

Knowledge and Readiness of Residents in Etche Local Government Area Towards Community–Based Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities

UBANI, N. SAMUEL (PHD)

Special Education Unit
Department of Educational Psychology
Guidance and Counselling
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education
Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Nigeria.
samuelubani22@gmail.com

HOLYDOM TORBARI SANIKPEGE

Special Education Unit
Department of Educational Psychology
Guidance and Counselling
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education
Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

AKUBUIRO ROSEMARY

Special Education Unit
Department of Educational Psychology
Guidance and Counselling
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education
Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

DIODEMISE PRECIOUS ONOME

Special Education Unit
Department of Educational Psychology
Guidance and Counselling
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education
Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Abstract

The study investigated knowledge and readiness of residents in Etche Local Government Area towards community-based rehabilitation of persons with disabilities. Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. Two

research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The population of consisted of 149,513 inhabitants in the area. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 400 adult residents for the study. A self-designed questionnaire titled: 'Knowledge, and Readiness of Residents on CBR Questionnaire' (KRRCBRQ) was used for data collection. Face and content validation were done by experts in Special Education. Reliability coefficient for (KRRCBRQ) was $r=0.81$ using the test re-test method. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while independent sample t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that to a high extent knowledge of residents in Etche Local Government Area towards community-based rehabilitation of persons with disabilities differ based on gender. That that to a low extent readiness of residents in Etche Local Government Area towards community-based rehabilitation of persons with disabilities differ based on gender. That residents' knowledge of community-based rehabilitation of persons with disability differ significantly based on gender. That residents' readiness of community-based rehabilitation of persons with disability does not differ significantly based on gender. It was recommended among others that; National Orientation Agency (NOA) should hold regular workshops and seminars that will enhance the knowledge of residents in Etche Local Government Area on the recent trends in Community-Based Rehabilitation of persons with disabilities

Keywords: CBR, Knowledge, Readiness, Residents

INTRODUCTION

Over time, Nigeria has improved the legal position of persons with disabilities, with the deliberate passage of several laws, decrees and promulgations. Some of such notable laws within the country are The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, (1999) (as amended); Section 34 of this Law provides generally for the dignity of human persons, and this provision covers persons with disabilities, The National Policy on Disability in Nigeria, National Policy on Albinism, The Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, Lagos State Special Peoples Act, Nigerians with disabilities Decree, among others which are serving as instruments used to create equal opportunities for employment, social inclusion, and educational inclusion for persons with disabilities.

However, discrimination among persons with disabilities is still prevalent within the country (Toro, 2019), possibly due to the lack of knowledge and readiness of members of the public at urban and rural communities towards their role in Community-Based Rehabilitation of such individuals Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) is a strategy designed by the World Health Organization (WHO) to overcome challenges to accessing rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities in low-to-middle income countries (Masa, 2018). Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) programs are implemented in more than 90 countries to disseminate rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities globally. Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) is widely defined as "a strategy within general community development for the rehabilitation, equalization of opportunities and social inclusion of all people with disabilities" (Masa, 2018). As the joint paper of the three global organizations: WHO, UNESCO and ILO has outlined, CBR is implemented through the combined efforts of community dwellers, persons with disabilities themselves, their families, organizations, and the relevant governmental and non-governmental agencies (Oloto, 2014).

Since it was launched in the 1970s more and more communities around the world, especially the poor communities in Asia, South America, and Africa have been embarking on CBR programmes. This global trend of embracing and practicing CBR has enabled the concepts

and practical elements of this progressive approach to be tested, modified and developed in response to real life experience, which contributes to the validity of this approach as a practically, as well as conceptually, sound approach in rehabilitation. With the new revolutionary change in the social concepts of disability, community development and human rights, Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) has adopted a social model that focuses on disability mainstreaming, human right base and holistic community approach in poverty reduction and social inclusion. Residents in local communities, alongside persons with disabilities and their organizations in the lead, are becoming more and more involved in initiating and executing CBR plans (Ubani & Sanikpege, 2020).

people are becoming more and more aware of disability and disability issues and are more empowered by knowledge and skills to take part in the community development activities that strive to change the lives of persons with disabilities and break the vicious cycle of poverty, isolation, and ill-health among persons with disabilities. A crucial tool is to empower local dwellers with the needed knowledge and practical skills to assist persons with disabilities in their neighbourhood. Training local people sustains the knowledge and skills needed for the success of Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) activities by guaranteeing knowledge transfer and skills development (Wezel, 2016).

