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Full Length Research

Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of User Education Programme for Fresh Students in Selected Colleges in Nasarawa State, Nigeria

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User education is one of the important services of the library organised each year for fresh students into higher institutions of learning. It is an academic programme designed by academic libraries to educate its user's especially fresh men on how to effectively utilise library resources and its services. The main objective of this study was to determine how to improve the effectiveness of user education programme for fresh students in selected colleges in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive survey design with a study population of 5,023 N.C.E II and N.D II registered library users of the three colleges studied out of which a sample of 252 respondents were selected using the stratified random sampling technique with the proportional allocation method using a sample fraction of 5%. The questionnaire was the main research instrument used for the collection of data which was administered in the three college libraries. Data was analysed using frequency distribution and percentages run on SPSS. The findings of the study revealed that central to the three colleges, the students were provided with library orientation and compulsory use of library course. Findings also revealed that the influence of time allocation for the programme was in the students' inability to attend the programme because it was conducted while they were yet to settle. Since the time allocated is not enough, it does not permit practicals. Inadequate provision of funds, inadequate number of staff to handle the programme, lack of follow up instructions, inadequate ICT facilities for the programme were identified as challenges. The study recommends a number of measures to enhance the effectiveness of user education programme such as allotting more time to user education programme, provision of funds, improved awareness creation, recruitment of more qualified professionals and teaching of the course when students have settled down to school activities.

Key words: User Education Programme, Information Literacy, College Libraries, Fresh Students, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

User education is one of the important services of the library organised each year for fresh students of higher institutions of learning. It is an academic programme designed by academic libraries to educate her users

especially fresh students on how to effectively utilise library resources and services. User education quickens the efforts of the clientele in retrieving and effectively utilising the library materials. The demand for the use of library resources calls for the need to ensure that students have effective and efficient access to these resources. User education is expected to offer to fresh undergraduate students the knowledge, skills and training on how to source and use the library system and services by introducing them to the services offered by the physical library building of the university as viewed.

The changing nature of higher education worldwide, along with ever increasing growth of library collections, technological developments in handling and retrieving technical information and fundamental changes in the nature of reference services, have justified the need for change in user education services in order that new models of education can be effective and improve the academic performance of students. According to Agyen-Gyasi (2008), user education is designed to equip users with information skills that will enable them to make efficient use of library resources and services. The increase in student population and rapid advances in Information Communication Technology (ICT) have necessitated changes in user education programmes. These changes, according to Tiefel (1995) have created an urgency to teach users how to become more effective, efficient and independent in their information searching. In response to these, the roles of library user education have expanded from teaching tools to teaching concepts and from library instruction to information literacy and lifelong learning.

A fresh student is a new member of the institution or the library often with enthusiasm of moving from a low academic setting to a higher one of learning with curiosity in the mind of not knowing what to expect while others may be better informed. Mindful of this situation, the university or college library provides a basic orientation programme for these new students which prepare them for subsequent use of the library as soon as their lecture starts. According to Anunobi (2012), there is often a surge of these freshmen into the library which many could be experiencing for the first time. Being intimidated by the size, the volume and the arrangement, they try to manoeuver and hence create series of problems for the library management. Such problems include pulling down books from the shelves (browsing through the shelves, not knowing how to use the catalogue), walking aimlessly in the reading room, attempting to leave the library with some books, etc. She further stated that the bid to alleviate these problems is what has led to the introduction of user education in academic libraries and that though the course content of the programme is satisfactory and rewarding, the impact cannot be guaranteed for every freshman.

According to Aina (2004), "A more holistic programme

of user education is referred to as information literacy programme". Many academic libraries especially university and research libraries emphasise the need for users to acquire skills that was enable them search for information independently on any aspect of knowledge using both traditional and electronic methods of accessing information. Information literacy programme is geared towards attaining a common a competence in the use of library and computer network technologies. User education therefore cannot be discussed without first discussing Information literacy because they are inter-woven.

The explosion of information and information sources has informed modern societies of the growing importance of special skills in accessing and using information from different sources and media efficiently and effectively. Such skills are known as information literacy (IL) skills. Information Literacy (IL) has thus become one of the most vital sets of skills for the Twenty First Century. IL skills enable students succeed academically and help them to secure future job opportunities. An information literate person according to UNESCO is "able to recognise when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information". The United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) define information literacy as "… beacons of the Information Society, illuminating the courses to development, prosperity and freedom. Information literacy empowers people in all works of life to seek, evaluate, use and create information effectively to achieve their personal, social, occupational and educational goals. It is a human basic right in a digital world and promotes social inclusion in all nations". Information literacy enables people to interpret and make informed judgements as users of information sources, as well as to become producers of information in their own right. Information literacy must be taught in the context of the overall process and instructions in information literacy skills must be integrated into the curriculum and reinforced both within and outside of the education system.

User education encompasses all types of activities designed to teach users about library services, facilities, organisation, resources, and search strategies in order to equip them with the basic skills to enable them to make optimal, efficient and independent use of information resources and services available in a given library (Ogunmodede and Emeahara; 2010). 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. Guiding users on how to use the library has become necessary because of the tremendous increase in volumes of publications as well as the resulting complexity of libraries and methods by which literature is organised and disseminated.

