Skill Needs of Library Personnel for Effective Cataloguing and Classification Services in University Libraries in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

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Abstract: The study ascertained skill needs of library personnel for effective cataloguing and classification services in university libraries in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The study postulated two specific objectives and two research questions for the research direction. It adopted a descriptive research design. The target population of 223 personnel in university libraries were used. The multistage sampling technique was used to select the respondents. The researcher-developed instrument titled Skill Needs of Library Personnel for Effective Cataloguing and Classification Services Questionnaire (SNLPECCSQ) with the reliability indices of 0.93 and 0.88 on Cronbach Alpha was used for data collection. The gap analyses were conducted using descriptive statistics, which their mean gap values were used to answer the research questions. The findings revealed that library personnel did not possess the skills needed for effective cataloguing and classification services in the libraries. It was concluded that effective cataloguing and classification services of the libraries is dependent on the skills possessed by the library personnel through the knowledge of suitable computer software utilisation. Thus, it was recommended among others, that the universities should organise in-service training for the use of computer software to catalogue and classify library information in the university libraries in the study area.

Keywords: skill needs, library personnel, cataloguing and classification services, university libraries

Introduction

Cataloguing and classification services are globally acknowledged as a means of achieving efficient information resources to library users for effective academic efforts. Apart from the manual cataloguing and classification services, information and communication technology (ICT) tools could help to facilitate the cataloguing and classification of information resources in the library. Hence, ICT could aid to demonstrate the sharing of information resources in order to meet up with the needs for effective library services to the users. ICT tools can assist in the integration of diverse information activities; enhance cataloguing and classification accuracies, data access and retrieval and efficient information dissemination (Sigh, 2009). ICT or digital cataloguing describes the utilization of computer software in the networks to perform cataloguing activities in the library that can promote accessibility and accuracy for effective information resource. Esse (2013) acknowledged that library personnel can use ICT cataloguing to prepare catalogue entries with accuracies and efficiencies to the satisfaction of library users in the universities. Universities are learning communities and the use of libraries is very pertinent for successful administration and improvement of learning gains among students in order to meet up with the academic yearning needs of societies for sustainable economic workforce.

Also, the application of ICT in cataloguing and classification is capable of promoting administrative information resources effectiveness in the library in terms of sorting of electronic books, manuscripts, journals, floppy disk, DVD, CD ROMS, audio visual materials (micro forms microfilms, microfiches and micro cards). It could also assist in constant accessibility to digital materials, motion pictures, sound recording, graphic and cartographic materials to be processed in the internet. Besides, Aina and Onuoha (2016) asserted that the library classification with ICT knowledge and skills can systemically help in the generation of notation (in case of DDC, it is Arabic numerals) electronically to the library document management. The electronic system can assist to automatically generate Library of Congress Classification (LCC) numbers, or National Library of Medicine (NLM) classification numbers, and subject headings from the Faceted Application of Subject Terminology (FAST) towards accessible ICT library information management (Cerbo, 2011). The automatic classification of library document using software are far away from being implemented in universities in Nigeria, perhaps due to many reasons such as lack of infrastructure, qualified personnel, library environment and funding among others. Accordingly, web and merging of different databases of different libraries help ICT cataloguing and classification of library document easier for efficient information services to library users (Ebiwolate, 2010).

The inability to integrate this new system of digitalisation in library services is affecting the work behaviour of many staff in Universities in Nigeria and negatively affects their operational capacities towards high performance. The adaptation to this new technology requires the acquisition of certain skills to successfully demonstrate effectiveness and quality work output. The library workers have to possess skills that can enable them originate information (writing and typing), preserve and store (manuscript, paper-print media), process (classification, cataloguing and indexing), retrieve (catalogues, indexes), disseminate or communicate (list, bibliographies, abstracts, hard copies) and destroy or discard where necessary (physical weeding). These skills if successfully possessed are capable of enhancing the capacity of the personnel to perform cataloguing and classification responsibilities for

effective library information services in the universities. They would encourage personnel effectiveness as the needs arise for the transformation of the library system in the study area. Hence, this becomes the rationale for this study to examine the skill needs of library personnel for effective cataloguing and classification services in the universities in the study area.

