



EXPLORING THE PERCEPTION OF STUDENTS ON LIBRARY EDUCATION IN ENHANCING THEIR USE OF LIBRARY SERVICES IN COAL CITY UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

The study is on the perception of students on library education in enhancing their use of library services in Coal City University, Enugu Nigeria. The study aims to ascertain the impact of library education on students' library use. Four research objectives and four research questions were adopted for this study. A total of 425 students formed the population of the study. The study was carried out using questionnaire (e-copies). Data were analysed using simple percentage and presented in tables and charts. The result of the study among others, revealed that library education has helped to improve the interpersonal relationship that is expected to exist between library users and librarians and that they are familiar with library services and its resources. The study also recommends that library management should see the library education exercise as a means to market library services among the university students by so doing, the students will learn to appreciate the services of the library.

Keywords: UniversityLibrary, Library Education, Library Users, Library Services.

Introduction

Libraries are regarded as the store house of knowledge. This is because it houses information resources stored in different formats. The academic libraries, on the other hand, are regarded as the integral part of the university system due to its significant role in supporting teaching, learning and research in the universities. Because of this mandate, academic libraries' collections and services are designed to meet the objectives and information requirements of the parent institution. As a centre of learning, teaching and research, the university libraries ensure that their collections and services are designed to meet the objectives and

information requirements of the parent institution. It, therefore, requires that university libraries develop strategies and programmes which will be geared toward effective utilization of the services which the University library provides and ensure effective service delivery. To achieve this, the university library offers Library Education/ library orientation programme which aim at educating the university students especially the freshmen on the basic skills needed to navigate the library in search of information.

Guiding users on how to use the library is necessary because of the ever growing library collections as well as seemingly complexity of libraries and methods by which literature is organized and disseminated which could be confusing. This is the reason for the library education. Uwa (2014), stated that user education involves teaching the users how to handle books and other resources, obeying library rules and regulations and how to make effective use of the electronic or manual library catalogues and reference materials. In a simple term, user education is an instruction given to library and information users with the intention of improving and enhancing their skills in the effective utilization and exploitation of library and information resources.

Library education extends beyond knowing how to use the library. According to Okorie (2016), it involves being able to maximally use the information resources the library provides. Uchendu (2014), affirms that library education impacts search skills on library users for improved search strategy. This is why Nweze (2011) affirmed that the impact of this library education could go beyond the number of years that students spend in academic institutions. This is because the aim of this library education is to give a life-long transformation in all learning and research activities of the students, providing them with skills which will enable them effectively use the information that is available in the library to their advantage.

The university curriculum has provided for academic libraries a platform for effective library education. Based on BMAS outline, Library education has become an indispensable academic program in Nigerian Universities. It has been integrated into the university curriculum with the title 'Use of Library, Study Skills and ICT'. The course is a general studies course and has the weight of two credit units and two hours a week. The course is taught, among others, to give an overview of the different libraries and their services as well as to make students aware of the available and scope of libraries' resources and services. This is to ensure that every freshmen of a university are prepared for subsequent use of the library throughout the course of their studies in the university. In addition to Use of Library course, Coal City University and some other universities in Nigeria, organize library orientation exercise, give library tour and produce library

handbooks for university students as a means of library education.

Library orientation, User education, library instruction, information literacy are all terms used to describe library education programmes which focuses on educating university students on the independent use of the library and its resources effectively. According to Okorie (2016) user education is concerned with the instruction and training that is given to the users by the librarians so that they will be able to make optimal use of the library and its information sources. It is an essential mechanism for ensuring effective library and information use especially to the new intakes in an institution of higher learning as it will help them acclimate with the university library and its numerous services (Uhegbu, 2011). Maduako (2013) affirms this by defining user education as a planned process and techniques that is aimed at equipping library users with the basic skills to help them make optimal use of the resources available in their library.

The goal of the library education is embedded in letting the library users gain knowledge of the resources and services which the library offers for his or her benefit. As a new student in an academic environment, library education is indispensable if the students are to quickly adjust and adapt to the challenges of the academic library environment. This is because the extents to which the library resources are used depend largely on users' skill and knowledge of information search and retrieval (Uwakwe, Onyeneka & Njoku, 2016). In agreement, Esse (2014) opines 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 the use of such materials or tools.

