

The Information Needs and Utilization of Information Resources Among Clinical Students of College of Medicine and Health Sciences, Bingham University Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examines the information needs and utilization of information resources among clinical students of College of Medicine and Health Sciences, Bingham University. The goal of the study is to help the University library and the authority of the University, to examine how often the students use the library, to determine the purposes for which the students use the library, to find out the types of information resources used most by the students, to identify the problems encountered by the students in using the library, to find out if the students are satisfied with the information resources in the library. Survey research method was adopted for the study and structured questionnaire was used to collect data. A total of hundred (100) questionnaires were administered using random sampling technique to the clinical students. A total of 80 copies of the questionnaire, representing (80%) of the 100 questionnaire were returned and found usable. Frequency count and percentage were used in analyzing the data. The major findings were that the student's purpose of visiting the library was to consult textbooks and they were also averagely satisfied with the library services. Recommendations were proffered on how to improve the library services.

Keywords: Information needs, information utilization, clinical students, Bingham University.

INTRODUCTION

There are vast ranges of information resources that can be found and utilized by the students in the University library. The basic information resources available and are being used, could be found both in print, non-print and electronic. The print is made up of books, journals, reference materials. The non-print consists of audio-visual resources in form of C.D, C.D-ROM, DVD and periodicals. The e-resources are the internet resources, data bases, web sites, etc. According to Onu (2005) information is as oil that greases the wheel of governance, programmes and activities of government, academics, organizations and individuals. Information needs may arise at an almost infinite number of places. Certain research approaches in cognitive and social psychology do make the task more manageable by providing a number of convenient reference points for professional librarians to be able to meet information needs of students in their various academic interests. Onifade, Ogbuiyi and Omeluzor (2013), Stated that the major aim of any University library is to support teaching, learning and research activities of its parent institution. University libraries must therefore, make sure that their resources are well utilized as this is essential for the educational development of the students. Wolf and Benson (2000) posited the necessity to study information needs as a means of improving existing services to cope with all the information needed to satisfy their users.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF BINGHAM UNIVERSITY

Bingham University, Karu was established by the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) its formal licensing by the National Universities Commission (NUC) on 5th January, 2005. The academic programmes of the University began in May 2006 at the Jos ECWA Theological Seminary temporary site and later moved to its present permanent site in March 2008 located at KM 26 Abuja-Keffi expressway, Kodape, New Karu- Nasarawa State- Nigeria

As the name of the university implies, the university was named after one of the trio of pioneer Sudan interior missionaries, Roland Victor Bingham whose vision along with those of other founding fathers desire to produced committed christens in our institutions, including the University through which Christ center leaders would emerge. The founding fathers intend to meet the soaring need for not only quality tertiary education but education that recognizes and integrates moral and spiritual values in the face of degenerating social decadence in Nigerian University campuses.

Bingham University, Karu, is unique in the history of tertiary education in Nigeria, being as one of the

few Universities to begin with a college of health sciences from inception gaining accreditation for the MB,BS programme at pre-clinical and having met the minimum requirement for the training and award of the MB, BS degree, the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria (MDCN). Approved the full accreditation of the program on 21st November, 2014

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to examine whether the clinical students utilized the resources and services provided by the library and the extent to which the library was used. The specific objectives are:

1. To examine how often the students use the library
2. To determine the purposes for which the students use the library
3. To find out the types of information resources used most by the students
4. To identify the problems encountered by the students in using the library
5. To find out if the students are satisfied with the information resources in the library

RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the types of information resources used in the library?

What are the problems encountered by the students when using library sources?

Are the students satisfied with the information resources in the library?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Information needs of an individual in any society are influenced by the purpose and goal at hand. Therefore, information need is a basic requirement which enables individuals to value their jobs, interests and carriers. According to Madukoma & Opeke (2013), Information need is stemming from a vague awareness of something missing and as culminating in locating information that contributes to understanding and meaning. Information need is an anomalous state of knowledge, or a gap in individual's knowledge in sense making situation. Similarly, Ikoja-Odongo and Mostert (2006), stimulate from a lack in knowledge data or inadequacy to satisfy a goal or objective. Information need in today's society cannot be overemphasized as there is a little possibility of taking wise decision without information. Uwen (1990), defined it as "data that have been subjected to some processing functions capable of answering a user's query be it recorded, summarized or simple collections that would help decision making." The study defined the information needs of health professionals in terms of three components: (1) information that is needed for decision making and that is already known by the health professional (currently satisfied needs); (2) information that is not known by the health professional but that he or she recognizes as being applicable to the decision-making process (consciously recognized needs); and (3) information that is important to the circumstances at hand but that the health professional does not realize is applicable (unrecognized needs) (Ibegwam,2013).

