USER EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS IN NNAMDI AZIKIWE LIBRARY UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study investigated the user education programs for postgraduate students at the Nnamdi Azikiwe Library, University of Nigeria Nsukka. It provided an overview of the current, heterogeneous user education situation in academic libraries and how users interact with the library system and services offered in the location where they are using it.

Design/methodology/Approach: Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study and four research objectives and research questions were formulated to guide the study. Total population sampling was adopted in this study. Instrument for data collection was well structured questionnaire. Ten questionnaires were distributed to the Social Work postgraduate students with 100% return rate. Frequency and simple percentage was used to analyze the data collected.

Findings: This study showed that majority of Social Work post-graduate students confirmed the availability of library orientation as user education method. They use the circulation service the most, followed by book borrowing, then the photocopying/printing service. This study revealed that majority of the Social Work postgraduate student found user education programs relevant to their use of library system and services, and the major challenge faced by post-graduate students is overpopulation of students.

Implication:

In a library or information system, the user is the most significant component, as they are the last links or recipients of information in the communication cycle. The study focused on user education in academic libraries and provided an overview of their current, heterogeneous user education situation. How users interact with the library system and services offered in the location where they are using it are critical. The philosophy for the provision user education; different species of user education, such as library orientation, bibliographic instruction, information skills teaching, online instruction, as well as instructional methods and challenges are all vital issues in any user education agenda in academic libraries.

Originality/value: The ultimate goal of a librarian and library is to educate its users on how to locate the information they need in the right place at the right time for the right users to save time while promoting and stimulating their reading habits. The paper captures the effectiveness of user education programs in providing the information services to users of academic libraries most especially the students and recommends possible strategies to be used by libraries in educating its users.

Keywords: Academic Libraries, Post-graduate students, University of Nigeria Nsukka, User Education Programmes

Paper type: Empirical research.

Introduction

The Academic library supports users' learning and research needs as it is their responsibility to ensure users maximize the use of information sources, services, and resources in order to achieve academic success. As a result, a user education program is critical for library users' success (Suleiman, 2012). Library user education is defined by Asogwa and Ugwuanyi (2015) as "a device by librarians to educate users on how to use the resources available in the library in a result-oriented manner." The provision of user education in the library is justified because library procedures can be complex for the average user who may struggle to understand how to use the available resources (Okeke & Idoko, 2018).

Academic libraries, according to Ubogu and Okiy (2011), are those associated with universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, and other similar higher learning institutions. In his study, Adeniran (2011) also stated that university libraries fulfil the research needs of students and faculty members. Books, journals, videos, recordings, computer databases, and skilled human resources are among the items found in today's library, according to Brown (2007). Also, Libraries contain a plethora of information resources, making them a possible learning environment in a university, and a strong academic library should provide a multifunctional environment within the library space, as this will give individuals a platform to achieve their goals (Ugwuanyi, Okwor & Ezeji, 2011).

Various terms have been used to refer to library user education, such as library literacy, library use education, library usage, reader instruction, user instruction, user education, library skills, bibliographic instruction, information skills, library user education, and so on (Igwe & Ndubuisi-Okoh, 2014). The goal of library user education is to introduce pupils or students and teaching staff to a wide range of information resources and programs by using the school library as a portal (Zaki, 2011).

In the recent decades, the advancements of information and communication technologies (ICTs) have a significant impact on the development of academic libraries and their educational programmes. Hence, these gave rise for the need to develop instructional programs to teach users how to become more competent, efficient, and independent in information searching and retrieving. More importantly, it is the university library's job to provide not only information resources but also provide avenues that will aid users in acquiring skills required for effective and efficient use of library resources (Lorenzen, 2004).