Persons with disabilities (PWD) and their families face numerous physical and attitudinal barriers to participation in their communities. The social model of disability views this exclusion as ‘disabling’ and as caused by the way in which the society is organized, making Persons with disabilities (PWD) more vulnerable to poverty and oppression (Robinson, 2016). Current estimates for the proportion of the Nigeria population of persons with disabilities stands at 22 million (Olade, 2017). Over the past three decades community based rehabilitation (CBR) has emerged as an effective strategy to implement services to persons with disabilities (PWD) and their families. According to the ILO, UNESCO and WHO Joint Position Paper Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) was defined as ‘a strategy within a general community development for the rehabilitation, equalization of opportunities, poverty reduction and social inclusion of all persons with disabilities (Robinson, 2016). Unlike other conventional rehabilitation programs, which tend to be merely medical and institutional, CBR is resolutely based within a community development framework. The rhetoric of Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) places equal emphasis on inclusion, equality and socio-economic development as well as rehabilitation (Robinson, 2016).

In Nigeria, Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) is still developing as local dwellers can acquire the basic knowledge on various categories of persons with special needs, their characteristics, management strategies and rehabilitation needs (Dempsey, 2015). Knowledge of CBR is very important for local dwellers to be able to locally integrate persons with special needs in the social, economic, medical and educational areas of life. Aside the acquisition of knowledge on CBR by residents, to guarantee the successful integration of persons with special needs is another important variable which is the readiness of residents to support the practice of Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR). Having the knowledge on various categories of persons with special needs, their characteristics, management strategies and rehabilitation needs

is not enough to guarantee successful integration of persons with disabilities in our communities without the readiness and willingness of the residents to actually partake in the rehabilitation process.

Readiness of residents to play significant roles in rehabilitating this unique group is a demand posed on them. East (2019) noted that members of the community must have an ability to plan, control and facilitate interaction, be resourceful, and facilitate the integration of persons with disabilities in their communities. The intention of the study was to therefore investigate the knowledge and readiness of residents in Etche Local Government Area towards Community-Based Rehabilitation of persons with disabilities.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A truly democratic nation is one in which positive efforts are geared toward promoting and protecting all citizens with diverse backgrounds to work together towards the nation's goals. However, the Nigerian government has made and continues to make concerted efforts aimed at achieving the purpose set down in the same standard as the Convention on People with Disabilities (CPWD) through its attempts to establish policy and laws prohibiting discrimination based on race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, colour and disability. However, these efforts are yet to be transformed into practical reality. The reason behind this shortcoming is not unconnected with lack of knowledge and readiness by residents to achieve inclusivity and affirmative action plans towards protecting and integrating persons with disability in our communities. Today, Nigeria has an estimated population of over 200 million people out of which 22 million are living with various forms of disability, be it physical or non-physical in appearance. Nevertheless, stigma and discrimination remain widespread phenomena affecting all facets of persons with disabilities lives in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Persons with disability often describe the stigma and discrimination as worse than their main condition. Residents and family members of persons with disability are also subject to limited knowledge and the implications of these prejudiced attitudes and discriminatory behaviour. Apparently, stigmatisation may lead to self-stigma, especially where PWD internalise society's negative attitudes towards them. They may even actually start to believe what others say and think about them, which often leads to self-blame and a decrease in self-esteem. Anticipation of rejection due to stigma may result in many persons with disability reducing their social networks and not taking advantage of life's opportunities. This, in turn, may lead to isolation, unemployment and lowered income. Experienced or anticipated discrimination is the main reason why many people hide their disabilities and do not seek help. It is observed that PWD routinely experience human rights violations. These violations extend to medical institutions providing inadequate, degrading and harmful care and treatment and unhygienic and inhuman living conditions. It also includes lack of adequate shelter and discrimination in education and employment opportunities. Beyond all these violations, every person, including PWD, is entitled to the protection of his or her fundamental human rights. This explains the relevance why all residents in any locality should have sufficient knowledge and readiness

