

Influence of Copies of Information Sources and Use of University Libraries in the South-East Zone of Nigeria

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Abstract

The study is on the influence of copies of information sources and the use of university libraries in the South-East Zone of Nigeria. It investigated the availability of copies of information sources and their relationship with the use of library services. One objective, one research question, and one null hypothesis guided this study. The ex-post-facto survey design was employed for the study. A sample size of 2000 out of 12,500 registered users was used. The questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. Data collected were analysed using frequency counts and percent. The hypothesis was tested using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistical technique. The null hypothesis was rejected, which revealed a significant positive relationship between copies of information sources and the use of library services. The relationship was determined to be significant at 0.05 level of significance. The study concluded that the independent variable has a substantial connection with the use of library services. The study recommended that more copies of information sources should be made available in the university libraries of the South-East Zone of Nigeria.

Keywords: Influence, Information Sources, University Libraries, Use, Nigeria

Introduction

Universities are essential agents for natural development. Through their programmes of teaching, learning, research, and community service, universities produce the needed high-level workforce for the engineering of social, economic, and political progress of any nation. Their research activities result in national self-discovery and awareness, which ensure that planning and development are based on facts and national policies.

Universities render essential community services in various forms and serve as centres for moral, social, and intellectual rejuvenation (Oyediran, 1998). One of the foundations on which this national development can be actualized is manpower

development to which higher education is primarily tied, and that explains why a certain percentage of the national budget is related to education at the tertiary level (Aguolu and Aguolu, 2002). Anafulu (1996) had earlier listed the goals of a typical Nigerian University. They include teaching, conduction research, and developing human resources, mounting extension services, and providing intellectual leadership. Anafulu went further to identify three main constituencies that make up a university community, namely: a body of students, a community of teachers and scholars, a posse of administration, and other support staff. The function and mandate of universities are spelt out in the laws establishing them. Their roles have been highlighted and discussed by Ifidon (1999) and Aguolu and Aguolu (2002).

Universities impart knowledge, which is required to solve human, social, economic, and political problems. They give knowledge of how to produce and distribute goods, of how to direct and guide others, provide knowledge that brings satisfaction to those who want to escape ignorance and superstition, which protects and advances the common good. Knowledge is infinite and can never be complete. The implication being there must be continuous research, which sheds light on problems and ensures positive development.

The University libraries are established to assist the Universities in performing these functions and roles by selecting, acquiring, and processing information sources, which are made available to the users. A university library is both collegiate and a research library. It is a collegiate in its provision of books and other documentary records to support the students' programme of instruction and the use of the library. The University library must provide materials for use by faculty members in the preparation of their courses of instruction and the staff of the university in the performance of their administrative and executive responsibilities.

University libraries also offer a wide range of undergraduate instruction beyond the master's degree level and usually offering advanced programmes in several fields. A university library is also a research library in that it provides in-depth collection. It provides books, treatises, primary source materials, and significant journals that are collected for the field of instruction of its parent institution. It must also manage the secondary and tertiary sources, the background materials, and publication in remotely related fields. In effect, it provides a very substantial portion of all the relevant thoughts on all subjects of interest to the university's young scholars and their mentors (Ugah, 2009).

The functions of a university give an idea of the purpose for which university libraries exist. The library plays an indispensable role in the fulfilment of these functions. To play these roles well, the library itself must have a sense of direction. The university library is a service organization, and its primary obligation is to provide the bibliographic or information sources that are essential to the fulfilment of the university's mission.

Information here is used to describe mankind's accumulated knowledge derived from all subjects in all forms and from all sources that could help the users in their search for knowledge (Akambi cited in Ugah, 2009). The term information source has been generally used here to include print and non-print and any other medium that contains information in whatever format. The library has to acquire these sources at different levels that correspond with the various categories of users.

It is expected that the provision of multiple copies of information sources could be related to the use of library services because the lack of numerous copies means that much demand is made on the available text. Other problems associated with the lack of multiple copies include mis-shelving, theft, and mutilation. In the absence of numerous copies of the preferred or recommended source, users clandestinely, steal or mutilate the available sources. In the case of students, the principal aim is not only to use the source but also to make them unavailable to others. In some cases, they hide some crucial sources from their peers, especially if students are addressing the same topic.

