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UTILIZATION OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE RESEARCH REPORTS FOR LIBRARY PRACTICE IN AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY ZARIA LIBRARY COMPLEX, NIGERIA

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Abstract
The paper discussed utilization of library and information science research reports for library practice in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria Library Complex. It pointed out some primary purposes of library and information science research reports for library practice among which is to teach skills necessary for a librarian to conduct basic rigorous and effective work in the library. It described library as an organized collection of sources of information and related resources made available for reference or borrowing to a specific community. Despite the increasing availability of numerous research reports and broad consensus on the importance of research reports in improving practice, there is lack of zeal or willingness by the academic librarians in utilizing it for library practice. The paper answered two research questions and tested one hypothesis. Related literatures were appropriately reviewed in line with the research questions. The research design adopted for the study was descriptive survey. It was chosen because descriptive survey research is fact finding in nature. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire; purposive sampling was used to select academic librarians. The total population comprised all the 177 academic librarians from Ahmadu Bello University Library complex there was no sample size because the population was manageable. Of the 177 questionnaire distributed, 96 questionnaires were returned and found useful for analysis. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. The researcher used descriptive statistical analysis and frequency distribution tables in analyzing the findings. The paper discovered that among the challenges faced by academic librarians in the utilization of research reports for library practice include lack of time to read and utilize research for library practice as well as no organizational support in utilization of research finding. The paper recommended that library top management should encourage the academic librarians to make adequate utilization of the available research reports in order to bring about new innovation in the library practice which would provide assistance to students, staff and other researchers.
Keywords: Utilization of library, Library and information science, Library practice, Research report, Zaria

Introduction

This article indicates that research is the primary purpose to help teach the skills necessary for a librarian to conduct basic rigorous and effective work in the library. Library is described as an organized collection of sources of information and related resources made available for reference or borrowing to a specific community. The resource may be real, digital, or visual, and they could be in physical building or visual area (Agbaje, 2014). Research is a veritable tool for program planning, service delivery, organizational development and problem solving considering the ever increasing organizational complexity of libraries. Research report is a medium to communicate research work with relevant people. It is also a good source of preservation of research work for future references. Research reports utilization for academic librarians, is very essential especially in the present global village which is characterized with explosion in the arrays of available information and technological interventions on the operations of library and information services.

Utilization of library and information sciences report simply means using of library research reports, a person or thing that uses something somewhere or some places to achieve his or her on purposes is a utilizer or user. Research reports utilization for academic librarians, is very essential especially in the present global village which is characterized with explosion in the arrays of available information and technological interventions on the operations of library and information services (Anunobi & Essmerole, To that effect, Lenox, (2009) posited that research is a veritable tool for program planning, service delivery, organizational development and problem solving considering the ever increasing organizational complexity of libraries". Librarians could overcome these complex challenges if they are grounded in research process and increase their consumption of research literature (Swisher, 2010).

Research report serves to create new knowledge and therefore contribute to the growth of LIS as a profession. It is needed to "improve problem solving and decision making in the workplace and it can equip academic librarians to better provide optimal information services to researchers in other fields.

Statement of the Problem

The success of a library is determined by the utilization of its resources. In library and information science (LIS), the importance of research reports utilization to practice has been well acknowledged by numerous scholars (Powell, Baker & Mika, 2012). This is because research report serves to create new knowledge and therefore contribute to the growth of LIS as a profession. It is

needed to "improve problem solving and decision making in the workplace and it can equip academic librarians to better provide optimal information services to researchers in other fields. However, academic librarians seem reluctant to utilize this expertise to create and use research data that could contribute to improving the practice of librarianship. Earlier concerns on low use of research may attributed to poor communication between researchers and practitioners, overwhelming professional literature, inadequate education on research methods.

Despite the increasing availability of numerous research reports and broad consensus on the importance of improving practice, there is lack of zeal or willingness by the academic librarians in utilizing the research reports for library practice. The perception that research result/reports are not related to application and resistance to new ideas/change by LIS practitioners.

Therefore, the study was set to examine utilization of library and information science research reports for library practice by academic librarians in A.B.U. Zaria library complex.

