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UTILIZATION OF INFORMATION RESOURCES FOR EFFECTIVE RESEARCH IN THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR POLICY STRATEGIC STUDIES, KURU

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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the paper was to evaluate the utilization of information resources for effective research in the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Case study design was adopted for the study in which quantitative and qualitative strategies (mixed method) were employed in collecting data. Sixty-five (65) copies of questionnaire were administered to participants of Senior Executive Course 40 (2018). The questionnaires were duly completed and returned – giving a response rate of 100%. Ten (10) respondents (participants) were interviewed.

Findings: The study revealed that the information resources in the library comprised mostly books, participant's projects, study tour reports, concluding seminars, term papers, internal publications, and online databases. The study further revealed that government publications, journals (hard copies), CD-ROMs and offline database were inadequate. Other findings showed that information resources were effective in enhancing research; respondents were satisfied with the information resources for research endeavors. The challenges associated with the utilization of information resources for effective research included poor lighting, poor internet connectivity and inadequate information resources.

Originality/Value: The paper recommended that management of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies should provide better halogen lanterns: (bulbs or tubes) that will enhance the lighting in the library; engage in collaboration with corporate bodies such as National Information Technology Agency (NITDA), National Communication Commission (NCC) and the like, to improve the bandwidth in the Institute for better internet connectivity; increase budgetary allocation to the library to enable it subscribe to more electronic databases.

Key Words: Utilization, Information Resources, Effective Research, National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru

Background to the study

Information resources have now become a critical commodity in the development process of nations, groups and individuals globally. They are a necessary prerequisite in what is often referred to as “knowledge economy”, as this is what drives growth and development in today's global stage.

The information resources in libraries comprise of both print and non-print materials including books, journals (which are also available in e-format), pamphlets, artifacts, CD-ROMs, online data bases and many others. In other words, most libraries (especially in developed climes and some developing economies) maintain

hybrid collections of information resources, which include print and digital information resources.

The essence of information resources is for usage in areas such as learning, teaching and research. This explains why libraries universally attach importance to, not just accessibility of information resources but their utilization as well. This assertion is corroborated by Cox and Joardt, cited in Hussein (2003) that “use” is the only means that is adopted in determining the retention of a document in a library's collection.

The importance of information resources in research endeavors therefore cannot be overemphasized. The awareness of the

availability of information resources in libraries and the ability to search and obtain the contents therein adds value to the learning process of researchers (Kumar, 2017). Information resources are the consumables that researchers require to enable them conduct meaningful and useful researches in their bid to expand the frontiers of knowledge and provide solutions to numerous problems in the society. As Olutayo (2019) rightly observed, utilization of information resources is a way of integrating the information that has been harvested from information resources to broaden existing knowledge. According to the author, this entails the maximum usage of information resources for the purpose of solving problems and providing solutions to information needs.

The National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS) Kuru is Nigeria's apex 'think-tank' institution on policy matters; it serves as a Centre for reflection, dialogue and research for scholars and top technocrats drawn from a wide spectrum of the Nigerian society. The National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies therefore conducts courses for top policy makers and executors drawn from different sectors of the country with a view to expanding their outlook and perspectives and stretching their conceptual capacity and qualities of discernment and analysis, thereby helping to improve their overall performance in their different fields. In this regard, it organizes and carries out on an interdisciplinary basis, in-depth research into the social, economic, political, security, scientific, cultural and other problems facing Nigeria with a view to contributing to the search for solutions; it conducts seminars, workshops and other action oriented programmes for leaders and potential leaders in the public service, the private sector, political organizations, professional bodies and other groups with a view to promoting, defining and enhancing the appreciation for long-range national plans and objectives; and publishes books, journals, monographs and other materials in the interest of the nation as a contribution to knowledge and for a better national and international understanding (NIPSS Year book, 2020)

From the foregoing, it is obvious that the Institute is a research – based outfit that requires the relevant information resources that would enable it achieve its objectives and mandate of making Nigeria a better society

Statement of the Research Problem

The National Institute library, which is also called "Olusegun Obasanjo Library", is the hub of research and learning endeavors in the Institute. It contains a wealth of information resources which include books, journals, research reports, pamphlets, publications of government ministries, parastatals and agencies, video tapes, CD-ROMs, databases and many others. It provides services to its users who are mainly participants (students) and members of the faculty (research fellows, directing staff and other academic staff within the Institute), Scholars from outside the Institute are also allowed access to the information resources.

