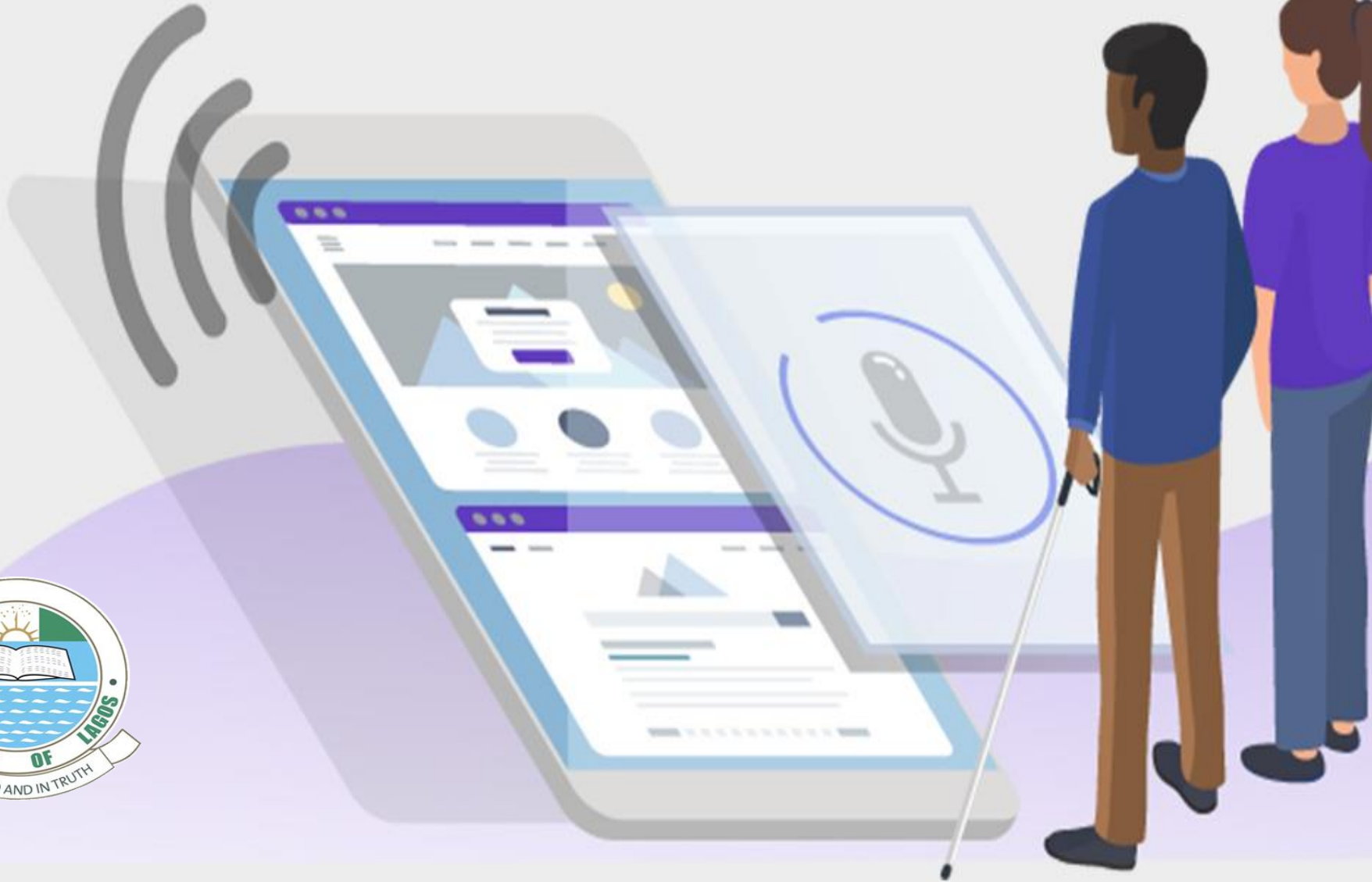
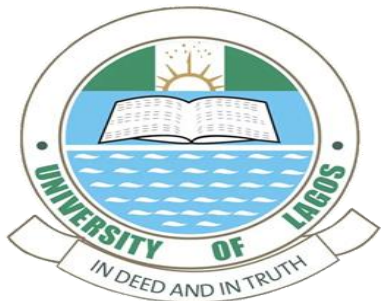