Research Questions

1. To what extent do the academic librarians utilize library and information science research reports for library practice in Ahmadu Bello University Library Complex?
2. What challenges do academic librarians encounter in utilizing library and information science research reports for library practice in Ahmadu Bello University Library Complex?

Hypothesis

Ho1. There is no significant difference among the academic librarians on the extent to which they utilize LIS research reports for library practice in Ahmadu Bello University Library complex.

Review of Related Literature

The concept of research utilization has been described by different researchers using a variety of terminologies, including 'knowledge translation', 'knowledge management', 'knowledge utilization', and 'research dissemination', among others. However, research utilization differs from all these terminologies in that it focuses on purposes and impact of the study outcome rather than mere knowledge management or dissemination of results. More specifically, research utilization focuses on what researchers want people to receive from their research results/reports, how they want people to make use of the ideas, information, or

products resulting from their research, and how people are actually using these (RUSH, 2009).

Research utilization can also be referring to as "making decisions concerning policy, advocacy and resource allocation, planning and management, and program systems development and strengthening, using information generated from research" (Population council, 2008).The utilization of information resources is a function of how properly the resources are organized and made available for use. Uhegbu, (2007) observed that "utilization of information resources differ from one person to another; and from one corporate organization to the other according to their information needs and other socio economic imperatives.

Research report utilization is the implementation of research-based knowledge (science) in practice setting to provide services to consumers. Increasing public expectation on high quality services forces practitioners in their practicing discipline to utilize research reports to promote the quality of outcomes for the services they offer. Research report utilization also known as evidence based practice (EBP) is a method of problem solving which includes recognizing the problem, running a literature search, appraising the research evidences and deciding on the intervention(s). Despite increasing availability of research reports and broad consensus on the importance of its benefits in discipline, using them in practice and services remains, at best, slow and arbitrary. This "gap between research and practice" according to Heydari and Emani, (2014) is a worldwide phenomenon. Therefore, it seems to be a priority to adopt modalities for increasing research reports use by practitioners including the academic librarians. To achieve this, identifying challenges to research utilization, would be a key strategy.

Several studies discussed challenges for inadequate utilization of research. The challenges were various but there were some challenges got the top scores in most studies. According to the reviewed studies, the top challenges to utilization of research include lack of administrative and team support inadequate time for reading and applying research reports poor research knowledge and skills Athanasakis, (2013) reviewed 37 papers about research utilization and found that lack of authority, lack of time and language as the top barriers to research utilization got the top scores. While in other study, the top research utilization barriers were mainly related to the organization (Atkinson & Turkel, 2008).

Research findings/reports may be utilized in three main forms: as data and findings, as ideas and criticism, or as briefs and arguments for action. (Hanney,

Gonzalez-Block, Buxton, & Kogan, (2009) argued that utilisation of research findings in policymaking is sometimes instrumental, conceptual, or symbolic. Instrumental use involves the use of research findings directly in policy formulation; conceptual use refers to the gradual sedimentation of insight, theories, concepts, and perspectives; and symbolic use refers to use of research to support continuation of an already established position (Squires, 2011). Therefore, there are three phases of policymaking where research utilization might occur, namely agenda setting, policy formulation, and policy implementation (Almeida & Báscolo 2006).

In striving to contribute towards improved practice and services outcomes, huge volumes of potential relevant research reports are generated and accumulated but remain largely underutilized, with limited movement from the research community to the practice community. (Hanney, Gonzalez-Block, Buxton, & Kogan, (2009) note that, whereas "research centers undertake large scale dissemination, this does not necessarily guarantee that their research findings will be utilized". This is further exacerbated by the fact that many dissemination practices remain based on "a mechanistic, linear conception of dissemination as a process of getting the word out" (RUSH, 2009). As a result, there is a fundamental gap between what is known about what works based on relevant knowledge and what is actually done with it; this is referred to as the "know-do gap" (Lang, Wryer, & Haynes, 2007). In essence, these findings suggest that the concept of research utilization, including what is actually done to promote it, remains an area that is worth further consideration.

