



EFFECTS OF INFORMATION LITERACY SKILLS ON THE UTILISATION OF LIBRARY INFORMATION RESOURCES AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN KANO STATE

BY

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ABSTRACT

Studies have found that, apart from lack of basic information literacy skills on the part of the students, there are problems emanating from the management such as dearth of information resources, lack of adequate reading space, bad policy, etc. which could impede on undergraduate students' use of information resources. There is the need for an investigation into the nature of this problem among Nigerian students. This study therefore, investigates legitimacy of information literacy skills (ILS) and the use of information resources by researchers. Undergraduate students of universities in Kano State were used as the population for the study. The objectives include to find out understanding about ILS among the undergraduate students and to determine the level of utilization of information resources by undergraduate in universities in Kano State. Quantitative method data was employed and analysed using inferential statistics through Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The study revealed that majority of the students has high level of information literacy skills and utilization of information resources. The study also found them use information resources for their academic activities to a greater extent. The study concludes that despite the challenges faced by these students, their information literacy skills are high. The study recommends the need to make libraries comfortable and more convenient to make them more interesting places to the students. Sensitization on the use of ILS to students is also recommended for the improvement of their academic pursuit.

Keywords: - Information literacy skills, Utilization of information resources, Universities



Introduction

Information literacy is an essential component of a successful academic career (Oakleaf & Owen, 2017). Students who lack these skills experience delays and frustration when attempting to complete course-related work which requires research. The ability to locate information is necessary for quality research. Investigation about the veracity of the information literacy skills (ILS) for the students and other scholars is vital in supporting the information usage wisely. Information is an essential ingredient in work performance of universities worldwide. It has become the most important element for progress in society. To thrive in this modern era, one need to be information literate no matter how well one is in a field or profession. As this time, people are living in the information age where education heavily depends on the creation, collection, storage, retrieval and dissemination of information resources. Issa, Amusan and Daura (2018) asserted that undergraduate students need some level of information literacy skills to make decisions about academic matters and other aspects of their daily lives. As the use of e-resources continues to soar, users are expected to develop information literacy skills. These skills, as Julien (2017) observed will enable users to make efficient and effective use of information sources. Julien further identified the skill domains that are involved and classified them as cognitive, affective, and physical, i.e., thought, attitude, and operation.

Omosekejimi, Eghworo and Ogo (2015) are of the view that despite several advantages of electronic information resources and its positive effect on students' academic performance in universities, many university students are yet to harness the opportunities provided by these initiatives due to inadequate facilities or lack of maintenance culture and even where these facilities are in place, the potential users of these new information sources are not making use of the valuable information resources owing to lack of awareness or lack of skills required to navigate the bulk of information resources. Unomah (2014) mentioned that acquisition of information literacy knowledge, skills and competencies among information users is a fundamental issue because competent information users are empowered and enabled to become competitive in using information in the global information age. It is required that every researcher in institutions of higher learning should be in position to evaluate information, formulate search strategies, locate the right information resources and make effective use of the available information. Information literacy is essential in broadening understanding of subject matter.

The objective of developing ILS and knowledge is to find, access and use information effectively, which evolved in the early 1970s. It has grown, taken dimensional shapes and strengthened to become recognized as the critical literacy for the 21st century (Bruce, 2008). Library and Information Science (LIS) professionals have been in the forefront of teaching students the skills and knowledge needed to find, access and effectively use information as well as serving as information providers. As their environments and the academic libraries changed, abilities to find, access and effectively use information also changed and broadened. Such study became necessary in order to provide insight into the awareness level of the researchers towards the available information resources and to ascertain their ILS, as well as the level of utilization of information resources.



Statement of the Problem

Locating information source in the library is not an easy task as it may seem, as one is required to have the skills in locating the information source and how to use it properly, which calls for ILS. However, observation had revealed that some researchers in Nigerian universities lack such basic skills as locating books and journals from the shelves in libraries, using table of contents, indexes, reference sources, Library's catalog, and retrieving information from Internet. Therefore, this study set out to determine the literacy skills levels of contemporary researcher with particular reference to undergraduate students of universities in Kano State. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- a. determine the level of understanding ILS among the undergraduate students in the universities in Kano State; and
- b. find out the frequency of usage of available information resources among the students.

