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LIBRARIANS' INFORMATION LITERACY SKILLS AND LIBRARY SERVICES PROVISION: A STUDY OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN OGUN STATE

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Abstract
The study explores the impact of information literacy skills on the provision of library services by academic librarians in Ogun State, Nigeria. It highlights the essential role that information literacy plays in enhancing the effectiveness and quality of services provided by librarians in academic settings. The research aims to determine the availability and frequency of library services, assess the level of information literacy skills among librarians, and identify the challenges affecting library service provision. Utilizing a mixed-method approach, it examines the types of services offered, the frequency of service delivery, the level of information literacy among librarians, and the challenges faced in providing these services. The findings offer insights into improving library services through targeted information, literacy training and policy recommendations. It also indicates a significant relationship between information literacy skills and effective library service provision, highlighting the need for continuous professional development in information literacy. Among others, it was recommended that collaboration should be encouraged between academic institutions and library associations to develop standardized frameworks for assessing information literacy skills.

Keywords: Information Literacy, Library Services, Academic Libraries, Ogun State, Librarians

Background to the Study

The role of information literacy in library service provision has gained increasing importance in the digital age. Information literacy encompasses a set of abilities enabling individuals to recognize when information is needed and to locate, evaluate, and use the needed information effectively. For librarians, these skills are crucial in managing and providing access to both traditional and digital resources. Academic libraries are integral to educational institutions, serving as hubs for knowledge and research support. They are critical information centers that support the educational and research needs of students and faculty.

Furthermore, they serve as the intellectual heart of academic institutions, playing

a vital role in knowledge generation and dissemination. The rapid advancement of technology has transformed these libraries into hybrid entities, combining traditional and electronic resources. Consequently, information literacy has become an essential skill for librarians to manage and provide access to these diverse resources effectively. Thus, these libraries fulfill dual roles: supporting the curriculum and advancing the research initiatives of both students and faculty. Their effectiveness hinges on the proficiency of librarians, particularly their information literacy skills, which encompass the ability to locate, evaluate, and use information efficiently. As technological advancements proliferate, the role of information literacy becomes increasingly vital in managing both traditional and electronic resources.

Ezeani and Ekere (2019) noted that many librarians have had to perform their duties with limited purchasing power. Mastering new skills allows librarians to deliver services more creatively and efficiently, even within constrained budgets. As the volume of information continues to grow, proficient search skills are essential not only for accessing information but also for filtering and utilizing the most relevant resources. Information literacy extends beyond proficient information-seeking behavior. It involves recognizing when information is needed, framing questions to gather that information, and evaluating and using the retrieved information appropriately and ethically, regardless of the source (Igun, 2016).

Many academic librarians narrowly view information literacy as merely teaching information searching skills. However, it is crucial for academic librarians to develop a shared understanding of the concept when communicating with each other and when discussing information literacy with other stakeholders, such as teachers, IT staff, and school leaders. Reviewing various definitions and descriptions of information literacy can help achieve common ground. It is important to remember that information literacy is context-dependent, influenced by the individual's situation and purpose. These definitions can inspire discussions among librarians and stakeholders to define information literacy in their specific context (Pond, 2019).

According to Pinto (2020), information literacy is increasingly shaping the services provided by librarians. Academic librarians have responded by offering instruction in information literacy, defined as "the ability to locate, manage, critically evaluate, and use information for problem-solving, research, and decision-making." When librarians possess strong information literacy skills, they can effectively deliver services such as cataloging, reference assistance, supporting staff and students in acquiring information materials relevant to the curriculum and users' interests, and providing access to online information databases, enabling users to find information across various platforms (Issa, Amusan and Umma, 2019).

There exists a vast array of information choices that academic librarians encounter due to the complexity of various sources and formats. This presents new challenges for library members in assessing and comprehending the content. The increasing volume of information, coupled with uncertain quality, can pose significant challenges for any

society lacking information-seeking skills. Librarians provide a broad spectrum of services to support their communities in accessing information, fostering a love for reading, enhancing digital literacy, and encouraging lifelong learning. Their expertise and commitment enhance the library experience, making libraries essential centers of knowledge and culture.