Effective library education is a headway towards achieving the goals and objective of a University library. Onyesikuru in Uwakwe, Onyeneka and Njoku, (2016) confirms that it is one of the principal objectives of establishing libraries. He insists that for this to be achieved, librarians must instruct the students on how to use the library; they have to familiarize them with the technique of library use and information retrieval. Therefore, Library education is important not only to the library user, but the library staff and the university at large. According to Uchendu (2014) Library education ease the work of librarians and quicken the efforts of clientele in getting and utilizing the library materials independently. This is why it is believed that it is the library's responsibility to provide better services to its clients to make sure that information sources, services and resources are well utilized for users' benefits. Hence user education programme is very crucial for library users' achievement. Potential library users of information are made to learn how to make effective and efficient use of the library and its resources with the aim of imparting the skills needed to use the library of their institution and

other libraries outside their institutions as well as obtain information from the various information bearing sources in their library (Ononogbo&Akanwa, 2016.)

Coal City University (CCU), Enugu is a citadel of learning poised to engender a mastery of critical thinking skills which will manifest in the ability to apply the concept of knowledge acquired to real life situation. As a university that is committed to the creation of knowledge through fundamental and applied research, it is very important to the institution that its students utilize the numerous library resources available to them. For this reason, the library is aligned to this mission and has continuously promoted the library services through library education programmes in the university. To achieve this, the librarians are particular with given the students instructions and training that will enable them to be able to make optimal use of the library and its information sources. Having carried this library education for over a period of time, this study therefore, aims to study the perception of students on library education in enhancing their use of library services in Coal City University, Enugu.

Statement of the Problem

The observed decline in the use of academic library resources has become a thing of concern for librarians. Studies have shown that the way students make use of the library and its resources, one would wonder if they are aware of the purposes and functions of the library. Despite the library education given to university students in their first semester in the university, it is quite unfortunate that many students pass through higher institutions without making use of the library, while those who do, do not use it effectively. One could guess that it may be as a result of lack of effective library education, wrong method of handling it, incompetence of the staff, lack of priority given to it by the management of the tertiary institution, problems affecting the teaching of user education in institutions? It is in light of the above, that this research work is set to investigate the perception of students on library education in enhancing their use of library services in the institution

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study is to ascertain the impact of user education on students' use of Coal City University library. Specifically, the study sought:

1. To learn about the students' knowledge on different library education available in Coal City University.
2. To identify how easily the students can use the library resources as a result of the teaching of library education.

3. To find out the level of students' satisfaction with the library education at Coal City University
4. To find out if the teaching of library education enhanced the interpersonal relationship that is expected to exist between the library users and the librarians in Coal City University.

Research Questions

In line with the study's objectives, the following research questions were posed to guide the study.

1. Are the students aware of the different library education available in Coal City University?
2. How easily the students can use the library resources as a result of the teaching of library education?
3. What is the level of students' satisfaction with the library education at Coal City University?
4. Has the teaching of library education enhanced the interpersonal relationship that is expected to exist between the library users and the librarians in Coal City University?

Literature Review

Library education is concerned with the instruction and training that is given to the students by the librarians so that they will be able to make optimal use of the library and its information sources. It is an essential mechanism for ensuring effective library and information use especially to the new intakes in an institution of higher learning as it will help them acclimate with the university library and its numerous services (Uhegbu, 2011). Maduako (2013) affirms this by defining education as a planned process and techniques that is aimed at equipping library users with the basic skills to help them make optimal use of the resources available in their library.

In a study by Agyeiku (2022), on the effect of library orientation programme on the use of library resources by new students in the university of education, Winneba, it shows that library orientation enables the library to sensitize the newly admitted students and create adequate awareness about the available resources and services of the library to meet and satisfy the needs of the users.

Similarly, Manuwa, Agboola and Aduku (2018) in their study on effects of library orientation on library use in two academic libraries in Gashu'a, Yobe State, Nigeria, the finding shows that library orientation has positive effect on the library users and has improved their use of library information resources. Also, Unuabor

and Oseghale (2018) in their study on impact of the use of library course for undergraduates' better usage of library resources in Faculty of Education, University of Ibadan: A study, revealed that user education through the use of library has raised the undergraduates' awareness about the resources available in the library, most especially the key resources they need to meet their information needs.

The study by Uwakwe, Onyeneka& Njoku, (2016) on Effect of user education on law students' use of the library: A case of the faculty of law library, Imo state university, Owerri, Nigeria also confirmed that user education programme has positively affected the law students use of the library and their academic performance. Bello (2003) as well, reported in his study on library user education evaluation at the Ibadan Polytechnic that a greater percentage of the respondents (93%) agreed that the user education course has to a great extent benefited them in the proper handling and use of the library resources.

