

Information Resources, Services and Utilisation of Government Special Libraries in Kano State

by

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Abstract

The study was based on the adequacy and timely provision of information resources and services in special libraries owned by the government of Kano State. The study surveyed the provision of information resources, services and utilisation of these libraries across the state. Reviewed related literatures on types of information resources, types of library services, utilisation of library services and problems of the utilisation of information resources and services and services. Survey research technique was employed for the study and questionnaires was used as data collection instrument fifty (50%) of the libraries were studied, that was eleven (11) libraries out of the 22 functional libraries. Two groups of respondent were used, the librarians and the users.

Keywords: *Information Sources, Government Libraries, Strategic Management, Information resources, Library services*

Introduction

Government libraries are established to provide information needs of the workers within the different government organisations. The libraries are expected to acquire, organise, preserve and disseminate information relevant to the need of the users. Womboh (2002:71) observed that Government departments and agencies require information on policies, information flows, costs, trends and innovations to formulate, policy and make strategic management decision. Research institutions and researchers need information on technology sources and technological alternatives and on experiences with the use of different techniques and processes.

Therefore, the library being the database for all types of information is a conceptual variable in decision making in any government organisation or institution and therefore its role in government decision making in developing countries need not be

overstressed. Government functionaries have little time to look for information. Their time is valuable and must be served. Their performances largely depend on the adequate information provision at their disposal, which will in turn effect the development of the government; positively. They always want immediate response to their information needs. Hence provision of relevant information resources and services that will satisfy their information needs is imperative. The extent to which the government libraries provides relevant information resources, services and put them to use is the motive behind this study. The study will also investigate the extent of users' satisfaction. In addition, it will look at the problems affecting utilisation of information resources and services in the libraries.

Methodology

Survey research design was employed for the study. The response rate of the two categories of questionnaires was very high. All the copies of questionnaire for librarians administered were returned and found to be usable. This makes 100% response rate for the first group of respondents. On the other hand, three hundred and sixty-four (364) copies of questionnaire were administered to the users of the selected libraries under study, which was the second group of respondents. Out of the three hundred and sixty four (364) copies of questionnaire, only three hundred and forty six (346) copies was returned and found usable. That makes ninety-five (95%) percent response rates. This appreciable response note was due to the researcher's efforts for personally administered the questionnaires and ensured they were correctly completed and returned fully.

Findings

Types of information resources available in the libraries.

In order to find out the types of information resource that are available in the libraries respondents were given a checklist of information resources and were asked to tick whichever is/are available in their libraries. The table below provides the information about the responses.

Table 1. Information resources in the libraries.

S/n	Information resources	Min. Agriculture	Min. of information	History & culture	Kano educational resources department	Head of civil service Establishment	Kano agricultural resources department	State universal basic education board	Kano assembly	Kano state radio cooperation	Science & technical board	Min. of education
1.	Books	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.	Journals	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.	Newspaper	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	✓	✓
4.	Gazettes	-	-	-	✓	-	-	✓	✓	-	-	-
5.	e-materials	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	✓	✓	-	-
6.	Pamphlet	✓	✓	-	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓
7.	Proceedings	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓
8.	Brochure	-	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-
9.	Indexes/ Abstract	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10.	Directories	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	✓
11.	Years books	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓
12.	Thesis and Dissertation	-	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	-
13.	Encyclopedia	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	-	-

From Table 1, clearly indicates the types of information resources available in the libraries under study. It could be noted that almost all the libraries have books, yearbook and newspapers. Head of civil of service Establishment and Cabinet libraries do not provide journals. Kano Agricultural Resources Department was the only library that does not provides Newspapers. All the libraries do not have indexes and

abstracts. Kano-State house of Assembly, Ministry of agriculture and Kano state radio corporation are the only libraries that have encyclopedias. Kano state house of assembly and Kano Educational Resources Department are the libraries providing electronic resources.

Types of library services provided the libraries.

