

## LIBRARY ORIENTATION: A PROSPECT TO EFFECTIVE LIBRARY SERVICE DELIVERY AND USE FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

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### **Abstract**

*This study examines the importance of library orientation to undergraduates in tertiary institutions of learning. Majority of the students gaining admission into higher institutions lack the basic knowledge of library use and its collections. The study specifically examines the basic roles of library as an information provider. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study consisted of 310 students selected randomly in four faculties in the university. These faculties are science, agriculture, languages and education. Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. Out of 310 copies of questionnaire distributed, 250 were filled, returned and used for the study representing 80.6%, which is good for the study. Simple percentages were used for the study. The library has been endless resources of information for its users. In meeting up with its clients' needs include and to remain relevant to its users, libraries encounters some challenges. In order to engage researchers fully, the library must make available its resources to its clients by engaging them in researches, preserving library materials on digital scale, key into library roles and objectives Libraries must make services available relevant and adequate reading materials for the readers. Library plays a major role in helping students in the course of their studies in the school by providing a conducive environment, relevant books and other materials for the students. Students needed to be guided most especially when they visit library for use. The paper also highlights the objectives, functions and the benefits/importance of library orientation. It recommends regular library orientation, provision of conducive learning environment and adequate and relevant books, encouraging students to attend all library orientation programmes among others.*

**Keywords:** Library, Undergraduate, orientation, service delivery, library use

### **Introduction**

Information centers in which library is one is indispensable in any academic environment in the provision of services and resources from where these services emanated. Since libraries are information providers, their importance therefore cannot be over emphasized. According to Yang (2011), the information consultation of libraries can help the teacher and students update their knowledge and understand the newest trends inside and outside, that is the so-called book scientific intelligence. Library orientation can be said to be a sort of planned library instruction programme put in place to introduce, enhance and enable students make proper use of it. Students make use of library more than any other set of people. That is to say they are the major users of the library. The other users include faculty members and the entire community in which the library was established. Among the important aims of library orientation as noted by Ashaver (2012) are to ensure that library users can make use of library resources and services, adequately and to their own satisfaction. The library orientation is designed to acquaint users with a number of the library resources which will be helpful during ones course of studies at the school. Library orientation is designed to introduce your students to the library wealth of resources and to strengthen their research skills. Students who receive an orientation to library resources and services are more likely to seek needed research assistance with course papers, projects and presentations.

According to Ben-Bura and Mwuese (2015), a user is a person who is duly registered with the university library and entitled to access, use and borrow library resources for use at his / her own convenience Several authors see library orientation in different

angle. According to Assoh (2012), orientation is conceived as a device used by librarians to educate users on how to use the library and the library resources effectively and efficiently. Library orientation is educative forums where the users are put through in all the activities of the library to enable them make maximum use of it. It is commonly observed that library orientation if properly and effectively handled go a long way in easing students utilization of library and its materials effectively. Okore et-al(2013) observed that the evolution of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) came as an innovation that made libraries disseminate information not only in print format but also in multi-media format hence library users needed to be guided how to access information from these sources, which need a professional advice/guide.

Information is now in different forms, and as such the information professionals should try to make it available to the users in the form they could understand. This was strongly advanced by Aguolu and Aguolu in Ben-Bura and Mwuese (2015) in which they attributed the reason for user education to information explosion and the proliferation of various media for the organisation and dissemination of information so as to enable users make adequate use of libraries and their resources. Lilli-Anna Baca (2014) carried out a study on the effect of library orientation on library knowledge of students of John Brown University, Ghana (JBU). A survey research method was used for the study. The population of the study was 150 students and survey research method was adopted for the study. The result of the study confirmed that with greater library knowledge comes the more comfort in the library and a stronger perception of the helpfulness of library staff. Library orientation is designed to introduce students and other users of library to library's wealth of resources and to strengthen their research skills.

Crystal et-al (2016) carried out a research on creating an engaging library orientation for first year experience courses at UC San Diego. The article focuses on the development of an engaging library orientation module for UC San Diego First Year Experience (FYE) courses. Over 400 FTE students completed the library module, and many indicated a marked increase in comfort using the library by the end of the module. As earlier noted library orientation consists of instructional programmes designed to teach library users how to locate the information they need quickly and effectively. According to Klaib, (2011), students who receive an orientation to library resources and services are more likely to seek needed research assistance with course papers, projects, and presentations. This research is carried out to determine the prospect of library orientation for effective and efficient usage among its users, in this case the under graduate students of Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai selected across various departments. No such study was carried out in this part of environment, hence the researcher decided to go into the research.

