



USER EDUCATION AS TOOL FOR UTILIZATION OF LIBRARY INFORMATION RESOURCES BY 300 LEVEL STUDENTS OF LAW, UNIVERSITY OF JOS

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Abstract

Purpose: This study was carried out to examine the user education as a tool for utilization of library information resources: a case study of 300 level students of Law, University of Jos.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. Four objectives and four research questions guided the conduct of the study. Total enumeration technique was used on two hundred and sixty (260) law students who formed the population of the study. Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection and descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, mean, and percentage was used in the data analysis and presentation.

Findings: The findings of the study revealed that GST (Use of Library) and Library orientation were the major types of user education programmes utilized at the University of Jos. The results also revealed that majority of the law students consult the library information resources in the library while some of the students make use of the library with their personal books. Furthermore, the GST (Use of library) and library orientation is influential.

Implication: GST (Use of Library) and Library orientation is more influential and should be encouraged in order for information resources in the library to be efficiently utilized.

Originality/Value: It was recommended that there is need for the students to be educated on the use of library because it plays vital role in the overall performance of the law undergraduate students. Also, it leads to utilization of resources.

Keywords: Library, User Education, Information resources, Utilization of information resources

Paper Type: Empirical research

Introduction

Libraries as repository of knowledge are saddled with the responsibilities of identifying users' need, select relevant information, acquire, verify, sort, organize the information resources and make them available for easy access and retrieval to meet the users' needs. The Centre point for every library's collection is the usage. Therefore, for library resources to be adequately utilized, the users must be adequately oriented. Hence, user education is important for effective use of academic library resources.

Education is geared towards making the learner to put what he/she learnt into practice, hence,

the knowledge acquired must be reflected in the life of the learner. User education programmes are planned in tertiary institutions to ease the work of librarians and quicken the efforts of the clientele in getting and utilizing the library materials (Diyoshak, 2011). In any research institution, the library plays a pivotal role in making available and accessible its information resources to the clients. It supports the educational, teaching and research needs of the parent organization the library serves. Libraries also see their responsibility as ensuring

that the use of information sources, resources, and services are maximized to benefit their users, (Bhatti, 2009).

Library users' education is one of the important duties of academic library organized from time to time to intimate students of higher institutions of learning about the various available library services they can access in the library. It is an academic programme designed by academic libraries to educate its users' especially fresh students on how to effectively utilize library resources and services. User education can be defined as instruction given to readers to help them make the best use of the library. User education is aimed at developing bibliographic skills of library users so that they can effectively use the library and its information resources. Aina (2004) opines that user education is to help library users get information they desire as well as developing the skills to use the resources of the library independently and appropriately.

Okoye (2013) asserted that user education is meant to improve the users' knowledge of the library's collections and services and to be a motivating factor for patronage, change of attitude, higher usage and more demands on the library. It entails systematic efforts to teach a set of principles or search strategies relating to the library, its collections or services using pre-determined methods in order to accomplish a defined set of objectives. User education is a process of activities involved in making the users of the library conscious about the value of information in everyday life to develop interest among the users to seek information whenever they are in need. User education encompasses all types of activities designed to teach users about library services, facilities, organization, resources, and search strategies in order to equip them with the basic skills to enable them to make optimal, efficient and independent use of information resources and services available in a given library (Ogunmodede & Emeahara, 2010).

Availability of information resources in academic library does not automatically translate to resource utilization. Without access to information resources, utilization is unrealizable, and the value of the resources

becomes meaningless to the users. A library can only be regarded as the hub of all academic activities where there are adequate library resources that are well utilized (Aladeniyi & Owokole, 2018). The issue of utilization is pivotal to library management because making resources accessible demands certain requisite skills, which when lacking, renders available resources inaccessible. Therefore, user education is designed to quicken the efforts of the clientele in retrieving and effectively utilizing the library materials. The demand for the use of library resources calls for the need to ensure that students have effective and efficient orientation to access the library resources effectively. The impact of a library can be valued if the resources acquired by the library are utilized.