Evidence-Based Strategies for Promoting Diversity and Inclusion of Library Services for Students with Visual Impairment in Nigeria: University of Lagos Experience



OUTLINE

- Introduction
- Discourse on Diversity and Inclusion
- Aim of the Presentation
- Study Site
- Library strategies to promote Diversity & Inclusion
- Research Questions
- Major findings
- Conclusion and Recommendation
- Key Take Away



Introduction

- University world over are increasingly admitting students living with different disabilities including those with visual impairment.
- 285 million people with visual impairment in the world.
- 70% of this population live in developing countries.
- More than 48 million are from Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Over 2.5 million of this population are Nigerians (Okiki and Okonji, (2019) .
- In Nigeria, there has been increase in enrolment of Visually Impaired Students (VIS) into tertiary institutions (Okiki and Okonji, (2019).



Introduction Contd

- Universities have the responsibility to equip learners with visual impairment with inclusive library services and technology required to support their information, learning and research needs
- Yet discussion on how to promote diversity and inclusion in order to meet the academic and information needs of these category of students tends to focus mainly on the general population and not on those with special needs, such as visual impairment.
- Recently, few university libraries in Nigeria are striving to offer inclusive services for ease of access to physical and virtual spaces, and learning resources with the aim of promoting diversity, equity and inclusion.



What is Diversity?

- A representation of many different types of people (gender, race, ability, religion, etc).
- Aids in students' development of analytical and critical thinking abilities as they advance in their education.
- “Libraries can and should play a crucial role in empowering diverse populations for full participation in a democratic society” (ALA, 2015)



Inclusion is.... Inclusive Library Service.....

deliberate act of welcoming diversity and creating an environment where people can thrive and succeed.

takes in to cognisance the diverse information needs of all members in the community.

accessed by everyone, without the need for special help for people with disabilities



Aim of this Presentation

To discuss the strategies the University of Lagos Library deployed to promote diversity and inclusion to support learning and research activities of students with visual impairment.

The study was undertaken having realized the research gap that exists in the area of diversity and inclusiveness of library services in Nigeria.



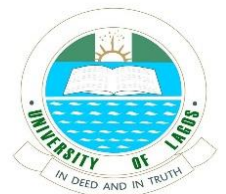
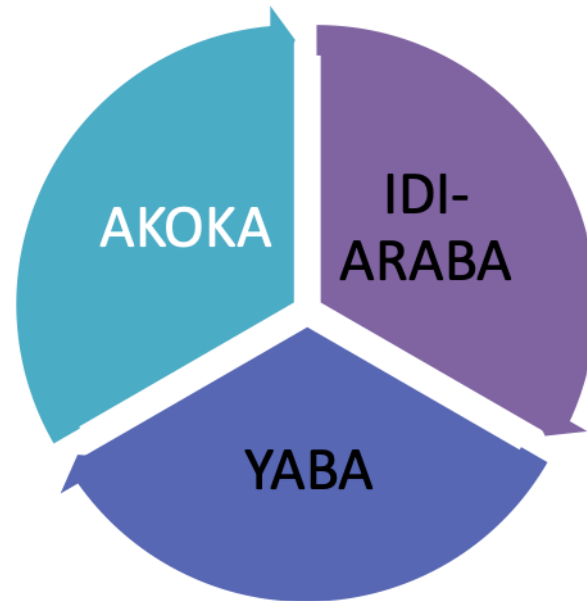
UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS

