

Clinical Students Attitude to Information Usage, College of Health Sciences, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology. Osogbo, Nigeria

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Abstract: Access to the right type of information in an academic environment is an asset which can be employed to pursue and accomplished the cardinal objective of the library. The study therefore examine the attitude of clinical students to information usage in college of health sciences, LAUTECH. Seventy five respondents were selected through stratified random sampling among the 3 levels of clinical classes. Structural questionnaires were used to collect data from the respondents. The data were analyzed using simple descriptive statistics such as frequency count and percentages. The findings revealed that majority of the clinical students were male, they sourced for information mainly from handouts, lecture notes and library books. About 80% of the students had more access to lecture notes than other materials. The respondents also mentioned that lecture notes, library books and Christian/Muslim materials were very important information materials and they used it regularly. The clinical students identified the distance to the information, limited time and cost as major problems that hindered the flow of information to them. To this effect they desire an extension of library services, regular updating of library books and provision of on-line information retrieval system to meet their current information needs.

Key words: Clinical students, information, attitude, library, books, handouts, lecture notes, journals

INTRODUCTION

The (The New Webster Dictionary, 1993) define information as “the communication of news, knowledge obtained by search and study”,etc it can also be considered as, “knowledge communicated concerning some particular facts, subjects or events” (Oduanya and Amusa, 2003). Information comes from social, scientific and researches all over the world due to increase in developmental activities and inter-disciplinary research across the globe. Although some of the information needs are met at present by some individuals and organization that are not skill in information management. Nwalo (2000) indicated that establishment of libraries in all part of the society will guarantee the position of appropriate, regular and timely information for the populace.

Also the importance of quality information cannot be over emphasized in an academic environment because it is the soul of research, access to the right type of information is an asset which can be employed to pursue and accomplish the cardinal objectives of any library, since the main professional function of a library is to make information sources available through its collection.

Regnold (1969) revealed that most of the library holding are just a display of some operational innovation that is not useful for library users. Adetunji (1994) emphasized that quality and quantity of any library holdings should be in such that will meet the information needs of the library patrons.

However proper selection and acquisition procedures with adequate knowledge of the information needs of the library users will guarantee effective library usage, because studies have shown that when a group of professionals need information, their first point of call is the library and information centers (The New Webster Dictionary, 2003; Ifidom, 1990).

While some people need information for personal consumption, others need it to succeed in whatever endeavour or occupation they found themselves. The library has the responsibility and capability of acquiring informational materials, organized information on various subjects of interest to the society and putting these materials acquire at the disposal of the society to satisfy their information need (Anaeme, 2004).

Uwem (2003) stated that acquisition of information sources would be a waste of funds if the resources are not consulted by users and that just as the customer is right

in commercial transaction, so also is the user right in service provision in the library, She further emphasis that the only starting point in meeting the need of users is the proper diagnosis and firm understanding of their need.

Therefore the study examine the attitude of clinical student of LAUTECH to information usage for improved library services.

The specific objectives of the study are to;

- Describe the personal characteristics of the respondents.
- Identify sources of information in the institution.
- Assess the importance, accessibility and frequency of use of the information materials
- Identify the problems of the flow of information.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted among the clinical students of the college of health sciences, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Osogbo in Nigeria. Seventy five respondents were selected for the study through stratified random sampling which was done among the 3 levels of clinical classes (that is 400, 500 and 600 levels). Structural questionnaires were used to collect data from the respondents. The data were analyzed using simple descriptive statistics such as frequency count and percentages. Among many of the information collected were personal characteristics of the students, sources of information, accessibility, frequency of use and importance of Information, problems and suggestion on information usage.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study revealed in Table 1 that 60% of the clinical students sampled were male while the remaining 40% were female and most of them were in 400 level (fourth year), that is 47%, 40% in 500 level and 13% in 600 level.

The respondents noted some information sources available to them in Table 2; these sources are handouts, lecture notes, friends/classmates, library journals, newspapers, Tell magazines, library books, library reference materials and Christian/Muslim materials. About 26.7% of the clinical students (which is the highest percentage) affirmed that they sourced for information mainly from handouts, lecture notes and library books, only 20.0% sourced for information in all the materials while the remaining students sourced for information from any of the materials listed above. It is important to note that all the respondents (100%) made use of library books and 46.7% used library journals.