Statement of the Problem

The quality of services provided by libraries is directly related to the level of information literacy among librarians. Several studies have focused on information literacy among academic librarians, particularly their information literacy skills. However, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, there is no single study that has combined librarians' information literacy skills and library services provision in academic libraries, especially in Ogun State. In the light of this, the current study explored how information literacy skills impact the provision of library services by librarians in selected academic libraries in Ogun State.

Objectives of the Study

The study aims to:

1. identify the services available to librarians in selected academic libraries in Ogun State.
2. determine the frequency of these services.
3. assess the level of information literacy skills among librarians.
4. explore the relationship between information literacy skills and library service provision.
5. identify challenges affecting service provision in these libraries.

Research Questions

1. What services are available to librarians in selected academic libraries in Ogun State?
2. How often do librarians render these services?
3. What is the level of information literacy skills among librarians?
4. What challenges affect the provision of library services?

Hypothesis

The study tests one null hypothesis:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between information literacy skills and library service provision by librarians in selected academic libraries in Ogun State

Significance of the Study

This research is significant for various stakeholders, including librarians, students, faculty, and policymakers. It offers valuable insights for librarians, policy makers, and educational stakeholders, underscoring the importance of information literacy skills in enhancing library services. It highlighted the importance of information literacy in enhancing library services and provides insights for professional development. The

findings can inform training programs and policy decisions aimed at improving library services and supporting academic success. It provides a foundation for developing professional development programs aimed at improving these competencies among librarians.

Scope of the Study

This study examines how information literacy skills affect the delivery of library services by librarians at specific academic libraries in Ogun State. To achieve this, purposive sampling was employed to choose seven public academic libraries: Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta; Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye; Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun; Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro; Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, Abeokuta; Federal College of Education, Osiele; and Tai Solarin College of Education, Omu.

Review of Related Literature

Concept of Information Literacy

Information literacy is defined as the ability to recognize when information is needed and to locate, evaluate, and use the needed information effectively. This skill set is essential for academic librarians to manage the growing array of information resources and to guide users in their research endeavors. In today's world of technology and the internet, the need to acquire information literacy skills has become more important than ever before. According to Nwosu, Obiamalu and Udem (2015), the term "information literacy" was first coined in 1974 by Paul G. Zurkwoski, who was then the President of United States Industry Association. He emphasized that it is necessary for people to become information literate in order to survive and thrive in an emerging information society. Over time, this term has gained widespread popularity in the United States and beyond, as people recognize its importance for effective utilization of available information resources.

Mwiti (2012) emphasizes that information literacy skills are vital for individuals, as they enable them to determine when information is needed, precisely define the subject of the information, and efficiently locate and access it using the right terminology. These skills also encompass the ability to analyze data, assess information sources, and effectively use the information to address various life challenges. According to Igun and Odafe (2016), librarians also need these essential skills to define their information needs, identify various available information sources along with their characteristics, and use them effectively to find the required information. Similarly, the Association of College and Research Libraries (2015) also highlights this importance.

Library Services and Information Literacy

Academic libraries provide a wide range of services, including acquisition, cataloguing and classification, serials services reference services, inter-library loans, and

digital resource management. Effective delivery of these services depends on the librarians' proficiency in information literacy, which enables them to navigate and teach others to navigate the complex information landscape. The evolving nature of information sources and technologies has transformed the traditional role of librarians from mere bookkeepers to educators who help students navigate through a sea of information. In our fast-paced society, being able to navigate and evaluate information is essential for success.

Information literacy skills are crucial in this regard, helping individuals make informed decisions and avoid false or biased information. Librarians have a vital role in teaching these skills to library users of all backgrounds and education levels. According to Carey (2000), librarians have shifted from tool-specific skills to general problem-solving skills applicable across various resources. This shift reflects the changing nature of information access and retrieval methods due to emerging technologies every day. Therefore, librarians must teach not only how to use specific tools but also how to approach problems strategically when dealing with complicated or unfamiliar resources.

By teaching these competencies comprehensively across many disciplines, librarians can provide their patrons with invaluable lifelong learning tools that will serve them well beyond the confines of the library walls. Nowadays, as data becomes increasingly available at our fingertips at all times in a world that continues its rapid expansion towards a fully digitalized age - developing strong Information Literacy Skills becomes increasingly vital for everyone who wants to stay ahead of the curve in any field they pursue.