As comprehensive as these information resources appear to be, the question is, how effective are these information resources in enhancing learning and research endeavors in the Institute? How can the information resources be made more effective to enhance research and learning in the Institute so that participants and staff can fulfill the mandate of an apex National Think Tank? This paper is an attempt to provide answers to these questions and few others.

Research Questions

1. What is the nature of Information resources in the Library of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS)?
2. How effective are the information resources in enhancing research in NIPSS?
3. What are the challenges associated with utilization of information resources for effective research in NIPSS?
4. What recommendations could be proffered to enhance the utilization of information resources for effective research in NIPSS?

Literature Review

Ani (2013) investigated the effect of utilization of electronic resources by academic staff on productivity of university of Calabar and University of Ibadan in Nigeria. The findings of the study revealed that there is significant difference between accessibility and utilization of e – resources and productivity of academic staff in the sampled universities. There is low level of electronic information environment at the surveyed universities in relation to global practices; with university of Calabar more productive than the University of Ibadan etc.

Similarly, Hussein, Vashistha and Jimah (2013) examined the awareness and utilization of library information resources by users of NIMS County library, Jaspurn India. The findings revealed amongst others that: female respondents preferred the library more than their male counterparts and were less than 30 years of age; majority of the respondents reported that gazettes were not available; there was more usage of books, yearbooks, electronic journals, newspapers/magazines and internet/computers.

Adeboye (2015) investigated the availability, accessibility and utilization of information resources and services to prison inmates in North Central Nigeria. Survey method was adopted for the study and 220 samples used from a population of 2,288. The findings revealed that information resources and services were made available to inmates; books, newspapers and dictionaries respectively were the most available information resources; the available information services were exhibition and display, lending services and library orientation/users education. It also revealed that not all the listed resources and services were fully utilized by inmates; inmates have information needs that need to be satisfied through the provision of information resources.

Nwabueze and Urhewhu (2015) examined the availability and use of digital information resources by undergraduates of universities in Delta and Edo States in South-South geographical zone of Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. Questionnaire was administered to 1,088 respondents using purposive sampling

technique. The major findings of the study include: some digital information resources were available in the university libraries studied; students make use of digital information resources to a low extent; the challenges encountered by students in accessing digital information resources in the libraries studied were epileptic power supply, non-availability of online databases, lack of formal training in internet skills among students, slow bandwidth, network problems and server slowness.

In a related study, Buhari (2016) examined library information resources and services utilization as correlates of creativity of senior staff of polytechnics in Southwest Nigeria. The survey method was adopted for the study and random sampling technique was used in obtaining a sample of 302 (from 16 institutions out of 24 private and public polytechnics) out of a population of 421 senior administrative staff of the polytechnics studied in the geographical zone. The findings of the study revealed that: library information resources and services utilization had significant effect on the credibility of the respondents; library information resources usage was constrained by erratic power supply, inadequate information and communication technologies, poor maintenance culture, inadequate funding and low bandwidth of internet access.

Purposive stratified random sampling. The study found that there was significant multiple correlation among information needs, accessibility to library information resources, utilization of library information resources and psychological well-being of inmates ($r = 0.665$). Similarly, there was significant relationship between psychological well-being and accessibility to library information resources by prison inmates ($r = 0.45, p < 0.5$). The study also revealed that information resources and utilization of library information resources are very critical ingredients in determining the psychological well-being of inmates.

Igweburike and Agbo (2017) examined the strategies for effective utilization of library resources by distant education students in Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study, which used a population of 4,000 students and 12 librarians. Findings revealed

among others that: National Teachers' Institute (NTI) students use the library for the purpose of acquisition of knowledge, doing assignments and reading for examinations. It also revealed they had little or no knowledge on how to utilize library services; there was poor cataloguing and classification; the challenges in effective use of library resources were truncated due to the programme, inadequate number of staff, insufficient power supply, cost of materials like e-books and networks, and poor funding.