It is in recognition of the above-expected relationship between multiple copies of information sources and the use of library services, which prompted this study, which is expected to determine the directions and strengths of the relationships. It is assumed that through this study, the appropriate strategy would be adopted to improve the situation.

Problem Statement

The researchers' observations in some university libraries indicate the prevalence of inadequacy of multiple copies of information sources. Furthermore, the researcher's preliminary not informal discussion with some university libraries and members of staff point to the fact the problem inadequacy in multiple copies information sources exists. These phenomena stated above have been observed and reported by many library users.

The researchers assume that this problem has some relationship or influence the use of library services. No study has so far investigated the relationship or the effect of copies of information sources and the use of library services. Therefore, a gap in our understanding of multiple copies of information sources influencing the use of library services. The present study was, therefore, conducted to fill this knowledge gap.

Objective

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between multiple copies of information sources and the use of university libraries services in the SE Zone of Nigeria. The specific objective was:

1. Determine relationship between multiple copies of information sources and the use of university libraries services in the South Eastern Zone of Nigeria?

Research Question

1. What is the relationship between multiple copies of information sources and the use of university libraries services in the South Eastern Zone of Nigeria?

Hypothesis

1. Multiple copies of information sources have no significant relationship with the use of University libraries services in the South Eastern Zone of Nigeria

Literature Review

The problem associated with the lack of multiple copies of information sources such as books, journals, research reports, CD-ROMs, and the use of library services has received expert attention. Buckland (1975) provides a clear analytical framework for diagnosing frustrations felt by users who fail to locate on the library shelves the materials they want and for establishing an efficient stock duplication (multiple copies) policies. Lack of numerous copies had led to severe pressure on available resources and other problems of deliberate mis-shelving, theft, and mutilation of information sources. One highly valued academic goal is a good grade average. The prescribed avenues for such scholarly achievement are attentive study and sustained efforts over a long period. Compounding this pressure is the fact that students compete with one another for the best grades since the academic merit system is based upon a similar ranking structure. This approach places burdens on students and may encourage 'shortcuts' around the accepted avenues for literary achievements. In the absence of multiple copies of the preferred or recommended text, students clandestinely steal or mutilate the available sources from the library. The students not only read them but also make them unavailable to others or hide crucial sources from their peers, especially if several students are addressing similar topics for term papers assignment in the class or course. These behaviours worsen the already bad situation.

Grant (1971) discussed an industrial inventory technique adapted to a university library's computer-based circulation system as one aid in identifying heavily used books for multiple copy purchases. The need arose out of a perennial student complaint that every time a book is needed, someone has already checked it out. To help mitigate this problem, the library decided to embark upon a programme of purchasing multiple copies of much-used books. The question then became one of determining which books would need multiple copies and how many more copies of such titles would need to be bought. Suggestions of titles to be duplicated were at first solicited from the faculty, but increasing demand for them prevented their being more than minimally cooperative. To increase the availability of books, the library changed its circulation period from two weeks to one week, with unlimited renewals. At the same time, there was an instituted a system whereby a student filled out a reserve card requesting that he/she be allowed to check out a book upon its return. When there were five or more with requests, then a

copy of the book was to be purchased. Although this system of ordering multiple copies was very cumbersome, it was better than nothing (Grant).

An article by Leffler, cited in Grant (1971), suggested a system and adapting industrial inventory techniques to the problem of identifying books to be duplicated that would be compatible with the library's computer-based circulation system. This could also be expected to be more straightforward and more thorough than the above method of buying multiple copies. The basic formula used can be simply stated as:

$$N_{\text{Books}} =$$

Where N_{Books} = the number of copies of a single title necessary to meet at least 95% of student demand for that title; and T = number of days of observation, i.e., the number of days in the academic year in which students are permitted to check out books. N = total number of times a title circulated during T ; $N_{\text{as}\%} = \alpha + 28$, where α = the average length of time a title was on loan, i.e., the total number of days in which a title was in circulation divided by the number of times (N) the title circulated. S = Standard Deviation, which is computed as:

A_1 is the length of time in terms of days that a single title was off the shelves each time it circulated and is not to be confused with α , which is the average length of time (over the academic year) that the same title was on loan.