towards Community-Based Rehabilitation of persons with disabilities particularly in Etche Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the study was to investigate the knowledge and readiness of residents in Etche Local Government Area towards Community-Based Rehabilitation of persons with disabilities. Specifically, the study intended to:

1. Ascertain the residents' level of knowledge in Etche Local Government Area towards Community-Based Rehabilitation of persons with disabilities based on gender.
2. Determine the residents' level of readiness in Etche Local Government Area towards Community-Based Rehabilitation of persons with disabilities based on gender.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. To what extent does residents' level of knowledge in Etche Local Government Area towards Community-Based Rehabilitation of persons with disabilities differ based on gender?
2. To what extent does residents' level of readiness in Etche Local Government Area towards Community-Based Rehabilitation of persons with disabilities differ based on gender?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study:

1. Residents' level of knowledge of Community-Based Rehabilitation of persons with disability does not differ significantly based on gender.
2. Residents level of readiness towards Community-Based Rehabilitation of persons with disability does not differ significantly based on gender

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The target population involved in this study consisted of all adult residents in Etche Local Government Area of Rivers State estimated at 149,513 inhabitants. Stratified random sampling technique was adopted to select a target population of 400 adult residents in Etche Local Government Area. The research instrument was a self-designed instrument titled: "Knowledge, and Readiness of Residents on CBR Questionnaire" (KRRCBRQ). Section A contained the demographic data of the respondents while section B was structured on a four point modified Likert Scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE), and Very Low Extent (VLE) respectively. Section B had a total of 14 items; 7 items on Knowledge of residents towards CBR and 7 items on readiness of residents towards CBR. The reliability of the instrument yielded an index of $r=0.81$ which was determined using the test-retest method. The research questions were answered using

mean and standard deviation while Independent sample t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Research Question One: To what extent does residents' level of knowledge in Etche Local Government Area towards Community-Based Rehabilitation of persons with disabilities differ based on gender?

Table 4.1: Mean and Standard Deviation on Knowledge of Residents in Etche Local Government Area towards Community-Based Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities Differ Based on Gender.

S/N	Knowledge of CBR based on Gender	Male N=190		Female N=198	
		\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD
1	I am aware that persons with disabilities need to be integrated fully into the community through CBR	2.54	0.33	2.73	0.94
2	I am aware that I am to support professionals of CBR in the task of assisting persons with disabilities adapt into their environment	2.80	0.83	3.09	0.98
3	I know that it is my responsibility to provide care and support towards persons with disabilities for them to be economically rehabilitated	3.05	0.92	2.80	0.90
4	I am aware that the social rehabilitation of persons with disabilities will enhance their level of communal integration	2.54	0.65	2.62	0.98
5	I know that persons with disabilities through educational rehabilitation will be able to become literate members of the society	2.42	0.88	2.55	0.95
6	I am aware that through rehabilitation, persons with disabilities can enjoy better health and greater access to health care	4.00	0.58	2.69	0.71
7	I know that the practice of CBR will promote the political and social right of persons with disabilities in my community	2.96	0.85	3.23	0.78
	Grand Mean	3.01	0.42	2.93	0.37

Criterion $\bar{X} = 2.5$

Table 4.1 show the extent residents' level of knowledge in Etche Local Government Area towards Community-Based Rehabilitation of persons with disabilities differ based on gender.

