

Challenges and Prospects of Information Resources and Services Provision in University Libraries in Federal Universities in North East, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigates the challenges and prospects of information resources and services provision in University Libraries in Federal Universities in North East, Nigeria. The study was guided by three research questions covering extent of utilization of information resources and services provision, challenges associated with the provision of information resources and services provision, and strategies for enhancing information resources and services provision in university libraries. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study was Two Hundred and Ten (210), consisting of (150) librarians and (60) paraprofessional staff of the university libraries. Questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. Two Hundred (210) questionnaire was administered and One Hundred Seventy Seven (177) was retrieved was found useable from the respondents. The data collected was analysed quantitatively using descriptive statistic of Mean (\bar{x}) and Standard Deviation (SD). Findings revealed that the information resources and services provision are highly utilized, challenges associated with information resources and services provision includes inadequate, inadequate power supply among others, and strategies for enhancing information resources and services provision includes adequate funding, adequate power supply among others. Based on the findings, it was recommended that library users should be sensitized on how to utilised the information resources and services provision. The library management should ensure that relevance information resources are acquire in the library and adequate information resources are also provided in order to provide better services.

Key Words: Problems, Prospects, Information Resources, Information Services, University Libraries.

Introduction

The ultimate goal of any university is to produce human resources for all sphere of life for effective services to humanities. University is the highest academic institution that produces knowledge for problem solving through research processes. Mole (2017) revealed that university is an academic institution of higher learning comprising of arts and sciences, graduate and professional schools that award degrees in various field of studies. For university to provide the purpose for which it was been established, there must be a university libraries at their disposal in order to provide information services for research and scholarship. Shehu and Idakwo (2017) noted that university libraries are academic libraries that are funded, managed and maintained by universities in order to support it objectives for which it was established: promoting teaching, learning and research activities of its parent institution. University libraries are responsible for all sorts of information resources (printed and non-printed) that support the institution in order to provide information services to the users. Adegun, Oyewumi, Oladapo, Sobalaje, Adewale, Olusegun, and Ladoke in Nok (2015) and Ashikuzzaman (2013) both agreed that university libraries' objectives include provision of materials for students instruction, project and term papers, support of faculty members, personal development, external and collaborative research, cooperation with other academic libraries in order to develop the network of library resources at their disposal. University libraries provide a variety of information resources which serve all fields of knowledge taught in the university when properly utilized. For university libraries to perform their functions effectively, their collection must include all library information resources i.e. books and other materials such as general and specialized reference collections which are

made up of newspapers, journals, manuscripts, maps, government publications, clippings, thesis and dissertations, letters, and audio-visual materials in order to provide services.

Information resources in university libraries are the source which convey or describe the characteristics of information to users. Information resources in university libraries are the printed and non-printed materials users consult that lead to information or knowledge about topics, events, theme, date, places, number, and or even words (Aina, 2002). In addition to that, the primary purpose of information resources in university libraries is to provide information services to the users. Popoola and Haliso (2009) sees information services as the activities the library and their personnel provide to meet the information needs of the clientele. In line with this, Stojanovski and papic (2012) asserted that, providing information resources sought by the users is the goals of information services.

Information service in university libraries can be view in so many ways. Iliyasu, Usman and Kashim in Igwe, Sadiku and Edam-Agbo (2019) are of the view that information service is designed primarily to provide access to resources that satisfy the informational, recreational and educational needs of users and categorized information service into two broad classifications which include technical and reader services. Traditionally, according to Egyankosh (2017), university libraries offered reference services, lending services and current awareness services to users, but with the advent of information technologies, university libraries provide both traditional and new technological based library services including reference services; newspaper clipping services; lending and inter library loan services; current awareness services and selective dissemination of information services; reprographic services; internet access and web

searching services; users education; and information literacy services; access to e-journal through consortia services.

However, university libraries are the library where users are expected to utilize wide range of information resources in all fields of studies offered by the institution in order to provide services. Jumba and Bashiru (2020) viewed that utilization of information resources depends absolutely on the organization, coordination and adequate funding of the university libraries in order to tackle some emerging challenges to influence better service delivery. In addition to that, Tanawade (2011) noted that many library staff lack skills and confidence of answering user queries which slow down better services delivery to the users. Library staff that lack Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills cannot provide better service delivery to the users.

