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Keywords: *libraries, library resources, library utilization.*

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Utilization of Library Resources by Veterinary Medicine Students in Two Federal Universities in South-East Zone of Nigeria

Nnamdi Emmanuel Onyekweodiri [α] & Amaoge Dorathy Agbo [σ]

Abstract- This study investigated the extent of library utilization by students of veterinary medicine in two federal universities in south-east zone of Nigeria. It sought to find out the library resources required by veterinary medicine students, the library services available for veterinary medicine students and extent of library resource utilization by the veterinary medicine students. A descriptive survey design was used for the study with a population of 1250 undergraduate students of veterinary medicine. Sample size of 250 (20%) of the population was used for the study. The instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire and observation checklist. Percentages, mean scores and frequency tables were used in analyzing the data. The result obtained from the findings revealed that library resources required by the students ranges from newspapers, magazines, current awareness services, journals, online resources related to veterinary medicine to many more. The result also revealed that Library services in both institutions under study are inadequate resulting in student's apathy to the library. The study also shows inadequate utilization of library by students of veterinary medicine as a result of some certain factors which include but not limited to obsolesce of information materials, lack of current awareness services such that students find it difficult to know when new materials are acquired in the library, inadequate staff to attend to users. Conclusion and recommendations were made on way forward.

Keyword: libraries, library resources, library utilization.

I. Introduction

The concept of utilization is not new. The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2007) defines utilization as –the use of something for a particular purpose. However, Prout, (2009) sees concept of utilization of all resources as unique. The concept of library utilization however refers to the extent of usage of libraries by students. The library is not just a reservoir of knowledge, information and human experiences but it also creates an avenue for accessing this treasure. In view of this, students in tertiary institutions especially veterinary medicine make use of the library for academic materials, equipment, assistance and guidance.

Many academic libraries are currently caught between pressures of increasing library usage and reduced budget. This is as a result of the ever increasing number of student enrollment in tertiary institutions which invariably increase the client group of academic libraries. It provides both access to information and the information itself. In an academic environment, especially in institutions of higher learning, the library helps the institution to achieve its objective of producing users that are information literate. Wale (2000), asserts that libraries should provide access to information resources; expert professional support to facilitate thorough and accurate utilization of all library resources, access to library materials and services to the community. The function of the library is to implement, to enrich, to vitalize and humanize the educational programmes, as it strives to attain excellence in content, process and product (Maliki and Uche, 2007).

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II. Objective of the Study

The broad aim of the study is to examine the extent of utilization of library resources by the students of veterinary medicine. The specific objectives are to:

i. Determine the library resources required by veterinary medicine students from the university libraries.
ii. Determine the library services that are available for veterinary medicine students in the libraries.
iii. Ascertain the extent of library resource utilization by the veterinary medicine students.
iv. Find out the problems affecting the utilization of the libraries by the students.

III. Scope and Limitations

The scope of the study encompasses the utilization of library resources by student in faculty of veterinary medicine in university of Nigeria Nsukka and Michael Okpara university of Agriculture, Umudike. However the study has the following limitations:

(a) The study is limited to university of Nigeria Nsukka and Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike.
(b) The study includes only the students of veterinary medicine.
(c) The study is limited to Library Utilization.

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IV. Literature Review

A library that is not being utilized is as good as dead as it cannot justify its existence. It is therefore the use to which the library is put that infuses life into its resources and services. Some factors determine utilization as asserted by Ugwuanyi (1998), citing Ford (1985), he identified two principal factors that determine the use of particular resources. These are: accessibility and quality. The perceived cost of using an information resource relies heavily on the user. The work of Ugwuanyi (1998) citing Allen (1981) clearly demonstrates this to be the strongest single indicator of use. Omehia and Ok on (2008) looked at distance as a measure of accessibility and found out that the probability of interpersonal communication decreased as the square of the distance between the person's normal place of work increased. At a lower level however, where the library is treated as a single channel, Norman (1989) found that the distance measure was applicable to library use. Harris (1986) found evidence to reinforce the hypothesis that improved exposure leads to increased use of resources and services. Although the library community advocates unrestricted access to resources for all, Maizell (1980) found that professional practices restrict access for some groups of people. Hayes (1981) analyzed data from the University of Pittsburgh concerning circulation and in-house use of collection at the Hillman library. The results of the analysis suggest that circulation alone is not an adequate index of all use. The implications of the research result are shown as they apply to the issue of allocation of materials to remote storage. They show that while there is likely to be only a minor effect upon circulation, there would be a dramatic effect upon the in-house usage of the collection with as much as 25% of that usage being adversely affected.

