of cost and size for a personal and portable use.

While the modern world is moving towards the use of IT, it would be contrary to the trend if the blind continued relying on the conventional methods of acquiring information. Information for the blind has seen tremendous developments in the latter years. An annual report from the Library of Congress reports:

Advances in automation and telecommunications have opened the door to adaptive method of service delivery and results of the network study expected in the spring of 1990 will provide a basis for discussing possible charges
in service pattern (Library of Congress, 1990:1)\textsuperscript{26}.

Although this information is ideal for the blind, it should be borne in mind that IT may be quite costly. But with the cost benefit that may accrue from the venture, it is worth the cost. Our libraries and information centres may consider using this information technology on a small scale as their financial constraints can permit.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

A researcher in librarianship or any other discipline has option of methods which he can employ to study an aspect. The methods include experiments, direct observation, historical research, case studies, interviews, etc.

In order to apply these methods for this research project, I started by carrying out a sampling strategy. I took a stratified random sampling technique which enabled me to select six libraries three information centres and two donor agencies.

3.2 SELECTED LIBRARIES

3.2.1 Kenya National Library Services (KNLS)
3.2.2 Kenyatta University Moi Library (KU Moi Library)
3.2.3 McMillan Memorial Library
3.2.4 American Cultural Centre
3.2.5 UNESCO Commission
3.2.6 British Council Library
3.3 INFORMATION CENTRES

3.3.1 Kenya Union of the Blind (KUB)
3.3.2 Kenya Society for the Blind (KSB)
3.3.3 Kenya Institute of the Blind (KIB)

3.4 DONOR AGENCIES

3.4.1 Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind (RCSB)
3.4.2 International Labour Organisation (ILO)

As the title of the research project indicates, Nairobi area was chosen because of the following reasons:

i) Suitable and convenient distribution of libraries.

ii) Possibility of the libraries stocking braille materials.

iii) Proximity to the working area, as Nairobi is the centre of industrial, communication and administration jobs.
3.5 THE SAMPLE

The population of the study includes:

3.5.1 Two librarians from each library, i.e. the chief librarian and the circulation librarian.

3.5.2 Twenty five visually handicapped employed persons.

3.5.3 Two donor agencies.

3.6. THE SAMPLING PROCEDURE

3.6.1 The Library Staff

For the research project to cover a reasonable representative sample of both the libraries and donor agencies stratified random sampling technique was applied. The selected libraries which are all found in Nairobi area have an element of braille materials in their stock. For instance UNESCO Commission Library receives braille materials as gifts from overseas. They forward the material to other libraries where the blind may use them. The staff that was sampled to supply the information was the librarian and the circulation
The librarian was chosen because being the overall manager of the library, he would be in a better position to deal with policy matters as well as acquisition policies. The circulation librarian was able to answer questions concerning the services and interaction with the visually handicapped.

3.6.2 Visually Handicapped Persons

The visually handicapped employed persons around Nairobi area were selected on the basis that they are employed. Although the number of visually handicapped may not exceed thirty two (according to statistics from Kenya Union of the Blind) twenty five visually handicapped were randomly selected. This number was meant to provide a first hand information about the quest for information and the problems they were encountering.

3.6.3 Donor Agencies

The donor agencies selected have some provision for the blind. They have dealt with the blind in the past, while others are actively dealing with the blind at the moment. For
instance RCSB produces braille reading materials for the blind especially for primary and secondary schools. International Labour Organisation has active programmes for the blind and other disabled persons.

3.7 DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

For the research to elicit the desired information the researcher employed the following different types of research instruments:

3.7.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires designed to get information from libraries were sent to the selected libraries. The librarians selected included; the chief librarian, the circulation librarian.

The questionnaires to the libraries covered such areas as: categories of users, adaptations in the library to suit the blind, serving the blind, materials and information organisations, interaction with the blind. The respondents were required to give brief explanations in some questions besides answering multiple choice questions which only required ticking.
The questionnaires to the visually handicapped on the other hand required the respondents to give short answers and writing the correct response in braille. The questions covered broad areas such as; the library buildings, orientation and mobility skills; information needs; reading materials; social aspects, etc.

3.7.2 Administration of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire for library staff and the visually handicapped was distributed by the researcher in person. To clarify some points, the researcher would hold a preliminary discussion with the respondents. Both the researcher and the respondents would agree on the day the questionnaires would be collected.

3.7.3 Interviews

Library staff who had been chosen to fill in the questionnaire were further interviewed as the questionnaires were being collected. This was necessary since some questionnaires may be badly filled and by taking extra clarification, it would be easy to interpret.
The visually handicapped employed persons who had been chosen at random were also interviewed either to clarify what they had filled in the questionnaire or to elicit extra information that is not provided for in the questionnaire.

I made arrangements to interview some selected donor agencies who deal with the visually handicapped. The following agencies were interviewed: Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind (RCSB), ILO.

3.7.4 Observation

Some observation sessions were conducted in selected libraries. The main purpose was:

i) To find out whether there are provision for the blind e.g braille books, non-book materials, large print for low vision etc.

ii) To find out whether the staff have an idea how they can help the visually handicapped users.

iii) To find out whether the visually handicapped ever visit libraries.
3.7.5 Secondary Sources

I consulted and reviewed written literature and applied it to the current study.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Survey method was used to carry out a situational analysis of the quest for information by the working visually handicapped readers. Descriptive statistics; i.e. cross tabulations and percentages were used to analyse the collected data.

3.9 CODING DATA

Coding of data was undertaken with an aim of making its presentation convenient. For example, in the Table a code such as; 1 = applicable/Yes and 0 = not applicable or No.

3.10 FIELD PROBLEMS

3.10.1 Libraries

i) Bureaucracy was experienced in some libraries, i.e. McMillan. After seeing the circulation librarian for a
formal interview, I was referred to the librarian. On seeing the librarian, she referred me to the Town Clerk.

ii) Lack of Personnel: At the UNESCO Commission Library, the librarian had left for greener pastures to the Commission of Higher Education. The person manning the circulation desk was only acting. She did not have answers to all the questions.

iii) Meetings: There were constant meetings in libraries which made it difficult to get all the people to interview or give a questionnaire at the same time.

3.11 VISUALLY HANDICAPPED EMPLOYED PEOPLE

There were problems which made it difficult to collect information from the employed visually handicapped persons:

i) Too pre-occupied with out-of-the-office activities such as meetings, seminars, to be found in the offices.

ii) Those who were found in the offices were too busy to fill the questionnaires immediately.
iii) Some visually handicapped users were reserved.

iv) Misplacement of questionnaires. This was reported by a few people whom I had to supply with fresh ones.

v) The visually handicapped employed people were scattered in different and distant places. It was difficult to see more than two in a day.

3.12 TIME FACTOR

i) Due to the pressure of time, I could not finish the number I had intended. However, I managed to see more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the sample.

ii) Some of the blind people did not have enough time to fill the questionnaires alone. They preferred instant filling of the questionnaire with the researcher.
4.1 INTRODUCTION

To carry out the study the researcher visited six libraries, three information Centres and one donor agency. The libraries are: Kenya National Library Services (KNLS); McMillan Memorial Library; British Council Library; American Cultural Centre; UNESCO Commission; Kenyatta University Moi Library.

The information Centres include; Kenya Union of the Blind (KUB), Kenya Institute of the Blind (KIB); Kenya Society of the Blind (KSB) and Talking Book Library.

Donor agency was Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind which has a regional office in Nairobi.

The main data collection instrument used in the study was the questionnaire; there were questionnaires for the libraries and information units; there were others for the visually handicapped themselves; personal interviews to verify the answers were carried out.
The sampled libraries and information centres were given questionnaires to fill. The libraries were also interviewed to verify some of the information given.

There was another type of questionnaire which was to be filled by the visually handicapped employed people themselves. Out of the possible number of thirty one blind people working within Nairobi twenty five could be reached. Those who are braille readers were given questionnaires which had been transcribed into braille. The researcher used print copy to tick where appropriate while the blind was using his braille copy to supply the answers. Low vision (partially sighted) used the normal print to fill the questionnaires.

4.2 GENERAL INFORMATION

Presentation of data is divided into two main sections, i.e data collected from the visually handicapped readers and the libraries. Each section is again broken into subheadings to facilitate the analysis.
4.3 VISUALLY HANDICAPPED EMPLOYED USERS

To present the data from the visually handicapped users the information was broken into the following subheadings; frequency of visiting the libraries; the library buildings/Orientation and mobility skills; information needs; reading materials; social aspects.

4.3.1 Frequency of visiting the libraries and information centres

The number that was sampled to be given questionnaires and be interviewed was 31, but only 25 were interviewed. It is only less than half of that number that ever visit libraries. Table 1 shows the results.

Table 1: Frequency of Visiting Libraries by the employed visually handicapped persons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>No. of respondents/25</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results indicate that the greatest percentage of respondents seldom visit the libraries. Those who often visit
the library do so when they have an urgent pressing information need or are just going to have newspapers read for them. 20% of the respondents indicated that they do not even attempt to visit libraries because, as they argued, they will not get what they are looking for.

4.3.1 Library buildings/orientation and mobility skills.

Looking at the data, it is evident that few visually handicapped employed people visit libraries. The reason given about the shortage of materials by the respondents is quite strong. However, there was quite a number of blind respondents who revealed that they have difficulties in some sections of the libraries. For instance of the 25 respondents who were interviewed or filled the questionnaires 15 indicated that they had difficulties in finding the books from the shelves. Below are the findings of the rest of the parts of the library. The number indicates the respondents who said that they had difficulties and the percentage calculated out of 25.
Table 2: Part of the library which pose difficulties to the blind

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part of the library</th>
<th>Number/25</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Circulation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelves</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africana</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio-visual</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All of them</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field study

From the statistics, it is evident that users of a library usually find difficulties in locating materials from the shelves. Indeed they even do not attempt to locate the books. 72% of the respondents indicated that they have difficulties in locating materials from the shelves. Perhaps the few who attempt to locate books have low vision and can use the little sight they have to locate their way around the shelves.