The University of Jos has a College and 15 Faculties, and the library has branches in the College and in all of the Faculties. For example, the Faculty of Law is headed by the subject librarian who holds a Bachelor of Law degree in addition to qualifications in Library and Information Science. This makes the subject Librarian to be knowledgeable and versatile in disseminating information sources and resources that pertains to Law to Faculty of Law lecturers, staff and students at any time and for the convenience of the reader irrespective of format whether online, or print (University of Jos Libraries, 2010). The library takes an active part in the user education programmes through their subject librarians to benefit new students in the beginning of their academic pursuit in the university. The students are taught about the organization of the library to acquaint them with various resources and services available in the library to solve their information needs.

Statement of the Problem

Anyanwu (2015) posits that the value of a library collection lies in its effective utilization by the user community. University must ensure that their resources are well utilized as this is essential for educational development of staff, researchers and students. The parent institution spend a lot of human and financial resources to make the library information resources available; and this must be complemented by utilizing maximally the resources. Otherwise,

the essence of acquiring, organizing, storing and making accessible the information resources become futile. Therefore, there is a need for studies to be conducted on the utilization of library information resources.

Research Objectives

1. To identify the types of user education programmes provided in the library
2. To know the extent to which the library information resources is being utilized
3. To know the level of influence of user education programmes on the utilization of library resources
4. To ascertain which of the user education programmes has more influence on the utilization of the library information resources

Research Questions

1. What type of user education programmes are provided by the library?
2. To what extent is the library information resources utilized?
3. What is the level of influence of user education programme on the utilization of library resources?
4. Which of the user education programmes has more influence on the utilization of information resources?

Literature Review

Academic libraries are libraries established in higher institutions of learning such as universities, polytechnics, and colleges to support the teaching, learning and research activities of the institution by providing adequate resources to fulfil the objectives of the library. Academic libraries have been variously described as the repository of knowledge. It is an indispensable instrument for intellectual development. A well-stocked academic library is a storehouse of information, or a record of human experience to which users may turn to for data or information. Essentially, it has been described as a collection of documents, a place where information in whatever form or format, printed or non-printed is acquired, preserve, processed, organized and disseminated for public use

which could be educational, recreational, information, enlightenment and for leisure.

According to Akpan and Akpan (2018), the university library is the principal instrument of the university in the conservation of recorded knowledge. Proper fulfilment of this role provides a sound basis for the transmission and advancement of knowledge. However, every university library, no matter the size is established to render service to its users. The library has to collect materials, published and unpublished, print and non-print, in some depth and globally in all the fields of knowledge not necessarily in only those offered in its institution.

According to Nwalo (2000), academic libraries are primarily set up to acquire, organize, store and make accessible to the users, within the quickest possible time all forms of information materials which they require. The systematic acquisition, organization and dissemination of books, journals and other information resources distinguishes a library from a reading room or just storehouse of books. Caroline and Adewale (2018) opined that the basic functions of any university is to conserve the existing knowledge, to transmit knowledge through teaching and to create new knowledge through research. The university library provides the needed information resources, which expands the frontier of knowledge. It has the function of supporting teaching, learning and research activities that go on in the various institutions. In performing these functions, the university libraries are stocked with several information resources such as books, journals and non-books resources and provide access to them. Furthermore, the importance of well stocked university libraries cannot be overemphasized; they contribute to the quality of the university as centres of learning and research.

However, the expectations of people are high when sourcing and retrieving information and when such information needs are not met, frustration usually set in and this may drive the users away from the library. Akinade (2003), noted that the use of library resources is uppermost in the minds of the university libraries as this will enable the management know how best they can serve their users.

Therefore, for effective utilization of academic library resources, users must be informed about the various resources and services available and how to fully access the available services. These necessitate the introduction of user education programmes in academic libraries.

