

BRIEF REPORTS

Community-Based Rehabilitation in Nigeria: A Scoping Study of Literature

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Previous reviews of CBR literature provide scant evidence supporting community-based rehabilitation in Nigeria. This study aimed at discovering the extent of CBR impact in Nigeria by reviewing published literature and making it available to researchers, CBR project coordinators and managers, and policy-makers.

Method: A scoping study of CBR literature on people with disabilities, families and communities in Nigeria was conducted, using the databases of Pubmed, African Journal Online, Google Scholar, African Journal of Disability, Asksource.info and REHABDATA on naric.com, for articles published between the years 1990 – 2018. Fourteen studies met all the inclusion criteria and were classified according to type as descriptive ($n = 4$), theory ($n = 5$), impact ($n = 2$), and case studies ($n = 2$) or review ($n = 1$) papers.

Results: The results indicated a recent increase in community-based rehabilitation literature publication.

Conclusion: However, there is a need for more well-designed literature to better inform community-based rehabilitation practice.

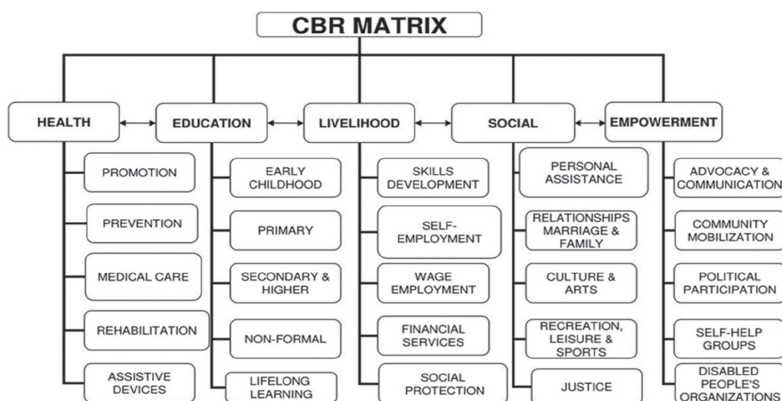
Keywords: community-based rehabilitation, disabilities, Nigeria, rehabilitation, persons with disabilities

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INTRODUCTION

About 15% of the world's population suffers from one form of disability or another (World Bank, 2011). According to Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006), persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. CBR has been presented as the most reliable approach for rehabilitation, empowerment and promotion of inclusion and participation of persons with disability since the eighties (WHO, 1981). It is a holistic strategy for rehabilitating persons with disabilities within the community, as against conventional rehabilitation programmes that are solely institutional or medical. It has been developed over the years and is now being operated in more than 100 developed and developing countries including Nigeria (Kuipers and Allen, 2004). In a joint position paper, the WHO, ILO and UNESCO (2005) defined CBR as "a strategy within general community development for the rehabilitation, equalisation of opportunities and social inclusion of all people with disabilities". The CBR strategies are defined in the form of a Matrix (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: CBR Matrix (obtained from the WHO)



The WHO's CBR strategy of coverage was formulated in the form of a Matrix consisting of 5 key components (health, education, livelihood, social and empowerment domains), each having 5 elements (presented in Figure 1). The components and elements of a CBR Matrix provide the basis of CBR programme objectives (WHO, 2010).

Previous studies on CBR literature (Mitchell, 1999; Wirz and Thomas, 2002; Finkenflugel et al, 2005) reported inadequate scientific research and evidence to

inform its practice. Consequently, there was a positive response in developed countries that Cleaver and Nixon (2014) declared that CBR literature was plentiful, and advised future research to focus on systematic comparison of research production and dissemination.

However, there is a dearth of CBR literature in Nigeria, going by the fact that only 2 studies from Nigeria were identified and included in the recent scoping reviews of CBR literature, while there were 7 from South Africa (Cleaver and Nixon, 2014).

Objective

The purpose of this study was to identify and review relevant literature of CBR in Nigeria so that already published literature would be made available to researchers, CBR project coordinators and managers, and policy-makers.

METHOD

Study Design

The study utilised the scoping review outlined by Arskey and O'Malley (2005) and further developed by Levac et al (2010).

