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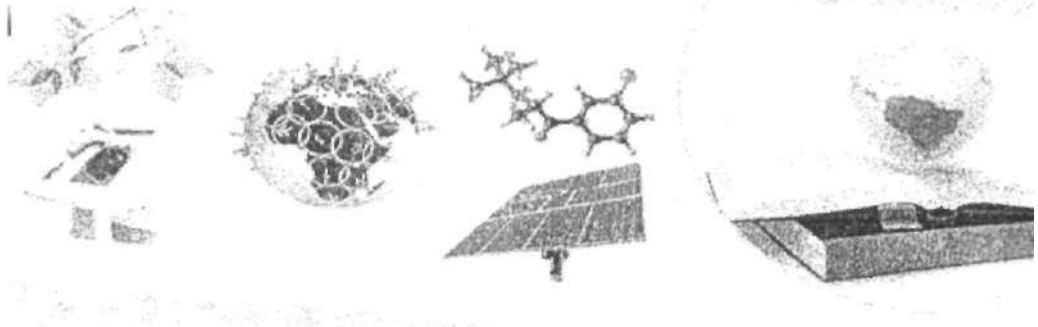
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Human and Physical Environmental Factors Affecting Students' Utilization of Library and Information Services in Colleges of Education Libraries in Nigeria

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Abstract: A cross-sectional survey on human and physical environmental factors affecting students' utilization of library and information service in collects of education libraries in Nigeria was conducted and reported in this paper. 648 students and 16 colleges of Education librarians were sampled, using a multistage simf>le random and purposive sampling technique. Structured questionnaires for students and college librarians' responses were used for data collection and interpretation for identification of problems. Results showed that students face human and physical environmental factors. Human factors were categorized as: students' lack of attendance at library user education, improper organization of library materials, shelf guidance and arrangement, insufficient and unfriendly staff attitude, users' attitude, insecurity of students' properties, unfavoruable rules and regulations for readers, crowded students timetable and lack of students' encouragement by lecturers. While physical factors were categorized as: inadequate hooks loaned out, Inadequate facilities and equipment, students' preference of hostel use than library, poor maintenance of facilities and untidy environment. The study concluded with recommendations that students and colleges' librarians were different on most of the environmental factors that affect students' utilization of library and information services in colleges of education libraries in Nigeria.

Keywords: Students; colleges librarians; human; physical; environment factors; utilization; library and Information service; Colleges of Education; National Commission for Colleges of Education and Nigeria.

I. Introduction

Colleges of Education (COEs) in Nigeria are one of the three arms of tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria. These are: Colleges of education, Polytechnics and Universities. Colleges of Education were established as a result of the Nigerian Government White Paper published in 1961, which recommended the training of professional teachers for the award of Nigerian Certificate of Education (NCE). The NCE teacher education is offered in COEs with some Polytechnics and Universities. They are recognized as sure key that opens the door to national development and teachers are the rightful persons to turn that key. To increase the quality of the NCE programme and for the purpose of harmonization and standardisation, the Federal Government of Nigeria by virtue of Decree No. 3 of 1989 established the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) as the highest supervisory agency for all NCE programmes in Nigeria. There are over 68 Colleges of Education in Nigeria. Of the 68 colleges, 21 are directly financed by the federal Government of Nigeria; 41 by the state governments; 1 by the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja and 4 by the private proprietors in Nigeria.

Coileges of Education world over, have as their objectives of serving as training institutions for students and staff with opportunity to continue their own education; whether in subjects taken at school or in others not hither to taken by them. They also provide a professional training for them as prospective teachers. This aspect of their function include: study, research, teaching and practice of education. In Nigeria for instance, COEs have as their other functions; the production of professional teachers for the primary and the Junior Secondary Schools. The goals of Teacher Education as to produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system; encourage and further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers; help teachers to fit into the social life of the community and society at large and to enhance their commitment to national goals; provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to any changing situation (not only in the life of their country, but in the wider world); and enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession. To achieve these goals and objectives of the COEs in the country; the Colleges of Education libraries (COELs), as reservoir of information in form of print and non-print media, have become an inevitable adjunct for general academic

pursuits for both lecturers and students in the colleges. Lecturers and students need the information for study, research and vocational improvement. Whenever they are not satisfied with the information provided to them by the college libraries, their personal objectives, and those of the institution will not be achieved. As a mark of adherence to the above objectives of the college libraries, each COEL is expected to provide a motivated and satisfactory library and information services (LIS) to meet the information needs of its users.