The visually handicapped were asked to indicate how they get their books while in the library. They were given four choices to base their responses. The results are tabulated below.
Table 3: How the blind get their books while in the library

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Getting books from library</th>
<th>No. of respondents/25</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With the help of a library staff</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the help of a sighted guide</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the help of sighted readers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field study.

The table shows that the blind get their reading materials with the help of a sighted guide. This is because the blind users do not go to the libraries unaccompanied by sighted guides. They anticipate difficulties since the libraries are stocked with print materials. This takes largest percentage, i.e. 40%. Even when they visit the libraries with sighted guides the guides may not be familiar with locating books so they request the library staff to assist them. They comprise of 32%. 28% of the users find the materials without being helped by anyone. Most of these are partially sighted users who can use their little sight to locate their reading materials.

The respondents agreed that there are problems of orientation and mobility for blind users in library and information centres. They were asked to suggest what can be done to solve the problem. Their suggestions were summarised
into three choices. Table 4 shows the number of and percentages in relation to their suggestions. The respondents had been asked to suggest what can be done to solve the problem. Three choices were given from which they could choose their suggestions. The results are tabulated below.

Table 4: Suggestions of how the problem of orientation/mobility (O/M) can be overcome

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestion</th>
<th>No. of respondents/25</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employ mobility instructors in the library.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make the necessary adaptations in the library.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep books and other materials for the blind near the entrance.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field study.

The results indicate that 60% of the respondents suggested that the necessary adaptations be made in the libraries to enable the blind to locate their materials. This could reduce their dependence on others. A relatively smaller percentage i.e. 40% suggested that the books and other reading materials for the blind are kept near the entrance where they can easily reach them. The suggestion of employing mobility instructors was surprisingly not chosen. That would be asking too much since it would be costly, especially during these days when
organisations are reducing their staff. However, they felt the existing members of staff can be given some basic skills in orientation/mobility which can be used to assist the blind whenever they visit libraries.

4.3.3 Information Needs

The following choices were presented for the respondents to indicate why they visit libraries.

(i) To read for pleasure
(ii) To do a quick reference
(iii) To read for examination
(iv) All the purposes listed above
(v) None
(vi) Any other.

After getting the responses the data was presented in a matrix. Table 5 shows the number of respondents who were interviewed and the subsequent percentage to ease comparison.
Table 5: Purposes for Visiting Libraries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purposes/Reasons</th>
<th>No. of respondents/25</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To read for pleasure</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To do quick reference</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To read for examination</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All purposes above</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field study

From the above matrix, it is evident that 24% of the visually handicapped users visit the library to do a quick reference, or, perhaps to prepare a paper to present in a seminar. Others said they wanted to learn a skill of doing something i.e. how to start and run a small business or keep animals. Others said they visited a library to refer to books that would add their skills such as administrative matters especially those who are in managerial jobs. All this constituted 40% of the respondents. Only 28% visited the library to read for pleasure. A minimal percentage of 8% visited libraries and information centres to read for examination.
4.3.4 Reading Materials

The respondents were asked what kind of materials they like reading. Their responses were quite varied, but it was evident that the greatest number of respondents preferred reading magazines and newspapers followed by fiction. Below is a tabulation of what was found during the study.

Table 6: Kind of materials preferred by the blind in libraries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kinds of books</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-fiction</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers &amp; Magazines</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field study.

The figures on table 6 indicate that the biggest percentage go to read magazines and newspapers. Out of the 25 respondents, 11 indicated that they like reading magazines e.g. The Courier, Matilda, Readers Digest. This represented 44%. The reasons offered were that just as the sighted readers, the visually handicapped would like to keep abreast with what is happening around them.
From the table, it is evident that of the interviewed number i.e. 25, 10 respondents who represented 40% went to the library just to read fiction books, not for serious reading but to relax. Quite a good number of respondents expressed their dissatisfaction on the unavailability of fiction books in the libraries. The librarian of Kenya Institute of the Blind said that some of the complaints he used to hear from his clients was that the novels in his library are too old.

The respondents were required to indicate whether the libraries they visited have talking books. A small number of the respondents indicated that the libraries they visited had talking books. Such libraries include Kenyatta University Moi Library where the work of recording is done locally. There is no proper room for recording even though the recording equipment is present. The respondents who use the talking books, both in the university and outside say that the quality of the work is good.

The talking books and magazines that were found to be common in the libraries visited by the respondents consist of non-fiction i.e. subjects in various disciplines such as education, history, literature, etc. That is the case as it is at Kenyatta University. Although there is quite a good collection of books but non-fiction are more. They increase
with demand from the students who are doing the subjects. In the library such as Kenya Society for the Blind, the cassettes are in fiction. They are bought from United Kingdom. Below is the tabulation of the results.

Table 7: Categories of Talking books and the stock in two libraries Kenyatta University Moi Library and KSB library

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of Talking Books</th>
<th>KU Moi Library</th>
<th>KSB Library</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No of stock</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-fiction</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>66.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines,Newspapers</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Study

The table shows that non-fiction at Kenyatta University Moi library takes the largest percentage i.e 66.3% whereas fiction at KSB library is 100%. The reason for the emphasis in the two libraries i.e Kenyatta University Moi library emphasis on non-fiction is due to the information needs of the users, who are in pursuit of education and other academic disciplines. KSB has 100% fiction because it serves the adult clientele and the aged and retired blind readers scattered all over Kenya.
Talking magazines and newspapers which take 10.9% of the talking books at Moi library is only available at that library. This may offer the explanation why there were so few respondents who ever used the talking magazines and books. However the respondents at Kenyatta University, Moi library expressed their feeling that it is an effective way of making the blind aware of what is happening.

There was a question in the questionnaire which required the visually handicapped to indicate what kind of information they go to seek in libraries. The responses were different. They were given four choices from where they were to indicate the kind of information they go to seek in the libraries. The table below shows the distribution of the categories of information they are in quest of.

Table 8: Kinds of information the blind go to seek in the libraries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kind of information</th>
<th>No. of respondents out of 25</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General information.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factual information for the purpose of examination.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational books to embrace professional knowledge.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities in Daily Living.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field study.
A look at the table (Table 8) shows that 44% of respondents visit libraries for general information whereas 40% want to read educational books to embrace professional knowledge. Only 4% go to the library to look for books that deal with activities in daily living i.e. Financial Management, Home economics, etc.

Part (b) of question 15 required the respondents to indicate the areas listed they wished to be included in the collections. The table below shows the distribution of the preferences as indicated by the respondents in terms of subjects.

Table 9: Subject most preferred by the blind

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>No. of respondents/25</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy and Religion</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field study.
The tabulation shows that the greatest number of respondents indicated that they would like to have books on rehabilitation because they would like to be self reliant in their lives. Rehabilitation books would contain such areas as management of small business, keeping chickens, gardening for the visually handicapped, etc. This element took 24%. A negligible number preferred psychology and no respondents chose economics and science books. A lot of blind users said that majority of the science books are designed and written with the sighted population in mind. Even if they are transcribed in braille they still present a lot of problems to the blind.

4.3.5 Social Aspects

Respondents were required to indicate whether the members of staff whom they meet in the libraries they ever visited are helpful. The results, differed from library to library and from one visually handicapped to another. The results for the question are tabulated below and are calculated from respondents who had visited the library between 1993-1995.
Table 10: Blind readers who visited the sampled libraries, 1993-June 1995.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kind of assistance offered by the librarians</th>
<th>K.N.L.S</th>
<th>MacMillan</th>
<th>Moi Library</th>
<th>British Council</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>out of 20</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>out of 40</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking them to the shelves.</td>
<td>4 20</td>
<td>3 12</td>
<td>2 5</td>
<td>1 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bringing all books they needed while they waited.</td>
<td>10 50</td>
<td>2 8</td>
<td>30 75</td>
<td>2 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telling them where the books can be found.</td>
<td>6 30</td>
<td>18 72</td>
<td>7 17.5</td>
<td>6 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assigning a member of staff to help locate books.</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>2 8</td>
<td>1 2.5</td>
<td>1 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20 100</td>
<td>25 100</td>
<td>40 100</td>
<td>10 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field study

Except for a library such as Kenyatta University, Moi library where 75% of the blind readers are served with their requests while they wait, the other libraries preferred directing them to the resources. For instance out of 25 respondents who visited McMillan Memorial library between 1993-1995, 18 were just told where they could find their reading materials usually in print while one of them was assigned a member of staff to show him the materials. British Council library has
received the fewest readers. Again the target percentage i.e. 60% was only told where the books can be located. Mostly the blind are accompanied by sighted guide.

The respondents were required to indicate whether there were rules and regulations in the libraries they visited. All of them responded on the positive. The question was meant to find out whether the rules and regulations were appropriate or not to the blind in relation to their handicap. The information obtained would also show whether the duration that is usually prescribed by a library of keeping a reading material of 2 weeks or a month, etc. is favourable to the blind or otherwise. Below is the tabulation of the results.

Table 11: Duration of keeping library books

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>No. of respondents/25</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One Week</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Weeks</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Months</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longer than 3 months</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field study

The results indicated that out of 25 respondents, 12 of them which represented 48% preferred to have a reading material for a month. They felt that a week is too short. They said they
had problems of getting people to read for them. Even if the book is in the braille it could still take time because they are occupied with the usual chores during the day and it is only in the evening they could listen or read. Two weeks took the second place in popularity. 8 respondents who represented 32% indicated that they would not have finished reading the book within two weeks. Although it would apparently seem as if the blind may want to keep a book for more than 3 months, given their nature of handicap, only five respondent out of 25 which represented 20% indicated that they could keep the material for more than three months. Majority of those who were interviewed said that they would like other readers to read the book.

