Assessment of Library Use by the Lecturers of College of Education Akwanga

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Abstracts

Research libraries support research process by collecting, preserving and making available an array of information resources relevant to their research community. The study surveyed academicians in the College of Education Akwanga Library to identify the role the College Library play in their research process. A random sampling technique was used to sample 80 lecturers and administered the questionnaire. A total of 54 questionnaires were collected and analyzed using percentage. The finding revealed amongst other things that, lecturers of College of education rarely visit the library for their research work. Recommendation for the proactive use of the Internet by the Library to facilitate access to current and relevant information for the research activities of the lecturers was recommended.

Introduction

Research is critical to society for the economic, social, cultural and intellectual benefits they bring. Every stage of the research and innovation process depends upon the efficient and effective flow of information (British Library Board, 2009). The purpose of research is to address specific problem and add to the body of knowledge. High quality research depends on having access to relevant literatures which tells the researchers something new and places it in the context of what they already know, hence dissemination and access to research findings is central and critical to research activities. Researchers demand access to information resources to examine what others have discovered and thought; to use and reuse evidence and scientific conclusions; and to publish results of their own research based on these resources. That is why their sources must be authentic, reliable, easy to find and retrieve, and easy to use and reuse. Every stage of the research process depends upon the efficient and effective flow of information. Hence bringing information together is important to enable researchers to survey the full range of thought that exists in their field. If critical material is unavailable, their results may be flawed and no researcher wants to reinvent the wheel. Society progresses by building on the record of ideas, and academic libraries play a central role in storing, organizing, preserving and facilitating access to the intellectual memory.

Research and Academic Libraries

Academic libraries function as change agents and leaders providing the information needed to facilitate teaching, learning and research. Provision of library and information resources for research is one of the cardinal focus of all academic libraries Collins Essential English Dictionary (2006) defined research as a systematic investigation to establish facts or collect information on a subject. Also, Shuttleworth(2008), asserts that in the broadest sense

of the word, the definition of research includes any gathering of data, information and facts for the advancement of knowledge. Science however does not use this word in the same way, hence it defines research as methodical study in order to prove a hypothesis or answer a specific question. Reliable and current information is central for each of the definition, thereby highlighting the crucial role library place in research process. One of the aims of research process is to generate measurable and testable data, gradually adding to the accumulation of human knowledge. These knowledge are collected, organized, stored and preserve for easy access by the academic library. Therefore the driving force for the establishment of academic library is to aid and facilities access to information relevant to its academic community.

A library can be viewed as an institution involved in the dissemination of information, it acts as an intermediary between the researcher and the information that has been created. It provides essential infrastructure, largely in the form of reliable and well-documented access to prior knowledge, data, the cultural record, and other research materials, necessary for research process. With the emergence of electronic resources demand for electronic resources is on the rise while print use continues to decline. Robin (2000) assert that libraries are designed to perform these basic functions; selecting materials and developing collections, ordering and acquiring materials, making documents available through document delivery, electronic delivery of information, and the provision of information-access mechanisms, conserving and preserving materials and providing bibliographic and other forms of instruction. American Library Association (2009) categories libraries into academic library, public library, school library and special libraries. In these categories special libraries offer library services to a specialized group of people, hence an academic

library is regarded as a special library. It is worth noting that because of the tree fold mission of research, teaching, and public service academic libraries are research libraries.

College of Education Akwanga

The College of Education Akwanga was established in September 1976 by the Plateau State Edict No 5 of1978, it was at then known and called Advanced Teachers College Akwanga (ATCA). The Edit establishing the Institution was repealed and replaced by the Nasarawa State Edit No 16 of 1996, which came into effect on 1st October 1996. The School is situated in Akwanga Local Government Council of Nasarawa State, 5 km from town centre along Jos Road, Akwanga. From 2000/2001 academic session the College of Education Akwanga started running degree programme in affiliation with Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Among the objectives of setting up the College is to act as a centre for research into the various areas of educational theory and practices. To archive the objectives of the college provision for library services was made.

Statement of the Problem

College of Education library is setup to support teaching learning and researches of both students and lecturers of the institutions. Library other academic libraries the library identifies and acquires external and internal sources of information, organize and facilitate its access and usage for teaching learning and research. The research however over the past few years have notice a decrease in the number of lecturers that visit the college library regularly.

Hence It imperative to find out whether College of Education Library Akwanga library is indeed living up to their objectives.

Objective of the Study

Even though the literature has indicated that academic libraries play a significant role on facilitating research, the overall goal of this study is to access how College of Education Akwanga library provide support for its staff research activities.