The table shows a grand mean for (male residents as $\bar{X} = 3.01$; $SD = 0.42$), and (female residents as $\bar{X} = 2.93$; $SD = 0.37$) which is higher than the criterion mean of (>2.50). This further indicates that to a high extent knowledge of residents in Etche Local Government Area towards community-based rehabilitation of persons with disabilities differ based on gender.

Hypothesis One: Residents' level of knowledge of Community-Based Rehabilitation of persons with disability does not differ significantly based on gender.

Table 4.2: T-Test Analysis Showing Residents' Knowledge of Community-Based Rehabilitation of Persons with Disability does not Differ Significantly Based on Gender

Gender	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	Standard Error	Calculated t-value	Critical t-value	Remark
Male	190	3.01	0.42	398	0.134	4.129	1.960	Significant
Female	198	2.93	0.37					

Table 4.2 indicated that the calculated t-value is 4.129 and at 398 degrees of freedom. Since the calculated t-value (4.129) is greater than the critical t-value (1.960) at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis that residents' knowledge of community-based rehabilitation of persons with disability does not differ significantly based on gender is been rejected.

Research Question Two: To what extent does residents' level of readiness in Etche Local Government Area towards Community-Based Rehabilitation of persons with disabilities differ based on gender?

Table 4.3: Mean and Standard Deviation Showing the Extent Readiness of Residents in Etche Local Government Area Towards Community-Based Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities Differ Based on Gender.

S/N	Readiness towards CBR based on Gender	Male N=190		Female N=198	
		\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD
8	I am prepared to assist persons with disabilities in my community adapt to our environment	2.58	0.50	2.51	0.93
9	I am ready to display positive attitude towards persons with disabilities in my community for them to feel socially included	2.01	0.77	2.63	0.93
10	I am prepared to work with other professionals in ensuring that persons with disabilities in my community are not denied quality health care service	1.89	0.98	2.71	1.03

11	I am willing to work with other members of my community to ensure that persons with disabilities receive quality education	1.32	0.81	1.34	0.88
12	I am ready to be a work colleague of a person with disability in my community	2.36	1.0	1.99	0.94
13	I often encourage persons with disabilities to take up leadership positions in my community	1.72	0.60	1.80	0.53
14	I am willing to have a person with disability in my	2.74	0.58	2.79	0.90
	Grand Mean	2.22	0.79	2.15	0.61

Criterion $\bar{X} = 2.5$

Table 4.3 reveal the extent residents' level of readiness in Etche Local Government Area towards Community-Based Rehabilitation of persons with disabilities differ based on gender. The table shows a grand mean for (male residents as $\bar{X} = 2.22$; $SD = 0.79$), and (female residents as $\bar{X} = 2.15$; $SD = 0.61$) which is less than the criterion mean of (<2.50). This further indicates that to a low extent readiness of residents in Etche Local Government Area towards community-based rehabilitation of persons with disabilities differ based on gender.

Hypothesis Two: Residents' readiness of Community-Based Rehabilitation of persons with disability does not differ significantly based on gender

Table 4.4: T-test analysis showing residents' readiness of Community-Based Rehabilitation of Persons with Disability does not Differ Significantly Based on Gender

Gender	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	Standard Error	Calculated value	t- Critical t-value	Remark
Male	190	2.22	0.79					Not
				398	0.134	1.326	1.960	Significant
Female	198	2.15	0.61					

Table 4.4 show that the calculated t-value is 1.326 and at 398 degrees of freedom. Since the calculated t-value (1.326) is less than the critical t-value (1.960) at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis that residents' readiness of community-based rehabilitation of persons with disability does not differ significantly based on gender is been accepted.

