

Library orientation as a predictor of library use among freshers in two selected academic libraries in Kwara State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: The paper is a study on library orientation as a predictor of library use among freshers in two selected academic libraries in Kwara State, Nigeria. The survey design was used for this study with a total population of two thousand and ten (2,010) registered students from Summit University, Offa (94) and Federal Polytechnic Offa (1916) for the 2021/2022 academic session. Two stage sampling technique was used in the study. The first stage selected departments similar to each of the institutions, these departments are Accounting, Business Administration, Banking and Finance, Computer Science and Mass Communication. The second stage involved the use of sampling fraction of 20% to select the sample size from each of the selected departments. This, therefore, gave a total sampling size of 201. Out of 201 questionnaires distributed to respondents, 200 questionnaires (representing 99.5%) were returned and found valid for analysis. The data collected were analysed using frequency table and mean. The hypothesis was tested using linear regression. Findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between library orientation and utilisation of library resources among newly admitted students in selected institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria. The findings showed the challenges confronting library orientation in academic libraries in Kwara State including but not limited to over population, and lack of instructional materials, among others. It was recommended that library orientation programmes in academic libraries of this nature should be imposed on newly admitted students. Library staff should adopt regular interaction with students and be willing to help and have a user-friendly disposition with them in their quest for services.

Keywords: Academic libraries, fresher, library orientation, library use.

INTRODUCTION

Academic libraries stimulate the mission of their parent institution to generate knowledge and equip people with relevant information skills to serve society and advance the frontiers of knowledge. Akimbola *et al.* (2010) as cited in Uwakwe *et al.* (2016) substantiated one of the laws of library science proposed by Rangannathan is allowing access to the use of library resources to enable the member of the academic community to develop new skills and ability to build a frame of work for teaching, learning

and research purposes. Taking care of the information needs of the users entails the provision of physical bibliographical and electronic access to information resources. It is therefore a necessity for all academic and research institutions to have well equipped libraries.

Madukoma *et al.* (2013) opined that library orientation was introduced in an academic institution to ensure that students have the intellectual ability to access and retrieve information as well as construct a framework for learning

and research activities of students, staff and faculties or departments. It has a lifelong impact on library users and enables them to acquire library skills to be able to locate, access, evaluate, retrieve and use library material with ease. It is the process of educating the user to use information that is available in the library to their advantage. The methods of application of library orientation differ from the library, the main purpose is to enable users to become independent and skilful in identifying, accessing and utilizing library resources effectively.

In most academic libraries for example Federal Polytechnic Offa and Summit University Offa Kwara State, Nigeria, library orientation takes place at every new semester beginning in October each year according to the Nigeria institution calendar. The target group for orientation at such time is the newly admitted students. All newly admitted students in the institutions would be taken through the various divisions, units and sections of the libraries to see the physical resources entail to aid their learning, assignment, research activities and how to utilize those information resources. Etim (2007) substantiated the impact of library orientation as means of achieving information literacy which is predicated on actualizing one's goal and developing one's knowledge and potential. It is a "catch young mechanism" aimed at inculcating in the newly admitted students, staff and researchers the use of library resources for overall academic development. The exponential growth of information resources coupled with the increasing pace of information technology development in the present age has occasioned an urgent need for academic libraries to keep users abreast of search techniques with a view to aiding the easy retrieval of information.

In recent times, more students surf the internet for information than go through library resources, as it is less complicated and readily available. Still, students who are regularly using the library know that libraries have resources that are more comprehensive and scholarly than most websites, which also may not be freely available or may not be online at all. Academic libraries do subscribe to e-journals, e-books and e-magazines among others that could give access to good articles in the needed studies or fields but are not available through other search engines. For these, the whole masses could be motivated towards using library resources which could be possible only by shifting the orientation system from teacher-centred to student-centred learning, from subject-based to knowledge-based learning. It is in college that a student becomes aware of the library resources where some students may show interest in learning and using library resources both electronic and print whereas some may not find it necessary to find specialized resources for their papers.