When they were asked whether the other readers ever complained an overwhelming number of respondents indicated that "nothing happened". This was an indication that the other readers understood the blind people had to take notes, and a braille machine is the only tool they can use. Below is the tabulation of the results as found out during the data collection.
Table 12: Complaints by the sighted readers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of complaining by the other readers</th>
<th>No. of respondents/25</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Directly to the blind readers.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through the librarian.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through another reader.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through writing.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing happened.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field study.

Results indicate that no complaints were made directly to the blind user. An insignificant percentage of 4% complained through the librarian. Another 12% complained through another reader. The largest percentage of 84% indicate that no complaints were made.

The respondents were asked whether they would prefer to have a secluded reading area. The responses were varied considerably. Table 13 illustrates the distribution of opinions on whether to have a secluded reading room for the blind or not. 72% of the respondents felt that there is a need to have a secluded reading area for the blind. The remaining 28% were of the opinion that there is no need to have a
secluded reading area. From the results, it is clear that majority of the blind users would prefer to have a secluded reading area but with a library that serves the sighted. The small percentage of blind users who did not want a secluded reading area felt that they would not like to be isolated from the other readers. See table 13 below.

Table 13: Distribution of opinions on whether to have a secluded reading room and exclusive library for the blind.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Secluded room</th>
<th></th>
<th>Exclusive Library</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>respondents</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>respondents</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>out of 25</td>
<td></td>
<td>out of 25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field study

Looking at the results, it is evident that the number of respondents who preferred to have separate reading area was overwhelmed by those who wanted to read where the others were.
Findings on whether the blind get entertainments at their place of work revealed that it is lacking. Except for an annual get together which again depends on the availability of finances, they do not get entertainments. The question required them to indicate in what area they get entertainment in. The responses are shown on table 14, below.

Table 14: Types of entertainment the blind get at their places of work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For the entertainment</th>
<th>Respondents out of 25</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parties</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outings</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clubs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field study

The results indicated that the largest number of respondents do not have any form of entertainment at their place of work i.e. 10 which represented 40% of the total number of respondents. Reading which was given as one of the options was chosen by only 5 respondents. This only represented 20%. This is an indication that a small number of the visually
handicapped employed people read as a form of entertainment. Whenever they visited a library they did so to read for a purpose different from entertainment. As mentioned earlier they wanted to do a quick reference, read for general information, or for examination.

The respondents were asked whether they were assisted in reading printed materials by their families at home. All of them, 25 who represented 100% responded on the positive. Those who did not have families had friends and relatives whom they stayed with and were helping them read print at home. According to the results the blind did not seem to have difficulties with their families, friends and relatives in terms of being assisted to read print at home. They were also required to indicate whether their relationship with their spouses were cordial at home, they all indicated that they did not have problems with them at home.

They were asked to show whether they did work at home. A number of them indicated that they did work at home when their friends or relatives are away. They were asked to indicate what kind of work they did at home. The results are tabulated in table 15 below.
Table 15: Kind of work done by the blind while at home.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kind of work</th>
<th>No. of respondents/25</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working in the garden</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping in general home</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chores such as cooking and washing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field study

From the results, it is evident that majority of the respondents did other work than the ones listed above. The question required them to specify the 'any other' work that they did. The 14 respondents who represented 56% listed different kinds of work that they did. Majority of them said that they carried official work at home. Others, especially ladies who are partially sighted did knitting at home. Some blind ladies too did knitting. Working in the garden had only 2 respondents out of the twenty five. They only represented 8% who did some work in the garden. This is understood, considering that they may not have gardens at the city. However, it is likely that the two respondents indicated that they work in small plot gardens at the city or perhaps when they go back in the rural area. From the data, it is evident that the blind actually did work while at home. They did not stay idle.
4.4 LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION CENTRES

4.4.0 Introduction

The sample for libraries and information units involved six libraries within the city centre i.e. KNLS, British Council, American Cultural Centre, McMillan Memorial Library, UNESCO Commission Library; K.U. Library, three information units; Kenya Union of the Blind (KUB), Kenya Society for the Blind (KSB), Kenya Institute of the Blind (KIB). They were all visited. Formal interviews were carried out and the questionnaires were answered as well.

4.4.1 Categories of Users

In case of the questions, libraries and information centres were asked to indicate the group(s) of the handicapped users whom they serve. In some libraries, it was found that they serve all the categories of handicapped users. For instance Kenya National Library Services (KNLS), it was found out that they have at one time or another served a handicapped person. The table below shows the categories of handicapped users served in the sampled libraries and information units.
Table 16: Categories of handicapped users who visited the libraries in 1994

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library/Information Unit</th>
<th>Blind</th>
<th>Hearing impaired</th>
<th>Physically handicapped</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KNLS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Council</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Cultural Centre</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMillan</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KUJR</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KSIB</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIB</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KU Moi Library</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field study

The results indicated that all the libraries and information units listed have at one time or another served a visually handicapped user. But they all conceded that the number has been very negligible and that there are long intervals between the visits. They could not tell whether they ever saw a deaf person. It would be difficult to tell whether he is hearing impaired or not since he does not show any physical impairment unless he starts to communicate. The physically impaired users frequent libraries, so most of the libraries reported having at one time or another served physically handicapped person. Below is the tabulation of results from 1994-1995.
Table 17: Categories of visually handicapped users.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library/Information Units</th>
<th>Categories of blind users</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Young children</th>
<th>Mixture of all</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Working people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KNLS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMillan</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Council</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Cultural</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO Commission</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KU Moi Library</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIB</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KUB</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KSB</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field study

The results indicated that most of the information units and libraries visited have only dealt with students or the working groups. However a library like UNESCO Commission does not at all serve the employed persons or any blind although they have braille materials. British Council library reported that they have at one time served a law student from University of Nairobi. They did not report of any employed visually handicapped users. McMillan reported that they have been seeing blind users come to the library. Table 17 shows that McMillan library has served two categories, i.e. 2 students and 1 working visually handicapped persons.
4.4.2 Adaptations in the Libraries to suit the Blind

Libraries and information units were required to indicate whether their libraries and information units are adapted to suit the blind. It is only a library like KUB and KIB which have a form of adaptations, i.e. the tables of KIB library are spacious enough to use the braille machine without problems. However, the labels on the shelves meant for marking the subject clarification are not in braille, so is lack of title guiding to point at where the materials are. All the other libraries did not have any form or adaptation. All the areas listed in the question, of the possible part of the library that could be adapted, most of the libraries had not done any adaptations to suit the blind. Table 18 indicates what libraries and information units have done so far to adopt their libraries and information units. The figures in the table shows the responses of the blind users who indicated the areas they had difficulties due to lack of adaptation in the sampled libraries and information centres. The responses were made out of 25 which also was used to calculate percentages.
The libraries that serve the blind such as KUB and KIB have attempted to adapt the facilities although they can do better than that. The reason given by those libraries for not adapting the libraries is that very few visually handicapped users visit the libraries. Perhaps if there were many of them visiting the libraries, the authorities could see the necessity of adapting them. But since the number that ever visit the library is negligible, the need to adapt them has not yet been seen as a necessity.

In order for the blind to be able to take their notes without disturbing the other readers, some libraries have made some form of adaptations. For instance a library like KU Moi Library, has made arrangements to have a reading carrel for the blind who are using sighted readers and may want to make notes. Even if they make noise they do not disturb the other readers. Their catalogue has been brailled to enable them to identify the books they would like to read. Their reading area has not been hidden away although there are no tactile guiding to identify the shelves.
Table 18: Areas of possible adaptations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adaptations in Libraries</th>
<th>Libraries and Information Units</th>
<th>McMillan</th>
<th>KNLS</th>
<th>British Council</th>
<th>American Cultural</th>
<th>KUB</th>
<th>KIB</th>
<th>Moi Lib</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tactile guiding</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toilets</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelves</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seats</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tables</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


4.4.3 Serving the Blind

The sampled libraries and information centres were asked whether they were planning to start serving the blind users in the future. That is a question the librarians were non-committal. They were quick to point out that they would only do so if they were allowed by the higher authority. Questions 9 in the questionnaire to the libraries and information centres' required the respondents to indicate by ticking either YES or NO in order to show whether they were planning to start serving them in the future or not. This question was combined with question 12 from the same questionnaire which asked them to either tick Yes or No to indicate whether they think it is a worthy course. The responses are tabulated below.
Table 19: Libraries and Information Centres which are planning and agree it is worth starting services for the Blind

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library/information centre</th>
<th>Libraries Planning to start %</th>
<th>Libraries which agree it is worth of 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNLS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMillan</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KU Moi Library</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Council</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Cultural</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO Commission</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIB</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KUB</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KSB</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field study

1=Positive
0=Negative
The Table shows the number of libraries and information centres which are planning and agree it is a worthy venture to start services for the blind. The responses which are positive represent 55.5%. This percentage is an indication that the libraries have not yet started the services, but may do so in the future.

4.4.4 Materials and Information Organisation

In order to find out how materials and information is organised in the library, there was a question which required the respondents to indicate the kind of catalogue they use in the library. The results are tabulated below in a matrix.

Table 20: Type of Catalogue Used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Catalogue used</th>
<th>Card catalogue</th>
<th>Book catalogue</th>
<th>Computer</th>
<th>Any other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KNLS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Council</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Cultural</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMillan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO Commission</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KU Moi Library</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KUB</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KSB</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIB</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field study
From the above results, it is clear that most of the libraries use card catalogue, i.e. 33.3% of the sampled libraries. 30% of the visited libraries, i.e. KUB Library, KIB Library, KUB Library use book catalogue.

4.4.5 Interaction with the Blind

Libraries and information centres were required to indicate whether they have ever got any complaints from the other readers, that the blind were making too much noise with their braille. No library indicated that there has ever been any complaints. KNLS and McMillan Circulation Librarians reported that there used to be a noisy blind library user who used to draw attention of the readers but there has not been complaints so far.

As for the librarians training, they all indicated that it is necessary to be trained so as to be able to serve the blind better.

The librarians were asked to indicate whether they supply the blind users with library guide. Most of the libraries indicated that they do not do so. The reason they gave was that they do not see them in the library. The only three public libraries, KNLS, British Council and McMillan reported
that they at one time between 1990-1995 served very few blind users. They could only report the users who used the library frequently. They were asked to show the format in which the library guide was in.