Literature Review

Recently, due to the digital age, ICT is holistically changing the pedagogical practices of traditional library systems to a more modernised pattern of information services. ICT has greatly impacted on library systems, services, and operations with regards to many activities of libraries such as cataloguing and classification as well as indexing for quality information services in the library (Akidi & Okezie, 2018). To successfully operate in the new e-learning environment, knowledge of these identified ICT tools become necessary for both the Librarian and other staff are imperative. Lau and Sim (2008) reported that despite the apparent benefits of the use of ICT for educational purpose, studies showed that in many cases, the learning potential of ICT is deprived as many personnel in educational environment including library and information service officers are still not fully ICT literate.

Mabayoje, Isah, Bajeh and Oyekunle (2015) stated that the benefits derivable from the application of ICT in the education sectors can only be maximized when the potential users are competent in the usage of the new technology. Oni and Adebisi (2011) reported that there is effect of ICT skills and its application for teaching and learning on record management. The authors posited that a person without the working knowledge of computers in the modern technological world will not be able to go far in life as far as his career options are concerned. This is because there is nothing in this world that does not work on computer technology (Balanskat, Blamire & Kefala, 2006).

Hence, the acquisition of appropriate skills is required in order for existing personnel to cope with the demands of the present job requirement. Thus, it is gradually becoming difficult among people due to adaptability process that is always time consuming. It involves the understanding of the features of the new systems, facilities to be used, the operational techniques and the skills needs of the software to be used and the entire working environment. However, the application of ICT is not a matter of being imported and used. Instead, it requires a specific level of knowledge and skills before one would be able to operate the equipment properly and it will depend on a specific level of applicability (Moses, 2009). These skills may help to improve the computerisation of cataloguing and classification activities that are crucial in library for information management system resources to users in academic environment. The online Computer Library Center, Inc (OCLC) acquired the DDC to facilitate immediate library functions for achievement of the desire goals of management information system (Caragea, Silvescu, Kataria, Caragea, & Mitra, 2011). While the interface can be used both by a machine as well as human being, it can provide access to more than 36 million collectively built records from a large pool of related resources (Aina, 2004).

It is postulated that the use of ICT makes the cataloguing easier and accurate to achieve efficient information services delivery for library users in institutions of higher learning. Notably, continuous use of ICT equipment can make cataloguing and classification jobs easier for exploring manipulative experiences for efficient web-base publications. Nwakundo, Oguejiofor and Nwankwo (2006) acknowledged that information and communication technology is a tool that comprises electronic devices, which are utilized for the information and communication needs of institutions, organizations, students and individuals. As electronic devices, it includes computers (software and hardware), networking, telephone, video, multimedia and internet (Osakwe, 2012). The growing popularity of the Web influences all aspects of our lives and has changed the way we live, work, study and even think. As a result, the role of librarians and information professionals is subject to radical changes. Information and communication technology has come to stay in libraries in respect to automation and computerization. For libraries, it is not a matter of free choice of alternatives.

Wong (2014) established that libraries and librarians must come to terms with the use of ICT in their operations if they hope to fit properly into the profession. Equally, one does not think that this is the time to argue if a change in society, especially technological change hitherto affects the operations of the Library. The fact remains that the profession has transformed substantially due to changes in the Information and ICT environment. Ramzan and Singh (2009) discussed the effects, of the changes which ICT brought to library operations. The authors articulated that it is a veritable tool for information generation and dissemination to this extent; it requires much tact and techniques including doggedness to keep pace with it. The tact one would argue is the ability of the librarians to improve their professional competence to suit the realities of the present day. The technique is the ability to manipulate and operate those technologies that help in the generation, storage and dissemination of information (Okoroafor, 2013).