### **Objectives and Functions of Library**

Libraries regardless of type have their own objectives to achieve. The main objective of any library is to ensure that its user's needs are met within the shortest possible time. This means that the usefulness of any library collection depends upon the ease and speed with which books and other library materials can be located and be used when required. Among the major objectives of the library include:

Organization of library materials for easy accessibility, provision of information sources necessary for faculty members, students and the community members, acquiring library materials through donations, purchase / deposit and gifts as case maybe, provision of information sources, acquiring library materials through

donations, purchase / deposit and gifts as case maybe, answering users inquiries to satisfy their needs Others include ascertaining the exact information needs of the users, provision of relevant information needs of the users, providing platform for borrowing library materials to the users, preserving library and information materials for the future generations, keeping in touch with places where information could be further accessed and how to use it, placing principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality to ensure appropriate and comprehensive collection and provision of materials containing a wide range of views on issues so that students may develop the practice of critical reading and thinking. Aside the objectives as enumerated above, the library also perform functions as: processing and preparation of library materials, preservation of library materials, selection of library materials, acquisition of library materials, providing a friendly environment for learning, provision of relevant and adequate library materials, proper organization of library materials for easy accessibility, provision of daily instructions on library use. Others include provision of internet facilities and services, preparing library budget, supervision of departments and supervision and maintenance of library and its equipments.

The library regardless of type must have its own objectives and function for which it was established. Given the objectives and functions of the library, it could be affirmed that library is an organized collection of books and information materials kept for reading, study and reference, it become necessary upon this assertion for the libraries to have those instructions that could guide its users for effective and efficient use of its materials. Nasser (2004) listed the following purpose of the educational bibliographic programme in academic libraries: (a) to support scientific research through description of the scientific research process, (b) to provide students with good ideas about information sources; (c) to develop students skills in information organizing; and (d) to ensure the understanding of ethical and legal matters such as authorship and publishing rights. This is the function of library orientation; hence its importance in libraries is appreciated for. It is worthy to note that the library and information science field professionalism has to do with the whole process of the operations within a library workforce. That the interaction of librarians with the library management, their clients, colleagues, team spirit, staff development, role of the Nigerian Library Associations, etc. Library and information service is an umbrella term covering all services obtainable in the library. This does not only imply within –the –library services, but also includes mobile library services which in essence are the provision of library services to clients outside library building. To enable the numerous library users obtain maximum satisfaction of the library and its services they needed to be enlightened, and this could only be effectively achieved by orientating the users about its activities and pupils are to be introduced to library early for they are intimidated by the size of the library, feel inadequate because they lack knowledge about where items and services are located in the building

### **Methodology**

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study consisted of 310 students selected randomly in four faculties in the university. These faculties are science, agriculture, languages and education. Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. Out of 310 copies of questionnaire distributed, 250 were filled, returned and used for the study representing 80.6%, which is good for the study. Simple percentages were used for the study. The study was limited to Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University for obvious reasons such as time factor and no such study was carried out in the school.

## Presentation of Results

Table 1 Importance of library

S/N	Item	N	Agree	Disagree
1.	Help both students and teachers update their knowledge	250	212(84.8%)	38(15.2%)
2.	An advocator of active cultural idea	250	188(72.2%)	62(24.8%)
3.	Stimulates the development of readers innovative personalities	250	197(78.8%)	53(21.2%)
4.	Best place for cultivating students morals	250	174 (69.6%)	76(30.4%)
5.	Help students to correct attitudes to study	250	201(80.4%)	49(19.6%)
6.	Help students to establish study objectives	250	169(67.6%)	81(32.4%)
7.	Help students towards quality education	250	224(89.6%)	26(10.4%)
8.	Reading journals and books students can be touched and influenced	250	190(76.0%)	60(24.0%)
9.	Store the most excellent human cultural legacy	250	216(86.4%)	34(13.6%)
10.	Best place for disseminating information resources	250	198(79.2%)	52(20.8%)

From Table 1, the respondents indicated the following as benefits of library. They help students and teachers update their acquired knowledge 212(84.8%), advocator of active cultural idea 188(72.2%), stimulates the development of readers innovative personalities 197(78.8%), best place for cultivating students morals 174 (69.6%), help students to correct attitudes to study 201(80.4%), Help students to establish study objectives 169(67.6%), help students towards quality education 224(89.6%), Reading journals and books students can be touched and influenced 190(76.0%), Store the most excellent human cultural legacy 216(86.4%) and best place for disseminating information resources 198(79.2%).

