THE EFFECTS OF LIBRARY EDUCATION ON INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to investigate barriers encountered by fresh students in seeking information and the extent to which library user education can help in improving their information seeking behaviour at the University of Ibadan. The actual utilization of resources in the library remains inconsistent, low and unsatisfactory. Considering that low utilization of library resources undermines the huge investment on library resources and personnel retention, this study has examined the barriers encounter by students in information seeking and the extent to which library orientation can help in improving information seeking behaviour of first year undergraduate students at the University of Ibadan. Survey research design was adopted for the study. Using a systematic sampling technique, a total of 230 first year students drawn from six faculties participated in the study. Results show that majority of first year students participated in use education in KDL but encounter information seeking challenges in the library. Because of poor perception of the library which makes them doubt the ability of the library to meet their information needs. The study suggests that effective utilization of academic library resources is dependent on perceived availability of relevant information materials, proper understanding of the products and services offered by the library and user's ability to utilize information retrieval tools and systems. The study therefore recommends a holistic approach to library orientation in colleges and universities in order to promote student's library utilization and build up their information seeking capacity.

Keyword*:* Library education, Information literacy, Library users' Assessment, Information seeking behaviour

Introduction

A library as an information system is concerned with the collection, processing, storage and dissemination of recorded information for the purpose of reading, studying and consultation. As a major infrastructure for effective teaching, learning and research, academic library is an indispensable component of the university system. While scholars need access to information materials in various forms, the long-established role of the library has been to expand their access to published information for appropriate retrieval and use. Providing effective information services in support of teaching, research and community service mandates of universities in recent years, has necessitated the acquisition of information in diverse formats and the application of appropriate retrieval tools and techniques to enhance information services

delivery to the university community. The emergence of information in diverse formats has turned libraries into complex information systems thus provoking new possibilities and challenges for facilitating access and equity for all staff and students.

As libraries move their focus from print collections to digital resources, it is important for librarians to think about how to ensure that users continue to use and value libraries. Kadli & Kumbar (2013) have discussed the changing relationship between libraries and their users in the changing environment. According to the authors, it is not sufficient to provide useful, high quality and innovative library resources and services, the acid test of their success is whether they will be used frequently. Among the challenges facing academic libraries as complex information systems is the urgent need to educate library users on the changing face of information resources, tools and techniques for retrieving information. Popoola (2001) declared that academic libraries should stimulate primary demand for their products and services as information availability do not mean accessibility and use. He further suggested factors that can likely influence the use of libraries as convenience, attention, awareness, and perception of value. Library education as a programme of instruction designed to introduce students to the library's wealth of resources and to strengthen their research skills.

According to Mohammadi, Moghaddam & Yeganeh (2008), learning, teaching and research activities in universities depend upon the library, and achievements in these scholarly activities are not possible without the library. They further emphasized that expenses for library resources are significant, and users should therefore be familiar with library materials and their applications. User education is a vital part of this process (Mohammadi, et al. 2008). Instruction in the use of the library is an important and effective aspect of user education. Furthermore, the volume of scholarly and scientific publications is very large, with about 1,000 new books and 9,600 periodical titles published daily in the United States alone, the amount of available information is too large for anyone to access all materials and use. Therefore, users must be able to discriminate and select. Selection is not possible without sufficient knowledge. User education is necessary for the best use of information resources. Through library education users can acquire the requisite ability and skills to recognize, access, evaluate and utilize needed information. This is referred to as information literacy. Information literacy is a major subject in the field of library user education programs (Mohammadi, et al, 2008).

According to American Library Association (ALA), to be information literate, a person must be able to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information (Webber & Johnston, 2003). Kadli & Kumbar (2013) argued that the availability of both print and electronic access to information has gradually brought some major changes to human information behaviour, related sources and services and their use in all walks of life. They are of the view that such changes are significant in the sense that library and information professionals are now studying information seeking behaviour, and its place within the learning process. Borgman (2000) defines information seeking as a continuous process that involves active and passive behaviours, formal and informal communication. The cycle of creating, using and seeking information can be viewed as series of stages in which people move back and forth, and they may be actively creating, using and seeking information concurrently. Therefore, information seeking behaviour refers to the pattern of response to the information needed by person or group of persons. It is used to summarise activities carried out by information seekers in order to access, evaluate, and utilize information resources in the library.