Review of Related Literature

In recent years, there have been a number of changes in the tertiary education sector in Nigeria and in particular, academic institutions. The flood of information resources has tremendously transformed information -handling and management in Nigerian academic environments, and university libraries in particular (Ani, Okon & Ahiauzu, 2018). Julien (2017) observed that information literacy is the ability to make efficient and effective use of information sources, and that an information literate person today should possess specific online searching skills, which include the ability to select appropriate search terminology, construct a logical search strategy, and evaluate information appropriately. Also, it entails individuals' ability to know when there is need for information, how and where to get the information and using such information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose. Information literacy will improve students' learning and information seeking abilities as students can search, find, locate, evaluate, use, communicate and exchange information to attain set objectives (Abilock, 2015). A skilled information user is better equipped for the use of different library and information systems to seek and use information for present and future needs. This may not be said to be the case with a user who does possess the requisite information literacy skill.

Studies on the frequency of use of information resources have been carried out around the globe. Many of these studies have come up with differing findings regarding frequency of utilization of information resources by undergraduate students (Frank, 2015). Bhatti et al. (2013) carried out a study on students of Department of Library and Information Science of Islamic University of Bahawalpur on Pervasiveness and purpose of information resources usage. The findings show that students make more use of books compared to theses, journals, project reports and other information resources. ILS and awareness of information resources work together in higher education. For students to use information resources, they must be aware of information resources through information literacy programme, which in turn make them to acquire the skills to identify their information need, search, evaluate and use information resources for their learning and research and to update their knowledge. On the other hand, the use of information resources highly depends on the awareness of the available information resources and ILS of students in higher education.

The relationship between information literacy and use of information resources cannot be overemphasized. Information seeking strategy for example is one vital tool students can use to identify, locate and retrieve information resources in the library. Sometimes, the information will be available but using it becomes a problem. Often, students Google information from the Internet but could not sieve the



information and put it to the right use, showing the students' lack of ILS (Raghuveer & Kalyan, 2015). A look at these studies with their conflicting findings, it has become even more necessary to carry out a research that will bring new evidence on the effects of students' ILS and the use of information resources. Moreover, all these studies were carried out in some distant locations from Kano State. This study was therefore carried out to determine the relationship between students' ILS and use of information resources to fill the gap left by the available literature.

Methodology

The study used quantitative method through survey research approach of data collection and critical analysis. The population comprised of nine thousand 9,542 300 level undergraduate students for the academic year 2016/2017 and two staff heading information resources units in each of the four universities studied. From this, a sample of 370 was drawn by applying Scott (2013) formulae for sample size determination. The data collected through the questionnaire was subsequently analyzed using the descriptive and inferential statistics with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 20.0.

Response Rate

A total of 370 copies of questionnaire were administered out of which 324 copies were returned representing 87.5%. This is considered adequate since the unreturned is very meagre compared to the returned ones.

Data Analysis

Level of Information Literacy Skills

Respondents were asked to indicate the level of their information literacy skills using the 4-point Likert Scale: SA=Strongly Agreed, A=Agreed, D=Disagreed and SD=Strongly Disagreed

Table 1: Level of Information Literacy Skills

Statement	A	U	DA
My general ability to locate information from a range of sources is very high	272 (83.8%)	50 (15.4%)	2 (0.7%)
My general ability to evaluate information resources is very high	245 (75.4%)	70 (21.5%)	9 (3.1%)
My general ability to use information resources is very high	256 (79%)	48 (14.8%)	20 (6.2%)

Table 1 presents undergraduates' perception of their general knowledge of information literacy, in which 272 respondents (83.8%) perceived their general knowledge of information literacy to be very high, 50 (15.4%) were undecided and finally, 2 (0.7%) believed that their general knowledge of information literacy is low.

From their responses, it could be deduced that undergraduate students' general knowledge of information literacy is high since in all three items "Agreed" recorded above 70%. This could be as a result of the ILS programmes offered to the undergraduate students in their various universities.



Utilization of Information Resources Utilization of Information Resources

One of the objectives of the study was to determine the level of utilization of information resources by the undergraduate students in universities in Kano state. This section focused on achieving that objective. Respondents were asked to indicate their frequency level of utilization of some information resources using “Always”, “Rarely”, and “Never”. Since using the information resources “always” indicates high level of usage, any information resources that 70-80% of the students used always is considered “very high”, score between 60-69% is “high”, 50-59 is “moderate”, while 0-49% is considered “low”. Their responses are presented in Table 2

