

Information Service Provision and User Satisfaction in selected Medical Libraries in Sokoto State

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Abstract

This study examines information service provision and user satisfaction in selected medical libraries in Sokoto State. Specifically, the study made an effort to know the type of information needs of medical researchers, the frequency with which researchers seek for information and the challenges faced by the researchers using the library. The study adopted survey research approach and the data was collected using structured questionnaire that was administered to ninety seven (97) respondents from the three selected medical libraries in Sokoto State using simple random sampling. The Findings of the study revealed that majority of the researchers frequent used the library at least once a week majorly for research, and their information needs ranges from educational to occupational need. It also revealed that users are being served with information services such as lending, reference, photocopying while subscription to some related database services are not available to library patrons. However, majority of the library users show significant level of satisfaction rendered by the library. In addition, the findings of the study recommended that: the management of the selected medical libraries should ensure that they provide ICT related database services to users among others.

Keywords: Information provision, User satisfaction, Medical libraries, Sokoto, Nigeria

Introduction

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2025), health information are data generated from systems that collect, analyze, and use information regarding health-related issues in order to support decision-making at all levels in healthcare system. this serves as a vital tool for monitoring progress, tracking diseases, and allocating resource. Mabawonku (1998) defined health information as those facts, materials or news communicated to people, who help them in the attainment of complete physical, mental and social well-being. At this end, medical library is a sine qua non in any medical institution as it provides the health information needs of the user community. Medical libraries are also considered as special library, due to their special users and services towards specific community and subject specialty. They are called special libraries because of their unique information resources for healthcare professionals.

Igwe and Sulyman (2022) stated that library resources and services include collection development, reader' services and ICT/multimedia, therefore, guiding users on the utilisation of

resources and services is another crucial aspect for library users. Emeahara and Ajakaye (2022) suggested that medical librarians should provide instruction to users on how to use the facility in order to achieve the library's objectives and library services and resources should be appropriately classified, organized and disseminated. However, the term "user" is not an easy task, as some individuals may visit the library frequently while others may not. Some users may take advantage of multiple services rendered by the libraries, while others may only utilise one. In addition, a user can be defined as a person who utilizes one or more services at least once a year (Onwubiko, 2021). On the other hand, user satisfaction is the degree to which a product or service fulfills a user's requirements, anticipations, and desires. In a medical library, user satisfaction is a key measure of information service quality. It reflects users' experiences and feelings after accessing the library's resources and services, as well as their likelihood of returning for future needs.

Medical library is a specialized library designed to meet the information needs of healthcare professionals, medical students, patients and researchers etc. The library focuses on resources related to health sciences with medical librarian as the custodian. Medical libraries play a key role in addressing the information needs of their users through the provision of relevant resources and services. To ensure user satisfaction, these libraries must deliver services that align with user requirements while actively promoting awareness of available offerings. They invest resources in acquiring, processing, organizing, and distributing information to serve their communities effectively. This enables users to understand the types and kinds of information resources and services that are available and accessible. The provision of library services has undergone a significant transformation from traditional methods to a more efficient and speedy approach since the advent of the technological era (Sahabi & Otobo, 2021).

In order to keep up with today's changes, medical librarians who are experts and specialized in managing health data and assist healthcare professionals and researchers to locate medical related information, are confronted with various challenges that need to be effectively addressed if they wish to remain relevant in the 21st-century information provision site (Ocholla et al., 2021) highlight several factors that influence user satisfaction in library service provision, such as limited access to information resources and services, lack of knowledge in information

technology, insufficient technical skills, and technical malfunctions that hinder access to these resources.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the information service provision and users satisfaction in three selected medical libraries in Sokoto State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. identify the information needs of healthcare professionals in selected medical libraries in Sokoto State;
2. identify the various information services render by medical libraries in selected medical libraries in Sokoto State;
3. ascertain the level of library user satisfaction of information service in medical libraries in selected medical libraries in Sokoto State and;
4. identify the challenges confronting the users using the medical libraries in selected medical libraries in Sokoto State.