In a study of user education Mohammadi, et al, (2008) found that there is always a barrier between librarians and university library users (students). The library building and its different parts are barriers between patrons and the library. Therefore, familiarity with the library through user education may be crucial to the formation of viable information seeking habit among students. Students require information for various activities in the university. Information seeking is of critical value in the intricate and complex processes of research initiatives and execution. Kakai, Ikoja–Odongo, & Kigongo–Bukenya, (2004) revealed that the main information demands that led undergraduate students into seeking

information include: course work and assignments, preparation for examinations and tests, general reading to enhance lecture notes, and class–group discussions.

User Education at Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan

Library education at Kenneth Dike Library (KDL), University of Ibadan is part of university wide orientation which takes place at the beginning of every new academic year. It is organized by the Circulation Department of the KDL. User education programme entails giving essential information on library opening hours, print and electronic resources available, tools and technique for accessing information and a tour of the library facilities. It is expected that at the end of library education participants should be able to locate resources and services within the library, log on to library computers and search the library's website, use the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) and understand the basics of database searching.

From the professional stand point of what a library is, most secondary schools in Nigeria do not have befitting libraries consequently their students are not familiar with resources and services offered in standard libraries. Library education provides the essential guide to the understanding of the library. Without which, it is difficult for fresh students gaining admission into universities in Nigeria to understand and appreciate the use of libraries in higher institution of learning. Besides, the emergence of information in electronic formats and the use of search tools pose serious challenges to most university students. They lack adequate knowledge in front end infrastructure and the right of access due to remoteness of electronic information resources (Akande, 2003).

Statement of the Problem

Library education is adjudged effective means of familiarising users with the library services, enhancing information seeking behaviour and increasing library utilization. The ultimate goal of library education is customer retention, increase patronage and effective use of information resources. However in spite of the efforts placed at organizing library education to familiarize fresh students with the library resources and services at Kenneth Dike Library (KDL), University of Ibadan over the years actual utilization of resources in the library remains inconsistent, low and unsatisfactory. Noting from observation and from circulation statistics of the use of library resources, it is apparent that majority of undergraduate students rarely use library resources in the university library. This may be attributed to the complex nature of academic libraries, poor information seeking habit among students and lack of awareness about library products and services.

Considering the fact that library information resources are expensive, managing these resources and making them accessible are also costly in terms of recruitment, and retention, ineffective use of library resources should constitutes a source of concern to academic librarians as there is always the need to justify the essence of the academic library in the face of perceived alternatives and return on investment. This study which sought to establish the effects of library education on information seeking behaviour of first year student at the University of Ibadan, is significant in that it will help to identify barriers encounter by students in information seeking and the extent to which library education has help in improving information seeking behaviour of first year undergraduate students at the University of Ibadan. It will be useful in determining the effectiveness of library education in Nigerian universities. the objectives of the study were to:
1. find out fresh students' participation in user education in KDL, University of Ibadan;
2. identify barriers fresh students encounter in seeking information in the library; and
3. examine the effect of user education on fresh students' information seeking skill in KDL, University of Ibadan.

Literature Review

Information Seeking Behaviour

Information seeking behaviour is a broad term, which involves a set of actions that an individual takes to express information needs, seek, evaluate and select information, and finally use the information to satisfy his or her information needs (Majid & Kassim, 2000). A review of the literature on information seeking behaviour shows that information seeking has generally been accepted as dynamic and non-linear (Foster, 2005; Kuhlthau, 2006). Information seeking encompasses a range of activities inherent in the information seeker. People experience the information search process as interplay of thoughts, feelings and actions (Kuhlthau, 2006). Information-seeking behaviour or human information behaviour has been described by Kadli & Kumbar (2013) as a sub-discipline within the field of library and information science which focuses on how people need, seek, manage, give and use information in different contexts. It has also been described as an aspect of scholarly work of most interest to academic librarians who strive to develop collections, services, and organizational structures that facilitate information seeking (Wiberley & Jones, 1989).