User Education

The fundamental objective of user education is to expose, acquaint and inculcate in the clients, the basic knowledge or understanding and skills which are necessary for effective and efficient utilization of the library services and resources. The effectiveness of any library is measured by the use made of its resources and services (Uwakwe, Onyeneke & Njoku, 2016). User education is the instruction given to readers to help them make the best use of the library. Its core is to teach; to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes. It is the umbrella term to describe a range of activities; from basic guidance in library layout to the more formal, structured and systematized programmes of instruction or training on the effective and efficient use of information resources, materials, services and retrieval systems (Kannappanavar & Swamy, 2012). User education consists of all types of activities designed to teach users about library facilities, services, organization, resources and search strategies in order to equip them with basic skills to enable them make optimal, effective, efficient and independent use of information resources and services available in the library.

Maduako, (2013) defined user education as a planned process and techniques that is aimed at equipping library users with the basic skills to help them make optimal use of the resources available in their library. Iheaturu (2002), user education is a process whereby potential users of information are made to learn how to make effective and efficient use of the library and its resources through acquisition, location, retrieval and exploitation of information. It is any effort or programme which will guide and instruct potential users individually or collectively with the objective of facilitating the recognition of their information need, effective and efficient use of information services. Various authors have used different terminologies to discuss ways of teaching library

patrons how to use the library resources. Some of these terms are user education, bibliographic instruction, user instruction, information literacy, library orientation etc. These terms are used interchangeably to describe formal and informal library programmes on how to maximally utilize library resources.

The importance of user education as instrument for effective utilization of library resources cannot be over emphasized.

User Education and Utilization of Information Resources

The extent to which the library resources are been used depend largely on users' skill and knowledge of information search and retrieval. Esse and Ugwumba (2014) asserted that there cannot be a connection between user and materials or tools without proper user education given to users who may not have prior knowledge or idea on the use of library materials, services or tools. Library user education is useful to make library users acquire necessary skills to make them competent library users and independent researchers.

Onyeneke, (2007), notes that effective use of library is expected to be one of the principal objectives of establishing libraries. He insists that for this to be achieved, librarians must instruct the students on how to use the library; they have to familiarize them with the technique of library use and information retrieval. Ishola (2005) opined that the need for user education has become more urgent as most students come into the university without background knowledge about the library systems. He noted that even where students are probably exposed to the use of the library, the size of the library resources and the organization are complex. Therefore, they must be introduced to it and with the expected increase in students enrolment, greater responsibility for finding materials rests on students and this require them to have the knowledge of the various types of library services.

Empirical Studies

Similar studies have been conducted by different authors; Adeyemo, Oladapo Olakunle (2018), who examined user education in

academic libraries and the information seeking behaviour of Users. A survey design was used for the study. Statistical data were collected through the use of questionnaire administered to one hundred and fifty (150) respondents from two Universities in Nigeria. Stratified random sampling technique was used in to select the population sample of the study. Out of this number, only one hundred and thirty two (132) copies of the questionnaires with adequate information were retrieved. Data for the study were analysed using simple percentage. The findings revealed amidst others, that though more than half of the respondents do not attend Use of Library lectures regularly yet the course has positively influenced the utilization of the library resources. It was therefore recommended that practical lectures should also be organized at the University library to further enhance the students' use of the catalogue and other library resources. It was also observed that the user education program is very essential to the academic excellence of students. Universities should also be encouraged to organize seminars and workshops for students and staff to educate them on new trends and improve their skills on utilization of library resources. The Library staff should be more friendly and ready to assist in other to encourage library usage.

Busawayo (2003) examines the perception of fresh students on the course "the use of library programme", of the University of Edo-Ekiti, which had compulsory status to ascertain the level of its acceptance. The extent of the achievement of the objectives of the course was also investigated. The study adopted the survey design method. A random sample of 280 fresh students was drawn from the Faculties of Arts, Agricultural Sciences and Social Sciences. Questionnaire was used for data collection and the data was analysed using tables, frequency count and simple percentages. The findings of the study revealed that though the perception of the students was positive they advised that the course be separated from 'use of English'. In line with that, the researcher recommended that the course "use of library" should be taught by qualified librarians. This study though had been able to elicit some response from the students, the sole use of 'Yes' or 'No' type of

questionnaire made the research too simplistic to attract meaningful response from the respondents.