Library and information services are of central importance in COE because they enhance knowledge acquisition and improve the competences of teachers thereby making learning more meaningful for the students. It equally reduces educational costs, because it assists in the development and promotion of innovative materials by staff and students. It also assists in the development, assessment and improvement of educational programmes. These library and information services could be defined as those tangible and intangible activities that contribute to users' drive that stem from the conscious or unconscious goal of satisfying their information needs. Both staff and students are inevitably heavily dependent upon the institutional library and information services in order to achieve their academic objectives and so justify the huge investment financially on the institutional libraries. However, for any meaningful and effective utilization of library and information services by students in tertiary institutions, the environment which could be human or physical should be favourable or conducive to the users. Reference [1] defines environment as "any of every influence with which an individual comes into contact after the hereditary pattern has been received through the germ plasma". The behavior of human beings can be presumed to be the influence of what is called 'nature' and 'nurture'. The nature is what one has inherited from his or her parents while the nurture is the environment in which the individual lives.

Some of the environmental factors in the library situation include human factors, such as: gender or marital status of the users; who could be male or female, married or single. Other aspects include library opening hours; lending policy where in some cases libraries vary in the loan of materials to their users and the duration. There is also the library staff cooperation or attitude, which could be favourable or unfavourable to the users. Users in this paper, refers to terms such as: clients, patrons, readers, customers, inquirers or library members. The person who does not use the library is known as a non-user. The term also is used to mean students in the colleges of education who use the college libraries. The two terms, that is "users" and "students" shall be used interchangeably in this paper. The physical factors on the other hand could include light; reading space relative to acoustics or sources of noise and in relation to the students' residence whether on-campus or off- campus.

II. Literature Review

Of the many that have looked at the relationship between use and library facilities in tertiary institutions, none is known to produce a definite answer to the Question "Do environment affect students utilization of library and information services in colleges of education libraries?" Reference [2] found evidence to suggest that the library and its resources should be built to support the school curriculum and lessons in the use of books and libraries. Reference [3] and [4] when discussing on school libraries and their services in support of the educational programmes of schools; stated that such libraries should have a well-stocked, adequately balanced and well-organized collection of books and non-books media that are easily accessible for teachers and students use. However, reference [5] and [6] were much particular on the location of the school library; where they indicated that it should be located in a quiet area away from games fields, canteens and should be centrally located in the school for easy accessibility from students' hostels and departments.

According to reference [7] the library is certainly of no use to its community, even if it achieves the highest level of self-analysis by mathematics techniques and through operations research, if it is unable to deliver within reasonable time the reading materials requested. The library staff that should be thoroughly acquainted with major library functions; should also, have sound training and experience in library service. Reference [8] supporting this idea of trained personnel of a University library, stated that after library materials have been received and duly processed, they are sent to the cataloguing department where they are identified and organized for effective use of the library's clientele. He went further to indicate that the basic test of the quality of any University library is its ability to get into the hands of the reader the book he wants and when he wants it.

Staff behaviour according to reference [9] is most important in influencing users. Poor performance can only serve to accentuate an already poor image. The opening hours of library's early stages of establishment are likely to be very short in a day, but as its stock and its potentialities grow, so will the demand for a more sustained service. Reference [2] supporting this view stated that the staff of the library will be needed to work extra hours to satisfy students quest for information in the library. Talking on the planning, accommodation and user facilities in the library, reference [10] observed that individual needs of students, where he indicated that while individuals needs vary, and the basic requirements of the students in higher institutions include: comfortable and adequate study facilities; long hours of opening; a substantial well-chosen book stock, augmented by periodicals; basic reference and information services; a flexible issue system, backed by speedy inter-library loans, reservation and request systems and instruction in library use, linked with a high quality personnel services at the enquiry desk and a supply of carefully prepared library publications.

