Evaluative study of collections and services of selected academic libraries in Borno state, Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper evaluated the collections of Ramat Library, University of Maiduguri, Ibrahim Musa Library, Sir Kashim College of Education, and Ramat Polytechnic Library Maiduguri, in terms of availability of funds, currency, and quantity of the materials available for the benefit of all their users. Four objectives and four research questions guided the study. A survey study was conducted and a questionnaire was administered to sixty (60) staff of the libraries. The population of the study comprised of 60 academic librarians from the three academic libraries under study. Descriptive statistics was used for data analysis. The results revealed that the academic libraries under study were underfunded which is affecting their services/operations output to their users; the major users of the libraries under study are staff and students; most of their collections were not relevant for teaching, learning and research activities.

Keywords: academic libraries, collections, services, Borno State

Introduction

To evaluate means to examine and judge carefully the collection and services rendered in a particular library. Researchers world over are engaged in conducting evaluative studies on library collection than any other facet of library services. This can be attributed to the fact that collection is relatively tangible, whereas the various library services being intangible or are more difficult to evaluate (Amkpa 1998). If a collection is found to be below a certain minimum standard, it is likely that the library will function ineffectively. There are widely accepted standards for minimum sizes of academic, school, college and public libraries. In the judgment of professional organizations or accrediting bodies, it is impossible to provide the variety of materials required for adequate services, when a library falls below acceptable standards (American Library Association, 2011). This implies that a collection of a particular size and type can be compared with some existing standards to meet the required accepted standards. These standards could be the core collections for that type of library.

For academic libraries in Nigeria to remain relevant in the 21st century, adequate print and non-print materials must be provided and applied to all its operations

and services. It must be emphasized that ICT facilities will form the basis for all development cycles in the 21st century. The academic libraries under study are no exceptional. Currently, there are eight academic libraries in Borno State and normally academic libraries are established to support the academic activities of their parent institutions. Even though efforts have been made by the state and federal government through the ministry of education to enhance the academic libraries in higher institutions in Nigeria, the academic libraries under study are still facing a setback in terms of facilities and services. However, the need for this study has arisen from the observed setbacks in terms of facilities and services to users in the academic libraries under study.

Objective of the study

The objectives of the study are to determine the:

- The extent of funding in the academic libraries under study.

- Adequacy and currency of information materials in academic libraries under study.

- Types of services provided by academic libraries under study.

- Educational background of the library staff in academic libraries under study.

Research questions

Based on the above-stated objectives, four research questions were formulated to guide the study. They are as follows:

- To what extent is the funding of academic libraries under study?

- Are the information materials in academic libraries under study adequate and current in meeting user's information needs?

- What are the types of services provided by academic libraries under study?

- What are the educational backgrounds of the staff in academic libraries under study?

Literature review

The extents to which funds are available often determine the level of effectiveness of academic libraries. According to Ojedekum (2007) funds available to the library is not sufficient compared to the huge amount needed to produce and maintain the new technology gadgets for libraries and other sources of information. Acquisition of resources for the library is the basic foundation for library development, but government funding which provides critical assistance to the libraries through their parent institutions is inadequate. Okonofua (2011) revealed that poor funding is the principal challenge that most Nigerian tertiary institutions currently face which limits their ability to rate high in the global ranking of educational institutions. As long as the government remains the major source

of funding there will continue to be funding gaps from government sources due to the increasing number of the government funded organization.

The issue of currency of library materials in Nigerian academic libraries has been a major one for many years. Awojobi (2004) reported low patronage of a university library, which was blamed mostly on the paucity of current information sources. In a study conducted by Iyoro (2004), a serial collection of the university of Ibadan was adjudged relatively current by the respondents. Result revealed that 84% of the respondents considered the serial holdings of the library current, while 16% claimed that the serial holdings were not current but have retrospective values.

One other issue that agitates the minds of information professionals is the adequacy of information sources to the needs of the library users. Oyediran (1998) argues that when information sources are inadequate in terms of currency and quantity it makes the use of the library services frustrating and problematic. Iyortsuun (2004) measured the level of adequacy and relevance of library resources provided by the University of Agriculture Makurdi in meeting its user's information needs, using CULNU guidelines on collection (resources) and building standard (facilities) as a yardstick for the measurement. The results revealed that abstracts, journals, documents, newspapers/magazines, bibliographies, indexes, and textbooks were rated to be adequate and relevant in meeting user's information needs. The relevance of library resources centers on the interest of every

user. Aina (2004) suggests that each library should develop its own type of services to suit the objectives of the institution. He noted that there are certain services that are common to all libraries. These according to him are lending services, inter-library loan services and documentation services, reservation, provision of seating and study facilities, reference services, exhibition and displays, library publications, user education and information literacy programme. Similarly, ACRL (2004) recommended that library should establish, promote, maintain and evaluate a range of quality services that can support the institution's mission and goals.