Library user education or library instruction "began in the nineteenth century, with instruction in library use offered by a number of libraries in the United States between 1876 and 1910 and then ramped up in the early twentieth century. Academic library instruction mushroomed during the 1960's and early 1970's. This resulted in the founding of the Library Orientation Exchange (LOEX), a non-profit, self-supporting educational clearinghouse, in the early 1970's. During the 1970's an 1980's, prior to the widespread public use of computers, [library instruction] went far beyond teaching the mechanics and identifying and locating materials in the physical library….. It focused on the physical library, as for the most part, that was all that users could try out during instruction. However, the goal was always teaching so that users would transfer what they learned to new situations, reference tools and environments new to them- that is, they would learn how to learn".

User education is an essential mechanism for ensuring and enhancing effective library and information use. User education programmes are designed to make library users independent and efficient in their search for materials to satisfy their information needs. However, without effective user education programme, the library use process may not be properly harnessed by the users.

Mwangi (2006), stated that the problems facing the user education programme ranged from poor timing, inappropriate and poor subject content, poor teaching methods, theoretical rather than practical approach to teaching, over-crowding in the lecture theatres, some incompetent staff, failure to use new technology as well as poor communication among the students, the library and faculty, appropriateness, timeliness and comprehensiveness of the programme that the students are taken through.

In Nigeria, higher institutions of education are part of what are usually referred to as the higher education or tertiary education system. They are centres of learning, teaching and research. In order to achieve their aims as centres of learning, teaching and research, it has become imperative for any established tertiary institution to have and own a library. Any library established, maintained and administered by a college to meet the information needs of its staff and students is known as a college library. One of the major objectives of college libraries is to ensure that their collections and services are designed to meet the objectives and information requirements of the parent institution (National Commission for Higher institutions of Education (NCCE); 1994). In order to fulfil this objective, the college library provides services usually referred to as reader services. These services are meant to bring the library, its services and its personnel into direct contact with the library users.

With the establishment of NCCE and the standardisation of the NCE programme, user education has been integrated into the curriculum of higher institutions of education. The course is a general studies course titled, "Introduction to Library Studies", and has the weight of a credit hour. The objectives of the course as outlined in NCCE Guidelines (1994) are to:

a) make students aware of the available and scope of library's resources and services.
b) ensure those students are aware of and can effectively use information resources and retrieval techniques, which can assist in their learning and future careers.
c) contribute to the personal and intellectual development of the student including his ability to continue autonomous learning outside the formal education context.
d) enable students to control and structure the varied information available and regularly used by them to solve academic and later professional problems.

Although the course is taught with the aim of achieving the objectives above, a study carried out by Maduako (2013) have shown that even in higher institutions of education where students receive this basic education on how to use the library, several students were found to be ignorant of the basic idea of how to register as library members. Some were even unaware of the fact that books could be borrowed, while some others found it relatively hard to retrieve the information they needed.

The efforts to make user education have a positive effect on students' library use was what led to making the use of library a compulsory course by the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE). The library user education in polytechnics and higher institutions of education is taught under the course code GNS 101 as use of English. However, findings revealed that, the user education programme of COE Akwanga, Nasarawa State Polytecnic Lafia and Federal Polytechnic Nasarawa, is structured in the form of library orientation, library tour, bibliographic instruction and user awareness with its focus on fresh students in the first few weeks of their entrance into the college and the compulsory use of library course which is incorporated into the higher institutions General Studies Programme as a GNS course often offered as a first semester course under the course code and title GNS 105 Use of Library and is to be taught for a whole semester at the end of which examination is taken which must be passed before graduation from college. It is, therefore, a compulsory, examinable and a one credit earning course and a condition for graduation.

This study, therefore, assesses the factors affecting the effectiveness of user education programmes for fresh students' in selected higher institutions in Nasarawa State.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The effective use of library by patrons is the principal objective of establishing any library. Studies have shown that despite the availability of different types of user education programmes organised for fresh students, many still do not know how to use the library. The fresh students lack the basic skills and competences required for the utilisation of library and information resources on their entrance into higher institutions of learning. This could be because, a good number of them have never been to a library or a good library before. Such students when admitted to a higher institution of learning and orientation programmes are organised, do not see the need to attend the orientation programme or use the library even after user education programme is organised for them until they have an assignment, test or exams at hand. This study has been prompted by an observation that in spite of the various orientation programmes designed to enhance use of library resources and services in higher institutions by students, effective utilisation of the library resources and services has not been realised.

Many studies have been conducted in the field of library user education programmes including the effect of library user education on students use of library and influence of library user education on students use of library but not much has been done to determine the factors affecting the effectiveness of library user education programme for fresh students in higher institutions in Nasarawa State and this is the gap that this research work intends to fill. This research, therefore, investigates the factors affecting the effectiveness of user education programmes for fresh students in the higher institutions in Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of this study is to determine how to improve the effectiveness of user education programme on to fresh students in higher institutions in Nasarawa State.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Identify the types of user education programmes provided to the users of the college libraries;
2. Identify the relative influence of the formal and informal user education programmes to the students effective library use;
3. Determine the extent to which user education has enhanced library use by the college students;
4. Investigate the effect of time allocated to the user education programmes on effectiveness of the programme;

5. Determine the influence of awareness creation of user education programmes on effectiveness of user education programme in higher institutions in Nasarawa State;
6. Ascertain the effects of students' interest on effectiveness of user education programme in the higher institutions and;
7. Determine the ways by which user education programmes of the college libraries can be improved.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the types of user education programmes provided to the users in the college libraries?
2. What is the relative influence of the formal and informal user education programmes to the students' effective library use?
3. To what extent has the user education programme enhanced the capacity for library use by the students?
4. What is the influence of time allocation to effectiveness of user education programme for fresh students in the higher institutions?
5. What is the effect of awareness creation of user education programme on effectiveness of user education programme in the higher institutions?
6. What is the influence of students' interest on effectiveness of user education programme?
7. How can the effectiveness of the user education programme for fresh students in higher institutions of education in Nasarawa State be enhanced?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The result of this study is expected to be useful to the management of the higher institutions to formulate an appropriate policy towards the improvement of library user education programme for more effective library use by college students in Nasarawa State.