Reference [11] went further to state that all the ingredients which constitute the library space, the fabrics and furnishings, the heating and lighting, the structural layout must be designed so that a clear relationship exists between them-for they are all complementing to one another and essential for proper planned homogenous accommodation. However, reference [12] in their study on use of library by 60 academic staff of two colleges in Nigeria revealed that the colleges libraries were not well utilized for research and recreational reading due to lack of books and periodicals. Also, the libraries do not provide conducive atmosphere for academic work. Although, reference [13] observed that the majority of the Administrative Training Institute (ATI) in India faculty members give first priority to the physical 'environment' and services aspect of the library service quality. Their findings could not include students of the institutes.

Library statistics in tertiary institutions suggest that there is low students utilization of library services, especially at COELs recorded during accreditation exercises and attended by the researchers. The low utilization of services, seem to suggest that the efforts of the lecturers whose main objectives is to direct the students' mind towards finding out detailed and comprehensive facts on what has been taught is not supplemented. This has been an issue of concern to librarians and the management of Colleges of Education Libraries in Nigeria. This phenomenon may have militated against the students passing their prescribed examinations with ease since they are exposed to circumscribed knowledge of their subject disciplines. It was therefore pertinent to investigate how the environmental factors influence the students' use or not use the library and information services provided in the Colleges of Education Libraries in Nigeria.

This paper is poised to finding answers to the following research questions: (i) What are the human and physical environmental factors as perceived by students and college librarians affect students' use of Library and information services provided in colleges of education libraries in Nigeria? (ii) Is there any difference in the perception made by the students and college librarians on the environmental factors affecting the use of library and information services by the students in the college libraries? The paper is important because it will assist/help the National Commission for Colleges of Education, the administrators and proprietors of both old and newly established Colleges of Education (federal, states and private) and other tertiary institutions in the country and elsewhere to have an in-depth understanding of the human and physical environmental factors affecting students' use of the library and information services in the colleges of education libraries in Nigeria. The identification of the factors and the suggestions will go a long way to improving the existing library and information services' use and services.

III. Methodology

A cross-sectional survey research was employed for this study, where two category response options' questionnaires of four and three sections on each for students and Colleges librarians were used to elicit responses on the human and physical environmental factors affecting students utilization of library and information services in colleges of education libraries in Nigeria. Adequate guidelines on how to complete the questionnaire by both students and college librarians were provided for the respondents. The ethical issues in terms of respondents consent and what the information shall be used was provided inform of letter for the respondents, who was at liberty to choosing to be involved in the study.

A face validation of the instrument was done by experts drawn from the National Commission for Colleges of Education and Department of Library and information Science, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The items were modified in line with the experts' comments, observations and recommendations before the instruments were administered to respondents in a pilot study. The pilot study was carried out at Federal College of Education, Zaria and College of education, Gidan-waya Kafanchan. Sixty (60) respondents of thirty (30) students each from the two colleges were randomly selected with stratification for gender, were involved in the pilot study. NCE I and pre-NCE students were not on campus. Only NCE II and NCE III students and regular not Sandwich programme were involved in the pilot study. The college librarians from the two colleges were also used for the study.

The results of the Pilot study indicated that factors relating to services and facilities were perceived by the college librarians to constitute problems for students' utilization of library and information services. While the students themselves perceived services, facilities, distance of students residence and transportation problems as issues faced. It was found that the factors that include: year of library establishment, students' enrolment, departmental libraries or library site as perceived by college librarians as factors that were not critical to students' effective utilization of Library and information services. But it was found that use of library before coming to institution and use of library at present institution were critical factors in determining students' perception of the problems confronting them in the utilization of library and information services in colleges of education. However, gender, marital status, course of study, occupation before coming to institution, level of study or place of residence were not found to be critical factors in the student utilization of library services. The reliability of the instrument was obtained by using a split-half method of inter-correlation and a reliability coefficient of 0.71.