Research Methodology

The design adopted for this study was descriptive survey. This design was chosen for this study because descriptive survey research is fact finding in nature. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire. The total population comprised 177 academic librarians from Ahmadu Bello University Library purposive sampling was used. There was no sample size because the population was manageable. Of the 177 questionnaire distributed, 96 questionnaires were returned indicating a response rate of 99.97%. The researcher used descriptive statistical analysis and frequency distribution tables in analyzing the findings.

Population of the Study **Names of libraries under A.B.U. Library Complex**	**Number of Academic Librarians in each Library**
1. Kashim Ibrahim Library (KIL)	42
2. President Kennedy Library (PKL)	9
3. Law Library	3
4. Centre for Islamic Legal Studies Library (CILS)	2
5. Institute of Agricultural Research Library (IAR)	6
6. Division of Agricultural College Library (DAC)	3
7. College of Medical Science Library	8
8. Lee T. Rails back (Veterinary Medical Library)	3
9. Abdullahi Muhammad Public Library (AMPL)	2
10. National Animal Production Research Institute (NAPRI)	3
11. National Agricultural Extension & Liaison Services (NAERLS)	2
13. Faculties and Departmental Libraries	34
Total 117	

Data Analysis and Discussion

Table 1: Extent to which academic librarians in ABU library complex utilize LIS research reports for library practice

S/N	Extent to which academic librarians in ABU utilize LIS Research Reports	LIBRARIES UNDER A.B.U LIBRARY COMPLEX																																						
		KIL			PKL			LL			CILS			IAR			DAC			CMSL			Lee T.			AMPL			NAERLS			NAPRI			F/Ds			Total	M	SD
		U	UN	NU	U	UN	NU	U	UN	NU	U	UN	NU	U	UN	NU	U	UN	NU	U	UN	NU	U	UN	NU	U	UN	NU	U	UN	NU	U	UN	NU	U	UN	NU			
1.	Journals articles	33	0	1	6	0	1	2	0	0	2	0	0	3	0	0	3	0	0	6		0	1	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	20	2	6	96	1.1	1.0
2.	conference/seminar papers	30	4	0	3	3	1	2	0	0	1	0	1	3	0	0	3	0	0		2	2	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	15	6	11	96	5.4	2.3
3.	technical reports	23	4	6	2	4	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	3	0	0	2	0	1		1	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	5	7	16	96	15.5	3.9
4.	Projects	26	3	5	5	1	1	1	1	0	2	0	0	3	0	0	2	0	1		5	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	21	2	6	96	1.4	1.1
5.	Dissertation	30	0	2	5	0	2	0	1	1	2	0	0	3	0	0	2	0	1		5	1	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	22	4	4	96	0.6	0.8
6.	Theses	31	1	0	5	0	2	2	0	0	2	0	0	3	0	0	2	0	1		5	1	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	20	3	5	96	0.9	0.9
7.	Books	25	2	1	5	1	1	2	0	0	2	0	0	3	0	0	2	0	1		5	1	1	0	1	1	1		0	0	0	3	0	0	21	2	4	96	0.6	0.6
8.	report for policy making and schools	17	5	6	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	1		2	2	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	3	11	11	96	7.4	2.3

KEY: U= Utilise, UN= Undecided, NU= Not Utilise, KIL= Kashim Ibrahim Library, PKL= President Kennedy Library, LL= Law Library, CILS= Centre for Islamic Legal Studies Library, IAR= Institute for Agricultural Research Library, DAC= Division for Agricultural College Library, CMSL= College of Medical Science Library, Lee T.= Lee T. Rails Back (veterinary medical library), AMPL= Abdullahi Muhammad Public Library, F/Ds= Faculties and Departmental Libraries

Table 2: Challenges faced by academic librarians in utilizing LIS research reports for library practice in ABU Zaria library complex