In a study by Sakhawat, Tariq, and Shahzad (2021) aimed to determine the effect of Information Literacy Skills possessed by librarians on the research productivity of Faculty Members at the University of Agriculture Faisalabad in Punjab, Pakistan. The researchers conducted this study by measuring the levels of Information Literacy among both faculty members and professional librarians. To achieve their objectives, they used a Sequential Explanatory design that incorporated a Mix method approach where questionnaires were distributed to all participants within the population of faculty members and interviews were conducted with professional librarians for an in-depth understanding related to the research.

The study conducted by Hasanah and Rachman (2019) delved into the information literacy skills of librarians in the public library of Bogor to address the information requirements of their users. To obtain a comprehensive understanding of the subject, the researchers employed a qualitative approach using a case study method, which involved gathering data through interviews and observation. The participants consisted of six librarians chosen through purposive sampling with criteria based on those who have completed Library Science education. The research utilized Empowering Eight as their information literacy model, which includes eight components such as identification, exploration, selection, organization, creation, presentation, assessment and application information. The findings revealed that although the librarian's had already applied components like identification, exploration presentation assessment and

application to meet user's needs maximally, there were still some areas for improvement in certain capabilities such as component selection, organizing and creating information.

A study conducted by Muhammad, Tariq, and Shahzad (2021) delved into the effect of Information Literacy Skills possessed by Librarians on enhancing the research productivity of faculty members at the University of Agriculture Faisalabad in Punjab, Pakistan. The objective of this research was to assess the extent of Information Literacy among both faculty members and professional librarians at the university. Their findings revealed that LIS professionals and faculty members exhibited moderate levels of Information literacy skills.

Library Services Provision by Librarians

Librarians play a critical role in supporting the educational and research needs of their users by providing access to diverse information resources, including books, journals, and electronic databases (Ayiah, 2007). However, this is not always an easy task. As Ayiah's (2007) study shows, visually impaired users encounter significant constraints when it comes to accessing library services. Furthermore, the study found that there was no program available for this category of users at all. This lack of accessibility demonstrates how important it is for libraries to make a conscious effort to upgrade their services in order to meet the academic needs of visually impaired students. A way librarians can support them is by incorporating assistive technologies into their collections.

Assistive technologies could include text-to-speech software or Braille displays which would allow visually challenged individuals to more easily access printed materials (Ayiah, 2007). Additionally, librarians can work with faculty members and disability service providers on campus to ensure that all course materials are accessible for everyone. In conclusion, librarians serve as gatekeepers of knowledge - ensuring that everyone has equal access regardless of any physical limitations they may have. By taking action towards creating inclusive communities within our institutions through technology enhancements such as those suggested above we create an environment where every individual can thrive equally thanks in part due diligence put forth by our librarian counterparts (Ayiah, 2007).

Librarians have a multifaceted role that involves more than just acquiring and organizing information resources. As Okogwu (2022) points out, they are also responsible for providing user instruction, information literacy training, and research support. In today's technology-driven world where information is readily available at our fingertips, it can be tempting to think that libraries and librarians are no longer necessary. However, the reality is quite different. The provision of library services by librarians plays an integral role in promoting lifelong learning and ensuring equitable access to high-quality information resources.

Social media serves as an effective medium not only for promoting new materials but also provides an opportunity for two-way communication between libraries and their

role of librarians beyond shelving books but rather providing innovative ways of delivering content to its users efficiently. As pointed out by Oakleaf (2009), this transformation requires documentation on the value proposition provided by academic libraries towards institutional missions and goals which would ultimately lead towards greater recognition amongst stakeholders including funding bodies seeking higher returns on investment.

The provision of library services by librarians is crucial in ensuring that users have access to a wealth of knowledge resources. Librarians play an instrumental role in acquiring and organizing information resources, providing assistance with research activities, as well as offering guidance on how to navigate complex information landscapes.

McAlbert, Tony-Okereke and Nwaonu (2022) emphasize the essential part that library staff plays in offering comprehensive information services that cater to the varying requirements of library visitors. Such support typically encompasses providing reference materials, facilitating research activities, and furnishing digital literacy assistance. Indeed, librarians are crucial stakeholders who contribute significantly to the success of communities' intellectual quests by providing valuable guidance and resources.

