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Information Literacy Programme and the Use of Legal Information Resources by Undergraduate Law Students in Bayero University, Kano

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Abstract

The paper examined the information literacy programmes on the use of legal information resources by undergraduate law students in Bayero University, Kano. The study investigated the information literacy programmes of undergraduate law students with specific focus on the impacts of literacy programmes on the use of legal information resources in faculty of law library, Bayero University, Kano. The study employed quantitative research method using cross-sectional survey research design. The population of the study comprised of Head of the Law Library, eight staff of the law library and 1,071 registered undergraduate law students of 2017/18 academic session in Bayero University, Kano. The Isreal formula for determining the sample size (1993) was used to calculate the sample size of two hundred and ninety one (291) undergraduate law students. A total number of 291 copies of questionnaire were administered, and 247 were returned and found useful for analysis. Data collected from undergraduate students was analyzed using descriptive statistics and Narrative analysis was employed for the qualitative data collected from the head of the law library. The findings of the study showed that the library orientation exercise, library tours by chambers and course related Instruction such as legal methods and GSP Programme on the use of the library are the literacy programmes available to undergraduate law students of Bayero university, Kano; while lack of university commitment to information literacy programme, lack of regular information literacy programme and faculty unwillingness to incorporate information literacy programme into the curriculum are the factors hindering effective information literacy programme in law library in Bayero University, Kano. The study concludes that, the success of information literacy programme on the use legal information resources in faculty of law library in Bayero University, Kano can be achieved through collaboration with faculty members. The study recommends for the provision of regular information literacy programs among others

Keywords

Information Literacy, Law Students, Legal Resources, Literacy Programmes, Undergraduates

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Introduction

Due to information explosion, it has become increasingly clear that students cannot learn everything they need to know in their field of study within a few years, at school or the university. Information literacy programmes equips them with the critical skills necessary to become independent lifelong learners. Scholars like Lawal and Yahaya (2020) viewed that students are more than ever searching for information to enhance their studies. Undergraduate law students are not left out in this regard. Use of Legal information resources implies the extent to which law library users make use of the resources of a library to meet their information needs. However, the rapid growth of information demands from law library users via various sources of information access necessitated undergraduate students in Nigerian Universities to become greatly ambitious and attractive towards the need of information literacy skills and proficiency in their use of legal information resources which have shifted the traditional skills of library users from conventional to modern library clientele.

According to Murugan (2013), information literacy (IL) programme in academic libraries involves the process of imparting library users with the information skills that can help them identify their information needs, locate, retrieve, evaluate and effectively use that information for problem solving. He went further to mention that, IL programmes help to achieve the objectives of any academic library because the library users are trained to become independent learners hence maximize the use of library information resources.

It is therefore, the duty of libraries to play the role of imparting information literacy to students in the respective institutions where the libraries are attached, Bayero University Library as in the case of this study. This could be done through organizing information literacy programmes of different kinds such as, the library orientation programmes, lectures, user education, demonstrations etc.

Statement of the Problem

Academic librarians in many countries have accentuated and expanded their roles to be advocates and teachers of information literacy. Training on the use of library resources has been an integral part of library services for ages. This was done through orientation programmes and various user education initiatives involving one-on-one and classroom based instruction. Information literacy programmes are the extension of these processes, but reflect a much broader dimension of user education and more encompassing than the traditional user education. By empowering students to develop information literacy skills, librarians can contribute to their academic success and help ensure graduates become independent and successful lifelong learners after graduation. Therefore, information literacy programmes help to achieve the objectives of any academic library because the library users are trained to become independent learners hence maximize the use of library information resources. Despite the importance of information literacy program particularly on the use of legal information resources, Anderson (2016) observe that little empirical work has been carried out on the benefits information literacy programmes especially to law students. Similarly, with reference to Bayero University, Kano Law library, not

many studies have been conducted. It is based on the foregoing that the study becomes imperative for law librarians and researchers in the area of law librarianship.

Objectives of the study

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the information literacy programmes and the use of legal information resources in Bayero University, Kano. Specifically, the objectives are:

- 1). To determine the information literacy programmes offered to undergraduate law students in Bayero University, Kano.
- 2). To examine the benefits of information literacy programmes on the use of legal information resources by undergraduate law students in Bayero University, Kano
- 3) To find out the factors militating the provision of information literacy programmes to undergraduate law students in Bayero University, Kano.