Furthermore, many of the university libraries in Nigeria failed to provide information service because of one problem or the other. Adepetun (2012) stated that most libraries in Nigeria do not have alternative power supply such as solar system, turbine gas, generators, and green technology among others. In this digital age, stable power supply is required in any university library in order to make them discharge their duties effectively especially in the area of electronic information resources. Nwalo (2000) noted that the challenges facing African libraries are inadequate funding of the libraries. Better service delivery in library can only be achieved with adequate funding in order to solve other problems beveling the libraries.

In this contemporary society, the library staff needs to be conversant with all sorts of information resources in order to provide services. Emuchay (n. d.) listed some strategies to enhance student use of libraries including: user education/orientation, acquisition of up to date

library materials, reprographic services, availability of adequate reading and seating carrels, provision of internet services, making time convenient for user and bibliographic services. These in one way or the other addressed the challenges facing university libraries in federal universities in North East, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

University libraries need to provide its users with relevance, adequate, current, and reliable information resources including print and non-print materials for proper utilization in order to provide services to solved users problems. For university libraries to achieve its objectives fully there must be services to humanities especially with information technology, new information services like open source contents services, social networking services, among others should be provided. There is need for university libraries to make available, relevant and quality information resources in order to provide services.

Despite the vital roles libraries play, University libraries seem to be constrained in several factors especially in the areas of information resources and services the libraries provide. From the researchers experience with university libraries in North East, Nigeria, the types of information resources are inadequate. Most of the information resources seem not to be satisfying users' need due to poor services, inadequate power supply, inadequate funding and inadequate access to information resources, and poor services due to inadequate training of personnel. However, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, no study has been conducted on the problems and prospects of information resources and services provision in university libraries in North East, Nigeria. This is what prompted the researchers to embark on this study on the

problems and prospects of information resources and service provision in university libraries in North East, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The researcher put up the following research questions to guide the study:

1. what is the extent to which information resources and services provision are utilized in university libraries in North East, Nigeria?
2. what are the challenges associated with the information resources and services provision in university libraries in North East, Nigeria?
3. what are the strategies for enhancing information resources and services provision in university libraries in North East, Nigeria?

Literature Review

There are series of problems that affect the of utilization of the information resources and services provision in university libraries which eventually affects the objectives of the university libraries in support of teaching, learning and research activities within the university community. Accessibility of information resources in university libraries creates an enabling environment for utilization of information resources (Anhwere, Paulina & Manu, 2018). The problems encountered by university libraries according to Shanmugan (2017) include shortages of funds, technical infrastructures, privacy/confidentiality, copyright issues, lack of professional skills, inadequate collection of electronic resources, online/virtual crime and security and unorganized structures of the library among others. These issues in one way or the other affect acquisition and provisions of information resources in university libraries and at the same time hinder better services to the users. Cullen, Adeyoyin, Olorunsola and Idada (2004) asserted that the problems

associated with university libraries in Nigeria includes inadequate funding of library, Poor physical facility of libraries and failure to keep pace with expanding enrolment, the methods of teaching is centered on classroom learning not on library based learning, lack of management strategies and poor communication barriers between the librarians and academic institutions.

In addition to the problems faced by the university libraries, there are inadequate technological infrastructures; bandwidth, network issues and no or little cooperation between the academic institutions among others. Growing in number of students enrolment without growing in availability of library resources, inadequate budget of the library, copyright and digital age issues in the library, lack of quality assurance and standard of information resources and services provisions (Musoke, 2008). University libraries strive to provide maximum information resources to the university community if they are properly acquired without any hindrance. Murugesan (2018) stated that inadequacy in awareness of information resources and services, network effect of the library, difficulty in grasping the control of indexing languages, limitation of the library database, inadequate of information description in bibliographic database among others. All these affect the information resources in the library as well as the service of the library. Incompetency of the library staff in university libraries constitutes as factors affecting better services in the library.

Many of the university libraries in Nigeria have failed to provide information service because of one problem or the other. Adepetun (2012) stated that most libraries in Nigeria do not have alternative power supply such as solar system, turbine gas, and generators among others. In this digital age, stable power supply is required in any university library in order to make them discharge their duties effectively especially in the area of electronic information resources.