the University of First Choice and the Nation's Pride

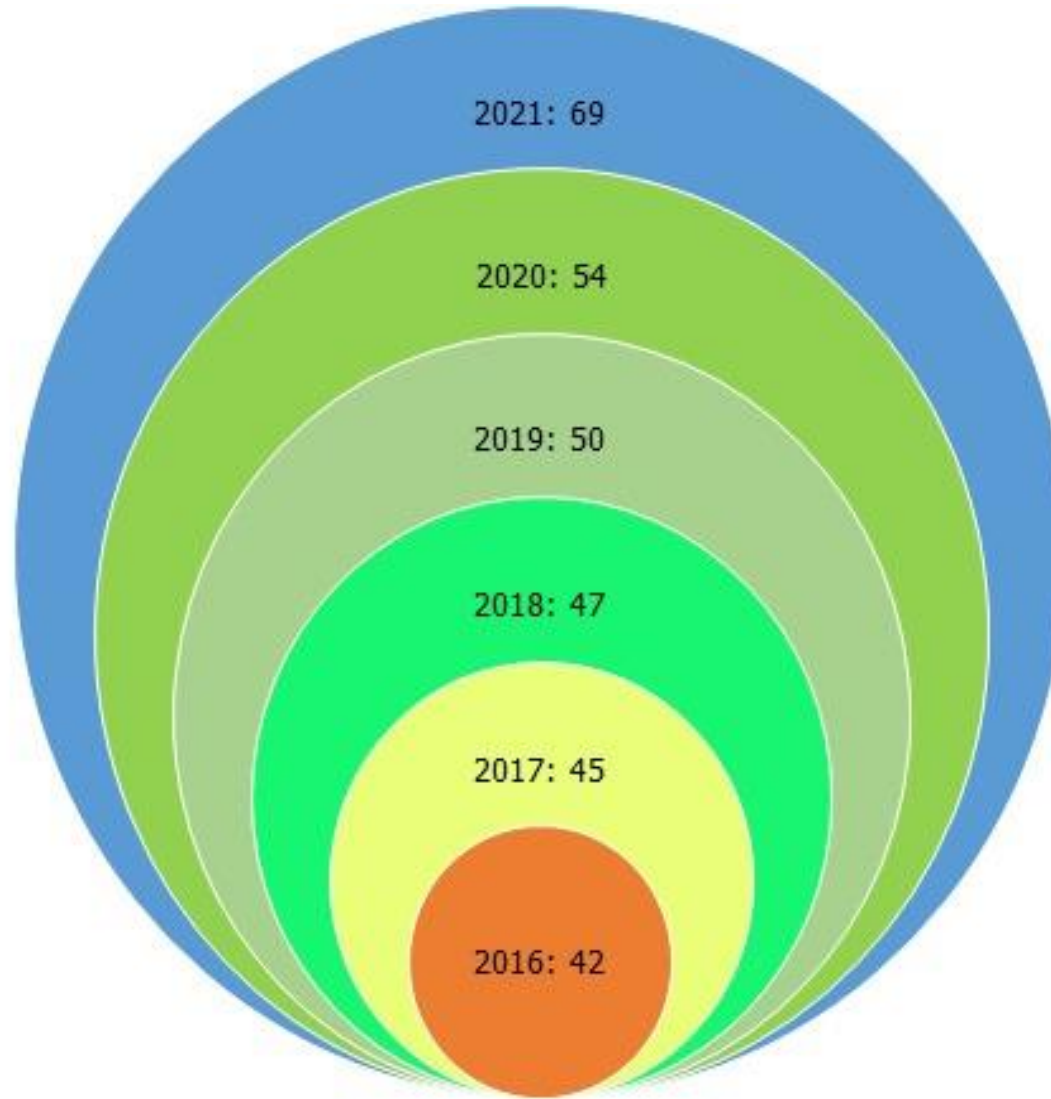
About the University

The University of Lagos, Nigeria was **founded** in **1962** by an Act of Parliament – the University of Lagos Act 1962. The Act, which governs the running of the University was amended by the amendment Act of 1967 and later the Universities (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1993 and its amendment Acts of 2003 and 2012

