

Original Research Article

Evaluation of Hotel Accessibility to People with Disability (PWD) on Wheelchair in Ondo City, Nigeria

Adegbola S., Adewale^{1*} and Aina Stella Oluwatoyin²

Abstract

¹Wesley University Ondo, Department of Hospitality Management and Tourism

²Federal University Oye Ekiti, Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management

*Corresponding Author E-mail: adewale.adebola@wesleyuni.edu.ng, books.adebola@gmail.com

For everyone with disabilities who want to integrate fully into society at large, accessibility is crucial. Society and people's accessibility cannot be separated. This necessitates the need to evaluate the accessibility to people with disabilities (PWD) on wheelchairs in twenty-five selected hotels, which is about 70% of the hotels in Ondo City. This study illuminated how accessible the main entrance, bar, reception, restaurant, and room entrances are to PWD on wheelchair. Results show that 92%, 16% 40% and 72% of the main entrances, reception, bar and room entries of the selected hotels are accessible to PWD on wheelchairs while 8%, 64%, 18%, 56% and 20% are not accessible to PWD on wheelchairs. The Nigerian government has set strong regulations for public spaces, including hotels, taxis, and other establishments, to provide accessibility, amenities, and equal opportunities for people with disabilities. The Nigerian government should implement the disability law and engage in a public enlightenment campaign against discrimination, and hotel owners should be trained on the features that will enable accessibility to people with disability (PWD) in wheelchair.

Keywords: Disability, Hotels, PWD and Accessibility

INTRODUCTION

To completely incorporate people with disabilities into society, accessibility is crucial. Our society cannot globally reject the increasing number of people with disabilities. By including people with disabilities in our public spaces, such as hotels, some architectural changes to the development of private as well as public places in our neighborhood will be avoided.

However, there are other challenges and restrictions that people with disabilities must overcome, such as obstacles like stairs, the absence of information in accessible forms, and community services presented in a way that people with disabilities cannot comprehend. Low-tech, low-cost accessibility solutions can be adopted right away, and all public and commercial locations should be compelled to eliminate any physical obstacles that prevent people with disabilities from entering the space.

A person has a disability when physical or social restrictions prevent them from engaging in daily activities.

According to Macharia et al. (2020), a disability affects a person's ability to engage in their community and their physical health. It can be physical, mental, cognitive, emotional, sensory, developmental, or even a mix of these, and can exist from birth or develop later in life.

Pinilla-Roncancio and Alkire (2021) found that people living in households with disabled members face higher levels of multidimensional poverty than those without disabilities in five of the 11 countries and that differences between the levels of poverty were larger in middle-income countries than in low-income countries. Ogunjimi et al. (2020) stated that inequality in the distribution of productive resources in Nigeria has a negative effect on PWD's sustainable livelihood, despite the rights of citizens, including PWD, being enshrined in the Nigerian constitution.

Wescott et al. (2023) stated that the UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) project in Serbia sought to create structural changes to

uphold the rights of people with disabilities. To understand the process of change, semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders and analyzed using interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA). This article aims to support global efforts in alignment with the CRPD and to give evidence on how countries may begin to tackle the structural exclusion of people with disabilities in society.

A person who is disabled has a physical or mental disability that limits their ability to do regular everyday chores. The phrase "disabled" defines those who are "unable," "unfit," or "cripple" due to hereditary faults, environmental constraints, accidents, or diseases. People with disabilities are also those who have been identified as having one or more disabilities by a specialist in any field of therapy, such as total or partial blindness, emotional disorder, deafness, partial hearing, physical handicap, speech defects, learning disability, social maladjustment, exceptional giftedness, or mental retardation. The United Nations estimates that there are around 650 million people with disabilities worldwide, with the majority of them residing in developing countries. In 2012, the numbers increased to around a billion. The World Health Organization estimates that over one billion people globally live with impairments and serious functioning difficulties.