The sum (Σ) of all A_1 's was used earlier to calculate α

$$\alpha =$$

for example, if a book circulated three times during the academic year (the first time for 18 days, the second time for 20 days and the third time for 3 days) the α (the average length of time book was on loan) would be calculated as:

$$\alpha =$$

at this point, it should be noted that although the libraries continue to accept request cards for books currently on loan, these requests are not used as part of the data in determining the number of copies necessary to meet at least 95% of the demand. For one thing, there is no way of knowing how long the person making a request will want to keep a book out, and time is an essential element in the formula. But more importantly, the formula, as it stands now, attempts to account for unsatisfied requests. It assumes that in the least some instances, there will be more requests for a title that there are copies in the library. By providing an analysis of the present circulation profile of each book, the formula attempts to predict the number of copies of each title the library would need to have to accommodate unsatisfied demand more adequately.

For obvious reasons of inadequate finance, Nigerian university libraries can only acquire only a highly limited number of copies of any book or information source for a disproportionately large number of users, especially students. According to

Dipeolu (1998), Nigerian University libraries hardly order more than one copy of a given title, which is far below fifteen to twenty copies of a title, University library is often urged to procure because of a large number of students taking the relevant course. Ifidon (1999), however, suggested that a library should usually acquire not more than four copies of a title, where there is an active bookshop. Lack of multiple copies has given rise to other problems, which lead to frustration and non-effective use of the library. Some library users, mostly students, steal or mutilate information sources for their private use to the exclusion of others. To solve this problem, Buckland (1975) recommends the provision of multiple copies as an alternative strategy to improve the use of library services.

The summary is that most Nigerian university libraries hardly acquire more than a copy of a given title despite a large number of users that the title is expected to serve. This has adversely affected the use of library services leading to frustration on the part of the users.

Methodology

Ex-post-facto survey design was adopted. The adoption of this design was based on the nature of the study i.e., to examine and establish the relationship between copies of information sources and the use of university libraries and to rely heavily on careful observation of existing practice. The study area comprised the universities in the South-East Zone of Nigeria. The zone includes the following states: Abia, Anambra, Enugu, and Imo. The population for this study consists of all registered library users estimated to be 12,500 in the state and federal universities in the South East Zone of Nigeria. The sample for this study comprised of 2,000 of the population of 12,500, registered library users in the university libraries in the South East Zone of Nigeria. The sample size was selected using a proportionate stratified random sampling method. The population was stratified based on the number of registered users in each of the University libraries under study. The instrument for data collection for this study was a questionnaire. The instrument went through the validation process. Secondly, the validity of the instrument was subjected to face and content validity tests by giving copies of the questionnaire to experts in library and information science and statisticians. Appropriate Modifications were done based on the recommendation of these experts. Twenty-four (24) copies were tested and randomly administered to students and lecturers that were using the Francis Suleimanu Idachaba Library, as it was not among the libraries under study. The data obtained were tested for reliability through the use of statistical methods of Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) analysis with the use of computer Programme-statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 10.0. Data collected were analyzed using frequency tabulation and percentages to answer the research question. The hypotheses were tested using statistical methods of Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) analysis with the

use of the Computer Programme of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 10.0.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Out of the 2000 copies of questionnaires distributed, 1,508 were returned, and all found useful for the analysis. The tables below show the results of the data analysed

Table 1: Knowledge of and Use of Library Services

	Items	SA	A	Total (%)	D	SD	Total (%)
A	Knowledge	450	446	896(59.4)	444	148	592(39.3)
B	Used Before	594	318	892 (59.0)	448	148	592(39.5)
C	Currently using	150	446	596(39.5)	744	148	892(59.2)
D	Used Regularly	446	150	596(39.5)	594	298	892(59.2)
E	Used Occassionally	318	296	594(39.4)	448	446	89.4(59.3)

Keys: S=Strongly Agreed, A=Agreed, D=Disagreed, SD=Strongly Disagreed

Table 1: The authors believed that it is not just enough to use library services. It was decided to inquire from respondents' knowledge and the use of the number of library resources. The respondents totalling 896 (59.4%) agreed knowing library resources, while 592 (39.3%). Approximately the same number of respondents agreed using the information sources, and ditto for those who disagreed. More details are in the table below.