For effective utilization of library and its resources, provision of certain services are imperative .Thus the librarians were asked to identify, from the list of services provided, the one or ones they do provide. Their responses are reflected in the Table 2.

Table 2.library services provided in the libraries under study

S/N	Library services	Min. of Agriculture	Min. of information	History & Culture	Kano educational resources department	Establishment	Kano agricultural resources department	State universal basic education board	Kano Assembly	Kano State Kano state Radio co-operation	Science & Technical Board	Min. of Education	TOTAL
1.	Selective discuss of Inf.	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	5
2.	Referral service	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓	7
3.	Translation service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4.	Lending Service	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	6
5.	Reservation Service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	11
6.	User education	-	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	4
7.	Current awareness	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	✓	✓	-	✓	6
8.	Exhibition & Display	-	-	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	✓	3
9.	Photocopying service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	1

From Table 2.all the eleven (11) libraries offered Reservation services. (100%) On the other hand not all the libraries offered lending services only five (5) libraries (45%) provides it. History and Culture bureau library, Kano Educational Resources Department, Head of civil service Establishment, Science &technical board and Kano state radio corporation libraries. User education services are not provided in most of the libraries: only four (4) (36%) of the libraries Kano Educational Resources Department, Kano Agricultural Resources Department, K/Assembly and Ministry of Education libraries offered it. Also Current

awareness services is provided in six (6) (55%) of the libraries, Head of civil service Establishment library, K/Assembly, Kano State Radio Co-operation, Ministry of Education, Ministry of agriculture and Ministry of information. Four (4) (36%) of the libraries do not provide Referral service to their users; Head of civil service Establishment, K/Assembly, Kano state radio corporation and Science & technical board. Only three (3) (27%) out of the libraries provides exhibition and display services in their library; History and Culture, STATE Universal Basic Education Board and Ministry of Education. Kano State House of Assembly was the only library that offered photocopying service. None of the libraries performs the Translation services and lastly Selective Dissemination services which is peculiar service to special libraries was only offered by Ministry of information library, History and Culture Bureau library, Ministry of agriculture, and State Universal Basic Education Board library(4)(36%). The differences in terms of the services provision could be due to the differences in organisational goals. Special libraries common objective of contributing towards attainment of their organizational goals may also be responsible for the variety and differences in resources provision. This is in line with the observation earlier made by Ball (2000:133) that Special libraries make decisive contributions to their organization in terms of permanent development, through the provision of different services to their users. That is based on the organisational needs and priorities.

Extent of library use

To find out the extent of library use, the frequency of the use of library by its users was asked on daily, weekly, occasional, monthly and never bases. Below are the details obtained from the respondents.

Table 3. Extent of library use

S/n	Libraries	Frequencies					
		Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Occasionally	Never	Total
1	Min. of Agriculture	5	15	3	7	5	35
2	Ministry of information	5	3	1	2	2	13
3	History & Culture	5	1	0	2	5	13
4	Kanœducational resources department	7	4	3	1	-	15
5	Head of Civil Service Establishment	8	3	0	4	2	17

S/n	Libraries		Frequencies				
6	Kano Agricultural Resources Department	10	9	0	15	15	69
7	State Universal Basic Education Board	6	0	0	1	0	7
8	Kano Assembly	4	2	1	1	0	8
9	Kano State Radio-Co operation	10	4	0	1	10	25
10	Science and technical board	10	12	1	17	20	60
11	Min. of Education	20	10	2	4	28	84
	No response	-	-	-	-	-	18
	FREQUENCY	90	63	11	55	87	364
	PERCENTAGE	25%	17%	3%	15%	23%	100%

From Table 3.out of three hundred and sixty-four users (364) ninety (90) used the libraries on daily bases, twenty five percent (25%). Sixty-three (63) used the library weekly that is seventeen percent (17%).Eleven (11) used the library on monthly basis that is three percent (3%). Seventy-five (75) used the library occasionally that is twenty-one percent (21%) of the respondents. Eighty-seven (87) never used the library about twenty-three (23%) percent of the respondents. No response from fifty-eight (58) of the respondents about fifteen (15%) percent. Generally, the use of the libraries is not encouraging as forty (40%) never use or are not aware of the library.