However, in a study by Ogunmodede, Adio, Odunola (2011) it was discovered from the finding that although the students are introduced to the use of library to enable them to make a meaningful research that will benefit not only Nigeria as a country but the whole Universe, its effect on the student is very minimal. The result showed that few library resources are being consulted by the students even after taken the library education instructions.

On the other hand, Obinyan and Udem (2018) carried out a survey on NCE students' perceptions on use of library course as an aid to their use of library resources in Colleges of Education in South-West Nigeria. The finding shows that students' perceived that use of library course aid their use of all library resource categories examined in the study (that is, reference, reserve, circulation and serials resources). Similarly, Chukwuji (2019) in a study on undergraduate's perception of use of library course as aid to use of resources in universities in North West, Nigeria, shows that students' perception of the use of library course as an aid to their use of various information resources in circulation, catalogue, references, serials and e-resources were all positive. Therefore, this study tends to explore the perception of students on library education in enhancing their use of library services in coal city university to find out if the students in coal city university has similar view about library education.

Methodology

The study investigated the library user education and its impact on library use in Coal City University, Enugu State, Nigeria. Data for the research was gathered through the instrument of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was generated in line with the research objectives and distributed as a course

assessment form among the students. A total of 425 students formed the population of the students who had library education for the year 2018/2019 academic year to 2021/2022 academic year. The e-copy of the questionnaire was distributed, 125 responses were received and considered useful. The 125 responses were considered useful because it constitutes more than 20% of the total population under study and according to Nwana in Uzoagulu (2015) there is no fixed number and no fixed percentage that is ideal for a study, rather it is the circumstances of the study situation that determines what number or what percentage of the population should be studied.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data analysis and presentation were done in line with the research questions and presented in tables and charts. The data were analysed using frequency and percentage.

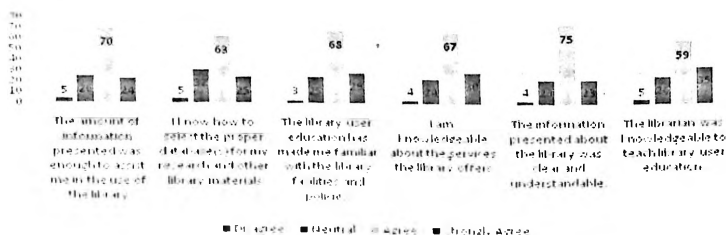
Table 1: Which of these library education did you know and participated in?

S/N	Items	Responses	Percentage
1	Use of Library Course	125	100%
2	Library Orientation Exercise	12	9.6%
3	Library visit/tour	19	15.2%
4	Library Handbook	0	0%
5	All listed above	0	0%

The response in Table 1 shows that the students are aware and participated in the listed methods of library education available at Coal City University. The table also indicates that Use of Library course which is offered at the first semester first year has the highest rating with 125 responses at 100%. Library Orientation Exercise has 12 responses at 9.6%; Library visit/tour has 19 responses at 15.2% and Library handbook has 0 responses at 0%.

This is, therefore, in line with Madukoma (2013) who opined that library education can be delivered as library orientation, classroom teaching, guided library tour and library guide.

Research question 2: What is the level of students' satisfaction with the library user education at Coal City University?



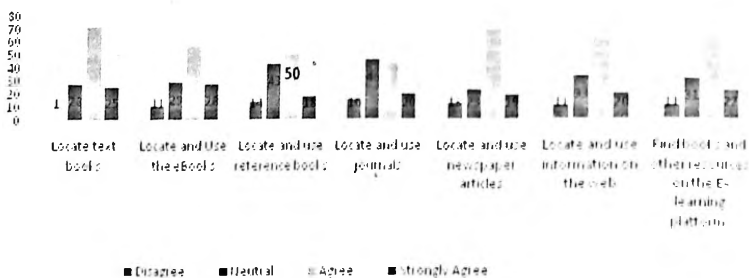
The respondents were asked their level of satisfaction with library education in regards to their ability to use the library and proper databases, their familiarity with library facilities and library policies and how knowledgeable about the services the library offers. The chart above shows that respondents agree that library education presents them with 'The amount of information enough to assist in the use of the library' with cumulative response of 94(75.2%); 'know how to select the proper databases for research and other materials' with cumulative number of 88 (70.4%) 'familiar with the library facilities and policies' with cumulative number of 97(77.6%) and 'knowledgeable about the services the library offers' with cumulative number of 97(77.6%) in agreement;

Further questions on whether 'the information presented about the library was clear and understandable' has a cumulative number of 98 (78.4%) responses in affirmation, while the response on whether 'The librarian was knowledgeable to teach library user education' has a cumulative response of 94(75.2%) in affirmation.