Eze and Uzoigwe (2013) in their study on place of academic libraries in Northern Nigerian education indicated that university libraries adequately provide the following services: user education/orientation for staff and students (85%); reference services (90%); bibliographic services (87%); reprographic services (69%); exhibition and display of materials (80%) are adequately provided. Even though the level of provision of these services may vary among libraries, these are the various services which university libraries are supposed to provide for users to support teaching, learning, and research in university education. Kumar (1999) opined that any organization's future depends on the quality of personnel than any other single element. The quality of staff should be provided to the library as they organize control and co-ordinate library resources directly or indirectly towards the achievement of the institution's goals. Commenting on the quality of staff, Myers

(1989) observed that the quality of staff varies considerably depending on a wide variety of factors, such as type and size of institutions, governance, funding and the context of automation. The library is expected to have a staff capacity that would be able to cope with the tempo of work in the library and to meet users demand.

Methodology

The study was carried out in three academic libraries in Borno State, namely Ramat library, University of Maiduguri; Ibrahim Musa Library, Sir Kashim College of Education Maiduguri; and Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri Library. Survey research design was adopted for this study.

The relevance of the design to this study lies in the fact that it has a wide scope and it obtains objective view or opinions of people on facilities and matches it against certain standards of efficiency, services, or rate of improvement. Sixty (60) academic librarians of the three academic libraries under study constitute the target population. Since the population of the librarians is not large and could be managed there was no need for sampling. The main research instrument used for this study was a questionnaire and this was supplemented by observation of library materials. The data derived from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency distribution and percentages, and results were presented in tables.

Findings and discussions

Table 1. General demographic information

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex		
Male	40	66.7
Female	20	33.3
Total	**60**	**100**
Age		
26-30	5	8.3
31-35	15	25
36-40	16	26.7
41-45	14	23.3
51-55	10	16.7
Total	**60**	**100**

Table 1 shows that (66.7%) of the librarians are males while (33.3%) are females. This shows that there were more males that participated in this study than their female counterpart. For the age groups, (26.7%) and (25%) of the librarians are between the ages of 31-35 and 36-40 respectively

Table 2: Library budget and library access and services

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sources of funding for library		
Education Trust Fund	30	50.0
Government	20	33.3
Library charges	10	16.7
Total	**60**	**100**
Do the libraries have sufficient funds to pay for full-text documents when necessary?		
Yes	5	8.3
No	55	91.7
Total	**60**	**100**
Collection catalogued		
Yes	55	91.7
No	5	8.3
Total	**60**	**100**
Method of cataloguing		
Manual	59	99.3
Automated	1	1.7
Total	**60**	**100**
Classification system		
Library of Congress Classification Scheme	40	66.7
Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme	20	33.3
None	0	0
Total	**60**	**100**

Table 2 Shows that major sources of funds to the libraries are: from the Education Trust Fund (ETF) (50%) and from the Government (33.3%), meanwhile, (16.7%) of the library's funds come from library charges. At the same time, (91.7%) of the libraries have an insufficient fund to pay for full-text documents. However, there was an indication that (91.7%) of materials in the libraries were catalogued and (8.3%) of the libraries collections were not catalogued. In the libraries under study (99.3%) of the materials were manually cataloged. Finally,

(66.7%) of the library's collection was classified using Library of Congress Classification Scheme, while (33.3%) of the library's collections were classified using Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme. This shows that Ibrahim Musa Library and Ramat Polytechnic Library use DDC Scheme for their libraries.

The results revealed that Education Trust Fund (ETF) is the major source of funds for the libraries under study and most of their library books are catalogued using Library of Congress Classification Scheme. Ninety-

one and above are the numbers of students   who visit the library in a day.

Table 3: Distributions of library materials

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
How are library materials acquired?		
As donation	20	33.3
By purchase	30	50
From the government	10	16.7
Total	**60**	**100**
Collection development policy.		
Yes	40	66.7
No	20	33.3
Total	**60**	**100**
Does the library involve faculty, department, individual lecturers, students and library staff in the selection of information materials?		
Faculty	15	25
Department	25	41.7
Individual lecturers	10	16.7
Students	5	8.3
Library Staff	5	8.3
Total	**60**	**100**
Total stock of the library:		
Less than 1,500	5	8.3
1000-10,000	15	25
10,000 and above	40	66.7
Total	**60**	**100**
Adequacy and currency of information materials:		
Yes	5	8.3
No	55	91.7
Total	**60**	**100**
Computers in the Library:		
None	5	8.3
1 to 3	5	8.3
4 to 6	8	13.4
6 and above	42	70
Total	**60**	**100**
Has the library access to an online full-text document?		

Yes	1	1.7
No	59	99.3
Total	**60**	**100**

Table 3 shows that 50% of the library materials are acquired through purchase; 33.3% through donations and 16.7% come from the government. It also shows that 66.7% of the academic libraries have collection development policies. Most of the selections are done by departments (41.7%); faculty (25%); individual lecturers (16.7%) and 8.3% each are done by the library staff and students. The indices on the total stocks of libraries under study show that the total stacks were from 1000 - 10,000 and 10,000 and above. This is evident by the respondent's high scores of 25% and 66.7% respectively. It was statistically shown that (91.7%) of materials in the academic libraries under study are not adequate and current in meeting user's information needs.

The table shows that in all the three libraries, they have 6 and above computers which were represented by (70%). Also, 99.3% of the libraries do not have access to online full-text document delivery.

