



## Information Repackaging for People with Special Needs in Edo State Library, Nigeria: A Case Report

Peace Osemudiamen Eromosele<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Edo State College of Nursing Sciences, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria.

### Abstract

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#### \* Corresponding author

Peace Osemudiamen  
Eromosele. Email:  
eromoselepeace6@  
gmail.com



**Introduction:** Information repackaging is a service barely available in the library, specifically for people with special needs. The study assessed information repackaging for people with special needs in Edo State Library, Nigeria.

**Methods:** This is a qualitative study. An open-ended questionnaire was used to collect data. Primary data was obtained from the entire population of eight library staff with a minimum qualification of an ordinary diploma in library science in Edo State Library within one week. Responses were analyzed and coded using the thematic analysis procedure by Braun and Clarke, summarized into categories and frequency, and represented in figures using column charts.

**Results:** The study revealed that the visual, hearing, and speech impaired people and illiterate people are the people with special needs, less than 15% of library users are special need people, information repackaging is partially available for people with special needs (50%), the major forms which information is repackaged for people with special needs were audio-visuals, charts, posters (100%) and the major problem associated with information repackaging for people with special needs was funds (100%).

**Conclusion:** The study discovered that information repackaging is partially available for people with special needs, indicating that they still need to be fully considered regarding their information needs. Thus, recommended inclusion for people with special needs as regards information.

## Introduction

In Nigeria, over 29 million of the 195 million people have one form of disability. The most common form of disabilities is visual impairment, hearing impairment, physical impairment, intellectual impairment, and communication impairment (1). Individuals with special needs possess a wide range of unique attributes. These could include visual, hearing, or speech impairments, intellectual developmental disorders, and behavioral disorders, among others. (2). Despite the high figure of people with disabilities,

people with special needs have been excluded in Nigeria (3). Regardless of this standpoint, individual, communal, national, or global development is hinged upon the availability, accessibility, and utilization of information to address man's needs in all areas of endeavor. Information is exponentially being recognized as man's fifth factor of production (4).

Information is knowledge or fact derived from studying, research, communication, and instruction to enhance development. Every individual requires



and needs information for growth, decision-making, career development, practices, and to display professionalism (5). Creation, distribution, and manipulation of information have become the most significant economic and cultural activity against the earlier belief that material, agrarian, and industrial resources influence development (6). The library has been one of the systems over time to manage and create access to various recorded knowledge, specifically, the public library, which has always been a source of accessing needed information for all. Public library is established to meet the informational, educational, and recreational needs of members of the public in all spheres of life. It is an organization established, supported, and funded by the government or through some other forms of community organization (7). Similarly, public libraries are agencies that promote education to people in a particular community. It is the local information center providing information resources for its users. The United Nations believes in inclusive and equitable quality education for all, including those with disabilities (8).

In 2012, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development Member States agreed to launch a process to develop a set of sustainable development goals (SDGs) to succeed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), whose achievement period concludes in 2015. The 17 SDGs address all three dimensions of sustainable development (environmental, economic, and social) and be coherent with and integrated into the United Nations global development agenda beyond 2015. The envisioned SDGs have a time prospect of 2015 to 2030. SDG Goal 4 states that inclusive and equitable quality education and promotion of life-long learning opportunities for all focuses on eliminating gender differences in education and ensuring equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for all, including those with disabilities. In addition, the scheme calls for building and improving education facilities that are child, disability, and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive, and effective learning environments for all. Furthermore, SDG 10 clearly strives to reduce inequality within and among countries by empowering and promoting the social, economic, and political inclusion of all, including those with disabilities (9). In order to achieve sustainable development goals, public libraries in Nigeria need to be inclusive in providing library services by repackaging information for those with special needs. The primary objective of a library is to

provide the right information at the right time in the right format to its users (10).