It was create awareness on the inadequacies of user education programmes of the libraries under study and relate to the need to enhance the students' effective library use.

It was provide a basis for redesigning user education programmes of the college libraries and suggest a proper framework and model for teaching user education programme that can be adopted in the higher institutions. Through the findings of the study, students was come to understand and develop skills in information literacy and effective use of library resources not only when they have assignments, tests or exams.

This study was apart from adding to the growing and ever expanding body of literature in the field of user education form the basis for other research works.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The library is the heart of any academic institution, it supports reading and research needs for that particular institution. 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 user benefits; hence user education program is very crucial for user's achievement. For library services to keep pace with the needs of students, library should increase number of employees' expert and skilful librarians who can provide user education programs. This chapter shall therefore be reviewed under the following headings;

Overview of college libraries resources and services

A college library according to Aina (2004:30) "encompasses all libraries that are attached to tertiary institutions other than universities. Polytechnic libraries, technikon libraries, college of education libraries, school of nursing libraries and libraries of post-secondary academic institutions fall under this category". According to Ode and Omokaro (2007) college libraries "are group of libraries established in educational institutions such as higher institutions of education, polytechnics and similar institutions of higher learning by the school authority. They are usually established, owned and funded by the school authority, which it serves as their parent organisations". They are meant to serve the students, teachers and the entire college community.

One of the major objectives of college libraries is to ensure that their collections and services are designed to meet the objectives and information requirements of the parent institution .In order to fulfil this objective, the college library provides services usually referred to as reader services. These services are meant to bring the library, its services and its personnel into direct contact with the library users.

Functions of college libraries according to Ode and Omokaro (2007) include: Provision of reference and information services to teachers and students as teachers rely solely on the library for the provision of their desired needed information, helping children and the young people to develop abilities and habits of purposefully using books and libraries in attaining their goals of living. College libraries serve as instructional resource centres and laboratories for learning and to provide books and other materials for pleasure and information. They provide and promote reading guidance to encourage reading skills and habits and also give useful suggestions on the type of instructional materials to be used. Provision of useful information on skills and also teach them to the students thereby helping the students to develop useful skills, which are essential for their future lives. Curriculum planning and implementation- college libraries have been integrated into educational system in line with the educational policy.

User education programmes in academic libraries

Academic libraries have been variously described as the repository of knowledge. According to Yusuf and Iwu (2010:1) "the academic library is the nerve centre or the hub around which scholarship revolves. It is an indispensible instrument for intellectual development. A well-stocked academic library is a store house of information, or a record of human experience to which users may turn to for data or information". Essentially, it has been described as a collection of documents, a place where information in whatever form or format, printed or non-printed is acquired, preserve, processed, organised and disseminated for public use which could be educational, recreational, information, enlightenment and for leisure.

User education is an academic programme that is designed by higher institutions to educate library users especially freshmen on how to effectively utilise library resources and its services Esse (2014) sees the attempt which include introduction of user education in the curricula as a bid to assist freshmen entering the university [higher institutions] build a good library culture into the students right from the foundation of their university education.

Objectives of user education programme

The library provides user education in order to equip a user with enough knowledge on the use of the library. This will enable the user to use the library resources effectively and efficiently since information is expanding and resulting in information explosion and new resources are being introduced into the field. A library can achieve its goals if the library is more precise about whom its users are. User education programme is aimed at developing an awareness and appreciation of library resources and services. It improves a user's ability to use library resources more effectively, inculcates in users desirable attitudes towards the library and information service in the society (Uhegbu 2007).

One of the hallmarks of user education according to Uhegbu (2007) is the sense of security and confidence which it instils in potential users while at the same time conferring confidence in their library and information seeking behaviour. User education creates confidence in the students in the retrieval and utilization of library resources. They become aware of the information potentials of the library and can run to the library in time of information need such as writing term papers, doing

take home assignments and even preparations for examinations.

Effect of user education on students' use of the academic library

The explosion of information and information sources according to Dadzie (2009) has informed modern societies of the growing importance of special skills in accessing and using information from different sources and media effectively and efficiently. Dadzie referred to such skills as information literacy (IL) skills. Information literacy she stated has become one of the vital sets of skills for the twenty-first century. Information literacy is a major subject in the field of library user education programmes and a key focus of educational institutions at all levels and in order to uphold this standard, institutions are promoting a commitment to lifelong learning and an ability to seek out and identify innovations that was be needed to keep pace with or outpace changes. Information literacy skills must be taught in the context of the overall process and instruction in information literacy skills must be integrated into the curriculum and reinforced both within and outside of the educational setting.

