

Library Services Standards Implemented in Colleges of Education in Nigeria

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Abstract: The study examines library services standards implemented in colleges of education in Nigeria. Data for the study was collected with the aid of structured questionnaire from 197 respondents in 58 colleges of education. Data analysis was by the use of frequency, percentage and chi square. Findings of study revealed that the colleges rendered basic library services as recommended by National Commissions for Colleges of Education (NCCE) such as Book loaning, Reference, Photocopying, Current awareness, Bindery. It was however revealed that colleges did not render indexing and abstracting services. For adequate teacher education at the colleges of education, it is therefore recommended that indexing and abstracting services must be adopted and taken more seriously.

Key words: Library services standards, colleges of education, indexing, implemented, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

The library is a potent resource for curriculum development because it is a repository of information and relevant data useful to end-users. The National Commissions for Colleges of Education (NCCE, 1994) has identified the library as one of the most important aspects of educational services. Libraries are established to support the teaching, learning and research activities of the parent institutions; an objective which is achieved through systematic acquisition, storage, organization and dissemination of entire forms of recorded and undocumented information in all fields pertinent to the goals of the institutions. Mohammed (2002) opined that libraries in colleges of education are expected to cater for intellectual, social, political, cultural and other needs of the staff and students. He also stated that librarians and information centres in all educational institutions are essentially expected to enhance the teaching, learning and research endeavour of students and staff alike. Dutse (2002) asserted that library supports societies' recreational, educational, informational and leisure needs. It was further noted that libraries occupy important position in terms of supporting teaching programme and stimulating general education and research.

The nature of the services rendered by a library determines the status of the library. The more and varied the services are, the more the library can be assumed to be developed. ACRL (2000) stated that the library should establish, promote, maintain and evaluate a range of quality services that support the college's mission and goals. The library should provide competent and prompt assistance for its users. Hours of access to the library should be reasonable and convenient for its users. Reference and other special assistance should be

available at times when the college's primary users need them. Colleges of education in Nigeria have a lot of stake in teacher education. For this to be actualized the library must provide its expected services. According to National Commissions for Colleges of Education (1994) the college library shall carry out the following services and others that may be deemed necessary by the college librarian: circulation; inter-library loan; reference and information services; current awareness; selective dissemination of information; user-education; literature searching; compilation of bibliographies; indexing and abstracting services; liaising with the academic/administrative departments; photocopying/reprographic services; publication of guides to the library; compilation and maintenance of statistics of its services.

Size does not determine how developed a library is but how effective the facilities are put into use and how prepared the staff are to render some specialized services. Lyle expressed the same feeling and stated that people know that the value and the quality of a college library is not in its size. Apart from the statutory functions and obligations of the library to create conducive atmosphere for reading and research, the library is expected to render other services. Edoka (2000) listed the following services of the library to include orientation on use of the library; acquisition of lists and bulletins; current awareness services; selective dissemination of information; special bibliographies; provision of indexes and abstracts; translation services; library loans facilities; referral services; photocopying.

The National Commissions for Colleges of Education (NCCE) gave the minimum standards of courses to all colleges including the standards for managing libraries in colleges of education in Nigeria, which they were expected to adhere to. With the effort of these

supervisory bodies, there was hope that there would be sanity in managing the Colleges of Education in the country. Standards are yardsticks for ensuring quality. Standard according to Reid is the degree of excellence required for particular purposes, the nearest of what is adequate, and a socially or practically designed level of performance. In the educational context, standards should be regarded as objectives to be attained or expectations of desirable attitudes or levels of performance. The British Standard Society (2003) defined standard as a document established by consensus and approved by a recognized body that provides for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results. It was noted that standard can make things happen, for instance, services, which mainly represent an indispensable know-how in any given area. Library services are appropriate indicators of quality assurance in library management. Adebayo (2006a) posited that assuring quality in libraries mean that there must be a striking balance between what should be and what ought to be, in the libraries. Also Adebayo (1999) had noted that library stock, infrastructure provision, personnel and funding are important ingredients for effective library management. These are components of library standards which are determined by professional librarians in order to attain and maintain the objectives they set themselves. Standards may be interpreted in various ways as the pattern of an ideal, a model procedure, a measure for appraisals and a stimulus for future development and improvement (Adebayo, 2006b).

Many libraries carry out a myriad of services no doubt, but it is not certain whether they do so in line with the standards laid down by the supervisory institution, the National Commissions for Colleges of Education (NCCE). This general objective of this study therefore examined whether colleges of education in Nigeria abide by implementation guidelines related to library services. Specifically the study investigates the specific library services rendered by Federal colleges of education on the one hand, and State colleges on the other. Also, the study determines whether any significant differences exist between services of federal and state colleges of education in Nigeria.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was carried out in Nigeria. Nigeria is a large country of over 100 million people. Because of the interest of government in education various colleges of education were established at the state and federal levels. Data for the study was collected from 58 colleges of education, which is made up of 38 at the state level and

20 at the Federal level. Data collection was with the aid of structured questionnaire administered to 197 librarians identified in the study area. A list of common services was generated by the researcher during a pilot study, thereafter modifications were made before the final draft of the questionnaire was developed. For the purpose of this study respondents involved in the study were specifically those with a minimum of first degree in Library Science or university degrees in other disciplines with a Post Graduate Diploma in Library Science. Data collected were analyzed using both descriptive (frequency and percentage) and inferential statistics (chi square).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data in Table 1 shows that the colleges of education in Nigeria performed moderately in services such as book loaning, reference, photocopying, current awareness, bindery. This confirms ACRL (2000) which recommended that libraries should establish, promote, maintain and evaluate a range of quality services that support the college's mission and goals. It is only library searching, indexing and abstracting, and bindery services that performance was poor against the remarks of Rowley (1992) and Nzelum (1997).

Table 2 is the chi-square analysis showing whether differences exist in library services of State and Federal colleges.

Since the X^2 calculated value is less than the X^2 tabulated value, there is no significant difference in the practices of the implementation of NCCE library standards on library services utilized. The implication of this finding is that the two categories of colleges of education provide the services as have been identified by Edoka (2000) and ACRL (2000). All of these services are indispensable to the proper functioning of the colleges of education because as academic institutions students and staff are expected to conduct research. If abstracting is a luxury, indexing is very fundamental.

Table 1: Implementation of library standards on services

Services	State colleges*	Federal colleges*
Book loaning	131 (100)	66 (100)
Reference	131 (100)	66 (100)
Library searching	30 (22.9)	10 (15.1)
Indexing	30 (22.9)	10 (15.1)
Abstracting	15 (11.5)	5 (7.6)
Photocopying	100 (76.4)	60 (90.9)
Current awareness	80 (61.1)	40 (60.6)
Bindery	65 (49.6)	33 (25.2)

*Multiple response

Table 2: Chi-square analysis showing differences in services

Variable	X^2 cal	X^2 tab	Df	Decision
Services	3.2	14.97	7	Not significant

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

With the findings it is easy to assume that the services of the federal and state colleges of education on the implementation of the NCCE library standards are the same. This is obviously so because the bulk of the requirements on the standards are administrative, which perhaps did not require much financial involvement. Most of the colleges rendered basic library services that the standards recommended. However, it was found that indexing and abstracting services were not rendered by the colleges. Interestingly, these services are very crucial in academic libraries. It is therefore recommended that these services must be adopted and taken more seriously.

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