

APPRAISING USER EDUCATION DELIVERY AMONG LIBRARY STAFF FOR ENHANCED INFORMATION RESOURCE ACCESSIBILITY IN KOGI STATE UNIVERSITY, AYINGBA

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Abstract

Purpose: The study was conducted to appraise user education delivery among library staff for enhanced information resource accessibility in Kogi State University, Lokoja; and in order to achieve the aim of the study, five specific objectives guided the study. **Design/Methodology/Approach:** Descriptive design was used for the study. A sample of 202 respondents which was made up of 62 staff and 140 users in, drawn out of a population size of 62 and (20,182) where the subject of the study. A total of two hundred and two copies of questionnaire were administered and one hundred and ninety one (191) copies representing (94.5%) were correctly filled and returned. Data were analyzed using Mean, percentages and frequencies.

Findings: The findings show that user education contribute reasonably in enhancing information resource accessibility in Kogi State University Library as it promotes the value of library and its resources in the university (62%) and equips users with information literacy and search skills (61%) to a high extent. Challenges were agreed be associated with effective delivery of user education among academic librarian in Kogi State University Library, among which included lack of well-trained librarians of (57%) and inadequate number of staff (62%).

Originality/Value: It was recommended that user education programme should be stepped up to include all strategies that facilitate the accessibility of information resources in Kogi State University Libraries through effective user education programme.

Keywords: User Education Delivery; Library Staff; Information Resource Accessibility; Kogi State University, Lokoja

Introduction

The study assesses user education practices among library staff for enhanced information resource accessibility in Kogi State University. The research was based on the need for various practices which harness access to information resources in the university libraries. The bottom-line behind user education as one of the critical services that are carried out in libraries is to ensure that library users are educated on the library resources, sources and services in order to achieve optimum exploitation of information. ALA (2019) stated that involving a collection of

resources in a variety of formats, and being organized by information professionals or other experts who provide convenient physical, digital, bibliographic or intellectual access of information materials and services to a targeted users, the mission of the library should be to educate, inform or entertain a variety of audience for the goal of stimulating individuals learning and advancing the society as a whole. Hence, part of the critical roles of libraries is to ensure that information is effectively accessed and utilized at the right time in the right format to a right user and in the right personal way through user education. Rashid (2022) sees user

education as a means of educating or guiding library users about available and wide range of facilities, resources, and other services. Monye (2016) further defined user education as “various programmes of instruction provided to users in the library to enable them effectively and efficiently use the library resources and services”(29). User education is crucial for despite the avalanche of information resources available in university libraries, users seem to opt for resources that may not be well written, reviewed or reliable sources. The reason could be due to poor access to information resources which are well sifted and sieved from varied and reliable sources. When users are not knowledgeable on the available information resources for their teaching, learning, assignments, projects and research which the university libraries are mandated to cater for, they may still not gain optimal access to these resources and may continue to wallow in information needs. Kogi State University Library is a library that invest huge amount of money on the acquisition, processing, storage and dissemination of information resources. This presents an urgent need to explore the user education practices that are carried out in Kogi State University Library, Lokoja which are geared towards enhanced accessibility to information resources.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to assess user education delivery among library staff for enhanced information resource accessibility in Kogi State University, Lokoja. Specifically, the study intends to:

1. find out the level of user education awareness among Kogi State University Library users
2. identify the level of user education delivery obtainable among Kogi State University Library users
3. ascertain the methods employed for user education delivery in Kogi State University Library
4. determine the extent to which user education delivery enhance information resource accessibility in Kogi State University Library

building abilities in new users for ways to go about information resources.

Through important practices of user education, libraries can attract and educate clientele to patronize and in turn enhance their access to information resources while satisfying their teeming information needs. It is worrisome that

5. find out the challenges associated with effective delivery of user education among academic librarians in Kogi State University Library

Review of Literature

A user in any library could be seen as someone who seeks access and utilizes information from the library. It is in line with the above that Manlunching and Malakar(2014) categorized users into potential, expected, actual and beneficiary user depending on the extent to which they need and use information available in the library. The level of users' knowledge on how to access information resources and in order to satisfy their information needs determines constant frequency and usage of library information resources. This brings to focus the need for user education. User education is a programme that cannot be exhausted easily given its central importance in the overall essence of library existence as it connects users and resources as well as services.