The Sarah Educational Trust (2016) estimates that there are 21 different categories of PWD: blindness, poor vision, and leprosy people who have been cured; hearing impairment (deaf and hard of hearing); locomotor disability; dwarfism; intellectual disability; and mental illness, including autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy; chronic neurological conditions; specific learning disabilities (dyslexia); multiple sclerosis; and speech and language impairment. One of the most important factors in urban planning is accessibility to public territory. This includes identifying architectural barriers that wheelchair users must overcome as well as assessing whether public buildings in Istanbul, Turkey's CBD, are compliant with the instrument's guidelines for wheelchair accessibility (Evcil, 2009).

The United Nations (2021) regulations for PWD state that all public buildings, governmental facilities and institutions, office buildings, residential buildings, commercial buildings, health facilities, educational institutions, restaurants, recreational facilities, sports facilities, religious buildings, and all other building types typically used by the general public must comply with accessibility requirements for the disabled. Private structures, such as private homes, clubs, businesses, or studios, are exempt from the criteria. A wheelchair user should be able to enter an accessible building through at least one entrance.

The World Health Organization (WHO) (2011) states that a wheelchair is an essential tool for mobility, independence, dignity, and general well-being for those

with difficulty walking or moving around. It can help them access school, work, healthcare, and other aspects of family and community life while also enabling them to be independent, participate, and have equal chances.

The WHO states that only 5 to 15% of the 70 million individuals who require a wheelchair have access to one. Additionally, there is a lack of health and rehabilitation professionals knowledgeable and skilled in providing tailored wheelchairs. The World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons, the Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are all included in the Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Access to assistive mobility technology is essential for people with disabilities to function in society, allowing them to work, care for themselves and others, and accomplish daily living tasks independently. According to Hernandez, D., & Rodriguez, S. (2023) the obstacles are faced by wheelchair users in Montevideo, Uruguay. The research found that each of these transit components poses high costs for wheelchair users, highlighting the importance of expanding universal design in public transport.

Kozleski et al. (2023) posited that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) addressed the complexities of living and dying in the US. It argues that the gaps between public policy, missed opportunities, and current realities create a lasting impact on generations of Americans. It calls for the ADA to be expanded and strengthened to expand its impact.

PWD in Nigeria

The Nigerian National Assembly estimated that over 20 million people are living with disability in the country. Despite the Charter of the United Nations recognizing the dignity and rights of all members of the human family, a segment of Nigerian society still lives in poverty due to disability. The quality of life experienced by the majority of PWD is lower than that enjoyed by their able-bodied contemporaries, contrary to the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, which states fundamental human rights. Despite economic growth, poverty has been persistent in the country, with PWD in rural areas representing the poorest of the poor. Statistics show that the unemployment rate for people with disabilities of working age is 80-90% and 50-70% in developing and developed countries, respectively. People with disabilities face many barriers, from physical barriers to systemic barriers to employment and social programs. The most difficult barriers to overcome are societal attitudes towards people with disabilities. Ogunjimi et. al (2020) The dignity and rights of all members of the human family are essential for freedom, justice and peace, but many PWD still live in poverty.

Floyd Morris (2023) said that a pandemic of devastating proportions had struck the world's ecosystem, killing more than 3 million people and afflicting more than 100 million people. Countries were compelled to put protections in place for the populace, including tactics for home businesses. Despite its tragic character, the crisis has given persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups the opportunity to work remotely. Through a case study, the author examines the job opportunities for those with disabilities utilizing the notion of remote work in the business process outsourcing sector. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which came into force in 2008, marked a paradigm shift in the way disability is perceived. In Nigeria, access by people with disabilities to social and physical resources such as social services, health services, education, and adaptive technologies has not received due attention. This study evaluated the accessibility of people with disabilities to hotel facilities in Ondo City, Nigeria, to examine the structure of the hotel in terms of accessibility for wheelchair users. In all that was stated above there is a gap to be filled as this is essential.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Area

This study was carried out in Ondo, Ondo State, Southwest Nigeria. Twenty-five hotels, or 70% of the total number of hotels in Ondo City, were chosen for this study. The top hotels in the city and a large number of visitors were the main topics of discussion. The hotel ratings vary from 2 to 4, with a minimum need of 15 rooms to account for accessibility in all five areas, including the main entrance, bar, rooms, receptions, and restaurant. Data from this study were both primary and secondary. The major data came from field observations, field surveys, and interviews. It was common practice to collect secondary data from books, journals, and hotel records. The study included data from Twenty-five hotels (see details on Table 1).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Summary of the Findings

