Students' Perception of Library Orientation Programme in Benue State University, Makurdi

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Abstract:
Library orientation programme has always been a vital programme to fresher's of any kind of library. This study investigated students' perception of library orientation programme in Benue State University Makurdi. The study employed a case study research design. From a sample size of 100 which was drown with the use of simple random sampling technique, data were collected using questionnaire. Data collected were presented and analyzed with the use of frequencies and mean. The findings of the study shows that students of the university benefited from the activities of the programme such as rules and regulations guiding the library and it facilities and introduction of students to the library available information resources to a very high extent. The study also reported that some students of the Benue State University Makurdi saw library orientation programme as a programme that transmit knowledge and information search skills while others saw it as time wasting. In order to change the negative perception of students on the programme, the study recommend that time is very a crucial tool to consider in every we do therefore more time be given to library orientation programme so that more awareness will be created by the library when the programme is organized, group in different phases etc.

Keywords: Students' perception, library orientation programme

1. Introduction

Libraries are established in universities to provide information resources in different formats to support teaching, learning, research and community services. That is to say that the philosophy of libraries is centred on service and resource provision. To this end, professional librarians continue to struggle to collect and organize printed and other forms of recorded knowledge in order to satisfy both present and future users (Nwezeh, 2010). A user is a person who is duly registered with the university library and entitled to access, use and borrow library resources for use at his or her own convenience. They include faculty and non faculty staff, students, alumni, etc. Users of university libraries according to Udo-Anyanwu and Uche (2008) include students, faculty members and the entire academic community. However, this study is concerned with a particular group of users called students.

Students' are those studying at the University for either Ordinary National Diploma (OND); Higher National Diploma (HND); and Bachelor degrees, Postgraduate diplomas, Master's and Ph.D. In order to enable students make judicious use of the collections, adequate orientation is given to them on how to search, locate and use information resources that contain their information needs. This demonstrated the vital role of library orientation services or programme in libraries. In view of the reason for a library orientation programme in academic library in general and university library in particular, Fidzani (1995), Nithyanandam, Kanniyappan, Dhanakar and Rajasekar (2006) averred that "academic libraries support the teaching and research needs of the institutions they serve. It is the libraries' responsibility to ensure that the use of its information sources, resources and services are maximized to benefit its users, hence the necessity for user education programmes". Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) attributed the reason for user education as information explosion and the proliferation of various media for the organization and dissemination of information coupled with the unprecedented rise in admission to institutions of higher learning in Nigeria forced academic libraries to give priority to user education. Library orientation is a type of library instruction programme introduced in libraries to enable users (students) make adequate use of libraries and their resources. Assoh (2012) defined it as a device used by librarians to educate users how to use the library and the library resources effectively and efficiently. This definition is accepted but for the purpose of this work therefore, library orientation is a planned, organized as well as an implemented programme by the university library to introduce fresh students into the university library system and expose them to the dos and don'ts, information resources available, and how to use the resources of the university library efficiently. Library orientation services or programme could be practiced in all types of libraries. The concern of library orientation programme or services is to generally introduce the organizational structure of the university, the facilities and

resources available, techniques and inculcate the skills of how to use the library to students or users. Ashaver, (2012) supported the above by saying that library orientation is aimed at acquainting users with the activities of the library on a whole.

Library orientation programme in university is very important in educating and explaining what, why and how students will benefit from the programme during and after their educational programme. It enables students and other library users to freely present their problems to the appropriate channels or persons and the problems are also addressed accordingly. Recognizing the importance of library orientation programe or services in libraries, Nithyanandam, Kanniyappan, Dhanakar and Rajasekar (2006) noted that

user education is essential. It helps publicize library services. It improves the image of the library. Above all, user education and training are the ways to implement Rangathan's five laws of library science. User education is often fee-based, because developing the infrastructure for the network environment is very costly. The world still appears to be suffering from an exponential increase in all kinds of information-bearing materials. Even if much is of little value, it still has to be shifted to find the required information. P. 448

Similarly, Assoh (2012) confirm that it enables students to comprehend research and using the range of information sources more effectively and efficiently, not only for passing their courses with good grades, but also for preparing themselves for lifelong learning.

In consideration of the importance of library orientation services or programme in the university and university library, the Benue State University, Makurdi which was erected according to Sambe (2012) as a cardinal academic and resource centre in conjunction with its parent institution in 1992 to meet the challenges that confronted the University as it faces the future as well as the instructional programmes of the institution has instituted library orientation programme to expose students to its structural organization and the techniques of exploring its resources effectively and efficiently. The programme is being carried out ones in every academic session of the university to introduce fresh students into the university library environment and the necessary skills involve in accessing the library resources.