Students and colleges librarians in colleges of Education in Nigeria formed the target population of the study. Sixteen (16) out of the sixty-eight (68) colleges of education were sampled. The colleges were sampled

based on geographical spread, proprietorship, type of programme (i.e general, special and technical) and researcher's convenience in terms of financial resources and mobility to the colleges of education that were sparsely located in the country. The colleges comprised of 11 Federal, 4 States and 1 Private. The study was limited to only students who were in the Pre-NCE, NCE.I, NCE.II and NCE. III programmes; as well as colleges' librarians that were heading the college libraries involved in the study. The NCE programme is designed to last for three academic years for students that fulfilled the basic admission requirement but students without the basic admission requirement were first admitted to do a one year preliminary qualifying courses and pass the required examination for the NCE regular admission. The one year programme is called Pre-NCE (*i.e.* Preliminary-National Certificate of Education).

The data collection for the study was done through the administration of the instruments to the college librarians' by the researcher personally at the sample institutions. While the instruments for the students were given to the college Librarians with simple instructions on the administration procedures. Respondents were randomly selected with stratification for gender. All respondents were enjoined to respond to items on the questionnaire as honestly as possible. Names were not asked to be written on the questionnaire to ensure unbiased responses. More so, an expected fear of being identified as a respondent will be eliminated. However, table 1 is the list of colleges of education libraries involved in the study, number of students and college librarians respondents in each of the colleges, proprietorship, geographical spread and type of programmes of colleges involves in the study.

Table 1: Colleges of Education Libraries (COELs) involved in the study according to respondents, proprietorship, geographical spread and type of programmes in the colleges

s/n	Colleges libraries involved in study	Respondents		Proprietorship			Geopolitical			Type of programme		
		Students	College librarians	Federal	States	Private	North	West	East	General	Special	Technical
1	FCE, Katsina	31	1	X	-	-	X	-	-	x	-	-
2	FCE, Zaria	43	1	X	-	-	X	-	-	x	-	-
3	FCE, Yola	48	1	X	-	-	X	-	-	x	-	-
4	FCE, Omoku	28	1	X	-	-	-	-	x	-	-	-
5	FCE, Oleine	48	1	X	-	-	X	-	-	x	-	-
6	FCE, Akoka	10	1	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-
7	FCE, , Eha-Amufu	46	1	X	-	-	-	-	x	x	-	-
8	FCE,(T) Pankshin,	38	1	X	-	-	X	-	-	x	-	X
9	FCE,(T),Umunze	44	1	X	-	-	-	-	x	-	-	X
10	FCE,(S), Oyo	48	1	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	x	X
11	FCE,(T) Gombe	49	1	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	X
12	COE, Kumbutso	34	1	-	X	-	X	-	-	x	-	-
13	COE,Kafanchan	34	1	-	X	-	X	-	-	x	-	-
14	COE, Gindiri	50	1	-	X	-	X	-	-	x	-	-
15	COE, Ankpa	45	1	-	X	-	-	-	x	x	-	-
16	Project Time,COE Akoka Lagos	46	1	-	-	x	-	X	-	x	-	-
	Total	648	16	11	4	1	9	3	4	11	1	4

Key
COE = College of Education
FCE = Federal College of Education
FCE (T) = Federal College of Education (Technical)
FCE (S) = Federal College of Education (Special)

IV. Results

The response rate for the study was 664(100%) for both respondents (students and colleges librarians). However, 648(100%) was made by students and 16(100%) was colleges librarians response rate respectively. The SPSS version 10, computer programme was used to analyze the data collected on the human and physical environmental factors affecting students' utilization of library and information services in colleges of education libraries. The items were measured on a five point scale, using an equal interval of 0.80, thus the guideline below was used for interpreting the attitude scores of respondents on environmental factors that affect students use of library and information services in the colleges of education libraries. A mean score was considered strongly disagreed (SD), if it falls within the range of 1.00 - 1.80; a mean score within the range 1.80 - 2.60 was

taken as Disagreed (D); a mean within the range 2.60 - 3.40 was considered undecided (UD), while a mean score within the range 3.40 - 4.20 was taken as Agreed (A); and a mean score within the range 4.20 - 5.00 was considered strongly Agreed (SA) for positive items. Analyses were carried out on the two sets of questionnaires to determine how the students and college librarians responded to the items through the use of a t-test to compare students and colleges librarians' differences in responses to the items.

