



Article

Information Resources and Services as Correlate of Library use by Students of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

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Abstract

This study investigated information resources and services as correlate of utilization of the library among undergraduate students. The study adopted a correlational design. Five research questions were raised and two hypotheses were formulated for the study. The study was carried out in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (IAUE), Rivers State, Nigeria. The population of the study consisted of 811 of registered undergraduate library users, out of which a sample of 270 was drawn using Taro Yamane's Statistical Formula. The instrument used for data collection was the questionnaire. Data were analyzed using the Percentages and mean and Spearman's Rank Correlation. The result revealed that information resources available in the library studied have a significant relationship with students library use and that services are provided to students in the library to a high extent, that statistically, a significant relationship exists between library services and students' use of the library. Recommendations include: increased acquisition of periodical literature, improved funding of the library, provision of infrastructure for a-hitch free use of internet services and enhanced student's information search skills.

Keywords: Information Resources, Library Services, Library use, Academic Libraries, Higher Education.

Introduction

The supporting role of the academic library in higher education is well-acknowledged. Higher education is offered in institutions of higher learning, especially the university, to equip men and women with adequate knowledge for maximum impact in the life of the society. The realization of this broad aim is highly dependent on use of the resources of the library. This is because the library stocks an array of materials from which the student is expected to source knowledge beyond the lecturers' capacity to impart in the classroom. It is therefore imperative that students who wish to gain maximally from the opportunity of higher education use the library extensively. Libraries must encourage this use by ensuring the provision of relevant information resources and services.

Information resources are the materials containing the myriads of information that the student requires to build and enrich his knowledge. They may be in print or non-print format such as textbooks, journals, newspapers, encyclopedias, biographies, technical report literature, films, and computers. These constitute the basic resources for service delivery in the library. The extent of their availability could influence the students' use of the library.

Library services are those offered to enhance the users' benefit from the resources of the library. They include user education, reference services, loan service, inter-library loan service, internet service, current awareness service and reprographic service. The level of adequacy of these services could be a factor in the use of the library. Library use is contextually defined in this paper as the intentional consultation of library resources for information to enhance the students' academic pursuit.

This study is an effort to determine the pattern of relationship that exists between information resources available in the library and students' library use on one hand, and services provided and students' library use, on the other.

Statement of the Problem

It is desirable that undergraduates utilize the resources of academic libraries in order to gain adequate knowledge and achieve academic excellence. Hence, the need to put in place those factors that could motivate their use of the library. It becomes absolutely necessary therefore, to ascertain those factors in relation to students' use of the library. The questions are: Does the extent of availability of information resources relate with students' library use? Does the level of services provided relate with students' library use? Absence of empirically valid answers to these questions is the gap in knowledge which this study hopes to fill.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. find out the information resources available in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Library.
2. find out the library services offered in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Library
3. determine the extent of students' use of information resources in the library.
4. determine the relationship between information resources available in the library and extent of students' use of the library.

5. ascertain the relationship between library services provided and extent students' use of the library.

Research Questions

In line with the objectives, the following research questions are posed:

1. what are the information resources available in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Library?
2. What are the services offered in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Library?
3. What is the extent of students' use of information resources in the library?
4. What is the relationship between information resources available in the library and extent of students' use of the library?
5. What is the relationship between services offered and extent of students' use of the library?

Hypotheses

Two hypotheses are formulated for this study to be tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between the availability of information resources and students' use of the library.
- Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between the services provided and students' use of the library.

Literature Review

Information Resources and Utilization

The quality of an institution as an instrument of higher learning is contingent upon its library. Ajayi and Adetayo (2005) posit that the philosophy of librarianship is based on the concept of library service and provision of relevant materials to users. The effectiveness of a library as a facility for learning is determined by its rate of success in providing the users with the information they seek. The purpose of the university library is to provide adequate and relevant information resources both in print and non-print formats (Quadri, Adetiminri and Idowu, 2014). Information resources are a fundamental part of infrastructure that enables the smooth operation of library activities directed towards the satisfaction of users' needs. Popoola and Haliso cited in Okiki (2013) define information resources as those information-bearing materials that are in both print and electronic formats, such as textbooks, journals, indexes, abstracts, newspapers and magazines, reports, CD-ROM databases, the internet, video tapes/cassettes, diskettes, magnetic disks, computers and microfiches. These information materials are the raw materials that libraries acquire, organize, stock, and make available to their patrons. Similarly, Aliyu (2006) states that information resources consist of a variety of materials in which information could be stored, retrieved and disseminated for use. It is the use to which the library is put that infuses life into its resources and services. Effective use of library will assist students, researchers and other library patrons achieve the goal of their academic pursuit. Supporting this view, Quadri et al. (2014) state that information materials in both print and non-prints are to support students' assignments, project works, term papers and seminar