However, it has been noticed that students of the university are having different ideas, perceptions and reflections on library orientation programme rather than its context. It is based on this that this study sought to examine students' perception of library orientation services or programme in Benue State University, Makurdi.

Perception according to Hornby (2000) is the ability to understand the true nature of something. Students perception could therefore be defined as an idea, a belief or an image students have on library orientation services or programme as a result of what they see or understand something.

1.1. Statement of the Problem
It is a truism that librarians all over the world will recall that their personal contact and experience with students will recount the questions of where can I get material? and how can I use the catalogue? Which are frequently asked by students. These questions necessitated the introduction of orientation programme in libraries in general and the Benue State University Library Makurdi in particular. But the question is, what kind of perception do the students of the university have on the introduction of the programme in the university? This is a question that needs to be investigated.

If nothing is done to find out the students' perception of library orientation programme in the university, students may hold negative views, ideas and wrong interpretation or explanation from their mates and desists from attending or paying attention to the programme in order to benefit from it increase their skills for information search which will increase their research output. The result of this is that it will affect students' academic performance and lower their level of research output. It is against this backdrop therefore, that there is an urgent call for investigation of the students' perception of library orientation programme in Benue State University, makurdi.

1.2. Objectives of the Study
The general objective of this study is to determine students' perception of library orientation programme to their academic work in Benue State University, Makurdi. Specifically, the study sought to:
1. Access students' perception on the purpose of library orientation programme in the University
2. Ascertain the extent to which students benefit from library orientation programme
3. Find out how the library will change students' negative perception of the programme

1.3. Research Questions
From the above objectives, the following five research questions were also formulated to guide the study.
1. What perception do the students' have on the purpose of library orientation programme in the University?
2. To what extent students benefit from a library orientation programme in the University?
3. How does the library change students' negative perception of the programme?

1.4. Significance of the Study
The study will be very influential to library administrators and students. The findings of the study will expose the formats, contents and methodology of organizing a library orientation programme in the library and this will help other libraries which are yet to initiate theirs to do so. It will also explore the students' perception of the programme and this will enable administrators to pay attention to library orientation programme in their libraries so as to present a good image of the programme. The usefulness of the programme revealed will be one of the ways of changing students' perception of the programme in the university.

2. Literature Review

Library orientation is an information and communication process which involves the totality of users' interaction with the library. It is a continuous process from the school level to libraries (national, public, academic, special, school libraries) which will add educational value to visits made to the libraries. It attempts to establish why and what impact the programme has on the student's life even after his/her educational programme (Assoh, 2011).   Fresh students are introduced into the library system in all universities, colleges of education, colleges of agriculture, polytechnics, technical colleges, colleges of health sciences etc. It is believed that improving users' knowledge   of their library's collection and services could be a motivating factor for more usage and more demands on the library (Fidzani, 1995).

Library orientation programmes are given different meanings and values. For instance Ashaver (2012) perceives it as a form of personal greetings to fresher by the librarian. In other words, she sees library orientation is an attempt by the librarian to formalize users with every aspect of the library. Idiegbeyan-Ose and Ohaegbulam (2014) considers it as services rendered by the library to introduce the users to library resources and services in order to inculcate library use skills on them so as to save their time in library. According to Klaib (2010) it includes library tour, individual instruction, teaching of the use of library/study skills, orientation and bibliographic instruction. Nithyanandam, Kenniyappan, Arul, and Rajasekar (2006) saw it as various programmes of instruction, education and exploration provided by libraries to users to enable them to make more effective, efficient, time saving and independent use of library. Ilo and Idiegbeyan-Ose (2011) describe it as a sure method through which users overcome the use of library phobia.

Library orientation according to Ashaver (2011) means conducting of new readers of a library from one section to another with activities in each section performed as they watch. Referring to it as a user education programme, Fidzani (1995) suggested that user education should aim to make all users aware for self information resources available; both directly in the library and from external sources and enable users enjoy the search for information. Unomah (1985) assert that;

library orientation helps users know, for example, when the library opens, how to obtain books, how to borrow materials needed, where specific items are to be found, and so forth. Apart from all of these, orientation helps to create the right kind of atmosphere for effective communication between users and library staff. Orientation presents the image of the library as a helpful and friendly institution. In fact, orientations are inspirational as they create the assurance that the library staff is ready to assist them at any time.p.114

It also enable students to identify, search, locate, access, evaluate and effectively and efficiently use information resources of the library for efficient academic performance and research development. Ioryem and Sambe (2014) maintain that "library user education enables the public to have timely, independent and continuous access to information for personal and national development. It enables the public to identify, locate, evaluate and communicate information in its various formats for societal development". Ogunleye cited by Idowu (2005) sees the programme as a veritable tool for developing an awareness for and appreciation of library resources and services, acquisition of library skills for pursuing prescribed reading and self directed learning.

