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LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE UNDERGRADUATES' ABILITY TO IDENTIFY AND ACCESS INFORMATION AS CORRELATE OF THEIR USE OF LIBRARY INFORMATION RESOURCES IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN SOUTH-EAST, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study determined library and information science undergraduates' ability to identify and access information as correlate of their use of library information resources in university libraries in South-East, Nigeria. The study was guided by two objectives, two research questions and two hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted a correlation survey research design. The population comprised 307 Library and Information Science final year undergraduates of 2022/2023 set in seven state and federal universities in South-East, Nigeria. No sampling technique was used because the population size was small and manageable. The instruments used were Information Literacy Skills Test (ILST) and Extent of Utilization of Library Information Resources (EULIR) scale. The reliability coefficients of 0.80 and 0.83 were established for ILST and EULIR using Kudder-Richardson and Cronbach's Alpha technique respectively. The data collected were analysed using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. Simple linear regression statistics were performed to test hypothesis on correlation via SPSS version 20. The result revealed that there was a very low positive relationship existing between LIS undergraduate students' skills in identifying information needs and their utilization of library information resources in university libraries in South-East, Nigeria. There was a very low negative relationship of existing between LIS undergraduate students' skills in accessing information and their utilization of library information resources in university libraries in South-East, Nigeria. It was recommended among others that library management should as a matter of interest and concern plan and implement regular seminars and workshops for undergraduate students of LIS to improve their ability in identifying their information needs to be able to effectively use library information resources. Undergraduate students of LIS should also avail themselves the opportunity of the training organized by their libraries and university management in the effective use of library information resources in order to boast their skills for full exploitation.

Keywords: Information; Ability; Identify; Access; Information Use; Library Information Resources

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Introduction

The acknowledgement of the significance of information in the 21st century is growing across all disciplines and organizations (Ikenwe, 2020). This has led to the creation of an information society where the demand and use of information is increasing. Thus, Information are facts provided or learned about something. It is data that have been put together to make a meaning. Aina (2013) defined information as accumulation of knowledge by human beings in all areas of endeavor that is used to solve problems and reduce uncertainty. Information can be defined as data that has been processed, organized, or presented in meaningful way to convey knowledge, facts and instructions. The importance of information in a system cannot be over emphasized. Information helps in planning, decision making, reduces uncertainty amongst others. In this light, Academic libraries, which are an essential component of the university system, play a crucial role in aiding faculty members, researchers, and undergraduate students within the university community. This is why any library associated with a university is commonly referred to as an academic library.

Library information resources are materials acquired by university library to meet the information needs of library patrons which include the library and information science undergraduate students. Unegbu, Lawal-Solarin and Ladan (in Popoola and Haliso, 2020) define library information resources as information in both printed and electronic formats, such as textbooks, journals, indexes, abstracts, newspapers and magazines, reports, CD-ROM databases, Internet/E-mail, video tapes/cassettes, diskettes, magnetic disk, computers and micro forms. Library information resources typically refer to various sources of information available within a library including books, journals, databases, and other materials. Today's libraries are repositories and access points for print, audio and visual materials in numerous formats including maps, print documents, microform, CDs, cassettes, videotapes, DVDs, videogames, e-books, audio-books and many other electronic resources. Libraries often provide facilities to access to their library information resources and services. The word "Resources" is been define differently by various discipline, in the area of library and information science centers is seen as the integrating of document, eBooks, e-journals, databases, and multimedia materials (Ekere, Omekwu, and Nwoha, 2016). Today library resources are been digitized which refers to the converting of information resources from other format to digitized format changing information resources in library has enhance library activities. Users of library can now freely access resources of any information centers from any ware (Ekere, Omekwu, and Nwoha, 2016). Information resource or library resources are the material that are found in library which consist of various things such as, material, financial and human resources. These resources are provided by the library for the library users which include the undergraduate students of library and information science.