Information Literacy skills and library services provision of librarians

Effective library services rely on librarians possessing information literacy skills. These abilities enable them to competently and ethically evaluate, locate, and use information resources (Sakhawat et al., 2021). By developing these competencies, librarians can better assist patrons in grasping complex concepts and achieving research objectives. Librarians' role in providing relevant and valuable library services is crucial; however, without strong information literacy abilities, it becomes challenging to do so. As Anyaoku (2015) noted, librarians need to possess good perceptions toward the service while also being equipped with the requisite skills to impart knowledge. In conclusion, every librarian should possess formidable information literacy abilities as they allow them not just to perform duties effectively but also meaningfully impact the communities, they serve by offering dependable guidance on research matters (Anyaoku 2015).

In a study conducted by Chukwueke and Idris (2023), the correlation between the digital literacy skills of librarians and their services delivery at academic libraries in Taraba State, Nigeria was examined. The research design used was correlational, wherein 112 librarians from 11 academic libraries in Taraba State were included for the study. Data collection involved using a questionnaire created by the researchers themselves. The study found that the digital literacy skills of librarians were inadequate despite providing several services to their patrons. The only areas where they showed proficiency were internet searches, communication of information, website evaluation and using Boolean logic among others.

Challenges of Library Service Provision faced by Librarians

Librarians face numerous challenges in acquiring and implementing information

literacy skills, including limited access to training resources, budget constraints, and rapidly evolving technology. Addressing these challenges is crucial for maintaining the relevance and effectiveness of library services. Okonoko, Abubakar and Nwafor (2022) conducted a study on Challenges of Rendering Effective Library Services in Library Services to Users in Select University Libraries in South-South, Nigeria. The four (4) identified items on the challenges facing the rendering of library services to library users in selected university libraries in South-South, Nigeria to include: obsolete materials (3.1), poor budgetary allocation (3.2), poor infrastructures (2.9) and poor recruitment process (2.6).

Aina (2004) posits that the services of academic libraries in Nigeria are grossly inadequate with outdated collections coupled with lack of sufficient professional librarians. Ebiwolate (2010) carried a study on Nigeria Public Library Service to Rural Areas: Libraries in Niger Delta States. The result found out that poor budgetary allocation to libraries, poor infrastructure, inadequate funding, inadequate human resources would hinder their services and development. Nworie, Ubochi, Iwuchukwu and Njoku (2023) conducted a study on Challenges and Prospects of Library and Information Services in Academic Libraries in Nigeria. They found out that funding, absence of unified library policies, Lack of Passion and Non Attendance to Workshop, Seminars and Professional Trainings as challenges facing the provision of library resources in Nigeria.

Research Methodology

This chapter presented the method that was used in carrying out the research work. These include Research Design, Population of Study, Sample and Sampling Technique, Research Instrument, Validity of Instrument, Method of Data Collection, Method of Data Analysis.

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design of the correlation type. This research design is considered to be suitable for this study since it will aid the elicitation of responses on variables of the study from the sample study which will be analysed and the findings generalised on the population of the study thus determining the current of the study population with regards to manipulation of the variables. It also gives room for the discovery of relationships among variables and to allow for the prediction of future events.

The study covered seventy five (75) librarians in the seven selected academic libraries in Ogun state. Total enumeration technique was adopted for this study to cover the total population size of seventy-five librarians in selected academic libraries in Ogun state. The technique will be in order to ensure participation of all the librarians chosen in the area of study and also due to manageable size of respondents and adequate budget for the study. This is in line with Bryman (2006) who posits that the use of this technique occurs when the respondents for the study are not too many.

Results

Services available to librarians in selected Academic Libraries in Ogun State

It was revealed that the library services provided include library orientation 60 (100%); e-library services 57(95%); information literacy services 57(95%); reference services 57(95%); lending services 57(95%); readers' advisory services 56(96.4%); technical services 54(96.4%); reprographic services 54(93.3%); user education programmes 55(9416%); and Current Awareness Services 52(89.3%). This implies that majority of the librarians in selected academic libraries in Ogun State identified library orientation, e-library services, information literacy services, reference services and lending services as the most provided library services.