The above findings are also in agreement with Omeluzor, Akibu, Dika, and Ukwangwa (2017) where they are of the opinion that the library education aims to expose library users on library services and equip them with the skills needed to effectively utilize the library services and resources. This also confirms the study of Maduako (2013) which revealed that students of Nigerian universities who go through the library education find it very satisfactory with the information given to them about the use of library and services offered at the libraries.

Research question 3: How easily can the students use the library resources as a result of library education?

Chart 2: Use of Library resources as a result of library education



From the chart above, general responses indicate that as a result of library education, respondents can locate and use textbooks 96(76.8%), eBooks 85(68%), and reference materials 68(54.4%). They have shown to also be able to use journals 63(42.4%) and newspaper articles 89(71.2%) and can locate and use the information on the web 81(64.8%) and also find books and other resources on the E-Learning platform 3(66.4%). A considerable variations feel indifferent about the influence of library education on their ability to use the library resources with 28 (22.4%), 29(23.2%), 43(34.4%), 46(36.8%), 23(18.4%), 33(26.4), 31(24.8%) respectively while 1(0.8%), 11(8.8%), 14(11.2%), 16(12.8%), 13(10.4%), 11(8.8%) and 11(8.8%) respectively could not locate textbooks and eBooks, locate and use reference books, locate and use journals and newspaper article database, locate and use the information on the web nor could they find books and other resources on the E-learning platform.

These findings are in line with Uchendu (2014) who affirms that library education impacts search skills on library users for improved search strategy. Also Uwa (2014), stated that user education involves teaching the users how to handle books and other resources, obeying library rules and regulations and how to make effective use of the electronic or manual library catalogues and reference materials.

This confirms the study of Adje, Frimpong and Dogbe (2021) that students find the use of library services and resources to be very comfortable as they were already equipped with the literacy skills needed to use such services and resources effectively.

Research Question 4: Has the teaching of library education enhanced the interpersonal relationship that is expected to exist between the library users and the librarians in Coal City University?

Chart 3: Interpersonal relationship between the library staff and the library users



Chart above affirms that library education has enhanced the students' interpersonal relationship that is expected to exist between library users and the librarians in coal city university. The responses show that because of library education, library users are very comfortable in the library with a cumulative number of 114(91.2%), they are not scared of using any library resources 111(88.8%) and they can easily approach any librarian 108(86.4%). The respondents further confirm that the librarians in Coal City University are friendly and approachable with a cumulative response of 111(88.8%) and they provide the necessary assistance needed by the library users 98(78.4%).

The findings in chart 3 above agrees with Janecatalla in Amando, Dajab and Bibot (2018) who are of the opinion that library education is designed to help library users to feel at home in the library and trust the competency of the library staff as well as enable library users to become skilled at finding information and thus foster feelings of confidence and independence.

Conclusion

This study was carried out to explore the perception of students on library education in enhancing their use of library services in Coal City University, Enugu. From the findings, the study revealed that the students are more familiar with the Use of Library course as a form of library education in Coal City University. The findings also reveal that due to the library education, students are now familiar with the library services and its resources. The most significant way the library education has benefited the students is that it helped to enhance the interpersonal relationship that is expected to exist between the librarians and the library users. For this reason, students are very at home while in the library, their competency and confidence in using the library is enhanced due to library education. However, a huge number of the students feel indifferent about the library and its services, though their number might be insignificant, they constitute a percentage of student that the library is meant to serve. For this reason, the librarians need to take cognitive of these group of people and consider improving the library education to include them.

Recommendation

At the end of the study, the following recommendations were made

- That the library management should see the library education exercise as a means to market library services among the students of the university. It should be an avenue for libraries to market their resources and services and not just a means to pass a course.

- That the library education should be designed to suit the library services of a particular university. This way, the students will be familiar with the services of their university library and be able to relate with the library practically.
- That while delivering library education, there shouldn't be any assumption that the students are already familiar with the library beforehand. Instead, it should be taught from the basics in order to achieve its objective

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