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Critical Factors Affecting the Demand for Information Resources among Federal University Library Users in North-West Nigeria

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The study examined the economics of demanding for information resource, with emphasis on the critical factors affecting the demand for information resources among university library users in 5 out of the 7 federal universities that were fully operational in North-West Nigeria during the study period. The study adopted descriptive survey and used quantitative methodology to collect data, via the use of questionnaire from 376 registered users that were randomly sampled for the study. Based on a response rate of 75.2%, the study revealed that both library users and their libraries are responsible for the observed critical factors affecting demand for information resources, among the university libraries in North-West Nigeria. While users were not following the appropriate technique for demanding information resources, it was discovered that university libraries were not good enough in providing current and up to date information resources to their users. The study shows that users of university libraries in North-West Nigeria are fairly satisfied with information resources they demand because of the poor articulation of their information needs and their inability of using catalogue to demand for information resources. Other issues critically affecting demand for information resources include users' inability of using boolean search techniques, outdated or non-current resources as well as inadequate computer and other information technology hardware for accessing information resources.

Keywords: Demand, Information Resources, Theory of Demand, University Libraries, Factors affecting demand for information resources

INTRODUCTION

Universities are established for the purposes of teaching, learning, research and community services. In line with the Nigerian Universities Commission, a federal university is a term used to qualify universities in Nigeria that are directly established and funded by the federal government in Nigeria. Such universities train individuals to become professional graduates who will occupy managerial positions and contribute in the socio-economic, political and industrial transformation of the Nigerian state.

All over the world universities strive for better ranking in terms of academic excellence, it is for this reason that they establish certain facilities to enrich tertiary education; the university library is the most crucial facility

that vitalizes every excellence that a university strives for. The university library enables a university to properly develop, impart and conserve knowledge. Considering the importance of university libraries Ifidon (1997) remarks that, "university libraries are the nerve wire that connects all that the university education is set up to achieve". By their nature, university libraries are established to select, acquire, process and organize an array of pertinent books and other information resources capable of satisfying the demand for information resources by its user community.

There is a positive correlation between university libraries and information resources. If the library is deficient of relevant information resources, it goes on to tell that such a university library is not working in line with those purposes for which it was established. Akintunde (2006) remarked that; the information resources that a library contains continue to hold a place in the ranking of higher education worldwide. It has remained the strength of the best traditions in academics; it is this tradition that marked out Oxford University, Cambridge University, Harvard University, University of Illinois, University of Ibadan as well as the University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University) as centers of academic excellence. Ogunrombi (2004) highlighted that there is a correlation between quality of information resources and the quality of education (research and scholarship) because no educational system would be greater than the quality of its teachers. He argues that the quality of education and research depends on the quality of information sources.

Evidence from the literature indicates that both library and user could be blamed for information resource demand failure. This study is conducted to identify what are those factors that hinder the successful demand for information resources among university library users in North-Western region of Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are as follows;

1.   To identify the information resources demanded by users in the federal university libraries in North-West Nigeria.
2.   To find out the purpose of demanding for information resources among users in the federal university libraries in North-West Nigeria.
3.   To determine the factors affecting the demand for information resources among university library users in North-West Nigeria.
4.   To ascertain the level of users' satisfaction with information resources demanded from federal university libraries in North-West Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept and Significance of Information Resources

Information resources are knowledge bearing materials

that support learning, teaching and research. Chimah and Nwokocha (2013) conceive information resources as "those materials, strategies, manipulations, apparatuses or consultations including all forms of information carriers that can be used to promote and encourage effective learning and research, as well as developmental projects". Ogbebor (2011) defined information resources as "an organized collection of published and unpublished books and audiovisual materials which a library uses to meet the informative, research, educational and recreational needs of its users". Bitagi & Garba (2014) opined that information resources constitute a range of materials and equipment gathered by a library in order to meet the information needs of both intended and anticipated users. Similarly, Bitagi and Udoudou (2013) opines that; "the availability of all forms and types of information resources in academic libraries is highly imperative if libraries are to meet up with satisfying the information needs of both users and researchers in their parent institutions".