As a process geared enlightening users on the library's wealth of information, access and usage, user education helps in building the interest of users for information seeking (Shahi, 2010). In agreement, Chalukya(2015) stated that this kind of instruction equips library users with the skills of independence and lifelong learning; builds knowledge of available library resources-both online and physical, creates awareness on the services provided for easy access to information sources and resources among others. Manlunching and Malakar(2014) divided user education program three categories: library, orientation, library instruction and bibliographic instruction. Library, orientation involves an introduction to library building, card catalogue and some basic reference materials with the aim of creating awareness, motivation users and exposing them to information resources and tools.

Library instruction on its part is geared towards teaching users the use of indexes, bibliographic tools, abstracts, and other references materials while bibliographic instruction aims at exposing users to the features and uses of bibliographical tools. Monye (2016) in a study, further identified some of the user education programme to include user instruction, library orientation, guided tour, lecture, seminar, workshop, library exhibition, library display, library publicity, in-house training, internet literacy training, printed guide, slide shows, handbills, posters around the library and library sign posts. These programmes when carefully delivered through the relevant methods is geared towards attracting users to the information resources; thus realizing the goal of information accessibility and use.

Without training users on the way to go about this, there may not be easy access and maximal use of information resources in the libraries; and for this to be realized, certain methods should be adopted in the university libraries to carry out user education programme. Some of the methods as identified by Fidzani (1995) are lecture method; advertising which includes paper, journal, posters and pamphlets; The practical workshop that is geared towards training users about the CD-ROM available and use as well as online services; and brochures which may contain history of the library, purchases, addressee in brochures and leaves; newsletters, demonstration method; book exhibition; display of new arrivals; and mass media. These are all geared towards facilitating the easy access and use of library and information resources. Rashid (2022) recently identified user education to include lecture method, use of audio-visual materials, computer assisted learning method and on-site library visit. According to the author, lecture method is most preferred kind of instruction especially when it comes to teaching large groups of learners.

The librarian employs all techniques including aural and visual to facilitate the learning of available and a wide range of information resources in the university, their access and use. Fidzanistated earlier that the lecture method could be formal or informal. However, the less experienced group may be left out when this method is employed. More recently, the use of

audio visual materials have been emphasized, Sahid argues. This has also been welcomed in library user education As a result, the information can be conveyed in a series of units such as slides or overhead transparencies or printed illustrations. This would suggest that tap/slide medium or the use of audio-visual tape in conjunction with printed materials would be suitable for library user education. The author also noted that during the last two decades the use of computer technologies has brought in a lot of changes in the society including education and information activities; resulting in rapid growth of computer-based online information retrieval system. However, the use depends heavily on the level of knowledge of users. On-site visit to the library helps to gathered a more practical experience from a physical visit or tour to the library, or make practical the learning experiences gathered through these forms of learning. The benefits of user education cannot be overemphasized when it comes to library delivery and accessibility to information resources

A study conducted by Moyane, Dube and Hoskins (2015) to investigate the effectiveness of user education for postgraduate students in the School of Management, Information Technology and Governance at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, found user education programs necessary in enhancing library use, which can in turn have a positive effect on their studies and academic performance. By their own admittance of the benefit of user education, it can be assumed that they realize the relationship between library use and academic success. In Nigeria, there is a plethora of empirical studies on library user education including Okonkwo (2005) and Aziagba and Uzoeki (2010) who found reawakened interests from the users concerning visiting the library. Kumar and Phil (2009) stated that continuous changes in teaching methods as well as the wide recognition and use of multi-media learning resources has added the need for user education. Librarians therefore need to begin to implement practical based user education in their respective institutions.