A number of efforts have been made to better define the concept and its relationship to other skills and forms of literacy. Although other educational goals including traditional literacy, computer literacy, library skills, and critical thinking skills are related to information literacy and important foundations for its development, information literacy itself is emerging as a distinct skill set and a necessary key to one's social and economic well-being in an increasingly complex information society. Information literacy encompasses knowing what is needed, locating the information, selecting and/analysing, organising /synthesizing, creating/presenting, evaluating the information. The Alexandria Proclamation according to the Wikipedia linked information literacy with lifelong learning. More than that, it sets information literacy as a basic Human right that it "promotes social inclusion of all nations". Though there is no one acceptable definition of information literacy, a certain number of definitions have been selected for the purpose of this study.

The United States National Forum on Information Literacy defines information literacy as "… to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively use that information for the issue or problem at hand". According to Aina (2004: 55) "A more holistic programme of user education is referred to as information literacy programme". Many academic libraries especially university and research libraries emphasize the need for users to acquire skills that was enable them search for information independently on any aspect of knowledge using both traditional and electronic methods of accessing information. Information literacy programme is geared towards attaining a common competence in the use of library and computer network technologies.

Studies show that about 60% of students could not make use of reference works and that about 90% considered user education vital (Shammasi, 2012). Some studies have concluded that library education can have a positive impact on the quality of students' education. For instance, Shammasi, (2012) demonstrated that there is a significant relationship between library user education and student grades

Ugah (2007) observes that both students and staff use the academic library although students constitute majority of the users. The findings also showed that nearly three quarters of users browse the shelves to locate materials which show their inability to use the library catalogues. He, therefore, recommended intensive library orientation on the use of the catalogue as an effective tool for information retrieval

Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) in Anmkpa (2011) explained that, effective use of library materials and other facilities depends on the skilfulness or competence of the users and the level of assistance given them. This is why freshmen in higher institutions in Nigeria have to be taught on how to use the library and its facilities. The success or failure of students' ability to locate resources in the library therefore, depends on the skill acquired though the library instruction programme.

Perception of effectiveness of user education programmes by college students

Evaluation is concerned with collection of information about the effects of an educational course or programme and often involves the comparison of observed effects with expectations or intentions (Bello, 2003). It is concerned with the collection and analysis of information about the output in terms of educational potential, variables affecting the educational process and the end product or output. Evaluation is carried out to justify and quantify benefits of research library resources and services to users' information utilization for research. The purpose of evaluation according to Bello is to collect and analyse information that can be used for rational educational decision making. This means that evaluation can be used to continue or terminate an existing programme. One of the aspects of a course which must be evaluated according to Bello is the extent to which the students' abilities have changed as a result of the course and this he said would be done by means of assessment.

According to Ugah (2007:1), in a library, "evaluation is a process whereby we systematically collect and analyse information about students' encounter with the library system, by using evidence (testing), assigning numerical values to the evidence (measurement) and using the

results to make decisions (assessment)". The purpose of evaluation according to Knightly in Ugah, is to gather information on how the library accomplishes its objectives, with a view to improving the delivery of library services. One of the ways of testing, measuring and assessing (evaluation) the effectiveness of a library system he said is through research.

Nwalo (1997) defined library evaluation as the quantification and comparison with laid down standards of library provisions and services. Library evaluation can be seen as an evaluation of user satisfaction, which can be checked at three possible levels: effectiveness evaluation, cost-effectiveness evaluation; and cost-benefit evaluation. In simple terms, library evaluation is carried out to check and balance library activities with its mandate. This helps to see how the library is meeting its users' needs and also what decision to take and those to be revised. According to them, "this is the reason why library evaluation has been referred to by some scholars as a management activity". Several ways could be adopted to evaluate library resources and services. He noted that input evaluation based on finances, staff resources and collection, and output evaluation based on process efficiency measures are indices of how research library users perceive library resources and services provided by the library.

According to Lancaster in Nwalo (1997) an evaluation of effectiveness is an evaluation of user satisfaction. Such evaluation should determine how well an information service satisfies the needs of its users. This kind of evaluation however, is often restricted to a consideration of how well the service meets the demands (expressed needs) of its users. Some writers look upon evaluation as an essential component of management in particular. The results of an evaluation may help the manager to allocate resources effectively. Evaluation of library user education is therefore, very necessary so as to allow the parent body to see where there are lapses and need improvement.

For academic libraries to be effective, it needs to explore the crucial relationship between the library and its users focusing on developing and managing reliable sources and services. The library should be aware of users' information seeking behaviour and also their needs and wants. The effectiveness of library resources can be measured in various ways. Lamptey (2010) citing Nwalo (1997) states, "libraries are judged by set objectives. [And] application set standards to measure the quality of operations". He stated that we can use both quantitative and qualitative techniques in determining the effectiveness of a library irrespective of whether the effectiveness of qualitative or quantitative parameters are set to be judged by users, who are in the best position to evaluate the effectiveness of the library. The effectiveness of a library he further stated can be gauged or assessed by its resources. According to Nwalo in

Lamptey, the library's effectiveness is measured in terms of the satisfaction expressed by its users. Fabunmi (2004) in Lamptey (2010) describes library effectiveness as including information customised to meet individual needs. He also stated that effective library systems are timely in delivery, meet their specific needs, are easy to understand/use, and are delivered by a knowledgeable staff.