From the above, one can concludes that, information needs is often as a result of some unresolved problem(s). An individual may feel that his or her current state of knowledge is insufficient to cope with the task at hand or to resolve conflicts in a subject area, or to fill a void in some area of knowledge. So, information needs are the driving force behind literature searching. Thus, these elements: information needs, information seeking or searching are all interlinked and should not be considered in isolation. If there is no expressed information needs, there will be no driving force to undertake a literature search. Abu (1986), affirmed that, "there is interaction of information needs, user's behavior and as well utilization." He is of the opinion that information needs will influence the user's behavioral pattern in seeking, exchanging and finally utilizing information gathered. Therefore, it is certain that achieving information needs vary, depending on the ease with which they can be identified, located and assessed for specific user.

Information utilization can be considered as one important attribute for academic development and it constitutes one of the most important factors for research. A fundamental factor in information resources utilization is the 'perceived' information need, awareness of existence of an information resource is a major determinant of use. According to Magoi (2014), the library as an information centre, is saddled with the responsibility of generating information resources to address user's needs and demands, irrespective of classes or races in the society. Opeke and Odunlade (2011), defined information resources as "the materials possessed by a library which may include: books, periodicals, films, microfilms that contain recorded knowledge." The sources could be in printed format as monographs, serials, maps, directories, etc. Non-print materials include the sources of information which are contained in a non-conventional format from which information is stored and retrieved through their relevant reading aids. Interestingly today, the trend of information services is changing drastically to a paperless society, which is a reality in computer era.

However, Byamugisha, Odongo and Nasinyama (2010) posited that information use, on the other hand, is a behaviour that consists of the physical and mental acts involved in incorporating the information found into the person's existing knowledge base (Oyesiku, 2004). Fasaie (2011) pointed out that one of the problems with information use is that information processing is as subjective as information need, and like information need, is

not observable since it takes place in the mind of the individual. Byamugisha, Odongo and Nasinyama (2010), proposed eight general categories which describe how people use information. To them, information may be used to develop a context; understand a particular situation; know what and how to do something; get the facts about something; confirm another item of information; project future events; motivate or sustain personal involvement; develop relationships, enhance status, reputation or personal fulfillment.

Ankuya (2013), emphasized that, “information is an indefinite commodity and our needs for it are pervasive and essential”. He further stressed that, “because technology changes the mode and pace for creating and storing information, it also demands changes in information accessing strategies”. Thus, the needs for information for problem solving based on critical thinking are inherent in all areas of human endeavors. Students, like any other professional bodies, needs library and information services to effective learning and research in the university which are paramount in their needs, including their information needs. It is in the light of this, that this paper intends to assess the information needs and utilization information by students of College of Medicine and Health Science, Bingham University.

METHODOLOGY

Survey research method was adopted for the study and structured questionnaire was used to collect data. A total of hundred (100) questionnaires were administered using random sampling technique to the clinical students of College of Medicine and Health Sciences, Bingham University. A total of 80 copies of the questionnaire, representing (80%) of the 100 questionnaire were returned and found usable. Frequency count and percentage were used in analyzing the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic information

The result of the studies indicated that female respondents were in majority 44(55%) were female and 36 (45%) were male respondents. The questionnaire contained 14 items to elicit responses of the information need and utilization of information by the clinical students of the College of Medicine and Health Sciences, Bingham University Nigeria.