The search strategy was to identify relevant articles published between the years 1990 – 2018. The key words were 'Nigeria', 'community-based rehabilitation' and 'low- and middle-income countries', used in different combinations on the databases of Pubmed, African journal online, Google Scholar, African journal of disability, Asksource.info and REHABDATA on naric.com. Additionally, the references of the relevant studies were also searched to identify peer reviewed articles included in the study.

Inclusion Criteria

The publication had to be about:

- People with disabilities, families and communities in Nigeria;
- Self-described as pertaining to Community-Based Rehabilitation or with CBR mentioned in the title, abstract, keywords or body of the text; and
- The article had to be published between 1990 and 2018 (both years inclusive).

Analysis

As indicated in Figure 2 below, around 2900 articles were identified through the electronic databases and 1032 remained after removal of duplicates. About 950 articles were excluded after going through them and finding that they were not about CBR but more about rehabilitation exercises or techniques for a particular disease. Some articles had CBR in their title but were applicable to engineering. There remained 83 articles that were seemingly about CBR for people with disabilities and, following the rigorous application of the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 33 articles were downloaded for full text review. After further scrutiny of the full text, 19 studies were excluded for not fitting in totally with the inclusion criteria. Finally, 14 articles were selected for inclusion in this study (see Table 1).

Figure 2: Flow Chart for steps in Identification of Studies

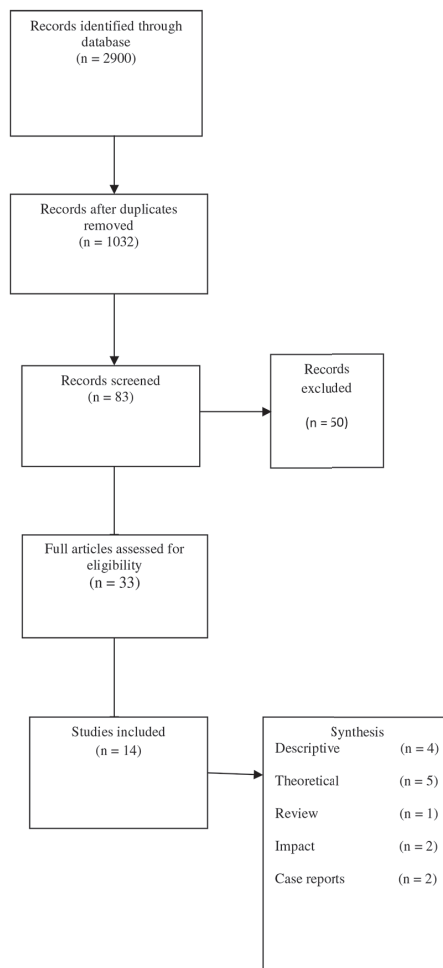


Table 1: List of Included Papers

Authors (Year)	Journals	Type of study	Empirical Research
Patrick and Oluseyi (2015)	International Journal of humanities, social sciences and education	Descriptive	Yes
Effiong and Ekpenyong (2017)	Journal of sociology, psychology and anthropology in practice	Impact	Yes
Alade (2004)	British Journal of special education	Case report	No
Igwesi-Chidobe and Udoka (2013)	International Journal of health sciences and research	Descriptive	Yes
Chakraborty et al. (2017)	BJPSYCH International	Case report	No
Asibi et al (2016)	International Journal of preventive and public health sciences	Impact	Yes
Hamza et al (2011)	Journal of the Nigeria society of physiotherapy	Theory	No
Adaka et al (2014)	International Journal of technology and inclusive education	Theory	No
Ebenso et al (2010)	Leprosy Review	Review	No
Vermeer et al (2015)	Disability, CBR and Inclusive Development journal	Descriptive	No
Olaogun et al (2009)	African Journal of physiotherapy and rehabilitation sciences	Theory	No
Vershima (2014)	National Journal of inclusive education	Theory	No
Jacob (2015)	European Scientific Journal	Theory	No
Vincent-Onabajo and Mohammed (2018)	African Journal of disability	Descriptive	Yes

Publication Period

All the 14 articles identified were published between 2004 and 2018, with about 21% (n = 3) published in 2015.