According to Aliyu (2006) information resources are made up of a variety of materials on which information could be stored, retrieved and disseminated for use. Lance, Rodney and Pennell, (2005) remarked that we can divide library resources into two categories i.e., traditional printed material or resources and non-printed or electronic resources. The print ones are those on paper while the non-print are those made available through information and communication technologies. Ezeala and Yusuff (2011); Adeoye and Popoola (2011) remarked that library information resources can be in both printed and electronic formats including textbooks, journals, indexes, abstracts, newspapers, magazines, reports, CD-ROM databases, Internet, email, video tapes/cassettes, diskettes, computers and microforms. Essentially, print and e-resources are important in preparing teaching activities, lecture notes, students' assignment, as well as for conducting research work.

Osinulu & Amusa (2010) noted that a library collection is well composed when it is responsive to usability, comprehensiveness, diversity, and size. In a study, Okello-Obura and Magara (2008) discovered that though the impact of moving from text-based to an e-resource based learning has evolved heavier demand for more varied media sources, the format in which an information resource is produced could affect the demand for using information resources. The authors discovered that students who have been exposed to Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in their first year of study have peculiar preference for the format in which information resource is produced. Accordingly, there is the belief that the academic (performance) standard of students work would suffer without electronic resources.

The Theory of Demand and the Demand for Information Resources

In everyday usage, demand refers to any desired need or wants that is yet to be fulfilled or intended to be attained. Lipsey and Chrystal (1999) describe demand as the quantity of goods a consumer is willing and able to buy at a given price and at a given quantity. The words "willing and able" are crucial to understanding the notion of demand, literarily they are more of a hypothetical presumption, but the true economic interpretation of it connotes an absolute affirmation that certain goods and services have been purchased and a need has been fulfilled.

The theoretical study of demand is a preserve of social scientists in the field of economics; the theoretical interest of economist in demand is on its alternative end which is viewed in relation to price and other factors. Accordingly, the theory of demand states that; the higher the price the lower the quantity demanded and the lower price the higher the quantity demanded. The theory of demand believes that human beings are rational beings that would properly utilize price information to make demand for goods and services. This further implies that the theory of demand does not only depict what the incidence of demand looks like at certain price regimes, it also demonstrates the psychological assumption of how consumers maximize satisfaction whether in time of abundance or scarcity.

Unlike Demand for goods and services in relation to the price of a commodity, as in the case of buying a book from a bookshop, there is no price that would influence demand for information resources in a library. What influence demand for information resources is driven by certain factors which has nothing to do with price. Demand for information resource entails obtaining and using a book or any of the information resource in a library's collection. Demand for information resources by users of university libraries is often done to gain knowledge with which to do academic work, especially so as to enhance scholarly communication between lecturers and their students. Owolabi, Jimoh and Okpeh (2010) observed that students demand information resources because of their course work, which is in terms of; enhancing their lecture notes as well as for writing assignment, examination and test. Oyediran-Tidings (2004) summed up that the whole reason why university students' demand for information resources is because of the quest for an academic excellence in their respective field of study. The nature of information resource demanded by undergraduate students mainly consist of books which are meant for under graduate instruction, term papers and projects as well as for their supplementary reading. Ifidon (1999) highlighted that the nature of information resources demanded by undergraduates are mostly curriculum based, they are

related to particular subject areas such as accountancy, engineering, law, medicine, and natural science", the author further noted that depending on the level of readership intended, some of them are for beginners while a few others are for research. Seldom treating any subject in detail, they are an excellent starting point for writing term papers and projects on practically any topic.

Factors Affecting the Demand for Information Resources

Certain factors are crucial to the demand for information resources available in a university library, and by extension these factors further indicate the usability attribute of information resources available in a library. Thus, taking these factors into consideration bridges the gap between information resource availability and their utilization. A successful demand for information resources depends upon the availability of information resources. It is not enough that they are available, or even bibliographically accessible; they must be physically accessible to those who would demand for them. Adeoye and Popoola (2011) highlighted the effectiveness, availability, accessibility and use of information resources in their study. They explained that, for effective demand of information resources by users to support their learning process, learners must have access to essentially current and relevant information materials and resources. The authors further stated that users demand for information resources may encounter five possible types of information resources inaccessibility problems that are; conceptual, linguistic, critical, bibliographic, and physical in nature.

