

Determining The Information Needs And Resources Provision For Students of Schools of Nursing In North Central States of Nigeria

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Abstract

This study aimed at determining the information needs and resources provision for students of Schools of Nursing in North Central States of Nigeria. A descriptive survey research design was employed and all students within the six schools of nursing in the North Central States of Nigeria alongside with the head of libraries in each of the schools, were used as the population of the study. Hence, a total of one thousand, three hundred and six (1,306) students formed the sample size. Questionnaire was the instrument used for collecting data from the two respondent groups in the six sampled schools of nursing libraries while data collected from both interview guide and questionnaire were descriptively analyzed and the findings presented in tabular forms and expressed in frequencies and percentages where necessary. It was found that the respondents major information needs has to do with information for formal course of study and practices, information for patient care, and information for research purposes. It was also found that the respondents appreciate the use and relevance of internet, textbooks/monographs and learned journals even though they are in short supply. The main problems that however militate against information needs of students of nursing were the inadequate information resources. It was therefore recommended that the management of the schools of nursing should provide adequate information resources, efficient internet facilities as well as effective user education, so that students of nursing can have more access to various electronic resources that can aid their study and improved knowledge towards adequately serving their communities after graduation.

Introduction

Information is regarded as resources for use and therefore its generation and use for efficiency and effectiveness is a very demanding and stressful task, as thus, as society progresses and becomes more complex, information need and information searching behavior becomes diverse, complex and sophisticated. So, the greatest resources for development are the human resources; hence no nation can develop in isolation of human resources. In the present modern period, progress and development of any society is determined by the number of its inhabitants that are properly and functionally informed as information plays an important role in the human endeavours. To be informed means not only timely access to relevant and properly documented information but also exact interpretation and provision where the need arise.

As observed by Aguolu (1984), adequate information can increase our awareness, and our reasoning. It can also help to educate our people, accelerate progress and provide the source of data required for the solution of our increasing complex, economic, scientific and social problems. Information needs of our various societies differ in terms of contents and sophistication. Again, it also varies among individuals in the society. The information needs of students of nursing vary from those of engineers or lawyers. The quality and quantity of services produced by each of the above professionals depends largely on the types, currency, relevance and level of information provided to them. What is therefore important is the time the information is provided.

The detailed history of profession that combines scientific principles, technical skills and personal comparison cannot be precisely relayed but records hold that the nursing profession came to limelight in 1854 when the mother of professional nursing, Florence Nightingale started the battle field with other 38 nurses and cared for the sick and injured men during the Crimean War in England. Her persistence, dedicated services, day and night, experiences paid off by making her famous and recognized by the lady with the lamp. Her metric service resulted in complete change in nursing profession and led to the beginning of professional nursing in the world at large. Nursing profession as an integral part of out health care delivery systems, has a vital role to play in meeting the health needs of our people. As such, conscious efforts need to be made for them to have access to necessary facilities and get them equip towards handling patients that they are trained to take care as such. Medical libraries worldwide are seen as an integral part of health care delivery systems, because of the crucial role they play in meeting the information needs of student's nurses, doctors, dentist, laboratory technicians, pharmacists and other related professionals. Information, as it were, is the basis of knowledge. Essentially, a librarian's job in the main is to guide readers on how and where to find information, and to acquaint them with the characteristics of most information sources. This is because librarians hold the key as facilitators, organizers, procurers, custodians and disseminators of information.

Human beings are by nature inquisitive beings that always desire to know. Their desire to know is therefore, not limited to any particular person or

group of persons, age, status, sex, nature, or those who know a little. There is tremendously more to know, even by those who either, by self-evaluation or by evaluation of others believed that they have known much (Bello, 2006). The philosophy of school of nursing in the North Central States is based on respect for the dignity and worth of individuals because it is strongly believed that the patient has the basic right to receive effective nursing care. As many schools of nursing were established in North Central States of Nigeria, respective States Government tried as much as possible to provide necessary infrastructures geared towards maintaining well qualified nurses in order to complement their health care delivery systems.