Information seeking is a basic activity indulged in by all people and manifested through a particular behaviour (Kakai, et al., 2004). Gandhi (2012) describes information seeking behaviour as a micro-level of behaviour employed by the searcher in interacting with information system of all kinds, be it between the seeker and the system or the pure methods of creating and following up of a search. The concepts of information seeking, retrieval, and behaviour are objects of investigation in information science. Within this scientific discipline a variety of studies has been undertaken to analyze the interaction between individual and information sources in respect of their peculiar and specific information need, task, and context. The research models developed in these studies vary in their level of scope. Wilson (1999) therefore developed a nested model of conceptual areas, which visualizes the interrelation of the here mentioned central concepts. Wilson defines models of information behaviour as statements, often in the form of diagrams which describes an information-seeking activity, it causes and consequences in relation to information-seeking behaviour.

Weiler (2005) observes that the first model for study of information seeking behaviour in the general population was developed by James Krikelas in 1983. This model suggests the steps of information seeking as follows: (1) perceiving a need, (2) the search itself, (3) finding the information, and (4) using the information, which results in either satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Based on Krikelas' model, people begin to seek for information when they perceive that the current state of knowledge is less than that needed to deal with some issues. Information behaviour has been the subject of many studies in the last thirty years (Foster, 2005). The highlights of research on information behaviour include the Ellis (1989) behavioural model of information searching strategies, Kuhlthau's (1993) information search process, and Wilson's (1997) problem-solving model. Many others contribute to shape our general understanding of information seeking. Collectively these studies suggest that information seeking exists within context, and is a linear process consisting of stages and interactive activities (Foster, 2005).

These views are echoed in studies of specific contexts, such as interdisciplinary, which include Palmer (2001), and Spanner (2001). These principles form the foundation of much that is recognisable as information seeking behaviour theory. Most times students' information seeking behaviour involves active or purposeful information seeking as a result of the need to complete course assignments, prepare for class discussions, seminars, workshops, conferences, or write final year research papers. Fister (1992) notes that undergraduate students are smart people, but find the university library to be a threatening place and find the process of information researching intimidating. Unfortunately they do not learn the basic information skills. They end up using trial and error methods of research that limits their capabilities to satisfy their needs. Wilson's model notes that in the process of seeking information, problems are encountered. Harle (2010) asserts the need for creating awareness about library resources and services for effective utilization. Mellon (1986) noted that undergraduates encounter barriers like library anxiety.

Finding ways of intercepting the barriers to information seeking is one of the solutions to improving the students' information seeking behaviour. Martin and Metcalfe (2001) have acknowledged that libraries should promote products and services through current awareness services (CAS) and selective dissemination of information (SDI), either through print or electronic means. These are other user outreach avenues that could be optimally utilized in addition to traditional methods. Fister (1992) submitted that bibliographic instruction with assistance approaches should be adopted in solving students information seeking behaviour. Callison (1997) recommends increased efforts to expand instruction beyond the one–time lesson in introducing students to the library. Lau (2001) observed that although librarians had assumed the role of user information educators, however, teamwork was recommended to make library instruction part of the learning process. The publicity services provided in an information institution play a big role in influencing how its resources are utilized and how the users seek for information.

Library education and Information Behaviour

Creating positive perceptions of academic libraries can occur at more than just the reference desk or during library instruction (Rhoades & Hartsell, 2008). According to the authors, librarians can and should take advantage of other occasions to promote their libraries. Library orientations for fresh students provide an ideal opportunity for librarians to be more innovative and proactive in creating first impressions of library resources and services in students. When librarians get involved with orientation programs, positive interactions begin before students even start their first semester. Retention research has reveals that new student orientations are a good starting point for integrating students into their institutions (College Board, 2009). Orientation programs are designed to help students adjust to university life and ultimately improve use of the library, retention rates, graduation rates, and grade point averages (Rhoades & Hartsell, 2008). Librarians can make a difference in these students' lives (Dudley, 2011; Tenofsky, 2007), by teaching skills and competencies that an informed citizen of an information society ought to possess to participate intelligently and actively in that society. It includes the ability to know when there is a need for information, to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively use that information for the issue or problem at hand.