Unlike Adeoye and Popoola (2011), who believe demand for information resources could be affected by the nature of their accessibility, relevance and currency. Rehman, Shafiq and Mahmood (2011). highlighted that demand for information resources by undergraduate users is affected by; the size and quality of library collection (the adequacy of the collection), organization of the collections, the usefulness of the bibliographic tools (catalogues, indexes and abstracts) in providing accessibility to the collections (availability of resources) and the ability and willingness of staff to assist users in exploiting these resources (staff quality vis-à-vis reference service).

The study of Popoola (2001) noted that there is a positive relationship between awareness and demand of library products and services. The author remarked that an information resource could be available in the library but if no awareness is created about that resources it might end up being underutilized because users are not aware of it. On his own part, Awolola (2004) remarked that students would not use the library let alone demand for the books of a college library if there are no better

books that are current and relevant to the need of the readers.

Iwhiwhu (2007) noted that a library user may be affected by stock failure and reader's failure in a bid to obtain information resources from a library. Stock failure entails a library's inability to acquire or provide the materials needed by the patron while reader's failure has two aspects which are bibliographical and physical in nature. Bibliographical aspect involves the reader's inability to find the items using the library catalogue because the bibliographic description is inadequate, incomplete or incorrect. In many cases, information retrieval devices themselves are lacking. The physical aspect is the failure to locate where an information resources is housed in the library.

Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) wrote about the factors affecting the ability of library users to obtain books and other information resources from a library. They stated that the failure to locate information resources on the shelf is a common challenge that leads to frustration among library users, especially because there is no indication on the library catalogue that an item is lost, sent to the bindery for repairs, weeded, or stolen. The authors further highlighted that users find it difficult to obtain information resources from a library when;

i.   Users do not precisely know what they want, or even if they do, they cannot articulate their needs accurately to the library staff.
ii.   The bibliographic or intellectual access to the content of the library is inadequate owing to poor indexing system in the library catalogue or of the library collection itself.
iii.   Items are miss helved or because a library staff might have removed materials for their private use or that of their relatives, friends, and associates.
iv.   The circulation policy of the library is inefficient, shelving methods are inadvertent, and guides to the library arrangement are lacking.
v.   Unnecessary physical and administrative barriers are imposed upon the use of the library material by the library management.

METHODOLOGY

The study of critical factors affecting the demand for information resources was conducted during the year 2013-2015. The study was carried on undergraduate students that are in 5 out of the 7 federal universities that were fully operational in North-West Nigeria during the study period. The federal universities studied include; Ahmadu Bello University Library, Bayero University

Library, Federal University Dutse Library, Federal University Dutsin-Ma Library and Usman Dan-Fodiyo University Library .

The study adopted descriptive survey design and used quantitative methodology to present and analyze data collected. A total of 18,342 registered users were identified for the study out of which 376 users were randomly sampled using the formula propounded by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Data for the study was generated using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was subjected to phase and content validity by lecturers in the Department of Library and Information Sciences at Bayero University, Kano. The questionnaire was reliable at .781 Chronbach Alpha co-efficient.

Data analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 16.0) while data interpretation was done by using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and mean. The analysis regarding factors affecting the demand for information resources was done based on the average mean score of 3, which was obtained by averaging the values of the Likert scale between 1-5. To specify whether a factor affecting the demand for information resources mean value >3 signifies an issue affects the demand for information resource while score <3 was considered less important to affect the demand for information resources .

Response Rate
Table 1: response Rate

Response Rate	Frequency	Percentage
Number of questionnaires duly returned	283	75.2
Number of questionnaires not returned	93	24.8
Total Number of questionnaires administered	376	100

Source: preliminary survey data

Table 1 shows the response rate of the study. 376 questionnaires were administered to respondents of the study out of which 283 copies representing 75.2% were duly filled returned and found useful for the study, while 93 representing 24.8% were not returned. The response rate of 75.2% reveals that the study has a relatively high response rate and this is attributed to the time frame used for data collection as well as the pre-test of the questionnaire's reliability before administering it to its intended respondents. Accordingly the response rate would greatly increase the reliability of the result of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Respondents Personal Information

Table 2: Respondents Personal Details

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	195	68.9
Female	88	31.1
TOTAL	**283**	**100**
Respondents' Age		
18-27	191	67.5
28-37	63	22.3
38-47	29	10.2
48-57	0	0
58 and above	0	0
TOTAL	**283**	**100**
Level Of Study		
Level I	61	21.6
Level II	66	23.3
Level III	97	34.3
Level IV	19	6.7
Level V	27	9.5
Level VI or (carry over)	13	4.6
TOTAL	**283**	**100**
Faculties of Study		
Agriculture	45	15.9
Arts and Humanities	52	18.4
Education	67	23.7
Engineering	19	6.7
Sciences	15	5.3
Social Sciences	35	12.4
Medicine	12	4.2
Law	30	10.6
Others	8	2.8
TOTAL	**283**	**100**

