Students' Perception and Library Use Skills Acquired in User Education As Correlates of library Use By Undergraduate Students in Public Universities in Abia and Imo States.

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: *The study focused on "students' perception and library use skills acquired as correlates of library use by undergraduate students in universities in Abia and Imo States". Three purposes of the study were answered and two hypotheses tested.*

Methodology: *A survey design and a correlational research design were adopted for the study. A sample of 395 students was drawn from a population of 20,933 students from the universities studied. A rating scale was used to collect data for the study. Data collected were analysed using mean, standard deviation, Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) approach. The coefficients, Pearson, r, so obtained were used to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level using t-test statistical tools.*

Findings: *The results revealed that: undergraduate students to a high extent utilize the library services in the university libraries studied; there is a significant low positive coefficient of correlation between the students' perception towards the library user education programme and undergraduate students' extent of use of university libraries and there is a significant low positive coefficient of correlation between the library use skills acquired from library user education programme and undergraduate students' extent of use of university libraries.*

Implications: *Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that: The high extent of use of the library by undergraduates of the universities studied is commendable but more efforts should be made for them to improve to a very high extent; awareness should be created to make students see library user education as an important aspect of their learning in the university and the library user education programme should be designed to be more practical oriented to complement the theoretical aspect of it.*

Originality/Value: *This work has not been published in any journal before. It originality lies in its ability to discover that user education ensure that library users make effective use of the library and its resources. However, its objectives cannot be achieved if the users have a wrong perception of it and if there are no new skills to be acquired.*

Keywords: *User Education, Students' perception, Library Use, Library Use Skills*

Introduction

University libraries all over the world are saddled with the task of providing information services to a target populace by fostering the collection, processing and disseminating information to seekers. According to Onifade, Ogbuiyi and Omeluzor (2013), the university library plays a vital role in assisting the university to fulfill its goal. The effectiveness of the university library to a large extent depends on the utilization of its resources and services. Library use according to Onuoha, Ikonne and Madukoma (2013) includes those activities which occur primarily within the library and which reflects rather traditional library functions such as circulating books and answering reference questions. In order to utilize available resources in the library, a user must be able to go about his search without difficulty.

In order to achieve the objectives of the library, it provides different forms of services to the library users aimed at familiarizing the users with the basic rudiments of exploiting the available information resources which include user education. User education refers to instructions which equip library users with the skills to enable them to be independent and efficient users of libraries and their resources. It includes all the activities involved in teaching users how to make the best possible use of library resources, services

and facilities. User education is an academic programme that is designed by higher institutions to educate library users on how to effectively utilize library resources and its services. According to Haliso and Aina (2012), user education is a way of training library users on how to effectively utilize the library materials.

Library use according to Onuoha, Ikonne and Madukoma (2013) includes those activities which occur primarily within the library and which reflects rather traditional library functions such as circulating books and answering reference questions. In order to utilize available resources in the library, a user must be able to go about his search without difficulty.

User education is meant for the students, but in most cases it has been discovered that students have many perceptions about .it. Some see it as necessary and thereby participate in it fully while others do not see the essence of it hence their non challant attitude towards it. Furthermore, some do not see any correlation existing between user education and their use of the library.

User education is the acquisition of various skills relevant to the identification of and familiarity with information sources, usually through formal bibliographic instruction and informal education. Users of the library should be equipped with the basic skills needed to locate information sources. Thus, it is aimed at equipping the library user with the skills needed in locating information sources in the library. It is also a means of educating users or an introduction given to users to help them make the best use of the library (Folorunso & Njoku, 2016).

This study is therefore carried out in universities in Abia and Imo States to examine how the variables – students' perception of user education and library use skills acquired in user education – correlate with extent of library use by the students. The universities to be studied are only government owned universities; Imo State University, Owerri, Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Abia State University, Uturu and Michael Okpara Federal University of Agriculture, Umudike, Abia State.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to investigate students' perception and library use skills acquired as correlates of library use by undergraduate students in universities in Abia and Imo States The specific purposes are to:

i. ascertain the extent of library use by undergraduate students in universities in Abia and Imo States;
ii. find out the coefficient of correlation between the students' perception towards user education programmes and library use by students; and
iii. ascertain the extent of correlation between library use skills acquired from user education and library use in the universities used in the study.

Hypotheses

The researcher formulated the following hypotheses that were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

HO_1: There is no significant coefficient of correlation between undergraduate students' perception towards user education programme and their use of university libraries in Abia and Imo States.

HO_2: There is no significant coefficient of correlation between library use skills acquired by the undergraduate students after participation in user education programme and their use of university libraries in Abia and Imo States.

