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Information Seeking Behaviour: A Catalyst for Library Resources Utilization by Undergraduate's in University Of Calabar.

Boma Torukwein David-West
Department of Library and Information Science,
Faculty of Education, University of Port Harcourt'
boma.davidwest@uniport.edu.ng

Dr. Mary Mfon Bassey
University of Uyo Library
University of Uyo
princessmji@yahoo.com

Abstract

This study examined information seeking behaviour: A catalyst for library resources utilization by undergraduates of University of Calabar. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprises 136 undergraduate students of the department of Library and Information Science University of Calabar. Census sampling technique was used for the study. A questionnaire was used for data collection. The instrument was tested for reliability. Yielding Cronbach,s Alpha coefficient at 0.75 making it valid and reliable. A total of 136 copies of the instrument was administered to respondents. At the end, 102 copies of the instrument were retrieved representing 75% return rate. The research question was answered using descriptive statistics of (x) while the hypotheses was tested using z test statiscal analysis at 0.5 alpha level. The study revealed that there is a significant influence of information seeking behaviour on utilization of library resources. It was concluded that academic libraries should provide the right information at the right time in the right format to its patrons, selecting sources, refining sources and evaluating sources are key to utilizing library resources. It recommended among others Library management should provide current library resources and online databases for easy access and retrieval.

Keywords: Catalyst, Information, Seeking Behavior, Library Resources, Library Undergraduate.

Introduction

The aim of every academic library is to acquire, organize, store, preserve and disseminate information resources to users. The primary function of every library is the provision of library resources for teaching learning and research and also ensuring that the information needs of their

user community is met. Olajumoke et. al (2023). Information is vital to all individuals, and all libraries try to provide the right information at the right time and the right format to its users.

According to Sultana (2016) information seeking behaviours involves a set of actions like information needs, selecting sources, evaluating sources and refining sources and finally utilizing this information. It is therefore an individual's way of gathering and obtaining information for seminars, workshops and thesis. Information seeking starts when someone acknowledge that there is a need for information and make frantic efforts to meet that need., These efforts may involve a lot of techniques like selecting, refining and evaluating sources and also investigating the internet until these needs are met (Gordon et-al, 2020).

The library resources are broadly utilized sources of information and are always available to promote literacy in the society. Libraries should be conscious of the kind of information needed by patrons and how it can be met. Despite the increasing cost of buying and preserving print and non-print information resources, the library has an obligation for providing and maintaining effective service delivery. The introduction of information communication and technology (ICT) has changed today, s libraries from repository to gateways of information.

Technological advancement and innovation have completely changed the way traditional libraries operate in storing, preserving and disseminating information.

Information seeking is very demanding and it has various aspects that has to do with the interaction among the users, the information needs and the information resources. The diverse environment students face in academic libraries today, increase the problem as it affects not only the information format, but the number of information resources seems to grow excessively. In the traditional library they deal with a narrow scope from the range of library resources. Some basic reference sources, books, magazines, newspapers, scholarly Journals. There is information explosion due to the digital environment which have enlarged the sources that students encounter when doing research and has also expands the information formats they will encounter making the students to navigate back and forth from the digital to the traditional environment. In other for undergraduate students to utilize library resources effectively they must have the necessary skills

According to (Sultana 2016), information seeking behaviour include:

Selecting sources in terms of selecting sources many undergraduate students seems not to be certain with the disadvantages in coping with an automated library environment. According to Majid & Tan (2002) ascertain that most students have not yet been acculturated to the scholarly communication patterns of a particular discipline. Furthermore, they are often required to do research in very desperate subject areas, so even if they are beginning to develop an understanding or disciplinary norm in their major, they do not possess that level of understanding across all areas in which they may be doing research. Most researchers also opined that most students seem to lack the necessary skills and the basic knowledge critical to becoming effective researchers.

According to libGuide (2023), searching does not always produce adequate results. This means that undergraduate students must demonstrate their creativity and flexibility as they utilize search tools to produce results that are useful for them. The searches are also too many or few, it should be refined to have a better result by using the Boolean operators to narrow or broaden the search result. Exploring the options is very vital to allow or searching by indexing terms or thesaurus and other search limits such as publication data and scholarly journals. In refining the search, the student should also try different combination of keywords, also get relevant, readable and accessible resources, examine the most promising lots for better vocabulary especially in the subject or descriptor fields. Try another database if you are not getting the accurate information.