Literature Review

Information service provision and user satisfaction in medical libraries were investigated within the medical libraries and outside Nigeria. Notably, Umenwa Ekene et al (2016) assessed the availability of resources and library services provided in two medical libraries in South-East Nigeria, result indicated that the medical libraries under study provided the services listed by the researcher but not without some hindrances as it has been observed from the respondents, not all of them are adequate, even though they are available. The findings of the study indicate that reference services, searching medical databases, current awareness services are rated by the respondents to be the most adequate of all the services listed. Aina (2014) noted that the information resources are the raw materials with which librarians work with and an information system that cannot provide information resources to meet the information needs of its users is therefore moribund because it has lost its vitality.

In another study, Kaishe-Mulungu, Lwehabura and Angello (2024) investigated how library service provision improved satisfaction among library patrons in selected university libraries in Tanzania. The results revealed that the primary services provided by those libraries were circulation with (22.2%), internet (15.6%) and reference services (14.9%). Furthermore, the

study found that the satisfaction levels were statistically significant at 5% and 1% levels of significance. The majority of respondents about (53%) rated the quality of service rendered in terms of availability of information resource is high. Furthermore, the findings of the study also revealed that library service provision significantly influenced the user satisfaction. These results imply that respondents were satisfied with the library services. However, there are some challenges, such as internet connectivity, institutional repository and secretarial services, were also recommended in order to improved service delivery. Mohammed (2019) and Lamba (2019) found that printing and photocopying services, lending services, reference services, internet and e-mail services, user assistant service and inter-library services are some of the services rendered by the libraries.

Methodology

Social survey research method was adopted for this study in order to involve a systematic and comprehensive collection of information about behaviors of healthcare professionals. The target populations were healthcare professionals in the three selected medical libraries in Sokoto State. These are Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Medical Library (UDUML), Usmanu Danfodiyo University Teaching Hospital, Medical Library (UDUTHML) and Federal Neuropsychiatric, Kware Medical Library (FNML). As at the time of the findings, the population of UDUML was (95), UDUTHML (85), and FNML was (75) respectively. Simple random sampling was used as it gave every prospective respondent in the study equal chance of being selected. Therefore, thirty two (32) respondents were sampled from each Medical Libraries making a total number of ninety seven respondents (97). Structured questionnaire was used to collect data and the data was collected in line with the four objectives of the study and were coded using the SPSS version IBM 20.0 Descriptive statistics of frequent count, simple percentage was used.

Results

Table 1: Information of the respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	59	57.2
Female	41	39.8
Total	100	97
Occupation		
Students	34	33.0
Medical Practitioners	53	51.0
Retiree	5	5.0
Researchers	8	8.0

Total	100	97
Age		
20-30	7	8.8
31-35	81	78.1
45-50	12	11.1
51 and above	0	0.0
Total	100	97
Qualification		
HND	20	29.1
B.Sc.	30	38.8
M.Sc.	27	27.1
Ph.D.	3	2.9
Total	100	97

Table 1 reveals that 59(57.2%) of respondent were male and the remaining 41(39.8) are female. 34(33.0%) respondent are student, 53(51.0%) are medical practitioners, 5(5.0%) are retiree and 8(8.0%) are researchers. 7(8.8%) are 20-30 age bracket, 81(78.1%) are 31-35 age, 12(11.1%) 0(0.0%) are 51 and above years of age. 20(29.1%) are HND, 30(38.8%) have B.Sc., 27(27.1%) have M.Sc. and 3(2.9%) have Ph.D. educational qualification.

Research Question 1: What are the information needs of healthcare professionals in selected medical libraries in Sokoto State?

Table 2: Information Need of Healthcare Professionals

Information Need	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Total
Educational information	19(18.4%)	70(68.0%)	9(8.7%)	2(1.9%)	100(97)
Historical information	15(14.6%)	55(53.4%)	24(23.3%)	6(5.8%)	100(97)
Sports information	5(4.9%)	14(13.6%)	36(35.0%)	45(43.7%)	100(97)
Current Affairs information	17(16.5%)	65(63.1%)	10(9.7%)	8(7.8%)	100(97)
Entertainment information	14(13.6%)	59(57.3%)	21(20.4%)	47(45.6%)	100(97)
Internet related information	8(7.8%)	21(20.4%)	47(45.6%)	24(23.3%)	100(97)
Social-cultural information	9(8.7%)	27(26.2%)	54(52.4%)	10(9.7%)	100(97)
Occupational information	15(14.6%)	45(43.7%)	36(35.0%)	4(3.9%)	100(97)