The new Information age has strictly divided the work of the information profession into two: creating access to, and the communication (dissemination) of information. Access creation is within the task of the librarian (Iloegbunam & Olorunsola, 2006). This implies that the library should be able to structure workforce and to create good access base, starting from an interaction base that involves its users in the selection/ acquisition stage. This access should be based on available materials/ books and journals, which should be indexed; catalogued and classified properly. Cataloguing and indexing should no longer be based on imaginary subject listing but on user need. Index theory has suggested the "aboutness" theory as the most feasible means of creating access to users. The creation of new types of resources as well as new forms of communication as a result of digitization has a major impact on cataloguing. Also the evolution of scholarly publication from print to digital form coupled with the explosion of online content on the web resulted in a paradigm shift in libraries from mainly ownership of collection to a combination of ownership and access to subscription databases and other free web resources which provide full text of Journals and books (Jagboro, 2003).

Classification is a procedure of grouping similar items and objects and is essential in formulating groups (Esse, 2013). This process helps the user to arrange, organize and make a logical sense of articles which also assists the user to locate them in an easy manner. The utilisation of ICT towards cataloguing and classification of information resources in libraries helps to identify appropriate subject headings, assign suitable call marks, prepare catalogue entries, produce catalogue cards and library catalogue maintenance among many others. The user usually experiences challenging situation if he or she does not possess the needed skills for computer cataloguing and classification of library service for effective service delivery in the university system. The achievement of the on how to recognise and locate recorded knowledge as contained in books (printed and electronic), serials, databases, and other media that currently flood the book industry and the web (Akidi & Okezie, 2018).

Statement of problem

It is commonly observed that library personnel have recently become deficient in their cataloguing and classification practices due to lack of knowledge of computer software application for such library services, despite their professional competence. The use of computer software in library as a library resource in Universities in Akwa Ibom State renders most of the personnel of library services redundant even when they are still occupying positions in their offices. Even though most of them were successfully trained outside the university for Digital Library Services including cataloguing and classification, they are inept in the use of software that can guarantee effective library operations. Recently, the Universities in Akwa Ibom State have provided some of the ICT infrastructure and space for digitalisation of the library, but they are complaining of the competency of library personnel who can handle such responsibility. This lack of digital skills among the responsible personnel has caused serious setback for the university administrative development regarding digitalisation of its library departments. The delay to digitalise the whole libraries of the universities are presumed to be caused by the ineptitude of library personnel regarding the effective operation of the software applications suitable for cataloguing and classification services of the library to the benefit of users.

Of course, workers' deficiency in adapting to the current trend of digital library operations hinders proficiency in administration and the productivity of the library services in these institutions. The library workers' inability to possess the needed skills for effective cataloguing and classification services is worrisome, as this position has affected the supposed implementation decision of these universities regarding the digitalisation of libraries. Thus, it has basically negatively affected the personnel work dynamics, students' reading habits and learning as well as research capacities of lecturers among many other benefits of libraries' digitalisation in the University. Hence, the problem of this study is that library personnel do not possess the needed skills that can buttress the cataloguing and classification services in the University libraries. This is most likely because they are not proficient in the use of cataloguing and classification software application that can assist them to execute library services in the Universities. This has necessitated the curiosity of the researcher to investigate the skill needs of library personnel for effective cataloguing and classification services in University libraries in Akwa Ibom State.

Objectives of the study
1) Determine the skill needs of library personnel for effective cataloguing services in the University libraries in Akwa Ibom State.
2) Determine the skill needs of library personnel for effective classification services in the University libraries in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Question
1) What are the skill needs of library personnel for effective cataloguing services in University libraries in Akwa Ibom State?
2) What are the skill needs of library personnel for effective cataloguing services in University libraries in Akwa Ibom State?