Evaluation is an attempt at examining the time option of a given concept. It is a process of critical and in-depth analysis of some phenomenon or trends in a bid to ascertaining its strength or weakness. To determine the value, the student must acquire access to unravel the reliability and reputation of the vendor or producer. A quality research determines whether they are scholarly peer reviewed sources or whether or not they will be good for their research. As undergraduate students gathering information from various sources for research projects including books, newspaper, articles, magazines, specialized database and websites. It is important each source is evaluated to ascertain the quality of the information. This is necessary because most of the information on the internet is not all that is accurate or trustworthy. The credibility of any research work rest on credibility of resources used to support the work. Information seeking behaviour is

the basic activity indulged in by every individual and might go through a particular behaviour when seeking for information.

Academic libraries provide information resources for users and undergraduate students are to use it for their seminars, research, course work etc. they are supposed to be up to date with relevant knowledge and skills that will enable them perform effectively in their research work. It is on this note the study aims to investigate information seeking behaviour: A catalyst for library resources utilization by undergraduates of University of Calabar.

Statement of problem

Academic libraries are the store houses of Knowledge where students are expected to visit and effectively make use of their resources to satisfy their information needs. Undergraduate students are expected to maximally utilize library resources as one of their major sources of information. However, noting from researcher's observation, there is a decline in utilization of library resources. Despite several efforts that are being made by the library management to provide accurate library resources, for easy access and retrieval of information resources, the problem of non-usage is still lingering.

It is on this note the study seeks to investigate the information seeking behaviour: a catalyst for library resources utilization.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to investigate influence of information seeking behavior on utilization of library resources by undergraduates of University of Calabar. The specific objectives of this study were to;

1. To examine the selection of sources and utilization of library resources by undergraduates of University of Calabar.
2. To ascertain the refining of sources and utilization of library resources by undergraduates of University of Calabar.

3. To determine the evaluation of sources sand utilization of library resources by undergraduates of University of Calabar.

Research Questions

1. To what extent does selecting sources influence utilization of library resources by undergraduates of University of Calabar?
2. What is the influence of refining sources on utilization of library resources by undergraduates of University of Calabar?
3. What is the influence of evaluating sources on utilization of library resources by undergraduates of University of Calabar?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between selecting sources and utilization of library resources by undergraduates of University of Calabar?
2. There is no significant difference between refining of sources and utilization of library resources by undergraduates of University of Calabar.
3. There is no significant difference between evaluating sources and utilization of library resources by undergraduates of University of Calabar.

Literature review

The primary purpose of the academic library is the provision and dissemination of information for user's utilization. If the library services and resources are not fully utilized it is as good as not having a library (David-West 2020). Information seeking behaviour is a process in which people search for information and utilize it to complete their assigned task. (Tubach (2018). This makes information seeking very important aspect of an individual's life to solve information need. Wilson (2000) posit information seeking behavior as that which involves personal reasons for seeking information, the kinds of information which are being sought and the ways and sources which needed information is being sought. (Zondi, 2020) conducted a study among post graduate students at the University of Zulu land, South Africa. She established that majority of students showed a very low level of competence in the use of library and displayed poor information

seeking patterns. Also, Dalistso (2023) conducted a study on the use of academic library and information seeking behaviour of student at UNTEBM University, Clinical medicine formed the population of the study, 30 students were positively selected. Results on the purpose for using that library showed that many were using it to read in other to improve personal competence. The findings also revealed that majority of students were aware of book display services while challenges revealed was made quiet time to seek needed information.

A study conducted by Nafiz (2022) on "I actually got my first job through ex-colleague, employment related information seeking behaviour of Bangladesh immigrant in Canada. Using a mixed-methods approach the study utilized semi structured interviews with Bangladesh immigrants in Ontario, Canada, and obtained 205 survey responses. The study highlights the centrality of employment related settlement among Bangladesh immigrants. The result shows that Bangladesh various information sources for their employment in Canada includes trends, professional colleagues, online searches and settlement agencies.