User education delivery is not without some challenges. Bhatti (2010) in an evaluation of the user education programs in the university

libraries complained that in some areas, user education is unpopular among especially when the program is designed without first articulating users’ demands, their backgrounds and limitations. The effect is a low turnout in library use pattern. Moyane, Dube & Hoskins, (2015) noted the worrisome challenges of implementing user education programs to include:

- ❖ students’ lack of searching and retrieval skills;
- ❖ students’ poor attendance of user education programs;
- ❖ lack of motivation; insufficient time allocated to training;
- ❖ timing of training interventions;
- ❖ poor marketing of programs;
- ❖ lack of marketing resources including expertise; and
- ❖ insubstantial collaboration among relevant stakeholders.

Users are deprived of access and use of a wealth of information resources when there exists challenges in programme implementation, whether self-made or from the library. In 2016, Uwakwe, Onyeneke & Njoku (2016) on their part noted also that user education programme is affected by students overpopulation, inadequate infrastructure, lack of instructional materials inadequacy trained personnel, among many others while Ottong (2005) and Ewa, (2012) observed poor attitude of staff towards users, lack of time for teaching and practical work and poor evaluation of methods of user education, among others.

From the foregoing, it is evident that user education is crucial for effective access and use

of information resource within and outside the four walls of the library. Without organizing and delivery a well-thought out user education programme and without organized practices, users in various universities may still not maximally access not use the libraries for their respective needs including teaching, learning, research, projects and assignments. At present, no study has examined user education delivery with regards to enhancing information resource accessibility. Library staff should as a matter of necessity begin to assist users in various ways to facilitate access to and use of different surfing strategies in order to satisfy their information needs.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The target population of this study comprises of both library staff and users in Kogi State University Library. However, staff population consisted of 62 entire staff in the library, which included professionals, para-professionals and administrative staff. The sample size of 201 was drawn from the total population of 20,182 users in the university. The instrument used for collecting data was questionnaire while the data generated for the study was analyzed using frequency tables and simple percentages.

Results

This part presents the distribution the instrument to the two groups of respondents used for the study and the findings gathered from the responses in line with the objectives of the study.

Table 1: Distribution of Questionnaire Administered and Returned.

S/N	University library	Copies administered	Copies Returned	Percentage of Returned	Rate
1	Staff	62	62	100%	
2	Students	140	129	92.1%	
	Overall Returned Rate	202	191	94.5	

Table 1 shows that two hundred and two copies of questionnaire were administered and one hundred and ninety one (191) copies

representing (94.5%) were correctly filled and returned.

Table 2: Level of user education awareness among Kogi State University Library users

S/ N	ITEMS	FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE (%)			
		SA	A	D	SD
1	I am aware of training on the use of library	46 (24%)	53 (38%)	60 (31%)	32 (17%)
2	I am hearing it for the first time in the university	27 (14%)	49 (26%)	55 (29%)	60 (31%)
3	I am aware of any online catalogue provided by the library	33 (17%)	59 (31%)	40 (21%)	59 (31%)
4	I am taking a course on the use of library	55 (29%)	46 (24%)	50 (26%)	40 (21%)
5	I am aware but I am not interested in going to the library	68 (36%)	32 (17%)	41 (21%)	50 (26%)
6	I am partially aware of library publicity	39 (20%)	58 (30%)	47 (25%)	47 (25%)
7	I am aware; so, I always patronize the library	40 (21%)	61 (32%)	72 (38%)	18 (9%)
8	I am aware of library tour	24 (13%)	58 (30%)	46 (24%)	63 (33%)
9	I am aware of library publicity	55 (29%)	53 (28%)	36 (19%)	47 (24%)
10	I am aware of internet literacy training in the library	20 (11%)	35 (18%)	67 (35%)	69 (36%)
11	I am not aware the library provides different guides for surfing information	51 (27%)	82 (43%)	30 (16%)	28 (14%)
12	I am aware of different search strategies provided in the library for research	47 (25%)	33 (17%)	60 (31%)	51 (27%)
13	I am not aware of guided tour to the library	72 (38%)	43 (22%)	54 (28%)	22 (12%)

KEY: SA (Strongly Agreed), A (Agreed), D (Disagreed), SD (Strongly Disagreed)

Table 2 above shows the level of user education awareness among Kogi State University Library users. The table reveals that 68(36%) of library users are aware of user education in the library but are not interested, while 60(31%) of library users are not aware of any training on the use of library. Also thirty-one percent (31%) are not

aware of different search strategies provided in the library for research. 82 of them are not aware the library provides different guides for surfing information; making 43% of the respondents. This indicates that there is need of user education awareness among Kogi State University Library users.

