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RELATIONSHIP AMONG AVAILABILITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND UTILIZATION OF INFORMATION SERVICES BY USERS OF BORNO STATE PUBLIC LIBRARY, MAIDUGURI, NIGERIA

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Abstract
This study determined the relationship among availability, accessibility and utilization of information services by users of Borno State Public Library. Descriptive survey research method was adopted for the study and a convenient sample size of seven hundred and one (701) users was drawn from a target population for the study was six thousand, one hundred and thirty-five (6,135) users of the library under study, data used was collected using a self-designed questionnaire. Out of the 701 questionnaires administered to the respondent, 677 (96.6%) copies were duly completed, returned and found valid for the analysis. The results indicated that only inter library lending, reference services and current awareness services were the information services available for users, the information services were accessible to the low extent and the extent to which users utilize the information services was to the low extent in Borno State Public Library, the availability of information services has significant relationship with extent of accessibility in Borno State Public Library and the extent of accessibility has significant relationship with the extent of utilization of information services in Borno State Public Library. The study recommended among others that the library management of Borno state public library should provide more and quality information services so as to encourage utilization by users of the library and the state government should provide fund or organize training and workshops to the library staff in order to improve service delivery.

Keywords: *Availability, Accessibility, Information services, Public Library, Maiduguri*

Introduction

The study investigates the relationship among availability, accessibility and utilization of information services by users of Borno State Public Library, Maiduguri. The term availability should be distinguished from the term accessibility. The availability of information services means ensuring that they are physically existing in the libraries for immediate utilization. Information service might be available i.e. the library has developed them but inaccessible for use to those who need them for whatever reason (possibly due to incomplete installation associated with technical or financial factors, unqualified staff, etc). Accessibility means that users can identify and use information services. However, the library could mean different things to different people and institutions. To some, it is a place where books and non-book materials are preserved for the dissemination of information and knowledge and for the benefit of the society it is meant to serve. To others, the library is an institution where books and other information resources are collected, processed, stored, retrieved and disseminated. The public library unlike other types of libraries is not restricted to any group of users. It is more or less a universal library. It is expected to serve all kinds of people including young children and people with disabilities and even people who for one reason or the other are incapacitated. Such people include patients in the hospitals, prisons, etc. they are generally managed, financed and supported by government, local communities and occasionally non-government organizations, etc. some National Libraries in Africa develop, operate and maintain public libraries (Aina, 2004). Public library is commonly talked about as the 'people's university' and are reflected as foremost means of communal, civil, informative, and ethnic change in any given society because they provide extensive variety of readership than any other form of library. As a rule, they are usually recognized by law and supported with public fund either through the community, local, state or national government agency. Public libraries are seen as vital to the individual as well as communities they serve in common. No doubt, public library has become a learning focal point where people can take part in learning activities, discuss and share knowledge and information. The obligation of the public library is to safeguard access of information for the public regardless of race, nationality, age, gender, religion, language, disability, economic, employment status and educational attainment" (IFLA/UNESCO, 2001)

The idea of a public library system in Northern Nigeria started in the late 1940s with the Native Authority (N.A.) Reading Rooms. Prior to this period

however, a collection of Islamic scriptures and manuscripts can be found with individual clerics scattered across the Region especially in Sokoto, Borno and Kano which are regarded as centers of commerce and Islamic civilization as a result of their contact with the Arab world through the Trans-Saharan Trade Routes. (Aguolu 1984 cited in Saleh & Lasisi 2011). These "libraries" lacked all that can be said of a public library in terms of policies, organization, personnel and services. The North Eastern State Library Service began in Maiduguri on 1st August, 1968 with 5,765 Books on display and others were locked up in boxes due to lack of space. Both the State Library collection and the Native Authority Reading Room collection of Arabic manuscripts was housed in one small room. Borno State Library Board was established in 1978, it has Six (6) local branches with a total collection of 32,749 Volumes and 72 Staff made up of 27 Professionals and 45 Para-professionals. Since then it places more importance on attracting young readers and promoting reading habit at an early stage. The facilities provided by the library also help adult populace to surmount illiteracy, falsehood, sickness, and poverty. The library is situated at the heart of the capital; the library opens for service from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm from Monday to Friday. However, despite the significance of the library, it has been observed that information services are not readily available, probably due to poor budgetary allocation from the state Government. Another problem observed is that the accessibility of the information services seems difficult. This perhaps might be as a result of poor quality or inadequacy of the information services. The problem associated with the use of information services as observed in the library that users appear not to be aware of the information services available in the library probably because they are uninformed or do not know the library setting/use. When library services are not available they cannot be accessed, and it means that the library itself is not being utilized. In order to have insight into the users' view about the public library information services, it is now crucial to research the relationship among availability, accessibility and utilization of information services by users of Borno State Public Library.