Factors affecting the effectiveness of user education programmes for fresh students

Library orientation is a welcoming activity and often forms part of the university's orientation programme for fresh students. According to Agyen-Gyasi, (2008) in the time past, the Kwame Nkrumah University Science and Technology (KNUST) library organised user education for all new students in the form of lectures, followed by demonstration and guided tours of the various departments in the library; aimed at making users easily find and effectively maximise the use of the resources in the library. According to him, the major challenge facing KNUST library is how to organise user education 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.

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 the 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. Findings from previous studies has revealed that user education enhances library use even though the programme is faced with a lot of problems which include lack of/or inadequate fund, inappropriate provision for the user education course on the time table, 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 them 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. He also stressed that even among the library community it was widely believed that there is not sufficient staff to assist the users to enjoy their search for information in libraries and librarians who have considerable workload remain reluctant to spend extra time to participate in user-education. He recommended that orientation allow new users in the university libraries to get the basic knowledge about the libraries services and holdings. Bhatti (2010) illustrated that lack of proper grounding from schools leads to deficiency at more advanced levels. That resulted in the vast majority of students having no significant information literacy skills. He saw this significant inadequacy in student's education if they have limited essential library use competencies.

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.

According to Ewa, (2012:56) it was established that there were some major impediments to effective use of library by students in the higher institutions which included lack of periodic user education programme, and lack of relevant and up to date resources, inadequate staff to assist users, poor attitude of staff towards users. Ottong (2005) also identified the problems associated with user education programmes to include; lack of time for teaching and practical work, lack of qualified personnel, inadequate funding and poor evaluation of methods of user education.

Also, a study conducted by Anunobi (2002), reveals that studies nationally and internationally indicate inadequate exposition of secondary students to library use. While quoting Daniel (1998), Anunobi stated that Daniel in his survey on the state of school libraries in Nigeria (with the Federal Capital Territory as case study), was discovered that of the 32 secondary schools sampled, only 4 have what looks like library buildings, 8 have professional librarians, 2 have chairs and tables, while most materials were obsolete and unclassified. Many of these schools converted the so-called libraries to staff rooms. Such libraries he stated were often starved of funds and lacked professional advice. The implication of these problems is that the affected students bring low or even lack of library skills into the university and so find the library user education not interesting.

According to Agyen-Gyasi (2008), Information technology also presents problems for user education. He stated that the user education CD-ROM at KNUST for instance has some shortcomings as it lacks practical demonstrations. For example, the discourse on the catalogue was limited to books with single authorship, and publications with joint authorship were not mentioned or explained. Moreover, there was no indication of how a book could be located in the catalogue and subsequently retrieved from the shelf. Nearly all other presenters likewise failed to explain adequately how to access available resources, although the lending department did provide some information on borrowing and returning books. The CD was too short for its purpose and lacking content. It should therefore not be used as a substitute for traditional user education, but only as a complement, since the practical demonstration is indispensable. He also stated that the library faces serious financial constraints and would not be in a position to sustain these services once the donor support ends. There is therefore the need to make adequate provision in the library budget to cover subscriptions to both e-journals and CD-ROM databases. The present library budget allocation does not enable it to subscribe to these resources.

Okoye, (2013) identified lack of stated objectives, non-cooperation from Faculty teaching staff as a challenge to user education. This affirms the assertion in the literature such as that of Agyen-Gyasi (2008) who observed faculty resistance to collaboration with librarians in teaching user education as a challenge. From his study he also identified inadequacy of the number of professional staff to conduct user education lectures, inadequate library resources, lack of funds as a challenge to user education.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. According to Popoola (2011) a descriptive research represents an attempt to provide an accurate description or picture of a particular situation or phenomenon.

The descriptive survey design was selected for the study because the research basically described what

existed by taking the views of a selected sample with the use of a questionnaire which represented the whole population. The choice of this research design was made because it is capable and efficient in handling a large population and allows the researchers to analyse, interpret and state relationship between variables and provides accurate description or account of a particular situation. The use of this method is therefore aimed at pointing out the factors affecting the effectiveness of user education for fresh students in selected higher institutions in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The population of the study comprises of 5,023 N.C.E II and N.D II students of the government owned higher institutions in Nasarawa State -College of Education Akwanga, Nasarawa State Polytechnic Lafia, and Federal Polytechnic Nasarawa and 3 librarians of the 3 institutions. The selected sample population for the study is 252 library users and 3 college librarians bringing it to a total of 255. The details of the study population in the three higher institutions are presented in Table 1.

The stratified random sampling technique was adopted for this study. This method was adopted as a result of the heterogeneous characteristics of the library users that need to be further broken down to homogenous non-overlapping characteristics in the three higher institutions selected for the study. Also, to determine the sample size, the proportional allocation method was used using a sample fraction of 5%. This gives 72 for College of Education Akwanga, 83 for Nasarawa State Polytechnic, Lafia and 97 for Federal Polytechnic, Nasarawa. A total of 252 users was therefore, randomly selected from the higher institutions with a total enumeration of the 3 college librarians. This gives a total sample size of two hundred and fifty-five (255) respondents. The details of the study population and their sample size are presented in Table 2

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Answers to Research Questions

Research Question One: What types of user education programmes have you received in the library?

Table 3 shows that there was compulsory use of the library course in the three institutions under study as testified to by 70 (100.0%) at the College of Education, Akwanga, 76(91.6%) at the State Polytechnic Lafia and 93(100.0%) at the Federal Polytechnic Nasarawa. However, only 38(54.3%) in College of Education Akwanga indicated that library tour forms part of user education in the college. Hence, observation from the Table shows that central to the three institutions under study, compulsory use of the library course and library orientation were the obvious types of user education programmes provided to the users in the college libraries.

