Assessment of the Impact of "Use of Library" course on Academic Library Use: A Case Study of Osun State University Library

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Abstract

Library resources and services support learning, teaching and research. It is imperative for students to use the library effectively, hence the introduction of the "Use of Library" course in universities in Nigeria. This study assessed the impact of the "Use of Library" course on academic library use: at the Osun State University Library. The descriptive survey research design was adopted using a questionnaire as an instrument for data collection. The population of the study was the students of Osun State University, and a purposive sampling technique was used to elicit responses from available students of all levels of the two colleges on the main campus of the University. Data generated were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, mean and simple percentages. Findings revealed that Textbooks were the most used resources followed by other resources like Dictionaries, Handbooks and Manuals, Newspapers and Magazines and the Internet. Results also show that majority of the students strongly agreed that the "Use of Library" class encouraged them to develop more interest in making use of the library and also helped improve their reading habits. Also, findings indicated that the library lending services, photocopy, and library orientation services are very beneficial to the students. It was recommended that the academic library management should improve on the user training, as well as infrastructure and Internet facilities to cater for the information needs of all target groups.

Keywords: *Use of library; Library use education; Users; Students; Academic Library; University Library.*

Introduction

Academic libraries are established to give literature support to their parent organizations. They have the critical role to support the teaching, learning, and research activities of students, academics and scholars by providing regular and timely information services. The student users are especially given a course orientation called "Use of Library" or "Library User Education" program, at the onset of their academic program in the institution to enable them to have a proper grasp of how to access and utilize information resources in the library. The library use program could take the form of library instruction or orientation or both. Abraham and Ozioko

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(2016) asserted that responsibility lies with the university libraries to make sure that the use of their information sources, resources and services are maximized to benefit the clientele, hence the need for library user education program.

Part of the curriculum for the "Use of Library" course is to give the students insight into the rudiments and techniques involved in library use. These techniques are guides that enable the students to identify library resources as classified in the library and also ensure that they access them easily and quickly. Kumar and Phil (2009) explain that users are illiterate as far as library activities are concerned as they need some guidance on how to utilize library resources and services. Most students in higher institutions of learning find it difficult to explore the world of information sources, thus leading to the poor appreciation of the library and its resources. New students enroll into the university every year and have varying kinds of information needs that the library should be able to meet. It is believed that a concerted effort to know and understand the essence of the library more will eventually enable individuals to develop themselves to the fullest potentials. This becomes very important as it will enable man to contribute effectively and positively to the development of society at large.

According to Edoka (2000),

> *The objective of user education is to help users make the best use of the overall library resources. In addition, a carefully planned and executed user education program greatly ensures the realization of the objectives aimed at the following: To develop readers awareness of the overall information resources available to them in their own and other libraries; to develop skills necessary for retrieving required materials; to develop in-depth knowledge materials in readers subject areas; to develop skills in presenting bibliographic references; to develop attitude skills required in making advanced studies and to create a positive attitude to information searching which will stimulate the user to make use of the resources available at different libraries.* (Edoka, 2000, p. 139).

In agreement with this, the National Universities Commission (NUC) in 1997 introduced the "Use of Library" as a course to be taught in all Nigerian Universities. It is believed that this will enable students in Nigerian tertiary institutions to use the library effectively. The teaching of the course: "Use of library", coded "LIB 101" and later recoded "GNS 103" commenced in 2010 at Osun State University. First-year students of the University have been consistently taught the course in their first semester for some years now. An evaluation is very paramount in determining the value or the effectiveness of any application, the present study is therefore set up to determine the influence of library use education as a compulsory course in Osun State University on library utilization by the students.

Purpose of the Study

The purposes of the study are to:

1. Determine the extent of utilization of the resources available in the UNIOSUN library.
2. Investigate the influence of the use of library as a course on the ability of UNIOSUN students to explore the library resources for their information needs.
3. Identify the library services students have benefitted from due to library use education.

Research Questions

1. What is the extent of students' utilization of the resources available in UNIOSUN library?
2. What is the influence of the use of library as a course on the ability of UNIOSUN students to explore the library resources for their information needs?
3. What are the library services students have benefitted from due to library use education?