The North Central states of Nigeria comprise Benue, Nassarawa, Kogi, Kwara, Plateau and Niger States. The states are naturally blessed with mineral resources like coal, iron ore, gold deposit, iron and steel and the inhabitants are farmers who engage in monotonic farming in order to satisfy their need for living. The health sectors of these states are not left of the scene. As a result of the increasing population in the states, a lot of hospitals and health care delivery centre have been established to cater for the health needs of these states. To meet the high demand for services, the hospitals are blessed with a crop of seasoned consultants' medical officers, nurses, attendants, pharmacists, laboratory scientists, radiographers and physiotherapists to cater for all the people of these states. In view on the important role played by the school of Nursing in the North Central States of Nigeria, it became imperative for libraries attached to such schools of nursing in the North Central States of Nigeria to ensure that nursing students are provided with necessary required facilities to enhance their studies.

Statement of the Problem

The principal objective of any library is to provide information resources that are not only relevant to the needs of the library users, but also which are made available to them at the right time and perhaps, under a conducive atmosphere. Schools of Nursing libraries are expected to provide adequate and relevant information resources to meet information needs of their users. In spite of the ever growing realization of the need for information by diverse human societies, some information demands of certain groups still suffer neglect. The need for information by any given group of people has to be generally affected by a number of factors such as the range of information resources available, the social, political and economic systems surrounding the users and the consequences of information use. There is need for Schools of Nursing libraries to keep abreast of latest developments in their fields of interest or as way of widening one's general knowledge. Thus, provision of information is

important but accessibility to relevant information seems to be important because accessibility and relevance are significant to the satisfaction of information needs of the students. Therefore, there is the need to probe into the library resources of school of nursing to establish whether or nor their information resources actually and realistically meet the information needs of the students of nursing.

Research Objectives

The study was conceived to fulfill the following objectives

1. To identify the information needs of students of schools of Nursing in North Central States of Nigeria.
2. To find out the types of information resources that are provided to meet the information needs of the students.
3. To identify the relevance of information resources in meeting their information needs
4. To finds out the problems militating against efficient provisions of library and information services to the students.
5. To identify the strategies adopted to overcome the problem.

Review of Related Literature

The Concept and Importance of Information

Information as a resource connotes different things to different people, depending on the context within which it is used. Many scholars have defined information differently to suit different situation at a particular time. Anderson (1991) defines information as facts providing knowledge relating to specific event or situation which may be used as a basis for making or modifying a course of action that will otherwise have not been implemented. To Womboh and David (2002) information is a term that is difficult to define because it has several dimensions. Information means many things to different people. It has contributed a lot in human knowledge and has always been the basis of human existence.

The important of information cannot be overstressed, Nzota (1991) for instance, wrote that information is a pre-requisite for sound decision-making at all levels. Information according to him is a resource just as energy is vital to the well being of individuals and organizations. Those who take decisions that affect humanities have responsibility to seek and obtain enough and right information to enable them take good decision.

Information Needs and Information Seeking Behavior of Students of Nursing

Dee and Stanley (2005) asserted that nursing students most likely rely on colleagues and books for medical information. Other resources they frequently cited included personal digital assistance,

electronic journals and books and drug representative. Significantly, more nursing students locate health information, and nursing students were more likely than clinical nurses to report performing a databases search at least one to five times a week. According to American Library Association (ALA 1980), special librarians, of which medical librarians are a part, often develop close working partnership with their users, and are able, to identify, not only on an organizational base, but also on an individual basis, the type of information needed and should be delivered urgently. This is because the collections are meant to support information services delivery with more emphasis on current information.