Research Question Two: What is the relative influence of the formal and informal user education programmes to the students' effective library use?

Findings on this question shows that the respondents (48 or 68.6%) in College of Education and 41(44.1%) in Federal Polytechnic were very highly influenced with bibliographic instruction (Librarian explains to them how to use different types of library materials). This could mean that this type of user education was not done formally at the State Polytechnic. However, only 33(47.1%) in College of Education and 33(39.8%) in State Polytechnic were Rarely Influenced with library tour. 56(60.1%) in Federal Polytechnic even ticked 1 which mean that library tour was not applicable to the students. Based on the observation from the table, the relative influence of the formal and informal user education programmes to the students' effective library use is only high in College of Education and Federal Polytechnic in terms of bibliographic instructions given to the students. This could mean that user education programme do not have relative influence to the students' effective use of the library in the State Polytechnic.

Research Question Three: To what extent has the user education programme enhanced the capacity for library use by the students?

Here it is interestingly revealed that the respondents were able to use the catalogue without the aid of the library staff as 49(70.0%) in College of Education ticked to a very high extent, 42(50.6%) in State Polytechnic ticked to a high extent and 50(53.8%) in Federal Polytechnic also ticked to a high extent. However, only 50(53.8%) in Federal Polytechnic now request for special services of the library that can be of benefit to them at least to a high extent. Thus central to the three institutions under study, observation from the Table shows that the students know the value of the library in promoting their learning and research, they used the library regularly and they were able to use the catalogue without the aid of the library staff at least to a high extent.

Research Question Four: What is the influence of time allocation to effectiveness of user education programme for fresh students in the college/polytechnics?

The results on this question shows that the respondents (38 or 54.3%) agreed in College of Education, 42(50.6%) agreed in State Polytechnic that period of teaching library education programme is not convenient. Only 38(54.3%) in College of Education agreed that user education progamme is conducted when they were yet to settle down to school activities. This could mean that user education programme is conducted when students in State and Federal Polytechnics had already settled down to school activities. Hence, observation from the Table shows that central to the three institutions under study, library user education is

Table 1. Study Population

Name of College	Population of Registered Library Users (N.C.E. II and N.D. II)	Population of College Librarians
College of Education, Akwanga	1,430	1
Nasarawa State Polytechnic, Lafia	1,650	1
Federal Polytechnic, Nasarawa	1,943	1
Total	5,023	3

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by Institution

Valid Higher Institution		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	College of Education, Akwanga	70	28.5	28.5	28.5
	Federal Polytechnic, Nasarawa	93	37.8	37.8	66.3
	Nasarawa State Polytechnic, Lafia	83	33.7	33.7	100.0
	Total	246	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: Types of user education programmes received by the users in the college Libraries (Frequency = F, Percentage = %)

S/N	Types of user education programme	College of Education, Akwanga		Nasarawa State Polytechnic, Lafia		Federal Polytechnic, Nasarawa	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
1.	Library Orientation	64	91.4	61	73.5	86	92.5
2.	Library Tour	38	54.3	15	18.1	38	40.9
3.	Bibliographic Instruction (Librarian explains to you how to use different types of library materials)	48	68.6	31	37.3	45	48.4
4.	One-on-One Session (Meeting one-on-one with the librarian)	38	54.3	36	43.4	57	61.3
5.	Compulsory use of the library course	70	100.0	76	91.6	93	100.0

taught only in one semester.

Research Question Five: What is the effect of awareness on effectiveness of user education programme in the college/polytechnics?

The effects or awareness on effectiveness of user education programme is found to have effect on their awareness of the importance of the programme as 47(67.1%) respondents agreed in College of Education, 52(62.7%) agreed in State Polytechnic and 71(76.3%) strongly agreed in Federal Polytechnic. However, only 38(54.3%) in College of Education agreed that Awareness of the user education programme enhances their participation in library tours. Therefore, it could be concluded based on the observation from the Table that awareness on effectiveness of user education programme in the college/polytechnics under study has effect creating awareness of the importance of library user education programme, increases students' level of participation at the orientation programme and enhances students' consciousness about the importance of the library in their academic pursuit.

Research Question Six: What is the influence of interest on effectiveness of user education programme?

Findings of the study on the above question shows that the respondents agreed that they protect library resources because they will make use of them later as 49(70.0%) respondents agreed in College of Education, 53(63.9%) agreed in State Polytechnic and 63(67.7%) strongly agreed in Federal Polytechnic. However, only 59(63.4%) in Federal Polytechnic strongly agreed that Interest in the programme of user education makes them to pass their exams in the compulsory use of library course. This could mean that the students in other institutions under study do not have interest in the compulsory user education course. Hence, the influence of interest on effectiveness of user education programme in the three institutions under study manifest in the following: loyalty to the library, protection of the library resources because and of course, it makes students to be library friendly.

Research Question Seven: How can the effectiveness of the user education programme for fresh students in college/polytechnics be enhanced?