Information repackaging is a needful service in the libraries. In most cases, the information needed by some clientele might not be available in the conduit or format best understood or suited for the clientele. The service of information repackaging involves the right contact between library clientele and staff mandated or required to make or obtain information from the clientele based on their needs and restructure the information in the format preferred by respective clientele (11). Information repackaging is processing information in a format that is more effective and understood by various categories of clientele in order to meet their demands (12, 13). Repackaging information for those with special needs is necessity for libraries, and the library is an agent of positive development and transformation, primarily in achieving SDGs. However, studies (11, 13, 14) have investigated information repackaging and the role of public libraries. However, there seems to be no research on how public libraries repackage information for people with special needs, exclusively as regards achieving SDGs in Nigeria, thereby leaving it open to scholarly investigation. This study attempts to bridge the knowledge gap, consequently, this study was conducted to ascertain how information is repackaged for people with special needs (particularly the visual impairment, hearing impaired, speech impaired, and illiterate people) in a public library in Nigeria because it is the people's library that is open to everyone. This study conducted at the Edo State Library aimed to identify the population of individuals with special needs utilizing the library services, understand the proportion they make up of the total library users and assess the availability and types of repackaged information for these individuals. Furthermore, it investigated the challenges related to repackaging information for individuals with special needs.

## Methods

The study adopted a descriptive study using qualitative research to determine how information is repackaged for special needs (particularly visual, hearing, and speech impaired people and illiterate people) in Edo State Library because it is the only functional public library in Edo State. Edo State Library is a public library in Benin City, the capital of Edo state in South-South, Nigeria.

Primary data was obtained from the entire population of eight library staff with a minimum qualification of

an ordinary diploma in library science in Edo State Library. The entire population was adopted due to its small size. When a population is of manageable size, less than 200, it is advisable to conduct a census of the entire population instead of just a sample (15).

The research instrument consisted of structured questions based on the research objective. An open-ended questionnaire was used to collect data for this study because it enabled the researcher to solicit large amounts of information. The questions were about library users with special needs, percentages of library users with special needs, availability and forms of information repackaging for people with special needs, and the problems associated with information for people with special needs.

The researcher administered the open-ended questionnaire in person, filled within one week, resulting in 100% response. The responses were analyzed and coded using a thematic analysis procedure by Braun and Clarke (16). Data were analyzed, and similar responses were coded and

summarized into categories with their Frequencies. Data was represented in figures using column Charts using Microsoft Excel.

## Results

### Theme one: People with special needs in Edo State Library

This theme was derived from the first research objective. This was to seek the people with special needs in the Edo State Library. Indicatively, the people with special needs in Edo State Library, as identified by eight participants, have hearing problems; seven respondents indicated who have problems with their speech, five participants listed people who are blind, and two participants highlighted those who cannot read or write. Based on similar responses, the participants' responses were summarized into four categories (hearing, speech, and visual impairment and illiterate people) and represented in Figure 1.