Literature Review

The tremendous increase in the volume of publications as well as the resulting complexity of libraries and the methods by which literature is organized and disseminated necessitate the information literacy programmes, which equip the library users with the skills to enable them to be independent and sophisticated users of libraries and their resources. Information literacy programmes in academic libraries, according to Kimani (2014), is increasingly becoming very important because library users are faced with challenges of identifying, locating, searching, retrieving and evaluating information. It also helps lay the foundation of information literacy skills among students. However, Brathwaite and Dolabaile (2013) posited that the concept of information literacy programs is about introducing users to the library as well as educating them on effectively accessing and using a variety of information sources. They further maintain that, for the academic library, the expected outcome of information literacy programme is an information literate user who will be both aware of the physical layout of the library and the services offered, and knowledgeable about numerous library resources at his/her disposal during his/her academic tenure.

Therefore information literacy programmes in law libraries involves the process of imparting library users with the information skills that can help them identify their information needs, locate, retrieve, evaluate and effectively use the legal information resources for problem solving. Such programmes according to Olorunfemi (2014) includes: orientation, user education (Face to Face Instruction on the Use of Library), lectures, Course Related Instruction etc.

As an integral aspect of educational curriculum necessary for lifelong learning, academic libraries usually design and organize various information literacy programmes for students at all levels, the essence which is to familiarize them with the resources and services held by the library and empower them with the skills necessary to access and utilize information effectively, for research and learning, even after they would have left school.

According to Walsh (2008) and Omeluzor, Bamidele, Onuoha and Alarape (2013), library information literacy programmes are usually organised by the university libraries and in most cases, cover lecture or tutorial, seminar, workshop, one-on-one discussion, online courses, computer aided instruction, user education, library tour and briefing by librarians. Specifically,

library orientation is only meant to educate newly admitted students of the University. The purpose is to enable new students acclimatize with library rules and available services for users which include opening and closing hours, procedures for book loan, identification of library sections, search tools, available information source and their locations, among others.

The benefits of information literacy programmes on the academic performance of students cannot be over emphasized as it enables them to be able to identify a need for information and have the ability to locate and access the available information, the ability to compare and evaluate information that will enhance their research activity, and also processed the ability to apply the skills acquired in presenting his or her work, by synthesizing new and old information to add to the existing body of knowledge and disseminating it in a variety of ways. Thus, many studies have been carried out to examine the impact of information literacy programmes on academic performance of students. According to Walsh (2008), library orientation is the most commonly used techniques of increasing students familiarity with the library and its resources; hence, a survey carried out by him within the Ventura College indicated that there was a significant increase in students patronage statistics of the Ventura College Libraries as a result of increased library orientations to promote usage of library's resources and services. Also, another study undertaken in Dublin City University library discovered that the institution's revamped library orientation programme was a significant contributing factor in the increased popularity and renewed interest exhibited by patrons.

Similarly, findings of a study by Suleiman (2012) revealed that user education helped students to increase their searching skills; and equally helped them appreciate and make better use of the Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC).

Despite the importance of information literacy programme particularly on the use of resources by students, it's faced with full of challenges thus responsible for ineffective information literacy programme in Nigeria. According to Kaur et al (2010), some of them also act as obstacles in integrating the information literacy programmes into academic curriculum as there is no standard information policy to guide information literacy practice in Nigeria. There is lack of university commitment to information literacy programs inadequate funds to library's budget on offer, lack of awareness among students about the information literacy instruction sessions. Instruction sessions are affected by time constraints because information literacy is not allocated official time in university and college academic timetables. Attendance by students is voluntary and as a result not all students take advantage of the sessions that are in place etc were major factors militating against the provision of information literacy programme.

Methodology

The study adopted quantitative research methodology using survey research design. The population of the study comprised of the head of law library and two hundred and ninety one registered undergraduate law students (those who have registered for 2018/2019) in Bayero University, Kano. The Isreal (1993) formula for determining the sample size was used to determine the appropriate sample size for each level of the undergraduate law students to arrive at the sample size of two hundred and ninety one (291) undergraduate law students. Semi

structured interview was conducted with the law librarian and eight staff of the law library to find out the factors militating the provision of information literacy programmes of undergraduate law students in Bayero University, Kano. While two hundred and ninety one (291) copies questionnaire was administered to the undergraduate law students by the researcher to collect data on the types of information literacy programme acquired by undergraduate law students and impacts of information literacy skills programme on the use of legal information resources in faculty of law library in Bayero University, Kano. Two hundred and forty seven (247) copies representing (84.88%) were returned and found useful for analysis. Narrative analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data from the interview, while quantitative data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics with frequency and percentages. Table 1 shows the population of the study and the sample size of the study.

