

INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOR OF CATALOGUERS IN SOME SELECTED UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

By

UCHE EMEKA-UKWU

And

ANTHONIA OMEHIA Ph.D

Abstract

The study investigated information seeking behavior of cataloguers in some selected university libraries. Descriptive design was used. The population of the study consists of 20 cataloguers in the university libraries under study. The questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. 20 questionnaires were distributed, only 19 were retrieved. The study revealed that the information needs of cataloguers in some selected university libraries in South-South, Nigeria are Anglo America Cataloguing Rule 11, library of congress list of subject headings, using library of congress classification scheme, attending workshops/conference, training and retraining of cataloguers, WebLC, Booktopia and RDA. The study further affirmed the information seeking behavior of cataloguers in the following order: Attending workshops/seminars on cataloguing, seeking information from mentors, getting vital information from people through interactions, getting new ideas on cataloguing through inter library switch, identifying a message that satisfies a perceived need. The study recommends following that cataloguers should keep abreast of relevant information that would facilitates their information needs, attending seminars/conference where new trends in cataloguing are discussed would enhance the information seeking behavior of cataloguers and the acquisition of relevant and current tools is critical to cataloguers information seeking behaviors.

Keywords: Information seeking behavior, cataloguers, university libraries

Introduction

The university library is a warehouse of information resources, processed and accessible for research works and human resources development. They are established in an institution of higher learning to cater for the research problems of students and researchers (Onwurah and Ifeka, 2012). University libraries are at the forefront of providing information services to their respective communities which comprises of students, lecturers, and researchers in order to

support their teaching, learning and research needs. The library has different units/division with different responsibilities assigned to the librarians who man them. The cataloguing and classification unit is one of the units in the university libraries which is responsible in cataloging and classification of information resources.

De Boer (2001) conveyed that cataloging and classification is one of the primary functions of librarianship. It is the core of the profession, the cohesive force that binds the library into a unified whole. Since cataloging and classification focuses on the intelligibility of bibliographic records and the fundability of material, therefore the information seeking behavior of cataloguers is critical. Information seeking behavior can be seen as the actual process of identifying and obtaining the information itself. According to Ingwersen and Järvelin (2005), information-seeking behavior is human information behavior dealing with searching for or seeking information by means of information sources and (interactive) information retrieval systems. Also, Wilson (2000) opined that information seeking behavior is the purposive of seeking for information as a consequence of a need to satisfy some goal. The information-seeking behaviors play a crucial role in solving cataloguer's information needs. It is indispensable for libraries that seek to raise their level of performance and improve the level of services provided to their users.

A library that fails to perform this great task according to Lawal (2015) is a moribund and an anemic information system because it has lost its vitality, honor, and its age long standard. It is therefore the duty of the cataloguers to strive hard to satisfy the intellectual and information thirst and curiosity of its users by properly organizing materials to ease access and utilization.

Also, in the course of information seeking behavior, cataloguers has to rely heavily on recent and current cataloging and classification tools such as Anglo America, Cataloguing Rule II ed; Library of Congress Lists of such Headings and Library of Congress Classification Scheme. These tools are geared towards solving the information needs of cataloguers as well as seeking their information needs.

It is in light of the above situations, that this study information seeking behavior of cataloguers in some selected university libraries in South-South, Nigeria is imperative.

Statement of the problem

Cataloguers must go beyond the ordinary, to acquire new training that should help eradicate digital illiteracy. The essence of this is to ensure that library resources and relevant information from libraries are made available to a global audience. One way of achieving this is geared towards information seeking behavior of cataloguers. Information-seeking behavior is the act of actively seeking information in order to answer a specific query. In order words, information-searching behavior is the behavior which stems from the searcher interacting with the system in question. In addition, information behavior is described as the totality of human behavior in relation to sources and channels of information, including both active and passive information-seeking, and information use.

It has been observed that literature exist on information seeking behavior of cataloguers, but there is no study on information seeking behavior of cataloguers with a particular reference

to some selected university libraries in South-South Nigeria. This research is therefore undertaken to fill the gap in knowledge.

Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study is to find out the information seeking behavior of cataloguers with a particular reference to some selected university libraries in South-South Nigeria. The specific objectives are:

1. To identify the information needs of cataloguers in some selected university libraries in South-South, Nigeria
2. To find out the information seeking behaviors of cataloguers in some selected university libraries in South-South, Nigeria

Research Questions

1. What are the information needs of cataloguers in some selected university libraries in South-South, Nigeria?
2. What are the information seeking behaviors of cataloguers in some selected university libraries in South-South, Nigeria?

Literature review

In order to establish a firm framework for the study, an examination of available literature relevant to the study was carried out. It is aimed at examining earlier works by researchers in the field and others who have worked in related areas under the following sub-headings: university libraries, cataloguer, and information seeking behavior.