University libraries are committed to providing information resources in both prints and non-prints formats to support better teaching, learning and research activities of their parent institutions especially with the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to facilitate services. Masese, George, Makwe, and Moenga (2016) noted that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has many features in library operation such as computer application, lamination, internet based facilities; photocopiers and fax have improved on the library services such as reference services, circulation, and interlibrary loans services and information services among others.

With series of challenges encountered with the provision of information resources and services in university libraries, there seem to be a lot of changes in information profession in order to provide better services to the users. Enweani (2018) stated that library uses diverse approaches such as improved funding, recruitment of competent librarians, training and re-training of library staff and adoption of good leadership style among others to deliver better services to the user. University libraries thrive to provide others means or source of income to address some challenges to ensure better information resources and better services delivery to users. Igun (2013) is of the opinion that libraries advocate for adequate funding to invest in internet subscription to provide internet services to the users.

Another strategy to enhance information resources and services provision to the users is by training of library staff on the new skills relevant to the library and information profession in order to bring more changes to university libraries. Chiware (2007) noted that adequate and training of librarians to manage the information resources especially in these Information and Communication Technology (ICT) age help to facilitate better services.

For university libraries to thrive well, varieties of issues in information resources and services need to put into consideration to provide effective library services. Mole (2017) citing Adoyade and Jibril (2005) asserted that eradication of corruption, good governance, adequate funding of library and nation economic growth improve students use of online information services for better service delivery. However, based on the review of related literature, no study has been conducted on the problems and prospects of information resources and services provision in university libraries in federal universities in Northeastern, Nigeria. This is the gap this study hope to fill.

Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was used for the study; the population of Two Hundred and Ten (210) librarians and para professional staff in federal university libraries in North East, Nigeria was used for the study. The entire population was used because the population was manageable enough for the study. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. The data was collected and analyzed using descriptive statistic with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.

Results and Discussions

Research Question 1: What is the extent to which information resources and services provision are utilised in university libraries in North East, Nigeria?

Table 1: Frequency Count, Mean, and Standard Deviation of Responses on the Extent of Utilisation of Information Resources and Services Provision University Libraries

S/N	Items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean	STD	Rank	Dec
Information Resources									
1	Textbook materials in the library	112	52	3	10	3.44	.98	1 st	VHE
2	Reference materials such as encyclopedia, dictionary among others in the library	72	82	11	4	3.16	.97	2 nd	HE
3	Audi-visual resources such as CD ROMs, films among others	59	67	31	9	2.89	1.11	6 th	HE
4.	Journal articles in the library	68	69	24	6	3.01	1.08	3 rd	HE
5	Newspapers in this library	54	68	37	7	2.85	1.09	7 th	HE
6	Grey literature such as project, thesis and dissertation	65	63	26	14	2.90	1.13	5 th	HE
7	Children literatures	39	62	45	16	2.53	1.17	9 th	HE
8	Online internet resources	58	75	27	8	2.93	1.05	4 th	HE
9	Fiction books in the library	54	70	36	7	2.85	1.07	7 th	HE
10	Non-fiction book materials in the library	51	73	35	8	2.83	1.07	8 th	HE
Cluster Mean						2.93	1.07		HE
Library Services									
1	Orientation services in the library	64	76	29	8	3.06	.96	2 nd	HE
2	Reference services	55	82	27	5	2.96	.99	4 th	HE
3	Binding services	83	38	39	10	3.01	1.13	3 rd	HE
4.	Online internet services	68	71	28	3	3.07	.98	1 st	HE
5	Guide to literatures	63	64	32	9	2.92	1.09	5 th	HE
6	Photocopying services	53	62	44	9	2.79	1.08	8 th	HE
7	Recreation services	57	57	44	12	2.81	1.08	7 th	HE
8	Social media services	47	56	49	18	2.66	1.09	9 th	HE
9	Indexing and abstracting services	57	57	40	16	2.79	1.10	8 th	HE
10	Current awareness services	60	55	43	12	2.84	1.09	6 th	HE
Cluster Mean						2.89	1.05		HE

VHE = Very High Extent, HE = High Extent, LE = Low Extent, VLE = Very Low Extent

Table 1 present results on the extent of utilisation of information resources and services provision in the university libraries in North-East, Nigeria. The result indicates that textbooks

and grey literature are rated very highly utilise with mean score 3.50, while the information resources that rated highly utilised were reference materials, journals, and online internet resources among others with 3.44 to 2.53 mean score range. The cluster means score is 2.93 (± 1.07) shows that the information resources are highly utilized. The standard deviation scores that range from .97 to 1.17 suggest moderate response variations among the respondents.