The respondents agreed that More time should be given to user education programme as 48(68.6%) respondents strongly agreed in College of Education, 50(60.2%) strongly agreed in State Polytechnic and 48(51.6%) strongly agreed in Federal Polytechnic. However, only 49(70.0%) in College of Education strongly agreed that library orientation should be conducted when students have settled down to school activities. Therefore, it is observed from the Table that the effectiveness of the user education programme for fresh students in college/polytechnics can only be enhanced through: giving more time to user education programme, allocation of the course to reasonable time on the timetable so as to enable practical aspect, improvement on creation of awareness on library orientation and use of audio-visuals as support materials for user education programme.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study revealed that compulsory use of the library course and library orientation were central to the obvious types of user education programmes provided to the users in the college libraries. The librarians of the three institutions attested to this response by the students. They stated that although the higher institutions provided library orientation, library tour, bibliographic instruction, one-on-one session and compulsory use of the library course, only the library orientation and compulsory use of the library course were formally provided for the students as every other one was provided on request. The result of a study by Ewa (2012)

showed that the higher institutions studied had various user education programmes that were available to the students such as lectures, library orientation for new students, guided library tour, use of library course as well as basic and advanced bibliographic instructions. Corroborating this is Amusa and Iyoro (2013) who in their study states that the types of library instruction programmes available in universities in South-West Nigeria include orientation talk, library course, library use seminar, library visit and library bulletin and newsletter but students were only aware of only the orientation talk and library course.

According to Nwabueze, Ozioko and Igwesi (2013), it is evident that library instruction, library orientation and bibliographic aids and guides are the available user education programmes in the university libraries in South-East, Nigeria. However, the findings of the study reveals that library instruction and orientation are the most popular while bibliographic aids and guides follow closely. Bhatti (2010), in a study of ten university libraries in Pakistan stated that when respondents were asked to indicate the types of user education available to them, the outcome illustrated the dominance of library orientation programmes (designed to introduce new or potential patrons to collection, facilities, organisation and services of the university library) and to a lesser extent basic bibliographic instruction. These findings, however, differ from that of Ahenkorah-Marfo and Teye (2010), which revealed that the two main forms of user education at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) Library are guided tour and video instruction, and have both proved ineffective in the face of soaring student enrolment.

The relative influence of the formal and informal user education programmes to the students' effective library use is only high at the College of Education, Akwanga and Federal Polytechnic, Nasarawa in terms of bibliographic instructions given to the students. This means that user education programme does not have relative influence to the students' effective use of the library in the Nasarawa State Polytechnic, Lafia.

In addition, central to the three institutions surveyed, the students know the value of the library in promoting their learning and research, they used the library regularly and they were able to use the catalogue without the aid of the library staff. This differs from the finding of Ugah (2007) that nearly three quarters of users browse the shelf which shows their inability to use the library catalogue. Similarly, Maduako (2013), states that the user education programme has turned students into regular users of the library, they can use the catalogue and other retrieval tools, they have acquired knowledge of the library rules and regulations and abide by them, and they now know the value of the library.

Hence, observation from the work shows that central to the three institutions surveyed, the period allocated to

teaching library education programme is not convenient, it is conducted while students are yet to settle down to school activities, the time allocation for the programme is not enough therefore does not permit practicals and library user education is taught only in one semester. The librarians of the three higher institutions attested to this also when they were asked to state the factors affecting the effectiveness of user education programmes in their higher institutions. They identified that; very limited time is allocated to the programme, the time allocated on the timetable does not permit practicals, the time allocated to the programme is not conducive as students are yet to settle down and there is lack of follow-up instructions as a result of staff involvement in library routines.

These findings corroborate that of Amusa and Iyoro (2013), who in their study stated that the duration of library instruction programme in universities in South-West Nigeria is a semester and is inadequate. Bhatti (2013) reported that only the first week of the academic year was allocated for the programme except on request. Maduako (2013) reports inappropriate provision for the user education course on the time table and a short time span and according to Abubakar (2012), while some institutions offer it as a first semester course, others offer it as a second semester course once for the whole staying of students in these universities. Akande (2002) reports that the yearly library orientation for University of Ibadan commences at the beginning of each academic session before the commencement of classes and normally lasts 3-4 days. Ahenkorah-Marfo and Teye, (2010) also reported that the programme is allotted a limited time of one hour for its video presentation for each session and because of the large numbers coupled with limited time, most freshers are not able to get their questions answered. They stated that there are many others who for fear of the crowd recoil into their shells and leave more confused than they were before the instruction.

Therefore, it could be concluded based on the results in Table 3 that the effect of awareness on effectiveness of user education programme in the college surveyed was in creating awareness of the importance of library user education programme, increasing students' level of participation at the orientation programme and enhancing students' consciousness about the importance of the library in their academic pursuit. This finding differs from that of Mwangi (2008) which revealed that very few respondents were aware of the existence of user-education programme in both universities. The main reason for this was lack of awareness and publicity. He stated that the majority of those who did not attend the programmes indicated that they were unable to attend because they were unaware of the existence of the programme and were inappropriately timed during the first week of the students arrival in the universities when they are busy settling down.

The study further revealed that the influence of students' interest on effectiveness of user education programme in the three institutions is in their loyalty to the library, protection of the library resources because and of course, making students to be library friendly. This differs from the findings of Amusa and Iyoro (2013) which states that there is lack of interest among students in universities in South-West Nigeria and Maduako (2013) which states that there is lack of interest by students of Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education (AIFCE) Imo State and Abia State College of Education Technical Arochukwu (ASCETA).

