



IMPACT OF USER EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN ACCESSING LIBRARY RESOURCES IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN BORNO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper intends to find out the impact of user education programs in accessing library resources. Five institutions of higher learning in Borno State, Nigeria were captured in the study. Stratified random sampling was used in the selection of the samples for the study. The findings revealed that user education programs have positively impacted on users on how library resources are accessed and utilized. Furthermore, the result revealed that user education has greatly influenced the habit of users towards library resources.

Keywords: *User Education programs, Accessing, Library Resources.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Libraries are established in tertiary institutions such as universities, colleges of Education, Polytechnics, Research institutes, in order to provide information resources and services for teaching, learning and research. They do so by selecting, acquiring, organizing, conserving and disseminating relevant information resources to meet the needs of their users. Effective utilization of libraries and its information resources has been a matter of concern to libraries and educationist in general. The under – utilization of libraries and its information resources, has assumed a worrisome dimensions in the administration of libraries in Nigeria.

Flemming (1990), on the other hand defined user education as “various programs of education exploration provided by Librarians to enable users make use of information resources and services in the library”. Library instruction or user education becomes necessary particularly in academic libraries, this is because according to Lau (1997), a student hardly uses the library during his or her first twelve (12) years of schooling and hardly the library becomes present in a student’s life where he/she becomes an undergraduate. This is why newly admitted students in institutions of higher learning in Nigeria have to be taught how to use the library and its resources. Soyinka (1996)

viewed user education as a formal program of instruction backed up with tutorials and seminars, aimed at teaching fresh undergraduates how to exploit the resources of the library in a meaningful manner. Okon (2008) asserted that user education concept of information literacy which in most libraries encompasses all activities undertaken to help users become efficient users of information resources available in such library.

The impact or effect of user education programs in accessing information resources in libraries cannot be over emphasized. According to Watter (2005) several scholars have posited that user education is the second most important role of the librarian in the development of any institution, irrespective of level, size or specialization. Kartz (2009) asserted that, it is through user education programs that a library user is informed of what a library has on a given subject, on a given title, on a given author, or a given literature. Kartz (2009) also stated that it is through user education that a library user is taught on how information resources in libraries are organized. Lack of organization hinders accessibility and utilization of information resources in the libraries. Rothstern (1999) stated that “it is not always good for librarians to be intelligent guide posts but to point the road to users, how to exploit and use the library resources is the business of users”. By this, it implies that user education should be given to users on how to access and utilize information resources in the library on their own without depending solely on the librarians. The importance of user education in accessing information resources in libraries is to be able to achieve the five laws of library science as put forward by Ranganathan (1930):

- 1 Books are for use
- 2 .Every reader his book
- 3 .Every book its reader
4. Save the time of the reader
- 5 Library is a growing organism

By the fourth law which says “save time of the reader”, means that the librarian should do everything possible to save the readers time, most of the time, readers that come to the library are eager to get the information they need within the shortest possible time. The librarians should organize information resources in their libraries so that users could easily have access to them without taking much of their time. This could be through provision of library services such as: library orientation, user education, current awareness services (CAS) organizing, display and exhibition of library materials. According to Kumar (2007) provision of user education services, helps to promote high reading culture among its users. The author went further by saying that user education helps library users whose interest and ability helps them seek for personal knowledge or self education. To know how to use a library is an essential part of the education for life process. Even in public, National, and special libraries, user education is

very necessary to promote full exploitation of the library's resources including human resources. Qjo (2004) asserted that user education tends to break the communication barrier between information resources of a library and the library users. The librarian need both professional education and the media resources so that he can be able to inculcate into the user the life – long habit of self discovery and learning through effective use of the library.

But according to Rice (2002), “there are several major obstacles to effective library orientation of user education”. How to find the staff or coordinator to do frequent presentation of an orientation programs; how to fine the combination of both knowledge and teaching ability to present the necessary information effectively and also to motivate the users; how to standardize the syllabus for multiple presentation (with the added problems of presentations by more than one instructor); how to deal with an audience which might have preconceived bias against or even a resistance to libraries, in the form of apathy, hostility, anxiety or disruption to other listeners”.

Bruce (2009) stated that while being involved in teaching library user education programme, he has not come across a class of students who have the same amount of library knowledge, but with variation of understanding them. This makes user education program very difficult because some of the students easily become bored and some easily become lost, they lack necessary basic information. According to standards set by the committee of Polytechnics Librarians in Nigeria, (COPLIN 1989), an institution with yearly enrolment of 500 – 1,000 new intake should make user education program compulsory to enable them make proper utilization of the library and its information resources on their own but lack of cooperation between the librarians and departments in the Polytechnics affect user education program. Wattaker (2002) stated that the growth in number of information seekers, students, researchers, professionals and the rate of diversification of information and bibliographical need, have far outstripped the growth of information resources available, and have affected planning of user education program in tertiary institutions (such as Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education and research institutions). The authors goes further by saying that user education aids or helps in creating awareness among users of what a library has and thereby helping, utilization of library and its information resources.