The result also shows that binding and current awareness services are rated very high extent with 3.06 to 2.84. The library services that are rated highly utilised such online internet services, orientation services, and reference services among others with 3.07 to 2.79 mean ranges. The cluster mean 2.89 (± 1.05) indicates that the library services are utilised to a high extent in the libraries. The standard deviation score ranges from 1.13 to .96 shows low response variations among the respondents

The findings of this study is in line with a similar study conducted by Anhwere, Paulina and Manu (2018) on accessibility of information resources in university libraries creates an enabling environment for utilisation of library resources in university libraries. Library users should be encouraged to frequently consult the information resources and services provided in the university libraries for their academic pursuit.

Research Question 2: What are the challenges associated with the information resources and service provision in university libraries in North-East, Nigeria?

Table 2: Frequency Count, Mean, and Standard Deviation of Responses on the Challenges Associated with Information Resources and Services Provision in University Libraries

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	STD	Rank	Dec
1	Inadequate funding of the library	103	49	9	8	3.30	1.06	1 st	SA
2	Inadequate power supply in the library	63	88	8	10	3.06	1.01	2 nd	A
3	Inadequate access to information resources in library	67	69	31	10	3.03	1.03	3 rd	A
4.	Poor attitude of library staff in handling duties	51	75	34	7	2.84	1.06	6 th	A
5	Lack of training and retraining of library staff on ICT skills	61	68	32	6	2.92	1.08	4 th	A
6	Inadequate user education/orientation service in the library	45	97	20	7	2.92	.96	4 th	A
7	Inadequate storage facilities in the library	54	72	37	4	2.88	1.05	5 th	A
8	Inadequate provision of ICT facilities in the libraries	37	78	48	1	2.70	1.04	9 th	A
9	unclassified information resources in the library	64	75	44	4	2.83	.99	7 th	A
10	Inadequate current awareness services	42	76	43	8	2.76	1.00	8 th	A
Cluster Mean						2.92	1.02		A

SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree

Table 2 shows result on the challenges associated with the information resources and services provision in university libraries in North-East, Nigeria. It suggests that only funding rated strongly with 3.30. All the remaining identified challenges are rated agreed such as inadequate power supply, inadequate access to information resources, lack of training and retraining of library staff on ICT skills, inadequate user education/orientation service in the library, etc with 3.30 to 2.70 mean score range. The cluster mean score 2.92 (± 1.02) indicates that the identified challenges are associated with the information resources and services

provision in university libraries. The standard deviation scores that range from .96 - 1.08 shows low response dispersion of the respondents.

Findings shows that the challenges associated with the information resources and services provision are inadequate funding, inadequate power supply, inadequate access to information resources, lack of training and retraining of library staff among others. The study shared similar view with Shanmugan (2017), which pointed out that shortages of funding is a major factor affecting the services of the libraries. in support of the findings Mole (2017) found that power failure, server low bandwidth and limited availability of computers services, and lack of training and retraining of librarians among others.

Research Question 3: What are the strategies for enhancing the information resources and services provision in university libraries in North East, Nigeria?

Table 3: Frequency Count, Mean, and Standard Deviation of Responses on the Strategies for Enhancing Information Resources and Services Provision in University Libraries

S/N	Items	VA	A	LA	NA	Mean	STD	Rank	Dec
1	Adequate funding of the library	103	48	13	4	3.31	.75	1 st	VA
2	Adequate power supply in the library	82	72	6	8	3.18	.95	2 nd	VA
3	Adequate access to information resources in the library	72	82	13	1	3.16	.87	3 rd	A
4.	Adequate attitude of library staff toward their duty in the library	63	85	12	6	3.03	1.11	6 th	A
5	Training and retraining of library staff on ICT skills	71	67	22	8	3.03	.94	6 th	VA
6	Adequate orientation/user education service in the library	66	75	20	7	3.02	.89	7 th	A
7	Adequate storage facilities in the library	77	71	16	4	3.14	.99	4 th	VA
8	Adequate provision of ICT facilities in the library	54	81	24	9	2.91	1.05	9 th	A
9	Classified information resources in the library	72	74	15	7	3.09	1.01	5 th	A
10	Provision of adequate current awareness services in the library	64	72	21	11	2.96	.99	8 th	A
Cluster Mean						3.08			A