Literature Review

The concept of user education is not a recent phenomenon. The origin of library user education can be traced back to more than 170 years ago (Ogunmodede, Adio & Odunola, 2011). The term user education is often used synonymously with terms such as "Library use education "Reader instruction", "User instruction", "Library orientation", and "Library user education". Rhodes and Chelin (2000) defined "user education as instruction which equips library users with the skills to enable them to be independent and sophisticated users of libraries and their resources. It includes library orientation, induction and information skills training" (p.59). To Maduako (2013), it is simply a planned process and technique that is aimed at equipping library users with the basic skills to enable them optimally use resources available in a given library or libraries. The purpose of university user education must be aligned with the objectives of the university library in consonance with the purpose of the parent institution.

User education in contemporary university environment has the fundamental goal of introducing the students to modern library resources and services so that they can optimally utilize it in the course of their studies. The aim of

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library user education according to Tian-hui (2009:83) is to strengthen library users' awareness to understand the layout of the library facilities, to help them maximize the use of the library. Thus, the content of library user education is designed to educate users' information awareness and capacity through various forms as well as the use of oriented library.

Maduako (2013) in his study found out that undergraduate students under use the university library services provided to them. Folorunso and Njoku (2016) in their study on undergraduates in University of Ibadan observed that students used the library to study and read for examinations, find materials for assignments, and also to do research work, e.g. projects and term papers. The students specifically used the library to consult reference materials like encyclopedia, dictionaries; borrow materials for academic work; consult librarians for information; make use of the wireless internet connectivity (Wi-Fi) on their devices; access electronic information resources; make use of computers and internet access; as well as read newspapers.

It has been noticed that students of the university are having different ideas, perceptions and reflections on library orientation programme rather than its context. Perception according to Hornby (2000) is the ability to understand the true nature of something. Students perception could therefore be defined as an idea, a belief or an image students have on library orientation services or programme as a result of what they see or understand something. Ogunmodede, Adio and Odunola (2011) discovered that a good number of respondents affirmed that library use education is relevant to their course of study, and their perception for the need for library use education is equally high, the result of Information Technology (Computer) search tools used by the students negates the usefulness of the library 101 as a course of study to the student. Moyane, Dube and Hoskins (2015) stated that the way students view or perceive library user education programmes to a high extent influences their participation in the programmes and at the same time influence their use of library in the universities. Ogunmodede, Adio and Odunola (2011) discovered that a good number of respondents affirmed that library use education is relevant to their course of study, and their perception for the need for library use education is equally high, the result of Information Technology (Computer) search tools used by the students

negates the usefulness of the library 101 as a course of study to the student.

The study of Bem-bura (2015) on students' perception of library orientation programme revealed that they perceived it as means of transmitting knowledge, useful device for improving the attitudes of students towards the librarian and library services, skills necessary for utilizing library resources, attempt to formalized users with every aspect of the library, a means of wasting students precious time, means of developing social and academic talent as well as capacities of students as well as means of introducing fresh students into the library system.

Students in higher institutions are expected to benefit maximally when they possess library user skills through resource based learning programmes. They will take more control in their learning and the teacher will be freed from the role of an omniscient expert. Students that acquire library skills are more effective consumers of information resources. They learn to recognize that information is packaged in a variety of ways using a variety of techniques, that it serves a variety of interests and contains a variety of valued messages. They are more critical when they make decisions about the resources they use. Possession of the requisite library use skills makes students to respond effectively to an ever changing environment. It makes them have techniques for exploring, making connections and making practical use of information so as to make a truly informed decision. These students believe in the need for information to address problems and questions in their lives and in their academics in order to be life-long learners (Idoko, Asogwa & Ugwuanyi, 2015). Ilo and Idiegbeyan-ose (2011) in their study discovered that there is no relationship between skills acquired by the students and their use of library in the universities. To Folorunso and Njoku (2016), effective user education programme helps to create a friendly atmosphere where the users and the librarian see themselves as partners in progress. User education is of immense benefits to both the user and the library. Dara (2005) also stated that possession of library skills is the outcome of library user education programmes. These skills have to do with having abilities/skills or competencies to effectively make use of library materials with minimal assistance.

Research Methodology

In this study, the researcher adopted two research designs: survey and a correlational research design. The survey design was used to

get the opinions of the respondents on their use of the library while correlational design was used to know the relationship between the use of the library and the indices of user education. The population of the study was 20,933 students of the institutions studied. It comprised all the students admitted in 2016/17 academic session in the four universities studied. Taro Yamane's (1969) statistical formula was used to determine the sample size of 395. The instrument used to collect data for this study was the rating scale. In analysing the data collected from the study, the researcher used mean and standard deviation to answer research question 1, Pearson Product Moment

Coefficient of Correlation (PPMCC) to answer the other two research questions while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level using t-test statistical tool.

Data Analyses and Presentation

Research Question 1: What is the extent of library use by undergraduate students in universities in Abia and Imo States?