Literature Review

According to Reitz (2004), user education refers to all the activities involved in teaching users how to make the best possible use of library resources, services, and facilities, including formal and informal instruction delivered by a librarian or other staff member one-on-one or in a group. Library user education may include using online tutorials, audiovisual materials, and printed guides and pathfinders. Nkanu (2013) defines user education as an instructional program in library use that is aimed primarily at developing the bibliographic skills of users for effective, efficient and independent use of the library and her resources. Abraham and Ozioko (2016) explain that the skills acquired in library user education include skills for identification, location, search, retrieval and use of information resources. Imbus *et al*. (2010) explain that guiding users through the user education program is necessary as a result of the influx of publications. Chalukya (2015) defines library user education or training as all the activities involved in teaching users how to make the best possible use of library resources, services and facilities, including formal and informal instruction delivered by a librarian or other staff member one-on-one in a group. Aguolu and Aguolu (2002); Aina (2004); Eze (2004) observe that several methods are adopted in the teaching of library user education by university libraries, which include, lecture, presentations, slides or tape formats, self-guided tours, group tours, seminar presentations, practical and also the emerging computer-aided instruction.

Library resources and services constitute important aspects of librarianship, and one of the ways of stimulating the active use of the resources is by teaching the library users, especially undergraduate students how to search for and retrieve materials in the library. This involves teaching the students the search strategies.

Search strategies are ways of using search terms in finding required information from search tools, such as search engines

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(Google), the library catalogue, and online databases (University of Johannesburg Library, 2020). Teaching students search strategies could be properly achieved through the user education program. Some factors that facilitate successful Internet use in schools are knowledge of internet services, continuous training; availability of equipment and technical assistance (Anaehobi & Ndanwu, 2014). Thanuskodi (2010) study on the use of the internet and electronic resources for agricultural science information showed that the internet and CD-ROM were the most frequently used IT-based facilities. He emphasized the need to encourage students to use the internet to access information; experience interactive activities; locate research materials; among other things. Haag et al. (2004) observe that the Internet is today almost inevitable as it helps to improve the lives of people and solve problems in society. Le Roy (2005) emphasized the essence of the Internet for enhancing learning activities and accessing library resources and services. Hobson (2007) explains that the Internet and personal computers are for use by teachers and students to help broaden their knowledge.

Barad (2019) in a study on user satisfaction with library resources and services highlights the role of the university library in higher education as satisfying the users with library resources and services, using ICT. While results showed user satisfaction with library services, they demanded quality improvement. Sharma (2019) in a study to know the usage of books by students reported that 147 (7.79%) information science books repeatedly issued 1858 times within 5 years in Punjabi University. It showed 1738 (92.20%) were not used, but a single book mostly used circulated 145 times. Kumar and Rajan (2015) in their study to find out user satisfaction of library services at Coimbatore Engineering College Libraries, showed that 55.25% of respondents were satisfied with the library functions, 40% were weekly visitors to the library, 70% felt the time range for library access was satisfactory, while 78.75% found the lending period satisfactory. The study however recommended better techniques for providing the best information services to college libraries. Yusuf and Iwu (2010) had in their study examined the extent of use of library resources in Covenant University, Nigeria, using a sample of 400 registered library users. Results showed that 88% of the student visited the library when they had an examination. Members of faculty however visited the library to read journals. The students also generally visited the library more than the faculty members.

Arogia and Balasubramanian (2019) study on the usage of electronic resources in Madras University showed that the majority of students lacked personal computers or laptops. 57.28% of the respondents feel that the internet and e-resources cannot take the place of print resources.

Swain and Panda (2009) results revealed that internet-based e-resources were more utilized than CD-ROM databases. Sujitha and Mudhol (2008) in a study on the use of electronic information sources at the College Fisheries in Mangalore, India found that 88.6% used e-resources for their project work and 87.6% used it for ongoing

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research. 79% browsed the internet for subject information websites, while 75.3% used them for browsing. The most frequently used electronic information source was e-mail followed by web resources. Natarajan *et al* (2010) found that despite the wide range of available e-resources, the frequency of their use was low. Aboderin *et al* (2011) in their study on a pedagogical appraisal of internet and computer usage among secondary school teachers and students found that 65% of students having access to the Internet indicated their use of Internet-enabled mobile-phone to surf the internet.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was made up of the undergraduate students of Osun State University. The sample was drawn out of convenience using the purposive sampling technique to elicit responses from students of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) and also College of Health Sciences in 100-500 levels. The Faculty of Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) and College of Health Sciences are on the main campus of the university, where the second largest population of students is located. The instrument used for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire titled "Use and Impact of Library and Information Resources Questionnaire" (UILIRQ). Five hundred copies of the questionnaire were personally administered by the researcher. A return rate of 329 was recorded. Frequency counts, mean and simple percentages were used to analyze the data at a 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The distribution of the respondents in this study based on level is shown in Tables 1.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by level

Level	Frequency	%
100 level	67	20.4
200 level	147	44.7
300 level	44	13.4
400 level	69	21.0
500 Level	2	0.9
Total	329	100

As shown in Table 1, a total of 67 (20.4%) respondents were 100 level students, 147 (44.7%) were 200 level students, 44 (13.4%) were 300 level students and 69 (21.0%) were 400 level students, while 2 (0.9%) were 500 level students. This shows that more of the respondents were 200 level

The data in Table 2 was used to answer the question.