Table 3: Level of User Education Delivery obtainable among Kogi State University Library Users

S/ N	ITEMS	FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE (%)			
		SA	A	D	SD
1	I am so excited by the availability of training I receives from library	40 (21%)	42 (22%)	59 (31%)	50 (26%)
2	I am trained by library staff on the first day I visited the library	46 (24%)	30 (16%)	67 (35%)	48 (25%)
3	I am satisfied with the services offered to me when I go to the library	73 (38%)	28 (15%)	50 (26%)	40 (21%)
4	The library staff are always ready to listen to my request	61 (32%)	55 (29%)	46 (24%)	29 (15%)
5	I am satisfied with staff hospitality when it comes to service delivery	78 (41%)	59 (31%)	30 (16%)	24 (12%)
6	I am not always entertained by the librarians	40 (21%)	61 (32%)	72 (38%)	18 (09%)
7	I don't know how to use the library	56 (29%)	40 (26%)	63 (33%)	23 (12%)

KEY: SA (Strongly Agreed), A (Agreed), D (Disagreed), SD (Strongly Disagreed)

Table 3 above shows the level of user education delivery obtainable among Kogi State University Library users. The table reveals that 78(41%) of library users are satisfied and agreed with hospitality of library staff when it comes to

service delivery, while 72(38%) users are not entertained by the librarian and this indicate that there is low delivery of user education that is obtainable among Kogi State University Library users.

Table 4: Method Employed for User Education Delivery in Kogi State University Library

S/ N	ITEMS	FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE (%)			
		SA	A	D	SD
1	Through library orientation	72 (38%)	37 (19%)	33 (17%)	49 (26%)
2	Through social media	50 (26%)	42 (22%)	50 (26%)	49 (26%)
3	Through library tour	27 (14%)	51 (27%)	42 (22%)	71 (37%)
4	Through lectures	62 (33%)	56 (29%)	38 (20%)	35 (18%)
5	Through in-house training	54 (28%)	47 (25%)	25 (13%)	65 (34%)
6	Through library exhibition	41 (22%)	60 (31%)	48 (25%)	42 (22%)
7	Through current awareness services	61 (32%)	55 (29%)	46 (24%)	29(15%)

KEY: SA (Strongly Agreed), A (Agreed), D (Disagreed), SD (Strongly Disagreed)

Table 4 above shows the method to be use on user education delivery in Kogi State University Library, the table reveals that library orientation of 72(38%) and lecture of 62(33%)are the major method use on user education delivery in Kogi State University Library.

Table 5: Determine the Extent to which User Education Delivery enhance Information Resource Accessibility in Kogi State University Library

S/ N	ITEMS	FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE (%)			
		VGE	GE	LE	VLE
1	It brings easy access to use of library and information resources	27 (14%)	60 (31%)	55 (29%)	49 (26%)
2	It enhances cordial relationship between library users and staff for optimal information services	46 (24%)	30 (16%)	67 (35%)	48 (25%)
4	It promotes the value of library and its resources in the university	68 (36%)	50 (26%)	41 (21%)	32 (17%)
5	It enables users to regularly visit the library for research and learning.	54 (28%)	47 (25%)	25 (13%)	65 (34%)
6	It promotes reading habit and lifelong learning among library users	41 (22%)	60 (31%)	48 (25%)	42 (22%)
7	It equips users with information literacy and search skills	61 (32%)	55 (29%)	46 (24%)	29 (15%)

KEY:VGE (Very Great Extent), GE (Great Extent), LE (Low Extent), VLE (Very Low Extent)

Table 5 above shows the extent to which user education enhances information accessibility among Kogi State University Library. The table reveals that 68(36%) of library users agreed to a very great extent that user education promote the value of library and love for its resources while32 (17%) was toa very low extent.