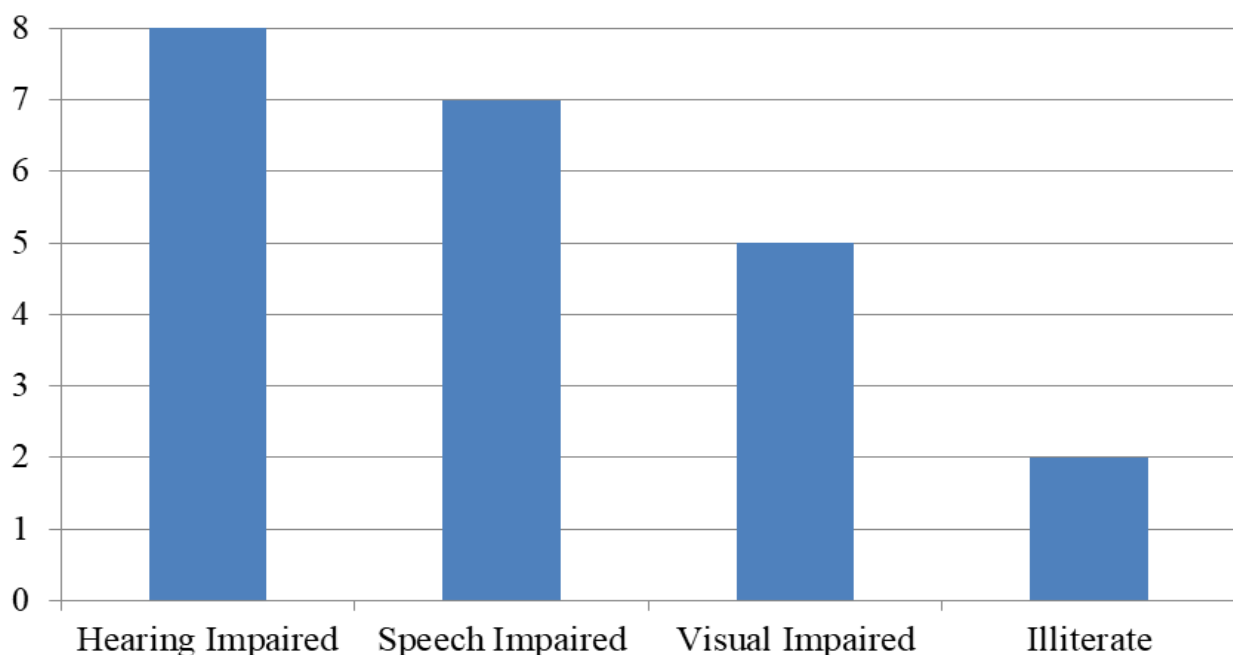


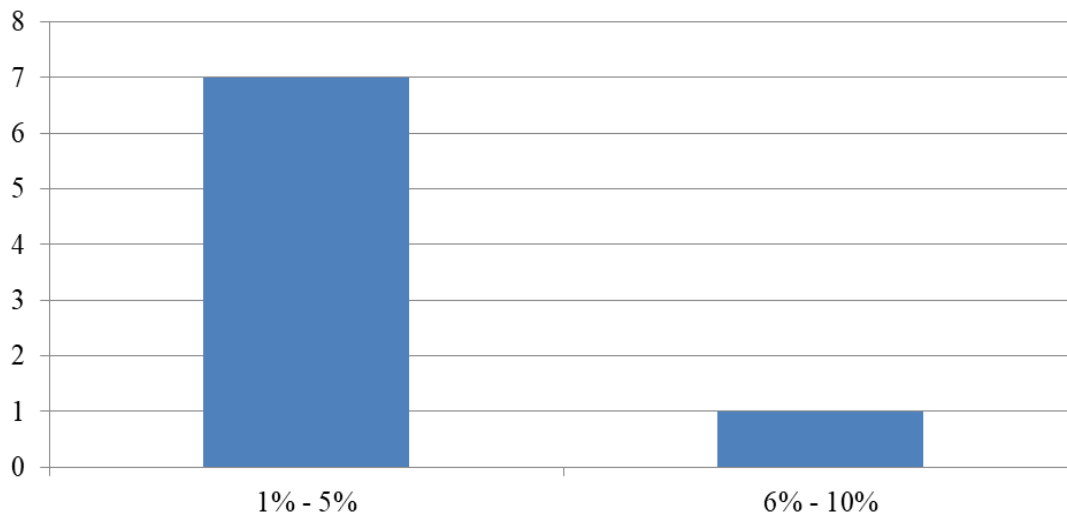
Figure 1. People with special needs in Edo State Library

### Theme two: Percentage of people with special needs in Edo State Library

This theme was derived from the second research objective. This was to ascertain the percentage of people with special needs in the Edo State Library. Three participants indicated it should be about 2 %, while five respondents identified various percentages such as 1 %, 3 %, 4 %, 5 %, and 7 %.

The response from the respondents was abridged

into two ranges because the various responses fall between (1-5 % and 6-10%). It was discovered that the percentage of people with special needs in Edo State Library, as stated by seven respondents listed between 1%-5% and 1 participant listed as 6%-10%. It can be deduced that the percentage of special needs library users in Edo State Library is less than 10% (Figure 2).