3 CAMPUSES



POPULATION GROWTH OF STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT



University of Lagos Library



From 2016 – To Date

PERSONNEL

- ❖ Appointment of one staff who is visually impaired
- ❖ Assisted by one sighted staff

INFRASTRUCTURE

- ❖ Creation of innovation hub within the library (Visually Impaired Resource Center)
- ❖ Provision of computer hardware and software
- ❖ Provision of assistive tools
- ❖ Activation of artificial intelligence (Robotics) to aid voice interaction and navigation

SERVICES

- ❖ Regular meetings with service staff
- ❖ Retrieval of reading materials from stacks
- ❖ Conversion of reading materials to braille
- ❖ Research assistance
- ❖ Document delivery
- ❖ Reader's assistance (mobility orientation/academics)
- ❖ Integrating special needs in the LMS



Other strategies are:

Architectural design/ Library Environment



Library Events, Library Lovers day LLD 1.0.





- RQ1: Are you aware of diversity and inclusion of library service prior now?
- RQ2: How can students with visual impairment benefit from it?
- RQ3: Strategies in place known to you for promoting diversity and inclusion of library services for students with visual impairment in the library?
- RQ4: What are the facilities provided for the students with visual impairment students in the library?
- RQ 5: What are the challenges facing the promotion of diversity and inclusive library services for students with visual impairment?

- This study was qualitative, with structured interviews used as a means of data gathering.
- Interviews were formally structured in such a way that the questions were not altered from one participant to the other.
- Overall, 69 students with visual impairment and the staff manning the VIRC.
- The data from the interviews were analysed thematically.



Major findings

| Research Questions | Findings |
|---|--|
| RQ1: Are you aware of diversity and inclusion of library service prior now? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•The finding revealed that many of the respondents are aware of diversity and inclusive library services to students with vision impairment and their general opinion is that having a diverse and inclusive library services for the students is a good idea. |
| RQ2: How can students with visual impairment benefit from it? | Students with visual impairment would benefit from a library when facilities and equipment that can support their learning and research activities are readily available and accessible |

RQ3: Is/ are there any strategy/strategies in place for promoting D & I of library services for students VI

The result revealed that the university of Lagos library has put in place strategies to promote diversity and inclusion library services through the VIRC, a space for the VI to carry out their learning and research activities.



Major findings

| Research Questions | Findings |
|--|---|
| RQ4: What are the facilities provided for the students with visual impairment students in the library? | Findings revealed that “Enabling reading environment, Brail Embossers, Scanner, JAWs and accessible Computer Systems. |
| RQ 5: Challenges facing the promotion of diversity and inclusive library services for students with visual impairment? | Inadequate funding was the major challenge facing the promotion of diversity and inclusive library service. This is due to the fact that the provision of assistive tools requires a whole lot of funds |

CONCLUSION

- The strategies deployed by university of Lagos library to promote DI library services to students with visual impairment.
- The library encouraged independent use of library resources by providing all students with VI access to the basic assistive technology software.
- Uses its website as one of its strategies for providing guidance on the services offered and how to use the accessible AT.

Recommendation

- Libraries buildings should be designed and re-designed in order to accommodate the visually impaired students in the universities.
- University libraries should have a dedicated librarian specialising in VI.
- Libraries should seek support of organizations for the blind to help with the cost and training of AT software (Williamson et. al.,2000).
- Provision of adequate funds is necessary in order to reach the information needs of the visually impaired students in universities.
- The assistive technologies and software's should be provided to assist the visually impaired students in their studies.







Key Take Away

- On this slides, we have shown some of the ways that university of Lagos library promotes diversity and inclusion, putting the value into action.
- If you have ideas for more strategies we could adopt to promote DI in our library, please reach out to the University Library@ <https://library.unilag.edu.ng>
- You can also contact Prof Yetunde Zaid @ yzaid@unilag.edu.ng; librarian@unilag.edu.ng or Dr Stella Nduka @ snduka@unilag.edu.ng/stellacnduka@gmail.com





Thank You

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