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted and used in this study. It was considered suitable as the design allows the researcher to describe and examine those skills required of library personnel for effective cataloguing and classification services of University libraries in the study area. The study was conducted in University libraries in Akwa Ibom State. Akwa Ibom State has two universities, one federal University and a State University. The federal University is known as University of Uyo (Uniuyo) located in Uyo Metropolis, whereas the State University is called Akwa Ibom State University (AKSU), Ikot Akpaden, Mkpat Enin Local Government Area. UNIUYO was established in 1991 through the former University of Cross Rivers State (UNICROS), while AKSU was established 2002 respectively. The population for this study consists of 223 respondents (15 Librarians and 208 library support staff (122 library personnel from UNIUYO while 86 library support staff from AKSU) in the two universities in Akwa Ibom State (the field work by Ezeibe, 2019). The administration of the instrument was performed with the whole 233 library personnel that is the population of the study. There was no sample since the population was scant.

The multistage sampling technique was used to select the respondents. The research instrument was designed by the researcher, titled *Skill Needs of Library Personnel for Effective Cataloguing and Classification Services Questionnaire* (SNLPECCSQ) derived from the findings of the reviewed literature related to the study. The instrument had two sections, A and B. Section A obtained bio-data of the respondents, Section B elicited data from the skill needs of Library Personnel for effective Cataloguing and Classification of services. The instrument was structured based on a 4-point summated scale for both respondents. The measure for research librarian in the universities was as follows: Highly Needed (HN) = 4, Needed (N) = 3, Not Needed (NN) = 2 and Not Highly Needed (NHN) = 1. Similarly, the measure for library personnel in libraries was as follows: Highly Possessed (HP) = 4, Possessed (P) = 3, Not Possessed (NP) = 2 and Not Highly Possessed (NHP) = 1. The face validity of the instrument was

ascertained by 2 experts in Library and Information Science, while 1 expert was from Educational Measurement and Evaluation, all in the Faculty of Education, University of Uyo, Uyo. The instrument was subjected to internal consistency test with the Cronbach Alpha statistics that generated 0.91 coefficients, through a trial test on 20 library personnel. This study used mean and standard deviation of item by item gaps score to answer the Research Questions.

The decision is to determine gaps between the skills needed and the skills possessed using the following steps: The weighted mean of each item under the skills needed component is shown as Xn was computed. The weighted mean of each item under the skills possessed component also shown as Xp was computed. The difference between the two weighted means were determined as (Xn –Xp) = PGs for each item of the questionnaire. Where; (a) the difference between Xn and Xp = 0 for any item, there was no skills needed because the level at which competency of item needed was equal to the level at which the library personnel could perform skilfully for effective ICT cataloguing and classification information services in the study area.; and (b) when the difference in Xn and Xp is negative (-) for each item, it means there was no need for skill because the level at which the skill needed in item was lower than the level at which the library personnel could skilfully attain effective ICT cataloguing and classification information services of University libraries (c) the difference in Xn and Xp was positive (+) for each item means, there was skills needed because the level at which the skill item needed was higher than the level at which the library personnel could skilfully attain effective ICT cataloguing and classification information services of the University libraries.

Results

The result of data analyses of this study are presented in tables 1 to 2.

Research Question 1

What are the skills needed of library personnel for effective cataloguing services in University libraries in Akwa Ibom State?

Table 1:   Mean responses of skills needed of library personnel for successful cataloguing in the Universities

S/N	Item Statement	XP	XP	Gap (Xe – Xp)	Remarks
1.	Basic window skills	3.68	2.45	1.23	SN
2.	Online cataloguing skills	3.38	1.64	1.74	SN
3.	Basic Internet skills	3.57	1.79	1.78	SN
4.	Library software skills	3.62	1.83	1.79	SN
5	Books and pamphlets	3.32	1.85	1.47	SN
6	Printed sheets	3.41	1.49	1.92	SN
7	Cartographic materials	3.57	1.90	1.67	SN
8	Manuscripts	3.29	2.29	1.99	SN
9	Music and sound recordings	3.46	1.71	1.75	SN
10	Motion pictures and video records	3.16	3.40	1.24	SN
11	Graphic materials	3.44	1.67	1.77	SN
12	Database files	3.48	1.46	2.01	SN
13	Three dimensional artefacts and realia	3.60	1.58	2.02	SN
14	Microforms and serials	3.44	1.62	1.82	SN

Source: Field survey data from the Researcher, 2019.
Key: XN = Mean Needed, XP = Mean Possessed, EC = Effective Cataloguing Gap, RMK = Remarks.