Library orientations are carried out in universities for all new students in different areas of academic endeavour and for different reasons. Library user orientation causes users to reorganize themselves in order to fit into the organizational environment of the academic library in general and university libraries in particular. According to Omekwu and Ugwuanyi (2009) a course of this nature is therefore indispensable if the student is to quickly adjust and adapt to the challenges of the academic library environment. Similarly, Okpakele (1999) pointed out that user education programme at the university of Ilorin has brought positive changes to students' behavior toward library use. Library user education according to Nithyananam et'al (2006) helps publicize library services and information resources; it improves the image of the library, lack of being able to find necessary information delays research and lack of awareness of information leads to duplication of effort. Anyaoku cited by Eze (2004) explained that users' efforts at using the library are not good enough without sufficient working knowledge usually end up in the feeling of frustrations. Users therefore need to be oriented if they are to be academically sound and successful. Ilo and Idiegbeyan-Ose (2011) remarks that it enables them to develop skills for effective utilization of library resources. Ajayi (1995) remarks that the mark of academic excellence and scholarship depends on the students' ability to develop an inquisitive mind.

In summarizing the literature review, it has been discovered that much research has been undertaken in the area of the library instruction programme has been found on students' perception of a library orientation programme specifically in Benue State University Makurdi. This creates a gap in the literature that this study is designed to fill. It is hoped that the findings of this study will fill the gap which has been created as a result of this absence.

3. Methodology

This study employed a case study research design. The population of the study consists of all the first year students of the university. The proportionate random sampling technique was used to select 100 students representing 10% of the overall population of students for the study. Questionnaire was used for data collection. Data was analyzed using frequencies and mean. Any mean of 2.5 and above was regarded as accepted and used while any mean below 2.5 was regarded as rejected and not used or the study.

3.1. Findings

3.1.1. Extent to Which Student Benefit from the Library Orientation Programme
This research question sought to collect data on the extent to which students of the university benefit from the programme. Data collected are tabulated and analyzed as follow

S/N	Items	VHE	HE	LE	NE	$\bar{X}$	Remark
1	Rules and regulations guiding the library and it facilities	67	25	6	2	3.57	VHE
2	Introduction of students to the library available information resources	60	25	11	4	3.41	VHE
3	Introduction of the university librarian	58	13	14	9	3.22	HE
4	Presentation of the library's layout to students	21	70	5	4	3.08	HE
5	Students guided tours/excursion	44	30	18	8	3.10	HE
6	Students exposure to library catalogue, access tools	8	70	12	7	2.81	LE
7	Library's opening and closing hours	41	16	22	20	2.78	LE

Table 1: Mean response on the Extent to which student benefit from the library orientation programme
Key: VHE= Very High Extent, HE=High Extent, LE=Low Extent, NE=No Extent

Table 1 above indicated the extent to which students benefit from the activities of the orientation programme. Data presented in the table shows that students of the Benue State University, Makurdi benefited from a library orientation programme to a very high extent as all the items presented are rated above the average mean scale of 2.5.

3.1.2. Student's Perception of Library Orientation Programme
This research question solicits information on student's perceptions of library orientation programme in Benue State University Makurdi. Data collected from respondents are presented and analyzed below

S/N	Items	VMR	MR	LR	NR	$\bar{X}$	Remark
8	A means of transmiting knowledge , skills necessary for utilizing library resources	66	23	9	0	3.58	Accepted
9	A useful device for improving the attitudes of students towards the librarian and library services	66	23	7	4	3.51	Accepted
10	An attempt to formalized users with every aspect of the library	70	12	7	8	3.48	Accepted
11	A means of wasting students precious time	39	46	7	7	3.18	Accepted
12	A means of developing social and academic talent as well as capacities of students	47	27	15	11	3.17	Accepted
13	A means of introducing fresh students into the library system	46	39	3	12	3.15	Accepted
14	A means of extorting money from the students	5	2	23	70	1.42	Rejected

Table 2: Mean response on Student's perception of library orientation programme
Key: VHE= Very Much Relevant, MR= Much Relevant, LE=Less Relevant, NE=Not Relevant

Table 2 above shows mean responses on students' perception of library orientation programme in Benue State University Makurdi. The table revealed mean responses of 3.58, 3.51, 3.48, 3.18, 3.17, and 3.15representing means of transmitting knowledge , useful device for improving the attitudes of students towards the librarian and library services, skills necessary for utilizing library resources, attempt to formalized users with every aspect of the library, a means of wasting students precious time, means of developing social and academic talent as well as capacities of students as well as means of introducing fresh students into the library system.