Table 1: Personal characteristics of the respondents

Variable	No	(%)
Sex		
Male	45	60.0
Female	30	40.0
Total	75	100.0
Academic level		
400	35	46.7
500	30	40.0
600	10	13.3
Total	75	100.0

Source: Field survey 2006

Table 2: Sources of information used by the respondents

Variable	No	(%)
a, b and g	20	26.7
a, d and g	5	6.7
a, b c, f and g	2	2.6
b, c, e, g and I	6	8.0
b, c, f, g and I	7	9.3
b, d, e, g and I	5	6.7
a, b c, e, g and I	5	6.7
a, b c, d, e, g and I	8	10.7
b, c, d, e, g, h and I	2	2.6
All	15	20.0
Total	75	100.0

Source: Field survey 2006, *a) Handoutsb) Lecture notesc) Friends/Classmatesd) Library Journals e) Newspapers, f) Tell magazinesg) Library booksh) Library reference materialsi) Christian/Muslim materials

Table 3 revealed that all the information materials were accessible, 80% of the students had more access to lecture notes than other materials. The respondents also mentioned (Table 3) that lecture notes, library books and Christian/Muslim materials were very important information materials that they could not do without. Library journals, Tell magazines and Library reference materials were not important at their levels. Most of the students confirmed that they used lecture notes, library books and Christian/Muslim materials regularly while they used handouts, friends/classmates, library journals, daily newspapers; tell magazines and library reference materials occasionally.

As indicated in Table 4, the clinical students identified some problems that hindered the flow of information to them. About 33.4% of the respondents noted that they could not allocate time for information searching because of their tight schedule, 13.3% mentioned the distance to the information as a problem and 17.4% said that limited time and cost of some of the information materials were their major problems.

In the same table, the respondents made some important suggestions to solve the problems. These suggestions are; extending reading hours (27%), extending borrowing period (19%), regular updating of the library books (11%), introducing and maintaining internet

Table 3: Percentage distribution of accessibility, frequency of use and importance of information by the respondents

	a %	b %	c %	d %	e %	f %	g %	h %	i %
Accessibility									
Very accessible	20.0	80.0	20.0	6.7	6.7	26.7	40.0	20.0	33.3
Accessible	73.3	20.0	73.3	66.7	86.6	60.0	60.0	66.7	60.0
Not accessible	6.7	-	6.7	20.0	6.7	6.7	-	13.3	6.7
No response	-	-	-	6.7	-	6.7	-	-	-
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Importance of information									
Very important	20.0	80.0	26.7	26.7	6.8	6.7	73.3	6.7	60.0
Important	53.4	20.0	66.6	33.3	80.0	60.0	26.7	66.7	20.0
Not important	13.3	-	6.7	20.0	6.7	20.0	-	13.3	6.7
No response	13.3	-	-	20.0	6.7	13.3	-	13.3	13.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Frequency of use									
Regularly	33.3	100.0	46.7	20.0	13.3	6.7	66.7	26.7	46.7
Occasionally	53.3	-	53.3	53.4	80.0	66.7	26.7	46.7	33.3
Never	6.7	-	-	13.3	-	13.3	6.7	3.3	6.7
No response	6.7	-	-	13.3	6.7	3.3	-	13.3	13.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field survey 2006, *a) Handouts b) Lecture notes c) Friends/Classmates d)Library Journals e) Newspapers f) Tell magazinesg) Library booksh) Library reference materials) Christian/Muslim materials

Table 4: Problems and suggestion on Information usage

Variable	No	(%)
Problems		
a) Distance to the information	10	13.3
b) Limited time	25	33.4
c) Unavoidability or the cost	10	13.3
d) Negative attitude of the information officers	-	-
a and c	5	6.7
b and c	13	17.4
b and d	3	4.0
a, b and c	5	6.7
a, b, c and d	2	2.6
No response	2	2.6
Total	75	100.0
Suggestion		
a) Regular updating	8	10.7
b) Internet access	6	8.0
c) Extending borrowing period	14	18.6
d) Extending reading hours	20	26.7
e) Cheaper handout	-	-
a and b	2	2.6
a and c	3	4.0
b and c	3	4.0
c and d	9	12.0
c and e	3	4.0
c, d and e	5	6.7
No response	2	2.6
Total	75	100.0

Source: Field survey 2006

access (8%). About 12% of the clinical students suggested extension of reading hours and borrowing period as solution to the problems.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it could be seen clearly that library books, lecture notes and handouts are the most important information sources relevant to the need of the clinical students of the college of health sciences, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Osogbo in Nigeria.

Generally speaking medical students desire an extension of library services in terms of operational hours and the time schedule for charging and discharging of books to students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is therefore recommended that:

- The quality and quantity of books in the medical library should be improved for better services.
- Library hours of operation should be extended in order to accommodate the medical students programme.
- Planning of medical library services would not be completed without the provision of on-line information retrieval system to meet current information needs of the users
- Medical library must organize information sources in such a way that library users will have easy access to it.
- Continuous study of the information need of the library users should be conducted for effective library services.

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