Although according to Uhegbu (2007) there are predictable factors that determine the use of library; these include availability and accessibility of library resources, format of

presentation of information, and user's knowledge and awareness of available library resources. Nevertheless, despite these factors, user education in universities has numerous obstacles that may limit users' ability to engage properly with the available library resources (Wickramanayake, 2015). These challenges are interlinked with issues that affect the University libraries and librarians in general such as of inadequate funding, insufficient library employees to handle the amount of work needed, and improper provision for the user education course on the timetable (Nwabueze, Ozioko, & Igwesi, 2013). Similarly, Ewa (2012) states that major barriers to effective library use by students in higher education, include lack of regular user education program, lack of relevant and up-to-date resources, and poor attitude of staff toward users. In addition, lack of infrastructure, lack of teaching materials, and unfavorable environment are contributing factors that impede effective user education in libraries (Uwakwe et al., 2016).

It is against this backdrop that this research study aims to examine user education in academic libraries by investigating the available user education programs, identify how user education program is being performed, examine users' interaction with system and services provided, justify the needs for user education as well as point out the challenges.

Statement of the problem

The importance of providing students with knowledge and skills in university education has grown throughout time since they supply a wealth of information resources and services, both print and electronic, which are expected to be used effectively by students in their academic pursuits. However, literature has demonstrated that most university students are unable to use information resources effectively and efficiently due to a lack of or poor user education, despite the avalanche of information resources and services available in academic libraries (Aderibigbe & Ajiboye 2011; Suleiman, 2012; Adeniran & Onuoha, 2018). The problem of students mutilating library books and

ODILI Ngozi[1], MALIK Olakunle Farouq[2]; MAGAJI Rhoda Victoria[3], ADAMU Samaila[4], ALABA Kehinde Joy[5]

engaging in other anti-social behavior at university libraries revealed that students lack the requisite user education for information handling and other information seeking behavior skills (Suleiman, 2012). If these issues persist at the library, library services will be underutilized. Therefore, using the Nnamdi Azikiwe Library at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka as a case study, this study will investigate the user education programs for postgraduate students of the Department of Social Work.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to examine user education in Nnamdi Azikiwe library for Social Works Postgraduate Students. The specific objectives are therefore:

1. To identify available user education programs in Nnamdi Azikiwe library.
2. To examine users' interaction with the library system and services provided in Nnamdi Azikiwe library.
3. To justify the needs for user education in Nnamdi Azikiwe library.
4. To identify the challenges of user education in Nnamdi Azikiwe library.

Research questions

1. What are the available user education programs in Nnamdi Azikwe library?
2. What is the nature of users' interactions with the library system and services provided in Nnamdi Azikwe library?
3. What are the needs for user education in Nnamdi Azikwe library?
4. What are the challenges of user education in Nnamdi Azikwe library?

Literature review

Literature was reviewed under headings related to the subject under investigation and includes the following:

User Education in Academic Libraries

User education is a process whereby potential users of the library are made to learn how to make efficient and effective use of the library and its resources through the acquisition of knowledge and skills in identification, location, retrieval, and exploitation of information (Iheaturu, 2012). Fleming (1990) defines user education "as various programmes of instruction, education and exploration provided by libraries to users to enable them to make more effective, efficient and independent use of information sources and services to which these libraries provide access". Improving users' knowledge of their libraries' collection and services could be a motivating factor for more usage and more demands on the library services.

Sujatha (1993) defines user education as any effort of program which will guide and instruct existing and potential user individually or collectively with the objective of facilitating the recognition of their information. Mews (1992) argues that training in the use of information should be part of all students' education and that there is need for instruction in the use of libraries and information services. He sees user education as a continuous process which should cover use of the catalogue, abstracts, bibliographies and reference books. At the post-graduate level detailed instruction in methods of searching and formulation of clear requests, is necessary. Foss (1994) corroborates this by arguing that user education should be organized at different information levels to ensure that needs of all users are met.

Foss **(**1994**)** outlines these different levels within the Fourah Bay College's (Sierra Leone) user education programme:

- The first stage provides a general introduction to the library.

- The next stage is concerned with more subject and bibliographic material.