The result in Table 2 revealed that the use of Textbooks made available in the library was a major attraction for user visits to the library. The result shows that there was heavier usage of Textbooks among the

Table 2: Extent to which students make use of library and information resources

Statements	Very heavily used f (%)	Heavily used f (%)	Occasionally used f (%)	Never usedf (%)	Mean
Textbooks	89 (26.4)	124(37.7)	108 (32.8)	9 (2.7)	2.9
Journals	20 (6.1)	28 (8.5)	136 (41.3)	144 (43.8)	1.8
Abstract/Indexes	21 (6.4)	38 (11.6)	112 (34.0)	157 (47.7)	1.8
Encyclopedia	23 (7.0)	47 (14.3)	120 (36.5)	138 (41.9)	1.9
Dictionaries	38 (11.6)	75 (22.8)	128 (38.9)	87 (26.4)	2.2
Directories	24 (7.3)	45 (13.7)	110 (33.3)	149 (45.3)	1.8
Handbooks/Manuals	34 (10.3)	54 (16.4)	120 (36.5)	120 (36.5)	2.0
Bibliographies	14 (4.3)	29 (8.8)	137 (41.6)	148 (45.0)	1.7
Biographies	17 (5.2)	36 (10.9)	129 (39.2)	146 (44.4)	1.8
Yearbooks	10 (3.0)	28 (8.5)	142 (43.2)	148 (45.0)	1.7
Newspaper/Magazines	37 (11.2)	48 (14.6)	118 (35.9)	125 (38.0)	2.0
Internet	50 (15.2)	48 (14.6)	66 (20.1)	164 (49.8)	2.0
CD-ROM	23 (7.0)	36 (10.8)	76 (23.1)	194 (59.0)	1.7
Others	27 (8.2)	24 (7.3)	84 (25.5)	138 (41.9)	1.8

respondents understudy with a mean of 2.9. This is followed by the use of other library resources, where usage of Dictionary (2.2), and usage of Handbooks/Manuals, Newspaper/Magazines and Internet (2.0) was not as heavy. These are followed by Encyclopedia (1.9), Directories, Journals, Abstracts/Indexes, Biographies (1.8), and others that had occasional usage. The results indicated that not many of the students utilized the library internet. The use of mobile phone had made many of the students not use the library internet service.

The findings above showed that majority of students that visit the library did so to

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(3.2). Furthermore, the perception of the students on the use of library education revealed that it increased their ability and skills to search for information (3.9). Also, respondents (3.9) indicated that after attending the class, they were able to find

Table 3: Perception of students on the impact of the Use of Library on their studies

Statements	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree	Strongly Disagree (%)	Undecided (%)	Mean
The use of library class enables me to develop an interest in making use of the library	128 (38.9)	116 (35.3)	25 (7.6)	16 (4.9)	38 (11.6)	3.9
It helped me to develop a good reading habit	131 (39.8)	131 (39.8)	23 (7.0)	16 (4.9)	22 (6.7)	4.0
It helped me to use the e-resources available in the library	72 (21.9)	104 (31.9)	40 (12.2)	33 (10.0)	73 (22.2)	3.2
It increases my ability and searching skills	98 (29.8)	159 (48.3)	21 (6.4)	16 (4.9)	29 (8.8)	3.9
After attending class, I am able to find the relevant information I need for my assignment and work	119 (36.2)	130 (39.5)	28 (8.5)	17 (5.2)	28 (8.5)	3.9
The lecture has helped me to make good use of the library Online Public Access Catalogue(OPAC)	56 (17.0)	73 (22.2)	53 (16.1)	47 (14.3)	95 (28.8)	2.8
The librarian who taught me was knowledgeable and friendly	108 (32.8)	125 (38.0)	13 (4.0)	12 (3.6)	66 (20.1)	3.6
Use of library has a positive impact on the quality of students education and reading course	141 (42.9)	139 (42.2)	9 (2.7)	10 (3.0)	25 (7.6)	4.1

the relevant information they needed for their assignment and work. On how the use of library lectures has helped them in making use of the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), some of the respondents (2.0) agreed that the lectures were beneficial. The students also positively perceived the librarian who taught them the use of library class. The result showed that respondents (3.6) agreed that the librarian who taught them was knowledgeable and friendly. The perception of the students was that the use of library education had a positive impact on the quality of their education and reading

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services with scores 199 (60.5%) and 164 (49.5%) respectively. Other library services that the respondents indicated as not so beneficial include: Current Awareness service with a score of 154 (46.8%), Reference/Advisory service 133 (40.4%), Internet service 116 (35.3%), E-Resources service 114 (34.7%), CD-ROM Database

Searching service 87 (26.4%), and SDI/Inter-Library Loan service 85 (25.8). However, it is evident that the Use of Library education impacted the students in one way or the other.