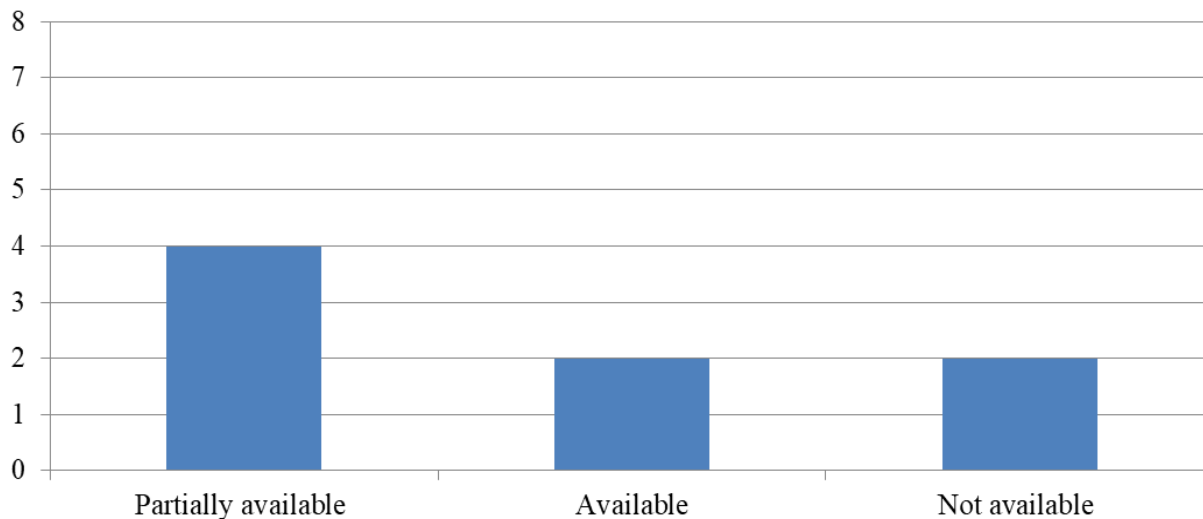
**Figure 2.** Percentage of people with special needs in Edo State Library

### Theme three: Availability of information repackaging for people with special needs

This aim was to ascertain the availability of information repackaging for people with special needs in Edo State Library. Four participants stated that, *to some extent, information repackaging is available*. In comparison, two participants stated, *“Yes” we package information for those with special needs*, and two participants clearly stated that *in this library,*

*to the best of my knowledge, we don't repackaging information for people with special needs.*

The responses were coded into three categories: partially, available, and not available, based on the similar responses of participants. It was discovered that four participants indicated that information repackaging is partially available, while two participants indicated that it is available and not available, respectively, as shown in Figure 3.



**Figure 3.** Availability of information repackaging for people with special needs

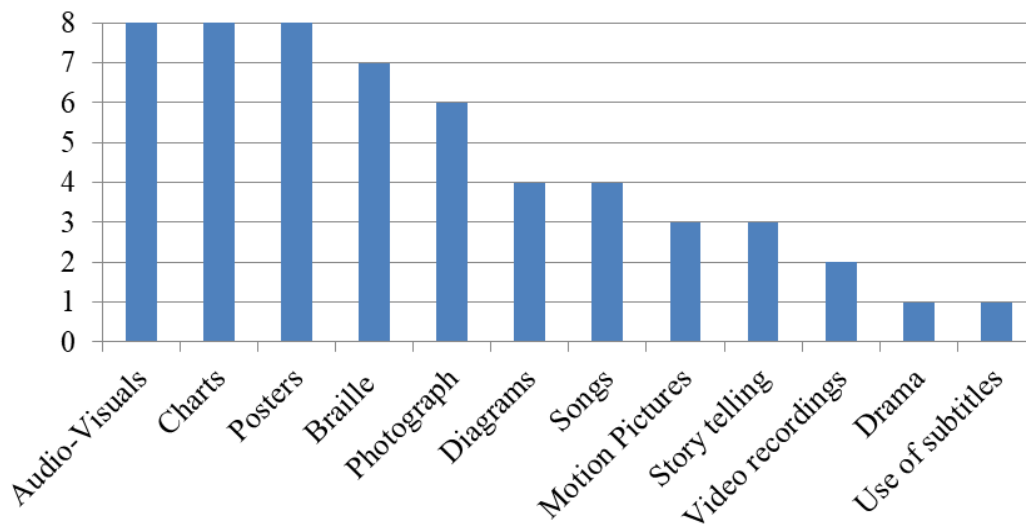
### Theme four: Forms of information repackaging for people with special needs