Table 21: Formats of Library Guides

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Braille</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Print</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Large print</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KNLS</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMillan</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Council</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Cultural</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO Commission</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KU Moi Library</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIB</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KUB</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KSB</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Source: Field study. |
The results in table 21 indicate that only two libraries i.e. KUB, KIB have library guide that is in braille representing only 22.2%. All the others representing 77.7% have library guide in regular print. No library has a guide that is in large print. The libraries which do not provide braille library guides give the sighted guide accompanying the blind the rules and regulations governing the use of the library to read for the blind person.

A question of the duration differed. For instance a library like British Council indicated that they lend their books for three weeks. The book may be received over the telephone or by the borrower in person before the due date. KNLS lend books for two weeks and this applies to all people whether sighted or blind. Kenyatta University Moi Library lend materials to external borrowers for one month. The libraries differed in their duration which they lend materials but one thing was clear that there are no special treatment in terms of time for the blind. All clients were treated alike irrespective of their handicaps.

The libraries indicated that they levy fines on overdue books. A library such as British Council has heavy fines. For instance the rules and regulations of the library clearly stipulated that fines are levied on overdue items at KShs.4/=
a day per item to a maximum of KShs.200/=.
Kenyatta University Moi Library levy fines for overdue books at one shilling per day, per item. All these fines affect the blind as well.

4.4.6 Acquisitions

The libraries were asked whether they order braille books. They were required to indicate by ticking either YES or NO. The table below shows the responses from the sampled libraries and information centres.

Table 22: Ordering of braille books

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Libraries and Information Centres</th>
<th>Whether they order braille books</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNLS</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMillan</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Council</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Cultural</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO Commission</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KU Moi Library</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KUB</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIB</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KSB</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3/9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results as shown on Table 22 indicate that only Kenya Institute of the Blind and KUB order braille materials. 33.3% of the sampled libraries and information centres order braille materials. The remaining percentage i.e. 66.7% do not. However, a library like UNESCO Commission do not order for the books but they receive them from Ministry of Education HQS.

KSB has talking books facilities. They only open two days a week, i.e. Tuesday and Thursdays from 10.00 a.m. They only have talking books which they lend to blind users scattered all over Kenya. The library has a collection of 500 titles fiction books. To become a member of the talking books borrowing, registration fees is KShs.1000/= per annum.

A library such as American Cultural Centre did not see the need since the library is not a public library. Unless a blind person asks for a specific bibliography material and there is a sighted person to read for him, the library does not offer services to the blind.

A question of whether the libraries and information centres ever received non-book materials drew different responses. The libraries were asked to indicate by ticking YES or NO as applicable in their libraries and specify the subjects which they receive. Table 23 shows the results.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library/Information Centres</th>
<th>Subjects in Cassettes</th>
<th>Music</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>History</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Literature Languages</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Religion Philosophy</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Sociology</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KNLS</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>McMillan</td>
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<td>American Cultural</td>
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<td>UNESCO Commission</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>11.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>KUB</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total               | 1/9 | 11.1 | 2/9 | 22.2 | 3/9 | 33.3 | 2/9 | 22.2 | 3/9 | 22.2 |
The results show that some libraries such as Kenyatta University have collection of non-book materials consisting of talking books covering all the subjects. Of all the libraries visited only Kenyatta University Moi Library has a comprehensive collection of talking books ranging from books, magazines and daily newspapers. KSB has a good collection of fiction talking books.

British Council library has a second collection of non-book materials such as video, films, etc. They lend them to schools but they do not have talking books. American Cultural Centre has video film facilities, etc but there are no talking books. The same applies to McMillan Library.

4.5 DONOR AGENCIES

4.5.1 Introduction

Donor agencies with interests for the welfare and information needs of the blind play an important role in facilitating the provision of reading materials for the blind. But they mainly supply the materials to schools and training institutions such as teachers colleges. The libraries and information centres where the employed people may go to read are not catered for.
In this research project, two donor agencies were studied. A brief account of what they do for the blind is given. The two donor agencies where information was obtained from are Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind and International Labour Organisation projects for the disabled persons.

4.5.2 Royal Commonwealth for the Blind (RCSB)

This is the agency whose regional office is based in Nairobi. It caters for East Central and Southern Africa. They specialize in matters relating to the educational needs for the blind.

To facilitate the education for the blind, they have set up a modern computerized braille press called African Braille Computer Department (ABCD). Quite recently they obtained fourteen up to date computers which are being installed with the help of an expert from Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB), Great Britain. After their installation is completed the centre hopes to step up their braille production to cope with the growing demand.
The braille materials produced from the department is not for sale. The main objective of RCSB is to supply braille materials to the primary schools and secondary schools for the blind. There are plans to start supplying materials to KNLS and its branches all over Kenya so that the blind could be reached at the various branches. The first consignment that is to be donated has already been attained from Britain. Already KNLS has accepted to receive the books.

4.5.3 *International Labour Organisation (ILO)*

This international organisation has been assisting the disabled persons. For instance it was involved in a project for the employment of the disabled persons. Although the project was not a big success, according to some disabled persons, nevertheless, it helped some people to get employed. After employment, the problem of quest for information persisted because ILO's concern was to ensure that the blind person is self-employed or in a regular employment. After employment it was up to the visually handicapped to seek his ways to find information.
CHAPTER 5

DATA INTERPRETATION DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 PROCEDURE

The data analysed in chapter 4 is interpreted and discussed. From the discussions, appropriate conclusion and recommendations were made in the light of the objectives of the study as outlined in chapter 1. The interpretations and discussions are therefore based on eleven subsections from the findings drawn from the visually handicapped users and libraries. The subsections which will form the framework of the discussions are:

(a) Employed visually handicapped users:
   
   (i) Frequency of visiting libraries.

   (ii) Library buildings/orientation and mobility skills.

   (iii) Information needs.

   (iv) Reading materials.
(v) Social aspects
(b) Libraries and information centres.

(vi) Categories of users served in libraries and information centres.

(vii) Adaptations in the libraries to suit the blind.

(viii) Serving the blind.

(ix) Materials and information organisations

(x) Interaction with the blind.

(xi) Acquisitions.

5.2 EMPLOYED VISUALLY HANDICAPPED USERS

5.2.1 Frequency of Visiting the Libraries

From the findings, it is evident that quite a good percentage of employed visually handicapped persons are not keen users of the libraries and information centres. For instance in table 1 we are shown that 44% seldom visit
libraries and 20% never visited libraries and information centres. This form 64% of those blind users who are not keen to visit libraries. It leaves only 36% of blind users who frequently visit the library. From the findings those blind users who visit the libraries were not getting satisfactory services since most libraries in Nairobi did not have reading materials for them. Those who never or seldom visited libraries gave the following reasons as the deterrents for not visiting libraries.

i) Employed visually handicapped users are not properly served in print libraries.

ii) There are no braille materials.

iii) They are sure they cannot get what they want.

So, the blind and partially sighted readers choose to stay away from libraries and information centres. 44% of employed visually handicapped persons who are indicated in Table 1 to be visiting libraries often, may be said to be under pressure from examinations and preparing papers to present in conferences and seminars. The findings indicated that under normal circumstances majority of the blind users do not visit libraries and information centres.
5.2.2 Orientation and Mobility (O/M)

The fact that most of the blind users do not visit libraries have underlying reasons. Besides lack of materials, orientation and mobility in the libraries may be a strong hinderance of the blind visiting the libraries. This is evident from the high percentage of respondents who indicated that they had difficulties in locating books from the shelves. From the findings, the respondents attributed the problem on the general outlay of the shelves. They said that the shelves were quite high and there was no adequate tactile guiding that could assist them in locating materials. Although there were other areas of the library where they were asked to indicate whether they had difficulties, none looked as problematic as the shelves.

Generally the blind users agreed that there is a problem of orientation and mobility in the libraries. They saw the solution as lying in making the necessary adaptations in the libraries to assist the blind. The results are tabulated in Table 4. Such adaptations include tactile guiding and low shelves. In addition, the library staff could be sensitised on the needs of the blind so that whenever they are in quest of information, they are not left unattended. Other blind users suggested that the libraries establish a section in the
library specifically designed to suit the blind. Since the libraries cannot afford to engage orientation/mobility instructors in the library, then they should design the library with the blind users in mind. Again the blind users should be encouraged to learn to be independent right from school age. This could enable him to get about in new environments after the initial orientation.

Usually whenever the blind users are visiting the library, they are accompanied by sighted guide. The sighted guide assist the blind person to identify the books. He reads for him the titles and the table of contents. Concerning the significance of the sighted guide in relation to their independence of the blind person, Jernigan (1993) says:

There are times when the assistance of a sighted person is extremely beneficial. Taken by itself, the use or lack of use of a sighted guide has very little, if anything at all, to do with real independence... (Jernigan, 1993:61) 27.

This was evident from the responses of how the blind people get their books while in the library. The mode of the results was in the choice (b) which had given the alternative "with the help of the sighted guide". The results as tabulated on table 3 indicate that 40% which was the highest percentage showed that the blind are mainly assisted by their sighted
guides. In fact some libraries such as American Cultural Centre encouraged the blind users to be accompanied by the sighted guides because they may not have a member of staff who can be assigned the duty of assisting him. This was also applicable in British Council library. A lot of blind users engage the services of sighted guides who assist in identifying and reading for him whenever he visits a library.

5.2.3 Information Needs

In table 5, the purposes why the employed persons visit libraries and information centres were tabulated. The largest percentage, i.e. 40% went to the library to read for pleasure and to do quick reference. In the table it was marked as "all purposes above". 28% went to the library to read for pleasure while 24% went to the library to do a quick reference. Only a small percentage of 8% visited the library to read for examinations. Most of these come from universities.