A study of 25 hotels in Ondo, southwest Nigeria, was conducted to gauge their wheelchair accessibility for guests with disabilities (PWD). This analysis evaluates accessibility of people with disability (PWD) to hotel facilities, especially disabled people in wheelchairs. The data provided in the table presents observations of various hotels' entrance accessibility, including the main entrance, reception entrance, restaurant entrance, bar

entrance, and room entrance. The data revealed that accessibility of people with disability (PWD) on wheelchairs and understood its implications on hotel services.

Table 2.0 details indicate that 23 (92%) of the selected hotels' main entrances are accessible, while 2 (8%) of the hotels selected are inaccessible to PWD riding wheelchairs. The results for the selected hotels' reception entries show that 4 (16%) of the hotels are wheelchair accessible, 5 (20%) are turbulent, and 16 (64%) are not accessible. According to the assessment of the restaurant entrances at the selected hotels, 4(16%) are wheelchair accessible, 1 (4%) needs support, 1 (4%) is turbulent, 1 (4%) is unsafe, and 18 (72%) are not. The outcome for the bar entry reveals that 10 (40%) of the selected hotels are wheelchair accessible, 1(4%) are unsafe, and 14(56%) are not. Furthermore, the outcome for room entrances reveals that 18(72%) are accessible, 1(4%) needs help, 1(4%) is sloppy, and 5(20%) are not accessible to PWD on wheelchairs.

Overview of Accessibility: Main Entrance

The analysis reveals that out of the 23 hotels observed, 92% have accessible main entrances to PWD in wheelchairs. This indicates that the majority of selected hotels have accessible main entrances to PWD in which wheelchairs can enter the premises without difficulty. However, it is important to note that 2% of the selected hotels still lack accessible main entrances, potentially causing inconvenience and limitations for disabled guests.

Overview of Accessibility: Reception Entrance

The analysis indicates that only 64% of the hotels did not have accessible entrances for PWD in wheelchairs. This poses a significant challenge to PWD individuals in wheelchairs, who may face difficulties in checking in and accessing reception services. Additionally, 20% of the hotels have sloppy reception entrances, which may not be suitable for PWD on wheel chairs to ride on. However, 16% of the selected hotels are wheelchair accessible to PWDs.

Overview of Accessibility: Restaurant

The analysis reveals that 72% of the restaurants of the selected hotels are accessible to PWDs in wheelchairs. This indicate that majority of the restaurant are not accessible to PWDs in wheelchairs. Also, other hotels indicate 4%, a dangerous entrance, sloppy work, and the need for support by external hotel staff. This indicate that

Table 1. Field Observation on the Hotel Facilities

S/N	List of Hotels	Main entrance	Reception Entrance	Restaurant Entrance	Bar Entrance	Room Entrance
1	Straight Edge Hotel and Suite	A	NA	NS	NA	NS
2	Esporta Hotel	A	NA	NA	NA	A
3	Sunny Skye Hotel	NA	NA	NA	A	A
4	Leisure Spring Hotel	A	A	A	A	A
5	City Walk Hotel	NA	NA	A	A	A
6	Akiavik Blue Roof Hotel	A	NA	NA	NA	NA
7	Lande Hotel	A	NA	NA	A	A
8	B-Luxury AHotel and Suites	A	A	NA	A	A
9	Abbey Hotel	A	NA	NA	NA	A
10	Olamojiba Hotel	A	NA	NA	NA	A
11	Boutique Hotel and Winery Ondo	A	SL	NA	NA	NA
12	1828 hotel and Suites	A	NA	NA	NA	A
13	Danyks Hotel and Suites	A	NA	NA	NA	NA
14	Vista Perfecta	A	SL	A	NA	A
15	Polack Hotel	A	SL	A	A	A
16	Chane Hotel and Ariya Hall	A	SL	NA	NA	NA
17	Afinju Resort and Hotel Limited	A	NA	NA	NA	A
18	De- Love hotel	A	NA	NA	NA	A
19	Angle 90 International Hotel	A	NA	NA	A	A
20	RKY Hotel	A	NA	NA	A	A
21	Knight Hotel	A	NA	NA	A	A
22	White Rock Hotel	A	A	SL	D	SL
23	PK Intercontinental Hotel	A	A	NA	NA	A
24	Bob K Hotel and Suite	A	NA	NA	NA	NA
25	Good way Hotel	A	SL	D	A	A