Mabawonku (2004) opined that information is an essential resource for an individual's growth and survival. Thus, there is often need for individual to obtain timely and relevant information. Devadason and Lingam (1996) explained that information needs arises when people realize that there are gaps that hinder their progress and induce uncertainty. To bridge these, they must seek relevant and accessible information sources. Yousefi and Yousefi (2007) defined information seeking as a basic activity in which all people irrespective of gender participate and manifest through particular behavior. A need is an inner motivational state that brings about thought and action. Need is always instrumented in seeking and it involves reaching a desired goal. Need is a desire to accomplish something such as to answer a test question, to write a class assignment, to satisfy curiosity or it may be the need to pass an examination, to get a degree or to be a knowledgeable person (Case, 2002). To Marchionin (1995), information seeking behavior means the style of searching for information in any field of human endeavour and it is viewed in such generic term which encompasses information demands, requirement and desire. Information seeking behaviour arises as a consequence of a need perceived by the information user, who, in order to satisfy it, makes demand upon formal and informal information sources or services resulting in either success or failure.

Information Resources Provision For Students of Nursing

Nursing students by nature have unique ways of using information provided to them in order to acquire knowledge. There are vast ranges of resources that can be used by nursing students from journals articles to government reports and original researches. Effective dissemination of information is very important for the survival and growth of a nation values, motivation and voluntary behavior of many people. No method of dissemination information to students of nursing that is most appropriate, rather, this varies considerably with the goals of the information source and the message content as it affects a given set of receivers. Lawal

(2007) citing Aiyepoku (2009) sees information as that which reduces the user's level of uncertainty in a particular decision situation. In his concluding remarks, he suggests the use of micro computers due to their advantages like accuracy, speed, convenience, and availability. They are more efficient means of accessing and using the valuable data and information contained in state medical records' he asserts.

Relevance of Information Resources Provided To Meet the Information Needs of the Students of Nursing

Lucas (1982) sees relevant information as an entity that serves to reduce uncertainty about some state or event. Information is not just raw data, rather data that are processed in some way, for example collected and summarized to produce output that is interpreted as information by the users. Information is also needed because of its indispensable requirement for acquisition of knowledge in all ramification of human endeavor. Opeke (2004) submitted that information has received a widespread acceptance as the essential feature of production, consumption and exchange in this modern era. The world has entered an era where the source of wealth and power is increasingly from information and human mental creativity as compared to physical resources. Through the above arguments, one will understand that no nation can truly achieve greatness unless the majority of her citizens are well informed.

Factors Affecting Information Needs and Library Resources Provision For Students of Nursing

Seriki (1983) in his work has identified most of the problems hindering meaningful library cooperation among Nigerian medical libraries. These were said to include the short history of the Nigerian medical Libraries and hence their small collections, lack of sufficient funding, equipment for photocopy services, high cost of postage and insufficient postal and communication systems. Again, it is further stated that the complete absence of a union list of all medical library holding is another factor that militates against adequate library services for the medical profession. Obaka (1985) traced the existence of Medical Library and Information Centers and tagged them as growing out of "after thought necessity". This derivative nature of their establishment led to their being accorded very low status. He has examined extensively the challenges facing medical librarianship most especially in Nigeria, in a paper that gives a historical review of the development of medical education, research and services in Nigeria, he showed that while the growth of medical activities in the country has been phenomenal, the medical libraries and information services which form a nerve centre of national

medical education, research and services, have not received the needed deserved attention.

Adimorah (1993) has further found that Libraries and Information Centers could not meet the needs of scientist and researchers for reasons that include being inadequately stocked and staffed. These are attributed to non-availability of current journals in their respective fields of study, lack of data bases, good information retrieval systems; inter loan facilities, inadequate and current information sources on Nigeria and poor orientation of Library and Information Centre staff to responsive reference services.