Source: preliminary survey data

From table 2, Data regarding gender distribution shows that 195 (68.9%) are male while 88 (31.1%) are female. This implies that there is a gender imbalance among undergraduate users of university libraries in north-west Nigeria. The figure of male users is twice that of their female counterpart.

The age distribution of the respondents indicates that majority of them are in their youthful age, data shows that users between the age of 18-27 are the majority and they are 191 (67.5%), then followed by 28-37 who are 63 (22.3%) and then those between the ages of 38-47 (10.2%). There were no undergraduate users identified within the ages of 48-57 likewise 58 and above.

With regards the level of study, data shows that the respondents fall within all the levels of study. Majority are those in level III 97 (34.3%), level II 66 (23.3%) as well as those in level I 61 (21.6%). The few ones were identified in level IV 19 (6.7%) and level V 27 (9.5%).

Consequently, the lowest respondents are level VI or

carry over with 13 (4.6%)

The study identified undergraduate users in numerous faculties of study. Majority are from the faculties of Education 67 (23.7%), then followed by those in the faculties of Arts and Humanities 52 (18.4%). Those from the faculty of agriculture are relatively many, they are 45 (15.9%) while those from the faculties of social science and law are 35 (12.4%) and 30 (10.6%) respectively. The few ones are from the faculties of medicine 12 (4.8%), sciences 15 (5.3) and engineering 19 (6.7%)

Types of Information Resources Demanded

Respondents were asked to indicate the information resources they demand as shown in table 3

Table 3: Types of Information Resources Demanded

S/N	Information Resources	Yes	No
a.	Textbooks	229 **(81%)**	54 **(19%)**
b.	Journals	166 **(58.6%)**	117 **(41.4%)**
c.	Newspaper	186 **(67.7%)**	97 **(34.3%)**
d.	Index and abstracts	35 **(12.4%)**	248 **(87.6%)**
e.	These and dissertation	97 **(34.3%)**	186 **(67.7%)**
f.	Magazines	128 **(45.2%)** (45	155 **(54.8%)**
g.	Government publications	32 **(11.3%)**	251 **(88.7%)**
h.	Technical report	17 **(6%)**	266 **(94%)**
i.	Encyclopedia	174 **(61.5%)**	109 **(38.5%)**
j.	Manuscript	8 **(2.8%)**	275 **(97.2%)**
k.	Microform	-	-
l.	Manuals	2 **(0.7%)**	281 **(99.3%)**
m.	Offline database	173 **(61.1%)**	110 **(38.9%)**
n.	Online database	173 **(61.1%)**	110 **(38.9%)**
o.	e-books	112 **(39.6%)**	171 **(60.4%)**
p.	e-journals	97 **(34.3%)**	186 **(65.7%)**

Source: preliminary survey data

Table 3 presents the types of information resources demanded by the respondents in North-west Nigeria. Data indicates that university library users demand for numerous information resources. Majority stated that they demand for information resources such as textbooks, newspaper, online database, offline database, encyclopedia, journals, magazines, e-books and e-journals.

On the other hand, it was discovered that the least demanded information resources include; manuals, manuscript, technical report, government publication as well as index and abstracts.

Purpose of Demanding for Information Resource

The respondents were asked to indicate their purpose of demanding for information resources

Table 4: Purpose of Demanding for Information Resources

S/N	Purpose	Yes	No
a)	For completing assignment	204 **(72.1)**	79 (**27.9%**)
b)	For conducting research	72(**25.4%**)	211(**74.6%**)
c)	For preparing notes	97 **(34.3)**	186(**65.7%**)
d)	For leisure reading	45(**15.9%**)	238(**84.1%**)
e)	To read for examination	226 **(80%)**	57 **(20%)**
f)	For borrowing books	36(**12.7%**)	247(**87.3%**)

Source: preliminary survey data

Table 4 shows that majority of the respondents demand information resources to read for examinations and to complete assignment. Data shows that 226 (80%) demand for information resources to read for examinations while 204 (72.1%) out of the entire 283 respondent demand for information resources to complete assignments. On the contrary, less than half of the entire 283 respondents of this study indicated that they demand for information resources for conducting research, preparing notes, leisure reading and for borrowing books to use outside the library.

