An examination of students' use of document section A case study of college library Federal College of Education Zaria, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT:

The study set out to examine students' use of document section in the college library of FCE Zaria, Nigeria. The library users who are students of the institution seem not making talent use of the projects, theses and government publications kept under supervision of the document section of the library. Therefore, the research main objectives were to find out what type of collection(s) available are the students aware of, to examine in detail how the available collection(s) are been used by the students and to find out what challenges encountered in the utilization of the collections(s) by the students. A case study design was adopted for the study using interview and observation as vital instruments for data collection. Thirty Five (35) sampled students were interviewed and observed and data collected were analyzed using frequency count and percentages of responses. Results revealed that total number of sampled respondents (100%) indicated their awareness of projects in the document section, 4 of 35 (11.4%) respondents responded been aware of theses, where as government publications were not known by the students scoring 0% response. In another result, 100% response of 35 respondents was gained for students using projects for their research work and selecting their research topics from a catalogue available in the section. None of the students was found using internet for selection of project topic (0% response). The students indicated their way of conducting selves' projects by recopying others research works with 31 of 35 respondents representing 88.6%. The study also found that 35 (100%) respondents reported lack of enough seats in the document unit and a 2hour sharing formula per students daily imposed for access were among problems the students faced. Lack of electricity was not that a big challenge, 10 of 35 (29%) respondents indicated. The paper concluded on the note that the library users lack the talent in using projects kept in the document section of the college library. Hence, the researchers finally recommends for effective user education program by the college library, so that the students are guided in their use of the collections in the document section of the library.

Keywords: Plagiarism, Copyright, Research

المستخلص:

تقوم الدراسة باستقصاء استخدام الطلاب قسم الوثائق بمكتبة كلية التربية الاتحادية في زاريا بنيجيريا. مستخدمو المكتبة الذين هم من الطلاب المعهد يبدو أنهم ليس لهم قدرة كافية في استخدام المشروعات والأطروحات والمنشورات الحكومية المحفوظة تحت إشراف قسم الوثائق بالمكتبة. وعليه فإن أهداف الدراسة الأساسية هي: معرفة ما إذا كان الطلاب على علم بأنواع المجموعات المتوفرة أصلاً، و استقصاء بشكل مفصل الكيفية التي يتم بها استخدام المجموعات، وأيضاً معرفة التحديات التي يواجهها الطلاب عند الاستفادة من هذه المجموعات. انتهجت الدراسة أسلوب دراسة الحالة باستخدام المقابلة والملاحظة كأداتين أساسيتين لجمع البيانات. تمت مقابلة وملاحظة العينة المكونة من (35) طالباً. وتم تحليل البيانات التي جمعت باستخدام حساب التكرارات والنسب للاستجابات. كشفت

نتائج الدراسة عن أن جملة عدد عينة المبحوثين (100%) أبدوا معرفتهم بالمشروعات المتوفرة في قسم الوثائق، وأن 4 من جملة 35 (11,4%) من المبحوثين أجابوا بأنهم على دراية بالأطروحات، بينما لم تكن منشورات الحكومة معروفة لدى الطلاب حيث كانت استجاباتهم بشأنها (0%). وفي نتيجة أخرى جاءت جملة استجابات المبحوثين بنسبة 100% وعددهم 35 بأنهم يستفيدون من المشروعات في كتابة أعمال بحوثهم ويختارون عناوين موضوعات بحوثهم المتاحة بقسم المكتبة. ولا أحد من الطلاب وجد أنه استخدم الانترنت في اختيار موضوع بحثه (0% من المبحوثين). كما أن 31 من جملة المبحوثين وهم 35 أي بنسبة 88,6% يقولون إنهم عندما يجرون بحوثهم ينسخون من البحوث السابقة الأخرى. وأظهرت الدراسة كذلك أن جملة المبحوثين الـ 35 (100%) ذكروا وجود عجز في أماكن التي يستخدمها الراغبون في الاستفادة من قسم الوثائق كذلك وأن الاشتراك بمعدل ساعتين لعدد من الطلاب يجعل من الوصول إلى المجموعات أمراً صعباً . ولا يمثل النقص في الطاقة الكهربائية تحدياً يذكر طبقاً لرأي 10 من جملة المبحوثين الـ 35 (29%). وخلصت الورقة البحثية إلى أن مستخدمي المكتبة يفتقرون إلى القدرة على الاستفادة من المشروعات المحفوظة بقسم الوثائق بمكتبة الكلية. لذا فإن الباحثين استنتجوا في نهاية هذه الدراسة أن من يريد أن يتمهر في المكتبة الكلية ، لأجل ذلك يرشد الطلاب ليمتلك فدرة كافية في كيفية اسخدام قسم الوثائق بالمكتبة.