Okeke, and Idoko (2018) carried out an appraisal of user education programme on the use of library resources by distance education students of National Open University of Nigeria. The study evaluated user education programmes of selected National Open University of Nigeria study centres libraries. This is because the effective use of library resources by distance education students is a vital tool for improvement in long life learning, skills acquisition, information searching and research. Any higher institution devoid of library user education programme is bound to have poor learning outcomes. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Three research questions guided the study. Simple random sampling was used to select a sample of 808 second year students drawn from the three Centres: Kaduna (200), Enugu (348) and Apapa study centre (260). Data for the study were collected through researches' developed questionnaire, interview schedule and observation checklist. The result was analysed using Mean and Standard deviation. The findings revealed among others that a positive effect existed in favour of user education, especially when the duration of library orientation period is increased and made compulsory for all registered students. Based on the findings, the researcher recommends that, effort should be made to improve user education programme in the National Open University of Nigeria.

Research Methods

Descriptive research design was used for this study. Since the population of the study is small and manageable with the same characteristics, total enumeration techniques were used to cover all the two hundred and sixty (260) 300 level law undergraduate students of the University of Jos. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into five sections. **Section A** was designed to collect demographic information of the respondents, **Section B** identifies the types of user education programmes provided in the library, **Section C** examines the extent to which

the library information resources is being utilized, **Section D** assesses the level of influence of user education programmes on the utilization of library resources while **Section D** ascertains which of the user education programmes has more influence on the utilization of the library information resources.

260 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents and 252 copies representing (96%) were retrieved and used for the analysis. Descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution count, mean, and percentage was used in data analysis and presentation.

Data Analysis and Interpretation of Results

Table 1: Types of Users’ Education Programmes provided in the library

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	M
1	Library Orientation	145(57.54%)	92(36.51%)	11(4.37%)	4(1.58%)	3.5
2	GST (Use of Library)	153(60.71%)	75(29.76%)	17(6.75%)	7(2.78%)	3.65
3	Bibliographic Aids and Guide	35(13.9%)	118(46.82%)	65(25.79%)	34(13.49%)	2.61

Key: SA= Strongly Agreed A= Agreed D= Disagreed SD= Strongly Disagreed

Table 1 shows the types of Users’ Education Programmes provided to the 300 level law students of the University of Jos. 153 (60.71%) of the respondents indicated that GST (Use of Library) comes first as the type of Users’

Education Programme with the mean point of 3.65 strongly agreed followed by Library Orientation 154 (57.54%) with the mean point of 3.5 strongly agreed, Bibliographic Aids and Guide 35 (13.9%) with the mean point of 2.61.

Table 2: Extent to which the Library Information Resources is being utilized

S/N	ITEMS	VO	O	R	NA	M
1	How often do you make use of the library information resources	47(18.65%)	184(73.01%)	7(2.78%)	14(5.56%)	3.05
2	How often do you find it difficult in using the library information resources	27(10.71%)	36(14.29%)	156(61.90%)	33(13.10%)	2.23
3	How often do you come to library to read your personal books	192(76.19%)	42(16.67%)	17(6.75%)	1(0.39%)	3.70

Key: VO – Very Often O – Often R – Rarely NA – Not At All

Table 2 shows the extent to which the library information resources is being utilized by the 300 level law students of the University of Jos. 184 (73%) of the respondents indicated that they make use of the library information resources often with the mean point of 3.05,

156 (61.90%) of the respondents indicated that they find it difficult to use the library information resources with the mean point of 2.23 and 192 (76.19) of the respondents indicated that they come to the library to make use of their personal books.