Extent of utilisation of information resources in the library

Utilisation of information resources is one of the primary functions of the library. The extent towards which they are utilised cannot be over emphasised. In order to find out the extent of the information resources utilisation a question was asked to the respondents to indicate the extent of use of each information resources available in their libraries.

TABLE 4. Extent of utilisation of information resources in the library

S/ N	Information resources	Min. of Agriculture	Min. of information	History & Culture	Kano Educational Resources Department	Head of civil services Establishment	Kano agricultural resources department	State universal basic education board	Kano Assembly	Kano State Radio co-operation	Science and technical board	Min. of Education	Freq.	%
1.	Books	4	4	9	8	32	30	4	4	4	5	60	161	44%
2.	Journals	6	4	2	0	-	35	6	2	-	-	43	98	26%
3.	Newspaper	8	4	1	20	14	-	8	2	6	3	128	200	55%
4.	Gazettes	-	-	-	4	-	-	2	0	2	-	-	8	2%
5.	e-materials	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	4	-	-	9	13	4%
6.	Pamphlet	4	3	-	4	-	26	2	0	4	-	26	69	19%
7.	Proceedings	6	4	-	0	-	65	0	1	-	-	-	76	21%
8.	Brochure	-	-	-	-	-	10	0	-	-	-	0	10	3%
9.	Indexes/ Abstract	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
10.	Directories	-	3	-	-	32	-	-	-	-	-	34	69	19%
11.	Years books	1	2	1	2	5	5	2	2	2	-	9	31	9%
12.	Thesis and Dissertation	-	3	1	-	9	20	-	1	-	-	-	34	9%
13.	Encyclopedia	4	3	1	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	26	34	9%

From the table 4. the most utilised information resources in all the libraries is Newspapers with two hundred (200) fifty five percent (55%) followed by Books one hundred and sixty one (161) that is forty four percent(44%), journals twenty six(26%)percent, Proceedings twenty one (21%)percent Pamphlets and Directories has, nineteen percent each (19%). Thesis, Encyclopedias and Yearbook has nine percent each (9%). E-materials with four percent (4%) Proceedings/reports have three

percent (3%) and Gazettes, two percent (2%). Abdulrazak (2006) noted earlier that the utilization of information resources depends largely on a considerable number of factors such as the quality of the collection, types of services providers, the nature of the library environment, the availability and accessibility of materials, the quality of job and commitment of the information seeker. The findings revealed that the information resources are not fully utilized, as only newspapers were used by more than fifty percent of the respondents. Thus there is the need to check and update the collections of the libraries and other factor

Extent of utilisation of library services.

Library services are meant to enhance the utilisation of library, the extent to which they are use determine its success. The respondents were asked to indicate the extent of the use of the services provided in their libraries.

Table 5.the extent of utilization of library service was collected from the respondents' details given below

S/N	Library services	Min. of Agriculture	Ministry of information	History & Culture	Head of civil service establishment	Kano agricultural resources department	State universal basic education board	Kano Assembly	Kano state radio corporation	Science & technical board	Min. of Education	Frequencies	%
1.	Selective dissemination of Inf.	4	2	9	-	-	1	-	4	-	-	20	5%
2.	Referral service	4	3	14	-	30	2	-	-	-	34	87	24%
3.	Translation service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4.	Landry Service	8	3	-	-	25	0	3	-	-	9	48	13%
5.	Reservation Service	6	2	14	7	20	0	3	2	6	0	60	16%
6.	User education	-	-	-	-	15	-	2	-	-	0	17	3%
7.	Current awareness	6	4	-	3	-	-	1	4	-	68	86	23%
8.	Exhibition & Display	-	-	14	-	-	7	-	-	-	26	14	4%
9.	Photocopying service	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	3	0.8%

