

AN EVALUATION OF THE USE OF INDEXING SERVICE BY LIBRARY USERS OF FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ZARIA-NIGERIA

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Abstract: *The purpose of this study is to determine how customers of the Federal College of education Library in Zaria use indexing services, as well as the issues that prevent library users from using indexing services. The data for the study was collected using a survey research approach, and samples were drawn using a random sampling procedure. The study's participants include the library's personnel and its patrons. To collect data from the samples, a questionnaire was created and employed. The frequency distribution and percentages were used to analyze the data collected from the respondents. The study discovered that a lack of understanding of the availability of indexing services is one of the factors preventing their use. Among the recommendations is that consumers be made aware of these services so that they can use them to access relevant information without wasting time. This can be accomplished by providing training and marketing its services.*

Key Words: *Evaluation, use, indexing, abstracting, services, users, education, college, federal, Zaria.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

The goal of any library and information centre is to identify information resources and services to satisfy the information needs of its users. Thus, all services provided in the library are geared towards user satisfaction for the library to fulfill these needs; it acquires all kinds of resources such as prints and non-prints materials. These resources have to be processed and organized so that they can be accessible to the information users who have different interests, and need relevant information in order to satisfy their various interests.

The information needed may be found in any document be it print and electronic resources. For relevant information to be available to existing and potential users Aina (2004) said libraries, have devised tools such as catalogues, bibliographies, indexes, abstracts etc. which are expected to make users or readers aware of the variety of information carriers such as books, serials, audio-visual materials available in the library and information centre's collections. Satisfaction by users can only be guaranteed when relevant information materials are accessed or retrieved to match their requests. To retrieve the right information involves the library acquiring the right collection and also providing the right processes for locating the document that matches the patron's request.

The most important tool used by the library or information centre to locate information is the catalogues and classification. This is a record of all document held in the library and the process of recording describing, and providing the location of each document present in the library in a catalogue is called cataloguing. The catalogue though useful in locating a whole document but it is still lacking and inefficient as a tool for searching documents, (Aina, 2004). Hence the need for a superior technique than cataloguing for retrieving relevant information contained in documents stored in the library. This is where abstracting and indexing come in as libraries and other information institutions strive to provide efficient and satisfactory services.

The library selects, acquires processes, stores and disseminates information to the teeming users of the library. Catalogue cards, bibliographies, indexes, and abstracts, among other things, are supplied to aid in simple access to relevant items whenever they are required in order to make these information resources easily accessible to their users.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The federal college of education library was designed to aid students, lecturers, and researchers in their teaching, learning, and research. The library locates and gathers external and internal sources of information, as well as processes, organizes, stores, and facilitates access to and use of such materials for teaching, learning, and research. The college library has devised a number of tools, such as catalogues, indexes, and abstracts, to make users aware of the many information carriers, both printed and non-printed, in order to make relevant information resources available and accessible to all library patrons. The index's purpose is to act as a link to the document's intellectual content, The Federal

College of Education library was designed to serve students, lecturers, and researchers in their teaching, learning, and research. External and internal sources of information are identified and acquired, and the library processes, organizes, stores, and enables access and usage for teaching, learning, and research. The college library has devised a range of tools such as catalogues, indexes, and abstracts to make users aware of the many information carriers of both printed and non-printed materials in order to make relevant information resources available and accessible to all library patrons. The index's purpose is to serve as a signpost to the document's intellectual substance, whilst the abstracts assist the user in determining the document's relevance to his or her information needs. As a result, it's important to look into how users of the library college library use indexing and abstracting services, and how effective they've been in their requests for information search and retrieval.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. The study seeks to find answers to the following questions:
2. What are the indexing and abstracting services available?
3. What are the problems hindering the use of indexing and abstracting services by users?

4. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

Concept of indexing

Indexing is defined by Reitz (2004) as the "process of compiling one or more indexes for a single publication such as a monograph or multivolume references work or adding entries for new document to an open end index covering a particular publication format (example newspapers), works of a specific literacy form (biography, book reviews etc.) or the literature of an academic field discipline or group of disciplines". Indexing which is a technique of producing an index is also seen by Aina (2004) as "the process of providing a guide to the intellectual contest of a document or collection of document. The end product of an indexing process is the index which is an important tool for the retrieval of relevant information context of a publication or document. The index serves as a guide to the intellectual content of publications or reading materials, such content are presented as a list comprising the major terms, concepts, subjects, topics and named arranged in a particular order especially alphabetical or chronological with references (particularly page or pages) to show where each item indexed can be found in the original document (Nnadozie, 2007). Indexes therefore have become in the words of Banjo (1987) cited in Nnadozie (2007) as: "The indispensable tool for navigating the complex reservoirs of information, whether these are contained in a single column of text, Several columns or whether they lie buried in any hundreds of issues of Newspapers, journals, magazines, documents or other reports". There are various types of indexes found in a standard library for example indexes to individual books or back of the book index, indexes to collection of books (the card catalogue in a library), index to the contents of journals or periodicals, for instance reader's guides to periodical literature by H. W Wilson in 1901.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

For this study, a survey research design was used. The study's population consists of 60 patrons and professional librarians from the Federal College of Education Library in Zaria-Nigeria. 30 participants were chosen at random to serve as the study's sample size for this study. The data was collected using a questionnaire and interviews, and the data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, tables, and percentages. The instrument was given out by hand. Questionnaires were provided at random to 30 people, and the completed questionnaires were later recovered. Only 30 of the 30 surveys given were retrieved, and only 24 of those 30 were representative. 80% correctly filled. While six (6) were discarded due to incorrect responses.

6. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS:

The result of the data obtained from the completed questionnaires is presented by analyzing the research question that guided the study. Thus, the analysis of the data collected is given below:

Table.1 on indexing services available in the FCE Library, Zaria

Responses	Response Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	20	83
No	4	17
Total	24	100

The table 1. shows that 20 respondents representing 83% agreed that indexing and abstracting services were available while 4 responses representing 17% said that abstracting and indexing services were not available

Table 2.: Are users aware of its availability

Responses	Response frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	8	33
No	4	17
No sure	12	50
Total	24	100

The Table 2. above reveals that 8 responses, representing 33% said yes the users awareness of the availability of indexing and abstracting services 4 responses representing 17% said users were not aware of its availability while 12 (50%) responses were not sure of if users were aware of the availability of this service

How regular is the provision of indexing services in the library?

Table 3.

Responses	Response frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	8	33
No	16	67
Not really	24	100

From table 3. above was discovered that 8 (33%) of the responses said the provision of indexing and abstracting services was a very regular process in the library. While 16 representing 67% of the responses confirmed that it was an irregular process.

Table 4. Types of materials indexed

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Newspaper	16	66
Magazine	4	17
Journals	4	17
Total	24	100

The table 4. reveals that the types of materials indexed ware Newspapers as represented by 16(66%) responses 4 (17%)responses said magazines and 4 (17%) responses said journals.

Table 5. Types of indexes compiled by the library.

Responses	Response frequency	Percentage (%)
Authorindex	3	12.5
Subject index	14	58
Perm term index	3	12.5
Bibliography	4	17
Total	24	100

From the table 5. above shows that 3 (12.5%) of the responses said Author index is what the library compiles. While 14(58%) of the responses said the type of indexes compiled is the subject index. 3 (12.5%) responses said Perm term index. And 4 (17%) of the responses said bibliography.

Table 6. : Extent of Indexing Service use by the library users of FCE Katsina

Responses	frequency	Percentage (%)
Very often	3	12.5
Not often	16	66.7
Not at all	5	20.8
Total	24	100

The table 6. revealed that 3(12.5%) responses said this services is sued by the users very often while 16 (66.7%) responses show that the service is not often utilized by the users. 5(20.8%) responses revealed that the users do not utilized the services.

Table 7. : Challenges faced in providing the indexing service

Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
Lack of knowledge of indexing and abstracting by staff	3	12.5
Lack of fund to underwrite production cost	7	29.2
Lack of facilities	2	8.3
Abstract of a comprehensive Nigerian thesaurus	2	8.3
All of the above	10	47.7
Total	24	100

Table 7. above discovered that 3 (12.5%) responses said that lack of knowledge of indexing and abstracting by providing this services. 7(29.2%) responses said lack of funds to underwrite production cost. While 2 (8.3%) responses said the absence of a comprehensive Nigerian thesaurus. Majority of the respondents said all of the above problems were faced while providing this services as represented by 10 (47.7%) of the responses

Table 8.: Extent of awareness of the availability of indexing and abstracting services: to answer this question, the respondent ware asked whether they are aware of the availability of indexing and

Why have you not been using the indexing services provided by the library?

Table 8.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Not aware of its availability	12	50
Ignorance of its usage	3	12.5
Not accessible	3	12.5
Not current as well as not regular	2	8.5
All of the above	4	16.7
Total	24	100

This table 8. presents the responses on why indexing services are not used by the patrons. 12(50%) of responses claim they are not aware of its availability, 3 (12.5%) of responses are ignorant of its usage 3(12.5%) of responses also said it is not accessible to them. 2(8.3%) of responses claim the indexes are not current as well as not regular. While 4(16.7%) of response said all of the above reasons is responsible for their not using the services provided.

7. SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS:

The summary of findings of the study: Indexing services are available in federal college of Education library as shown in theresponses of 20 (83%) all affirmed that it was available.

On user’s awareness of its availability, it was discovered that 12(50%) responses were not sure if it was available or not. This response showed the users are not aware of its existence. It was discovered that the provision of indexing services was irregular as shown in the responses of 16(67%). On types materials indexed was discovered that the type of materials indexed by the FCE library Zaria were mostly newspapers, as shown in responses of 16(66%). It was revealed from the analysis that the type of indexes compiled was the subject index as affirm by the response of 14(58%). On how often the services is utilized by users, it was found out that most users do not often use the services as reflected in the response of 16(66.7%). On challenges faced in providing this service by the library, it was discovered that lack of knowledge of indexing and abstracting by staff, lack of funds to underwrite production cost, lack of facilities and absence of a comprehensive Nigerian thesaurus are all the challenges faced in providing the service as attested in the responses of 10(47.7%) showing that all of the items were the problems faced.

On reasons for not using the indexing service it was discovered from the study that most users were not aware of its availability as affirmed in the response of 12(50%) respondents.

8. CONCLUSION:

Based on the findings of the study, it could be concluded that, the lack of use of indexing services by patrons is largely due to lack of awareness of its availability and for this service to be effectively harnessed, it must be publicized and orientation be given to the users, to keep them aware of its availability. It could also be concluded that lack of profession knowledgeable staff and funds to underwrite production cost is a major problem faced in the course of providing indexing service. To promote its use, the librarians must advertise it services and encourage its users to exploit this means of retrieving information that is relevant to their needs. Therefore, Federal College of Education library should create more awareness on the availability of indexing services; this will enhance its usage by their teeming users this could be achieved through orientation, sensitization on the importance of indexes as tools to be

employed to help in the retrieval of relevant contents of document in their holdings.

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