Kumar (2017) investigated the use of information resources and service available in the library by postgraduate students and research scholars of University of Agricultural Sciences, Dbarjandid, Pakistan. The study adopted the survey method in which questionnaire was administered in obtaining primary data from 455 respondents. Three hundred and eighty-six (386) questionnaires were completed and returned, giving a response rate of 86.2%. Interview was employed to augment data from the questionnaire. The study revealed amongst others that: authorities of Universities need to conduct user training programmes for better utilization of available ICT applications, e-resources, e-books, e-journals and e-databases etc.

According to Ani, Ngulube and Onyeoreha (2018) access to information is vital for effective research at Universities and that electronic resources provide new platforms for information to aid in conducting research at Universities. The study explored the perceived effect of accessibility and utilization of electronic resources on research productivity at Nigeria Universities. The study adopted a quantitative approach in which survey method was used. The study revealed that: accessibility and use of electronic resources had a significant perceived positive effect on research productivity of surveyed Nigerian Universities.

Ogugua et al (2019) x-rayed current changing needs to utilization of information resources in University libraries in Abia and Imo States, Nigeria. Survey research design was used for the study. The research adopted consensus method which was used to examine 394 registered users

from university libraries in Abia and Imo States, the findings revealed that there is significant relationship between Library publications and utilization of library resources ($\chi^2 = 272.32$ x 3 tab = 21.03); Current awareness Services and Utilization of library resources (χ^2 cal = 394.32 x 2 tab = 21.03) and notice boards and utilization of information resources (χ^2 cal = 472.12 x 2 tab = 21.03).

Olutoyosi and Abodunrim (2019) examined information needs and seeking behavior as correlates of utilization of information resources among secondary school students with special needs in Ibadan metropolis, Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design and used purposive sampling technique to select 112 students with special information needs. The findings revealed that there are wide significant differences between information needs and utilization $b = 0.010$, $t = 0.106$; $p = 0.0916 > 0.05$). Information needs propel utilization of information resources more than the information seeking behavior was found to be less significant on the utilization of information resources by secondary school students with special needs in Ibadan metropolis.

Methodology

This study adopted the case study research design. Both quantitative and qualitative strategies (mixed method) were employed in data collection. Sixty-five copies of questionnaire were administered to respondents who were participants of senior Executive course 40, 2018. 65 copies were duly completed and returned, giving a response rate of 100%. Ten participants were interviewed. Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) while qualitative data was analyzed descriptively. The data were analysed using inferential statistics – Simple Frequency Analysis. The result is presented in tables and figures to draw inferences on the phenomenon under investigation. The study scheduled a total 65 survey questionnaire to Senior Executive Course (SEC) Participants of Course 40, 2018 of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies. The result obtained 100% retrieval rate

as the entire number of the questionnaire administered was retrieved.

Findings

1.2 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section summarises the socio-demographic profile of respondents which include respondents' occupation, educational qualification and background, gender, age distribution and marital status. Figure 1.1 shows

occupation of respondents which include Civil Servant (Federal), 26%, Civil Servant (State) 20%, Army 10%, Air force 10%, Navy 6%, Police 10%, Custom 2%, Prison 2%, DSS 2%, DIA 2%, Private Sector 10% and other Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) 2%. It can be deduced that respondents' opinion on the research is all encompassing taking into consideration the various works of life and experiences of the respondents.