Analysis of Reviews and Concluding Remarks: From the reviews made by different authors above, it could be concluded that most of them concurred that user education programs have significant impact on making users much accessible to library information resources, though, some of the authors viewed that user education programs might be confronted with some challenges which may arise due to individual differences of the users.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. Impact of user Education Programs in accessing Library Information Resources

3. RESEARH QUESTION

1. What is the impact of user education program on students' utilization of library resources?

4. METHODOLOGY

Survey research method was adopted for this study. Whittaker (2000) stated that survey research involves a systematic and comprehensive collection of information about the opinions, attitudes, feelings, beliefs and behavior of the people. Busha and Harter (1980) asserted that survey research enables specific issues to be investigated through information gathering on people's opinions and beliefs over wide population. In survey research, a sample is selected from the large population in order to get appropriate data. It enables a librarian to discover whether library users or patrons and non- users are satisfied with the information resources provided for them or not. The validity of survey is usually reached before they will finally be used. Layzellward (1997) also supported the relevance of survey research in librarianship when he maintained that survey seems to be the dominant research method in library and information science studies.

4.1 SAMPLE

There are seven (7) academic libraries cited in different tertiary institution of higher learning in Borno state. They are:

1. Ramat Library of University of Maiduguri
2. Ramat Polytechnic Library Maiduguri
3. Mohammed Ashigar Library College of Agriculture Maiduguri
4. Ibrahim Musa library Sir Kashim College of Education Maiduguri
5. Tijani El-Miskin Library Mohammed Goni College of Legal and Islamic Studies Maiduguri.
6. Shehu Kyari Library of Umar Ibn Ibrahim College of Education Science and Technology, Bama.
7. Haruna Ningi Library of Waka Biu College of Education Biu, Borno State.

But only five academic libraries were selected for the research and they are as follows: Ramat Library, University of Maiduguri, Ramat Polytechnic Library Maiduguri, Mohammed Ashigar Library College of Agriculture Maiduguri, Ibrahim Musa Library of Sir Kashim College of Education Maiduguri and Tijjani El-Miskin Library of Mohammed Goni College of Legal and Islamic Studies Maiduguri. The population of this research was the registered users (10,885) of the five (5) academic libraries of tertiary institution under study, stratified sampling techniques was used to select sample from the target population. According to Chava and David (2008) stated that cluster sampling involves first selecting large grouping and then selecting the sampling unit from clusters, the clusters are selected by a random sample or stratified sample, depending on the research problem, it is cheaper and convenient.

Table 3.1: Population and Sample

S/N	Names of Institution	No. Of Registered Users	Sample Size
1.	Ramat Library, University of Maiduguri	2,009	402
2.	Ramat Polytechnic Library Maiduguri	3,000	600
3.	Ibrahim Musa Library Kashim Ibrahim College of Education, Maiduguri	2,044	409
4.	Tijjani El-Miskin Library Mohammed Goni College Of Legal And Islamic Studies.	1,268	253
5.	Mohammed Ashigar Library College of Agriculture Maiduguri.	2,564	513
	Total	10,885	2,177

Source: Reports of Libraries under Study, 2017

Proportional stratified sampling techniques was used to ascertain the representative sample of Two thousand one hundred and seventy seven (2,177) users of the five (5) tertiary institutions under study. The sample (2,177) is 20 percent of the target population of ten thousand eight hundred and eighty five (10,885) which is proportionate to each strata of the population. The twenty (20) percent representative sample is based on suggestion on the desire level of confidence of sample size of the population. For instance, Borg and Gall (1983) recommended that a minimum sample size of twenty (20) percent should be used for the population that is up to one thousand (1000) and above.

It is on the basis of this recommendation that the researcher used twenty (20) percent of the total population as sample based on proportional stratified sampling technique. Proportional sampling techniques is a type of sampling in which the sample proportions are made to be the same as the population proportion on the stratified variable. Ary, Jacobs Rasavieh and Sorensen, (2006). In other words the method required the selection of units at random from each stratum in proportion to the actual size of the group in the total population. According to Mohammed (2006) in proportionate stratified sampling, the number selected from each group is relative to the size of the group. That is the sample from each of the group reflects the size of the group.

4.2 TOOLS USED

Questionnaire was used for data collection, complemented with unstructured interview. The questionnaires is closed structured with options for selection which is self – designed by the researcher it was used for data collection and divided into seven (6) sections, namely section A,B,C,D,E,F and G respectively. Section ‘A’ cover biographical data and section ‘B’ dwells on types of user education service academic libraries provide for users education programs and services, while section ‘C’ on attitude of users towards user education programs and services. Section ‘D’ was



on frequency of use of libraries and information resources, section 'E' was on impact of user education programs in accessing information resources in academic libraries then section 'F' is on factors inhibiting users utilization of library and its information resources. The librarians' structured interview have ten (10) questions which deals with types of user education programs provided, in the libraries and the problems affecting them in general. Documentary sources such as library handbooks was used as instruments for data collection. Copies of the structured questionnaire and unstructured interview questions was given to specialists in the field of library and information science for face validation to cross check for clarity, logical argument, style of presentation, composure, appropriateness of language and relevance of information seeking.