 A study conducted by Amaravathi (2022); information seeking behaviour of library use pattern among undergraduate students, a case study. Survey method was adopted for the study. 232 were satisfied with texbooks. Kadi and Kumbar (2013) library resources, services and information seeking behaviour in changing ICT environment: A literature review.in this study emphasis was placed on the literature review on behavioural science professionals.

 Folorunso (2014) conducted a study on information seeking behaviour of social sciences scholars: Nigerian case study. Based on the research findings, the author provides suggestions on how current information services and products can be improved to better serve the users.

Chayal, and Vatta (2014) carried out a study on assessment of information seeking behaviour of post graduate students regarding library resources. The study revealed that majority of the students visited library for the purpose of borrowing books, among others it was recommended that user awareness /educational programme for efficient utilization of University library resources and services.

Vighnarajah, Aziz, and Lee (2016), conducted a study on profiling information seeking behaviour of distance students in open university. The study revealed that students use internet search engine as part of their information seeking process.

David-west and Owate (2018) conducted a study on information needs and information seeking behaviour of lecturers in Faculty of Agriculture, University of Port Harcourt. A population of one hundred and six (106) lecturers constituted the population. The study revealed there is a significant relationship between information needs and information seeking behaviour of lecturers.

The empirical studies reviewed by different scholars and authorities related to the study were discussed. The gap which the researcher wants to fill is to enable undergraduate know how best to utilize library resources and how selecting, refining and evaluating a source will help spring a positive information seeking behaviour that will facilitate easy access and retrieval.

Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study is made up of 136 undergraduate students of Library and Information science department University of Calabar. The census sampling technique was used. The instrument for collecting data for this study is structured questionnaire titled Information seeking behaviour: A catalyst for library resources utilization. (ISBCLRUQ). Professionals validated the instrument.in library and information science and other experts. (lecturers) in measurement and evaluation. A total of 136 copies of the instrument was administered to respondents. At the end, 102 copies of the instrument were retrieved representing 75% return rate. The instrument was a questionnaire with a modified 4-point Likert scale. The four-point likert scale strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD).

This study licit to make sure that the findings are reliable and valid. The reliability of the instrument used for the study is ascertained using Cronbach Alpha. Cronbach alpha is the most commonly used when you want to assess the internal consistency of a questionnaire (survey) that is made up of multiple Likert type scale. The reliability test showed 0.75 which indicates that it is consistent and reliable. The data collated was arranged in frequency and percentage The research question was answered using descriptive statistics of mean (x). the hypothesis was tested using z statistical analysis at 0.5 alpha level.

Results 1: what is the effect of selecting sources on utilization of library resources by undergraduate students in university of Calabar.

Table 1: mean ($\bar{X}$) scores of respondents on the ways selecting sources enhance utilization of library resources by undergraduate students in university of calabar

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Selecting sources		Resources Utilizations		Mean Set	Rank Order	Decision
		$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}_1\bar{X}_2$		
1	Library resources are easier to select and use	3.35	0.67	2.73	0.54	3.04	5th	Agreed
2	Inability to select library resources while doing research	3.18	0.64	3.47	0.69	3.33	2nd	Agreed
3	It is faster selecting sources while using online database	3.16	0.63	2.98	0.59	3.07	4th	Agreed
4	Selecting sources gives access to the right information resources	3.51	0.70	3.23	0.65	3.37	1st	Agreed
5	Selecting resources manually is cumbersome	3.47	0.69	2.76	0.55	3.12	3rd	Agreed
	Aggregate Mean Score	3.33	0.66	2.03	0.60	3.19		Agreed

Data on table 1 described the mean (x) scores and standard deviation of the ways selecting sources enhance utilization of library resources by undergraduates in University of Calabar. The respondents agreed on all items in the table with high mean (x) score of 3.19 explained that library resources are easier to select and use, inability to select sources while doing research find, it is faster selecting sources when using online databases, selecting sources gives access to the right information resources, selecting sources manually is cumbersome all these influence the utilization of library resources by undergraduates in university of Calabar.

Research question 2: what is the influence of refining source on utilization of library resources by undergraduates in University of Calabar?