كلمات مفتاحية: *انتحال الأفكار، حق النشر، البحث*

INTRODUCTION:

A number of people think of plagiarism as copying another person's work, or borrowing else's original ideas. However, this is true. According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, to 'plagiarize' means to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own, to use (another's production) without crediting the source to commit literary theft and or, to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source'. In other words, people copy the works of others without given due credit to the originals, this infringes copyright laws. It is a common problem and of practice today by students in post secondary schools. Students writing end of year projects often end in plagiarism with the knowledge or otherwise that such acts are big offences. A good research is set out and known to be free of committing literary theft. Studies conducted by people enjoy copyrights of intellectual property and must be respected. On the other hand, a library's central role in the academic to promoting research cannot be over mentioned. George D. K. and Robert G. (n.d) pointed that 'the library is the physical manifestation of the core values and activities of academic life'. Here, one of the 'core values' to be observed include research. The strength of any academic library is today measured in terms of it research activities. Qakleaf M. (2010) in a forward note remark that, 'librarians are increasingly called upon to document and articulate the value of academic and research libraries…' This implies that academic libraries should not only aim at promoting teaching and learning activities (the pedagogical process), but also enhance research. Perhaps, some libraries on an important note devise

separate unit or section for research activities.

Statement of the Problem

The document section of the college library, FCE Zaria plays a vital role in housing research works. The unit's collections include government publications, projects and theses (written by students and staffs of the institution). However, the research works are ideally for consultation purpose. But very unfortunate, the researchers observe that the library users particularly the students make improper use of the materials. The students copy directly while using these collections. So what is housed in the section at last becomes duplication or repetition of works, thereby accommodating storage space.

Review of relevant literatures

The term plagiarism refers to the use of another's original expressions or thoughts as if they were possessors. Works when borrowed from an original source and do not give proper credit, one conducts plagiarism and violated copyright laws. According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, to 'plagiarize' means 'to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own, to use (another's production) without crediting the source to commit literary theft and or, to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source'. The problem is widely spread in the academic world today, especially among students of higher institutions of learning. Patrick M. S and David R. N (2002) in their study found that, 'a substantial minority of students reported copying some text and using it without citation; 19% sometimes and 9.6% often or very frequently'. Online plagiarism were similar they added, 'cutting and pasting

some text without citation was reported sometimes by 16.5% of students and often or very frequently by 8%'. This dishonesty found in students is not proper. Millett (2012) cautions that 'students are both users and creators of copyright work, and so have a particular obligation to respect and comply with copyright law. Students need to know about copyright, because as authors they will be owners of copyright and as researchers they will be users of copyright works and must avoid infringing the copyright of other people'. Copyright simply put, refers to the laws which protects intellectual property, making it illegal to reproduce someone else's expression of ideas or information. And this includes written words among others. On another hand, an academic library can be seen as a role model that guides library users to conducting their research works. George D. Kuh and Robert Gonyea (n.d) noted that 'the library is the physical manifestation of the core values and activities of academic life'. One of these 'core values' to be observed should include the area of research. Research simply put by Redman and Mory (n.d) is a "systematized effort to gain new knowledge. Projects and theses written by students in higher institutions of learning are called research. How effective are the research conducted? However, a California State University has developed a manual (2004 edition) on thesis and project guide for graduating student so that they can demonstrate their ability to investigate, develop and synthesize materials pertaining to a topic in their field of study. In addition, issues on 'plagiarism' and 'copyright' were as a matter of

importance discussed for students conduct.

Approach
The research is on the approach of qualitative research using case study method to find solution to the problem

Objectives
General objective
The overall objective of the study is to find solution to the problem of not proper use of the collections in the document section, college library, FCE Zaria.

Specific objectives
1. To find out what type of collection(s) available are the students aware of
2. To examine in detail how the available collection(s) are been used by the students
3. To find out what challenges encountered in the utilization of the collections(s) by the students

Significance of the study
The importance of the study should help the college library have clear understanding of the use of collections in the document section, so that library users can be well guided on effective use of the collections.

Methodology
A case study design was adopted to examine patron's use of document section, college library FCE Zaria. The choice for the method is that it concentrates on a small group or unit. The researchers are interested in only the use of the document unit as one of the sections of the library.

Population of the study
Final year students comprising NCE, Degree and PGDE of the institution form population of the study. And they are the only patrons allowed to use the document section of the college library. The section has the capacity to accommodate Forty Eight (48) patrons at a time, and each student is allowed access to the collections therein for a period of two hours (2hrs) daily.

Sample of the study
Thirty Five (35) students were considered appropriate as a sample for the study. There are no specific rules when determining an appropriate sample size in qualitative research. The sample size may best be determined by the time allotted, resources available, or study objectives (Patton, 1990). Morse (1994) has suggested 30 - 50 interviews, while Creswell (1998) even suggested only 20 - 30. However, qualitative analysis typically requires a smaller sample size. Respondents were selected randomly.

Instrument for data collection
Interview and observation was used as a method to collect data from the students. The questions were close ended eliciting required data from the respondents. No assistant other than the researchers were involved in the interview process.

Validity
Questions generated were given to experts in the field for check and modification in terms of relevancy, clarity and merit.

Reliability
Stenbacka (2001) argues that since reliability issue concerns measurements then it has no relevance in qualitative research and hence, reliability is an irrelevant matter in the judgment of quality of qualitative research. Therefore, if it is used then the "consequence is rather that the study is no good" he added. In contrary, Campbell (1996) asserts that consistency of data can be achieved when the steps of the research are verified through examination of such items as raw data, data reduction products, and process

notes. The later opinion was adopted and hence steps of research were adequate.