3.1.3. How the Library Can Change Students' Negative Perception of Library Orientation Programme
In a bid to changing students negative perception of library orientation programme in Benue State University Makurdi, respondents views were collected and analyzed in the table below

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	$\overline{X}$	Remark
15	Adequate time be given to library Orientation programme	77	13	4	6	3.61	Accepted
16	More awareness should be created by the library when the programme is organized	39	23	31	5	2.97	Accepted
17	The programme should be carried out in phases to avoid clash programme	33	39	13	15	2.90	Accepted
18	The programme should be carried out at least twice a year	12	70	7	11	2.86	Accepted
19	The programme should not be restricted to only first year students	13	57	27	2	2.81	Accepted
20	Provision for students refreshment should be made right from the planning stage of the programme	20	21	46	13	2.48	Rejected

Table 3: Ways Libraries can change students' negative perception of library orientation programme
KEY: SA=Strongly Agree, A= Agree, D= Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree

Table 3 revealed mean responses of students on how to change students' negative perception of library orientation programme in the university. Data presented in the table shows that majority of the respondents representing 3.61 agree that adequate time be given to library orientation programme. This is followed by creation of more awareness by the library when the programmeis organized with 2.97, the programme should be carried out in phases to avoid clash programme with 2.90, the programme should be carried out at least twice a year with 2.86 and the programme should not be restricted to only first year students with 2.81.

3.1.4. Discussion of Major Findings
Findings of the study revealed that students of the university benefited from the activities of the programme such as rules and regulations guiding the library and it facilities and introduction of students to the library available information resources to a very high extent, introduction of the university librarian, presentation of the library's layout to students to a high extent, and students guided tours/excursion and Library's opening as well as closing hours to a very high extent to a less extent. This agreed with Ilo and Idiegbeyan-Ose (2011) who remarks that it enables them to develop skills for effective utilization of library resources. Therefore, students benefited from the activities of library orientation programme in the university such as rules and regulations guiding the library and it facilities and introduction of students to the library available information resources to a very high extent.

It not an overstatement to say that library orientation programme is a powerful tool of imparting search skills required for students to utilize library resources and services in order to boost their academic output. It is in view of this importance that findings of the study revealed that students of the Benue State University Makurdi saw library orientation programme as a programme that transmit knowledge and information search skills, device for improving the attitudes of students towards the librarian and library services, attempt to formalized users with every aspect of the library, a time wasting programme, a means of developing social and academic talent as well as capacities of students and a means of introducing fresh students into the library system. This finding is in line with Ashaver (2011) who saw library orientation programme as a form of personal greetings to fresher by the librarian and an attempt by the librarian to formalize users with every aspect of the library. Thus, majority of the students of the Benue State University perceived library orientation programme as a way of improving the attitudes of students for information search while some saw it as a means of wasting their precious time.

In view of changing the negative perception of students on the programme, the study revealed that the best ways of doing this is by giving adequate time to library orientation programme, creation of more awareness by the library when the programme is organized, the programme should be carried out in phases to avoid clash programme, the programme should be carried out at least twice a year and the programme should not be restricted to only first year students. This will to a great extent prevent fire-on- the mountain approach usually employed by librarians in giving library orientations to fresh students of the university thereby making the programme difficult, boring and stressful to students of the university.

3.2. Summary and Conclusion
Results of the study shows that considering the immense benefits of the orientation programme, the university library and library users (students) cannot afford to ignore the importance of carrying out the programme as the study believed that students benefited from the programme to a very high extent.The study also shows that students' of the Benue State University Makurdi have both positive perception of the orientation programme. However, some students saw the programme as a time wasting which is an aspect of negativity. Based on this negative perception of students, the study suggested that time is very a crucial tool to consider in every we do therefore more time be given to library orientation programme so that more awareness will be created by the library when the programme is organized, group in different phases etc.

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