A successful library is one that informs users about resources and services and convinces them to use them (Block, 2001). Noel and Waugh (2002) opined that it is essential to create library services awareness to its users because it serves as an important factor in achieving academic success. Rhoades and Hartsell (2008), Alexander, Gaither and Tuckett (2000)'s reports have however described the University of Michigan Libraries' role in new student orientation, and discussed effective techniques for reaching students. Byerly (2006) examines the importance of these classes for establishing a foundation for students, stating that the library uses "this one-shot session to lay the foundations of information literacy by providing instruction on basic research skills, catalogue searching, database searching, and finding help from a librarian"(p.590)

Kakai, et al., (2004) defines information-seeking behaviour as an individual's way and manner of gathering and sourcing for information for personal use, knowledge updating, and development. Library education processes encompass a diverse range of activities covering the identification of existing information sources, keywords, and information tools and techniques for accessing and retrieving information, library opening and closing hours, disciplinary attitude require for maximum exploitation of information etc. In some ways library education performs many of the basic problem solving aspects. It focuses on identification and in which direction to look in searching for information. It follows therefore that library education if properly planned and implemented with the prospect of building and developing the latent information capacity of the target users, will encourage ultimately the exploitation of information irrespective of the formats in which it is embedded.

Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey method. The population for this study comprised all registered first year students of the University of Ibadan. Using a systematic sampling technique, a total of 230 students taken from six faculties: Education, Arts, Sciences, Pharmacy, Medicine and Technology participated in the study. The main instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire administered mainly during the teaching of General Studied (GES) 101: the "Use of Library" component of the "Use of English". The GES 101 is a compulsory course for all first year students in Nigerian universities. The questionnaire was divided into four (4) sections; Section A: sought to find out if students' participated in library education in KDL, Section B: sought to identify barriers/ challenges encountered by first year students in seeking information in KDL; and Section C: examines the effect of library education on their information seeking skills and Section. Out of 230 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 173(75%) were valid for data analysis and using statistical package for social science (SPSS), results were presented using simple percentage.

Data Analysis

Table1: Fresh Students' Participation in Library Education in KDL

Participation	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	157	91 %
No	16	09 %
Total	173	100 %

Result from Table 1 shows that an impressive majority (91%) of students participated in library education at Kenneth Dike library

Table 2: Information seeking challenges/ barriers encountered by fresh students in KDL
Identify and rate challenges/ barriers encountered in seeking information in Kenneth Dike library. **Greatest challenge =5, Greater challenge =4, Great challenge 3, Little challenge =2, No challenge =1**

N	Items	5	4	3	2	1
1	Use of Library Catalogue	16 (9.25%)	27 (15.61%)	57 (32.95%)	39 (22.54%)	34 (19.65%)
2	Use of Online Public Access Catalogue(OPAC)	53 (30.64%)	38 (21.97%)	33 (19.08%)	24 (13.87%)	25 (14.45%)
3	Accessibility to E-resources	38 (21.97%)	30 (17.34%)	49 (28.32%)	28 (16.18%)	28 (16.18%)
4	Library Location	20 (11.56%)	15 (8.67%)	17 (9.83%)	15 (8.67%)	106 (61.27%)
5	Staff-Users Relationship	16 (9.25%)	24 (13.87%)	33 (19.08%)	41 (23.70%)	59 (34.10%)
6	Lack of recent information resources	29 (16.76%)	23 (13.29%)	57 (32.95%)	39 (22.54%)	25 (14.45%)
7	Poor lighting of the Reading rooms	29 (16.76%)	33 (19.08%)	50 (28.90%)	34 (19.65%)	27 (15.61%)
8	Loaning System	17 (9.83%)	32 (18.50%)	62 (35.84%)	30 (17.34%)	32 (18.50%)
9	Seating Facilities	22 (12.72%)	26 (15.03%)	26 (15.03%)	36 (20.81%)	63 (36.42%)

10	Inadequate information searching Skills	57 (32.95%)	30 (20.81%)	39 (22.54%)	22 (12.72%)	19 (10.98%)

From the table it can be inferred that majority of fresh students encounter great challenges in the use of library catalogue, Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), electronic resources, and lack of recent information resources. Other challenges include; poor lighting of the library reading rooms, loaning system and inadequate information searching skills. However, the table indicates that the library location, seating facilities and staff-user relationship do not pose a challenge to users.