To this end Ford (1985) observes that it is difficult to trace useful findings on the utilization of information that is what he referred to as "the what-where-when-how- and why of the book use". It is rather easier to discover how many books a user borrows, but the amount of use made of the books is largely unknown. Earlier studies have shown that the use of library resources is widely used in the natural and applied sciences. Convi (1999); Ehikhamenor (1993); Kling & Mckim (1999), Tenopir (2003) buttressed this fact and submitted that users' discipline and institutional context strongly affect the use of library resources. In a related study conducted by Abel et al, (1996); they explored factors that affect the adoption and use of electronic networks by engineering faculties in small universities and colleges. They discovered that the perceived utility of the network services correlated significantly with intensity of use and number of services used. They further averred that perception of utility was influenced by factors such as academic discipline and task. Contrary to this opinion, Ehikhamenor, (1993) found out that there is indirect evidence that both scholars' discipline and the availability of relevant materials interact in the use of library resources. Torma & Vakkiri, (2004) viewed the issue differently, and submitted that; although there are studies that both user's discipline and the availability of resources correlate with the use of library resources, there is only scattered empirical evidence based on case studies of how these two factors are related to use. As a result, Olanlokun (2005) affirmed that academic libraries have to build strong collection of information resources in physical and digital format to cater for knowledge requirements of their users. It is therefore necessary to take the needs of the veterinary medicine students into consideration in any university library. This study therefore aims to provide an insight in this area.

V. Methodology

A descriptive survey design was used for the study with a population of 1250 of undergraduate students. Sample size of 250 (20%) of the population was used for the study. The instrument for data collection was structured questionnaires and observation checklist. Percentages, mean scores and frequency tables were used in analyzing the data.

VI. Analysis of Data

Tables 1 : Distribution and return rate of Questionnaire

S/N	University	Number of questionnaires distributed	Number Returned	Percentage of distribution %
1	University of Nigeria, Nsukka	192	190	99
2	Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike	58	56	96.6
	Total	250	246	98.4

From the table 1above, a total number of two hundred and fifty (250) questionnaires were distributed to the respondents but only Two hundred and forty-six (246) were returned and correctly filled. This indicates a percentage of 98.4 which the researcher considers appropriate for use. Percentage score of 50% was used as a bench mark.

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Table 2 : Distribution of students according to Year of study

S/N	Year of Study	Number of students	Percentage %
1	One	64	26
2	Two	64	26
3	Three	24	9.8
4	Four	27	11
5	Five	30	12.2
6	Six	37	15
	Total	246	100

The data analyzed in Table 2 shows that the distribution of questionnaire to students per year of study in number and percentage in both Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Umudike and University of Nigeria, Nsukka are as follows: year one 64(26%), year two 64(26%), year three 24(9.8%), year four 27(11%), year five 30(12.2%) and year six 37(15%) respectively.

Table 3 : Mean Responses on Required Information Resources by Veterinary Medicines Students

	Information Resources	VLE	LE	F	LIE	Mean	Decision
1	Newspapers	27	71	59	88	2.14	R
2	Magazines	23	58	95	65	2.14	R
3	Journals	85	67	59	32	2.82	A
4	Current Awareness Services of the Library	91	54	53	40	2.82	A
5	Online Resources related to Veterinary Medicine	160	53	17	15	3.45	A
6	Database Materials Related to Veterinary Medicine	125	65	32	18	3.21	A
7	Newsletters related to Veterinary Medicine	104	73	41	25	3.03	A
8	Thesis, projects, technical report and Dissertations	92	76	60	17	2.98	A
9	Reference resources	86	76	59	23	2.91	A
10	Books	159	57	26	4	3.51	A
11	Conferences / Seminar Papers	86	77	58	23	2.90	A

Key: A= Accepted, R: Rejected

From Table 3 above, the shows the extent to which veterinary medicine students require information resources, in a descending order of their mean score range from books related to veterinary medicine (3.51), getting information online related to veterinary medicine (3.45), data base materials related to veterinary medicine (3.21), Newsletters related to veterinary medicine (3.03), thesis, projects, technical report and dissertations (2.98), Reference Sources (2.91), conference/ seminars papers (2.90), Journals (2.82),Current Awareness Services of the library (2.82).

From the table it was discovered that veterinary medicine students require online resources related to veterinary medicine more than other sources of information resources. The table also shows that Newspapers and Magazines are the least information resources required by veterinary medicine students.