S/N	Items	Refining source		Resource Utilization		$\bar{X}_1\bar{X}_2$	Remark Order	Decision
		$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD			
6	Refining information resources leads to relevant information	3.45	0.69	2.73	0.54	3.09	3rd	Agreed

S/N	Items							
7	Refining sources makes it possible to shift through large quantity of information	3.08	0.62	3.47	0.69	3.28	2nd	Agreed
8	Inadequate skill in refining sources	3.16	0.63	2.13	0.59	3.07	4th	Agreed
9	Refining sources online saves time.	3.55	0.71	3.23	0.65	3.39	1st	Agreed
10	Poor knowledge on how to refine sources	3.37	0.67	2.76	0.55	3.07	4th	Agreed
	Average mean/standard deviation	**3.32**	**0.66**	**2.03**	**0.60**	**3.18**		**Agreed**

Data on table 2 presented the mean scores and standard deviation of the ways refining source influence utilization of library resources by undergraduates in university of calabar. The respondents agreed to all items in the table with high mean scores greater than the mean criterion of 2.50 following the rank order from 1st to 4th . the aggregate mean score of 3.18 explained that, refining information sources makes it possible to sift through large quantity of information, inadequate skill in refining sources. Refining source online saves time for users to determine the relevancy of any information materials, poor knowledge on refining sources for which tremendously influence utilization of library resources by undergraduates in University of Calabar.

Research question 3: what is the influence of evaluating sources on utilization of library resources by undergraduate in University of Calabar?

Table 3: mean $(\bar{X})$ scores of respondents on the ways evaluating source influence utilization of library resources by undergraduates in University of Calabar.

S/N	Items	Evaluating source		Resource utilization				
		$\overline{X}$	SD	$\overline{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}_1\bar{X}_2$	Remark Order	Decision
11	Evaluating source before taking decisions make the information accurate	3.16	0.63	2.73	0.54	2.95	3rd	Agreed
12	With evaluation of sources misinformation is erased	3.47	0.69	3.47	0.69	3.47	1st	Agreed
13	Evaluation of sources provide efficient and effective usage of information	3.18	0.64	2.98	0,59	3.08	2nd	Agreed

14	Inability to evaluate sources before usage	2.92	0.58	3.23	0.65	3.08	2nd	Agreed
15	Evaluation of sources guides user to find the relevant information	3.06	0.61	2.76	0.55	2.91	4th	Agreed
Average mean/standard deviation		**3.20**	**0.63**	**2.03**	**0.60**	**3.10**		**Agreed**

Data on Table 3 presented the mean scores and standard deviation of the ways evaluating sources influences utilization of library resources by undergraduates in University of Calabar. The respondents agreed on all the items in the table with high mean scores greater than the mean criterion of 2.50 following the rank order from 1st to 4th. The aggregate mean score of 3.10 explained that, evaluating source before utilization makes the information accurate, with evaluation of sources misinformation is erased, evaluation of sources provide efficient usage, evaluation of sources guides a user to find the relevant information which influence the utilization of library resources by undergraduates in University of Calabar.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypotheses 1: There is no significant difference between selecting sources and utilization of Library resources by undergraduates in University of Calabar.

Subject	N	X	St.D	DF	P	ZCAL	z-crit	Decision
Variable selecting source		3.33	0.66					
	102				0.05	2.60	+1.96	sig
				100				
Resource utilization		2.03	0.60					

Table 4: z test calculation of the understudied variables selecting sources, library resources utilization by undergraduates in University of Calabar.

In table 4, the calculated z test of 2.60 is greater than the critical z value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance with degree of freedom of 100. This explained that the null hypothesis is rejected showing that there is a significant difference between selecting source and utilization of library resources by undergraduates in University of Calabar.

Hypothesis 2: there is no Significant difference between refining of sources and utilization of library resources by undergraduates in university of Calabar.

T able 5 z test calculation of the understudied variables

Subject	N	X	St.D	DF	P	Z-crit	Z-cal	Decision
Variable selecting source	102	3.32	0.66	100	0.05	±1.96	2.60	sig
Resource utilization		2.03	0.60					

Variable Refining source, library resources utilization

Table 5 shows that the calculated z test of 2.58 is greater than the initial z value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance with degree of freedom of 100. Thus, reveals that the null hypothesis is rejected which implies that there is a significant difference between refining source and utilization of library resources by undergraduates in University of Calabar.