The explanation given for the small percentage of those blind users who visit libraries to read for examinations was that there are provisions for private candidates especially in this era of 8-4-4 system of education. Those who went through the old system expressed their dissatisfaction of the new
system which they said bar blind people from registering as private candidate. Some of them said that they need to benefit quite a lot in the old system where they could book for higher academic certificate and study privately. By then they used to visit the libraries for the purpose of reading for examination. This does not happen any more.

5.2.4 Reading Materials

Reading materials generally fall under different categories. The broad categories include fiction, non-fiction, newspapers and magazines. From the findings, it is evident that the largest percentage of respondents, i.e. 44% as indicated in table 6, prefer reading magazines and newspapers whenever they visited libraries. This is followed by fiction which takes 40%. From the results, it can be deduced that the blind just like the sighted need to read for pleasure as well as keeping conversant with the world around them through reading newspapers and magazines. In a library like Kenyatta University Moi library, the magazines such as Step, Parents, Drum, Daily newspapers e.g. The East African Standard, Daily Nation and the Kenya Times are recorded in cassettes and lent to the blind users.
Fiction books are second in preference. According to the respondents who preferred fiction books, they said that they like reading novels and story books for entertainment. A library like Kenya Society for the Blind Talking Books Library, only stock fiction books for the adult visually handicapped and the aged. The blind lack avenues for enjoyment so whenever they get opportunity to read a paper back transcribed in braille for tapped cassette, they derive a lot of enjoyment. Quite a good number of the respondents expressed their dissatisfaction on the availability of fiction books in the libraries. Some of the complaints made by the blind users to librarian is that the novels were not adequate and some are too out-dated. There is a need to equip the libraries with modern fiction so that the blind can also keep with the trends of times through reading.

In table 8, it is clear that a larger cluster of blind users seemed to favour visiting libraries to look for general information. They said that they would like to be well informed like the sighted readers who have a lot of opportunities to get information through many channels, i.e. mass media, barazas workshops and seminars, etc. They expressed their dismay in the failure displayed by libraries which cannot supply them with adequate materials to acquire general information.
It was generally evident that there is deficiency in almost all the subjects as indicated in table 9. They felt that the collection in the libraries should be revamped by adding braille books in philosophy, languages, psychology, sociology, economics, law, history, music and science. Quite a good number of the respondents indicated that they would like to read books on Special Education and Rehabilitation for the visually handicapped which are quite important to the blind because they can equip them with the survival skills and independence.

5.2.5 Social Aspects

In order to examine the relationship between the employed visually handicapped readers and the libraries, the blind users were asked to indicate how the library staff helped them whenever they visited libraries. Table 10 shows how varied the responses were. The respondents indicated that the members of staff in some libraries such as Kenyatta University Moi library brought the requested books to the blind person as he waited. Others such as McMillan memorial library indicated where the materials could be found. The reason for doing so was given as shortage of staff. The librarians could not distribute themselves adequately where they afford to spare a number of staff to look for materials for the blind.
Another problem that was evident in the responses is about this issue of attitudes of the sighted towards the blind. Talking about this issue of attitude of the public towards the blind the chief executive of Kenya Union of the Blind pointed out that:

The real problem of blindness is not blindness itself but what members of the general public think about it. They perceive blindness as imposing serious functional limitations which prevent the blind from growing into independent and responsible people (Chief Executive officer, KUB, 1993:5).

This problem is evident in the way libraries and information centres are stocked. There are no braille materials. This absence of materials for the visually handicapped discourages them from going to the libraries since they know they will not get what they are looking for. They say that it is a waste of time to visit the libraries.

The study sought to find out whether rules and regulations have any effect in the frequency in which blind people visit libraries. The findings were that they were not given the rules. In some libraries such as British Council, the rules and regulations governing the use of the library are kept at the circulation desk. However, they were not in braille. It is expected that all the people who visit the
library are sighted and therefore the thought of availing braille rules and regulations do not occur because there are no braille materials in the library. A library like Kenya Union of the Blind do not have the rules and regulations, because it is only starting. The other libraries have not yet prepared them in braille.

Within the rules and regulations of a library, the duration a reader should take with the borrowed book before returning are stipulated. The researcher wanted to find out whether this duration also have an effect. Again surprising enough, contrary to the assumption that the blind would ask for more time to stay with a book, was refuted. 48% respondents shown in Table 11 indicated that they like to read the book for one month which is the duration given to the sighted. Those who preferred the duration of one month gave the reasons as:

i) that other readers would like to read the book.

ii) that the longer one stays with a book the more he will relax because he knows the book is there.

iii) that he would like to read the book so as to create the need for more books.
Although the blind employed people are too busy during the day with their daily duties, however, with proper arrangement they always find time to read the book depending on the information need at the moment. Usually one month is the normal duration external borrowers are loaned books in some libraries such as Kenyatta University Moi library.

The sighted readers usually take notes while in the library. The blind, too should take notes while reading in the library. The issue is, how will they do it using their braille machines without disturbing the other sighted readers? One factor was evident that the blind are quite conscious of the noise that the brailler can make to the other readers. For that reason many of them do not take notes but would rather get a reader to quietly read for them if there are no braille books, as is always the case. Others prefer to use a private reading room (carrel) if they are present or sit in an isolated corner where they would not disturb the readers.

The library management at Kenyatta University Moi library has reserved a carrel for blind readers. They can invite a sighted reader who can read aloud without disturbing the other readers. They can use the braille machines freely. The low vision use paper and pencil to take their notes, so they can easily fit with the other readers in the open reading areas.
However, a small number of low vision readers at Moi library, Kenyatta University prefer reading in a carrel where the books can be brought to them.

Concerning the possible complaints that may emanate from the sighted users, the findings showed the other sighted readers do not overtly complain about the noise the blind make with their braillers. Although it is a fact that braillers do make loud noise, but the findings of whether it brings about complaints from the sighted users drew negative responses, i.e. nothing happened. The assumption was that there would be complaints from the users.

It can be said that the sighted readers tolerated the noise made by the machines or get used to the noise as is usually the case if readers stay for a long period with blind people who use braillers. This further indicated that the community with which the blind have to live in are aware of the nature of the handicap of the blind people and are tolerant enough to put up with the noise that they can make with their braille machines as they take notes.

A question was asked of whether it is preferable to have an exclusive library built and equipped with materials for the visually handicapped. The responses differed. The question
required them to respond either YES or NO. 40% of the respondents felt that there is a need for an exclusive library for the visually handicapped readers. From the many reasons given to support the need for such a library four reasons seemed to feature prominently. These are:

i) There is a dire need for a library or libraries for the blind. There is none at the moment in Kenya.

ii) An exclusive library for the blind would cater for the needs and interests of the blind adequately.

iii) A library for the blind would concentrate materials and make them accessible with the maximum convenience to the blind.

iv) The blind people would get undivided attention which is lacking at the moment.

On the other hand, there was 60% of the respondents who felt that there would be no need of having an exclusive library for the blind. They gave diverse reasons to support their arguments. But the reasons given below seemed to be the consensus of the 60% respondents. The reasons they gave were:
i) An exclusive library for the visually handicapped will isolate the blind from the mainstream community they should live in.

ii) It would rob the public the opportunity to understand the blind.

iii) With the exclusive library there is a danger of narrowing the field from where the blind would select their reading materials.

iv) It is better to use the libraries designed for the sighted people because the blind can use the same existing materials for the general public.

v) It is not cost effective to equip a library for the blind only since it requires a lot of equipment, i.e. thermoform, combo-binder, spirals, braillers, cassettes, etc., yet it is only going to serve a negligible reading population.

From the above analysis of the reasons for and against, it is evident that the blind would not like to be isolated from the community. The essence of integration which is highly regarded at the schools is naturally the trend even for the
employed visually handicapped persons.

However, the blind felt that they would need to have secluded reading area where they would have adaptations of the tables and lighting for the vision within the libraries designed for the sighted. They would use the secluded reading area for having their readers read aloud for them without disturbing the other readers. They would also use their typewriters and their braillers without feeling that they are inconveniencing the other readers. They felt that since they would be using their braille machines or having someone to read for them. A separate enclosure would serve the purpose.

On the other end of the scale, respondents felt that having scheduled reading room for the blind is another form of isolating the blind from the mainstream. They would not like to appear as bothersome group who create an extra cost in libraries to provide a room for them. They would like to utilize the existing facilities. Low vision readers did not opt for separate reading area. However, their lighting requirements differed considerably. There were some who felt that there is need for optimum lighting in some libraries. They felt that some libraries like McMillan Memorial library lacked enough natural lighting.
The results of the study indicated that the employed blind people lacked entertainment in their places of work. They do not visit libraries where they would go to read for pleasure like the sighted. In a conference about deaf-blindness at Osimo (1993) it was observed that:

Making enjoyable use of one's leisure time is important to the quality of life for a deaf-blind person as it is for anyone else integral to this is the opportunity for blind people to learn for expertness of others. (5th Helen Keller World Conference, 1993:4). 

This section deprive the employed blind people of their right to relax and enjoy reading fiction books, librarians would serve them well if they had reading materials in braille and large print.

From the study it was found out that the blind usually get assistance from their members of the families. From the data it was evident that even those who were not married were living with sighted relatives who helped them. Others felt that the relatives who are not from the nucleus family used to get impatient reading for them always. Sighted friends would sometimes desert them. The study also revealed that the blind were busy at home. They help in the daily chores such as housekeeping. They sometimes get too busy to read while at home. One of the respondents indicated that they did
administrative and coordinated general repairs.

5.3 LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION CENTRES

5.3.1 Introduction

In this subsection, the study will analyse data received from libraries and information units. The analysis will cover the following areas: categories of users; adaptations in the libraries to suit the blind; serving the blind; materials and information organisation; interaction with the blind; acquisitions. The discussion will be done with close reference to the data analysis.