Table 2: Level of Utilization of Information Resources

Information resources	Always	Rarely	Never
Lecture notes and Handouts	299 (92.3%)	15 (4.6%)	10 (3.1%)
Books	269 (82.9%)	43 (13.3%)	12 (3.7%)
Journals	224 (69.1%)	87 (26.9%)	13 (4.0%)
Reference sources	217 (66.9%)	65 (20.2%)	42 (13.0%)
Internet	275 (84.9%)	28 (8.6%)	21 (6.5%)
Theses\Dissertations	195 (60.1%)	69 (21.3%)	60 (18.5%)
Library catalogue	227 (70.1%)	71 (21.9%)	26 (8.0%)
E-journals	167 (51.6%)	82 (21.9%)	45 (13.9%)
E-books	178 (54.9%)	69 (21.3%)	31 (9.6%)
Electronic databases	198 (61.1%)	70 (21.6%)	56 (17.3%)
CD-ROM databases	195 (60.1%)	63 (19.4%)	66 (20.4%)
Directories	149 (45.9%)	116 (35.8%)	59 (18.3%)
Almanacs	156 (48.1%)	83 (25.7%)	85 (26.2%)

Responses of students in Table 2 revealed that majority 299 (92.3%), 269 (82.9%), 275 (84.9%), and 227 (70.1%) of the respondents were found to have utilize lecture notes and handouts, books, Internet, and library catalogue very high. The Table also indicated that more than half 224 (69.1%), 217 (66.9%) 195 (60.2%), 198 (61.1%), 224 (69.1%), 198 (61.1%), and 195 (60.1%) of the respondents have high utilization of journals, library catalogue, theses\dissertations, electronic databases, and CD-ROM respectively. Furthermore, the table revealed that another more than half 167 (51.6%), and 178 (54.9%) of the respondents have shown moderate level of the use of information resources. However, less than half 149 (45.9%), and 156 (48.1%) of the respondents have low utilization level of directories and almanacs. This mirrors that utilize lecture notes and handouts, books, Internet, and library catalogue were the most utilized information resources among undergraduate students in the universities.



Discussion of the Findings

The current study's findings revealed that majority of the undergraduate students have high level of information literacy skills from their responses to the questions relating to information literacy skills. The study found that students demonstrated good skills in defining their information needs, devising strategies to locate and access information, evaluate and synthesize as well as use information resources. This finding corroborates Haruna and Mabawonku (2013) who also found that information literacy skills of undergraduate students in Nigerian federal universities were high. It also corroborates with Kimani (2014) who reported that undergraduate students have high level of competency in information literacy skills. The finding is also consistent with the result of Mas'ud (2015) on information literacy skills by postgraduate students which found that his respondents possess a good number of information literacy skills. The result of this study also corroborate the finding of Osaheni, Oshiotse and Momoh (2016) on their study that investigated the Awareness and Utilization of Information Resources by Students of Benson Idahosa University Benin City, Edo State Nigeria and concluded that their respondents have high level of information literacy skills.

The study also found that utilization of information resources by undergraduate student is very high. It founds also that handouts, books, and journal are the most utilized information resources. This finding is in line with Bhatti et al. (2013) who reported that students make more use of books compared to theses, journals, project reports and other information resources. It is also in line with Aminu (2014) who found high level of utilization of information resources by the undergraduate students in a study on undergraduate students in Federal University, Kashere, Gombe State. Likewise, the result of this study is consistent with finding of Karunarathna (2014) who investigated the Use of Information Resources by Law Degree Students at Anuradhapura Regional Centre of the Open University of Sri Lanka and found that majority (93%) of their respondents use information resources their academic activities. The finding of this study also supports the study of Nomambulu (2013) that focused on the use and value of the library's resources by academic staff and postgraduate students in two departments (Electrical, Electronic and Computer Engineering and Mechanical Engineering) in the Faculty of Engineering at Cape Peninsula University of Technology. The study found that the respondents frequently use the information resources provided by their libraries.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study concludes that majority of the undergraduate students have high skills in information literacy. This is because more than half of them demonstrated through their responses high level information literacy skills. However, majority of them do not use their information literacy skills to utilize the available information resources for academic purposes. Therefore, the study recommends that:

1. these libraries be made comfortable and more convenient to make them more interesting places to be visited by the students;
2. efforts should be intensified towards enhancing the students' ILS since it was found to have statistically significant relationship with the use of available information resources in the university library. More efforts should be laid on the information literacy programmes offered by the universities as more can be done to improve on them so as to enable the students to effectively use the information resources available in their universities;



3. the students should be encouraged to reduce their heavy reliance on handouts and lecture notes and explore more other information resources for effective learning. Also that they should not only wait until examination is approaching before start using the information resources.

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