Keys of Interpretation: NA-(5) Not Accessible, D-(4) Dangerous, SL-(3) Sloppy, NS-(2) Needs Support, A- (1) Accessible

Table 2. Field Observation on the Hotel Facilities

	Accessible	Needs Support	Sloppy	Dangerous	Not Accessible
Hotel Sections Accessibility					
Main entrance	23 (92%)				2 (8%)
Reception Entrance	4(16%)		5 (20%)		16(64%)
Restaurant Entrance	4(16%)	1(4%)	1(4%)	1(4%)	18(72%)
Bar Entrance	10(40%)			1(4%)	14(56%)
Room Entrance	18(72%)	1(4%)	1(4%)		5 (20%)

PWD in wheelchairs cannot access dining facilities independently without having a support.

Overview of Accessibility: Bar

The analysis reveals that 56% of the the bars of the selected hotels are not accessible to PWDs in wheelchairs. This indicate that majority of the bars of the selected hotels are not accessible PWDs in wheelchairs. Also, the analysis reveals that 4% of bars of the selected hotels are of dangerous bar entrances for PWD in wheelchairs. However, 40% of the selected hotels have accessible bar entrances for PWD in wheelchairs.

Overview of Accessibility: Room

The analysis revealed that 72% of the rooms of the selected hotels are accessible to PWD on wheelchairs. This indicates that the majority of the rooms of the selected hotels are accessible PWDs in wheelchairs. However, 25% of the rooms were not accessible, and 4% were sloppy and needed the support of hotel staff or another hand.

Overall Implications of the Findings

The findings of this analysis emphasize the importance of accessibility ease in hotel services for PWD on wheelchairs. The level of accessibility directly impacts the overall experience and satisfaction of disabled guests, potentially influencing their choice of accommodation and the hotel's reputation.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

The analysis demonstrates that while some hotels have

made strides in ensuring accessibility ease for disabled individuals, there is still significant room for improvement. By addressing the accessibility challenges identified in the data, hotels can enhance the experiences of disabled guests, promote inclusivity, and differentiate themselves as part of the society. According to the survey, hotels in the southwest of Nigeria are unaware that people with disabilities are among the expected guests and that they should be accommodated in public spaces. The Nigerian government has set strong regulations in place for public spaces, including hotels, taxis, and other establishments, all of which are subject to severe laws and standards for providing accessibility, amenities, and equal opportunities for people with disabilities. It might take a lot of time and be technically challenging to accomplish, but if we can do it, we can make the world inclusive for everyone.

Recommendation

The Nigerian president should implement the disability law and engage in a public enlightenment campaign against discrimination. The Federal government should introduce a Disability Tax Fund (DTF) to provide social security and welfare to disabled persons. Hotel staff should be trained on the features of accessible rooms and be prepared to provide reasonable accommodations for guests with disabilities. The key to designing an accessible hotel room is a simple layout, minimal furniture, spaciousness and the ability to provide flexibility.

Stakeholders in the hotel industry should recognize that improving accessibility not only caters to disabled individuals but also aligns with inclusive practices that benefit a broader range of guests. It is recommended that hotels undertake the following measures to enhance accessibility:

1. Conduct Accessibility Audits: Hotels should regularly assess their premises to identify areas that require improvement in terms of accessibility to PWD on wheelchair. This includes entrance ramps, elevators, door

widths, and the layout of public spaces.