presentations by providing relevant information.

Students in tertiary institutions utilize the library for information materials to assist and guide them for research and other academic related purposes. Information utilization is the actual putting into appropriate use of acquired information to achieve intended objectives. It is therefore, pertinent that users' information needs be understood in order to provide corresponding services to enhance library use. In line with this, an evaluative study of information resources and services conducted by Bitagi and Garba (2014) revealed that inadequate funding of the libraries was one of the factors militating against the provision and utilization of information resources and services. Inadequate and out-dated information materials to meet the demand for current research due to the high cost of information resources and related problems account for underutilization of resources by undergraduate students in the library. Bitagi and Udoudoh (2013) argue that the availability of all forms and types of information resources in academic libraries is highly imperative if these libraries are to meet with the information needs of researchers in their parent institutions which in turn will encourage their use. Furthermore, Chimah and Nwokocha (2013) submit that a quantum of information resources is available in libraries and information centres facilitated by ICT, resulting in the challenge of accessibility to specific information needed for particular situations.

Library Services and Utilization

According to Hameed (2004), the goal of any library is to enable the user have access to the available resources and maximize

their usage. The means of accomplishing this is through the provision of efficient and effective library services. In academic libraries, these services are the various ways and means by which information professionals provide, organize, store, retrieve and disseminate information to users. Opara (2001) states that some library users are unaware of the wide range of services that academic libraries offer and therefore do not avail themselves of them. However, a study by Raza, Upadhyay and Noor (2011) revealed that most of the students studied were aware of their library resources and services and used them. Some of these services, according to Obi (2013) are user education, circulation and reference services. She further states that efforts must be made to encourage the use of the information materials in the libraries for the achievement of the libraries' basic aims, one of which is to better the academic lot of the undergraduate users. Uwa (2014) also identifies a significant number of services offered in the library to users as follows; answering user's reference query, user education, compilation of reading lists, compilation of bibliography, inter-library loan services, current awareness services, routing of periodicals, Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), publication of current contents, library extension services, photocopying/printing services, etc. Few of these services will be discussed briefly for the purpose of this study.

User Education: There cannot be a connection between the user and the resources in the library without proper education on library use given to the user who may not have any prior knowledge or basic idea on the use of such resources. Therefore, the academic library has a role in ensuring that its resources are maximally utilized by its users without much stress,

hence, the need for user education programme. User education is a process by which library users are adequately assisted through instruction to make maximum use of library resources. User education is an academic programme that is designed by universities and other higher institutions to educate library users on how to effectively utilize library resources and services which can be formal and informal (Esse, 2014). Obi (2013) further states that user education comes in two levels namely: the library orientation which is the introduction of newly admitted students to the library, and, the use of library programme which is a well-planned in-depth programme provided by the library. This is much more formal in the sense that it is an organized form of teaching the users the essentials of library use by the librarians. It cannot be denied that proper use of the library can bring about improvement in the academic performance of the students.

Reference Service: Reference service is a crucial library service performed in the reference unit. This unit is charged with the responsibility of providing personalized guidance to library users in locating and accessing appropriate information resources or materials to meet their needs. Reference service refers to a variety of activities associated with personal assistance to library users including selection, liaison activities, bibliographic instruction and the implementation of electronic products. It also indicates a direct librarian/user interaction which takes place in some physical service points, typically the reference desk. Edoka (2000) states that reference services are the personal assistance given by a librarian to an individual in search of information for whatever purpose as well as various library activities deliberately designed to facilitate easy availability of information.