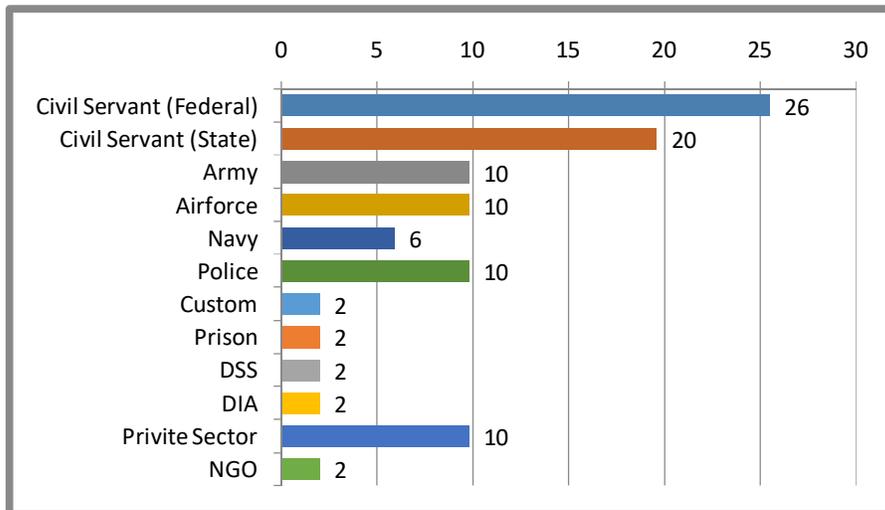


Figure 1.1: Respondents Occupation
Source: Field Survey, 2021

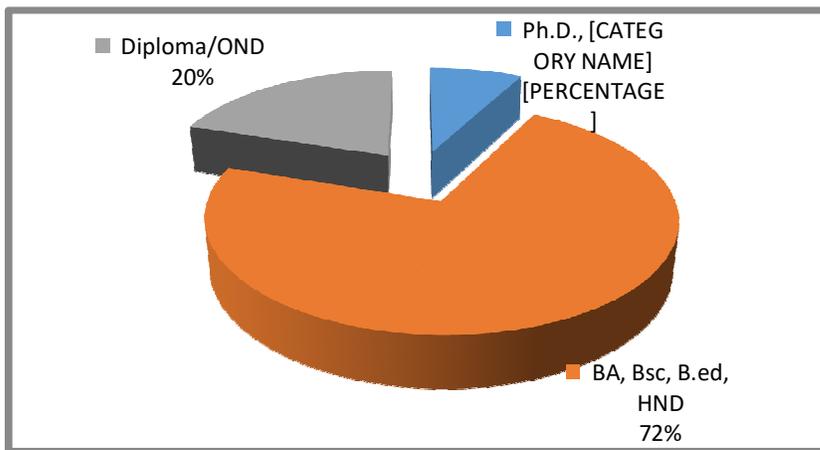


Figure 1.2: Educational qualification of Respondents
Source: Field Survey, 2021

Figure 1.2 shows that majority of the respondents making 72% are Degree/HND holders, 20% possess Diploma/OND while 8% possess Ph.D., Master's Degree or its equivalent. It can therefore be deduced that

respondents for this study are well educated and therefore able to understand the subject matter being interrogated and make valuable contribution.

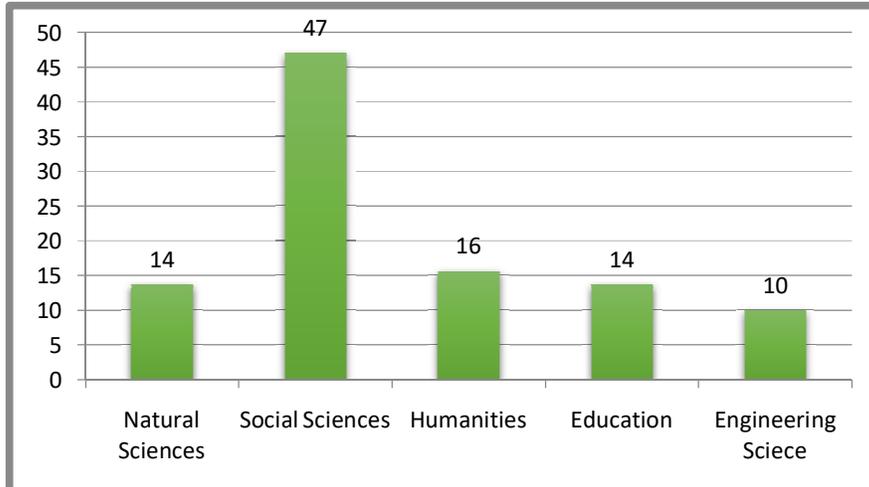


Figure 1.3: Educational Background of Respondents
Source: Field Survey, 2021

Figure 1.3 shows the various educational backgrounds of the respondents which included Natural Science 14%, Social Science 47%, Humanities 16%, Education 14% and

Engineering Science 10%. The foregoing shows that the respondents for the study come from various educational backgrounds with social sciences recording the highest.