Table 2 clarify that 89(86.4%) of the respondent agreed that educational materials meet their information needs while 11(10.6%) disagreed, 70(68%) of the respondent agreed that historical

information materials meet their information query and 30(29.1%) disagreed. Again, 19(18.5) of the respondent strongly agree on sports information meets their needs; 36(35.0%) disagree and 45(43.7%) strongly disagree that sport information satisfies their query, 17(16.5%) respondents strongly agree and 65(63.1%) agree, while 18(17.5%) disagree that current affairs information meets their information search and query. The table also show 73(70.9%) of respondents agreed that entertainment information materials meet their information needs and 68(66%) strongly disagree. 29(28.2%) of respondent agreed on internet related information and 71(68.9%) disagreed with internet related information. The table indicate that 60(58.3%) of the respondents agreed that occupational information meet their information query while 40(38.9%) disagreed to this. In summary, and as depicted in table 2, majority of the respondents agreed that, the library services provided in the medical libraries in Sokoto State are relevant, germane and worthwhile, although some disagreed with the opinion. This could be as a result of institutional differences, locations, environment and staffing system.

Research question 2: What are the information services rendered by Medical Libraries in Sokoto?

Table 3: Information Service rendered by Medical Libraries

Service rendered	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Total
Lending services	30(29.1%)	51(49.5%)	15(14.5%)	4(3.9%)	100(97)
Binding services	7(18.4%)	19(18.4%)	36(35.0%)	38(36.9%)	100(97)
Photocopying services	5(4.9%)	49(47.6%)	30(29.1%)	16(15.5%)	100(97)
Internet services	12(11.7%)	17(16.5%)	27(26.2%)	44(42.7%)	100(97)
New arrival display	33(32.0%)	40(38.8%)	22(21.4%)	5(4.9%)	100(97)
Outreach services	8(7.8%)	33(32.0%)	48(46.6%)	11(10.7%)	100(97)
Referral services	18(17.5%)	51(49.5%)	16(15.5%)	15(14.5%)	100(97)
Book mobile services	19(18.4%)	17(16.5%)	14(13.6%)	50(48.5%)	100(97)
Satisfaction with the hours of services	48(46.6%)	33(32.2%)	10(9.7%)	9(8.7%)	100(97)
Reference services	17(16.5%)	71(68.9%)	9(8.7%)	3(2.9%)	100(97)
Book reservation services	25(24.3%)	60(58.3%)	13(12.6%)	2(1.9%)	100(97)

According to the table, majority of the respondents agreed that the medical libraries in question rendered some basic services that are relevant for the healthcare workers and the students. Specifically, the table elucidates that 81(78.6%) of the respondent agreed the library rendered lending service to them, and 19(18.4%) disagreed, 26(36.8%) of respondent agreed that the library rendered binding service to them, 19(18.4%) disagree that it rendered such service to

them. 54(52.5%) of the respondent agreed that the library rendered photocopy service, 46(34.%) disagreed. 29(28.2%) of the respondent agreed that the library have internet service to her client, 71(68.9%) disagreed on internet service, and 73(70.8%) of the respondents agreed on new arrival display, 27(26.3%) disagreed. 31(39.8%) of the respondent agreed on library outreach services, 59(57.3%) disagreed and 68(67.0%) strongly agree that the library offered referral services to them, 31(30.0%) disagreed to referral services. 36(34.9%) of respondent agreed on book mobile services, 64(62.1%) disagreed. 81(78.8%) agreed that the hour of services provided is ok while 19(18.4%) disagreed on the hour of services. 88(85.8%) Agreed of having the fore-knowledge of reference service, 12(11.6%) disagreed of the reference services. 85(82.6%) of respondent agreed of awareness the library offer book reservation service and 15(14.5%) of the respondent disagreed the library offer book reservation services.

Research Question 3: What is the level of Library User Satisfaction of Information Service in the Medical Libraries in Sokoto State?