According to Schement (2002), reference librarians are variously referred to as 'mediators between the user and the information', and 'navigators of information superhighway'. Reitz (2004) opines that reference services are all the functions performed by a trained librarian employed in the reference section of a library to meet the information needs of the patrons (in person, by telephone, or electronically), including but not limited to answering substantive questions, instructing users in the selection and use of appropriate tools and techniques for finding information, conducting searches on behalf of the patron, directing users to the location of library resources, assisting in the evaluation of information, referring patrons to resources outside the library when appropriate, keeping reference statistics and participating in the developing of the reference collection.

Circulation Services - The beauty of library operations is not only in the ability to provide needed and useful materials containing information for the community, but also in being able to make them accessible to the clientele as and when needed. The circulation unit is responsible for charging and discharging library books, necessarily done by a qualified competent librarian that has good communication and human relation skills and a friendly disposition in order to ensure maximum use of the library. This unit plays a vital role as it is the first port of call in any library. It portrays the image of the library. This is why the staff in charge are regarded as the image makers of the library.

A library circulation service comprises the activities around the lending of library books and other materials to users. Edoka (2000) submits that the possibility of borrowing one information item or the other

is a major service that attracts many people to the library. He further states that the circulation or lending department has the responsibility of making most of the information resources in the library available to users. Obi (2013) lists the duties performed in this unit as; causes books to be shelved constantly, recalls overdue books, keeps statistics of books borrowed, files catalogue cards, keeps records of daily users or clients, registers library users etc.

Reprographic Service – The most visible reprographic service offered in most Nigerian libraries is photocopying. Photocopying allows users to duplicate for private use, library materials or books that may not be easily borrowed from the library. No single library all over the world has the capacity of stocking all the required information resources; hence libraries inter-borrow materials and duplicate same by photocopying. Nicholson (1989) opines that the introduction of electrostatic photocopying has transformed the intellectual transmission of information and knowledge. The duplication of limited materials as provided by library staff is usually done on commercial basis but at a subsidized rate. This has helped in prolonging the lifespan of library books as theft and mutilation are highly reduced. Availability of photocopying service in the library encourages library use by the students. Notwithstanding this, a study by Sambo, Aghojare and Ahutu (2016) revealed that the reprographic service in their studied library was affected by lack of spares and consumable materials, lack of technical knowhow, insufficient equipment and funds, and lack of air conditioner, inadequate space among others.

Current Awareness Service (CAS) – This is another important service offered in academic libraries in recent times. This service is primarily aimed at alerting and furnishing students, researchers, scholars, and other users with current information relevant to their research. It provides awareness to users on new acquisitions in the library collection that may be of interest to them. This service is particularly useful to researchers and students keen in updating their knowledge in subjects of their interest.

From the discussion above, it is clear that services provided in the library promote library use by students.

Methods

The study was conducted using a combination of descriptive survey and correlation designs. Descriptive survey was necessary since the researchers sought data on the information resources available, services provided, and extent of students' use of the studied library. Correlation was apt since the main thrust of the study was to determine the relationship among the independent variables and the dependent variable. The sample for the study was 270, drawn from 811 registered users of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Library in the 2017/2018 academic session. The instruments used for data collection was a researchers – made questionnaire patterned in the Likert-type rating scale. The questionnaire was structured in two sections. Section 1 had two clusters, A and B developed to elicit data on the independent variables (Information Resources and Library Services, respectively); Section 2 featured items on the dependent variable (Students' Library Use). Mean and standard deviation, as well Spearman Rank Correlation were used to answer the research questions as applicable

while hypothesis were tested at 0.05 alpha level, using p-value statistical techniques.

Data Analysis: Data were analyzed based on the research questions. For research questions 1, 2, and 3, mean scores of the rated items were used for analyses. On a 4-

point scale, 2.5 was regarded as the decision point; thus, mean scores less than 2.5 were low while mean scores equal to, or greater than 2.5 were high. Research questions 4 and 5 were answered using the Spearman Rank Correlation.