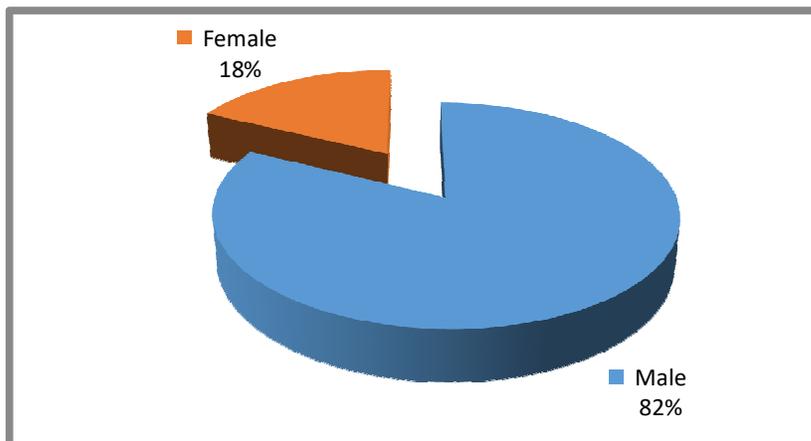


Figure 1.4: Gender of Respondents
Source: Field Survey, 2021

Figure 1.4 shows that 82% of the respondents are male while 18% are female. The disparity in the ratio of male to female did not in any way

affect the result of the findings but rather points to the purposive sampling method used by the researcher.

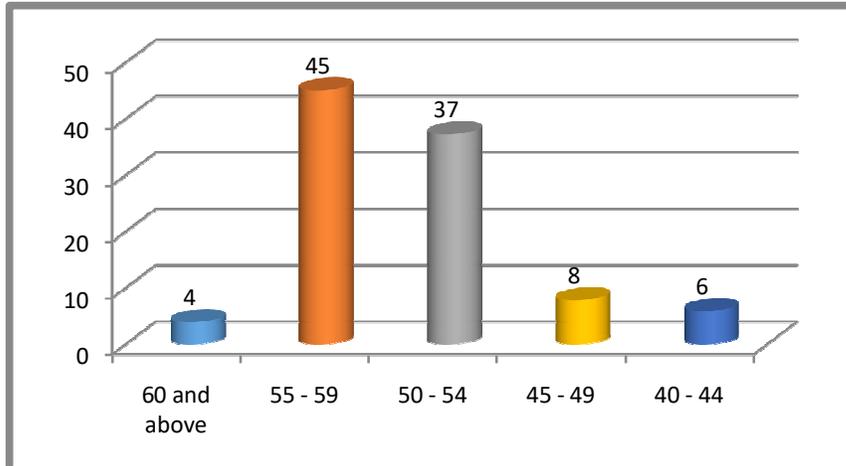


Figure 1.5: Age Distribution of Respondents
Source: Field Survey, 2021

Figure 1.5 shows the distribution of respondents by age. Of the 51 questionnaires administered, 4% of the respondents are 60 years and above, 45% are between 55-59 years, 37% fall within the age bracket 50-54 years, 8%

are between 45-49 years while 6% of the respondents are between the age brackets 40-44 years. It can be deduced that the respondents are old enough to comprehend the subject under investigation.

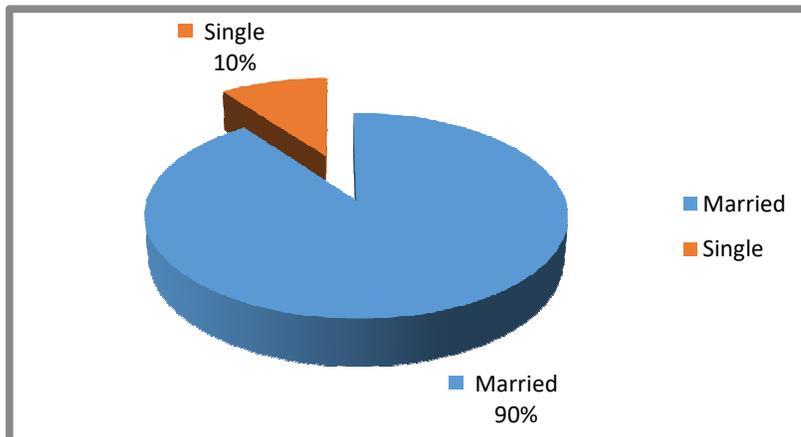


Figure 1.6: Marital Status of Respondents
Source: Field Survey, 2021

Figure 1.6 shows the marital status of respondents. From the foregoing, it can be deduced that majority of the respondents making up 90% are married while 10% are single