Methodology

A descriptive survey research was adopted for the study and this was based on Cohen and Manion (2000) submission that data collected from such survey enable comparison to be made overtime or between groups. Questionnaire bearing both a closed and open ended questions was used to gathered data from the respondents that were grouped into two, namely: Head of Library working in the six (6) school of Nursing under study as well as students of the concerned schools. The schools and their students population are:

School of Nursing Markurdi, Benue State -	161
School of Nursing Lafia Nassarawa State-	264
School of Nursing Obangende , Kogi State-	204
School of Nursing Ilorin , Kwara State-	133
School of Nursing Jos, Plateau State-	128
School of Nursing Bida, Niger State-	416

The students population in the affected school of Nursing as shown above is 1,306 with head of libraries in each of the six schools. In all, 1,312 questionnaire were administered on the respondents with 993 representing (76%) adequately filled and returned.

From table 1 it can be seen that six (6) copies of questionnaire were distributed to the six Librarians headings the six (6) Schools of Nursing in North Central States of Nigeria and all the copies were returned and found useful. The table also shows that out of the total of one thousand, three hundred and six (1,306) copies of questionnaire administered to the students of the six (6) schools involved in the study, nine hundred and ninety three (993) copies (representing 76% were returned and found usable. The encouraging response rate obtained in this study was due to the physical involvement of the researcher in the administration of the research instrument and the cooperation received from the respondents. Therefore, the analysis is based on the six (6) copies and nine hundred and ninety three (993) copies of the questionnaire returned by the Librarians as well as the students respectively.

Information Needs of Students of Nursing

Nursing professionals need a wide range of information resources to meet their clinical and educational needs. In this regard, only students were asked to provide answer to research question on information needs and their responses were presented in the table 2.

Table 2 shows that four hundred and one (40.3%) of respondents indicated that lifelong learning is evidence to support practice as their information need while information for patient care was indicated by two hundred and seventy eight (27.9%) of the respondents.

The response also reveals that consulting information for the purpose of research was indicated by one hundred and seventy three (17.4%) of the respondents while the means to satisfy curiosity, personal and inclination was indicated by one hundred and forty one (14%) of the respondents. This implies that there was no adequate publicity on the side of the management on the importance of Library to their students. The table above shows clearly that they usually use their libraries for information on lifelong learning instead of laying emphasis on information on patient care which primarily should be their focus after graduating from schools. As a member of the health team, students should be equipped to carry out their functions effectively to meet world ever changing field of medicine. The six school of nursing in the North Central States Nigeria should not just provide library resources but also endeavor to make students aware of what is available in their libraries so that they can explore.

It is clear from table 3 that the head of Libraries of the six schools of Nursing were asked the types of information resources they provide to their students and their responses indicated that they provided different types of information resources like text books/monographs, learned journals, newsletters and bulleting, C.D ROM/Databases, internet and video films for their students to enhance their creativity, cultural and educational purposes.

Table 1: Response Rate of Librarians and Students

S/N	Institutions	Librarians	Students		
			No of Questionnaire Administered	No of Questionnaire Returned	Percentage (%)
1	School of Nursing Markudi	1	161	121	75%
2	School of Nursing Lafia	1	264	164	62%
3	School of Nursing Obangede	1	204	189	92.6%
4	School of Nursing Ilorin	1	133	91	68.4%
5	School Of Nursing Jos	1	128	128	100%
6	School of Nursing Bida	1	416	300	72%
	Total	6	1306	993	76%

Table 2: Information Needs of Students of Nursing

Variables	School of Nursing Markurdi		School of Nursing Lafia		School of Nursing Obangede		School of Nursing Ilorin		School of Nursing Jos		School of Nursing Bida		Total
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	
Information for lifelong learning	62	51%	63	38.4%	67	35.4%	41	45%	39	30.4%	129	43%	401 (40.3%)
Research purpose	18	15%	28	17%	38	20%	23	25.2%	16	12.5%	50	16.6%	173 (17.4%)
For patient care	30	25%	35	21.3%	44	23.2%	17	18.6%	61	47.6%	91	30.3%	278 (27.9%)
To satisfy curiosity, personal interest and inclination	11	9%	38	23%	40	21%	10	10.9%	12	9.3%	30	10%	141 (14%)
Total	121	100	164	100	189	100	91	100	128	100	300	100	993 (100%)