2. Invest in Infrastructure: Hotels should allocate resources to retrofit existing facilities and build new structures with accessibility features in mind. Installing ramps, widening doorways, and incorporating braille signage are examples of proactive measures that can greatly enhance accessibility.

3. Staff Training: Hotel staff should receive comprehensive training on how to assist disabled guests, including offering personalized support and addressing their specific needs. This can contribute to a more welcoming and inclusive environment for all guests.

4. Collaboration with Accessibility Experts: Hotels investors and directors can seek guidance from accessibility experts or disability organizations to ensure that their efforts align with industry best practices and legal requirements. Such partnerships can provide valuable insights into improving accessibility and enhancing the overall guest experience.

REFERENCES

- Cassells L (2021). The Impact of the Marrakesh Treaty on South African Publishers. *Publ. Res. Q.* 2021, 37, 41–52. [Google Scholar] [CrossRef]
- Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999). Chapter IV Fundamental. Human Rights PP 17. Retrieved from: [http://www.nigeria-law.org/ConstitutionOfTheFederal Republic Of Nigeria.htm](http://www.nigeria-law.org/ConstitutionOfTheFederalRepublicOfNigeria.htm) Department of Economics and Social Affairs, Division for Inclusive Development.
- Evcil AN (2009). Wheelchair accessibility to public buildings in Istanbul. *Disabil. Rehabil. Assist. Technol.* 2009 Mar; 4(2):76-85. doi: 10.1080/17483100802543247. PMID: 19191062.
- Floyd Morris (2023) Prospects for employment of persons with disabilities in the post- covid-19 era in developing countries, *Disability & Society*, 38:2, 267-286, DOI: 10.1080/09687599.2021.1932757.
- Haruna MA (2017). The problems of living with disability in Nigeria. *Journal of Law, Policy and Globalization*, 65, 103- 111.
- Hernandez D, Rodriguez S (2023). Same Network, Same Access to Urban Opportunities? Accessibility Via Public Transportation for Wheelchair Users. *J. Disabil. Pol. Stud.* 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/10442073231165773>
- Kozleski EB, Proffitt WA, Stepaniuk I (2023). Disability Policy in the Context of Intersectionality, Contemporary Oppressions, and Injustices: Toward a Just Future. *J. Disabil. Pol. Stud.* 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/10442073231165762>
- Ma GYK, Mak WWS (2022). Meta-analysis of studies on the impact of mobility disability simulation programs on attitudes toward people with disabilities and environmental in/accessibility. *PLoS One.* 2022 Jun 10;17(6):e0269357. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0269357. PMID: 35687538; PMCID: PMC9187118.
- Macharia S, Otike J, Bosire EK (2020). Exploiting the marrakesh treaty to obviate copyright-related challenges on access to information by visually impaired people in academic libraries. *Libr. Manag.* 2020, 41, 235–246.
- Ogunjimi SI, Ajala AO (2016). Participation of physically challenged people in agricultural value chain: Implication in food sustainability in Nigeria. *J. Agric. Forestry*, 62(1), 165-174. doi: 10.17707/Agriculture Forest.62.1.19.
- Ogunjimi, L. O. (2007). Attitude of health personnel in Calabar and factors militating against health care services for handicapped persons in Nigeria, *Pak. J. Soc. Sci.* 4(2), 200-203.
- Pinilla-Roncancio M, Alkire S (2021). How Poor Are People With Disabilities? Evidence Based on the Global Multidimensional Poverty Index. *J. Disabil. Pol. Stud.* 31(4), 206–216. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1044207320919942>
- United Nation (2021). United Nations Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- Wescott H, Ferri D, MacLachlan M (2023). Participation, Legal Capacity, and Gender: Reflections from the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Project in Serbia. *Disabilities*, 3(1), 129–146. MDPI AG. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/disabilities3010010>
- World Health Organisation/World Bank (2011). World Report On Disability WHO Library Cataloging-in-Publication Data, World report on disability 2011.
- World Health Organization (2012). Disabilities. Retrieved from: <http://www.who.int/topics/disabilities/en/> Accessed 25/04/23. www.sarthakindia.org, www.capsarathi.com or download Capsarathi App