

Perceptions Onintegrating Library Instructionprograms Inpolytechnic Libraries in the North-Easternstates of Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: The study examined the various library instruction programs offered in the polytechnic libraries and their status in the north-eastern states of Nigeria. The population of the study comprised the entire 85 librarians, 60,163 students in the entire 8 accredited polytechnics within the zoneduring 2018/2019 academic session. A sample of 1% of 60,163 (602) were chosen to represent the target population as appropriate for students while two (2) librarians each were considered from each library. A total of 16 librarians constitutes the target of this category. In addition, they form the major group who provides the information required for the study. Cross-sectional research design was employed using a structured questionnaire to collect data. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The hypotheses was tested using one way ANOVA at 0.05 level of significance. The statistical test observed at F-ratio is 3.47 which is significant at 0.05 level. This implies that there is no significant difference in the type of Library Instruction Programs offered to Students in polytechnic libraries in the North-eastern states of Nigeria. The study equally reveal that the challenges encountered by students during the instruction programs is relatively different in the institutions studied. So therefore, Polytechnic libraries need to reevaluate library user instruction to strengthen the use of both print and electronic materials. It was recommended that library instruction programs should be incorporated into the Polytechnic curriculum to affect changes in students' library behaviour.

KEYWORDS: perceptions, library instruction, polytechnic libraries, North-Eastern states, Nigeria

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I. INTRODUCTION

Library instruction is an academic program that is designed by higher institutions to educate library users on how to effectively utilize library resources and its services (Esse 2014). Library instruction is referred to in the current literatures as bibliographic instruction, library orientation etc. In the 21st century, Library professionals have created different definitional structures for the concept of library instruction. Library instruction is concern with the systematic nature of efforts to teach something- a set of principles or search strategies relating to library, its collections or services using the pre-determined methods in order to accomplish a pre-defined set of objectives. Klaib (2010) maintains that library instruction program is organized in order to inculcate in users library use skills such as bibliographic instruction and information literacy skills. Library instruction has also transformed and expanded to include information literacy and learning for life. It reduces the library staff's time and efforts in solving individual problems regarding the use of library services and also prepares users to exploit information effectively in any circumstances. Ilo and Jerome (2011) portrays two types of library user's education: library orientation and bibliographic instruction. Library orientation is mainly concerned with introducing the users to the library generally and the services available. This may include the organization of the library and the general principles governing the use of the library. On the other hand, bibliographic instruction is concerned with introducing the users to the sources of information and the best ways to use them.

Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL 2006) in the document information literacy competency standard for higher education defined Library instruction as a set of abilities requiring individuals "to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, retrieve, evaluate and use effectively the needed information. It is established that library users all over the world face various challenges which influence the extent to which the resources available are put to maximum and effective use. Therefore, imparting knowledge on how library users can effectively utilize the library resources is important element in education. Similarly, seeking, retrieving, use and evaluation of information are activities engaged by the students in their academic pursuit. Library instruction is an important platform through which information literacy is achieved. Koenig and Nicholas (2003) demonstrates that many students in higher educational institutions need library instruction programs because the courses are becoming interdisciplinary and their

pattern is changing. It makes imperative for students to become better library literate so that they can make the optimum use of the available sources of information.

To avoid serendipity in sourcing information resources, students will therefore, be required to know and be conversant with the various information search strategies using manual retrieval tools like classification, catalogue, index, abstract, bibliographies, and also electronic retrieval tools as online public access catalog (OPAC), search engines etc. and also to develop logical, creative and critical technique to search and retrieve information. Polytechnic libraries acquire, and processes information resources in various area of knowledge and students who secure admission into polytechnics come from various secondary schools some of which have no libraries. In respect of this, libraries and the institutions incorporate various programs which properly position its fresh students to explore the library's avalanche of resources without stress. Such include teaching of use of library and study skills, library orientation, bibliographic instruction, and individualized instruction.