Information Resources Available in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Library

Table 1: Information Resources Available

	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean	Std Deviation
Textbooks	227	39	3	1	270	3.82	0.437
Reference materials	168	74	21	7	270	3.49	0.75
E-resources	168	71	23	8	270	3.48	0.775
Journals	144	81	31	14	270	3.31	0.871
Audio-visual materials	107	96	8	29	270	3.04	0.984
Serials	89	94	52	35	270	2.88	1.015
Periodicals	82	89	77	22	270	2.86	0.947
Grand Mean						3.27	0.767

Table 1 shows the range of information resources available in the studied library. Evidently, textbooks are the most available information resources, accounting for a mean of 3.82 and a standard deviation of 0.437. The next most available information resources are reference materials, with a mean score of 3.49 and standard deviation of 0.075. Interestingly, e-resources make it

as the third most available, with a mean of 3.48 and a standard deviation of 0.775. Periodicals are the least available, having a mean score of 2.86 and a standard deviation of 0.947. On the whole, the mean score of the information resources available in the studied library is 3.27 while the standard deviation is 0.767.

Services Offered in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Library

Table 2: Library Services

	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean	Std Deviation
Reference service	204	53	11	2	270	3.7	0.581
Internet service	194	47	18	11	270	3.57	0.791
Inter library loan	186	52	26	6	270	3.55	0.759
Loan service	134	70	29	37	270	3.11	1.069
Current Awareness service	102	111	42	15	270	3.11	0.864
Reprographic service	77	113	41	39	270	2.84	0.997
Grand Mean						3.31	0.797

Table 2 shows the services of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Library as reference service, loan service, interlibrary loan service, internet service, current awareness service (CAS) and reprographic service. With a mean of 3.7 and a standard deviation of 0.581, reference service is rated the highest service provided in the library, while reprographic service is the lowest

with a mean score of 2.84 and a standard deviation of 0.997. The library offers a high internet service as attested to by a 3.57 mean score and a standard deviation of 0.791. In summary, a grand mean score of 3.31 and standard deviation of 0.797 indicate a high level of services offered in the studied library.

Extent of students' use of information resources in the library

Table 3: Extent of Students' use of Information Resources in the Library

	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	N	Mean	Std Deviation
Textbooks	221	22	18	9	270	3.69	0.742
Reference materials	197	50	20	3	270	3.63	0.67
E-resources	186	57	25	2	270	3.58	0.689
Journals	172	53	36	9	270	3.44	0.846
Serials	98	85	52	35	270	2.91	1.034
Audio-visual materials	96	84	51	39	270	2.88	1.054
Periodicals	58	78	60	74	270	2.44	1.109
Grand Mean						3.22	0.75

Table 3 presents the students' rating of their use of the various information resources in the studied library. It shows that textbooks, with a mean score of 3.69 and standard deviation of 0.742, are the most used information resources, followed by reference materials (mean score, 3.63 and standard deviation, 0.67). Electronic

resources are also highly used as indicated by a mean score of 3.58 and standard deviation of 0.689. The least used are periodicals with a mean score of 2.44 and standard deviation of 1.109. The overall mean score and standard deviation for extent of students' use of the library are 3.22 and 0.75, respectively.

Relationship between information resources available in the library and students' use of the library

Table 4: Relationship between information resources available in the library and students' library use

Variables	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Correlation Coefficient	P-value
Information Resources Available	270	3.27	0.767	0.802	0.000
Library Use	270	3.22	0.75		

The result in Table 4 reports the relationship that exists between the types of information

resources available in the library studied and students' library use. The study has shown

that the information resources available in the library studied has a significant relationship with students' library use as their p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 significance level. The study also discloses that the correlation coefficient reports about 0.802 which indicates that the study could only account for about 80.2% level of

relationship between available information resources and students' library use. Based on this result, the null hypothesis 1 is rejected and the alternative accepted, therefore concluding that there is a significant relationship between the information resources available and student's use of the library.

Relationship between services provided and students' use of the library

Table 5: Relationship between services provided and students' use of the library

Variables	N	Mean	Standard Correlation		
			Deviation	Coefficient	P-value
Library Services	270	3.31	0.797	0.968	0.000
Library Use	270	3.22	0.75		

The result in Table 5 reports the relationship that exists between the level of library services available in the library studied and student's library usage. The study has shown that the level of library services provided in the library studied have a significant relationship with students' library usage as their p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 significance level. The study also revealed that the correlation coefficient

reports about 0.968 which indicates that the study could only account about 96.8% level of relationship between library services and students' library usage. Based on this result, the null hypothesis 2 is rejected and the alternative accepted, therefore concluding that there is a significant relationship between the library services available and students' use of the library.