University libraries

University libraries are established in tertiary institutions for the purpose of research, learning and teaching. Arua (2001) described university libraries as those libraries of tertiary institutions of learning, research and reference purpose. The dictionary of library and information

science (2011) described a university library as library or library system established, administered, and funded by a university to meet the information, research, and curriculum needs of its students, faculty, and staff. Accordingly, Adeyemi and Ola (2012) noted that university libraries are established to promote teaching, learning, research and community development mandate of their parent institutions. The objectives of academic libraries are tied to those of their parent bodies. The general objectives or functions of university libraries are as follows: provide specialized information resources and service to appropriate segments of the institutions; and provide resources to support teaching and research

University library is a warehouse of information resources, processed and accessible for research works and human resources development. They are established in an institution of higher learning to cater for the research problems of students and researchers (Onwurah and Ifeka, 2012). University libraries are at the forefront of providing information services to their respective communities which comprises of students, lecturers, and researchers in order to support their teaching, learning and research needs. A university cannot operate without a library because the university's purpose is to teach and do research. The university library should offer a wide range of services. It is also expected to serve all of the university's knowledge areas. As a result, university libraries are sometimes decentralized, with a central library that coordinates the activities of departmental and faculty libraries. Its collection must comprise not only books, but also general and specialized reference collections, which may include periodicals, newspapers, manuscripts, historical maps, government publications, clippings, letters, theses, and audio-visual resources.

Cataloguer

Cataloguing and classification are gateway to information resources access and utilization and they are means of organizing library resources in order to ensure that access and retrieval of such information resources are made easy (Akidi, & Omekwu 2019). It is the core of the library profession. It is therefore mandatory that a student who is aspiring to be a professional should be competent to do the job. Cataloguing or is the process of creating and maintaining bibliographic and authority records in the library catalog, the database of books, serials, sound recordings, moving images, cartographic materials, computer files, e-resources etc. that are owned by a library. A cataloger is an individual responsible for the processes of description, subject analysis, classification, and authority control of library materials. Catalogers serve as the foundation of all library service, as they are the ones who organize information in such a way as to make it easily accessible. According to Esther (2004), cataloging is 'a process describe library materials using their bibliographic data in a logical and systematic order of indexing tools such as AACR2. While classification is the arrangement of things in a logical order according to the degree of their similarity, especially the allocation of books or other items to their appropriate places in the classification scheme.

Nwosu, (2014) reported that the development of three principles, requiring ability, aptitude, and attitude, that guide cataloguers in acquiring competences and skills and essentially engaging in continuing education will position cataloguers to cope with the challenges inherent in cataloguing practices. This implies that a cataloguer must be very knowledgeable. Librarians must be interested in cataloguing and classification to be able to place in the hand of a user, the

needed information materials without wasting time and with little effort. Furthermore, Isiyaku, Bello & Ado (2018) investigated the challenges and prospects of cataloguing and classification. The study identified that librarians are no longer interested in cataloguing and classification units due to its tedious nature, very boring difficult and time consuming. Yusuf, (2015) investigated a study on attitude to cataloguing and classification in an academic institution, the study revealed among others that students perceived the course as difficult with their practical.

Information seeking behavior

Information behavior is a relatively new but growing research field in the expansive field of library and information science. In this field, several researchers have investigated the information behavior of faculty and students at academic institutions, as well as professionals within the workplace. Bruce (2014), Case and Given (2016) stressed that the study of information behavior has developed since its inception during the 1960s when most research was directed towards understanding how professionals searched for information and the resources they consulted. Different approaches were employed and different sources were consulted when making inquiry to satisfy his curiosity or information needs. But for Bruce, Ford, Case and Given (as cited in Makinde, Jiyane & Mugwisi, 2019) stated that the study of information behavior has developed since its inception during the 1960s when most research was geared towards understanding how professionals sought for information and the sources they consulted. Information seeking behavior is the processes of recognizing the need for information, searching

for, using, and sharing it. It is usually associated with information search behavior, information retrieval behavior and information literacy skills.