This aim was to ascertain the forms of information repackaged for people with special needs in Edo State Library. All eight participants stated that *we have various audio-visual materials, charts, and posters in the library, which is a form of information repackaging*, while seven participants indicated that *we have information in braille in the library*

*for blind people*, six respondents clearly stated *we picture in the library that contains information*, four participants listed *we have diagrams that clearly have information*, another four participants stated that *we have songs recorded in our native dialects that are informative*. Three participants listed *motion pictures*, while three mentioned that *we have story time in the library at least once a month*. Two participants listed *video recording*, and finally, one respondent each

indicated that *I use subtitles as a way of repackaging information and drama.*

The responses were coded and summarized based on responses from participants in Figure 4.



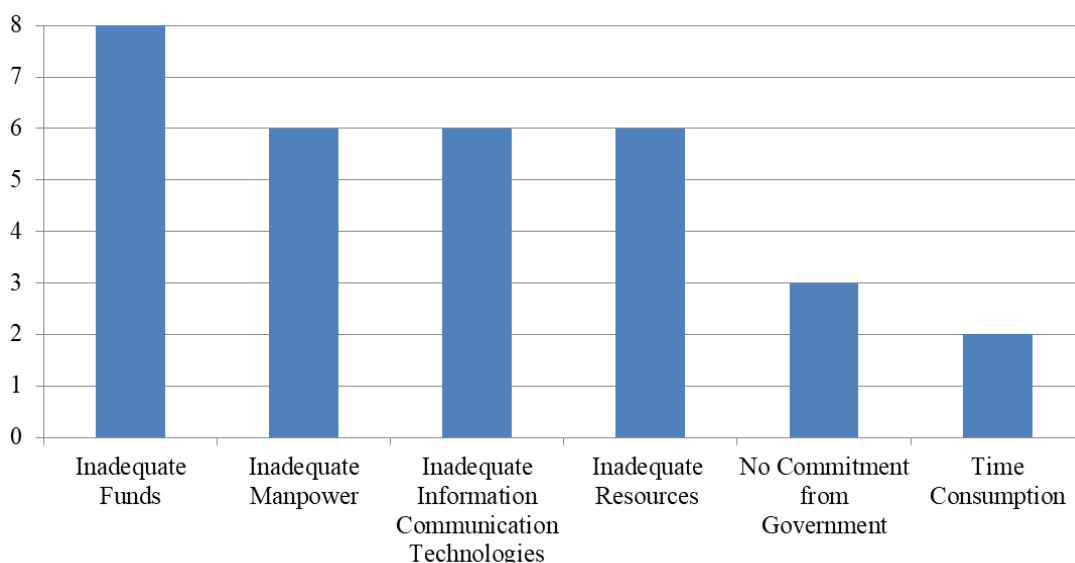
**Figure 4.** Forms of information repackaging for people with special needs

**Theme five: Problems associated with information repackaging for people with special needs**

This motive was to ascertain the various problems associated with Information Repackaging for people with special needs in Edo State Library. All eight participants agreed that *the government does not give the library enough money, restricting our activities.* Six participants clearly stated that *we have very few library staff and we need more library staff to work effectively.* Moreover, six participants mentioned that *most of our work is still done manually; we have few ICT facilities,* and six participants stated that *we do not have the resources to carry out information repackaging.* Three respondents indicated that *the government is not fully dedicated to enhancing the*

*library service, which is a problem for the library.* Finally, one respondent indicated that *when I decide to package information for people, especially illiterate people, it takes a lot of my time, and I have other jobs to do.*

The responses were coded and summarized based on responses from participants. Eight respondents believed inadequate funds were the significant problem associated with information repackaging for people with special needs in Edo State Library. Other were inadequate manpower, inadequate information communication technologies, and inadequate resources six each, no commitment from the government 3 and time consumption 2 (Figure 5).