Discussion

Information resources and services in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Library.

The study found that textbooks are the most available information resources in the studied library followed by reference materials, while periodicals are the least available. E-resources are also highly available. The high presence of e-resources

in the library is a good development, being in line with global trends. More users are

transiting from manual to electronic information search; thus the high availability of e-resources in the Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Library is an indication that the library has adjusted to modern information services. E-resources facilitate speedy and easy access to information as well as permit simultaneous use from different locations. It is not surprising that textbooks and reference materials are still the most available information resources in the studied library. These are the basic resources that students require for their studies. Their use is not affected by power failure and hence their preference by many students. However, the low availability of periodicals is worrisome. Periodicals are a source of current

information and thus, should be well-stocked for students' use. Their limited presence in the studied library may be due to paucity of funds. In an evaluative study of information resources and services in academic libraries, Bitagi and Garba (2014) reported that inadequate funding of libraries is one of the key factors militating against the provision of information resources.

It is commendable that reference service is still top of the list of services offered in IAUE library. By its nature, reference service enhances students' confidence to use the resources of the library. Equally commendable is the high rating of internet service availability in the library. This should be sustained as modern information service is internet driven. Finally, reprographic service is reported low in IAUE library. This seems to agree with the finding by Sambo, Aghojare and Ahutu (2016) that the reprographic section of the Federal University of Petroleum Resources Effurun Library did not offer most services expected. They also reported that services of the reprographic section were affected by lack of spares and consumables, lack of technical know-how, insufficient equipment and funds, lack of air conditioner and inadequate space, among others. The low level status of reprographic service in the library studied should be redressed in the light of the benefits of the service, especially, photocopying to both the library itself and users. As stated by Nicholson (1989), the introduction of electrostatic photocopying has transformed the intellectual transmission of information and knowledge, hence, enhancing the use of the library by students.

Information Resources and Library Use

A major finding of the study is that a significant relationship exists between information resources available and

students' use of the library. This finding lends credence to Bitagi and Udoudoh's (2013) view that availability of all forms and types of information resources in academic libraries is highly imperative to encourage their use. It also lends credence to the assertion by Neelameghan (1981), that availability and accessibility are prerequisites for information utilization. The result supports an earlier finding by Oluwatobi, Ehioghae, Aruko-Arowolo and Ayoola (2014) that the relationship between postgraduate students' accessibility and use of library resources in Babcock University was positive at $P > 0.01$ significance. Information resources available and quality of services were the reasons for which the postgraduate students of Babcock University used the library.

Library services and Library use

The study found that there is a significant relationship between the services provided in the library and students' use of the library. The result shows that reference service, loan service, interlibrary loan service, internet service, current awareness service (CAS) and reprographic service are all services provided in the studied library. Although Opara (2001) observed that many students are unaware of the wide range of services that academic libraries offer and therefore do not avail themselves of them, this appears not to apply to most students of the Ignatius Ajuru University of Education as they are aware of the services and use them. However, the result of a study by Ashaver and Bem-Bura (2013) shows a negative perception of the library services rendered as a result of the poor attitude of library staff toward the students. This means that the library staff have a lot to do to encourage students' patronage.

Conclusion

Academic libraries will continue to be pillars of support to their parent institutions saddled with the responsibility of human capacity building. A measure of their impact is the extent to which students utilize their resources to meet their information needs. Provision of information resources and services are variables that influence the pattern of students' use of academic libraries. Therefore, academic libraries must ensure the availability of adequate resources and services to encourage students' use of the library.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are hereby made, based on the findings of the study.

1. Management of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (IAUE) Library should make provision for

increased acquisition of periodical literature.

2. The university management should provide basic infrastructure to facilitate a hitch-free use of the electronic resources of the library.
3. Reprographic services should be improved upon by the library management.
4. The funding authorities should beef up financial allocation to the library to enable it acquire the necessary information materials and render effective services.
5. Students should take personal responsibility to enhance their information search skills to enable them maximize the use of both print and e-resources provided for them in the library.

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