Empirical Research

Of the 14 articles included, 6 (43%) presented an empirical research. The remaining articles that reviewed unpublished secondary data using a sound methodology (Ebenso et al, 2010), or presented thorough and insightful narrative accounts without research methods (Alade, 2004) were regarded as unempirical research.

Journals in which the Articles appeared

All the included articles were published in different journals. About 79% were published in international journals, 2 were published in Nigerian national journals and 1 was in a foreign national journal.

Authors of the Articles

None of the authors seemed to have more than one publication. Majority (n=8) of the first authors are affiliated to Nigerian universities, four are affiliated to foreign universities and one each to a foreign hospital and an NGO. CBR is a multi-speciality field and different professionals are involved in its delivery and study. In this study, special education professionals contributed about 36% (n=5) of the papers, followed by physiotherapists with 4 papers.

RESULTS

Types of Studies

The reviewed articles were classified on the basis of study type as descriptive, theory, impact, and case study or review paper. Table 2 below shows the criteria for classifying the articles.

Table 2: Description of Types of Articles

Type of Paper	Description
Impact studies	Articles reporting on studies assessing the effect of a CBR intervention for a specific group. To be included, articles should enclose a description of the research design, the research methods and results.
Descriptive studies	Articles describing outcomes of interest of a selected population at a defined moment (without an intervention being carried out) are included here.
Case reports	Articles describing a particular CBR project or an approach to a specific problem in or aspects of a CBR project.
Review papers	Articles based on earlier published work that gives an overview of knowledge in a specific area.
Theory papers	Articles that aim to provide a theoretical base for CBR. Includes ethnographic and phenomenological work as well as discussion papers and articles presenting general information on CBR.

Adapted from Finkenflugel et al (2005) with modification

Theory Papers

Majority of the papers (n=5) are classified as theory papers on CBR. Hamza et al (2011) looked at the emergence of CBR as an opportunity for people with disability to get the best out of physiotherapy, as well as for the physiotherapists to prepare for their role in the CBR model that seeks to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities and their families. The authors also called on the policy-makers to develop innovative ways to utilise physiotherapists in the community. Vershima (2014) discussed how CBR can promote inclusive education for persons with disability and highlighted how an international Non-governmental Organisation was able to achieve this in Nigeria.

The rest of the papers commented on the general principles of CBR regarding rehabilitation, participation and inclusion of people with disabilities (Olaogun et al, 2009; Adaka et al, 2014; Jacob, 2015).

Descriptive Papers

Four studies were classified as descriptive articles. All the studies used cross-sectional surveys and semi-structured questionnaires. Two of them used an outcome measure (Patrick and Oluseyi, 2015; Vincent-Onabajo and Mohammed,

2018) and one used a focus group discussion (Vermeer et al, 2015). The studies described a specific outcome of interest. Patrick and Oluseyi (2015) carried out a correlational survey on how rehabilitation depends on the quality of healthcare, service, personnel, material and financial resources. Vincent-Onabajo and Mohammed (2018) focused on the preference for rehabilitation settings among stroke survivors. Igwesi-Chidobe and Udoka (2013) studied the knowledge and attitude of physiotherapists towards CBR. Lastly, Vermeer et al (2015) described the role of traditional leadership of persons with disabilities on the success of a CBR programme.

Review Paper

Only one study (Ebenso et al, 2010) identified itself as a review study, and was also classified as such. The paper discussed the 13-year journey of the rehabilitation of persons with leprosy and its transformation from socioeconomic rehabilitation into a coordinated community-based rehabilitation. The study indicated that combining CBR principles and community development projects can stimulate improvements in well-being, self-esteem and reintegration of people affected by leprosy into the community.

Case Reports

The 2 studies classified as case reports described rehabilitation programmes that started as centre-based and later transformed into community-based so as to facilitate reintegration into the community and remove barriers and stigmatisation. The study by Chakraborty et al (2017) gave a narrative of a mental health rehabilitation programme that started as centre-based in Edawu community of Benue state through a partnership with a UK-based NGO and the Nigerian government, and later transformed into CBR.