- The third stage of instruction would cater for the needs of advanced and research students.

While Foss (1994) based his levels of user education on information levels, the China Ministry of Education (1995) recommended

three levels of user education based on the users' educational background.

1. The first level is library orientation for freshmen.

2. the second is courses in bibliographic instruction for juniors and seniors, and

3. the third is more sophisticated user education involving the sorting and summarizing of documentation and the studying and analysing of information for all graduate students.

Ford (1994) notes that in South Africa, Australia and the Netherlands issues related to information access and use have become an increasing concern and, therefore concepts of user education and information literacy are being incorporated in their school and higher education curriculum. She further points out that the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) recognizes the importance of the development of information seeking skills to all members of society. The above views indicate that user education is a continuous process which has to be performed for all user groups. To ensure that users are equipped with efficient methods of accessing, evaluating information from a variety of sources and synthesizing the information into a coherent whole training can be organized around level of difficulty of information and or users' educational background. The goal of user education should be to improve the quality of user's research output and ensure lifelong learning. The different forms of user education includes library orientation, bibliographic instruction, information skills teaching, on-line instruction and course-related instruction, seminars, workshops, library tour, library week, library exhibition, attachments, practical sessions and instructional methods. Specific components of user education have been variously described by authors such as, Donnelly (2003), Sheridan Libraries, (2011), Ogunmodede and Emeahara (2010) as:

1. General orientation, library talk, and library tour given to new students

2. Introduction of new students, some of whom have never made use of well-established libraries, to the complexities of university library facilities.

3. Librarians familiarizing users, who have little or no information seeking skills at all with a broad range of library resources in order to develop library skills.

4. Librarians educating users on how to access resources manually through a card catalogue or electronically using on-line public access catalogues (OPAC).

5. Librarians educating students through credit-earning course work.

Aina (2004) contributing on how user education can be carried out states that it could be one-on-one session, library orientation formal or classroom instruction. While Kumar (2009) states that bibliographic instruction has to provide by librarians to help users to use these resources in the library properly and get benefit out of it.

Users' interaction with system and services provided by academic library

Academic library is a library that is attached to a higher education institution and serves two complementary purposes: to support the curriculum, and to support the research of the university faculty and students. The services provided by academic library includes: circulation service, reference service, online reservation of books resources, recommendation of library material, current awareness service, inter-library loan service, photocopying and printing service, orientation and information sessions, selective

ODILI Ngozi[1], MALIK Olakunle Farouq[2]; MAGAJI Rhoda Victoria[3], ADAMU Samaila[4], ALABA Kehinde Joy[5]

dissemination of information, audio visual service and multimedia section.

Academic library can go beyond quantitative measures with a view to obtaining a more illuminating and complex picture of users' behavior and interaction with different resources by:

- Observation of user's movement in the library (to see where users naturally physically travel to within their library spaces as opposed to where the librarians think they travel to)
- observation of activity within given spaces (to see how users naturally behave in demarked spaces and environments)
- walking through library spaces with users to observe and discuss how they use the library
- focused discussion with library users about what works for them and what does not
- diaries and reflective exercises about users' experience of the library
- observation of alternative library- or service-oriented spaces
- unstructured interviews
- photo studies
- cognitive mapping.

Importance of user education in academic libraries

Ogunmodede and Emeahara (2010) observe that no matter how large the stock of a library is, if the services and its resources are not fully utilized, such a library will be a white elephant project. Therefore, proper planning, design of the facilities as well as adoption of library policies and programs with the aim of ensuring effective use of libraries services is mandatory. More importantly, user education encourage users to develop interest in information seeking, influence positive mindset about the library, and help get user to become familiar with information resources, sources, and services. Furthermore, user education help library client to get familiar with every section of the library, and it provides the avenue for the

librarians to teach users information literacy skills, and information retrieval skills. Also, according to Esse and Ugwumba (2014) establishing a connection between user and materials or tools, proper education is needed for users who may not have prior knowledge or idea on the use of such facilities. Tremendous increase in the volume of publications as well as the resulting complexity of libraries and the methods by which literature is organized and disseminated necessitate the user education. Esse quoting ishola (2005) states that the need for user education has become more urgent as most students come into the university without background knowledge of the library. User education is no doubt an important part of an academic library's service, as it guides both students and faculties to become better-informed and more effective library users, and thereby allowing them to make the best use of library resources available.