Results and discussion

Data collected was analyzed using frequency count and percentages of

responses. All Thirty Five (35) sampled students were successfully interviewed and observed and the following findings were generated;

Table 1.0   Summary of students' categorization

Type of student	Frequency	Percentage
NCE	20	57.1%
Degree	10	28.6%
PGDE	5	14.2%
Total	35	100%

The data above shows the number of students interviewed in terms of their educational level. 20 NCE students representing 57.1% and 10 Degree students (28.6%) were interviewed. While PGDE students had 5 interviewed, representing 14.2%.

Table 1.1   Collections available in the document section the students are aware of

Type of collections	Frequency	Percentage
Projects	35	100%
Theses	4	11.4%
Government publications	0	0%

In assessing students awareness of the availability of collections in the document section of the library, all the students interviewed showed their awareness of projects in the document section with 35 responses representing 100%. 4 responded been aware of theses represented by 11.4%. However, the researchers observed that, the 4 respondents who accounted of their awareness on theses availability were PGDE students. While government publications are not been aware of by all the students.

Table 1.2   Students use of the collections in the document section

Table 1.2.1		
Which of the collections do you use in conducting your research work		
Collections	Frequency	Percentage
Projects	35	100%
Theses	0	0%
Government publications	0	0%
Table 1.2.2		
How do you arrive on a research topic		
	Frequency	Percentage
By selecting a number of topics from the catalogue for supervisor's approval	35	100%
From the internet	0	0%
Table 1.2.3		

How do you use the projects, theses, government publications in conducting your research work		
	Frequency	Percentage
Recopying	31	88.6%
Not recopying	4	11.4%

To find out the students use of the collections, table 1.2.1 shows that 35 of the subjects (100%) use projects for their research work. In spite of their little awareness on the availability of theses in the document section (see table 1.1), none of the student uses the theses for their research works. Data collected indicated 0% usage of the theses, including government publications by the students. On this note, the researchers observed that, the few students who knew about the availability of the theses thought that it was only meant for students studying master degree in universities. Table 1.2.2 indicated that, 35 (100%) of the subjects responded selecting their research topics for approval using the catalogue (contains the list of projects and theses in the section). 0% response was recorded on whether the students use the internet for same purpose as an alternative. This implies however, the students' solemnly depends on the document section for their projects assignment. While table 1.2.3 indicated that, 31 of 35 respondents represented by 88.6% 'recopy' a material against 4 (11.4%) respondents that reported 'not recopying' as a way of conducting their projects. However, the researchers observed that, 4 out of the 35 respondents who reported 'Not copying' knew the implication of recopying as a form of plagiarism and not that they were honest in their answer. Thus, Millet (2012) caution that students are both users and creators of copyright work and so have a particular obligation to respect and comply with copyright law. Thus, the college library should devise a means for guiding the students in writing their projects; through user education services for example.

Table 1.3problems faced in the utilization of the collections by the students

Problems	Frequency	Percentage
2hrs sharing formula per student daily	35	100%
Lack of constant power supply	10	29%
Lack of enough seats	35	100%

In an effort to investigate the problems faced in using the collections by the students, table 1.3 shows that, all 35 respondents indicated the 2hours sharing formula per student daily imposed on accessing a material, and lack of enough seats as challenges to them. However, the researchers observed that, regardless of the 48 seats capacity at a spot the document section can accommodate users; the students on the other hand are many. And that could be the reason why the 2hours sharing formula per student daily was ruled. On the other hand, data collected indicated lack of constant power supplies as a minor problem for the student; 10 of 35 responses were gained representing 29%.

Conclusion

The study was carried out in Federal College of Education Zaria. It adopted the case study design and data collected from library users (students) in the institution. The study clearly points the library users of the document section to include NCE, Degree and PGDE students. Results show that all the students are aware of the availability of projects in the document unit with 35 responses representing 100%. While majority of the students not been aware of the availability of theses had 4 of 35 respondents representing 11.4%, the students were found not been aware of government publications in the document section. In spite of their little awareness on the availability of theses in the document section, none of the student uses the theses for their research works; including government publications had 0% usage. But in a contrary, findings reveal that, all 35 (100%) respondents use projects for their research work. In another finding, 35 (100%) of the students responded selecting their research topics for

approval using the catalogue (contains the list of projects and theses in the section), and 0% response was gained on whether the students use the internet for same purpose as an option. As way of conducting their personal projects, 31 of 35 respondents representing 88.6% claim recopying a material. In fact, 4 out of the 35 (11.4%) respondents who reported 'Not copying' knew the effect of recopying as a form of plagiarism, the researchers observed. More so, the study found out that, a 2hours sharing formula per student daily imposed for access and lack of enough seats in the document section were among challenges reported by all 35 (100%) respondents in their use of collections in the document section. On the other hand, a result indicated lack of electricity supplies as not much a greater problem for the student with 10 of 35 responses representing 29%. However, the researchers conclude on an important note, the library users (i.e the students) lack the talent in using projects hence, the need for effective user education service.

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