1. To find out the frequency of visit of College of Education lecturers to the library and purpose
2. To identify the information resources and services lecturers use for their research activities in the College of Education library
3. To identify the challenges faced by the academics in the use of COE library resources and services in their research process

Methodology

A survey method was used to administer 80 questionnaires to 32% of the total number of lecturers. From the 254 academic staff in the college 80 representing 32% of the total number of academic were randomly selected and administered the questionnaire. A total of 54 representing 68% of the total questionnaires administered were duly filled and returned for analysis and discussion.

Literature Review

The research Library plays a central role in the research process as depicted in figure 1, hence at every stage of the research process the researcher consult the library resources to support their work. Problems and the quest to improve the quality of life are often the motivation to carry out a research. Walonick (1993) posit that all research begins with a question, to answer the question researchers begin by consulting the library to review what other researcher have done. This process often clarifies the theoretical issues associated with the research question. It also prevents the need to *reinvent the wheel* for every new research question. At each stage of the research process access to information resources in important to the success of the research.

The researcher at the end of the research publishes his/her findings in scholarly literatures which the library in-turns acquire and make available for other researchers to review and build upon.
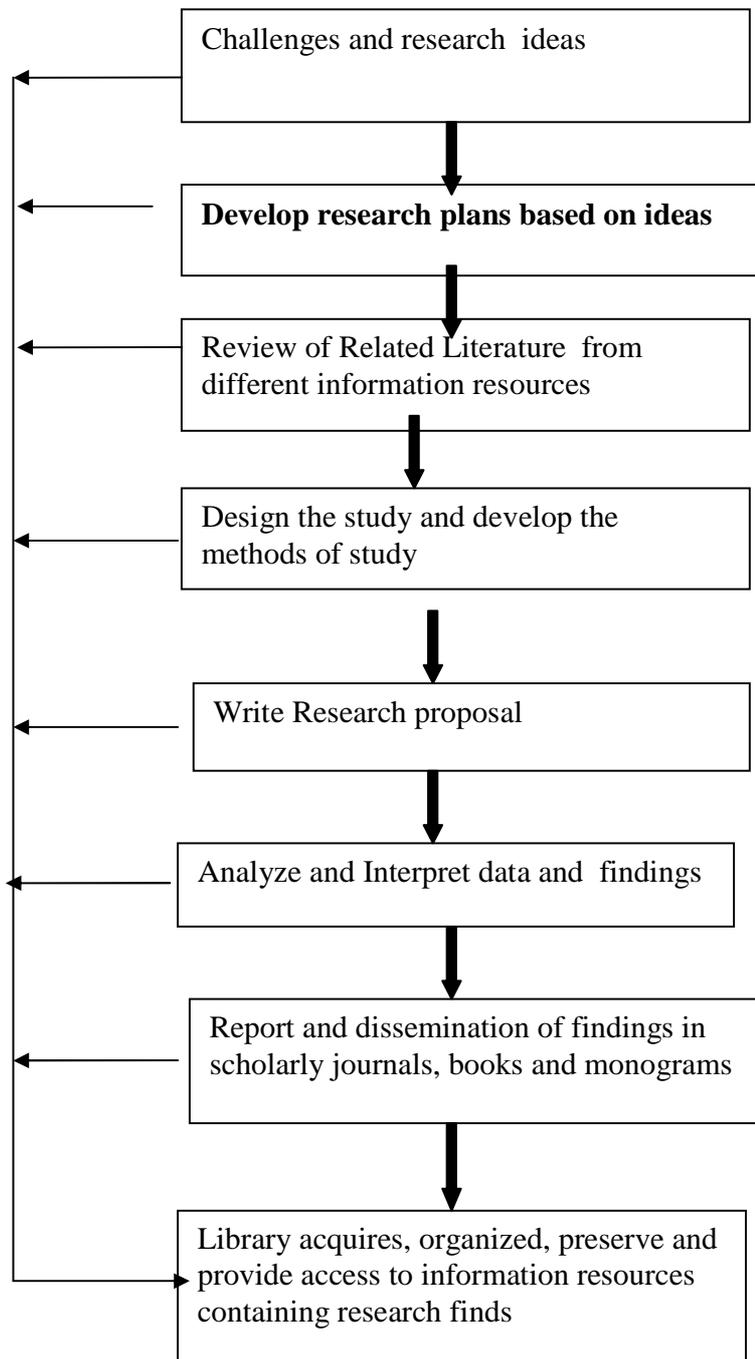
Research Process