Challenges of user education

The major challenge facing user education in library is how to organize user education program more effectively given the rise in student numbers, the limited number of professional staff and the advent of electronic resources which has changed the information landscape as many library users believe they can access whatever information sources needed with the aid of technology. In Nigeria, many fresh students of higher institutions come into the institution without the library background. Even where students are previously exposed to the use of library, the size of the library in a higher institution, the resources and their organisation are so complex so they must be introduced to it. Often times, because of the non-introduction of library usage from their secondary school days even when library orientation is organised these set of students see no reason to attend and this seem to affect their usage of the library later on.

Although studies (Ewa, 2012, Ottong , 2005, Edom, 2007, Joseph, 2005) has revealed that user education enhances library use however, the programme is often faced with a lot of problems such as lack of or inadequate funding, inappropriate provision for the user education

course on the time table, lack of collective curriculum for user education programs in Nigerian universities, and inadequate library staff to cope with the amount of work involved. As revealed by Nwabueze, Ozioko and Igwesi, (2013) that though the staff involved in the programme have sound knowledge of the subject matter, and have the ability to impart knowledge, the number is inadequate. The implication of the inadequacy according to the authors is that they had to handle larger number of students which retards learning. According to Bhatti (2010), professionals showed their dissatisfaction with the size of the groups of students in guided tours and with their relationship with their students. He revealed that shortage of library staff, shortage of facilities are causes of large size of groups of students as they could not break them into smaller groups because of the insufficiency of library staff. He attributed the problem of group size to financial constraints in provision of teaching facilities.

Akhalumhe (2009) has identified the following as problems of user education programme in some Nigerian academic libraries;

i. Over dependence on one day orientation programme.
ii. Lack of collective curriculum for user education in Nigerian tertiary institutions.
iii. Lack of examinable library instruction.
iv. Over concentration (on the part of Librarian) on library technical services like acquisition, cataloguing and classification and shelving of books rather than information retrieval mechanism, and
v. The use of unqualified personnel to teach the use of library in some institutions.

He argues further that four main areas affecting the programme that need to be re-appraised are:

i. Timing of the programme delivery.
ii. Quality of course delivery.
iii. Funding of the programme.
iv. Lack of continuity and follow-up.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was descriptive survey research design. This design is suitable for this kind of study as it allows the researcher to interpret the data and show the relationship between the variables. The study population comprises of 10 social work postgraduate students (master) of 2020/2021. The total population for this study was 10 and census sampling technique was adopted for this research study due to the fact that the population is small and manageable. The postgraduate students of the Department of Social Work was chosen as representatives of other students to gather data within the period available for this assignment in fulfillment for the Course LIS 803: Information Literacy and User Education. Questionnaire was used as the research instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was personally administered and collected from the respondents by the researchers. Data was analyzed using simple percentages while tables and figures were used to present the data. The overall treatment of the data, therefore, is intended to provide answers to each research question as obtained.

Findings/discussions

A total of 10 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and same the 10 questionnaires were retrieved, properly filled and returned by the respondents, giving a response rate of 100%.