The advancement in technology and tremendous growth in library information resources would be made learning much easier depending upon the individual and how

he/she makes use of it and implement it in their learning process. It is a student's own perception that leads to incapable performance. Students with a strong sense of competence approach difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered rather than as a threat to be avoided. Their belief in their ability to succeed in specific situations plays a major role in how they approach goals, tasks and challenges.

Statement of the problem

The library is seen as the gateway to knowledge. Potential users of the library are assumed to be aware and capable of using the literature search tools such as catalogues, indexes and bibliographies; electronic search engines and available databases to locate the documents they need. Studies have revealed that oftentimes, students shun the library and this is perceived to be responsible for dropping students' patronage of the library despite increasing library stocks. Contrarily, freshers may not possess the skills needed for information search and utilization of library resources hence their information needs are not adequately met. Library orientation on library use is expected to be the antidote for increasing students' information literacy and awareness and utilization of library resources.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to investigate library orientation as a predictor of library use among freshers in two selected academic libraries in Kwara State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. examine the relevance of library orientation to freshers in two selected academic libraries in Kwara State, Nigeria;
2. identify the challenges faced by libraries in organizing library orientation programmes for freshers in the two selected academic libraries in Kwara State, Nigeria; and
3. ascertain the relationship between library orientation and library use among freshers in two selected academic libraries in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Research questions

The following research questions guided the research:

1. What is the relevance of library orientation to freshers in two selected academic libraries in Kwara State, Nigeria?
2. What challenges do libraries face in organizing library orientation programmes for freshers in the two selected academic libraries in Kwara State, Nigeria?

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between library orientation and library utilization among freshers in two selected academic libraries in Kwara State, Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Orientation in the use of libraries plays the most crucial role to enhance the quantitative and qualitative use of libraries by library users. The term orientation as used in this research work includes not only how to locate information but also instruction on the use of library tools, explanation of library policies and introduction to library resources and services to newly admitted students into higher institutions. Bleidt (2011) opined that library orientation by institutional libraries is used to improve student performance, retention and graduation rate with the aid of library orientation.

Library orientation is a vital programme which is usually carried out by academic librarians. Goldman *et al.* (2016) narrated that fresh students who receive an orientation to library resources and services are more likely to seek needed research assistance with course papers, assignments, projects, and presentations. The main objectives of library orientation are to expose students to the library services and its resources and to educate and guide them on how to utilize the library services and resources. The orientation usually takes place within both library buildings, where students were grouped department by department to have control over their population. The programme provides an opportunity for newly recruited students about activities, services, programs, resources, opening hours, contact information, and rules and regulations of the libraries. During each orientation programme, newly admitted students were given the privilege to ask questions on any issue concerning the library activities that had not been clearly understood by them and answers were adequately provided. Hindagolla (2012) discloses that although the library provides a number of services and facilities for its users, the majority of students are not aware of most library services owing to the limited coverage of the orientation programme. In addition, the students are not satisfied with the existing library orientation programmes due to different factors such as un-suitable time slots, insufficient awareness of e-resources, insufficient coverage of study areas, too many students for one group, insufficient information about the program and limited duration of the program. Similarly, Bamidele (2015) Opined that librarians can develop reading and library use plans by involving in a series of lectures under the library orientation and user instruction programme. Ullah and Ameen (2014) submitted that the programme aids library users to become independent learners by utilizing library resources.

Madukoma *et al.* (2013) reported that library orientation

was introduced in academic institutions to ensure that students have the intellectual ability and skill to access and retrieve information as well as construct a framework for learning. The impact of library orientation goes beyond the number of years that students spent in institutions. It has a lifelong impact on library users and enables them to acquire library skills to be able to identify access, retrieve and use library materials with ease. Bhatti (2010) commended that effective library orientation links naturally to active learning techniques and lifelong learning. Active learning is a method of educating students that allows them to participate in class, takes them beyond the role of passive listener and note-taker and takes some direction and initiative with the aid of library orientation.