Challenges and research ideas

Develop research plans based on ideas

Review of Related Literature from different information resources

Design the study and develop the methods of study

Write Research proposal

Analyze and Interpret data and findings

Report and dissemination of findings in scholarly journals, books and monograms

Library acquires, organized, preserve and provide access to information resources containing research finds

Fig 1: Research Process

Role of the Library in Research process

There is the need to access information sources throughout research process and research libraries provides access both to the body of literatures and to the data upon which this literatures are based. To contribute to the research process of its patrons, research libraries order for information resources that are curial and relevant to the research activities of their institutions, form a consortium to share resources with other libraries, and provide electronic document delivery services for resources they do not have. Jubb and Green (2007) posits that academic libraries have for centuries played critically important roles in supporting research in all subjects and disciplines within their host universities or colleges. These allowed published works to be fixed in a framework of knowledge and to be given multiple access points for retrieval. In addition research tools and resources such as library catalogues, bibliographies, indexes and abstracts, full-text database, academic and research portals are also maintained by research libraries to help researchers identify relevant resources. They also guarantee that everyone doing research today and in the future has access to the full range of electronic information and data they need, wherever and whenever they need it. The Library's role is to support varied forms of research output, working with publishers and other information providers.

Wesley and Ghosh (2002) assert that new technology is being increasingly utilized not only for automation of library functions but also for enhancement of information access and delivery of items **not** physically contained within the library boundaries. The shift from producing and consuming information in hard copy to multimedia digital form has moved the center of information gravity from research libraries to the Internet. Most research libraries now offer an online public access catalogue (OPAC), public PCs equipped with CD-ROM drives, scanners or public terminals connected to the Internet to support research activities. However, the growing volume of information published on the web is causing many researchers to complain of information overload which sometimes constitute an obstacle to effective research. To address this research libraries have put in place different information literacy program to help researcher find what they need and link them to different types of information resources, that address their information need. In addition many research libraries are building and maintaining their websites where users have access to quality and well vetted electronic resources without geographical and time restriction.

Technological advances has continue to provide new opportunities for research libraries to create, manage and disseminate information, serve new and remote users, and enhance the quality of research process. To effectively support research activities in the 21st century, research libraries require network skills, new methods of information retrieval and presentation, and these often involves creating and designing new systems applications to facilitate adequate information services.

Research libraries acquire and deploy new technologies to transform the ways in which information is created, disseminated, stored, and accessed. Researchers put their new ideas into circulation by the formal process of publishing a monograph or peer-reviewed article, giving a paper at a conference, submitting data to a central database, or informally exchanging findings with colleagues. Changes taking place in the ways in which researchers are disseminating their work include Open Access publishing and subject-based or institutional repositories. New practices for disseminating research findings are flourishing in many research libraries, thereby taking the lead in developing new solutions to overcome barriers that are legacies of the old print-limited publishing environment. Research libraries also facilitate access to existing content through programs that digitize and redistribute previously published (or unpublished) works and participate in mass digitization projects. Hahn, (2008) assert that research libraries will take responsibility for current scholarship as well as legacy scholarship, especially for a wide range of locally produced works of scholarship. The survey of Association of Research Libraries (ARL) member libraries verified that research libraries are rapidly developing publishing services like publication hosting and dissemination, production support such as peer review workflow management and journal issue compilation, or digitization of back issues.

Implication for the Academic Library

The future of the academic library is shaped in part by the evolving web technology and researchers who have become technically skilled consumers of digital information have high expectations regarding its format, functionality, and delivery. The academic library is currently faced with the challenge to balance traditional collection and service models with resource needs for new initiatives. There is the need for lecturers to access information sources throughout the research process. The research library must take advantage of web technology to provide improved or

new services, to increase access to resources beyond those owned, to provide remote access to their electronic resources 24/7, to reach more users more effectively, to promote the research activities of their client. The 21st century research library is also faced with the challenge to employ web technology skilled librarians that will be able to implement and deploy the array of information technologies to the satisfaction of their Internet savvy researchers. In addition to some of these challenges particularly for research libraries in developing countries is the challenge of providing adequate electrical power to run the necessary services and keep the web servers running 24/7. Research libraries are now taking responsibility for assisting with curation and preservation of smaller-scale data repositories arising from the work of local or domain-specific research groups. Luce E Richard in Council on Library and Information Resources (2008), assert that preserving knowledge is one of the most vital and rapidly changing fundamental roles of the research library.