Table 1 Population and Sample size of the Study

LEVEL	NO. OF STUDENTS	SAMPLE SIZE
1	160	43
2	249	66
3	244	66
4	209	58
5	209	58
TOTAL	1071	291

Source: The Isreal (1993) formula for determining the sample size

$$\begin{aligned}
 N_y &= N / (1 + N e^2) \\
 &= 1071 / (1 + 1071)(0.05^2) \\
 &= 1071 / (1 + 1071 * 0.0025) \\
 &= 1071 / 3.68 \\
 N_y &= 291
 \end{aligned}$$

Results Presentation and Interpretation

Information Literacy Programmes Received by Undergraduate Law Students

Table 2: Showing Information Literacy Programmes Received by Undergraduate Law Students

S/N	Programs	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
1	Library Orientation exercise	148(59.92)	99 (40.08)	247 (100)
2	Library Tours by Chambers (Liberty, Solace, Maslaha chambers)	139 (56.28)	108(43.72)	247 (100)
3	Lectures/ Seminars	167 (67.61)	80 (32.39)	247 (100)
4	Face-to-Face instruction on the use of library	83 (33.60)	164 (66.40)	247 (100)
5	User Guides	63 (25.51)	184 (74.49)	247 (100)
6	Course-Related Instruction (Legal Method, GSP)	113 (45.75)	134 (54.25)	247 (100)

Source: Field Survey, **Key:** % = a frequency's percentage

The data on Table 2 shows the various information literacy programmes received by undergraduate law students of Bayero University, Kano. Results show that Lectures/ Seminars was the major programme they received as indicated by the majority 167(67.61%) of the respondents. The table further shows that more than half of the respondents indicated Library Orientation exercise and Library Tours by Chambers were offered to them having response rates of 148(59.92%) and 139(56.28%) respectively. However, Course-Related Instruction were offered as indicated by almost half 113(45.75%) of the respondents, and more than one-quarter 83(33.60%) of the respondents indicated that Face-to-Face instruction on the use of library. Least of the respondents 63 (25.51) indicated that users guide as Literacy Programme was offered to them. The availability of Orientation exercise to undergraduate law students could be attributed to the standards or criteria given by Legal council on education on the accreditation of law libraries in Nigeria.

Benefits of Information Literacy Programs on Use of Legal Information Resources

Table 3: Showing the benefits of information literacy programme on the use of legal information resources by undergraduate law students in Bayero University, Kano

S/N	Information Literacy Abilities	VH (%)	H (%)	L (%)	VL (%)	Total (%)
1	It increase my knowledge of available legal information in the library	77 (31.17)	150 (60.73)	15 (6.07)	5 (2.02)	247 (100)
2	It helps me to ensure better use of the library's electronic resources	63 (25.51)	123 (49.80)	48 (19.43)	13 (5.26)	247 (100)
3	It helps me in identification and retrieval of prints legal information resources	75 (30.36)	139 (56.28)	33 (13.36)	0 (0.00)	247 (100)
4	It increases my level of library's patronage	144 (58.30)	68 (27.53)	27 (10.93)	8 (3.24)	247 (100)
5	It encourages independent life-long learning	73 (29.55)	137 (55.47)	30 (12.15)	7 (2.83)	247 (100)
6	It enhances the quality of legal researches	133 (53.85)	65 (26.32)	23 (9.31)	26 (10.53)	247 (100)
7	It helps in proper citation and referencing	52 (21.05)	145 (58.70)	33 (13.36)	17 (6.88)	247 (100)

Key: VH = Very High, H = High, A = Average, L = Low, VL = Very Low, & % = a frequency's percentage

Table 4 shows the benefits of literacy programmes on the use of legal information by the undergraduate law students. From the responses, majority 150(60.73) agreed that information literacy programme highly increases their knowledge of available legal information resources within and outside the library. About 145 (58.70) of the respondents indicated that information literacy programme highly helps in proper citation and referencing. This is followed by 144(58.38%) of the respondents who confirmed that information literacy programme increases their level of library's patronage 'very high'. And 139 (56.28) of the respondents indicated that that information literacy programme highly helps in identification and retrieval of print legal information resource, while 137 (55.47) of the respondents agreed that it encourages independent lifelong learning. About 123 (49.80) confirmed that it facilitates better use of library's electronic

information resources. More than half 133(53.85) submitted that information literacy programme increases the quality of legal research 'very high'. Thus, it could be deduced that information literacy programme have a great benefit on the use of legal information resources of undergraduate law students in Bayero University, Kano.