Other factors affecting the effectiveness of user education programmes identified by the librarians of the higher institutions studied include; inadequate financial support from the parent institution, shortage of information resources for the programme, inadequate ICT facilities for the programme, inability to manage large groups as a result of inadequacy of number of professionals and para-professionals. Nwabueze, Ozioko and Igwesi (2013), found that there is inadequacy of staff involved in the user education programme and they also lack the ability to manage the classes. Maduako, (2013) identified the factors that impede the user education programme of the two libraries studied to include: lack of/or inadequate fund, inadequate library staff to cope with the amount of work involved, student's inability to use the library resources, less provision of bibliographic instruction, lack of awareness of the importance of such a programme, and a short time span. Okoye, (2013) identified lack of stated objectives, non-cooperation from Faculty teaching staff as a challenge to user education. This affirms the assertion of Agyen-Gyasi (2008) that faculty resistance to collaboration with librarians in teaching user education, inadequacy of the number of professional staff to conduct user education lectures, inadequate library resources, and lack of funds are challenges to user education. This conforms to the findings of Bhatti (2008) and Edem, Ani and Ocheibi (2009) who posit that scarcity of funds and provision for library expenditure, inadequate ICT facilities, and non-practical demonstration of internet use during user education were identified as problems facing user education.

Nwabueze, Ozioko and Igwesi, (2013) also agree with the foregoing findings when they stated 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 them is that, they had to handle larger number of students which retards learning. According to Bhatti (2010), shortage of library staff, shortage of facilities are causes of large classes during user education 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. He also stressed that even among the library community it was widely believed that there is not sufficient staff to assist the users to enjoy their search for information in libraries and librarians who have considerable workload remain reluctant to spend extra time to participate in user-education.

According to Ewa, (2012) lack of periodic user education programme, inadequate staff to assist users, poor attitude of staff towards users were some major impediments to effective use of library by students. Akhalumhe (2009) identified the use of unqualified personnel to teach the use of library in some institutions, lack of personnel, lack of professional, time for teaching and practical work as major problems of user education programme in some Nigerian academic libraries. Anunobi, (2002) identifies funds and lack of professional advice .Mwangi (2008) states that majority of the students were unable to attend the programme because they are inappropriately timed during the first week of the student's arrival in the universities when they are busy settling down and proposed that these programmes take place when they are settled.

Finally, the findings of the study reveals that the effectiveness of the user education programme for fresh students in college can be enhanced through: giving more time to user education programme, allocation of the course to reasonable time on the timetable so as to enable practical aspect, conducting orientation when students have settled down to school activities, improvement on creation of awareness on library orientation and use of audio-visual as support materials for user education programme. All three librarians supported the students measures for improvement of the programme in the following ways: More qualified professionals should be recruited, training for old staff of the library should be regular, more time should be allotted to the user education programme, timely awareness creation for the programme of user education, orientation should be conducted when students have settled down to school activities, practical training of students on use of basic library facilities adequate finance should be made available for the programme, user education programmes should not be conducted only in one semester.

The findings above corroborate the findings of Ibiam (2010), who advocated that qualified staff should be employed to assist users in locating information materials with minimal effort. Maduako (2013) who states that the user education programme can be enhanced by allotting more time to user education on the timetable in order to improve the programme's effectiveness, improved creation awareness on the importance of the programme and the use of audio-visuals to make the programme more interesting. Nwabueze, Ozioko and Igwesi (2013) also affirmed this point as the findings of their study reveals that strategies that could be used to improve the

programme includes; increment of duration of orientation and conducting orientation when all students must have registered and settled down.

CONCLUSION

From the findings of the study, the following conclusions are hereby made: The availability and provision of the various types of user education to students is very important for effective utilisation of the library resources and services. This is to say that the provision of user education programme for students cannot be underestimated.

Factors that affect effectiveness of user education programmes were time allocated to the programme, awareness of the availability of the programme and its importance in the students' academic life and student's interest. Finance, shortage of library materials, inadequate ICT facilities and lack of professionals also affect the effectiveness of user education as is the case of College of Education, Akwanga, Nasarawa State Polytechnic, Lafia and Federal Polytechnic, Nasarawa.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are hereby made:

1. A practical method rather than theoretical approach should be employed by the libraries as this was make the programme more interesting for students and encourage them to participate. Lectures may feature documentary to show students how to use the catalogue and how materials are prepared and made ready for use.
2. Library user education that will include library tours should be introduced in the first semester before the fresh students was be allowed to use the library. Orientation should be vigorously carried out before library instruction to ensure that the latter is built on the former.
3. Teaching use of library to college students in only one semester is inadequate. More time should be allocated to the programme, and the programme should therefore be reviewed to become a continuous taught course at the beginning of each semester but examinable once in the students' academic life.
4. User education programmes should be taught when students have settled down to school activities probably in the second and not the first semester when students are going about their registration process.
5. Awareness of the user education programme should be created through students library handbook or bulletin made available to students during registration

in the library and on notice boards in every department.

6. Adequate and qualified staff should be employed for the programme to reduce workload. In addition, the staff needs to be sponsored to training and development programmes to enhance their performance.

7. The use of audio-visuals during orientation should be enhanced while sufficient ICT facilities should be provided for the students of the higher institutions to practice what has been taught theoretically.

8. Adequate provision of funds by management of the institutions for the user education programme should be the priority in library budget and allocation for every fiscal year.

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