Table 4 : Services Rendered by the Academic Libraries to Veterinary Medicine Students

	Library services rendered in the universities under Study.	University of Nigeria Nsukka	Michael Okpara University of Agric. Umudike
1	Current Awareness Services (CAS)	√	√
2	Online Services	√	
3	Reprographic services	√	√
4	Reference Services	√	√
5	Inter library loan	√	√
6	Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)	√	√
7	Document delivery	√	

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Table 4 shows the number of library services being rendered by University of Nigeria, Nsukka and Umudike respectively. The researcher had to use an observation checklist which he personally collected from each of the university libraries under study. There was no frequency because the checklist was one. Out of the seven (7) items listed University of Nigeria, Nsukka renders all the services namely: Current Awareness Services, online services, reprographic services, Inter library loan, reference services and Selective Dissemination of Information, while Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike has five (5) of the library service namely: Current Awareness Services, Reprographic Services, Reference Services, Inter Library Loan and Selective Dissemination of Information. This shows that to some extent, library services are available in the two institutions. It also answers research question two.

Table 5 : Extent of library utilization by veterinary medicine students

	Item statement	VLE	LE	F	LIE	Mean	Decision
1	Thesis, projects, technical reports and dissertations	92	79	53	16	2.97	A
2	Newsletters, Magazines, and Journals related to Veterinary Medicine	98	77	54	15	3.06	A
3	Books and Monographs	101	63	65	14	3.03	A
4	Online Resources related to Veterinary Medicine(Medline, CAB, Agricola, etc)	137	53	35	18	3.24	A
5	Database Materials Related to Veterinary Medicine	107	75	48	14	3.11	A
6	Reference resources	82	73	66	22	2.87	A
7	Conferences / Seminars Papers	80	68	60	35	2.78	A
8	Extent of library utilization	31	47	30	122	1.83	R

Key: A= Accepted, R: Rejected

To ascertain the utilization of library by veterinary medicine students, table 3 above shows that veterinary medicine students, searching for online resources related to veterinary medicine (3.24), database materials related to veterinary medicine (3.11), newsletters, magazines and journals related to veterinary medicine (3.06), books and monographs (3.03), thesis, projects, technical reports and dissertations (2.97), reference resources (2.87), conference/seminar papers (2.78). Whereas veterinary medicine students often use the library for studies (1.83) is least of the options and was rejected.

Also the grand mean of items on research question 3: library utilization was determined. The grand mean for this study is 3.0. Grand mean of all the items under research question 3 divided by the total number of items of this section. The grand mean when determined will determine whether students of veterinary medicine have a very large, large, fair or little extent using the 4 point scale. Total of the entire mean= 22.89 divided by number of items ie. Eight (8) items would be 2.86. This shows that to a large extent the students of veterinary medicine do not use the library.

VII. Findings

From the result of research it was evidenced that veterinary medicine students really need journals, newsletters, thesis, projects, reference resources, online data base related to veterinary medicine. This is admitted because all the libraries under study agreed that they need these resources. The findings were also put to test by summing the means scores to get the Grand mean of all the items, this showed that to a very large extent veterinary medicine students do rarely use the library. It is therefore not surprising to note that most of the veterinary medicine students rarely use the library they depend mostly on the internet for their studies. It is clear from this finding that any academic library should have more resources online for student's utilization.

Findings also revealed that in all the universities studied, they do not offer the entire library services. Out of the seven (7) items on library services, University of Nigeria, Nsukka rendered all while five (5) of the services are being rendered in Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike. This to a very large extent shows how weak and discouraging this may be to the students. It was also discovered that newsletter, magazines and journals, books and monographs, online resources related to veterinary medicine are utilized to a very large extent by veterinary medicine students. The study also found that difficulty to know when materials are acquired, out dated information materials, lack of library instruction or guide constitute the major problems of utilization of library by veterinary medicine students.

VIII. Conclusion/Recommendations

Libraries play central role in the academic work of students. College and university libraries are often

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considered the most important centre of information in an institution of higher learning. Library services and facilities can be used among parameters for measuring capacities and sophistication of research in any tertiary institution. Issue affecting the effective library utilization should be tackled or reduced to the barest minimum to enable the student have maximum access to the avalanche information in the library satisfy their information needs. The following recommendations have been made in the light of the findings and the discussions that followed:

- Lecturers should give students more assignment that will take them to the library and refer them to books which they use for their study.
- There is need to educate veterinary science students on proper use of the library.
- More qualified staff is also needed in the library to meet with the growing needs of the clients.
- Information resources in the library should organize to enable access with ease.
- Effort should be made to update the resources as when due or keep up with trend in their field.

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