5.3.2 Categories of Users

Generally the libraries and information centres sampled for the study are designed for the sighted readers. Except for three libraries, i.e. Kenya Institute of the Blind (KIB), Kenya Union of the Blind (KUB) and Kenya Society for the Blind (KSB); Talking Book library which serve the blind users and are built exclusively for the blind, all the others are for the sighted. Public libraries such as KNLS, McMillan and British Council reported that they occasionally serve the
blind users. They reported that whenever the blind visited the libraries they only did so to read some specific books. For instance, KNLS and McMillan Memorial libraries reported that they used to serve an adult blind user who used to come to the library only to consult reference books such as dictionaries and encyclopedias with help of sighted guides. British Council library used to serve a blind person who used to visit the library to read Law books. He used to be accompanied by a sighted guide.

The libraries reported a considerable turn up of the physically handicapped in 1994. These do not require special materials like the blind who read braille. The only problem is that the libraries do not have special adaptations to accommodate their physical needs such as toilets, stairs, seats, tables, entries, etc. They could not tell whether the deaf visited their libraries since no deaf user had come for assistance in the circulation desk or reported to the librarian. Unless they start communicating where they can be seen using sign language. They only enter and go without being noticed.

It was reported that the numbers of the visually handicapped users who visited the libraries in 1994-95 varied. They comprised of different categories of the visually
handicapped, i.e. there were students, young children, working people. Different statistics were presented. Some libraries such as Kenyatta University Moi library had the largest number of students who are served in the library as shown in table 16. This number can be attributed to the fact that Kenyatta University Moi library has the largest population of visually handicapped students. Again it was second to KIB in serving the employed users. This number may come about because after the students have completed their degree and are employed, they come back to look for information because they are aware of what the library can offer. KIB library has the highest number because it is fundamentally built for the visually handicapped. Although the institute basically serves the blind through correspondence there is a library where the blind can go to borrow books and do quick reference.

KUB library which is relatively a new library has been utilized by the employed readers. It is built for the union members. It has a collection that is growing steadily. From the findings it is evident that the library has a wide variety of titles and new braille books. They receive braille books from Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB) in Great Britain.
UNESCO Commission library does not serve the blind although they receive braille materials. The reason given was that the library which can be equated with a special library for the Ministry of Education employees does not serve the public. Since they do not have a blind employee at the moment, they do not see any blind user going to be served. The library occasionally receives books and journals from the ministry headquarters at Jogoo House, but do not keep them on the shelves. They in turn donate them to institutions such as Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE) library. The blind are not aware of such a library and the presence of braille materials in the library.

British Council Library and American Cultural centre are entirely for the sighted readers. There are no braille facilities neither are there non-book materials to facilitate the reading of the blind. The librarians felt that they were not confident enough to serve the blind in their libraries. Both libraries affirmed that they encourage the blind to visit the library in the company of a sighted guide who would assist him to locate and identify the books.

McMillan Memorial library results showed that they have been in contact with blind users. Mostly they could remember an adult blind person who used to come to the library
accompanied by a sighted guide. He used to read the reference books. Another visually handicapped visitor of the library was a student of journalism who could visit the library occasionally to read materials of his profession since there are no braille materials in the library, the student journalist who is an employee of Kenya Union of the Blind, used to go with a sighted guide. The librarians would only point to where they could find the materials. They did not offer a lot of help. The blind readers never registered to become regular borrowers. They only read in the library.

5.3.3 Adaptations in the Libraries to Suit the Blind

This factor of adaptations in the libraries and information centres was found to be lacking. No library, even those designed for the blind themselves had adequate adaptations. In fact there were some which had attempted e.g. KUB and KIB, but it cannot be said to make any impact at all. KUB has labelled its parts in braille but that is as far as they go. KIB has also attempted adaptations by having large tables that can accommodate the braillers and the braille papers. Again they cannot be said to be enough. Virtually, there are no tactile guiding to indicate the direction of the materials. KU Moi library has attempted to bring about some
suitable adaptations. For instance the blind users cannot use the public catalogue or short loan catalogue unless they are accompanied by sighted guide or a member of staff volunteers to assist them. Moi library has taken steps to ensure that the cards for short loan materials are put in braille to help the blind to be independent.

Table 18 which shows possible areas where adaptations can be made in the library conveys the message that only those libraries designed for the blind, (KUB, KIB) have some form of adaptations and to some extend KU Moi library which has blind students. The reason advanced by the librarians of why they do not make adaptations in their libraries can be summed up into the following reasons:

i) it ought to be planned right from the planning level.

ii) the blind are only minority and even at that, they do not visit libraries.

iii) it is a costly undertaking especially if it is to be done later.
From the reasons advanced by the librarians, it can be said that adaptations will not be immediately accomplished in the libraries. It is clear that the blind will still continue experiencing problems in libraries and information centres which are not meant for them.

5.3.4 Serving the Blind

As for the future prospects of libraries and information centres providing reading materials for the blind and low vision, the solution is not yet visible in majority of the libraries. However, there are plans at KNLS to start providing braille materials to the blind at the District Branches as well as the Headquarters. This was reported in the East African Standard of June 1st, 1995. The report said that arrangements have been made between the library and Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind who would supply them with braille materials. The report says:

Braille books will be provided by the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind, Kenya Institute of the Blind and African Braille Centre Department will also be involved... (East African Standard June 1995)
Except for the preparation of availing braille materials to the blind, other plans like making adaptations to suit the blind have not yet been arranged. The other libraries and information centres such as British Council, American Cultural centre, McMillan, UNESCO Commission, said they did not have plans of starting services for the blind.

5.3.5 Materials and Information Organisation

Generally most libraries which had been sampled for the study use card catalogue. As mentioned earlier only Kenyatta University Moi library has brailed some cards. But some libraries serving the blind entirely use book catalogue which are in braille. The use of Information Technology (IT) is practised at British Council, American Cultural Centre whereby they have started all their card system in computer. Within these three categories, i.e. card catalogue, book catalogue and computer, only computer is least used. The two libraries which have the facility are overseas aided, and therefore they can easily afford them. The other libraries and information centres are still on the way to making their information organisation automated. UNESCO Commission and KNLS reported that plans are under way to purchase and install computers in their libraries for all the operations.
The collected data showed that except the libraries which are designed for the blind such as KUB, KIB have acquisition policy for braille materials. KSB has an acquisition policy for Talking Books which are mainly fiction. All the other libraries are designed for the sighted and therefore they do not have an acquisition policy for acquiring materials for the blind.

The research revealed that although the visited libraries stock non-book materials such as microfilm, computers, transparencies, cassettes, etc. quite a small number have talking books. Libraries such as KU Moi library has quite a good collection of Talking Books produced locally. KSB library has a collection of 500 titles of talking books mainly in fiction which they procure from United Kingdom, KUB has a small number also. The others do not have any. Those libraries which have talking books such as KSB testify that the service is quite popular with employed readers who borrow cassettes and take home to listen as they are relaxing. At Kenyatta University Moi library, the blind users who do not want to take the cassettes away are provided with cassette players and can sit in a reading carrel reserved for them to listen to the talking books and take notes without being disturbed or disturbing others with the machines.
5.3.6 Interaction with the Blind

The librarians were required to indicate by ticking either 'Yes' or 'No' whether they have been trained to handle the blind effectively. All of them indicated that they were not trained. The question further required them to indicate whether the training is necessary. Again they all conceded that the training is necessary. The reasons which the librarians gave to support their opinion that the training is necessary are summarised below:

i) To get the skills in order to serve the blind better.

ii) To gain confidence as they serve the blind.

iii) To gain understanding of information needs of the blind.

iv) To be able to interpret appropriately the relevant communication media for the blind.

The reasons given above featured in all libraries which do not serve the blind at the moment. The librarians felt they are not competent enough to serve the blind at the moment.
Except for libraries designed to serve the blind i.e. KIB and KUB which have some form of braille rules and regulations, all other libraries have print copies. British Council keep the copies of the rules and regulations as well as joining instructions at the circulation desk, each user can get a copy but there is non in braille, the media of the blind. Unless a blind comes to the library with a sighted guide, he cannot read for himself what the library allows or forbids.

The prescribed duration libraries lend books differ from one library to the another, but one thing was clear that there are no special treatment in terms of duration variation specifically for the blind. All clients were treated a like irrespective of their handicaps. But in case a person has not completed reading the book, he could renew the book before the date due, i.e. in British Council library. Majority of the blind users supported the penalty of levying fines to those who overstayed with a library book. They gave the reason that it is deterrent to those lazy readers who would like to keep the book to themselves at the expense of others who would like to read the book as well.
5.3.7 Acquisitions

Acquisition policies of the sampled libraries and information centres differed. However, there are some salient characteristics which generally make each library or information centres fundamentally different from the others. For instance Kenya Society for the Blind Talking Books library is solely concerned with braille books and a number of print journal such as World Blind. KIB is a braille library, UNESCO Commission receives some magazines and books in braille. Kenyatta University Moi library receives materials from Royal National Institute of the Blind.

A library such as American Cultural centre did not see the need for acquiring materials for the blind since the library is not a public library. Unless a blind person asks for specific bibliographic materials and there is sighted person to read for him the library does not offer services to the blind.

Although the libraries such as British Council and American Cultural centres are well stocked in terms of non-book materials. They do not have talking books for the blind. It is only Kenyatta University Moi library and KSB Talking book library that have considerable number of titles. Whereas
KSB deal with fiction books, KU Moi library has all broader coverage because it serves the students who mainly major in Education and Humanities.
5.4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.4.1 Conclusions

From the data collected from the field, it is quite clear that the employed visually handicapped people rarely visit libraries and information centres. The responses in the questionnaires for the visually handicapped indicated that the low vision hardly go to the libraries. The reason for this normally lies in the fact that the libraries lack books in large print. In addition the lighting conditions in the libraries are not suitable for the low vision readers.

Among the respondents of the questionnaires there were two albinos with low vision from different offices. They indicated that they do not visit libraries. The reason they gave was that they would not get what they want. Although they are interested in reading from libraries, they are discouraged by the small print in the books. They strain too much. One of them carries a magnifying lens or loop for reading newspapers in the office. That loop could not be sued for reading extensively because it is too small and one has to keep on moving and sliding it along the page.
It was generally agreed by the blind users that there are problems of orientation and mobility in the libraries for both the low vision and the blind. The most problematic area are the shelves which are too high and not tactually adapted or boldly labelled in good contrast for the low vision users.