TOTAL 95%

From table 5. Referral services and Current awareness were the most utilised with 87/86 responses from users which was twenty-three percent (23%) of each. Reservation services records sixty (60) which was

sixteen percent (16%). Lending services records forty-eight (48) which was thirteen percent (13%). Selective Dissemination of Information with five percent (5%), user's education four percent (4%), exhibition four percent (4%) and photocopying zero point eight percent (0.8%). Translation service wasn't provided in any of the libraries. These findings show in effectiveness of the libraries as observed earlier by Muhammad (2007:7) who is of the opinion that "the use that users make of the library has to be characterised as the ultimate test of its effectiveness." It would be assessed that the services offered in the libraries did not meeting the expectation of the users. It could be due to poor awareness as the observation earlier made by Opara (2001) who observes that some library users are unaware of the library services therefore do not avail themselves of them. SDI which is a vital service in special libraries has only five (5%) this indicates in efficiency of the librarians. Abdulrazak (2006:35) is of the view that "the ability to make a meaningful use of information resources can be a yard stick for measuring the effectiveness of the libraries service in a given situation." Therefore, there is the need for the librarians to embark on new information services

Users Level of satisfaction with information resources

To find out the level of users' satisfaction in terms of utilization of information resources in the libraries under study. The respondents were asked to indicate the level of satisfaction with the information resources available in their libraries from the options provided. The details of information collected are provided in the table.

Table 6. users Level of satisfaction with information resources

S/N	Level of Satisfaction of Respondents	frequency	Percentage
1.	Higher	20	5%
2.	Moderately	75	20%
3.	Not	198	54%
4.	No response	42	12%
	TOTAL	364	100%

From table 6. out of the respondents one hundred and ninety eight (198)about fifty four percent (54%) were not satisfied with the

information resources, seventy five(75)(20%)percent signified moderately satisfied ,twenty (20)(5%)were highly satisfied with the information resources and forty two (42)(12%)did not respond. This finding indicates that the information materials are not able to satisfy the users as expected. This proved the observation of KafinSauri (2003:205) who maintains that “the development and growths of balance and relevant collection is a matter of serious concern to every library because upon it depends the utilization of the library resources generally hence the satisfaction of users need”. Most of the libraries were not adequately developed with current and relevant information resources.

Users level of Satisfaction with Library Services

The able of a library to satisfy its users is primary concern of every library. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with the library services provided in their libraries. Table 4.8 provides the information collected.

Table 7 Users level of Satisfaction with Library Services.

S/N	LEVELS SATISFACTION	Frequency	percentage
1.	Highly	18	5%
2.	Moderately	92	25%
3.	Not	208	57%
4.	No response	46	13%
	Total	364	100%

From the table 7.two hundred and eight (208) that is fifty seven(57%) percent of the respondents indicates not satisfied with the library services ninety two(92)(25%)percent were moderately satisfied eighteen (18)(5%)were highly satisfied and forty six(46)(13%)did not respond. From the findings it signified that generally users were not satisfied with the services this shows lapses on the part of the librarians as in the opinion of Clifton (2006:342) were he noted an effective manager of a special library oversees staff and resources to deliver the best quality products and services to users in the shortest time for the least amount of money. In order to hasten effective utilisation of information resources and services the reference librarian are available to answer questions and staff members in a special library do not always await to be approached with a request for services, often they will seek out the users or patron to

determine how they may be of assistance. This was the major problem that triggers the study, as the users has no time to go to the library despite the relevant of the library services to their development and the organization at large. Therefore, the librarians have to be pro-active in their services.

Problems identified in the utilisation of information resources and library services.

To find out the problems associated with the utilisation of information resources and services options were given to the respondents to indicate where applicable in their libraries. The table provides the details.

Table .8 problems of utilization of information resources and library services.