Hypothesis 3: there is no significant difference between evaluating source and utilization of library resources by undergraduates in University of Calabar

Table 6: z test calculation of the understudied variables

Subject	N	$\bar{x}$	St.D	Df	P	z-cal.	z-crit	Decision
Variable refining source	102	3.20	0.63	100	0.05	2.39	1.96	sig
Resource utilization		2.03	0.60					

Variable Evaluating source Resource utilization

Table 6 reveals that the calculated z test of 2.39 is greater than the critical z value of 1.96 at 0.05 level with degree of freedom of 100. This implies that the null hypothesis is rejected indicating that there is a significant difference between evaluating source and utilization of library resources by undergraduates in University of Calabar.

Discussions of findings

The findings reveals that the ways selecting source influence utilization of library resources include easier selection and use of library resources, inability to select library resources when doing research .it is faster selecting sources when using online databases, selecting resources give access to the right information resources, bases as selecting sources manually is cumbersome which invariably influence the utilization of library resources by undergraduates in University of Calabar. The test of hypothesis one shows that there is a significant difference between selecting source and utilization of library resources by undergraduates in University of Calabar. the test of hypothesis one shows that there is a significant difference between selecting source and utilization of library resources by undergraduates in University of Calabar. In line with this finding's ,LibGuide (2023) put simply selecting source does not always produce adequate results but inadequate results are achieved if and only if students demonstrate their creativity and flexibility as library resources are effectively utilized. David-west 2020 averred that the academic library exists for the provision and dissemination of information for user's utilization. The scholar advanced that if the library services and are not fully utilized it is as good as not having a library. The worry of majid and tan 2002 was that most students appear not to be certain with the disadvantages in coping with automated library environment because, students have not yet been acculturated to the scholarly communication patterns of a particular discipline.

The second findings also reveal that the impact of refining sources on utilization of library resources include: refining information sources help users to access the relevant information, refining sources makes it possible to sift through large quantity of information, inadequate skill in refining sources, refining sources online save time for users to determine the relevancy of any information materials, poor knowledge in refining source when searching for information which influenced the utilization of library resources by undergraduates in University of Calabar. The test of hypotheses two also reveals that there is a significance difference between refining sources and

utilization of library resources by undergraduates in University of Calabar. In line with the findings, Dalisto (2023) the study affirms that the use of academic library at every point in time helps to effectively access and refine relevant information and usage to advance effective academic research. Thus, Nafiz (2022) and Amaravathi (2022) confirms that in refining the search, the students try different combination of keywords, get relevant, readable and accessible resources to get accurate information. It is therefore imperative to infer that library resources, services and information seeking behaviour is key to the effective utilization of library resources.

The third findings went further to reveal that the influence of evaluating source on utilization of library resources include: evaluation of sources misinformation is erased, evaluation of sources provide efficient and effective usage of information, inability to evaluate sources before usage, evaluation of sources guides a user to find the relevant information which tremendously influenced the utilization of library resources by undergraduates in University of Calabar. In line with the findings, Zondi (2020) infers that with evaluating sources misinformation is erased and information is accurate for effective and efficient usage of information. The scholar in her study established that majority of students showed a very low level of competence in the use of library and displayed poor information seeking patterns. This is why David-West and Owate (2018) posits that information seeking behaviour guides the user to select, refine, and evaluate and utilize relevant information to complete an assigned task.

Conclusion

Academic library at every point in time in the University system is to acquire, organize, store, preserve and disseminate as well as teaching, learning, researching and meeting the information needs of the community it serves. To provide the right information at the right time and the right format to its patrons, selecting sources, refining sources and evaluating sources are key to utilizing this information by students. Students need to demonstrate creativity and flexibility in utilization of search tools to produce results that are useful for them.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researchers recommended that:

2   Librarians should provide current library resources and online databases for easy access and retrieval.

3   Students should effectively utilize the selecting sources to get the right information at the right time and the right format.

4   Librarians should acquaint their selves with the information seeking behavior of students so as to meet their information needs for efficient and effective service delivery.

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