Table 4: Level of Users' Satisfaction with Information Service in Medical Libraries

Users satisfaction	HS (%)	S (%)	MD (%)	NS (%)	Total
Accessibility to information materials	30(29.1%)	47(45.6%)	15(14.6%)	8(7.8%)	100(97)
Library as a good place	29(28.2%)	44(42.7%)	18(17.5%)	9(8.7%)	100(97)
Attitude of librarians	34(33.0%)	46(44.7%)	11(10.7%)	9(8.7%)	100(97)
Conducive environment	30(29.1%)	44(42.7%)	19(18.4%)	7(6.8%)	100(97)
Library ventilation	29(28.0%)	41(39.8%)	21(20.4%)	9(8.7%)	100(97)
Lighting	15(14.6%)	49(47.6%)	25(24.3%)	11(10.7%)	100(97)
Suitability of Library furniture	22(21.4)	32(31.1%)	36(35.0%)	10(9.7%)	100(97)
Opening and closing hour	51(49.5%)	26(25.2%)	14(13.6%)	9(8.7%)	100(97)
Library environment provide relaxation	20(19.4%)	49(47.6%)	20(19.4%)	11(10.7%)	100(97)

Table 4 reveals that 77(74.7%) of respondents were satisfied with the information material in the library, 23(22.4%) were not satisfied with the information materials in the library, 73(70.9%) of respondents were satisfied with the library while, 73(70.0%) are not satisfied to this. Again, 80(77.7%) of respondents were satisfied with the attitude of librarian and 20(19.4%) were not

satisfied with the attitude of the librarian. A total of 74(71.8%) respondent were satisfied with the conducive environment of the library, of respondents were not satisfied with the library environment. 70(67.8%) of the respondents were satisfied with the ventilation while 30(29.1%) of respondent were not satisfied with the library ventilation. 54(52.2%) were satisfied with the library tables and chairs while 44(22.3%) are not satisfied. 77(74.7%) of respondent were satisfied with the opening and closing hour of the library and are not satisfied. 69(67.0%) of respondents affirmed be satisfied with the library environment that provide relaxation, 31(30.1%) were not satisfied.

Research Question 4: What are the Challenges confronting the Users using Medical Libraries?

Table 5: Challenges confronting the Users using Medical Libraries

Challenges	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Total
Poor attitude of staff	6(5.8%)	16(15.5%)	48(46.6%)	30(29.1%)	100(97)
Inadequate information	6(5.8%)	21(20.4%)	50(48.5%)	23(22.3%)	100(97)
Poor services	9(8.7%)	18(17.5%)	45(43.7%)	28(27.2%)	100(97)
Lack ICT	20(19.2%)	26(25.2%)	26(25.2%)	28(27.2%)	100(97)
Lack of up to date material resources	5(4.9%)	14(13.6%)	59(57.3%)	22(21.4%)	100(97)
Information resource not relevant	6(5.8%)	11(10.7%)	53(51.5%)	28(27.2%)	100(97)
Poor library access	5(4.9%)	12(11.7%)	41(39.8%)	42(40.8%)	100(97)
Library ventilation	2(1.9%)	15(14.6%)	39(37.9%)	44(42.7%)	100(97)
Poor technical service	4(3.9%)	11(10.7%)	37(35.9%)	48(46.6%)	100(97)

Table 5 elucidate 22(21.3%) of respondent agreed on poor attitude of staff, 78(75.7%) disagreed on poor attitude of library staff. 27(26.2%) agreed on inadequate information and 73(70.8%) disagreed to it. 27(26.2%) agreed on poor services, 73(70.9%) disagreed on poor services. 19(18.6%) Agreed that the resources are outdated while 81(78.7%) disagreed. 17(16.5%) agreed that the information resources are not relevant, 81(78.7%) disagreed that the information resource are not relevant. 17(16.6%) agreed of the library location, 83(80.6%) disagreed. 17(16.5%) respondents agreed on the ventilation of the library and 83(80.6%) disagreed. 15(14.6%) agreed on poor technical service while 85(82.5%) disagreed.