Statement of Problem

The orientation of students in the use of library in Nigerian institutions has become a tradition due to increase in students' intake, complexity of library systems, introduction of information and communication technologies in library services and increase in acquisition of library resources and complexity in their organization for easy retrieval, calls for educating users with skills to use libraries (Ishola 2005). The aim of library instruction is to acquaint freshmen on the existence of the library and its organization, layout and services available at hand. The benefits include: increased usage, increased awareness and educating freshmen on the use of library resources and services among others. Without doubt, libraries have numerous instruction programs such as user orientation, use of library course, staff guidance, tutorials, library tour etc. which are organized to attract users patronize the abundant information resources carefully organized in the library. The essence of these instruction is to educate students how to effectively access and utilize library resources and services to enhance their academic pursuit.

Integration of library instruction in tertiary institutions improves students' strategies and techniques to use the library optimally in all curriculum content areas (Kamba 2009). The phenomenon has an effect on students' academic performance and lifelong learning. Preliminary investigation reveals that, library instruction programs are not formally offered and integrated into the curriculum in some of the Nigerian polytechnics, which in turn leads to underutilization of library resources and poor academic performance. Ajiboye (2013) observed insufficient orientation of students on the use of library resources and services in Nigerian institutions deprive student from making use of information resources for their academic activities. To strengthen this assertion, Breen and Fallon (2005) and Uzuegbu (2004) avow that to be information literate, a person must be able to recognize when information is needed and have ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to ascertain the Library Instruction Programs offered in selected Federal Polytechnic Libraries in the North-Eastern States of Nigeria. Specifically, the study is design to highlight the various Instruction Programs offered in the Polytechnic Libraries under study. The challenges of these Instruction Programs. **Research questions:** this questions were raised to guide the study: What type of Library Instruction Programs is offered to students in the Polytechnics under study. What are the challenges of Library Instruction programs in polytechnic libraries of the North-eastern States of Nigeria? **Research hypotheses:** There is no significant difference in the type of library instruction programs offered to students in polytechnic libraries of the North-eastern States of Nigeria. There is no significant difference on the challenges encountered by students during the instruction programs in polytechnic libraries in the North-eastern States of Nigeria.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Library Instruction Programs

Library instruction is concerned with enabling students to become aware of the existence of the library and its organization, layout and services available at hand. The need for information search and retrieval skills, problem-solving, life-long learning among users is some of the reasons which make library instruction mandatory for the freshmen in Polytechnics and other institutions of higher learning. Many writers have examined library instruction program in some higher institutions in Nigeria in the relevance of the program to effective utilization of library resources and also, on how to improve on some problems relating to the dissemination of the course. Aina (2004) is of the view that, library instruction is information literacy service with the emphasis of educating users on how to acquire skills that will enable them search for information independently on any aspect of knowledge by using traditional and electronic methods. Livehabura (1999) is of the opinion that library instruction should be integrated within the curriculum of the institution so

that the contents and coverage of the program accommodates information development, learning, teaching and research within and outside the institution. This instruction programs enhances utilization of resources in the library which in turn improve academic performance of students.

Traditional face-to-face library instruction programs are numerous in Nigerian Polytechnics as quoted by (Esse 2013) where she reveals some of the methods of educating library users ranging from orientation, use of library course, staff guidance, tutorials, library tour etc. Kantharaj (2014) enumerates other methods of library instruction programs which include; lecture method, presentation method, and documentary on library, tutorials, guided tour, attending individuals at the help desk, virtual tour, and brochures/flyers. These orientation programs aid library users to acquire skills on how to effectively utilize the library. This is in line with what Ojasaar (2003) said in his study, that user education is an instruction which equips library users with the skills to enable them to be independent and sophisticated users of libraries and their resources especially in the areas of identification, location, search, retrieval and exploitation of information. He recommends that effort has to be made in the area of staff guidance and tutorials. One of the basic functions of the academic library is to offer both formal and informal instruction in the use of library. Tiafel (2008) noted that libraries have to develop expanded programs to meet the changing needs of library users and prominent among these is the library user education program.