The questionnaire as a data collection instrument has been acclaimed by scholars as the most suitable for soliciting for data from a large population. Structured interview is a kind of conversation with a purpose which is expected to provide additional information and proof for further clarification of issues that cannot be properly addressed by questionnaire. Questionnaire was used for data collection, complemented with unstructured interview. The questionnaires is closed structured with options for selection which is self – designed by the researcher it was used for data collection and divided into seven (6) sections, namely section A,B,C,D,E,F and G respectively. Section 'A' cover biographical data and section 'B' dwells on types of user education service academic libraries provide for users education programs and services, while section 'C' on attitude of users towards user education programs and services. Section 'D' was on frequency of use of libraries and information resources, section 'E' was on impact of user education programs in accessing information resources in academic libraries then section 'F' is on factors inhibiting users utilization of library and its information resources. The librarians' structured interview have ten (10) questions which deals with types of user education programs provided, in the libraries and the problems affecting them in general. Documentary sources such as library handbooks was used as instruments for data collection. Copies of the structured questionnaire and unstructured interview questions was given to specialists in the field of library and information science for face validation to cross check for clarity, logical argument, style of presentation, composure, appropriateness of language and relevance of information seeking.

1. RESULTS

Impact of User Education Program on Students Utilization

Factors	Response	Frequency	%	X^2
Impact of user education program on students utilization of information resources	High impact	576	29.9	$X^2=2.3928$
	Fair impact	516	26.8	
	Not well impacted	460	23.9	
	Undecided	375	19.4	
	Total	1,927	100	

How well has the	Very well	926	48.1	
program (UEP) influenced you	Moderately	550	28.5	$X^2=44.1464$
on how to use library resources	Fairly	420	21.8	
	Poor	31	1.6	
	Total	1,927	100	
How do you apply the	4 times a week	1022	53.0	
knowledge you acquire in	3 times a week	740	38.4	$X^2=30.73$
(UEP) during your search in the	Never	165	8.6	
library	Total	1,927	100	
To what extend has this (UEP)	High extend	840	43.6	
help you in accessing	Moderately	556	28.7	
information resources in the	Fairly	575	26.7	$X^2=92.68$
library?	Low extent	0	0.0	
	No extent	16	0.8	
	Total	1,927	100	

Source: Field Survey 2017

$$= 9.44 < X^2 \text{ Cal-df} = 4, P < 0.05, \text{UEP User Education Program}$$

On the impact of user education program on students' utilization of library resources, table 4.2.5 reveal that 29.9% of the respondents indicated that UEP is highly impactful 26.8% indicated it is fairly impactful, 23.9% indicated it was not well impactful and 19.4% remained undecided.

Furthermore on how well has the user education program influenced its users on how to utilize the library resources 48.1% respondents indicated UEP had very well influenced their skills on use of the library resources than 28.5% indicated it has moderately influenced them, 21.8% indicated it has fairly influenced them 1.6% indicated it has poorly influenced them.

When asked on how the respondents apply the knowledge they acquire through UEP in searching library resources, 53.0% indicated they apply it sometimes while 8.6% indicated they never use or apply it at all. When asked on to what extent UEP has helped them in accessing information resources in the library, 43.6% of the respondents rated UEP help in accessing information resources as high extent, 26.7% indicated as moderate, then 28.9% indicated it as fairly, and not extent is only 0.8%. From these result it can be concluded that user education program has greatly impacted and influenced the users' utilization on library resources. In line with the findings of this research, educational institutions should intensify efforts in providing user education to end users of libraries thereby leading to proper identification, selection and use of library resources.

7. CONCLUSION

It was also among the findings of this research work that user education program have greatly impacted and influenced the students in utilization of library resources, this was also in agreement with Walter (2005) who reported that several scholars have posited that user education is the second most important role of the librarian in the development of any institution, irrespective of level, size or specialization. Also Katz (2009) asserted that, it is through user education that the library has on a given subject, on a given title, on a given author or a given literature. Katz (2009) also stated that it is through user education that a library user is taught on how information resources in the libraries are organized. Lack of organization hinders accessibility and utilization of information resources in the libraries. Furthermore, Rithstern (1999) stated that “it is not always good for librarians to be intelligent guide posts, but to point the road to users, on how to exploit and use the library resources is the business of users”. By this, it implies that user education should be given to users on how to access and utilize information resources in the library on their own without depending solely on the librarians.

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