ODILI Ngozi[1], MALIK Olakunle Farouq[2]; MAGAJI Rhoda Victoria[3], ADAMU Samaila[4], ALABA Kehinde Joy[5]

Table 1: Demographic Data of Respondents

Demographic Information		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	6	60%
	Female	4	40%
	Total	**10**	**100%**
Age	21-25	3	30%
	26-30	5	50%
	31-35	1	10%
	36-40	1	10%
	Total	**10**	**100%**
Religion	Islam	4	40%
	Christianity	6	60%
	Total	**10**	**100%**
Marital Status	Single	3	30%
	Married	7	70%
	Total	**10**	**100%**

The table shows that 4(40%) respondent out of 10 respondents are female while 6(60%) are male, this means that majority of the respondents are male. The result in the table shows the age distribution of the respondents, the table indicates that 3(30%) respondents are between the age of 21-25 years, followed by respondents between the age 26-30 years with 5(50%), next is 1 respondent between the age 31-35 years and also 1 respondent between the age 36-40 years. The result shows that majority of the respondents are between the age of 26-30 years. Furthermore, the table reveals that the majority of the respondents are Christians with 6(60%) while the Muslim respondents are 4 in number constituting (40%) of the total population. The study indicates that 3(30%) of the respondents are single while 7(70%) are married; the result is so because the research is based on postgraduate students.

Question1: What are the available User Education Programs in Nnamdi Azikwe library?
Table 2: Available User Education Programs in Nnamdi Azikwe library

Programs	Frequency	Percentage
Library orientation	8	80%
Bibliographic instruction	5	50%
Information skills teaching	2	20%
Training program	2	20%
Seminars/workshop	3	30%

The table above shows that majority of the respondents agree on the availability of library orientation with 8(80%), 5(50%) of the respondents agree on the availability of bibliographic instruction as a user education program, also 3(30%) of the respondents confirm seminar/workshop to be available user education program. Furthermore, 2(20%) of the respondents agree on information skills teaching and training program to be the user education programs available at the library. Majority of the users agree that user education programs are available and such programs are those mentioned above. Contributing on how user education can be carried out include one-on-one session, library orientation formal or classroom instruction (Aina, 2004).

Question 2: What is users' interaction with the library system and services provided in Nnamdi Azikiwe library?

Table 3: Users' interaction with the library system and services provided in Nnamdi Azikiwe library

Library Services	Frequency	Percentage
Circulation service	9	90%
Reference service	2	20%
Recommendation of materials	0	0%
Current awareness service	2	20%
Library book loan	6	60%
Photocopy/printing service	4	40%
Selective dissemination of information	3	30%
Audio-visual service	3	30%

From the table above, it can be understood that 9(90%) of the respondents use the circulation services rendered in the library, while 6(60%) of the respondent utilize the library book loan services provided, 4(40%) of the respondents use the photocopying/printing service, 3(30%) of the respondents benefit from the selective dissemination of information and audio-visual/ multimedia services of the library. The table also reveal that current awareness service and reference service are provided with 2(20%) of the respondents agreeing to its provision in the library. None of the respondents agree to use of the recommendation of resources service by the library. Furthermore, 4(40%) of the respondents state that they use the library services always, 4(40%) of the respondent agree to use the library services occasionally, while 2(20%) of them rarely use the provided library services. 6(60%) of the respondents rate the library services provided to be good while 4(40%) of them agree that the library services are provided excellently.

Question 3: What are the needs for User Education in Nnamdi Azikwe Library?

Table 4: Justification for the needs of User Education in Nnamdi Azikwe Library

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Very relevant	4	40%
Relevant	5	50%
Irrelevant	1	10%
Very irrelevant	0	0

The table above indicate that 5(50%) of the respondents find the user education programs provided relevant, some of the respondents find user education programs very relevant with 4(40%), supporting the reasons for their agreement to be the importance of the programs to them as it helps them make use of the library efficiently, familiarizes them with the library system and services. 1(10%) respondent agree that user education program is irrelevant supporting the reason for his agreement by stating that student can ask the librarian about the needed information and the librarian's duty is to provide such required information material(s). Contributing to the need of user education in academic libraries, Esse and Ugwumba (2014) reiterated that there cannot be a connection between user and materials or tools without proper education given to users who may not have prior knowledge or idea on

ODILI Ngozi[1], MALIK Olakunle Farouq[2]; MAGAJI Rhoda Victoria[3], ADAMU Samaila[4], ALABA Kehinde Joy[5]

the use of such materials or tools. Tremendous increase in the volume of publication as well as the resulting complexity of libraries and the methods by which literature is organized and disseminated necessitate the user education.

