

Sport Centres has in many ways improved the lives of people in all walks of life not minding their abilities and limitations; that is, physical or mental disabilities. The Sport Centres used for disabled individuals is described as assistive Sport Centre.

The objective of the study was to examine and determine the availability and utilization of assistive Sport Centres for special education in Nigerian Sport Commission Metropolis as well as determine the influence of teacher's gender, qualification and experience on the utilization of assistive technology. Thus, the study provided answers to some six research questions listed below:

1. What are the assistive technologies (AT) available for special education within Nigerian Sport Commission metropolis?
2. Are available assistive technologies (AT) utilized for teaching special education students?
3. What is the frequency of use of assistive Sport Centres (AT) for special education students?
4. What is the influence of the Disability's gender on the utilization of assistive technology?
5. What is the influence of the Disability's educational qualification on the utilization of assistive technology?
6. What is the influence of the Disability's teaching experience on the utilization of assistive technology?

It also analysed three hypotheses developed by the researcher for the purpose of the study. The researcher administered a researcher-designed instrument to seventy-three (73) special education teachers, forty-two (42) of which were females and thirty-one (31) were males; twenty-four (24) had National Certificate of Education, thirty-four (34) had bachelor's degree in any of education, arts or sciences and twelve (12) had masters in sciences or education or postgraduate diploma in education; twenty-seven (27) had experience between 1-5 years, twenty-eight (28) had experience between 6-10 years and eighteen (18) had attained above 10 years of teaching experience.

It was revealed that a very limited number of assistive Sport Centres devices were available for special education due to reasons ranging from high-cost of the assistive Sport Centres gadgets and scarcity due to difficulty in importation of gadgets from other countries. It was also noted that of the available assistive Sport Centres devices in Nigerian Sport Commission Metropolis, only a few were being highly utilized and frequently used. It was gathered that the male teachers showed more interest in the utilization of assistive devices for special education than their female counterparts. It was also gathered that the teacher's educational qualification and teaching experience do not influence the utilization of assistive Sport Centres for special education. This study disclosed that teachers with less years of experience are most inclined to use Sport Centres for special education purposes than those with more experience though, the older the experience, the more the exposure to the need for these technologies in a special education classroom.

It was concluded from the analysis done on the hypotheses that there is no significant

difference in the utilization of assistive Sport Centres for special education based on the teacher's gender, educational qualification and teaching experience. The study made recommendations which includes that the government at all levels with the Ministry of Education and other concerned bodies should involve special education teachers and students with disabilities and their families in related assistive Sport Centres activities, including the development of policies, the design and evaluation of services and products.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0. Introduction

In any part of the world, there has been a stigma associated with anyone using wheelchair or being accompanied by a cane. These people, who are much known in the society as "people with disability", are frequently categorized as futile and incapable. Because of this judgmental approach of other people, people with disability tend to develop a negative outlook and lose their sense of worth. In response to this unfortunate circumstances experienced by the people with disability, participation in sport has already been proven to be one of the key ways in which they can demonstrate their place in the world. Being able to take part in sports can change what the society think and feel about them and also change what they think and feel about themselves.

1.1. Background and Nature of the Project

Adaptive sports refer to sports that are modified or adapted to meet the unique needs of individuals with disabilities. It includes sport designed to enable those with and without disabilities to participate. (Luo, 2010) Considering that this project is intended for adaptive sports, the equalization of opportunities is really prioritized. The full potential of these people can only be attained if they are given the chance to prove their capabilities and not be restrained by their limitations. This kind of sports was made to encourage and promote the participation of persons with disabilities in a mainstreamed program of sporting activities for them to develop greater independence. Playing and competing with other people would help them feel that they are not different and that they belong to a community. Thus, adaptive sport is an ideal tool for reducing the stigma associated with disability.

The term disability summarizes a great number of different functional limitations. People may be disabled by physical, intellectual or sensory impairment. Different expressions are used when referring to persons with disabilities. The term "handicap" means the loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in the life of the community on an equal level with others. The term "disabled persons" might be misinterpreted to imply that the ability of the individual to function as a person has been disabled. The term "differently-abled persons" indicates that disability is not perceived as a deviation from the norm. (Human Rights Education Associates [HREA], 2012) In this project, the users would be considered as differently-abled persons because the researcher aims to remove the stereotypical idea that these people are disabled and incapable.

About 16 per thousand of the country's population had disability. (National Statistics Office [NSO], 2013) Although the population of people with disability is not that

large, negligence is still inappropriate. These people must receive the right amount of attention that they deserve. It must be ensured that differently-abled people have the opportunity to have access to various facilities such as sporting, recreational and tourism venues. The notion that access of differently-abled people is just limited to few types of venues due to their impairments must be changed because nowadays these people can do almost all the activities that normal people can.

The Nigeria already formed a national sports association for athletes with impairments which is called the Nigeria Sports Association for the Differently Abled—National Paralympic Committee of the Nigeria (NSPADA-NPC Nigeria). This means that the idea of sports for differently-abled people is not a new concept for the country yet the country still lacks sports venue with facilities adapted to the users' needs. A major challenge facing the disability population is the inadequacy of available services and facilities. There are numerous sports centers in the country but there are very few that are accessible to differently-abled people and none was really created for the purpose of accommodating adaptive sports. In order to make adaptive sports be further recognized by people around the country, there must be a particular facility that will focus on this kind of sports.

According to the 2013 **Nspada National Games, the sports that are usually included in the competition are** Athletics, swimming, wheelchair basketball, badminton, chess, goal ball, tenpin bowling, table tennis, powerlifting, volleyball, cycling and wheelchair tennis. (*Nigeria Sports Commission [PSC], 2013*) These sports are actually just ordinary sports but because the players of these would be differently-abled people, the facilities to house these activities must be suitable with the users' needs with adequate concern to safety and accessibility.

SPORT CENTRE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

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