S/N	Challenges to LIS research reports	Libraries under A.B.U Complex														
		KIL	PKL	LL	CILS	IAR	DAC	CMSL	Lee T.	AMPL	NAPRI	NAERLS	F&D L	Total	M	SD
1	lack of time to read and utilize research to improve practice	19	4	1	1	2	0	4	1	2	1	0	15	50	7.7	7.8
2	No organizational support in utilization of research finding	20	7	0	1	3	0	2	1	2	1	0	22	59	4.9	3.7
3	the research reports do not address practical problems in work place	11	1	1	0	2	0	1	1	1	0	0	9	28	2.3	5.2
4	research report not easily available	13	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	14	33	2.8	3.2
5	research changes practice & services little	9	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	9	23	1.9	5.9
6	problem with physical availability	15	2	2	0	3	0	3	0	1	0	0	17	43	3.6	3.7
7	research is presented in a way that is difficult to understand	11	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	9	26	2.2	4.3
8	Problems with intellectual availability (e.g. poor bibliographic control of research findings)	11	0	0	1	2	1	3	1	1	2	0	13	36	3.0	5.0
9	Conferences, meetings and professional network provide sufficient knowledge to be use in the library practice.	12	7	7	2	0	2	1	1	1	2	0	15	43	3.6	3.7

Discussion of Findings

Table 1 shows the extent to which academic librarians in ABU library complex utilize LIS research reports for library practice. The table revealed that, technical report with the mean score 15.5, report for policy making and schools with mean score 7.4, followed by conference/seminar papers with mean score 5.4

respectively were the statement showing the extent to which some LIS research reports were highly utilized for library practice by academic librarians in ABU library complex. This findings could be supported with the findings of (Anunobi, Okoye, & James, 2009) who stated that journal articles, conference/seminar papers, technical reports, and books were the various types LIS research reports utilized in library and information science practice.

However, the least among the statement showing the extent to which LIS research reports were not utilized for library practice by academic librarians in ABU library complex were project with mean score 1.4, journal article with mean score 1.1, theses with mean score 0.9, dissertations with mean score 0.6, and books with mean score 0.6 respectively were the LIS research reports that are not utilized for library practice by academic librarians ABU library complex. This shows that most of the LIS research reports were not being utilize to some extent line with the findings of Brown& Spencer (2004) which state that most librarians went about their work without consulting LIS research reports. The implication of this is that, without adequate utilization of the available research reports by the academic librarians, the library practice of A.B.U. library complex would remain in the traditional way while the library and information science profession today is in the era of 21st century librarianship

Table 2 shows the challenges faced by academic librarians in utilizing LIS research reports for library practice in ABU Zaria, library complex. The responses from the table revealed that, lack of time to read and utilize research for library practice with mean score 7.7, No organizational support in utilization of research finding has mean score of 4.9, problem with physical availability with mean score 3.6 and conferences, meetings and professional network provide sufficient knowledge with mean score 3.6 were the major challenges to the utilization of research reports for library practice by academic librarians in ABU Zaria library complex.

The least among the challenges revealed are problems with intellectual availability (e.g. poor bibliographic control of research findings) with mean score 3.0, research report not easily available with mean score 2.8, research is presented in a way that is difficult to understand with mean score 2.2, the research do not address practical problems in work place with mean score 2.2, and researches change practice and services little with mean score 1.9.Several studies discussed barriers/challenges for inadequate utilization of research.

Conclusion

Based on the findings the study concluded that the challenges faced by

academic librarians in the utilization of research reports for library practice were lack of time to read and utilize research for library practice, no organizational support in utilization of research finding, problem with physical availability and conferences, meetings and professional network provide sufficient knowledge, with that being the case, the library complex would remain in the traditional way while the library and information science profession today is in the era of 21st century librarianship. This indicates that there is need for top management of A.B.U. library complex to ensure maximum utilization of this expertise and also develop mechanism for measuring the utilization.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following the recommendations are made:

1. The library top management should encourage the academic librarians to make adequate utilization of the available research reports in these ways in order to bring about new innovation in the library practice which would provide assistance to students, staff and other researchers.
2. The library management should support and encourage the academic librarians by providing on the job time for reading and discussing research reports, strong organizational support and also the required modern equipment and necessary training that can facilitate the utilization of new ideas in library practice.

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