The data analysis in Table 2 shows the items of the skills needed by library personnel for effective cataloguing and classification services in university libraries. As presented in Table 2, the result indicates that the library workers in the University Libraries are in need of these ICT embedded skills for effective cataloguing and classification services. Hence, the answer to the research question is that library personnel are in need of all the cataloguing skills for effective job performance in the University libraries in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. This study in support of the study of Oni and Adebisi (2011), which reported that the effect of ICT skills and its application for library record management are pertinent and without the working knowledge of computer software and their application in the ICT environment, no workers can function effectively.

Research Question 2

What are the skills needed of library personnel for effective classification services in University libraries in Akwa Ibom State?

Table 2:   Mean responses of skills needed of library personnel for effective classification services in the Universities

S/N	Item Statement	XP	XP	Gap (Xe – Xp)	Remarks
1	Folders arrangement	3.54	1.30	2.24	SN
2	Information collection management	3.40	1.60	1.80	SN
3	Information generation	3.52	1.47	2.05	SN
4	circulation of documents	3.48	1.41	2.06	SN
5	statistical data referencing	3.30	1.89	1.41	SN
6	information weeding	3.65	2.57	1.08	SN
7	Information service skills	3.16	3.40	2.04	SN
8	Selective dissemination skill	3.44	1.67	1.77	SN
9	User profile description ski	3.48	1.46	2.01	SN
10	Internet exploration	3.60	1.58	2.02	SN
11	Subject entry	3.44	1.62	1.82	SN
12	Downloading	3.40	1.57	1.83	SN
13	presentation	3.54	1.30	2.24	SN
14	Navigation	3.40	1.60	1.80	SN
15	Metadata analysis	3.89	1.76	2.13	SN
16	file discovery	3.70	1.59	2.11	SN

Source: Field survey data from the Researcher, 2019.
Key: XN = Mean Needed, XP = Mean Possessed, EC = Effective Classification Gap, RMK = Remarks.

The data analysis in Table 2 shows the items of the skills needed by library personnel for effective ICT cataloguing and classification of library information service materials of university libraries. As presented in Table 2, the result indicates that the library workers in the University Libraries are in need of these ICT embedded skills for effective ICT cataloguing and classification of information services. Hence, the answer to the research question is that library personnel need all the 16 digital embedded skills for effective classification services in the University libraries in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. This in study in support of the study of Oni and Adebisi (2011), which reported that the effect of ICT skills and its application for education on record management are pertinent and without the working knowledge of computers in the modern technological world, no worker can function effectively. The finding of this study is collaborating with the assertion of Mabayoje, Isah, Bajeh and Oyekunle (2015), established that the benefits derivable from the application of computer software in library education can only be maximized when the potential users are competent in the usage of the new technology.

Conclusion

Based on the finding of this study it is concluded that effective cataloguing and classification services of the libraries is dependent on the skills possessed by the library personnel through the knowledge of suitable computer software. This is most likely because when the library personnel are unskilful regarding the use of computer software suitable for the cataloguing and classification function of the libraries, their job performance would be suffering from mediocrity. This may inhibit the chances of effective library services that would improve the learning integrity of education in the university for productive graduates from the University.

Recommendations

Sequel to the finding of this study, it is recommended that the Universities should organise in-service training for the use of computer software to catalogue and classify library information in the University libraries. This would go a long way to equip library personnel to acquire the needed skills for effective cataloguing and classicisation services in the library. Accordingly, the acquisition of these needed ICT library embedded skills by the library personnel would prompt the authorities of the Universities to continue implementing the digitalisation of libraries in the Universities for effective actualisation of learning. It would further mitigate inexperience and inefficiency of the library workers for improvement of cataloguing and classification services of the libraries in the study area.

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