Discussion of the findings

To ascertain the frequency and reason for library usage by users of medical libraries, the study reveals that the majority of library user' frequent visit the library twice in a week, majorly for reading. These calls for an urgent improvement in quality of services delivery rendered by research libraries, in order to keep attracting the potential users utilize the services rendered by the libraries. This disagrees with some studies that indicate research libraries are properly patronized by the researchers. It should be noted from this study that, there is an improvement on the use of research libraries through the information service provided since people no longer see it as a mushroom.

This is in line with Umenwa Ekene et al (2016) that researches libraries have been notify to improve literacy through various informational and educational services they render over time. The study also reveals that information needs for users of research libraries ranges from educational, historical, sports, current affairs, entertainment, internet related, social-cultural, occupational informational. Similarly, Igwe and Sulyman (2022) opined that every individual whether literate or illiterate, has different information needs. He echoed that the information could either be recreation, leisure or meeting tasks that are considered critical to survival or information that could be meant for day to day activities or even information that is necessary for good neighborhood, community and nation at large.

To identify the various information materials that meet users' needs, findings reveal that majority of the respondent agreed that general books, subject books, newspapers, journals and government publication are the materials consulted often, they disagreed of not providing them with video tapes, audio tapes and microfilms. The electronic resources are meant to be at the disposal of every research libraries in order to enhance information services delivery in the libraries. Lamba (2019) posited that, "intellectual access to recorded information has quite properly been a major pre-occupation of librarians" and that "intellectual access needs to be accompanied by physical access if the documents are to be used to obtain information." The libraries need to be equipped with electronics resources in line with the current trends in information organization, selection, retrieval and distribution to improved on productivity, Furthermore, the findings of the study also reveal that majority of the library users agreed that, they have being served with services such as lending, photocopying, new arrival display, referral, the hour of services provided is ok, reference and book reservation services, while they disagree

on internet services. This finding agrees with Sahabi and Otobo (2021) claim that most research libraries are not automated making the library difficult to cope in this era of ICT where it is used to facilitate provision of services to users.

To ascertain the user' satisfaction with medical library in general, findings also reveals that majority of the patrons affirmed to be satisfied with the information service rendered, information materials, the library as a good place to get needed information, attitude of librarians, conducive environment, ventilation, lighting, tables and chairs, closing and opening hour, library environment that provide relaxation. The International Federation of Library Institutions and Association (IFLA) set minimum standards for information resources, facilities and services to be provided by research libraries (IFLA, 2001).

The impact of the available information resources on researchers using the medical library is that journals/magazines are suitable and relevant in meeting their research work, researchers output have increased due to available information in the library, the available information usually provides link to other material in other libraries, and newspapers are always available which influence users satisfaction. Facilities to be provided include reading tables adequate enough for users, sitting chairs, book shelves, library space, fans, lighting, ventilation, flooring, restaurant, location of exit point, notice board/bulletin, photocopier, circulation desks and Other facilities that would make users comfortable for reading (IFLA, 2001). While the services include information Services, reference services, lending services, photocopying services, book reservation services and many others (IFLA, 2001). As regard this standard, research library can be said to have fulfill these requirements although there is still need to improve more on some of its resources, facilities and services.

As opined by Onwubiko (2021) that users' satisfaction of research library information resources and services is how users judge the services of the medical libraries and whether users of research library get desired information resources, facilities and services expected to be provided by the libraries. Medical library has to serve its users at any point and it must be able to give out quality information in terms of currency, relevance, accuracy and ease of use in order to meet and satisfy the information needs of its users.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study has assessed information service provision and user satisfaction in selected medical libraries in Sokoto State; so far the results generally indicate that there is a considerable level of satisfaction with the selected medical libraries through the provision of relevant services and resources and have utmost satisfaction in this, however, the internet/ICT service, database subscriptions, binding and book mobile are meant to make these libraries functional and strategic part of the research library system is actively lacking. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The management of those medical libraries should ensure that they provide ICT/internet facilities, subscribe to relevant database, other related and electronic resources should be included to users.
2. Adequate funding's should be provided by the management of those selected Medical Libraries for the smooth running of the library and should ensure the funds are used for the intended purpose.
3. There should be new re-creative services in order to enhance library users' satisfaction as majority of the library users are health professionals.

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