Table 1:

Extent of Library Use by Undergraduate Students

S/N	Item statements	$\bar{X}$	S	*Remark*
1.	Circulation services	3.08	0.77	**HE**
2.	Reference services	3.14	0.78	**HE**
3.	Reprographic services	3.08	0.79	**HE**
4.	Internet services	3.01	0.81	**HE**
5.	Library resources	3.01	0.79	**HE**
6.	Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)	2.00	0.93	**LE**
7.	Loan services	2.99	0.79	**HE**
	Overall Mean	**20.29**	**2.78**	**HE**

Data in Table 1 showed the item-by-item mean and standard deviation scores on undergraduate students' utilization of libraries in the universities in Abia and Imo States. The result of the data analysis in the table showed that undergraduate students to a high extent utilize the circulation services, reference services, reprographic services, internet services, library services and loan services of the university libraries. This is indicated by the mean scores of the items, which are above the item criterion mean of 2.50, except for item 6 that have mean score below 2.50, indicating low extent. The overall mean scores of 20.29 is above the expected mean of 17.50. The standard deviations are small

indicating that the item-by-item response scores are homogenous, that is spread around the individual item means.

Research Question 2: What is the coefficient of correlation between the students' perception towards user education programmes and library use by students?

HO$_1$: There is no significant coefficient of correlation between undergraduate students' perception towards user education programme and their use of university libraries in Abia and Imo States;

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Table 2:

Coefficient of Correlation between Students' Perception toward User Education Programmes and Library Use by Students.

Variable	$\bar{X}$	S	r	R^2	t_{Cal}	$p-value$	t_{Crit}	df	Decision
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Lib. Use:	20.29	2.78							
			.22	0.05	4.41	0.00	1.96	382	Reject Ho$_4$
Perception:	19.71	2.07							

Data on the coefficient of relationship between the students' perception towards the library user education programme and students use of the University libraries is presented in Table 2. The mean rating score of the use of library by the undergraduate students is 20.29, while the standard deviation is 2.78. Also, the mean rating score of students' perception towards the library user education programme is 19.71, while the standard deviation is 2.07. The small standard deviation indicates that the rating scores of the students on the use of library and the students' perception towards the library user education programme are homogenous or spread around the mean and tends towards high extent. The coefficient of correlation between students' perception towards the library user education programme and the use of library by the students is .22. This coefficient is within the range .21 − .40, indicating that there is a low positive relationship between students' perception towards the library user education programme and the use of library by the students. That is the higher the students' perception towards the library user education programme, the more students utilize the university libraries.

The calculated t-value of 4.41 is greater than the tabulated t-value of 1.96, while the p-value of 0.00 is less than 0.05. The null hypothesis four is therefore, rejected. The result of the t-test of significance of coefficient of correlation show that, at an alpha level of 0.05 and 382 degree of freedom, a coefficient of .22 is significantly different from zero. Hence, there is a significant low positive coefficient of correlation between students' perception towards the library user education programme and undergraduate students' extent of use of university libraries in Abia and Imo States**.**

Research Question 2: What is the coefficient of correlation between library use skills acquired from user education and library use by students?

HO$_2$: There is no significant coefficient of correlation between library use skills acquired by the undergraduate students after participation in user education programme and their use of university libraries in Abia and Imo States.

Table 2:

Coefficient of Correlation between Library Use Skills Acquired from User Education and Library Use by Students.

Variable	$\bar{X}$	S	r	R^2	t_{Cal}	$p-value$	t_{Crit}	df	Decision
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Lib. Use:	20.29	2.78							
			.37	0.14	7.78	0.00	1.96	382	Reject Ho$_5$
Skill:	18.21	1.76							

Data on the coefficient of relationship between the library use skills acquired from library user education programme and students' use of the university libraries is presented in Table 3. The mean rating score of the use of library by the undergraduate students is 20.29 and the standard deviation is 2.78 while the mean rating score of the library use skills acquired from library user education programme is 18.21 and the standard deviation is 1.76. The small standard deviation indicates that the rating scores of the students on the use of library and the library use skills acquired from library user education programme are homogenous or spread around the mean and tends towards high extent. The coefficient of correlation between library use skills acquired from library user education programme and the use of library by the students is .37. This coefficient is within the range

21–40, indicating that there is a low positive relationship between library use skills acquired from library user education programme and the use of library by the students. That is the higher the library use skills acquired from library user education programme by the students, the more students utilize the university libraries.

The calculated t-value of 7.78 is greater than the tabulated t-value of 1.96, while the p-value of 0.00 is less than 0.05. The null hypothesis five is therefore rejected. The result of the t-test of significance of coefficient of correlation show that, at an alpha level of 0.05 and 382 degree of freedom, a coefficient of .37 is significantly different from zero. Hence, there is a significant low positive coefficient of correlation between the contents of the library use skills acquired from library user education programme and undergraduate students' extent of use of university libraries in Abia and Imo States.