Eftekhar and Hayati (2016) observed that information seeking behaviors exhibited by cataloguers is derived from cataloguer information needs when they have the urge for information. In the opinion of Azadeh and Ghasemi (2016) researchers may apply different techniques to collect information which are basically influenced by different factors, and consequently, researchers will express different information-seeking behaviours. According to Ori and Berry (2020), information-seeking is undertaken to identify a message that satisfies a perceived need. Jabeen, Jeelani and Ganaie (2020) simply note that research on information-seeking has looked at how individuals go about finding the materials that they need to satisfy information needs. According to Rafiq, Iqbal, Rehman, Waqas, Naveed and Khan (2021), information-seeking is undertaken to identify a message that satisfies a perceived need. This activity, as perceived by Van Lieshout, De Lange and Cools (2020), may be actively or passively done when taking steps to satisfy a felt need. According to Agyemang, Ngulube and Dube (2018) information-seeking behavior includes those acts that a cataloguer may engage in when defining their own information needs, searching for it in any means, and using or sharing it. For cataloguer to seek for their information needs they need to attend workshops/seminars which is tailored towards new ideas and trend in cataloging and classification. Also their working tools such as Anglo America, Cataloguing Rule II ed; Library of Congress Lists of such Headings and Library of Congress Classification Scheme should be current and relevant to the cataloging profession.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design using questionnaire as instrument for data collection. The population of the study consists of all the 23 cataloguers in the university libraries under study. A total of 23 questionnaires were distributed only 19 were retrieved. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics mean and percentage mean score of 2.5 and above and percentage score of 50% were considered.

Table 1: Population of the study

S/N	Institutions	Cataloguers
1	Admiralty University	2
2	Dennis Osadebey University	3
3	Fupre Library	2
4	University of Agbor library	2
5	Delta State University Abraka	7
6	University of Science and Technology Library	7
	Total	23

Table 2: Information needs of cataloguers

Items	SA	A	D	SD	-X	Decision
Using Anglo America, Cataloguing Rule II ed	8	8	2	1	3.2	Accepted
Using Library of Congress Lists of Subject Headings	9	9	1	0	3.4	Accepted
Using Congress Classification Scheme	7	8	3	1	3.1	Accepted
Attending workshops/conference	7	8	2	2	3.0	Accepted
Training and retraining of cataloguers	11	7	1	0	3.5	Accepted
WebLC	8	8	2	1	3.2	Accepted
	7	8	3	1	3.1	Accepted

Booktopia						
RDA	9	9	1	0	3.4	Accepted

The table 2 revealed four (4) identified items on information needs of cataloguers in some selected university libraries in South-South, Nigeria as follows: using Anglo America Cataloguing Rule 11 (3.2), using library of congress list of subject headings (3.4), using library of congress classification scheme (3.1) attending workshops/conference (3.0) and training and retraining of cataloguers (3.5) , WebLC (3.2), Booktopia (3.1) and (3.4) RDA(3.4) respectively.

Information seeking behavior of cataloguers

Table 3

Items	SA	A	D	SD	-X	Decision
Attending workshops/seminars on cataloguing	8	10	0	1	3.3	Accepted
Seeking information from mentors	9	8	1	1	3.3	Accepted
Getting vital information from people through interactions	12	7	0	0	3.2	Accepted
Getting new ideas on cataloguing through inter library switch	11	7	1	0	3.5	Accepted
Identifying a message that satisfies a perceived need	9	7	2	1	3.1	Accepted

The table shows five (5) identified items on information seeking behavior of cataloguers in some selected university libraries in South-South, Nigeria as follows: Attending workshops/seminars on cataloguing (3.3), seeking information from mentors (3.3), getting vital

information from people through interactions (3.2), getting new ideas on cataloguing through inter library switch (3.5) identifying a message that satisfies a perceived need (3.1) respectively.

Discussion of findings

The study is on information seeking behavior of cataloguers in some selected university libraries. Two research questions were formulated to guide the study. The result in table 1 revealed items on information needs of cataloguers in some selected university libraries in South-South, Nigeria as follows: using Anglo America Cataloguing Rule 11, using library of congress list of subject headings, using library of congress classification scheme, attending workshops/conference and training and retraining of cataloguers , WebLC , Booktopia, and RDA application respectively. This is in line with Adeleke and Azubogu (2013) who opined that cataloguing training is presently influenced by the evolution of bibliographic information driven by new technologies and applications.

Table 2 shows the information seeking behavior of cataloguers in the following order: Attending workshops/seminars on cataloguing, seeking information through mentorship, getting vital information from people through interactions, getting new ideas on cataloguing through inter library switch, identifying a message that satisfies a perceived need. This is in line with Eftekhari and Hayati (2016) when they observed that information seeking behaviors exhibited by cataloguers is derived from catalogue information needs when they have the urge for information.

Conclusion

The study examined the information seeking behavior of cataloguers in some selected university libraries in Delta State, Nigeria with the aim of discovering their information needs and how they seek for information. The study found that that the information needs of cataloguers in some selected university libraries in South-South, Nigeria are Anglo America Cataloguing Rule 11, library of congress list of subject headings, using library of congress classification scheme, attending workshops/conference, and training and retraining of cataloguers. The study further affirmed the information seeking behavior of cataloguers in the following order: Attending workshops/seminars on cataloguing, seeking information from mentors, getting vital information from people through interactions, getting new ideas on cataloguing through inter library switch, identifying a message that satisfies a perceived need. Therefore, all the information seeking behavior of cataloguers should be geared towards solving their immediate problems and also for the future. Thus, the information seeking behavior of cataloguers is critical.