Challenges of Library Instruction Programs

Libraries in tertiary institutions are meant to provide user-centered services to meet students' needs. This function is performed through library user education which is expected to connect students to the vast array of information resources necessary for their problem-solving, academic pursuit and life-long learning. Educating freshmen on the use of library resources and services available in Nigerian Polytechnic libraries faced with some problems. Osagie (2013) opines that a library is one of the most important educational establishment in improving the quality of teaching and learning and most be properly stocked and compliment other educational activities in the Polytechnics. Consequently, these instruction programs are faced with some problems as identified by (Joseph, 2005) which include: Over dependence on one day orientation program, Lack of collective curriculum for library instruction in Nigerian tertiaryinstitutions, Lack of examinable library instruction, Over concentration (on the part of Librarian) on library technical serviceslike acquisition, cataloguing and classification and shelving of books ratherthan information retrieval mechanism, and the use of unqualified personnel to teach the use of library in someinstitutions. Similarly, Nkechi (2015) Identify the following as other constraints that may impede the acquisition of library user skills in Polytechnics. These include: lack of well-equipped Polytechnic libraries, lack of confidence in the use of libraries, dependence of students on lecture notes and textbooks for everything, lack of information resources for learning, teachers mode of instruction not adequate, lack of funds for library user programs implementation, library staff not properly equipped to attend to students, constant power outage, no period in the time table for the teaching of use library, poor learning environments, lack of administrative support. For Nithyanandam (2013) lack of skills regarding search, retrieval, utilization of information; lack of training of lecturers in the use of library resources; insufficient systems and skills to manipulate technological resources in the library by students seriously impede the acquisition of library user skills by students.

Other factors that militate against the conduct of library instruction programs in Nigerian tertiary institutions include lack of resources; language barrier, illiteracy, teaching orientation and practice are part of the factors (Rockman 2002). For Ani andBassey (2015) lack of appreciation and ignorance shown by the teaching staff is also responsible for this malaise. A major obstacle to library instruction programs is that some librarians consider it as a distraction from the main library role of delivery of information. In the view of Case (2012) library instruction program would increase the need for space, materials and public services personnel. This will drain funds for other more important services such as reference etc and it will also create personnel problems relating to scheduling, competence and assessment of teaching.

To solve these problems, Klaib (2011) asserts on the need for explicit statement ofobjectives, availability of infrastructure, qualified trainers, careful choice of teaching methods and regular systematic evaluation. In a similar study, Akinbola (2007) assess the significance of library instruction program where he recommends that: the library instruction program inour tertiary institutions should be overhauled to make it more standard. Adequate and qualified personnel should be recruited to undertake the teaching of the course effectively; the course should be allocated reasonable time on the time table so as to enable practical aspect taught effectively.

III. METHODOLOGY

Quantitative research method was adopted for the study using cross-sectional survey research design. This is because of its flexibility which permits the use of variety of data collection techniques such as questionnaire, interview and observation. It was also chosen because it deals with various aspects of human

behavior and responses. The targeted population for the study was the entire **85** librarians, **60,163** students in the entire polytechnics within the zone. In addition, they form the major group who provides the information required for the study. A sample of **1%** of **60,163 (602)** was chosen to represent the target population as appropriate for students. Curry’s table in Youth (2006) revealed that a study with a target population above 50,000 has an ideal sample size of one percent of its total population. While two (2) librarians each were considered from each library. A total of **16** librarians constitutes the target of this category.

Structured questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. In order to ascertain the validity of the research instrument, face and content validity test was carried out, while for reliability of the instrument, Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient was used in order to obtain the reliability index suitable for the study. SPSS Version 23.0 was used to test the reliability index of the research instrument. This yielded a coefficient value of 0.87which signifies that the instrument is reliable to elicit the data required for the research.Out of the 602 copies of the questionnaire distributed to the students across the Polytechnics in the North-Eastern States of Nigeria 532 (88.4%) were duly completed, returned and found usable for this study. Also out of 16 copies of librarians questionnaire distributed a total of 14 (87.5%) copies were returned duly completed and found usable for this study.Data collected from the field were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. The null hypotheses raised in the study were tested using F-test (one way ANOVA) because the samples are more than two institutions, then the data was subjected to computer analysis using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS), Version 23.0.