A. Environmental Factors Affecting Students' Use of Library and Information Services

Table 2 depicts the items description of human and physical environmental factors in the colleges of education libraries as perceived by students (SDS) and colleges librarians' (CLS) respondents. The table also reflects the decisions taken on the Mean and standard deviation comparison of students and college librarians' perception on each of the items 1 – 19 as perceived by both SDS and CLS respectively.

Table 2: Decision on Environmental Factors Affecting Use by Students of Library and Information Services in Colleges of Education Libraries as Perceived by Students and Colleges Librarians' Respondents

S/NO	Item description	Groups	Respondents	X	SD	Decision
1.	Inadequate library books in disciplines taught	SDS	646	2.72	1.46	UD
		CLS	16	2.94	1.73	UD
2.	Lack of current library books	SDS	646	3.17	1.47	UD
		CLS	16	2.25	1.65	D
3.	Inadequate books loaned out	SDS	646	3.49	1.41	A
		CLS	16	2.44	1.63	D
4.	Inadequate period of books loaned	SDS	646	2.98	1.55	UD
		CLS	16	1.63	1.20	SD
5.	Domestic work for married women	SDS	646	2.14	1.52	D
		CLS	16	2.06	1.73	D
6.	Living off-campus	SDS	646	2.87	1.71	UD
		CLS	16	2.88	1.89	UD
7.	Distance of hostel from library	SDS	646	2.92	1.62	UD
		CLS	16	1.63	1.26	SD
8.	Availability of departmental libraries	SDS	646	2.66	1.65	UD
		CLS	16	1.50	1.15	SD
9.	Transportation difficulties	SDS	646	2.64	2.69	UD
		CLS	16	1.81	1.38	D
10.	Library sitting in a noisy area	SDS	646	2.31	1.53	D
		CLS	16	1.50	1.21	SD
11.	Inadequate opening hours	SDS	646	2.67	1.58	UD
		CLS	16	1.88	1.20	D
12.	Library not opened daily	SDS	646	2.17	1.37	D
		CLS	16	1.81	1.33	D
13.	Poor lighting in library	SDS	646	2.38	1.55	SD
		CLS	16	1.50	1.21	D
14.	Inadequate seating facilities	SDS	646	3.08	1.57	UD
		CLS	16	2.25	1.61	SD
15.	Harsh loan penalty for defaulters	SDS	646	2.80	1.44	UD
		CLS	16	1.50	1.03	SD
16.	Unfriendly attitude of library staff	SDS	646	2.28	1.33	D
		CLS	16	1.50	1.03	SD
17.	Unhelpful attitude of library staff	SDS	646	1.03	1.25	D
		CLS	16	1.38	1.02	SD
18.	Attendance at library use education	SDS	646	1.21	0.58	SD
		CLS	16	1.07	0.50	SD
19.	Lack of students' attendance at library use education	SDS	646	3.47	1.72	A
		CLS	16	3.50	2.07	A

KEY
X = Mean
SD = Standard Deviation
UD = Undecided
D = Disagreed
A = Agreed
SD = Strongly Disagreed

From the analysis on table 2 above, students perceived two (2) environmental factors that affect their use of library and information services in COELs. These factors were: "Inadequate books loaned out to students (item: 3)" and "Lack of students attendance at library use education (item: 19)". These factors can be categorized as inadequate services and lack of library use education. However, one may derive from the students responses that the factors: (1) inadequate books on students disciplines; (2) Lack of current books; (4) inadequate loaned period; (6) living off-campus; (7) library location from students residence; (8) use of departmental libraries by

students; (9) students transportation problems; (11) inadequate library opening hours; (14) inadequate seating facilities and (15) harsh loan penalty in which the respondents were undecided could affect students use of library and information services. These factors could be categorized under the headings: facilities, transportation problems, residential location and loan penalty.