Statement of the Problem

Public library is rightly referred to as people's university because it serves as a local gateway to knowledge. The public library provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision-making and cultural development of the individual and social groups. The basic roles of public libraries are knowledge archiving, preservation and maintenance of culture, knowledge dissemination, knowledge sharing, information retrieval, education, and social interaction.

Public library is closely linked with the community and has the obligation to provide information services needed by the community. In this information age, one of the key functions of the public library should be provision of information services necessary for all the sections of the community. If promotional medium of information services is not provided, then the flow of utilization of the public libraries would either never take place or take place inefficiently. However, preliminary investigations by the researcher revealed that, the library seem to be underutilized, and this could lead to discouraging reading habit among the people in society, this is because public libraries, through their resources and services are supposed to attract people towards them and also embrace technologies to meet the information needs of the people. The concern here is; could it be that the information services were not provided enough? Or could it be that access to the services is restricted? It is against this backdrop that this study determined the relationship among Availability, Accessibility and Utilization of Information Services by Users of Borno State Public Library, Maiduguri, Nigeria.

Objective of the Study

The objectives of this study are to determine the:

1. Types of information services that are available in Borno State Public Library,
   Extent to which information services are accessible in Borno State Public Library, Maiduguri, Nigeria;
2. Extent to which the information services are being utilized by users in Borno State Public Library, Maiduguri, Nigeria;
3. Relationship between the availability and the extent of utilization of information services in Borno State Public Library, Maiduguri, Nigeria
4. Relationship between the extent of accessibility and the extent of utilization of information services in Borno State Public Library, Maiduguri, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The study answered the following research questions:

1. What are the types of information services that are available in Borno State Public Library?
2. To what extent are information services accessible in Borno State Public Library, Maiduguri, Nigeria?
3. To what extent are information services being utilized in Borno State Public Library, Maiduguri, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

Ho_1. There is no significant relationship between the availability and the extent of accessibility of information services in Borno State Public Library, Maiduguri, Nigeria.

Ho_2. There is no significant relationship between the extent of accessibility and the extent of utilization of information services in Borno State Public Library, Maiduguri, Nigeria.

Review of Related Literatures

Information Services and Utilization of Public Libraries

The main purpose of any public library is to fulfil the information needs of any users, meeting the information needs of the public entails making readily available and accessible all the services required to meet users need. All activities, resources, and services of any public library are geared towards helping the general public to achieve their information needs. The availability of information services refers to the presence of all means that help users get satisfied in their pursuit for information in any library and information center. However, access to information services is also a factor of availability for without the physical presence of an information service, a user cannot access anything. This, therefore, entails that the effective utilization of any information services is best measured in terms of its accessibility. Abdulsalami and Salami (2013) remarks that availability requires workable performance measures to back it up even if the ultimate benefit to the individual user and the community is difficult to assess. The access to library information resources and services of any library is also a factor of availability for without the physical presence of a document a user cannot access anything. This, therefore, reveals that the effective use of any library is best measured in terms of access and demand for its resources and services. Various factors affecting the availability and use of Information resources and services. Gardner (2014), one of the key problems affecting the availability and use of library resources and information services in developing countries is that of inadequate funding. Although concept of information services could encompass different segments of libraries' activities in literature it is usually related to the reference services (IFLA, 2012). It has been observed in the statement of problem to this research effort that the library seems to be underutilized, and this could lead to discouraging reading habit among the people in society, this is because public libraries, through their resources and services are supposed to attract people towards them and also embrace technologies to meet the information needs of the people. There are some cogent factors, either from the end of service providers, users or due to

environmental factors, which serve as constraints to utilization of library information resources and services by the users of the Borno State Public Library.