Question 4: What are the challenges of User Education in Nnamdi Azikiwe Library?

Table 5: Challenges of User Education in Nnamdi Azikiwe Library

Challenges	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of instructional materials	4	40%
Inadequate qualified staff	4	40%
Inadequate facilities	5	50%
Limited time allocation	4	40%
Poor attitude of staff	2	20%
Overpopulation of students	6	60%
Poor attitude of students	2	20%

From the table above, it can be understood that the major challenge of user education programs in Nnamdi Azikiwe library of university of Nigeria is the overpopulation of students with 60% of the respondents agreeing to the challenge, 50% of the respondents agree inadequate facilities is a challenge of user education in the library, 40% of the respondents agree to lack of instructional materials, inadequate qualified staff and limited time allocation as challenges encountered in user education programs respectively. Poor attitude of library staff and poor attitude of students with 20% of the respondents agree to be a challenges of user education in academic library.

Edom (2007) state the challenges of user education programs as follows: Inadequate time, large number of students, inadequate number of lecturers to take the course, inadequate equipment/facilities, high cost of audio-visual materials, the attitude of lecturers, the attitude of students, use of library combined with use of English. Ottong (2005) also identified the problems associated with user education programs to include; lack of time for teaching and practical work, lack of qualified personnel, inadequate funding and poor evaluation of methods of user education.

Implications

The results from the study showed that library orientation, bibliographic instruction, information skills teaching, training program, seminars and workshop are available programs for educating users in Nnamdi Azikiwe Library.

User's interaction with the library system and services provided by the university library from the table 3 above, shows that most of the social work postgraduate students use the circulation service, followed by the use of library book loan, then the photocopying and printing service. Postgraduate students also use the selective dissemination of information service, audiovisual service, current awareness service and reference service.

From the table 4, it has been revealed that majority of the respondents found user educations programs relevant to their use of library system and services rendered, however, one of respondent opposed the relevancy of user education programs in the usage of library and its services.

The table 5 revealed that the major problem facing the user education program in university of Nigeria library is overpopulation of students, next prevailing challenge was the inadequate facilities, other challenges include lack of instructional material, inadequate qualified staff, limited time allocation, lack of professionalism displayed by library staff towards students and lack of skills in managing difficult users.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are put forward:

1. Library user education should not be dependent on one-day orientation program but rather should be done regularly such as monthly, quarterly to enable more time to teach users how to use different types of library resources efficiently and effectively.
2. Adequate funding should be allocated to the library to enable the acquisition of suitable facilities for use in educating its users about the library.
3. Library personnel should develop friendly dispositions towards library users to motivate them in attending program.
4. Students should be encouraged to attend user education programs to get familiarized with the library system, library collections and library services.
5. To teach user education, it is recommended that students should be divided into smaller groups according to their various faculties.

Conclusion

Based on the study conducted in regard to the user education programs designed for social work postgraduate students in University of Nigeria, Nsukka, it became evident that user education program is a necessity in creating awareness among students about the library collections and in encouraging them to use the collections effectively. The benefit of providing students with knowledge and skills required to enable them efficiently use the library cannot be underestimated, since the library supply a wealth of information resources and services, both print and non-print resources that are expected to be used by students for their academic pursuits. However, the problem of students mutilating library books and engaging in other anti-social behavior at university libraries revealed that students lack the requisite user education for information handling and other information seeking behavior skills. Therefore, it is suggested that the library need to design a user education programme that will be delivered to the students periodically and repeatedly rather than on a single day.

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