The findings showed that most of the library materials are acquired through purchase. At the same time, the three academic libraries understudy has collection development policy, and most of the selections are done by the departments. In addition, the stock of the libraries was 10,000 and above. Most of the information materials in all the libraries are inadequate, not current in meeting user's information needs. All the libraries have computers but do not have access to full-text document delivery.

Table 4: Types of services provided

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Internet services		
Yes	43	71.7
No	17	28.3
Total	**60**	**100**
E-Library Services		
Yes	54	90
No	6	10
Total	**60**	**100**
Reference services		
Yes	50	83.3
No	10	16.7
Total	**60**	**100**
Reader services		
Yes	45	75
No	15	25

	60	100
Total	**60**	**100**
Cataloguing		
Yes	55	91.7
No	5	8.3
Total	**60**	**100**
Collection Development		
Yes	56	93.3
No	4	6.7
Total	**60**	**100**
Serials Services		
Yes	48	80
No	12	20
Total	**60**	**100**
Bindery Services		
Yes	40	66.7
No	20	33.3
Total	**60**	**100**
Total students who visit the library in a day		
1 to 30	5	8.3
31 to 60	5	8.3
61 to 90	15	25
91 and above	35	41.7
Total	**60**	**100**
Seats available in the three libraries under study		
1 to 50	0	0
51 to 100	5	8.3
101 to 150	10	16.7
151 and above	45	75
Total	**60**	**100**

Table 4 shows responses of staff on the types of services provided by the academic libraries under study. On the Internet service, the results 71.7% of the respondents indicated the academic libraries have internet service, while 28.3% disagreed. On E-Library it was indicated (90%) that the academic libraries under study have established e-library as part of the library services, while 10% disagreed to that. On reference services, 83.3% of the respondents indicated that reference services are provided in the libraries under study, while 16.7% indicated they are not provided. Seventy-five percent indicated that reader services are provided by the three academic libraries. At the same time, 25% disagreed to the availability of the services. On cataloguing, 91.7% of the respondents indicated that cataloguing service is provided in all the three libraries, while 8.3% of respondents were of the view that cataloguing service is not provided. On collection development, 93.3% of the

respondents agreed that the service is provided, and 6.7% disagreed to the non-provision of the service. It was reported by 80% of the respondents that Serials services are provided in the libraries under study, while 20% disagreed to that effect. On Bindery service 66.7% of the respondents indicated the availability of the services in all academic libraries under study, while 33.3% indicated disagreement to the availability of the bindery services. From the table, the total students who visit the library in a day are 91 and above and 61 to 90 respectively. The three academic libraries under study have 151 and above as seating capacity for their respective users.

The results of the study revealed the provisions of the internet, e-library, reference services, reader services, cataloguing and classification, collection development, serials and bindery services in all the academic libraries under study. In addition, the total number of students who do visit library are from ninety and above, with a seating capacity of about one hundred and fifty-one and above in all the academic libraries.

Table 5: Educational backgrounds of library staff

	Frequency	**Percentage (%)**
Academic Qualification		
BLS	40	66.7
MLS	19	31.6
PhD	1	1.7
Total	**60**	**100**
No. of working staff		
five	8	13.3
six	7	11.7
eight	10	16.7
more than ten	35	58.3
Total	**60**	**100**
Library committee		
Yes	55	91.7
No	5	8.3
Total	**60**	**100**
Role of the committee		
Advisory	10	16.7
Policymaking	15	25
Missing	35	58.3
Total	**60**	**100**

For academic qualification, 66.7% and 13.6% of the respondents are holders of first degree (BLS) and master (MLS) degree respectively, with 1.7% holding Ph.D. On working staff 58.3% have more than ten

staff; 16.7% have eight staff; 13.3% have

The results revealed that most of the library staff hold first and master degree respectively. The majority of the respondents have more than ten years

Conclusion and recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that the three academic libraries face inadequate funding. Despite keeping pace with changes in modern times by providing current and adequate materials and ICT facilities, most of the library's information materials and facilities are not current and adequate in meeting their user's information needs. Internet facilities, e-library, reference services, reader services, cataloguing and classification, collection development, serials and bindery services are provided by the academic libraries under study, yet these services are not effectively and efficiently provided to cope with the modern age of information and communication technology (ICT). Users do find it difficult to locate and access needed information materials in the respective libraries. Even though most of the staff who participated in the study hold first and second degrees, their potentials are not fully displayed for effective and efficient service delivery to users among others.

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

1.   Those responsible for funding the academic libraries under study should provide more funds to enable them to acquire current and adequate information

five staff and 11.7% have six staff.

working experience and most of them are members of the library committee, and their roles are policy making.

materials and facilities in meeting their respective user's information needs.

2.   All services identified to be provided should be improved upon by the managements of the academic libraries under study to cope with the modern age of information and communication technology (ICT), and enhance teaching, learning, and research activities of lecturers, students, and other researchers.

3. The staff of the academic libraries should be motivated by the managements of their institutions in order to boost their moral in the display the knowledge/skills and talents acquired from their training for the betterment of services and operation to library users.

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