Omotosho and Okiki (2012) agreed that inadequate funding is the major challenge faced by the library staff in the provision of effective library and information services to users. The effect of this is that the library users are not likely to be attracted to access library resources and services. However, for potential users to be satisfied, services such as inter-library lending is a necessary feature of modern library activities, because no library no matter how well founded, it is difficult to acquire all the materials needed by their users. (Barfin & Agyupong, 2018). In view of this fact, Abdullahi, and Isyaku (2019) assert that partnership and cooperation both local, national and international have become inevitable for all libraries. Thus, the interests of information seekers are wider in scope than the subject contents of any given library. Whatever name it is called, its main purpose is to supplement a library's resources by making materials, which the borrowing library does not possess available through direct loans for a short period of time with due provisions made by the lending library for the rights of its primary user.

Varieties of literatures shows that different studies have been conducted on the either perceptions, resources and or information services of public library in both developed and developing countries. Bopape, Dikotla and Mahlatj (2017) examined the information needs of public library and information services users in Limpopo province. The results of the study indicated that youth and young adults constitute majority of the library users, who specifically use these libraries and information services for study space and accessing the internet. Similarly, Kumara and Nikam (2012) studied the perception of young adults towards public library services, and found out that majority of young adults visit library daily for the purpose of using available information resource, meet friends and relax, use the library space, find answers for reference queries and the internet, and are satisfied with the library services rendered. Bhatti, Marwat and Khan (2015) studied user's perception of services quality of the Central public library Bahawalpur. Their study revealed that respondents were satisfied with the quality of different library services rendered. Ikenwe and Adegbilero-Iwari (2014) studied the utilization and user satisfaction of public library services in South West Nigeria and the study shows that lack of sufficient facilities, outdated information resources and e-resources services in Nigeria public libraries were revealed by the users as major factors affecting user satisfaction of public library services. Likewise, Nnadozie, Okeke and Onyekweodiri (2015) revealed that, majority of their respondents were dissatisfied with the available resources,

facilities and services.

The above studies show beyond reasonable doubt that services in public libraries were utilized by the respondents with sharp indication that lack of sufficient fund, facilities, outdated information resources and e-resources services in Nigeria public libraries were revealed by the users as major factors affecting user satisfaction of public library services. Likewise, in some instance users of public libraries were dissatisfied. However, availability, accessibility and utilization of information services by users of Borno State Public Library, Maiduguri, Nigeria are of great concern. The current research could find some of the obstacles.

Methodology

Survey research design was adopted for this study because it is a non-experimental research method in which it assesses the statistical relationship between one or more variables. The target population for the study was six thousand, one hundred and thirty-five (6,135) users of the library under study, out of which a convenient sample size of seven hundred and one (701) users was drawn. Data was collected from the respondents through the use of a self-designed questionnaire administered to the seven hundred and one (701) respondents and a check list was used to ascertain the information services that were available in the library under study. Descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages was used in analyzing the data to answer the research question. Results were presented in tables. Inferential statistics was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC).

Data Analysis and Discussion

Response Rate

Out of the 701 questionnaires administered to the respondent, 677 (96.6%) copies were duly completed, returned and found valid for the analysis. The results were presented in tables.

Table 1: Types of Information Services available in Borno State Public Library.

S/N	Items	N	Available	Not Available	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Inter-library lending	**684**	✓		**684**	**100%**
2.	Reference services		✓		**684**	**100%**
3.	Current awareness services		✓		**684**	**100%**
4.	selective dissemination of information service			✓	**684**	**100%**
5.	Circulation services		✓		**684**	**100%**
6.	Bibliographic Services			✓	**684**	**100%**
7.	Adult Literacy			✓	**684**	**100%**
8.	On-line services			✓	**684**	**100%**
9.	Indexing and abstracting services			✓	**684**	**100%**

Table 1 exhibit the types of information services that are available in Borno State Public Library, Maiduguri, Nigeria and it revealed that; only inter library lending, reference services, current awareness services and circulation services are the information services available for users.