The table also shows that the colleges' librarians' respondents perceived only one issue as an environmental factor affecting the use of library and information services in the colleges' libraries. The factor was "Lack of students' attendance at library use education (item: 19). In this case, one may also derive from the responses that the factors: (1) inadequate books on students' disciplines and (6) living off-campus in which the respondents were undecided could affect students' effective use of library and information services. These factors can be categorized as inadequate library and information services, collections and distance of student residential location.

A cursory look at the table, shows that both students and colleges' Librarians responses were in agreement on students lack of attendance at library use education (item: 19) and they were both undecided on inadequate books on students discipline (item: 1) and living off-campus (item: 6) respectively. But surprisingly, most colleges' Librarians respondents strongly disagreed on most of the items on the table that were observed by the students' respondents who were undecided on most of the items. However, it can be deduced from the table that students perceived more factors than the colleges' librarians. Also, that the intensity of the identified factors differ from students to colleges librarians as portrayed by their means and standard deviation statistics.

The respondents' questionnaires for both students and colleges' librarians, there were closed and opened-ended responses. After the students and colleges' librarians had indicated their degree of agreement on the closed-ended questions in the questionnaires, the students and colleges' librarians were also requested in the opened-ended question; to indicate as many environmental factors not included in the list that hinders students' library and information services utilization. Their responses were coded and presented as environmental factors/problems affecting students' utilization of library and information services in colleges of education libraries as follows: inadequate facilities such as chairs, tables, toilets, air conditioners and fans; improper organization of library materials; lack of shelf guides and shelf arrangement of books; insufficient library staff to attend to readers; readers' attitude in the library such as theft, mutilation, noise making, miss-shelving of books; laziness on part staff to help users; lack of funds to transport users to library; lack of binding, photocopying and computer facilities for internet service; untidy environment in terms of poor maintenance of library facilities and building; strict library rules and regulations (for example, the demand at all times of students I.D. Card); poor security of readers properties (like their bags); students having crowded timetable without provision for library use; lack of encouragement by lecturers, who do not give assignments to students that would involve the use of library; and students preferring to seat in their hostel rooms to read or discuss topics with friends or mates.

The above listed factors, which are both human and physical and obtained from the item analysis of the open-ended question of both respondents (students and colleges librarians); could be categorized as: inadequate facilities and equipment, improper organization of library materials, shelf guidance and arrangement, insufficient staff, unfavourable attitude of users, unfriendly staff attitude, insecurity of library reading/users properties, unfavourable rules and regulations for readers, crowded students timetable, lack of students encouragement by lecturers, students preference of hostel use than library, poor maintenance of facilities and untidy environment. These factors that are also inclusive of the closed-ended responses of both students and colleges' librarians are regarded as providing the answer to the research question one of this study. The closed ended identified factors were inadequate books loaned out to students and lack of students' attendance at library use education.

B. Perception of Students and Colleges' Librarians on the Environmental Factors

The perception of students and colleges' librarians on the environmental factors affecting the use of library and information services in the colleges of education libraries was analyzed in table 3, using the t-test statistics (i.e. the "t-cal" and "t-cri"), it shows the item description of the environmental factors, groups of students (SDS) and colleges' librarians (CLS) respondents and the remarks on whether the statistics is significant (S) or not significant (NS).

Table 3: T-Test Comparison of Students and College Librarians' Perception on Environmental Factors Affecting Students' Utilization of Library and Information Services in Colleges of Education Libraries in Nigeria.

S/N	Item Description	Groups	Respondents	t-cal	t-cri	Remarks
1.	Inadequate library books in disciplines taught	SDS CLS	646 16	0.509	1.645	NS "
2.	Lack of current library books	SDS CLS	646 16	2.194	1.645	S "
3.	Inadequate books loaned out	SDS CLS	646 16	2.563	1.645	S "
4.	Inadequate period of books loaned	SDS CLS	646 16	3.105	1.645	S "