IV. PRESENTATION OF DATA, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Type of library instruction program(s) offered to students in polytechnic libraries in the North-eastern States of Nigeria

| S/N | Type of Library Instruction Programs | Name of Institution | | | | | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------------|---------------------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|
| | | ATAPBL | FPBL | RPML | MAPGL | FPDL | FPML | SPYL | FPBL |
| 1 | Use of library course | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 2 | Library tour | X | √ | √ | X | √ | √ | X | √ |
| 3 | Tutorial | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| 4 | User orientation | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 5 | Workshop | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| 6 | Seminar | √ | √ | X | X | √ | X | X | X |

Key: √ (Offered) X (Not offered)

Key: ATAPBL = AbubakarTatari Ali Polytechnic, Bauchi Library; FPBL= Federal Polytechnic, Bauchi, Library; RPML= Ramat Polytechnic, Maiduguri, Library; MAPGL= Mai-IdrisAlooma Polytechnic, Gaidam, Library; FPDL= Federal Polytechnic, Damaturu, Library; FPML= Federal Polytechnic Mubi, Library; SPYL= State Polytechnic, Yola, Library; FPBL= Federal Polytechnic, Bali, Library.

Table 1 shows the type of library instruction program(s) offered to students in polytechnic libraries base on the decision made by the institutions. These programs are offered to the students in various forms which is determined by students’ size, number and qualification of staff. The table support the fact that the entire North-Eastern states polytechnics offers the course use of library and user orientation programs. This discovery is in line with what Esse (2014) lamented that curriculum-based use of library and orientation of user platform have the highest number of respondents in their study conducted among five selected universities in southern part of Nigeria. Library tour and seminar were also integrated in some polytechnics to educate users on how effectively utilize the library resources and services. Workshop and tutorial suffers the least mode of instruction in all the polytechnics possibly due to lack of fund and other equipment to organize the programs for their students. This implies that the most employed means of instruction as revealed in the table is the traditional face-to-face use of library course and user orientation in all the libraries within the study area simply because of the tradition in Nigerian tertiary institutions where lectures is the common method of imparting knowledge to the students.

Table 2:Status of the course library instruction in North-eastern states polytechnics of Nigeria

| S/N | Course Status | Type of Respondents | | | | | | | |
|-----|-------------------------|----------------------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|
| | | Librarians | | | | | | | |
| | | Name of Institutions | | | | | | | |
| | | ATAPL | FPBL | RPML | MAPGL | FPDL | FPML | SPYL | FPBL |
| 1 | Part of General Studies | √ | X | √ | √ | √ | X | √ | X |
| 2 | Core course | X | √ | X | X | X | √ | X | √ |
| 3 | Not offered | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |

Key: √ (Available) X (Not available)

The table 3 shows the status of the course library instruction in the polytechnic libraries. Library instruction programs are offered as a core course in federal polytechnic Bauchi library, federal polytechnic Mubi library and federal polytechnic Bali library only. Also AbubakarTatari Ali Bauchi, Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri, Mai IdrisAlooma Polytechnic Gaidam, federal polytechnic Damaturu and Adamawa State Polytechnic formalized library instruction program embedded in a general study (GNS) in their polytechnics as scheduled in curriculum and course specifications of National Board for Technical Education (NBTE, 2004). This is in a way supported by what Anyaoku (2015) said about library instruction in tertiary institutions where he conducted a study to ascertain the nature and status of library instruction programs in south-eastern universities in Nigeria, the finding revealed that five universities out of seven embedded the course in General Study (GS) in their universities. Thus, non among the polytechnic libraries found not offering the programs in any form. This implies that library instruction programs are offered in all the polytechnics in the North-eastern states of Nigeria in various forms and status to enhance effective utilization of library resources and services.

Table 3: Challenges of library instruction programs in polytechnic libraries of the North-eastern states of Nigeria

| S/N | Challenges | Type of Respondents | | | |
|-----|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| | | Librarians | | Students | |
| | | Response rate | Response percentage | Response rate | Response percentage |
| 1 | Over dependence on one day orientation program | 0 | 0 | 108 | 20.3 |
| 2 | Rapidly evolving technologies | 0 | 0 | 82 | 15.4 |
| 3 | Library anxiety | 0 | 0 | 98 | 18.4 |
| 4 | Lack of skills regarding search, retrieval and utilizing library materials | 5 | 35.7 | 130 | 24.4 |
| 5 | Students dependence on class notes for everything | 3 | 21.4 | 46 | 8.6 |
| 6 | Not giving assignment involving the use of library | 1 | 7.1 | 68 | 12.8 |
| 7 | Inadequate fund for information literacy programs | 2 | 14.3 | 0 | 0 |
| 8 | No period in the time table for the teaching of use library | 3 | 21.4 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 14 | 100% | 532 | 100% |