Table 3: Types of Information Resources Provided

Information Resource	Librarians					
	SON Makurdi	SON Lafia	SON Obangede	SON Ilorin	SON Jos	SON Bida
Textbooks and monographs	√	√	√	√	√	√
Learned journals	√	√	√	√	√	√
Newsletter and bulletins	√	√	√	√	√	√
CD-ROM And Databases	√	√	√	√	√	√
Internet	√	√	√	√	√	√
Video films	√	√	√	√	√	√

Key:
√ Available

Table 4: Relevance of Information Resources Provided

Institutions	Resources																	
	Textbooks/ Monograph			Leaned Journals			Newsletters and Bulletins			CD-ROM and Databases			Internet			Video Films		
	VR	R	NR	VR	R	NR	VR	R	NR	VR	R	NR	VR	R	NR	VR	R	NR
SON Markurdi	98	21	2	60	36	23	58	42	21	90	21	10	101	18	2	50	63	8
SON Lafia	126	36	2	105	36	23	131	27	6	87	49	28	155	7	2	50	-	8
SON Obangede	121	67	1	70	80	39	111	45	33	118	47	24	158	31	-	-	61	-
SON Ilorin	52	38	1	60	25	6	43	37	11	34	31	26	55	34	2	68	17	60
SON Jos	97	26	5	45	77	6	99	23	6	87	33	18	110	11	7	10	36	64
SON Bida	240	59	1	203	84	13	100	113	87	124	112	64	223	75	2	74	13	18
Total	734	247	12	543	338	110	542	287	164	540	293	170	802	176	15	314	190	158
	73.9%	24.8%	1.2%	54.6%	34%	11%	54.5%	28.9%	16.5%	54.3%	29.5%	17%	80.7%	17.7%	1.5%	31.6%	19%	15.9%

Key:
VR: Very Relevant
R: Relevant
NR: Not Relevant

Table 5: Problems Militating Against the Provision of Information Resources

Institution	Librarians	Problems				
		Unconducive library environment	Shortage of fund from parent organization	Poor cataloguing system	Inadequate user education program	Inadequate ICT facilities
SON Markurdi	1	√	√	√	√	√
SON, Lafia	1	√	√	X	X	√
SON, Obangede	1	√	√	√	√	√
SON, Ilorin	1	√	√	√	√	√
SON, Jos	1	√	√	√	X	√
SON Bida	1	√	√	X	√	√
Total	6	6	6	4	4	6

Key:

√: Applicable

X: Not Applicable

Table 6: Strategies to overcome the Problems

Institutions	Librarians	Strategies				
		Conducive library environment	Provision of sufficient funding	Efficient and easy catalogue system	Adequate user education program	Provision of ICT facilities
SON Markurdi	1	√	√	√	√	√
SON, Lafia	1	√	√	X	X	√
SON, Obangede	1	√	√	√	√	√
SON, Ilorin	1	√	√	√	√	√
SON, Jos	1	√	√	√	X	√
SON Bida	1	√	√	X	√	√
Total	6	6	6	4	4	6

Key:

√: Applicable

X: Not Applicable

From table 4, it shows that internet was indicated as very relevant by eight hundred and two (80.7%) of the respondents and seven hundred and thirty four (73.9%) of the respondents indicated very relevant against utilizing textbooks and monograph. This could be based on the fact that textbooks and monographs are the foundation of any library's collections. The internet facilities have created easy access for the students to the electronic resources of the library beyond the library building. It was followed by learned journals which was indicated very relevant by five hundred and forty three (54.6%) of the respondents. The responses also revealed that five hundred and forty two (45.5%) of the respondents indicated newsletters and bulletins as very relevant and CD-ROM and Databases as information resources was indicated very relevant by five hundred and forty (54.3%) of the respondents. The utilization of video films was the least among those pointed out to be very relevant by three hundred and fourteen (31.6%) of the respondents. This implies that students of schools of nursing should be adequately equipped with all relevant information resources in order to prepare them for the ever challenging world of medicine. It can be deduced from the responses above that majority of the respondents indicated that internet provision is very important to their learning and future professional development.