The study unearthed some underlying problems why the blind do not visit the libraries. One of the problem being the most common is lack of materials for them. The other problems include; lack of adaptations to suit them in terms of their movement; lack of understanding on the side of librarians who are supposed to serve them; failure to get constant help from the sighted guides all the time whenever the blind wants to go to the library; orientation and mobility skills are lacking in the blind; libraries are generally designed for the sighted.

Failure of the blind to visit libraries has implications. One of the implications is that the libraries and information centres will continue to think and plan for the sighted, since the blind are not seen in the libraries. The librarians are not aware of their potential information needs and as a result they do not include the blind in their collection development. The second implication is that the blind are
going to be seen as people who do not read. So, if they are not thought of a reading lot then the policy and decision makers will continue to ignore them.

The libraries which receive braille materials do not take extra pains to inform the blind that there are some braille materials in their libraries. A library that can be taken as an example is UNESCO Commission. Braille materials are obtained but they are left there untouched for months before they are forwarded to the institutions.

It is true that the libraries are designed for the sighted. It should be borne in mind that the blind too who are a component of our community, although a minority group ought to be provided for. The libraries which have braille materials could make them aware of the existence of such materials. This can make them enjoy their full privileges like their sighted counterparts.

Although the low vision group which is a subset of the blind population is also minority, it is worth thinking about. This is a group that is highly misunderstood. They can walk independently to the library, but they cannot easily locate the books efficiently. Their visual acuity differ significantly from one individual to another. Although they
have a generic name "the partially sighted" yet their visual efficiency differ. If they are wearing glasses, they may see better but that does not mean that they are able to see all the details. So locating a book from shelves may be quite difficult. As mentioned earlier, the shelves are very high and the labelling is inadequate. So locating the book is not the only problem, there is also problem of scanning the table of contents because the writing is very tiny to a low vision reader. Perhaps large writing or reading lenses would assist.

5.4.2 Recommendations

5.4.2.0 Procedure

The recommendations will cover the areas that make up the study. The areas are: employed visually handicapped users; libraries and information centres and donor agencies.

5.4.2.1 Visually Handicapped Employed Persons

1. The study has found out that majority of the blind employed persons do not frequently visit libraries and information centres. The reasons given were that they are too busy or that there are no materials for them to read. It is
recommended that an awareness campaign be conducted to the blind employed persons so that they are informed that visiting libraries is good for them for continuing education, intellectual and emotional growth as well as enhancing their professional skills.

2. While in the library the blind person should be assisted by a library staff to locate and scan the contents of a book. Although the libraries do not have enough members of staff, it is important that a blind person is assisted as much as possible. If they are assisted at the initial visit, then they can always find their materials in the subsequent visits. It is therefore recommended that materials for the blind be kept in a convenient location within the library. They should not be hidden away in a long twisty path.

3. Since the blind library users may need to depend on the sighted for guidance within the library, it is recommended that they cultivate an understanding and positive social interaction with the sighted so that the sighted may assist them without feeling that they are being forced to do so.

4. The existing libraries designed for the sighted readers should be adapted to suit the blind. At the moment they present a lot of difficulties whenever a blind person wants to
get materials to read. The shelves can be made shorter and tactile guiding installed to enable the blind to locate materials.

5.4.2.2 Libraries and Information Centres

5. At the moment public libraries and information centres are designed for the sighted population. The blind who are supposed to be part of that public are not catered for, it is recommended that libraries are designed to cater for the total population without leaving out the blind and partially sighted (Low vision).

6. Libraries and information centres are stocked with print books. It is recommended that they include portions of braille books so that the blind can find materials in the libraries and information centres when they visit them. The braille materials may comprise of fiction, journals and non-fiction so that there is a wide variety of reading materials.

7. It is clear that the blind use some noisy writing machines such as braille writers, type writers, slate and stylus. Their noise may be disturbing the other readers who are not used to the noise. It is therefore recommended that the
libraries provide reading enclosures or carrels for the blind to use with their readers who may need to read for him aloud.

8. Perhaps, at the moment most libraries are not serving the visually handicapped due to the inevitable overhead costs for providing reading space, tables, talking books, etc. But it can be done by utilizing the existing facilities and soliciting for donations and gifts from institutions which deal with the blind such as RCSB, KSB or RNIB of Great Britain. With proper arrangements, materials could be attained from the agencies to start the services.

9. The availability of reading materials in the libraries through donations and gifts may stay unnoticed by the beneficiaries, i.e. the blind. So as to avoid this wastage, it is recommended that the libraries and information centres organise awareness campaigns to publicise the presence of braille materials, through mass media, seminars and workshops and sending letters to the companies where the blind are working.

10. If for one reason or another, the libraries and information centres have not yet started to serve the blind and partially sighted, it is time they started considering the venture. There is a dire need for such provisions in the
libraries. KNLS has taken positive steps towards starting services for the blind in its district branches.

11. Non-book materials are an ideal alternative for the reading materials. It is recommended that the libraries and information centres start to plan for the collection and stocking the libraries with talking books, cassette players, magnifiers, etc.

12. Although the libraries and information centres have print card catalogue which suit the intended users, i.e. the sighted, it is recommended that the catalogue is put in braille so that the blind can also check for themselves what they want without having to depend on the sighted all the time.

13. As for the computerisation of bibliographical information to facilitate retrieval of information by the blind, it is recommended that the blind can use special software in an adapted hardware computer to retrieve and store the bibliographical information.

14. Public libraries do not have policy for the acquisition of braille materials. It is recommended that it is time their
policy for acquisition of library materials is revised, with a view of incorporating the policy for the acquisition of materials for the blind and low vision.

15. Most libraries especially the public libraries do not conduct adequate and well organised library user education. It is recommended that the libraries conduct user education so that the blind can be told what the library holds. On the other hand, the library members of staff may know that there is a need of serving the blind. The other readers may also need to be made aware that they would have to put up with the noise the blind persons may make with their braillers.

16. Libraries and information centres have rules and regulations. They are usually in print. It is recommended that these be put in braille so that the blind can read for themselves.

5.4.2.3 Donor Agencies

17. Donor agencies usually supply books and other braille materials to schools only. The public libraries and information centres which are the likely places the blind may go to, are not in the list of those places where braille materials may be sent. It is therefore recommended that the
agencies start sending materials to libraries and information centres.

18. Although ILO has been involved in the project for the Employment of the Disabled Persons, it is recommended that they provide libraries with facilities to enable the blind employed persons to pursue their continuing education through reading in the libraries and information centres.
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To whom it may concern

Dear Sir/Madam,

POSTGRADUATE STUDENT IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES

Name: WAMBUA, FREDRICK NZICKA
Reg. No. E55/8012/93

The above named is a postgraduate student in the Department of Library and Information Studies at Kenyatta University. He is carrying out research entitled "Quest for information by employed visually handicapped readers in some selected libraries and information centres in Nairobi area: A situational analysis" as part of his degree requirements.

Any assistance given to him to facilitate the study will be highly appreciated.

Thank you for your cooperation.

J.R. NJUGUNA
HEAD, LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED EMPLOYED PERSONS

NAME---------------------------------

Professional Qualifications ---------------

Place of work ---------------------------------

Duration worked ---------------------------------

A. FREQUENCY OF VISITING LIBRARIES

1. Do you ever visit a library?
   Yes ( )
   No ( )

   If your answer is No give reasons

2. How often do you visit a library
   a) Often ( )
   b) Seldom ( )
   c) Never ( )

B. THE LIBRARY BUILDINGS/ORIENTATION & MOBILITY SKILLS

3. Is the Library far away from where you live?
   Yes ( )
   No ( )

4. Do you find the layout of the buildings convenient for your easy movement?
   Yes ( )
   No ( )

   If your answer is No what part of the library do you have difficulties in?
   a) Circulation ( )
   b) Shelves ( )
   c) Africana ( )
   d) Audio Visual ( )
   e) All of them ( )
   f) None ( )
5. While in the library, how do you get your books
   a) With the help of a library staff ( )
   b) With the help of a sighted guide ( )
   c) Alone ( )
   d) With the help of other readers ( )

6. How do you get to the library
   a) Alone ( )
   b) With the help of a sighted guide ( )
   c) You never visit a library ( )

7. Do you agree that there are problems of orientation and mobility for blind users in libraries and information centres?
   Yes ( )
   No ( )

   If your answer is Yes what do you suggest should be done to solve the problem?
   a) Employ mobility instructors in the libraries ( )
   b) Make the necessary adaptations in the libraries ( )
   c) Keep books and other reading materials for the blind near the entrance ( )

   List other suggestions that you feel should be considered and are not listed above.

   INFORMATION NEEDS

8. For what purpose do you visit a library?
   a) To read for pleasure ( )
   b) To do a quick reference ( )
   c) To read for an examination ( )
   d) All the purposes listed above ( )
Give any other reason that is not covered above.