Table 3: Effects of Library Education on Information Searching Skills

As a result of Library user education in KDL, my information searching skill has improved to a:	Frequency	Percentage
Great extent	35	20.2%
Some extent	114	65.9%
No extent	10	5.8%
I don't know	14	8.1%
Total	173	100%

Table 3 reveals that to some extent library education programme has positive impact on the information seeking behaviour of majority 114(65.9%) of the respondents while 5.8% of the respondents claimed no effect on their information seeking behaviour. Fourteen (8.1%) respondents were undecided.

Discussion of the Findings

The study reveals that an impressive majority of students participated in library education in Kenneth Dike Library (KDL), University of Ibadan at the beginning of every section. The study has established that majority of fresh students encounter great challenges in the use of library retrieval tools, products and services. The study of Islam (2010) who found that more than half of the respondents occassonally or never used the library catalogue while only 8.97% used it to retrieve materials in the library supports the position of this finding on library retrieval tools. This finding is similar to (Nkamnebe, Udem & Nkamnebe, 2014; Larson & Owusu-Acheaw, 2012) who found that information resources availability for their programmes were inadequate. Other finding shows that the students lack adequate searching skills to explore information resources. This is in line with the study of Oyedapo & Ojo (2013) which shows that lack of information retrieval skills was identified among barriers to effective utilization of information resources. However, the study shows that majority of students do not encounter challenges in the library location and seating facilities (Hussain & Abalkhail, 2013) supported the findings. The study also found that staff-user relationship does not pose a major challenge to user. This finding corroborates the position of Larson & Owusu-Acheaw (2012) on library staff satisfaction.

The study reveals that library education programme has, to some extent, improved the information seeking behaviour of majority (149; 86.1%) of the respondents. In the same vein, Harle's 2010 study of four African Universities identified significant barriers to accessing and using resources and the need to continue raising awareness of what is available to researchers and academics was shown to be important. This has implication for academic libraries to continue to find new and innovative ways to disseminate all they have to offer. This shows that a comprehensive programme of library education will make more positive impact on information seeking behaviour as it will identify and resolves information seeking barriers encountered by students in the process of seeking information in the library. This findings support Kakai, et al., (2004) who state that finding ways of overcoming the barriers to information seeking is one of the solutions to improving the students' information seeking behaviour. This study therefore suggests that effective utilization of academic library resources is dependent on perceived availability of relevant information materials, proper understanding of the products and services

offered by the library and user's ability to utilize information retrieval tools and systems. The implication of this study is that library education can improve information seeking behaviour of academic library users if orientation is comprehensive, robust and organized regularly. This would enhance optimal use of the library resources and have positive return on investment.

Conclusion

The study has revealed undergraduate students participation in library education of the Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan. One major significant finding shows that undergraduate students were not satisfied with the library resources and services. As a result of perceived challenges and barriers associated with information seeking in the library, most students see the libraries as mere reading-rooms, and meeting points, hence their influx to the library. These challenges include the use of information finding tools such as catalogue and non- availability of information resources, lack of skills to search the library collections among others affect the use of the library by fresh students. These are considered as great barrier to effective utilization of Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made from the study:

1. Holistic approach to library education in universities in order to promote student's library utilization and build up their information seeking capacity.
2. Library education should be organized regularly.
3. Librarians should be assigned to specific faculty as academic/ library adviser
4. Students   should be taught different aspect of information literacy during library orientation
5. New information products and services should reflect in library education content
6. Library education packages should be reviewed and up-dated regularly to improve the students' awareness of information products and services, and strengthen their research capability

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