Analysis and Discussion
A total of 80 questionnaires were randomly distributed to academic staff of the college. Out of which 54 representing about 68% were completed and returned. The returned questionnaire were analysis and discussed using frequency and percentage table as The study sought to find out the frequency of visit of COE Akwanga Lecturer's visit to the library for the purpose of research work. The response are shown in table 1

Table 1: Frequent of visit of lecturers to the library for your research

Frequency of visits	Freq (%)
Never	1(1.8%)
Rarely	44(81.5%)
Frequently	9(16.67%)
Very Frequent	0(0.0%)
Total	54(100%)

Table 1 showed that no lecturer visits the library very frequently while only 16.6% visit the library frequently. The table revealed that most of the sampled lecturers representing 81.5% rarely visit the library.

The respondents were provide with a list of activities they can perform in the library and asked to indicate as many activities as possible which they use the library for during their visits.

Table 2: Purpose of visit to the Library

Activities	Freq(%)
Search for research idea	1(1.85%)
Develop research plans	15(27.78%)
Review of related literatures	26(48.15%)
Design and develop research methodology	2(3.70%)
Write research proposal	3(5.56%)
Analyze and interpret data and finding	4(7.41%)
Deposit post print and preprint of research articles, books and monograms for dissemination	2(3.70%)

The responses of the respondents indicated that review of related literatures was the purpose of visiting the library by many lecturers of COE Akwanga as indicated by 48.15% of the respondents, which is followed by the development of research plan as revealed by 27.78% of the respondents. The respondents revealed that when searching for research idea only 1.8% of the respondents use the library. Asked to indicate which resources they use for their research work in the library, 74.1% of the respondents indicated that textbook was the most popular resources they used as shown in table 3.

Table 3: Library resources used research work

Resources	Freq (%)
Journals	22(40.74%)
Textbooks	40(74.07%)
Reference materials(Encyclopedia, dictionary)	15(27.78%)
Newspapers	7(12.96%)
Monograph	2(3.70%)
Theses and dissertation	10(18.52%)
Internet	15(27.78%)

The use of journals as indicated by 40.74% of the respondents was closely followed. Monograph were the least material consulted for research work in the library as indicated by 3.70% of the respondents. The small percentage of respondents that use the Internet for their research work may be connected with the erratic internet service in the library.

The relevancy of the library information sources to the research activities of the lecturers were sought for and the results shown in table 4.

Table 4: Relevancy of Information resources

Relevancy of information resources	Freq(%)
Not relevant	4(7.41%)
Relevant	34(62.96%)
Very relevant	16(29.63%)

Table 4, shows that 62.96% of the respondents indicated that the material the consult for their research work were relevant to their research work, while only 7.41% indicated that the materials they consult is not relevant to their work. The research went further to find out if the lecturers participate in the section of information resources acquired by the library and 64.81% indicated they do not because they were either not contacted to make a request or did not have time to send a request. Of the 35.19% that indicated that they participated in the selection process, they did so either by submitting their request to the library or selecting material through book catalogues sent by the library.

To achieve its objective the library provides different services to its patrons as listed in table 4.

Table 5: Library services used for research work

Frequency	*Freq(%)
Reference services	30(55.56%)
Indexing and Abstracting Services	4(7.41%)
Interlibrary loan/document delivery	1(1.85%)
Internet Services	13(24.07%)
Information literacy skills	1(1.85%)
Selective dissemination of information	1(1.85%)

Respondents were asked to select only one service they enjoy most from the library, 55.6% andn24.1% indicated that they patronize the reference services and Internet service respectively. Interlibrary loan/document delivery, information literacy skills and selective dissemination of information recorded low patronage as indicated by 1.9% of the respondents each.

The research sought to identify from the respondents what they consider to be a hundreance to their effective of the library for their research work and the responses are shown in table

Table 6: Hindrance to the effective use of the library for research work

Hindrances	*Freq(%)
Lack of relevant information resource	44(81.48%)
Lack of available current information resources	45(83.3%)
Working hours of the library	0
Furnishing of the library	10(18.52%)
Ventilation of the library	4(7.41%)
Poor Library Services	9(16.67%)

- multiple response

Lack of available current information and relevant resources has been indicated as the major reason why they do not visit the library for research as indicated by 70.37% of the respondents. The responses collected also revealed that poor reception by library staff was not a factor for the poor visit of the COE Akwanga staff to the library

Conclusion and Recommendations
The finding of this study suggests that lecturers of the College of Education rarely visit their library in the process of their research work because most of them do not see the library meeting their information needs for their research process. In view of this study recommends that the library need to do more to create awareness of its resources and services. The library also needs to enlighten the lecturer on how they can help them to support their reach activities. The library should proactively use the Internet to provide the lecturers with current and relevant information in their research activities.

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