Library and information science undergraduate students are individuals who

pursue a degree in library and information science at the undergraduate level, which equips them with the knowledge and skills to contribute to the effective organization, retrieval and dissemination of information. According to Crawford (2018) LIS undergraduate students are individuals who are trained to acquire and possess the expertise to guide library users in developing their information literacy skills, empowering them to become independent seekers and evaluators of information. Furthermore, these students develop technical competencies in various information technologies. They gain proficiency in utilizing library management systems, databases and digital tools for organizing and retrieving information. LIS undergraduate students are expected to acquire a range of skills throughout their education which will enable them to perform their roles effectively. An example of such skill is the ability to identify information needs.

The ability to identify information needs refers to the skill of recognizing, understanding, and determining the relevant information that is required to fulfil a particular purpose or solve problems. The ability involves being able to define the scope and nature of information required, recognize gap in knowledge, formulate research questions, select appropriate sources, evaluate information sources and analyze information (ALA, 2000). Additionally, the ability to identify information needs is a crucial skill for LIS undergraduate students as they navigate the complex landscape of academic research and information retrieval. By clarifying their information needs, LIS undergraduate students can focus their efforts on relevant sources, avoid information overload, and critically evaluate the credibility and relevance of the information they encounter. Furthermore, in today's information-driven society, the ability to effectively identify information needs is fundamental to academic success and lifelong learning. The skills to identify, evaluate and use information is learned over a period of time (Okpala, Benneh, Sefu and Kaluleh, 2016). These skills as stated by Okon (2014) is the ability to recognize that accurate and complete information is the basis for intelligent decision-making, recognize the need for information, identify potential sources of information, develop successful search strategies, access sources of information,

Ability to access information, denotes the potential to select appropriate search strategies, select appropriate information retrieval system and retrieve information in variety of ways (ALA 2000). This however highlights the need to use appropriate search strategies and tools to locate relevant information. In addition, accessing information sources like online databases, academic journals, and educational websites provide a wealth of information on a wide range of topics, allowing the LIS undergraduate students to deepen their understanding of subjects that interest them. Furthermore, the ability to access information also allows the undergraduate students to expand their knowledge on specific subjects in library and information science. This access to information can be particularly beneficial for LIS

undergraduates who rely on up-to-date and accurate information execute their academic activities. Acquiring this skill determines the speed at which an information output in any format is obtained. Therefore, LIS undergraduate students need the necessary skills to be able to have easy access to the numerous information resources available to them in the library and also develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. In the same vein, Olajide and Gboyega in Ugah (2017) claimed that the more accessible information resources are, the more likely the readers tend to use resources that require the minimum effort to access.

Access to information is important, people need information to develop their potentials through education and training to succeed in business, to enrich their cultural experience and to take control of their daily lives. According to Manir (2009), the concept of information has been generally and universally viewed as a basic resource which all people use to improve their condition of living and is essential to economic development of any nation. Oyeronke, (2012) confirms that Access to Information is very crucial; it accelerates the level of individual advancement as well as corporate educational development. Access to Information focuses on the rights of individual to have access to the information at the right time. Its importance is also seen as a determining factor to economic, social and political development of any nation irrespective of their culture, ethnicity, language etc. To be able to have access to information, and information literate individual should be able to identify and utilize appropriate search strategies and tools available for identifying and accessing information. The skills required in this aspect is the ability to identify the type of information needed and have access to the sources of that information.

Onuoha (2008) identified three aspects of information access as physical access, Intellectual access and social access. The physical access information according to him relate to the document's location and format and the conditions, technologies, or abilities required to reach that document. Svenonius (2000) identifies intellectual access to information as the ability to understand how to get to, and in particular, how to understand the information itself once it has been physically obtained. It is the access to information contained in a document. Burnett, Paul, Jaeger and Thompson (2008) identified social access of information in the basis of the theory of normative behavior. They went further to claim that within specific social context, information behaviors like other day-to-day activities must be seen as normative. All these three aspects of information require specialized skills for accessing information. These skills range from the ability to select appropriate information retrieval systems, constructs search strategies, retrieve information using variety of methods, extracting and managing information (ACRL, 2015).