Table 3: Influence of User Education Programme on the Utilization of Library Resources

S/N	ITEMS	VI	I	LI	NI	M
1	How influential is GST (Use of Library) to you in respect to the use of Information Resources	230(91.27%)	15(5.95%)	7(2.78%)	0%	3.88
2	How Influential is Library Orientation to you in respect to use of library Information Resources	34(13.49%)	160(63.50%)	47(18.65%)	11(4.36%)	2.86
3	How Influential is the use of bibliographic aids and guides in respect to use of library Information Resources	12(4.76%)	24(9.52%)	177(70.24%)	39(15.48%)	2.03

Key: VN – Very Influence I – Influential LI – Less Influential NI – Not Influential

Table 3 shows the influence of users' education programmes on the utilization of library information resources by the 300 level law students of the University of Jos. 230 (91.27%) of the respondents strongly agreed that, "GST (Use of Library)" is very influential with the

mean point of 3.88,160 (63.50%) of the respondents agreed that, "Library Orientation" is influential with the mean point of 2.86 while, 177 (70.24%) of the respondents disagreed that, "bibliographic aids and guides" is not influential.

Table 4: Users' Education Programmes that has more Influence on the Utilization of the Library Information Resources

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	M
1	Library Orientation has more influence on the utilization of information resources	49(19.44%)	154(61.11%)	15(5.95%)	34(13.50%)	2.87
2	GST (Use of Library) has more influence on the utilization of information resources	156(61.90%)	65(25.80%)	22(8.73%)	9(3.57%)	3.46
3	Bibliographic Aids and Guide has more influence on the utilization of information resources	5(1.98%)	16(6.35%)	77(30.56%)	154(61.11%)	1.21
4	Library Tour has more influence on the utilization of information resources	14(5.55%)	48(19.05%)	186(73.81%)	4(1.59%)	2.29
5	Library Exhibition has more influence on the utilization of information resources	2(0.8%)	15(5.95%)	56(22.22%)	179(71.03%)	1.40
6	Library Week has more influence on the utilization of information resources	15(5.95%)	7(2.78%)	3(1.19%)	227(90.08%)	1.25

Key: SA= Strongly Agreed A= Agreed D= Disagreed SD= Strongly Disagreed

Table 4 shows the types of users' education programme that has more influence on the utilization of the library information resources among the 300 level law students of the University of Jos. 156 (61.90%) of the respondents strongly agreed that, "GST (Use of Library)" is more influential with a mean point of 3.46, 154 (61.11) of the respondents agreed that, "library orientation" is more influential with a mean point of 2.31, 186 (73.81%) of the respondents disagreed that, "library tour" is more influential with the mean point of 2.29, 179(71.03%) of the respondents disagreed that, "library exhibition" is more influential with the mean point of 1.40,227(90.08%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that, "library week" is more influential with the mean point of 1.25 while, 154(61.11%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that, "bibliographic aids and guide" is more influential with the mean point of 1.21.

Implication

The findings of the study revealed that, GST (Use of Library) and Library Orientation are the types of user education programmes in the library. On the extent of the library information resources utilization, the study revealed that, the law students of the University of Jos consult the library information resources, visit the library to make use of the library information resources every time and some visit the library to make use of the library with their personal books. To ascertain the influence of users' education programme on the utilization of the library information resources, the study revealed that, GST (Use of Library) and Library Orientation has influence on the utilization of information resources in the library. Finally, the types of users' education programme that has more influence on the utilization of the library information resources among the 300 level law students of the University of Jos, the findings of the study revealed that, GST (Use of Library) and Library Orientation is more influential and

should be encouraged in order for information resources in the library to be efficiently utilized.

Conclusion

It is worth knowing that law library services cannot be under estimated because they play vital roles in the overall performance of the law undergraduate students. However, for effective service delivery of law libraries, there is need for the students to be educated on the use of library. As such, the study examined Users' Education Programmes as Tool for Utilization of Library Information Resources: A Case Study of University Jos. The GST on the Use of Library was revealed to have more influence on the use of the library information resources by the undergraduate 300 level law students. It is imperative from this study that, library users' education has great influence on the law students because it exposes them to various services available in the library and how to make use of the information resources. However, the University management needs to intensify effort to make the GST - Use of Library course and library orientation for students to be more effective to enhance the utilization of the library information resources.

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