This shows that respondents for this study are mostly married men and women and are matured enough to comprehend the issue under investigation.

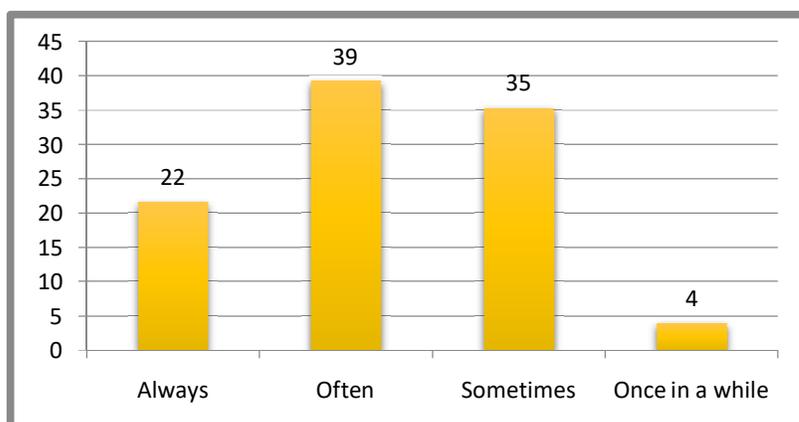


Figure 1.7: Frequency in the use of information resources in NIPSS Library

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Figure 1.7 reveals a positive use of information resources (96% cumulative) the responses of most of the respondents interviewed showed that they regularly used the information resources. This is an indication that the information resources are relevant to the needs of respondents and their presence on the shelves is therefore justified.

1.3 Empirical Analysis of Field Data

This section of the study dealt with responses to the questionnaires and data analysis. It is targeted at meeting the stated objectives of the study and answering the research questions on utilization of information resources for effective research at NIPSS library.

1.3.1: Assessment of the Nature of Information Resources in the Library of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies: Availability of Resources

Table 1.1: Availability of Resources

S/No	OPTIONS	Highly available	Available	Low available	Not available	Don't Know	Total
1.	Books	57	29	4	5	5	100
2.	Project (Participants works, works from other institutions)	57	29	4	10	0	100
3.	Study Tour reports	70	30	0	0	0	100
4.	Concluding seminar reports	40	58	2	0	0	100
5.	Term Paper	33	43	22	2	0	100
6.	Government publications (from Ministries, Parastatals)	2	37	53	6	2	100
7.	Journals (Hard copies)	0	27	65	8	0	100
8.	Publications of NGOs, (UNO, UNESCO,WHO,CSO, etc)	2	28	62	6	2	100
9.	Internet Publications	9	57	24	4	6	100
10.	Online database e.g EBSCOhost, Jstor	17	49	14	6	14	100
11.	Offline database e.g e-granary, digital library, CD-ROMS	4	10	58	8	20	100
12.	Catalogue	4	39	53	0	4	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

In ascertaining the nature of information resources in the library of the Institute, and with respect to availability of resources, Table 1.1 shows that all the listed information resources are available in considerable numbers. Respondents making up 86% were of the

opinion that the library has availability of books, Project (Participants works, works from other institutions) 86% (cumulative), Study Tour reports 100%, Concluding Seminar 98% and Term Paper 76%. Respondents making up 59% opined that Government publications (from Ministries, Parastatals). is low in terms of

availability, in addition to Journals (Hard copies) and Publications of NGOs, (UNO, UNESCO, WHO, CSO). There is availability of Internet publications 66%, online databases e.g EBSCOhost, Jstor 57%. Offline databases e.g

e-granary digital library, CD-ROMS and Catalogue are scarcely available. It can therefore be deduced that the library is fairly well stocked with information resources.