Recommendations

The study recommends thus:

1. Cataloguers should keep abreast of relevant information that would facilitates their information needs
2. Attending seminars/conference where new trends in cataloguing are discussed would enhance the information seeking behavior of cataloguers
3. Acquisition of relevant and current tools is critical to cataloguer's information seeking behaviors.

4. Different approaches should be consulted to satisfy cataloguer's information needs and their seeking behavior

References

- Adeleke, A. A. & Azubogu, N. (2013). Librarians' perception of the annual cataloguing classification and indexing seminar/workshop of Nigerian Library Association:2009 2011. *The Nigerian Cataloguer* 1(1)38-56.
- Adeyemi, B.M. & Ola, C. O. (2012). Motivation, job satisfaction and services delivery. Mid level staff at Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. From <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1893&content=libphilp>
[ac](http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1893&content=libphilp)
- Agyemang, B.K., Ngulube, P. & Dube, L. (2018). Information needs and information-seeking behavior of krobo beads producers in the Eastern Region of Ghana. *Library Philosophy & Practice*, 1-27.
- Akidi, J. O. & Omekwu, C. O.(2019). Assessment of bibliographic control practices of the National Library of Nigeria in the digital age. *An unpublished PhD Thesis Submitted to the Department of Library and Information Science, Faculty of Education, University Of Nigeria, Nsukka*
- Arua, G.N. (2001). *The use of the library: For schools, colleges, polytechnic and universities*. Nsukka: Jopax Publishers.
- Azadeh, F. & Ghasemi, S. (2016). Investigating information-seeking behavior of faculty members based on Wilson's model: case study of PNU University, Mazandaran, Iran. *Global Journal of Health Science* 8(9): 26-36.
- Bruce, C. (2014). *Information experience: approaches to theory and practice*. Bingley, England: Emerald Group
- Case, D.O. & Given, L.M. (2016). *Looking for information: a survey of research on information seeking, needs, and behavior*, 4th ed. Bingley, England: Emerald Group
- De Boer, A. (2001). Teaching cataloguing and classification at the University of Pretoria: Thinking preferences of second year students. *Libri - International Journal of Libraries and Information Services*, 51(2): 114-123
- Eftekhari, Z. & Hayati, Z. (2016). Coping with information resources: identifying, searching, accessing, evaluating and using information in academic libraries. *International Journal of Information Science and Management* 14(1): 1-11.

- Esther, N. (2014) *Organization of Knowledge in Nigerian Libraries*. Mazandaran, Iran.
- Ingwersen, P. & Järvelin, K. (2005), *The Turn: Integration of information seeking and retrieval in context*, Springer, Dordrecht.
- Isyaku, M. Bello, B.B. & Ado, G. (2018). Cataloguing and classification a library material in libraries of Kano State, North West Nigeria. Challenges and prospects. *International journal of advanced academic research arts humanities and education*, 4(7), 2488-2489.
- Jabeen, S., Jeelani, S.G.M. & Ganaie, S.A. (2020). Relational analysis of information-seeking behavior among students and faculty members in selective departments at University of Kashmir. *Journal of knowledge and communication management*, 10(2): 99-109.
- Lawal, O.O. (2015). Lecture Notes on Information Management, University of Calabar Nigerian *Journal of Library, Archival and Information Sciences (NJLAIS)* 1 (15). 1 –11
- Makinde, O.B., Jiyane, G.V., & Mugwisi, T. (2019). Evaluation of the level of adoption of information and communication technology resources and the usage of alternative sources in obtaining information by researchers of a federal research institute in Nigeria. *Library* at: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/2380>
- Nwosu, M.C. (2006). Bibliographic control: The changing perspectives of cataloguers, cataloguing and classification in the 21st century librarianship. *International journal of innovative research in engineering and science*, 3(11).
- Onwurah, B. & Ifeka, O.E.(2012). *Introduction to use of library*. Oba; ifevic publishers.
- Ori E. M., Berry T. R., & Yun L. (2021). The believability of exercise blogs among young adults. *J. Sport Exerc. Psychol.* 43, 53–60. doi: 10.1123/jsep.2020-0177, PMID: [
- Rafiq, S., Iqbal, A., Rehman, S.U., Waqas, M., Naveed, M.A. & Khan, S.A. (2021). Everyday life information-seeking patterns of resident female university students in Pakistan. *Sustainability*, 13(7), 3884.
- Wilson, T.D. (2000). Human information behavior. *Journal of informing science*, 3(2), 49- 55
- Yusuf, K.F. (2015). Preparedness of cataloguing section for library automation in academic libraries in Lagos State. *Nigerian journal of research in education and society*, 3(2), 119-125.