The indispensability of library orientation as an instrument for the effective utilization of library resources is not in question. This is because the extents to which the library resources are used depend largely on users' skill and knowledge of information search and retrieval. Esse (2014) is of the opinion that there cannot be a connection between the user and materials or tools without proper education given to users whose prior knowledge or idea on the use of such materials or tools. Uwakwe *et al.* (2016) note that the effective use of libraries is expected to be 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.

The implementation of library orientation in higher education in the past and presently has impacted positively on newly admitted students in Nigeria Institutions including how to utilize the available resources of the library at the appropriate time. Busayo and Elaturoti (2016) observes that students of Nigerian higher education particularly the academic libraries are being inducted to explore the library and information service in different ways so that they can be comfortable, free-minded and potentially in accessing library resources. Madukoma *et al.* (2013) stated that academic libraries in Nigeria and other developing nations in the world had developed some methods for orientation on its new and current users. The methods include library orientation, classroom teaching, instruction, guided library tour and library guide.

Library orientation is an indiscriminate situation due to unprecedented challenges confronting academic libraries and librarians are currently facing unprecedented. Apparently, the reason for these changes is the development and introduction of new information literacy initiatives in the field, the rapid development of the information and communication technology sector and the complex nature of user requirements. With the current trends in library services and with the importance of library orientation on library users, several challenges have been identified in research as factors downgrading against it in academic libraries. Anyaoku (2015) as cited in Manuwa *et al.* (2018) identified students' apathy to library orientation

as a problem in academic libraries. Idoko *et al.* (2015) elaborated that several challenges as noted by staff and students include a lack of confidence in the use of the library, a librarian's mode of instruction not adequate to help students and inadequate information resources for learning e.g computers among others. The lack of modern technological tools such as projectors, computers, the internet and many more to facilitate the programme of library orientation in an academic library has given limited support in carrying out the programs effectively and efficiently.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted survey research with a total population of two thousand and ten (2,010) registered students from Summit University, Offa (94) and Federal Polytechnic Offa (1,916) for the 2021/2022 academic session. Two stage sampling technique was used in the study. The first stage selected departments similar to each of the institutions, these departments are Accounting, Business Administration, Banking and Finance, Computer science and Mass Communication. The second stage involved the use of a sampling fraction of 20% to select the sample size from each of the selected departments. This, therefore, gave a total sampling size of 201 and a random sampling technique is adopted for the study. Two hundred and one (201) questionnaires were distributed to respondents, and 200 questionnaires (representing 99.5%) were returned and found valid for analysis. The data collected were analyzed using frequency table and mean. The hypothesis was tested using linear regression.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the demographic information of respondents, it was revealed that 118 (59.0%) of the respondents from the selected institutions were female while 82(41.0%) were male. This implies that female respondents of the selected institutions are more than male respondents. Also, the result of the age distribution of respondents in Table 2 revealed that 43 (21.5%) of the respondents fall within the age range of 15-17 years, 49 (24.5%) of respondents are within the age of 18-21 years, 89 (41.5%) of the respondents are within the age of 23-25 years while 25 (12.5%) of the respondents are within 26 and above.

The result on the relevance of library orientation on library use among fresh students as shown in Table 3 revealed that library orientation will improve students' ability to retrieve needed information from the library with a mean score of (3.38), it enables me to use the catalogue effectively to retrieve material (3.28), it will enhance my use of index as retrieval tool (3.36), it will enlighten me on the various structures of literature in your field and related areas (3.29), it will increase my motivation to use the library (3.35), it will inculcate in me the ability to think critically (3.29), it exposed me to the bibliographic

Table 1. Demographic Information of Respondents.

Parameters	Frequency	Percent
Sex		
Female	118	59.0
Male	82	41.0
Age		
26 and above	25	12.5
23-25	83	41.5
18-21	49	24.5
15-17	43	21.5

database of the library (3.35) it makes me aware of the scope of the library resources (3.29) and also library orientation will help to have the understanding on the arrangement and organization of library material in the library (3.34).