1.3.2: Level of Usage of Information Resources in NIPSS Library

Table 1.2: Level of Usage of Information Resources in NIPSS Library

S/No	OPTIONS	Highly utilized	Utilized	Fairly Utilized	Lowly Utilized	Not Utilized	Total
1.	Books	24	43	26	7	0	100
2.	Project (Participants work, works from other institutions)	55	35	4	6	0	100
3.	Study Tour Reports	51	37	10	2	0	100
4.	Concluding Seminar	22	54	20	4	0	100
5.	Term Paper	14	44	28	12	2	100
6.	Government Publications (from Ministries, Parastatals)	6	20	54	18	2	100
7.	Journals (hardcopies)	6	18	46	26	4	100
8.	Publications of NGOs (UNO, UNESCO, WHO, CSO, etc.)	2	28	39	22	9	100
9.	Internet Publications	4	58	28	6	4	100
10.	Online database e.g EBSCOhost, Jstor	4	54	18	16	8	100
11.	Offline database e.g, e-granarydigital library, CD-ROMS	4	14	26	40	16	100
12.	Catalogue	4	29	35	26	6	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 1.2 shows the level of usage of information resources in NIPSS Library. It revealed that majority of the respondents were positive on the level of utilisation of information resources in the library. Interview with some respondents further buttressed this as one respondent reported thus: "I mostly consult

past projects, concluding seminar and online databases". Another respondent said, "Term papers and government publications provided the information I needed in writing my research reports". It can therefore be affirmed that majority of the respondents appreciated the information resources in the library.

1.3.3: Level of Satisfaction with Information Resources for Research Endeavours

Table 1.3: Level of Satisfaction with Information Resources for Research Endeavours

S/No	OPTIONS	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Lowly Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Total
1.	Books	28	37	22	13	0	100
2.	Project (Participants work, works from other institutions)	49	41	4	6	0	100
3.	Study Tour Reports	39	45	16	0	0	100
4.	Concluding Seminar	29	49	20	2	0	100
5.	Term Paper	9	41	40	8	2	100
6.	Government Publications (from Ministries, Parastatals)	2	18	54	14	12	100
7.	Journals (hardcopies)	2	22	40	26	10	100
8.	Publications of NGOs (UNO, UNESCO, WHO, CSO etc)	2	28	46	10	14	100
9.	Internet Publications	6	45	28	12	9	100
10.	Online database e.g EBSCOhost, Jstor	2	43	26	20	9	100
11.	Offline database e.g, e-granarydigital library, CD-ROMS	2	43	26	20	9	100
12.	Catalogue	2	12	35	43	8	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 1.3 above shows the opinion of respondents on their level of satisfaction with information resources for research endeavours. From the foregoing, majority of the respondents opined that they were generally satisfied with the level of information resources in the library except with the catalogue (which was considered outdated). Responses of some respondents from key

informant interview revealed an appreciable level of satisfaction with the information resources in the library. One respondent commented that “catalogue affects effective use of the information resources”. It can be deduced that the respondents are generally satisfied with the information resources in the library.

1.3.4: Effectiveness of Information Resources in Enhancing Research in NIPSS

Table 1.4: Effectiveness of Information Resources in Enhancing Research NIPSS

S/No	OPTIONS	Very Effective	Effective	Fairly Effective	Not Effective	Very Ineffective	Total
1.	Books	57	29	4	5	5	100
2.	Project (Participants work, works from other institutions)	57	29	4	10	0	100
3.	Study Tour Reports	70	30	0	0	0	100
4.	Concluding Seminar	40	58	2	0	0	100
5.	Term Paper	33	43	22	2	0	100
6.	Government Publications (from Ministries, Parastatals)	2	37	53	6	2	100
7.	Journals (hardcopies)	0	27	65	8	0	100
8.	Publications of NGOs (UNO, UNESCO, WHO, CSO etc)	2	28	62	6	2	100
9.	Internet Publications	9	57	24	4	6	100
10.	Online database e.g EBSCOhost, Jstor	17	49	14	6	14	100
11.	Offline database e.g, e-granarydigital library, CD-ROMS	4	10	58	8	20	100
12.	Catalogue	4	39	53	0	4	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

