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A Case Study on the Adoption and Utilisation of Assistive Communication Technology for Non-Verbal Adults with Cerebral Palsy in Kampala, Ghana

K, w, a, m, e, A, s, a, r, e, ,, K, o, f, i, M, e, n, s, a, h, A, n, o, k, y, e, ,, A, m, a, S, e, r, w, a, a, B, o, a, t, e, n, g

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| Abstract

Non-verbal adults with cerebral palsy in low-resource settings face substantial communication barriers. Assistive communication technology is a potential solution, but its practical adoption and use in such contexts are not well understood. This case study examines this issue within a specific community in Kampala, Ghana. The purpose was to measure the adoption and utilisation rates of assistive communication technology among non-verbal adults with cerebral palsy in this setting. The objectives were to identify the types of technology provided, assess levels of daily use, and explore factors influencing sustained utilisation. An instrumental case study design was used. Data were collected via semi-structured interviews with a non-verbal adult with cerebral palsy, a family carer, and an occupational therapist. This was supplemented by direct observation of technology use and a review of local records. The findings showed a low rate of sustained technology utilisation. Although a basic speech-generating device was procured, observation and interviews indicated it was used for less than 10% of daily communication interactions within several months. Key barriers included inadequate training for the family, challenges with device maintenance, and a failure to integrate the technology into established daily routines. The mere provision of assistive technology does not ensure long-term adoption. This case demonstrates a significant gap between acquiring a device and its effective integration into

the user's life within this specific low-resource context. Recommendations involve developing structured, ongoing training programmes for users and families, creating local support mechanisms for maintenance, and for occupational therapists to prioritise embedding technology use into meaningful daily activities from the initial intervention stage. assistive technology, cerebral palsy, augmentative and alternative communication, occupational therapy, low-resource setting, adoption, Ghana This case study offers a detailed, contextualised analysis of the challenges in sustaining assistive communication technology use, providing practical insights for occupational therapy practice and service development in similar African settings.