Services rendered by llibrarians in selected Academic Libraries in Ogun State

It was revealed that the frequently provided library services are E-library services (=4.05; std dev. =1.3269); lending services (x =3.91; std dev. =1.5169); readers' advisory services (x=3.87; std dev. =1.4278); library orientation (x=3.83; std dev. =1.2177); references services (x=3.78; std dev. =1.4735); and technical services (x=3.78; std dev. =1.3033). This implies that the most frequently provided library services in selected academic library in Ogun State are E-library services and lending services.

Level of Information Literacy skills of Librarians in selected Academic Libraries in Ogun State

It was revealed that they can apply information resources to the problem at hand (x=3.32; std dev. =.9166); they can select, retrieve and summarise information resources to suit the need of library users through indexing and abstracting services. (x=3.19; std dev. =.9801); they are able to select appropriate publications for their library users and recommend non-predatory publishers where they can publish. (x=3.16; std dev. =1.0579); they possess the requisite skill to guide the library user to use the library catalogue to search for specific books (x=3.10; std dev. =.9849); they recognise the need for information and data to achieve a specific end (x=3.10; std dev. =1.0562); they can decide where and how to find the information they need x=3.08; std dev. =1.1164); they can choose range of materials on topics, taking into account currency, bias, authority, accuracy, relevance and comprehensiveness. (x=3.08; std dev. =.9395); they understood the nature of information available on the internet. (x=3.07; std dev. =1.1258); they have ability to construct complex searches and search across a wide range of databases using different user interfaces, redefining terms, and repeating searches as required (x=3.07; std dev. =1.0763);they have ability to sift resources and recommend same for acquisition in the library. (x=3.05; std dev. =1.0343); and they have understanding of everyday search tools (x=3.01; std dev. =1.1360). This implies that majority of them can apply information resources to the problem at hand.

Challenges affecting the Provision of Library Services by Librarians in selected Academic Libraries in Ogun State

The challenges include the poor budgetary allocation to the library affects the provision of library services to users (x=2.87; std dev. =.9548); the library suffers from erratic power supply (x=2.80; std dev. =1.0517); the patronage of the library has drastically reduced (x=2.75; std dev. =1.1793); inadequate government support affects the provision of library services to users (=2.67; std dev. =1.2226); there are evident infrastructures in their poor state which makes it impossible for me to carry out my responsibility as a librarian (x=2.66; std dev. =.1.0492). This implies that the major challenges facing the provision of library services for librarians in selected academic libraries in Ogun State include poor budgetary allocation, erratic power supply and drastically reduction of library patronage.

Hypothesis

Ho1 There is no significant relationship between information literacy skills and library service provision of librarians in selected academic libraries in Ogun State

Table 1: Relationship between information literacy skills and library service provision of librarians in selected academic libraries in Ogun State

Variables	N	Mean	St.Dev	Df	R	P	Sig
Library service provision	60	126.51	23.7768	60	.370	.004	S
Information Literacy Skills	60	90.45	19.0862				

Table 1 shows the relationship between information literacy skills and library service provision of librarians in selected academic libraries in Ogun State. It revealed that information literacy skills (r =.370; p < .004; N= 60) has a linear significant relationship with library service provision of librarians in selected academic libraries in Ogun State. However, this situation only occurs 37% of the time. This implies that an increase in information literacy skills will result in an increase in library service provision librarians in selected academic libraries in Ogun State. Thus, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between information literacy skills and library service provision of librarians in selected academic libraries in Ogun State is hereby rejected.

Conclusion

Information literacy skills are pivotal for the effective provision of library services in academic libraries. This study highlights the need for continuous professional development and institutional support to enhance these skills among librarians. By addressing the challenges identified, academic libraries can improve their service provision, ultimately supporting the academic and research needs of their institutions. The findings underscore the critical role of information literacy in enhancing library

services. Improved information literacy skills enable librarians to better manage information resources and support users' research needs. The identified challenges highlight the need for targeted interventions to support librarians in developing these skills.

Recommendations

To address the challenges and improve information literacy skills among librarians, the study recommends:

1. Regular professional development programs focused on advanced information literacy skills.
2. Increased funding for library services and resources.
3. Collaboration between academic institutions and library associations to develop standardized frameworks for assessing information literacy skills.

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