9. Have you ever visited any information centre?
   Yes ( )
   No ( )

If the answer is Yes which one(s)

10. Is there a need for reading facilities for the visually handicapped in the libraries and information centres.
    Yes ( )
    No ( )

If your answer is either Yes or No, please justify

READING MATERIALS

11. What kind of books and magazines do you like reading?
    a) Fiction ( )
    b) Non fiction ( )
    c) Newspapers and other magazines ( )
    d) None ( )

12. What mode of writing do you use?
    a) Braille ( )
    b) Large Print ( )
    c) Regular print ( )
    d) All ( )

Tick where applicable

13. Do the libraries that you visit have talking books/books in cassettes
    Yes ( )
    No ( )
If the answer is Yes, in which category do they fall?

a) Fiction ( )
b) Non-Fiction ( )
c) Magazine ( )

List any other that may be there and is not covered above

14. What kind of information do you go to seek in the Library

a) General information ( )
b) Factual information for the purpose of Examinations ( )
c) Educational books to enhance professional knowledge ( )
d) Daily living skills books ( )

15. Are books which you find in the library where you visit relevant to your profession

Yes ( )
No ( )

If your answer is No which of the areas listed below do you wish they be included in the collections

a) Philosophy and religious studies ( )
b) Languages ( )
c) Psychology ( )
d) Sociology ( )
e) Economics ( )
f) Law ( )
g) History ( )
h) Music ( )
i) Science ( )

If the area(s) you feel need to be included is/are not mentioned above please write it/them
SOCIAL ASPECTS:

16. Whenever you visit a library, do you encounter a problem in communication?
   Yes ( )
   No ( )
   If the answer is Yes how do you overcome it?
   a) By getting an interpreter ( )
   b) By listening carefully to what the other person is saying ( )
   c) By avoiding a talk with the Librarians ( )
   d) None of the above ( )

17. Are the members of staff whom you meet in the library or information centres helpful to you?
   Yes ( )
   No ( )
   If your answer is Yes in what ways do they help you?
   a) By taking you to the shelves ( )
   b) By bringing all the books you need while you wait ( )
   c) By telling you where the books can be found ( )
   d) By assigning another member of staff to help you locate the books ( )
   e) None of the above ( )

18. Are there rules and regulations in the library/information centre where you visit
   Yes ( )
   No ( )
   If your answer is Yes how are they communicated to you?
   a) They are read to you ( )
   b) You are given to take home ( )
   c) You are not aware of existing rules and regulations ( )
   Tick as appropriate
19. Is the method used to make you aware of the rules and regulations suitable to you?
   Yes ( )
   No ( )

If your answer is No how else can it be done?
   a) Being brailled and supplied to the visually impaired and the blind ( )
   b) By being read aloud to the visually impaired ( )
   c) By being given out for the visually impaired to take home ( )

20. Do you find the other readers helpful?
   Yes ( )
   No ( )

21. Do you take notes while in the library?
   Yes ( )
   No ( )

If your answer is Yes how do you do it?
   a) Using brailer ( )
   b) Someone else does it for you ( )
   c) Using a portable typewriter ( )
   d) Using, slate and stylus ( )
   e) Using paper and pencil/biro ( )

If your answer to the above is either A, C or D has any reader complained due to the noise they make
   Yes ( )
   No ( )

If the answer to the above question is Yes how did they do it?
   a) Directly to you ( )
   b) Through the Librarian ( )
   c) Through another reader ( )
   d) Through writing ( )
   e) Nothing happened ( )
22. If you were to borrow books from a library how long would you like to stay with them?
   a) A week ( )
   b) Two weeks ( )
   c) a Month ( )
   d) 3 months ( )
   e) Longer period than 3 months ( )

23. If somebody overstays with a book is it justifiable to levy a fine on him or her
   Yes ( )
   No ( )

24. Would you prefer to have an exclusive library built and equipped with materials for the visually handicapped
   Yes ( )
   No ( )

If your answer is either Yes or No, briefly state the reasons.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________

25. Would you prefer to have a secluded reading area away from the other readers
   Yes ( )
   No ( )

25. Do you get any entertainments at your place of work
   Yes ( )
   No ( )

If your answer is Yes what kind of entertainment do you get?
   a) Music ( )
   b) Parties ( )
   c) Reading ( )
   d) Outings ( )
   e) Clubs ( )
   f) Sports ( )
   g) None ( )
   h) All listed above ( )

27. Does your family assist you in reading printed material for you at home?
   Yes ( )
   No ( )
If your answer is No, what are the reasons
a) They are too busy with other chores ( )
b) There is no one literate enough to read for you ( )
c) You do not ask them ( )
d) You do not carry home printed material ( )

28. Are you married?
Yes ( )
No ( )

If your answer is Yes what does your spouse do to earn his/her living
a) Business ( )
b) Secretarial work ( )
c) Farming ( )
d) Teaching ( )

If the type of work that your spouse does is not listed above, please mention it.
_________________________________________________________________________

29. Do you do any work at home?
Yes ( )
No ( )

If your answer is Yes what kind of work do you do
a) Working in the garden ( )
b) Helping in general house chores such as cooking and washing ( )

List any other work that you do while at home.
_________________________________________________________________________

30. How is your relationship with your spouse?
a) Cordial ( )
b) Strained ( )
c) Impartial ( )
Mention any other that is not listed above.
_________________________________________________________________________
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LIBRARIES/INFORMATION UNITS:

NAME OF LIBRARY/INFORMATION CENTRE:

A. CATEGORIES OF USERS:

1. Which of the following users does your library/information centre cater for?
   a. Students
   b. Adults
   c. Children
   d. Researchers
   e. Handicapped
   f. All

2. If you serve the handicapped users which groups do you serve?
   a. the blind
   b. the hearing impaired
   c. the physically handicapped
   d. all
   e. none

3. Do the blind come to read in your library?
   Yes
   No
   If your answer is No please give reasons

If your answer is Yes which books do they prefer?
   a. fiction
   b. non-fiction
   c. magazines
   d. periodicals
   e. tests in pursuit of further education

4. Which group of visually handicapped users visit your library?
   a. the students
   b. the young children
   c. mixture of all
   d. none
5. Do you get some visually handicapped working people enquiring about some specific materials to read?

Yes [ ]
No [ ]

If your answer is YES, please specify

________________________________________________________________________

B. ADAPTATIONS IN THE LIBRARIES TO SUIT THE BLIND:

6. Is your library adopted to suit the blind?

Yes [ ]
No [ ]

If your answer is YES what adaptations are there?

a. the guidings [ ]
b. the toilets [ ]
c. the shelves [ ]
d. the seats [ ]
e. the tables [ ]
f. materials e.g. books, audio visuals, etc. [ ]

List others that are not covered above

________________________________________________________________________

7. How do the blind come to the library?

a. independently [ ]
b. assisted by their sighted guide [ ]
c. you do not know [ ]

8. How do the blind take their notes in the library?

a. using braille [ ]
b. using sighted guides [ ]
c. they do not take notes [ ]
d. you do not know [ ]
C. SERVING THE BLIND

9. If you are not serving the blind users at the moment do you plan to do so in the future?
   Yes ( )
   No ( )
   If your answer is YES, specify the kind of preparations you are making

10. Are the blind users satisfied with what they get from your library?
    Yes ( )
    No ( )
    If your answer is NO, what areas do they need improvement?

11. Do the blind users who visit the library ever ask for guidance within the library?
    Yes ( )
    No ( )
    If your answer is YES, how do you assist?

12. If you have not yet started to provide the visually handicapped with reading materials, do you agree it is worth to start such a provision in your library?
    Yes ( )
    No ( )
D. MATERIALS AND INFORMATION ORGANISATION

13. Do you have braille books in your library?
   Yes ( )
   No ( )

If your answer is YES which subjects do they cover?
   Religion ( )
   History ( )
   Literature ( )
   English ( )
   Philosophy ( )

Tick where applicable

List down others which are not mentioned above

14. Do you stock your library with non-book materials (such as talking books, cassettes, etc.)
   Yes ( )
   No ( )

If your answer is YES give some examples

If your answer is NO give reasons

15. What kind of catalogue do you have?
   a. card catalogue ( )
   b. book catalogue ( )
   c. any other ( )

If your answer is C, please specify


16. Do you have a form of catalogue that can suit the blind?  
   Yes ( )  
   No ( )  
   If the answer is YES, please specify

   ____________________________________________________________

   ____________________________________________________________

   If the answer is NO, give reasons

   ____________________________________________________________

   ____________________________________________________________

17. Do you use computer for storage and retrieval of information  
   Yes ( )  
   No ( )  

18. Do you have any policy for acquisition of materials for the blind?  
   Yes ( )  
   No ( )  
   If your answer is NO, please briefly explain why?

19. E. INTERACTION WITH THE BLIND  
   Do you offer any assistance to the blind when they visit your library  
   Yes ( )  
   No ( )  
   If your answer is NO or YES, please specify

20. Do you get complaints from the other readers that the blind readers are making too much noise with their braillers?  
   Yes ( )  
   No ( )  
   If the answer is YES what do you do to alleviate the problem

   ____________________________________________________________

   ____________________________________________________________
21. Do you conduct library user education?
   Yes ( )
   No ( )
   If YES state briefly what you cover?

22. Have you ever been trained to handle the blind?
   Yes ( )
   No ( )
   If your answer is NO, do you see any necessity of a person who is to deal with the blind getting a training to be able to deal with them?
   Yes ( )
   No ( )
   If your answer is either yes or no, please briefly explain why?

23. Do you supply the blind users with a library guide?
   Yes ( )
   No ( )
   If YES, in what format is it?
   a. Braille ( )
   b. Print ( )
   c. Large print ( )
   If the answer is No, how do they know the rules and regulations governing the use of library. Please explain briefly.

24. Do you open the library over the weekends
   Yes ( )
   No ( )
If your answer is either YES or NO, please specify your opening hours

Do you lend books to the blind?
Yes ( )
No ( )
If the answer is YES, for how long do you lend then?
If NO, why?

Do you levy fines on overdue books?
Yes ( )
No ( )
If your answer is No give reason

G. ACQUISITION

Do you receive donations and gifts from donors and organisations
Yes ( )
No ( )
If YES what kind of materials do you receive?
   a. magazines ( )
   b. conference proceedings ( )
   c. periodicals ( )
   d. books ( )
   e. cassettes ( )
List others which you receive and are not included above

Do you ever order braille books?
Yes ( )
No ( )
If your answer is YES, list down some of the titles you order

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

If your answer is no please give reasons why you do not

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

9. Do you receive non book materials?

   Yes ( )
   No ( )

If your answer is YES, specify the subjects which you receive?

   a. music ( )
   b. history ( )
   c. languages ( )
   d. philosophy ( )
   e. sociology ( )

List any other that is not covered above

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

If your answer is NO please give reasons why you do not.