DISCUSSION

The finding of research question one (Table 4.1) revealed that to a high extent knowledge of residents in Etche Local Government Area towards community-based rehabilitation of persons with disabilities differ based on gender. And hypothesis one (Table 4.2) revealed that residents' knowledge of community-based rehabilitation of persons with disability differ significantly based on gender. The finding are in line with the study of Masa (2018) who maintained that awareness of community-based rehabilitation of persons with disabilities was already on the high side as most European and African countries are already familiar with the needs of persons with

disabilities within their environment. Masa (2018) insisted that community dwellers in rural areas reported high knowledge of community-based rehabilitation for disabled persons. Masa (2018) however insisted that awareness of community-based rehabilitation of persons with disabilities was not enough but the practice of in itself was essential. The finding also collaborates with the finding of Olade (2017) writing on “Albinism in Malawi: Knowledge and beliefs from an African setting” revealed that adult male and female residents in Eastern Malawi reported having good knowledge of community-based rehabilitation of persons with disabilities. Olade (2017) revealed that both gender indicated been aware of the intricacies of community-based rehabilitation and indicated been aware of the various challenges that acted as an impediment to the practice of CBR.

The finding of research question two (Table 4.3) revealed that that to a low extent readiness of residents in Etche Local Government Area towards community-based rehabilitation of persons with disabilities differ based on gender. And hypothesis two (Table 4.4) revealed that residents’ readiness of community-based rehabilitation of persons with disability does not differ significantly based on gender. The finding are in tandem with the study of Wezel (2016) who observed that it was dependent on the gender of the individual, that most local community dwellers especially in rural areas were less likely to partake in the community-based rehabilitation of persons with disability in their immediate environment.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the study concluded that to a high extent knowledge of residents in Etche Local Government Area towards community-based rehabilitation of persons with disabilities differ based on gender. That that to a low extent readiness of residents in Etche Local Government Area towards community-based rehabilitation of persons with disabilities differ based on gender. That residents’ knowledge of community-based rehabilitation of persons with disability differ significantly based on gender. That residents’ readiness of community-based rehabilitation of persons with disability does not differ significantly based on gender.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study the researcher made the following recommendations:

1. National Orientation Agency (NOA) should hold regular workshops and seminars that will enhance the knowledge of residents in Etche Local Government Area on the recent trends in the Community-Based Rehabilitation of persons with disabilities;
2. The Ministry of Education through the State government should organize orientation programs that will enhance the readiness of residents and teachers in Etche Local Government Area towards the educational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities in the area;
3. Government and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO’s) should provide scholarship to residents in Etche Local Government Area who are ready to practice Community-Based Rehabilitation of persons with disabilities to act as professionals in the area of CBR.

REFERENCES

- Dempsey, M. (2015). Students stress and coping strategies: A case of Pakistani medical school. *Education for Health, 17*(5), 346-353.
- East, C. (2019). Research and intervention with adolescents exposed to domestic violence. *Journal of Family Psychology, 33*(1), 45 – 52.
- Masa, A.V. (2018). Questioning whether you have a contemporary school counselling program. *The Clearing House, 78*(2), 73-76.
- Olade, N. (2017). Disability, culture, and the UN convention. *Disability and Rehabilitation, 31*(14), 1111-1124.
- Oloto, M. (2014). Optimizing rehabilitation for adults with visual impairment: Attention to life goals and their links to well-being. *Clinical Rehabilitation, 19*(7), 790-798.
- Robinson, P. (2016). Scholars before researchers: On the centrality of the dissertation literature review in research preparation for persons with disabilities. *Educational Researcher, 34*(6), 315-320.
- Toro, B. (2019). Albinism in Malawi: Knowledge and beliefs from an African setting. *Disability and Society, 21*(6), 599-611.
- Ubani S.N. & Sanikpege H.T. (2020). *Foundations of Special Needs Education*. Premium Service Ventures.
- Wezel, B. (2016). Family functioning and low vision: A systematic review. *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness, 103*(3), 137-149.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999). Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Federal Printing Press Abuja.