Statement of the Problem

Possession of information literacy skills is paramount in the accessibility and usability of information resources in this

information and technology era. Undergraduate students who use the academic libraries are faced with increasingly diverse and abundance of information resources, however, it is regrettable that some of them are not able to identify, access and make use of particular information relevant for their needs. Available literature such as Okiki (2013) and Olasore (2015), have shown the low level and lack of Information Literacy Skills among undergraduate students. Furthermore, evidence abound in literature such as Amusa and Atinmo (2016), show that there are a lot of library information resources with low usage or not being used by undergraduate students in Nigerian universities. Most universities spend their financial resources for the acquisition of library information resources and make them accessible for use by undergraduate students to keep up with the changing trends in education but such information were barely accessed and utilized. While many studies have been carried out to investigate the use of library information resources, there are few of literature connecting use of library information resources to information literacy skills. A few studies in Nigeria have attempted to relate information literacy skills of academics in Nigeria to utilization of library information resources in Nigerian universities, however, none of these studies is done in South-East, Nigeria. None of the studies adopted an information literacy standard to investigate the relationship between undergraduautes' ability to identify and access information and use of library information resources. This study, therefore, aims to determine library and information science undergraduates' ability to identify and access information as correlate of their use of library information resources in federal university libraries in South-East, Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What relationship exists between LIS undergraduates' skills in identifying information need and utilizing library information resources?
2. What relationship exists between LIS undergraduates' skills in accessing information and utilizing library information resources?

Research Hypotheses

Ho 1: There is no significant relationship existing between LIS undergraduates' skills in identifying information need and utilizing library information resources

Ho 2: There is no significant relationship existing between LIS undergraduates' skills in accessing information and utilizing library information resources

Research Method

Correlational research design was adopted for the study. The study was conducted in Soth-east, Nigeria. The population of the study comprised 317 Library and Information Science final year undergraduate students of 2022/2023 session in seven state and federal universities in South-East, Nigeria who have offered courses in information literacy, namely Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka (NAU), University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN), Imo state University (IMSU), Abia state

University (ABSU), Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam campus (COOU), Enugu state University of science and technology (ESUT) and Ebonyi state university (EBSU). The population size was small and manageable and as such was studied in entirety. Therefore, the researcher adopted the total enumeration sampling technique for all the 317 undergraduate final year students in 2022/2023 set from the two federal universities and five state universities under study. Instrument for data collection were Information Literacy Skills Test (ILST) and the questionnaire instrument titled, Extent of Utilization of Library Information Resources (EULIR). The instruments were validated by 3 experts, two in the Department of Library and Information Science and one in the Department of Educational Foundation (Measurement and Evaluation), all in Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to answer research questions 1 and 2. Pearson's product moment correlation was used to test hypothesis on relationship. For the two null hypotheses, p-value was used to determine the significance of the correlation. Where the calculated p-value was less than the stipulated level of significance (0.05), the null hypothesis was rejected. Whereas, the null hypothesis was not rejected where the calculated p-value was greater than the stipulated level of significance (0.05). All analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: What relationship exists between undergraduates' skills in identifying information need and utilizing library information resources?

Table 1: Pearson r on undergraduates' skills in identifying information needs and utilizing library information resources.

Sources of Variation	N	Skills to Identify the extent of information needs r	Utilization of library information resources r	Remarks
Undergraduates' needs in identifying information needs	**307**	**1.00**	**0.059**	**Very low positive relationship**
Utilization of library information resources	**307**	**0.059**	**1.00**	

Table 1 shows that there is very low positive relationship of 0.059 existing between undergraduate students' skills in identifying information needs and utilizing library information resources.

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Research Question 2: What relationship exists between undergraduates' skills in accessing information and utilizing library information resources?

Table 2: Pearson r on undergraduates' skills in accessing information and utilizing library information resources

Sources of Variation	N	Skills in accessing information r	Utilization of library information resources r	Remarks
Undergraduates' skills in accessing information	307	1.00	-0.142	Very low negative relationship
Utilization of library information resources	307	-0.142	1.00	

Table 2 shows that there is a very low negative relationship of -0.142 existing between undergraduate students' skills in accessing information and utilizing library information resources.