Table 6:Challenges associated with effective delivery of user education among academic librarian in Kogi State University Library

S/N	ITEMS	FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE (%)			
		SA	A	D	SD
1	Lack of well-trained librarians	72 (38%)	37 (19%)	33 (17%)	49 (26%)
2	Lack of ICT related expertise	55 (29%)	46 (24%)	50 (26%)	40 (21%)
3	Lack of motivation	40 (21%)	18(9%)	72(38%)	61 (32%)
4	Inadequate number of staff	56 (29%)	62 (33%)	38 (20%)	35 (18%)
5	Inadequate training and retraining of staff	27 (14%)	71 (37%)	42 (22%)	51 (27%)
6	Lack of training equipment's	30 (16%)	46 (24%)	67 (35%)	48 (25%)
7	Poor attitude of staff towards user education	41 (22%)	60 (31%)	42 (22%)	48 (25%)

KEY: SA (Strongly Agreed), A (Agreed), D (Disagreed), SD (Strongly Disagreed)

Table 6 above shows the challenges associated with effective delivery of user education among academic librarian in Kogi State University Library, the table reveals that lack of well-trained librarians of72(38%) and Inadequate training and retraining of staff of 71(37%)are the major challenges associated with effective delivery of user education among academic librarian in Kogi State University, this indicate that there is serious need for training and re-training of

librarian in user education delivery in Kogi State University Library.

Discussion of Findings

Students' awareness of user education is necessary for accessing information resources in any university library. Findings show that there is need for more opportunities that create awareness for students on information in the library. This corroborates ALA's (2019) position that the library's mission is to get users aware the programmes geared toward maximal use of information resources in the library. Further, Aziagba and Uzozi (2010) established in their study, the need for igniting the interests of users to be aware of opportunities provided by the library for information resources. A great number of respondents agreed that the level of user education delivery obtainable in the library studied should beef up the ways they entertain the users for a more improved delivery and accessibility to information resources. This is in agreement with Kumar and Phil (2009) who stated that teaching methods are continuously changing; while there is wider recognition and use of multi-media learning resources. Rashid (2022) further stated methods for user education delivery include computer assisted learning method, use of audio-visual materials, lecture method, and on-site library visit. This brings to limelight the need for a variety of methods to be introduced during user education delivery. This is a technology-driven age and demands maximum accessibility of information resources both within the library and beyond. The study equally found the extent to which user education enhances information accessibility among Kogi State University Library to be very high. Bhatti (2010) however disagrees with this in his study in which they complained that in some areas where the program is designed without first articulating users' demands, their backgrounds and limitations, user education becomes unpopular among students. Thus it becomes challenging, effectively delivering user education among librarians in university libraries

Conclusion

This study aimed at appraising user education delivery among library staff for enhanced information resource accessibility in Kogi State University, Lokoja. Specifically, the study

ascertained the level of user education awareness among Kogi State University Library users; level of user education delivery obtainable among Kogi State University Library users; method employed for user education delivery in Kogi State University Library; determine the extent to which user education delivery enhance enhanced information resource accessibility in Kogi State University Library; and challenges associated with effective delivery of user education among academic librarian in Kogi State University Library. Though some methods are used in user education in the study area, there are challenges that affect effectiveness of user education, among which are lack of awareness of the availability of the program and its benefit in the students' academic life, student's interest lack of training and retraining on the part of librarians. It is therefore recommended that a practical method, rather than theoretical approach, should be employed by the libraries for more effective user education programme. Library user education that will include library tours should be introduced in the library in order to encourage them to patronize the library resources and services. Strategies should be developed to create awareness of user education program. This could be realized through different medium during registration and orientation. Adequate and qualified staff should be employed for the program to reduce workload. In addition, the staff needs to be sponsored to training and development program to enhance their work performance. When this is done, user education programme will become effective in university libraries and in turn, enhance information accessibility in library.

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