Table 1 Frequency use of library by clinical students

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	22	27.5
Weekly	36	45
Monthly	6	7.5
Occasionally	3	3.75
Not at all	13	16.25
Total	80	100

Use of library by clinical students

The study sought to find out the use of library by clinical students. The answer to this question is presented in table 1. The analysis of the result presented in table 1 revealed that majority 36 (45%) of the respondents used the library occasionally, 6(7.5%) of the respondents only used the library daily and 3(3.75%) respondents used the library weekly and 13(22.5%) used the library monthly and 13(16.25%) respondents don't use the library at all. The implication here is that majority of the clinical students do not use the library on regular basis. This may be due to the fact that, they go for different posting and this may affect their reading time. This might be the reason for the underutilization of library resource.

Table 2 Purpose of Visiting Library

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Consult materials	17	21.25
Prepare for Seminar	10	12.5
Returned borrowed books	10	12.5
Borrow books	13	16.25
Study for examination	15	18.75
Lecture follow up	13	16.25
Librarians guidance	2	2.5
Total	80	100

Purpose of visiting the library

Revealed in table 2 is the purpose of visiting the library. Majority of the respondents 17(21.25%) visit the library mainly to consult materials for research, 10(12.5%) of the respondents go to the library to prepare for seminar presentation while 13(16.25%) respondents visit the library to borrow books. 10(12.5%) respondents visit the library to returned borrowed books 15(18.75%) of respondents goes to the library to study for examination while

13(16.25%) respondents visit the library for lecture follow up 2(2.5%) of the respondents visit the library for librarians guidance.

Table 3 Types of Information Use in the Library

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Internet	12	15
Textbook	45	56.25
Journals	8	10
Reference materials	10	12.5
WHO Material	5	6.25
Total	80	100

One of the objectives of the study was to ascertain the types of information materials used by the clinical students. The result from table 3 showed that, majority of the respondents 45(56.25%) visit the library to consult textbook, 12(15%) goes to the library to make use of the internet facilities 8(10%) goes to the library to consult journals while 10(12.5%) visit the library to consult reference materials and 5 (6.25%) consult WHO materials

The implication is that most of the students prefer to use the library books than other resources.

Table 4 Problems Encountered when using the Library

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Insufficient Internet	20	25
Opening Hours	10	12.5
Inadequate Space	7	8.75
Lack of Time	11	13.75
Short duration	8	10
Power Outage	14	17.5
Orientation	6	7.5
Staff Manners	4	5
Total	80	100

Another propelling issue was to determine the problems encounter by the students when using the library so that the library authority can take steps to solve these problems. The analysis on Table 4 showed that, majority of respondents 20(25%) complained of weak internet services 10(12.5%) respondents complained of the library opening hours 7(8.75%) talked about inadequate space while 11(13.75%) respondents declared lack of time. This may be associated with their posting and lecture periods. 14(17.5%) respondents complained of power outage.

As earlier observed, majority of the respondents complained of insufficient internet which may be caused by the fluctuation of the service by the service providers and power outage could also be another reason. In view of this, it is important for the library to provide power back up for the library and also provide a stronger internet services for the library.

Table 5 Users Satisfaction

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Very Highly Satisfied	5	6.25
Highly Satisfied	10	12.5
Average Satisfied	50	62.5
Not Satisfied	15	18.75
Total	80	100

One of the aims of this study is to find out whether the students are satisfied with library services. Analysis of the result of this aspect is presented in table 5. 50(62.5%) represent the respondents that were averagely satisfied 5(6.25%) respondents were very highly satisfied while 10(12.5%) were highly satisfied and 15(18.75%) of the respondents were not satisfied with the library services

Conclusion

Library resources have really improve library services and also contributed to student academic development in providing timely and easy access to information resources worldwide. Therefore, to function properly in a rapidly changing academic environment, students' needs to interact with variety of information notwithstanding that factors that affect information needs which are getting more complex and dynamic by the day. In seeking for information, it is necessary to have complete and recent information about things and circumstances as possible. Information needs of students in Nigerian universities differ based on their different roles, and they seek information from different sources.

Recommendation

1. An alternative source of power supply should be provided by the library to forestall problem of power outage since power holding company of Nigerian (PHCN) is not a reliable power supply.
2. The university library should be adequately funded so that current and up to date materials can be acquire for the library
3. Provision of adequate and up-to-date textbooks and journals in the Library
4. There is the need for the university to provide a bigger accommodation for the e-library because the existing one is small and also to upgrade the internet facilities

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