The result of the Table 2 analyses reveals that the library orientation programme is relevant to the students of the selected institutions. These confirm to be in line with the opinion of Ogunmodede and Emeahara (2010) and Edom (2007) that the library orientation programme is useful to students both in caring out the class assignment and in their overall academic performance.

The result on challenges facing library orientation in academic libraries as shown in Table 4 revealed that overpopulation is with a mean score of (3.13), lack of instructional material (3.16), negative attitude to the programme (3.08), limited time allocated (3.03), unconducive environment (3.15), inadequate accommodation/space (3.14) and highly cost advance material (3.17). These indicate that users do not discriminate widely across the numerous challenges of library orientation.

It can be concluded that all the items are challenges facing library orientation in academic libraries. These include but are not limited to overpopulation, lack of instructional materials, negative attitude of both staff and students to the programme, unconducive environment, limited time allocated to the programme as well as inadequate accommodation/space. In support of these findings, Idowu (2015) observed that the timing of the programme, quality of course delivery and funding of the programme are some of the challenges that affect the programme which must be re-appraised. Edom (2007) contributing to improved library orientation programmes in Nigerian academic libraries identified a lack of personnel and professionalism in teaching and practical work as challenges facing library orientation.

Testing of hypothesis

The result of the hypothesis revealed that the p-value = 0.001 is less than 0.05 level of significance. Then the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between library orientation and library

Table 2. Relevance of library orientation on library use among fresh students.

Variables	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
Library orientation will improve my ability to retrieve needed information from the library	76	123	1	-	3.38
It enables me to use the catalogue effectively to retrieve material	61	134	4	-	3.28
It will enhance my use of index as a retrieval tool	72	127	1	-	3.36
It enlightens me on the various structures of literature in my field and related areas	57	143	0	-	3.29
It will increase my motivation to use the library	70	130	0	-	3.35
It will inculcate in me the ability to think critically	48	147	3	2	3.29
It exposed me to the bibliographic database of the library	58	139	1	2	3.35
It makes me aware of the scope of the library resources	58	141	1	-	3.29
It will help to have understanding on the arrangement and organization of material in the library	68	132	0	-	3.34

Table 3. Challenges facing library orientation in academic libraries.

Variables	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
Over population	57	119	17	7	3.13
Lack of instructional material	54	128	13	5	3.16
Statement negative attitude to the programme	34	153	7	6	3.08
Limited time allocated	30	158	10	7	3.03
Non-conducive environment	43	145	11	1	3.15
Inadequate accommodation/space	41	148	10	1	3.14
High cost material	40	156	2	2	3.17

Table 4. Relationship between library orientation and library utilization among fresh students.

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	16.421	1	16.421	11.189	0.001 ^b
Residual	290.574	198	1.468		
Total	306.995	199			

a. Dependent Variable: LIB - USE; b. Predictors: (Constant), LIB –ORIENTATION.

utilisation among fresh students in two selected institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria is hereby rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between library orientation and utilisation of library resources among newly admitted students in selected institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Summary of findings

1. The study revealed that the library orientation programme is relevant to the students of the selected institutions.
2. The findings showed the challenges confronting library orientation in academic libraries in Kwara state to include but not limited to overpopulation, lack of instructional materials, negative attitude of both staff and students to the programme, lack of conducive environment, limited time allocated to the programme as well as inadequate accommodation/space.
3. The study also showed that there is a significant relationship between library orientation and utilisation

of library resources among newly admitted students in selected institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Conclusion

On the basis of the above observation, one can conclude that the library orientation programme is an important part of any academic institution. The study established 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. Likewise, a library orientation that is well organized will create confidence in the users and therefore encourage them to use the library effectively.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Academic libraries should prioritise library orientation in order to sensitize more students and draw their attention to the available resources and services that can be of immense benefit to them during their studies.
2. Library orientation programme in an academic library should be imposed on newly admitted students; this will afford the opportunity to acquaint them with the library environment which will further encourage effective library use.
3. Library staff should adopt regular interaction with students, wiliness to help and a friendly disposition to students in their quest.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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