**Figure 5.** Problems associated with information repackaging for people with special needs



## Discussion

In an attempt to investigate information repackaging for people with special needs in Edo State Library, the study discovered that the categories of people considered as those with special needs in Edo State Library were visual impairment, hearing impaired, speech impaired, and illiterate people. According to the obtained results, other categories of library users with one form of disability, such as walking challenges, behavioral disorders, and the like, may not necessarily be considered people with special needs in Edo State Library. Similarly, it can be concluded that the library staff are aware that library users have special needs, specifically regarding their quest for information. This study affirmed the findings of the Federal Ministry of Education, Nigeria (2), stating that people with special needs have various forms of exceptionalities such as visual, hearing and speech impairment, intellectual developmental disorders, and behavioral disorders.

The study found that even though the library staff is aware that there are people with special needs, the percentage of library users identified as people with special needs varied with different participants' responses. It was concluded from the findings that the percentage of library users with special needs was less than 15% in Edo State Library. This disagreed with the findings of Bello & Ojo (11), who indicated that a higher percentage of information seekers in two public libraries in Nigeria were either eye impaired, ear impaired, or had walking challenges.

The research revealed that information repackaging is partially available for people with special needs in Edo State Library. Demonstratively, information needs to be repackaged for people with special needs. The Information needs of people with special needs are barely put into consideration, implying that the information needs of people with special needs still need to be fully satisfied at Edo State Library. This indicated that people with special needs are not totally included in Edo State Library as regards their needs for information. This supported the findings of Uduu (3), who indicated that disabled people are excluded in Nigeria and refuted that of United Nations (9) SDG 10, striving to reduce inequality within and among countries by empowering and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all including those with disabilities.

Moreover, the research showed that the primary forms in which information is repackaged for people

with special needs in Edo State Library were audio-visuals, charts, and posters. In contrast, other forms were braille, photographs, diagrams, songs, motion pictures, storytelling, video recordings, drama, and the use of subtitles. This corroborated with Okoroma's study (17) that suggested information can be repackaged for physically challenged people via visuals, fliers, and pictures.

The findings of the study indicated that inadequate funds were the foremost problem associated with repackaging information for people with special needs other problems were inadequate manpower, inadequate information communication technologies and inadequate resources, no commitment from the government, and time consumption. It can be deduced that Edo State Library lacks funds, facilities, and manpower to carry out proper information repackaging for people with special needs and that the library is poorly managed. This is in line with Babayi et al.'s (18) study that reported public libraries in Nigeria depend entirely on government funding, yet these funds are inadequate for modern-day library service delivery. Agim and Oraekwe (19) asserted that a lack of government support hampers the provision of library services in public libraries.

The following suggestions were made as a result of the study's findings, which were consistent with those of other studies conducted. Thus, the study recommended that people with special needs should be totally included as regards their information needs. Information/ library resources should be repackaged to meet their needs. Edo State Government should ensure that the budget allocated to the Edo State Library board is adequate for the library to perform its task of satisfying the needs of its users. Edo State Library is understaffed as presently there are only eight library personnel; Edo State Government should ensure more Library personnel are engaged to ensure the smooth running of the library activities.

Finally, the study suggested more research be done to examine the Information needs of people with special needs in Nigerian public libraries and Information repackaging for special needs students in academic Libraries.

### Strengths and Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to a particular public library due to a lack of funds and might not be applicable to other libraries. Likewise, it is a one-time study, not a long-time study, to ascertain the authenticity of the responses. However, the strength of this study is the ability to explore a new area of study and open up



new areas for further exploration.

## Conclusion

Hearing, speech, and visual impairment and illiterate people are the people with special needs in Edo State Library, and less than 15% of library users are people with special needs. Information is partially repackaged for people with special needs, indicating that people with special needs need to be fully considered as regards their needs for information. Audio-visual, charts, and posters are some of the ways information is repackaged for people with special needs. The inadequate funds, manpower, and lack of resources were some of the problems hampering information repackaging for people with special needs.

## Declarations

### Acknowledgement

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## Conflicts of Interests

The researcher had no conflict of interest in this article.

## Ethical statement

The purpose of the study was described to the participants before administering of the questionnaires, and the participants gladly accepted to participate. No financial incentive was given to the participants of the study. The discretion of the responses of the participants was maintained.

## Funding and support

The researcher funded the research in terms of logistics and printing of questionnaires.

## Authors' contributions

The author was solely responsible for designing, running, and writing all parts of this study.



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