In an attempt to ascertain the level of effectiveness of information resources in enhancing research in NIPSS, Table 1.4 above shows that majority of respondents were positive that the information resources are effective in enhancing research in NIPSS. Interview responses from some respondents attested to this position as some of them said they were able to conduct their research

successfully due to the quality of the information resources. One respondent stated, “I am happy with the quality of my report which is due to the quality of information resources in the library, the resources need to be improved in areas to do with the catalogue and online resources”. It can therefore be inferred that the information resources were effective in enhancing research in NIPSS.

1.3.5: Challenges Associated with Utilization of Information Resources for Effective Research in NIPSS

Table 1.5: Challenges Associated with Utilization of Information Resources for Effective Research in NIPSS

S/No	Challenges	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Total
1.	Poor guide to use of library resources (no sign posting or directing guide)	2	23	47	26	2	100
2.	Inadequate catalogue (arrangement in catalogue poorly organized and difficult to use)	2	29	39	28	2	100
3.	Lack of assistance by library staff	4	16	51	29	0	100
4.	Poor lighting	26	39	0	35	0	100
5.	Inadequate ventilation	4	30	35	29	2	100
6.	Poor internet connectivity	8	47	35	10	0	100
7.	Inadequate information resources (can't get what I am looking for)	20	46	26	4	4	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

In an attempt to find out the challenges associated with utilisation of information resources for effective research at NIPSS library, majority of the respondents indicated that poor lighting, inadequate ventilation, poor internet connectivity and inadequate information resources constitute some of the challenges associated with utilisation of information resources for effective research in NIPSS library. It can therefore be deduced that there are challenges that need to be addressed to enhance the use of information resources for effective research in NIPSS.

Discussion of Findings

- The findings revealed the nature of information resources mostly available in the library. They include books, participant's projects, study tour reports internet publications and databases. Those that are available in less quantity include government publications (from ministries and parastatals, journals (hard copies) publications of NGOs Offline databases and CD-ROMs. This finding corroborates that of Adeboye (2015) and Hussen, Vashis and Jimah (2013) who found that books, newspapers, dictionaries, and the like constituted the major information resources that were made available to prison inmates. The findings also supported that of Nwabueze and Urhirewhu (2015) who found that digital information resources were

provided for undergraduates of Delta and Edo States Universities in the South-South geographical zone of Nigeria.

- The study revealed that most of the information resources were effective in enhancing research endeavours. This finding was corroborated by Ani, Ngulube and Onyeoreha (2018) who found that accessibility and use of electronic resources had significant positive effects on research productivity of surveyed Nigerian Universities.
- The findings of the study revealed that the challenges associated with the utilization of information resources for effective research include, poor lighting, poor internet connectivity and inadequate information resources. This finding was supported by Adeboye (2015) Nwabueze and Urhirewhu (2015) and Buhari (2016), and Igweburike and Agbo (2017) who also discovered that there were inadequate information resources, poor internet connectivity and poor lighting in the libraries studied.

Strategies for Enhancing Utilization of Information Resources

Based on the findings of the study, the following strategies are proffered in enhancing effective utilisation of resources at NIPSS library:

- i. The management of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies should improve the lighting in the library by providing better halogen bulbs.
- ii. The management of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies should engage in collaboration with corporate bodies such as National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), National Communications Commission (NCC) and the like, to improve the bandwidth in the Institute for better internet connectivity.
- iii. The management of NIPSS should increase the budgetary allocation to the library to enable it subscribe to more electronic databases and acquire hardcopies of books and other information resources.

Conclusion

The aim of research in every academic institution is to identify and solve problems that exist within or outside the institution in various disciplines and generally to expand the frontiers of knowledge for the benefit of scholars and the society. To ensure that this aim is achieved, the management of these institutions must make concerted efforts at ensuring that the relevant information resources, which are what drive and support research endeavours are adequately provided. It is only when this is done that researchers can boast of a conducive ambience for serious scholarly pursuit; and the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies is certainly no exception to this.

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