Factors Militating Against the Provision of Information Literacy Programmes of Law Students

The semi structured interview with the law librarian and eight staff of the law library indicated that the factors militating the provision of Information Literacy programmes in Bayero University, Kano include: Lack of information literacy policy or standard, Lack of university commitment to information literacy programs, Lack of regular information literacy programs, Faculty unwillingness to incorporate information literacy program into the curriculum, Inadequate funds to library's budget, Limited contact between law librarians and faculty members and Poor awareness among the librarians on their role as information literacy teachers in the university system. The implication of this finding is that faculty of law library must educate both the institution and the library staff on the importance of information literacy programme in enhancing students performance and legal education in general.

Discussion of Findings

Finding on the types of information literacy programme received by undergraduate law students in Bayero University include: Library Orientation, Library Tours by Chambers (Liberty, Solace, Maslaha chambers), and Course related Instruction such as Legal Methods and GSP Programme on the Use of the Library. Lectures, Face to Face Instruction on the Use of Library, User Guide, Course Related Instruction (Legal Method, GSP) etc. This finding corroborate with the findings of Abubakar and Adetimirin (2016) whose findings revealed that library orientation, rather than the use of computer course (otherwise known as computer-aided instruction) and seminars was among the major user education and information literacy programmes available to postgraduate students in conventional universities in Nigeria. The finding is however in contrast to the findings of Pelemo et all (2020) who found that only 15 (1. 7%) of their respondent indicated the availability of library orientation programme in Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta.

Findings on the benefits of information literacy progrmmes to undergraduate law students in Bayero University, Kano include: it increases their knowledge of available legal information resources within and outside the library; it helps in identification and retrieval of print legal information resources; it facilitates better use of library's electronic information resources; it encourages independent lifelong learning; it helps to increase library patronage; it increases patronage; it increases the quality of legal research; and it helps in proper citation and referencing. The findings are similar to the findings of Sasikala and Dhanraju (2011) who found that the skills imparted to library user through information literacy programs in Andha University enable the science students to locate and use the information resources or documents more efficiently and effectively.

Further finding revealed the factors affecting the provision of information literacy programme in Bayero University, Kano to include: Lack of information literacy policy or

standard, Lack of university commitment to information literacy programs, Lack of regular information literacy programs, Faculty unwillingness to incorporate information literacy program into the curriculum, Inadequate funds to library's budget, Limited contact between law librarians and faculty members and Poor awareness among the librarians on their role as information literacy teachers in the university system. Corroborating this finding is the submission of Olorunfemi (2014) who found that majority, 280 (100%) of the respondents agreed that inadequate funding of the library, 278 (99.3%) Poor awareness among the librarians on their role as information literacy teachers and 275 (98.2%) Lack of regular information literacy programs among others were the major factors militating against the provision of information literacy programme in Nigerian universities.

Conclusion

The information literacy programme available to undergraduate law students in Bayero University Kano comprised of Library Orientation exercise, Library Tours by Chambers and Course related Instruction such as Legal Methods and GSP Programme. However, the success of these programme can only be achieve through collaboration with faculty members. Also, information literacy programmes contributed significantly to the use of legal information resources available to undergraduate law students in Bayero University, Kano.

Recommendations

Regular information literacy programs should be provided. Although there are programs in place aimed at imparting information literacy skills to students, there is however, low level of attendance to most of the programs. The law library should use various methods to ensure all students attend such forums. Also, Faculty members should put heads together with the law librarians to organize awareness campaigns in the university on the importance of information literacy.

Integration of information literacy education in law curriculum: Bayero University should integrate information literacy training to become part of the law curriculum for fresh law students. This will ensure that information literacy classes are mandatory to new students. In relation to this, therefore, law librarians and faculty members should co-design the contents of the information literacy courses.

Training of library staff: The University library management should organize trainings for the staff of law libraries on a regular basis which should be in form of workshops and seminars on information literacy so as to enlighten them on their roles as teachers of information literacy skills to students and or information users. The library staff should be motivated in order to be attending such trainings. Also, more skilled librarians should be encouraged to train their peers.

Improved librarian and user relations: Law library staff in Bayero University needs to be in touch with their users in order to understand and satisfy their information needs.

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