Table 3 revealed the challenges of library instruction programs in polytechnic libraries. It can be deduced that a majority of librarians 5(35.7%) and students 130(24.4%) attest to the greatest challenge of library instruction is lack of skills regarding search, retrieval and utilizing library materials by students. This is not surprising because navigating the library to search, retrieve and utilize a document is complex without having the necessary skills to carry out such task especially in libraries with larger collections. This makes most of the students to navigate all over the library shelves in search of a document “serendipity”. Following closely is over dependence on one day orientation as portrayed by students. About 108(20.3%) of the students indicated that too much dependence on one day orientation pose a major challenge to library instruction as users could not

acquire the required skills to make use of the library. This is in a way supported by Joseph (2005) in five identified problems of library instruction. Similarly, Ilo (2011) in his findings from the study he conducted in covenant university to ascertain the problems hindering students from maximizing user education program. He discovered that insufficient period for library instruction hamper students from maximizing the use of library resources and services among others.

Hypothesis one

There is no significant difference in the type of Library Instruction Programs offered to Students inpolytechnic libraries of the North-eastern states Nigeria.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance in the Type of Library Instruction Programs offered in Polytechnic Libraries

| Source of Variation | Sum of Squares | df | Mean of Sum of Square | F-ratio | Decision |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|---------|----------|
| Between Groups | 1014.050 | 3 | 673.603 | 3.47 | Retained |
| Within Groups | 224.500 | 528 | 561.125 | | |
| Total | 1238.55 | 531 | - | | |

Significant at 0.05 level

From the analysis of variance presented in the above table, the null hypothesis that “there is no significant difference in the typeof Library Instruction Programs offered to Students in polytechnic libraries in the North-eastern states of Nigeria” was retained, because the F-ratio is 3.47 which is significant at 0.05 level. This implies that there is no significant difference in the type ofLibrary Instruction Programs offered to Students in polytechnic libraries in the North-eastern states of Nigeria. The analysis showed that Polytechnic libraries in the North-eastern states of Nigeriahas different methods of educating their new students on how to effectively access and utilize the library resources and services. This can be attributed to the nature of academic programs in the institutions and users ability to utilize these resources among others.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference on the challenges encountered by students during the instruction programs in polytechnic libraries in the North-eastern States of Nigeria.

Table 5: Analysis of Variance on the challenges encountered by students during the instruction programs

| Source of Variation | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean of Sum of Square | F-ratio | Decision |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|---------|----------|
| Between Groups | 221.500 | 3 | 61.125 | 0.014 | Rejected |
| Within Groups | 601.050 | 528 | 73.603 | | |
| Total | 823.00 | 531 | | | |

Significant at 0.05 level

From the analysis of variance presented in the above table, the null hypothesis that “There is no significant difference on the challenges encountered by students during the instruction programs in polytechnic libraries inNorth-eastern States of Nigeria” was rejected, because the F-ratio is .014 which is less than 0.05 (P<0.05). This implies that there is significant difference on thechallenges encountered by students during the instruction programs. Similarly, the analysis shows that polytechnic students in the North-eastern states of Nigeria highlighted the areas they requires improvement on the part delivery methods, tutors efficiency as well as the library equipment that will enhance teaching of the programs.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it could be concluded that library instruction prepares polytechnic students toward effective utilization of library resources and services and also acquiring the strategies and techniques on how to search and retrieve information materials in their libraries. That can only be enhanced by incorporating the courses into the polytechnic curriculum as it is fairly offered in some polytechnics of the North-eastern States of Nigeria. The benefits of such are numerous. It would promote library patronage, ease access, retrieval, and use of information resources as well as making librarians to become more proactive and less reactive in discharging their services.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and subsequent conclusion, the following recommendations are proffered:-

1. The course library instruction should be incorporated in the polytechnics' curriculum and integrate other delivery methods of instruction to the traditional face-to-face delivery in order to affect changes in students library behavior.
2. More periods should be allotted for library instruction programs as well as practical lectures on the use of library should also be organized at the polytechnic libraries to further enhance the students' use of information resources and other library services.

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