Table 2: Extent of accessibility of information services in Borno State Public

S/No.	Items	N	V.H.E (%)	H.E (%)	T.H.E	L.E(%)	V.L.E (%)	T.L.E
1.	Inter-library lending		136 (19.9%)	68 (9.9%)	**204 (29.8%)**	344 (50.3%)	136 (19.9%)	**480 (70.2%)**
2.	Reference services		146 (21.3)	80 (11.7%)	**226 (33%)**	321 (46.9%)	137 (20.0%)	**458 (66.9%)**
3.	Current awareness services	**684**	134 (19.6%)	73 (10.7%)	**207 (30.3%)**	349 (51.0%)	128 (18.7%)	**477 (69.7%)**
4.	Circulation service		116 (17.0%)	70 (10.2%)	**186 (27.2%)**	322 (47.1%)	176 (25.7%)	**498 (72.8%)**
	GROSS	**684**	532	291	**823**	1,336	577	**1,913**
	AVERAGE	**684**	**133 (19.4%)**	**73 (10.7%)**	**206 (30.1%)**	**334 (48.8%)**	**144 (21.1%)**	**478 (69.9%)**

Key: - V.H.E = Very High Extent**, H.E** = High Extent**, L.E** = Low Extent**, V.L.E** = Very Low Extent, **T.H.E** = Total High Extent**, T.L.E** = Total Low Extent and **N** = Number of respondents.

Table 2 exhibit the extent of accessibility of information services in the Borno State Public Library, Nigeria, it was discovered that majority of the respondents that is, 478 (69.9%) indicated that the information services were accessible to the low extent while only 206 (30.1%) of the respondents indicated that the services were accessible to the high extent in Borno State Public Library, Maiduguri, Nigeria.

Table 3: Extent of utilization of information services by users in Borno State Public Library.

S/No.	Items	N	V.H.E (%)	H.E (%)	T.H.E	L.E(%)	V.L.E(%)	T.L.E
1.	Inter-library lending,		155 (22.7%)	98 (14.3%)	**253 (29.8%)**	301 (44.0%)	130 (19.0%)	**431 (63.0%)**
2.	Reference services	**684**	164 (24.0)	100 (14.6%)	**264 (33%)**	280 (40.9%)	140 (20.5%)	**420 (61.4%)**
3.	Current awareness services		174 (24.9%)	94 (13.7%)	**268 (30.3%)**	312 (45.6%)	104 (15.2%)	**414 (60.8%)**
4.	Circulation service		152 (17.0%)	61 (10.2%)	**213 (27.2%)**	211 (30.8%)	260 (38.0%)	**471 (68.9%)**
	GROSS	**684**	645	353	998	1,104	634	1,738
	AVERAGE	**684**	**161 (23.5%)**	**88 (12.9%)**	**249 (36.4%)**	**276 (40.3%)**	**159 (23.2%)**	**434 (63.6%)**

Table 3 exhibit the extent of utilization of information services in the Borno State Public Library, Maiduguri, Nigeria, it was discovered that majority of the respondents that is, 434 (63.6%) indicated that the information services were utilized to the low extent and only 249 (36.4%) of the respondents indicated that the services were utilized to the high extent in Borno State Public Library, Maiduguri, Nigeria.

Table 4: Relationship between the availability and the extent of accessibility of information services.

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	df	r-value	P-value	Decision
Availability	11.5965	2.81822	684	675	0.630	0.018	Rejected
Extent of Accessibility	13.4518	4.88572	684				

Table 4 shows the relationship between the extent of availability and the extent of accessibility of information services in Borno State Public Library. The hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between the availability and the extent of accessibility of information services in Borno State Public Library, Maiduguri, Nigeria. It was indicated that the extent of availability of the information services had mean of 11.5965 and standard deviation of 2.81822. Also, the extent of accessibility of the information services had mean of 13.4518 and standard deviation of 4.88572. The calculated r-value was 0.630 and p-value of 0.018 at the df of 682 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, since the calculated r-value .630 was greater than the p-value of .018, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that the availability is a predictable variable for the extent of

accessibility of information services in Borno State Public Library. Therefore, the availability has significant relationship with extent of accessibility of information services in Borno State Public Library.