Table 2: Responses on Availability of Multiple Copies of Information Sources

	Inadequate	SA	A	Total (%)	D	SD	Total (%)
A	Inadequate multiple copies	616	446	1062(70.5)	402	44	446(29.3)
B	Inadequate multiple copies in my discipline	764	446	1212(80.4)	198	128	366(21.5)
C	My use of the library does not depend on adequate multiple copies	198	128	326(215)	914	298	121(80.4)
D	Inadequate multiple copes do not satisfy my use of Library Services	912	150	1062(70.5)	298	148	446(29.5)
E	Inadequate multiple copies do not influence my use of library service	198	148	346(22.8)	148	994	1162(77.3)

KEY: AS=Strongly Agreed, A=Agreed, D=Disagreed, SD=Strongly Disagreed

As shown in table 2, inadequate multiple copies of information sources had a total score of 1062 (70.5%) agreement, while disagreement scored 402 (26.7%). Inadequate sources in various disciplines scored 1212 (80.4%) agreement, while 362 (21.5%) disagreed. As shown in Table 8c, the majority of the respondents agreed that their use of library services depended on the availability of multiple copies of information sources. Many did not get satisfaction from the use of library services because of imperfect copies of information sources, as in table 8D. Again, the majority agreed that the provision of multiple copies of information sources influence their use of library services.

Testing of Hypothesis

Hypothesis: multiple copies of information sources have no significant relationship with the use of library services. The data collected were analyzed using the PPMC analysis. The result obtained is presented in table 9.

Table 6: PPMC Analysis of the Relationship between Multiple Copies of Information Sources (X) and the Use of Libraries Services (Y).

N	ΣY	ΣX	ΣY^2	ΣX^2	ΣYX	r- value	P	Df	D
1508	20705	17700	308427	225906	244504	0.675	0.05	1506	S

$P \leq 0.05$, S = Significant, df = 1506, critical value = 0.165

The obtained r – value was 0.75. The value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical value of 0.165 at 0.05, with a 1506 degree of freedom. The obtained value was greeter of freedom. The obtained value was greater than the critical value at 0.165; therefore, the tested null hypothesis of information sources has a significant relationship with the use of library services in the university libraries in SE Nigeria.

Discussion of findings

The null hypothesis, which stated that multiple copies of information sources have no significant relationship with the use of library services, was rejected. There was, therefore, a significant relationship between multiple copies of information sources and the use of library services. The result of this study reveals this relationship. The relationship was positive as the use of library services had 80.4% dependence on the multiple copies of information sources, which had a 77.1% influence on the use of library services.

The majority of the respondents also agreed on the relationship between multiple copies of information sources, and the use of library services was low. Because of the lack of multiple copies of information sources in general and in specific subject areas, it was leading to users not being satisfied with the use of library services

in table 8. This finding agrees with earlier find by Obiagwu (1983), who revealed that the presence of two or more copies of information sources is an indication of utility and, by implication, effective use of library services.

Conclusion

From the finding of this study, it has been established that there is a lack of multiple copies of information in South East university libraries. The effect was that most of the library users were not satisfied using the library services because of the lack of multiple copied information sources. Since the majority of the respondents were not satisfied with the lack of multiple copies of information sources, and significant relationship exists between this lack and the use of library services. It is concluded that the libraries' services provided by the South East university libraries are not fully utilized because of this perceived shortcoming. The implication being that the university libraries in the SE zone are not adequately playing the expected roles of assisting the universities in imparting knowledge, conducting research, and providing intellectual leadership.

Recommendation

Based on the finding of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. South East University libraries should provide adequate copies of information sources.
2. Available information resources (hard copies) that are in high demand should be duplicated and bound, while the original texts should be on reserve.
3. Soft copies should be replicated on CD-ROMs. Many printers print out hard copies from CD-ROMs.
4. Internet connectivity should be provided with additional printers to enable users to download and print by the South East University libraries

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