Null Hypotheses 1: The relationship existing between undergraduates' skills in identifying the information needs and utilizing library information resources

Table 4: Significance of Pearson r on undergraduates' skills in identifying the information needs and utilizing library information resources.

Sources of Variation	N	Skills to Identify the extent of information needs r	Utilization of library information resources r	Df	P-Value	Remarks
Undergraduates' skills in identifying information needs	307	1.00	.06	305	0.301	Not significant
Utilization of library information resources	307	059	1.00			

Table 6 indicates that at 0.05 level of significance and 305df, the calculated r 0.059 has p-value 0.301 which is greater than critical value-P 0.05. Therefore, the first null hypothesis was accepted. The relationship existing between undergraduate students'

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skills in identifying information needs and utilizing library information resources was not significant

Hypothesis 2: The relationship existing between undergraduates' skills in accessing information and utilizing library information resources

Table 5: Significance of Pearson r on undergraduates' skills in accessing information and utilizing library information resources

Sources of Variation	N	Skills in accessing information r	Utilization of library information resources r	df	P-value	Remarks
Undergraduates' skills in accessing information	307	1.00	-.142	305	0.013	Significant
Utilization of library information resources	307	-1.42	1.00			

Table 7 indicates that at 0.05 level of significance and 305df, the calculated r -0.142 has p-value of 0.013 which is less than critical value-p of 0.05. Therefore, the second null hypothesis was rejected. The relationship existing between undergraduate students' skills in accessing information and utilizing library information resources was significant.

Discussion of Findings

The findings in table 1 shows that there is very low positive relationship existing between LIS undergraduate students' skills in identifying information needs and utilizing library information resources in university libraries in South-East, Nigeria. This finding is in agreement with the finding of Issa, Amusan and Daura (2009) which shows positive relationship of respondents' skills in formulating questions based on information needs and identifying potential sources of electronic information on electronic resources use. In addition, this finding alligns with Furthermore, the finding is further supported by Mwatela (2013) who found that users' ability to identify and locate information resources depends on their information skills of designing approaches to an information system. However, test of hypotheses one indicated that the correlation existing between undergraduate students' skills in identifying information needs and utilizing library information resources was not significant

The result in Table 2 shows that there is a very low negative relationship existing between LIS undergraduate students' skills in accessing information and utilizing library information resources in university libraries in South-East, Nigeria. This is surprising because one would have expected that

students' skills in accessing information should have a positive relationship with their use of library information resources. However, the result may not be misleading because some researchers have similar results. Obaro and Umusor (2020) reported that undergraduate students lacked searching skills in the use of electronic resources. The study negates that of Odede and Nsibirwa (2018) who found that successful search and retrieval of electronic information as dependent and significant on one's level of information literacy skills. Hence, they concluded that there is a positive correlation between both variables. This implies that, it can be reasonably argued that skills to select appropriate search strategies and information retrieval system enhances the use of digital library resources. This difference might be due to insufficient guidance and support from librarians or mentors which can contribute to difficulties in accessing information resources effectively. The result of hypothesis two revealed a significant relationship between undergraduate students' skills in accessing information and their utilization of library information resources. This implies that the null hypothesis was rejected, while the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

Conclusion

Skill in identifying information need and skill in accessing information are crucial in the use of library information resources due to the drastic expansion of information in the digital age. It is required that undergraduate students possess the various dimensional constructs of information literacy skill for effective and efficient utilization of library information resources. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that there is a positive relationship between undergraduate students' skills in identifying information needs and their utilization of library information resources. In addition, it was concluded that there is a negative relationship between undergraduate students' skills in accessing information and their use of library information resources.

Recommendations

1. Library management should as a matter of interest and concern plan and implement regular seminars and workshops for undergraduate students of LIS to improve their ability in identifying their information needs to be able to effectively use library information resources.
2. Undergraduate students of LIS should also avail themselves the opportunity of the training organized by their libraries and university management in the effective use of library information resources in order to boast their skills for full exploitation. They should take advantage of the enabling environment.

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