Table 5: Relationship between the extent of accessibility and the extent of utilization of information services in Borno State Public Library.

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Df	r-value	P-value	Decision
Extent of Accessibility	13.4518	4.88572	684	684	0.927	0.001	Rejected
Extent of Utilization	13.2515	4.55690	684				

Table 5 shows the relationship between the extent of accessibility and the extent of utilization of information services in Borno State Public Library Maiduguri, Nigeria. The hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between the extent of accessibility and the extent of utilization of information services in Borno State Public Library, Maiduguri, Nigeria. It was indicated that the extent of accessibility of the information services had mean of 13.4518 and standard deviation of 4.88572. Also, the extent of utilization of the information services had mean of 13.2515 and standard deviation of 4.55690. The calculated r-value was 0.927 and p-value of 0.001 with the df of 682 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, since the calculated r-value .927 was greater than the p-value of .001, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that the extent of accessibility is a predictable variable for the extent of utilization of information services in Borno State Public Library.

Discussion of Findings

1. Analysis of findings revealed that inter library lending, reference services, current awareness and circulation services were the information services available for users. It is obvious that the Library Board lack a coordinated library development policy resulting in haphazard and inefficient information services. This is in line with the IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines for Public Library Service Development (2001) who observed that in meeting the needs of its community, the public library will have to develop policies and that these policies may vary from one society to another but the principle of planning library development is important in all public library policy development.
2. The information services were accessible to the low extent in the Borno State Public library. This corroborated with the assertion of Abdulsalami and Salami (2013) that accessibility to library information resources and services

of any library is also a factor of availability for without the physical presence of a document or services, a user cannot access anything. This, therefore, reveals that the effective use of any library is best measured in terms of access and demand for its resources and services.

3. The information services were utilized by the users to the low extent in Borno State Public Library. This is in line with the assertion of Omotosho and Okiki (2012) that inadequate funding is the major challenge faced by the library staff in the provision of effective library and information services to users. The effect of this is that the library users are not likely to be attracted to access and utilize library resources and services.
4. Availability of information services has significant relationship with extent of accessibility of information services in Borno State Public Library. It is evident that access can only be possible when what to be accessed is available, this is however showed that the services were not much available that is why Abdullahi, and Isyaku (2019) assert that partnership and cooperation both local, national and international have become inevitable for all libraries. Thus, the interests of information seekers are wider in scope than the subject contents of any given library. Whatever name it is called, its main purpose is to supplement a library's resources by making materials, which the borrowing library does not possess available through direct loans for a short period of time with due provisions made by the lending library for the rights of its primary user.
5. The extent of accessibility has relationship with the extent of utilization of information services in Borno State Public Library. It was revealed that utilization has become low due to low accessibility, it is obvious therefore that the public library board is lagging behind in provision of such services that may be needed by users. This is possible due to the fact that Gardner (2014) asserts that one of the key problems affecting the availability and use of library resources and information services in developing countries is that of inadequate funding.

Conclusion

Borno State Public libraries Maiduguri have gone through a lot since the 1960s as Native Authority Libraries, to Provincial Reading Rooms, to Provincial Libraries, to Divisional Libraries and finally to the present State Library Board. What however continue all these while is the failure of the Library to sufficiently make readily accessible all the services needed by user to satisfy their quest for knowledge. This is a result of protracted period of negligence and lurk worm

approach of the state government towards public library. It is the strong conviction of the researchers that the State should key into the federal government's new development policy that was tagged as 'Vision 2020', also the concept of 're-branding Nigeria' and no doubt the need to foster our promising democracy by imbibing democratic standards, can only thrive when we have educated, well informed and enlightened people. In here lies the inevitable role of the Public Library in Borno State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

The study thus recommended the following: -

1. The library management of Borno state public library should provide more and quality information services so as to encourage utilization by users of the library.
2. The library management should make all information services readily accessible so as to foster utilization by users of the library.
3. The library management should be involved in lending current information services bearing in mind the users' needs.
4. The management of the library should provide or organize awareness for the host community so as to improve their perception on the services available for them.

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