The second study by Alade (2004) gave a narrative of a community-based vocational rehabilitation programme, an empowerment programme instituted by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) that started in Oyo in partnership with the state government. The programme was later extended to 5 other States.

Impact Papers

Two studies fell into the category of impact studies. The studies determined the impact of CBR on beneficiaries of the CBR programme in 2 States - Plateau and

Akwa Ibom (Asibi et al, 2016; Effiong and Ekpenyong, 2017). The studies used both qualitative and quantitative methods to determine the effectiveness of the CBR intervention retrospectively.

Table 3: Some Evidence of the Impact of CBR in Nigeria

Authors (Year)	Intervention	Target Population	Evidence of Impact	Assessment
Effiong and Ekpenyong (2017)	Not specified	Persons with disability – random sample from all beneficiaries of CBR (n=436)	The findings revealed improvements in five elements of livelihood (skill development, self employment, wages employment, financial services and social protection).	Researcher interviewed beneficiaries using a 4- point Likert Scale structured questionnaire.
Asibi et al (2017)	Not specified (partly institution – based CBR programme)	Persons with visual impairment (n=16)	Beneficiaries became independent (n=12). Visually impaired persons acquired vocational skills (n=13). Many beneficiaries secured paid employment through the programme (n = 8). Facilitation of economic reintegration in the society (n=13). Improved mobility and orientation skills.	Researcher interviewed beneficiaries using structured questionnaire.
Alade (2004)	Community-based vocational training.	Persons with disability (n = 155) as part of community-based vocational rehabilitation pilot project in Oyo state, 1991.	90% of the beneficiaries were gainfully employed and thus facilitating inclusion into society.	Interviews with chairperson and coordinator of the project and review of record and reports of social workers.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the current review was to identify relevant literature about CBR in Nigeria and review the work with the aim of making published literature available to researchers, CBR project coordinators and managers, and policy-makers.

Some of the CBR studies from Nigeria that were included in the previous CBR literature reviews were not included in this study as they did not fulfil the inclusion criteria. For instance, Finkenflugel et al (2005) considered a study by Hartley and Wirz (2002) on the development of a theoretical model to support people with communication disabilities using previous studies on CBR, although the authors themselves did not describe their study as a CBR article. Similarly, Velema et al (2008) also described a study on a socio-economic rehabilitation project by Ebenso et al (2007) as CBR, but Ebenso et al (2010) said that the aforementioned project was transformed into community-based rehabilitation, implying that initially it was not a CBR project. Furthermore, the study by Odebiyi et al (2008), which was cited by Cleaver and Nixon (2014) as CBR, was not about people with disability.

The articles were categorised as empirical research only in order to describe the empiricism of CBR literature in Nigeria and not to assess the quality of the published articles, as that is not the function of a scoping study (Arksey and O'Malley, 2005).

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study showed that there is a dearth of CBR literature in Nigeria, considering the fact that only 14 studies were found. The previous reviews of CBR (Finkenflugel et al, 2005; Velema et al, 2008; Cleaver and Nixon, 2014; Bowers et al, 2015) listed 17 studies from South Africa, while Nigeria had only 7 (assuming all were about CBR). This shows that Nigeria, with the highest number of persons with disabilities in Africa, has been lax in producing peer reviewed articles to better the lives of persons with disability. However, the publishing trend shows that there is a recent improvement in CBR literature publication, as about 64% (n = 9) of the articles were published in the last 5 years. The majority of the articles published were theory papers (n = 5), indicating a need for comprehensive intervention studies, case reports and descriptive studies to better inform practice. The findings show that there is no prominent person who can be called an authority on CBR in Nigeria. The authors are mostly

academicians and, with a few exceptions, are probably not working directly with people with disabilities. There are a lot of on-going CBR programmes in Nigeria but no published studies on their modus operandi, impact or success stories.

Future studies should focus more on well-designed studies of CBR in Nigeria, on impact, implementation and the role of mid-level community rehabilitation facilitators. Also, with the passage of the Disability Bill in Nigeria, the government should create a Community-based Rehabilitation department in the Ministry of Social Welfare, as has been done in other African countries, to facilitate inclusion and participation of persons with disability.

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