S/N	Problems	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Lack of relevant information Resources	180	49%
2.	Out dated information resources	91	25%
3.	Inadequate Qualified staff	30	8%
4.	Incompetent library staff	15	4%
5.	Un-conducive reading atmosphere	5	1%
6.	High cost of current information materials	10	3%
7.	No response	33	9%
	TOTAL	364	100%

It could be observed from table 4.8 that the most pressing problem in all the libraries was lack of relevant information materials indicated by one hundred and eighty respondents (180) forty nine percent (49%) Ninety one (91)(25%)twenty five percent respondents indicates Outdated information materials. In adequate qualify staff thirty (30) (8%)eight percent incompetent staff fifteen(15)(4%)four percent, Un conducive atmosphere five(5)(1%),high cost of current information resources ten(10)(3%)and thirty three (33((9%) did not respond. Only

three percent of the respondents indicated high cost of information resources as a problem this could be both the librarians and users were not involved in the acquisitions of the information materials. However, Ubogu (2003:123) highlighted the inadequate funding of libraries as a major obstacle; he noted that some cannot sustain continuous subscription for very relevant journals not to talk of automation. Many who rely on foreign grants get disappointed when these are suddenly withdrawn. Funding is a major problem and an obstacle to the development of libraries. It is very important to involve users and librarians in the implementation of library budget. This is not practice in most of the libraries due to its poor placement in the organization.

Solution to the Identified Problems

An open ended question was given to the respondents to provide possible solutions to the identified problems of utilisation of information resources and library services. The data obtained is provided in table 4.8.1 solution to the identified problems.

Table 8.1 solutions to identified problems

S/N	Solutions	Frequencies	Percentages
1.	Adequate & current information resources	100	27%
2.	Qualified library staff	33	9%
3.	Relevant library services	74	20%
4.	Conducive atmosphere	33	9%
1.	Modern Information technology	81	22%
2.	General library awareness	20	5%
3.	No responses	23	6%
	TOTAL	364	100%

The table 8.1 shows the suggestions given by the respondent as measurers to improve the services of the government libraries. Adequate and current information resources have the highest opinion 100 (27%) provision modern information technology has 81 (22%) relevant library services 74 (20%) qualified library staff and conducive atmosphere has 33

(9%) each general library awareness has 20 (5%) no response 23 (6%). The implementation of these solutions will improve the services of the government libraries upon all the provision of adequate and proper implementation of library budget.

Conclusion

From the study some conclusions were drawn. There exist various types of information resources in government libraries of Kano State. It was a fact that they offered a number of library services to their users. Despite the availability of the information resources it was a fact that most of them were not utilized as well as the library services. Most of the information resources were not current and relevant to the needs of the users. The librarians do not offer adequate library services and general awareness to their users. The findings did not meet the researcher assumption. Government libraries as special libraries are expected to provide timely information services in anticipation of the needs of their users. This was contrary to findings of this study. Therefore, there is the need for serious rehabilitation of the government libraries based on the problems identified for effective and efficient information provision to the users, which is to go in hand with their counterpart in non-governmental organizations. There is also a serious need for the provision of information communication technologies for globalization.

Recommendation

- Librarians should be pro-active in term of information provision services in their libraries. That is timely information provision services.
- There should adequate provision of current and relevant information resources in the libraries
- The government should make the libraries functional and provides them will necessary infrastructure, funds, and recruit professional libraries. There should be collaborations and consortium among the librarians working in
- government libraries to be able to know the areas that needs improvement.
- Librarian should be ready to adapt to situations in order to promote the image of their organizations.

- The librarians should be trained on the use of modern information communication technologies.
- Librarians should be given continuous education on the job training, seminars, workshops etc. on the information services.
- There should be general awareness in all ministries and departments, so that users should be much aware of the library services. Librarians should market their services.
- Librarians should be actively involved in the implementation of library budget. So that funds are disbursed according to the needs of the users.

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