Table 2 : Benefits of the Library Orientation

S/N	Item	N	Agree	Disagree
1.	Provide students with information about their academic achievement	250	176((70.4%)	74(29.6%)
2.	Improving students research skills	250	198(79.2%)	52(20.8%)
3.	Provide students idea about information sources	250	184(73.6%)	66(26.4%)
4.	Assist students in defining the needed information	250	201(80.4%)	49(19.6%)
5.	Provide information about importance of reading and Its promotion	250	190(76.0%)	54(21.6%)
6.	Provide information about printed library collections	250	170(68.0%)	80(32.0%)
7.	Create awareness about library mission and tasks	250	188(75.2%)	62(24.8%)
8.	Provide good idea about library catalogue	250	196(78.4%)	54(21.6%)
9.	Provide students idea about borrowing measures	250	177(70.8%)	73(29.2%)
10.	Increases Library usage	250	165(66.0%)	85(34.0%)

The findings in table 2 have revealed that students agreed to the benefits from library orientation. Assist students in defining the needed information 201(80.4%) was the most ranked benefit, followed by supporting students on research skills 198(79.2%) and provision of good idea about library catalogue 196(78.4%). Providing idea about borrowing measures 177(70.8%) was the least among the items.

*Table 3: Challenges in Accessing Library Materials*

S/N	Challenges	N	Agree	Disagree
1.	Inadequate supply of power	250	211(84.4%)	39(15.6%)
2.	Inadequate library staff	250	169(67.6%)	81(32.4%)
3.	Lack of ICT skills	250	181(72.4%)	69(27.6%)
4.	Lack of proper shelving	250	205(82.0%)	45(18.0%)
5.	Lack of enough seating space	250	197(78.8%)	53(21.2%)
6.	Unfriendly attitude of some library staff	250	179(71.6%)	71(28.4%)
7.	Inadequate ventilation	250	198(79.2%)	52(20.8%)
8.	Library roles	250	157(62.8%)	93(37.2%)
9.	Inadequate relevant materials	250	209(83.6%)	41(15.4%)
10.	Closing hours of library	250	164(65.6%)	86(34.4%)
11.	Lack of reprographic facilities	250	149(59.6%)	101(40.4%)
12.	Inadequate toilets facilities	250	133(53.2%)	117(46.8%)
13.	Irregular internet services	250	152(60.8%)	98(39.2%)

Data in Table 3 above shows that all listed items had percentages above 50%. This explains the acceptance that the items are impediments to library use. Inadequate power supply 211(84.4%) was the biggest problem, followed by inadequate relevant materials 209(83.6%) and lack of proper shelving of books 205(82.0%). Inadequate toilets facilities 133(53.2%) is also an impediment to access library services.

*Table 4: Strategies for Improving students Use of Library Materials*

S/N	Item	N	Agree	Disagree
1	Regular internet services	250	199(79.6%)	51(20.4%)
2	Extension of closing library 106(42.4%)	250	144(57.6%)	
3	Availability of reprographic facilities	250	163(65.2%)	87(34.8%)
4	Well ventilated reading rooms	250	188(75.2%)	62(24.8%)
5	Adequate and decent toilet facilities	250	150(60.0%)	100(40.0%)
6	Availability of enough seating space	250	191(76.4%)	59(23.6%)
7	Adequate relevant reading materials	250	214(85.6%)	36(14.4%)
8	Steady and constant power supply	250	226(90.4%)	24(9.6%)
9	Library staff be friendly and accommodating	250	201(80.4%)	49(19.6%)
10	Library materials be properly shelved	250	209(83.6%)	41(16.4%)
11	Library roles must be friendly	250	155(62.0%)	95(38.0%)
12	Library staff must be ICT inclined 101(40.4%)	250	149(59.6%)	

Table 4 above shows the result of the strategies for improving the use of library and its resources by the respondents. The result obtained as shown from the table revealed that strategies identified were the steps that could improve library use and

its services by the students. Top among the listed items was steady and constant power supply 226(90.4%), closely followed by adequate relevant reading materials 214(85.6%) and proper shelving of library materials 209(83.6%) among others as shown on the table.

### **Conclusion**

The result of study show that student value library orientation programmes. This can be attributed to the numerous benefits derived from it if properly handled. This aside they also recognize and appreciate the position of library in the student's education pursuit as it affords students every opportunity to access its services. There are some challenges in accessing library materials which could also slow down library use. Inadequate power supply, inadequate relevant reading materials and fluctuating net work services were among the major obstacles to library use.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the result of the study the following recommendations are made: Universities should put up library orientation programmes tailored to the student's educational development, constant power supply be made available in the library, encouraging, undergraduate students to attend library orientation programmes, sustaining library orientation programmes and be managed by competent and experience information quality education scientists such as librarians, university is required to provide incentives to the instructors so as to boost their ego and give their best to students. The library should have enough library and information science text books, student should be encouraged to make best use of libraries to enable students get both quality and moral education and early introduction of library orientation to enable them make use of library and its resources for they may lack knowledge about where items and services are located in the building

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