Discussion of Findings

Extent of Library Use by Undergraduate Students in Universities in Abia and Imo States

The findings of the study concerning the extent of library use by undergraduate students in the universities in Abia and Imo States revealed that undergraduate students to high extent utilize the circulation services, reference services, reprographic services, internet services, library resources and loan services of the university libraries. The finding showed that undergraduate students make extensive use of the library services provided in the universities. The finding of the study also showed that undergraduate students do not make use of selective dissemination of information in the university libraries. This finding is in line with Folorunso and Njoku's (2016) study on undergraduates in University of Ibadan. They observed that students used the library to study and read for examinations, find materials for assignments, and also to do research work, e.g. projects and term papers. The students specifically used the library to consult reference materials like encyclopedia, dictionaries; borrow materials for academic work; consult librarians for information; make use of the wireless internet connectivity (Wi-Fi) on their devices; access electronic information resources; make use of computers and internet access; as well as read newspapers. These findings are contrary to the findings of Maduako (2013) who found that undergraduate students under use the university library services provided to them. Also contrary to the findings of this study, Ogunmodede, Adio and Odunola (2011) that most students in higher institute of learning finds it difficult to explore the world of information sources thus leading to poor appreciation of the library and its resources, which contributed to their inability to undergo meaningful researches or at best become poor library users.

Students' Perception toward User Education Programmes and Library Use by Students

The finding of the study on the coefficient of relationship between students' perception towards the library user education programme and students use of the University libraries revealed that there is a low positive relationship between students' perception towards the library user education programme and the use of library by the students. That is the higher the students' perception towards the library user education programme, the more students utilize the University libraries. The coefficient of relationship falls within the range of low positive relationship, indicating that the relationship between students' perception towards the library user education programme and the use of library by the students is low. However, the test of significance revealed that there is a significant low positive coefficient of correlation between students' perception towards the library user education programme and the use of library by the students. These findings is in line with the findings of Moyane, Dube and Hoskins (2015) that the way students view or perceive library user education programmes to a high extent influences their participation in the programmes and at the same time influence their use of library in the universities. Ogunmodede, Adio and Odunola (2011) discovered that a good number of respondents affirmed that library use education is relevant to their course of study, and their perception for the need for library use education is equally high, the result of Information Technology (Computer) search tools used by the students negates the usefulness of the library 101 as a course of study to the student. The study of Bembura (2015) on students' perception of library orientation programme revealed that they perceived it as means of transmitting knowledge, useful device for improving the attitudes of students towards the librarian and library services, skills necessary for utilizing library resources, attempt to formalized users with every aspect of the library, a means of wasting students precious time, means of developing social and academic talent as well as capacities of students as well as means of introducing fresh students into the library system.

Library Use Skills Acquired from User Education and Library Use by Students

Discussion of findings concerning the coefficient of relationship between library use skills acquired from library user education programmes and library use by students revealed that there is a low positive relationship between library use skills acquired from library user education programme and the use of library by the students. That is the higher the library use skills acquired from library user education programme by the students, the more students utilizes the University libraries. The finding showed that the skills acquired by the students from the user education programmes influences their use of the library in the universities. This finding is contrary to the findings of Ilo and Idiegbeyan-ose (2011) that there is no relationship between skills acquired by the students and their use of library in the universities. Folorunso and Njoku (2016) stated that effective user education programme helps to create a friendly atmosphere where the users and the librarian see themselves as partners in progress. Dara (2005) also stated that possession of library skills is the outcome of library user education programmes. These skills have to do with having abilities/skills or competencies to effectively make use of library materials with minimal assistance.

Conclusion

User education has been seen as every effort made by the university authority or wherever a library is established to educate the users on the library resources available and services provided in the library. This will help the students to explore the library in their bid to satisfy their information needs, hence making them active users of the library. It is seen as a proactive and pragmatic step taken towards ensuring that library users make effective use of the library and its resources. In summary, user education programme connotes the educational role of the library which aims at changing users' behaviour and experience towards the use of library resources to meet their information needs namely; study, learning and research. However, its objectives cannot be achieved if the users have a wrong perception of it and if there are no new skills to be acquired. Every effort should therefore be made to ensure that the purposes are achieved which will definitely lead to effective use of the library by students.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study the researcher made the following recommendations:

1. The high extent of use of the library by undergraduates of the universities studied is commendable but more efforts should be made for them to improve to a very high extent.
2. Awareness should be created to make students see library user education as an important aspect of their learning in the university.
3. The library user education programme should be designed to be more practical oriented to complement the theoretical aspect of it.

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