Problems Militating Against the Provision of Information Resources

The six librarians of Schools of Nursing were asked the challenges associated with the provision of information resources and their responses' were presented in table 5. Table 5 shows that the overwhelming of the respondents indicated that un-conducive library environment are the problems they encounter when utilizing resources to meet their information needs. This was followed next by shortage of funds as the six schools of nursing libraries revealed that libraries are being under funded by their parent organizations, which ultimately affect the provision of adequate information resources and services that could meet the user information needs.

Furthermore, data from the table shows that respondents attested to poor catalogue system to be a challenge to them. Also, the table depicted that librarian of school of nursing indicated that inadequate user education program was a problem affecting them when utilizing the resources and services of the library. This could be due to lack of libraries parent organizations cooperation and the librarians inability to provide adequate user education program based on the users need. Also, in the table is inadequate provision of ICT facilities i.e. internet service which the respondents attested to as a challenge, on the use of information and communication technology (ICT) i.e. internet

services, electronic documents etc. and training the librarians on how to use them to the benefit of the students. This could be because (ICT) provides access to wide varieties of information to the students that could enhance their studies. Ong (2006) noted that "in order to make the best use of very limited material and human resources, it is not the intention to change the existing systems, but, where needed, with additions of relevant information technology (IT) equipment and training of staff, to build on them". In view of the problem militating against provision of information resources, the librarians were asked to appropriately choose among the listed strategies as possible solutions for improvement in future information needs and library resources provision. They librarians were also asked to freely comment on the solutions to the problems of resources provision for the students of the schools of nursing under study. Their responses were presented in table 6.

Data from table 6 signifies that provision of conducive library environment as a measure to the challenges. This result conforms to similar findings by Uche (2009) that, conducive library environment is the major factor that promotes reading habits. Also, the finding corroborates that of Uchey and Ngozi (2011) while they revealed that "good environment conditions such as good ventilation, adequate physical facilities and noise control are required to boost and sustain patronage and use of the services provided by the libraries to its users". The six head of libraries as indicated by the table, also indicated adequate provision of budgetary allocation as a way to the solution of the challenge. This finding corroborated Haruna and Oyelekan (2010) who found that "if the library is adequately funded, problem associated with information resource provision and utilization will be reduced to the barest minimum". Furthermore, the data also reveals that students of nursing indicated that provision of sufficient information retrieval devices to be a measured of overcoming the challenges.

Conclusion

The place of libraries catering for the schools of nursing operating within the North Central States of Nigeria cannot be over- emphasized. Hence, such libraries need to be designed and equipped with resources and services that would adequately fulfill information needs of the nursing students, as this will enhance their contribution to the region and the country at large by way of maintaining healthy citizens.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

Nursing libraries in North Central State of Nigeria should provide information resources that are

relevant to the information needs of students of nursing in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their study:

An aggressive user education and user needs assessment programmers should be embarked upon by the libraries to sensitize the student's of nursing about the available information resources and services and to provide such resources and services based on the information needs of the students. This is because some of the prevailing impression from the research from the research findings was that of lack, of awareness about the available information resources and services, and inadequate users need assessment.

The libraries should acquire modern information and communication technologies especially in the area of internet facilities to enable students have access to abundant information worldwide.

Individual State Governments of the six school of nursing should make adequate fund available to the library so as to enable them acquire necessary resources and provide relevant services that could meet the information needs of the students.

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