VA = Very Appropriate, A = Appropriate, LA = Less Appropriate, NA = Not Appropriate

Table 3 presents result on the strategies for enhancing information resources and services provision in university libraries in North-East, Nigeria. It suggests that adequate funding, adequate power supply and adequate storage facility in university libraries with 3.31 to 3.03, with all the remaining identified strategies are rated appropriate such as adequate access to information resources in the library, provision of classified information resources in the library, training and retraining of library staff on ICT skills, etc. with 3.39 to 2.91 mean score range. The cluster mean score 3.08 (\pm) indicates that the identified strategies are appropriate for enhancing

information resources and services provision in university libraries. The standard deviation scores that range from .75 - 1.11 show high response variations among the respondents.

The outcome of the findings was that the appropriate strategies for enhancing information resources and services provision in university libraries include adequate funding of the library, adequate power supply in the library, adequate access to information resources in the library, and adequate storage facilities among others. In consonance with this finding, Ezeani (2018) suggests that library should use diverse approach such as adequate funding, recruitment of adequately trained librarians, training and re-training of librarians and adoption of good leadership style among others to deliver to deliver better services. Supportively, Igun (2013) suggest that library advocate adequate funding and Chiware (2007) noted that adequate and initiative training of librarians to manage the information resources to enable better services delivery. The availability of sufficient fund in federal university libraries in North East Nigeria will help the library to fully implement other strategies such adequate power supply in the library, adequate access to information resources, and adequate storage facilities among others.

Summary of the Major Finding

- Information resources and services provision are highly utilised 2.89 (± 1.05) in university libraries.
- Challenges associated with information resources and services provision includes inadequate funding, inadequate power supply, inadequate access to information resources, lack of training and retraining of library staff on ICT skills, inadequate user education services, and orientation service in the library among others

- Strategies for enhancing information resources and services provision in university libraries includes adequate funding, adequate power supply, adequate access to information resources, adequate storage facilities, and training and retraining of library staff on ICT skills among others

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it could be concluded that the information resources and services provision in university libraries in federal universities in North East, Nigeria are highly utilised. The challenges associated with information resources and services provision in university libraries includes inadequate funding, inadequate power supply, and inadequate access to information resources, lack of training and retraining of library staff on ICT skills, inadequate user education services, and orientation service in the library among others. And that the appropriate strategies for enhancing information resources and services provision in university libraries includes adequate funding, adequate power supply, adequate access to information resources, adequate storage facilities, and training and retraining of library staff on ICT skills among others in university libraries in federal universities in North East, Nigeria.

Recommendation

In line with the findings of the study and to ensure better service in university libraries, the following recommendations were drawn:

1. The university library management should allocate a good percentage of the library monetary allocation to the acquisition of information resources and in order to provide better library services
2. Library users should be well sensitized and encouraged to utilize the information resources and services of the university libraries for their academic and research works through library programmes such as users' education/orientation services and workshops

3. The library management should ensure that the library funds are judiciously used in acquisition of relevance and quality information resources in order to provide better services in university libraries

4. Conclusion

5. Based on the findings of the study, it could be concluded that the information resources and services provision in university libraries in federal universities in North East, Nigeria are highly utilised. The challenges associated with information resources and services provision in university libraries includes inadequate funding, inadequate power supply, and inadequate access to information resources, lack of training and retraining of library staff on ICT skills, inadequate user education services, and orientation service in the library among others. And that the appropriate strategies for enhancing information resources and services provision in university libraries includes adequate funding, adequate power supply, adequate access to information resources, adequate storage facilities, and training and retraining of library staff on ICT skills among others in university libraries in federal universities in North East, Nigeria.

6. Recommendation

7. In line with the findings of the study and to ensure better service in university libraries,

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