Discussion of Findings

The findings on the impact of the use of

Table 4: Library services students benefit from as a result of library use education

Statements	Yes		No	
	Frequency	**%**	**Frequency**	**%**
Lending	227	69.0	97	29.5
Reprographic /Photocopying	191	58.1	133	40.4
Current Awareness	154	46.8	170	51.7
SDI/Inter-Library Loan	85	25.8	239	72.6
Reference/Advisory	133	40.4	191	58.1
Internet	116	35.3	208	63.2
E-Resources	114	34.7	210	63.8
CD-ROM Database Searching	87	26.4	237	72.0
Book Reservation	164	49.5	162	49.2
Library Orientation	199	60.5	125	38.0

library course on the usage of the academic library understudied indicated that there was a higher level of patronage of the university library by the students, and that textbooks were utilized more than the other resources. This was in tandem with the studies by Olajide and Adio (2017) which showed that books, reference sources (encyclopedia and dictionaries) and Internet were mostly used by students. Onuoha and Subair (2013) study also showed paper-based textbooks, dictionaries, Internet facility and encyclopedias as mostly used library

resources. Thanuskodi (2010) results revealed that the Internet and CD-ROM

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Sankari *et al.* (2013) study had recommended user education to help enhance the knowledge and skills of users where results had shown skill deficiency in the use of OPAC. In line with these findings, Dina (2002) has proffered that library skills should be possessed by students, for them to effectively and efficiently utilize the resources in the library. The result of the analysis shows that the students found the use of library education very beneficial as it helped them to make good use of the library Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC). Results from the study by Harris (2008) confirm that the OPAC is one of the best interfaces between patrons and the library resources. The students were also satisfied with the disposition of the librarian who taught them and believed that the librarian was knowledgeable and friendly. This is in line with Richardson (2002) where the study shows that the friendly disposition of staff, readiness to assist with information on how to find needed resources encouraged users to patronize the library. On the other hand, Enemute and Okorodudu (2012) study reveals user dissatisfaction with library staff attitude. Conclusively, results showed that the use of library had a positive impact on the quality of students' education and reading culture. This indicated that the use of library has a significant positive impact on students' education. Bello and Musa's (2003) survey agreed with this study where 49.0% of respondents reported that there was a need for the instruction class. The researchers agreed that guidance and regular library instruction was important in helping the students meet some of their information needs.

Conclusion

This study has generated information on the impact of the user education course in Osun State University Library. Findings revealed that textbooks were the most used resources followed by a few others like Dictionaries, Handbooks/Manuals, Newspapers/ Magazines and the Internet. Results also showed that because most students had their smartphones and other handheld devices, they seldom visited the library internet services. Furthermore, the majority of the students strongly agreed that the "Use of Library" class encouraged them to develop an interest in making use of the library, helped them to develop a good reading habit, and also increased their information search-skills. Findings also indicated that the library lending services, photocopy, library orientation and book reservation services are the most beneficial for the students. With this in mind, one could conclude that the use of library education has significantly impacted students at Osun State University. A notable challenge is that the level of internet usage is not appreciably high.

Recommendations

There is no gainsaying the importance of library user education in tertiary institutions, particularly for undergraduate students from their entry session. Arising from the findings of this research, the following recommendations are made:

1. Libraries need to enhance service provision and infrastructure to ensure better service delivery and user

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information need satisfaction. All efforts must be made to ensure that library users get direct access to every library resource by ensuring that they are made aware of what is available Efforts should also be made to efficiently utilize reference services in each library thereby encouraging users to feel free to make queries on information resources.

2.   There is a great need for the Osun State University Library management to invest more in electronic resources provision services.

3.   Management of academic libraries also needs to consistently organize and improve on user education training, to better cater for the information demands of all target groups. Today's technological advances are continually providing avenues for better interaction between the libraries and the users and librarians must take advantage of the opportunities provided by Information Technology (IT). The library management must put in place clearly defined policies to drive this plan to ensure best practices.

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