Factors Affecting Demand for Information Resources

Respondents were asked to indicate factors affecting their demand for information resources. The mean score of the response generated was used as a basis for making remark regarding whether a factor affect the demand for information resources or not, while the remark on the last column of further indicates the extent at which respondents are affected by factors affecting demand for information resources.

Data presented in table 5 shows that respondents agree that 5 factors affect their demand for information resources. These include, the poor articulation or understanding of information needs by users, inability of using catalogue to identify information resources, out dated or non-current resources, users' illiteracy of using (Boolean) search techniques as well as inadequate computer and information technology hard ware for accessing information resources.

Similarly, respondents fairly agree that 4 factors affect their demand for information resources, these include; ineffective/ outdated library catalogue, irrelevant collections, inadequate internet as well as inadequate knowledge of using online and offline information database.

On the contrary, data shows that respondents

Table 5: Factors Affecting Demand for Information Resour

S/N	Factors	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Remarks
a.	poor articulation or understanding of information needs by users	3.7	A
b.	Poor organization of library resource	2.4	D
c.	Ineffective/outdated library catalogue	3.3	FA
d.	Inability of using catalogue to identify information resources	3.9	A
e.	Inadequate collections	2.2	D
f.	Irrelevant collections	2.8	FA
g.	Inaccessible collections	2.1	D
h.	Outdated/non-current collections	3.7	A
i.	Absence of library guide	1.9	D
j.	Users illiteracy of boolean search techniques	3.9	A
k.	Unfriendly staff behavior	2.1	D
l.	Inadequate computer and other information technology hard wares	4.2	A
m.	Inadequate internet	2.6	FA
n.	Inadequate knowledge of using online and offline library information database	3.4	FA

Source: preliminary survey data
Key to Remarks: 0.5-1= Strongly Disagree (SD), 1.5-2 = disagree (D), 2.5-3 = Fairly Agree (FA), 3.5-4 = Agree (A) while 4.5-5 = Strongly Agree (SA)

disagreed that their demand for information resources were affected by four factors. These include; inadequate collections, inaccessibility of resources, unfriendly staff behavior as well as absence of library guide.

Respondents Satisfaction with Information Resources

Respondents were asked to state how satisfied they are with information resources they demand from their libraries

Table 6: Respondents Satisfaction with Information Resources

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Very satisfied	23	8.2
Satisfied	55	19.4
Fairly	119	42.1
Unsatisfied	77	27.2
Very Unsatisfied	9	3.1
Total	283	100

Source: preliminary survey data

Table 6 is on how respondents describe their satisfaction with the information resources demanded from university libraries in north-west Nigeria. The data

presented shows that majority 119 (42.1%) are fairly satisfied with the information resource they demand. Only 23 (8.2%) of the respondents are very satisfied while 55 (19.4%) indicated that they are satisfied. Furthermore, 77 (27.2%) and 9 (3.1) were unsatisfied and very unsatisfied respectively with the information resources demanded from the university libraries in the region under study.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After five decades of university education in Nigeria, this study highlights that the university libraries in Nigeria especially those in the region understudy are yet to exonerate themselves from their users' inability to efficiently demand for information resources. The study also reaffirms that factors affecting the demand for information resources can be viewed from a dual perspective. Findings of this study imply that both the university library and its users are still blameworthy regarding factors affecting the demand for information resources. It can thus be concluded that the university libraries in the region under study are plagued by inadequate current information resources as well as inadequate information and computer infrastructures that would enable library users to demand for information resources. On the other hand, users lack the wherewithal to independently navigate the library resources using search tools and techniques. In essence, the study has opened a gap of knowledge regarding the practice of efficient information retrieval among university library users in Nigeria.

University libraries are the sole information service provider that supports the academic functions of a university; it is highly recommended that this study should be replicated in other regions of Nigeria with the view of exposing those issues hindering demand for information resources across university libraries in the whole country. It is also recommended that university libraries should align themselves with this report and make necessary corrections in a tactical and strategic manner.

Regarding the inability of users to efficiently retrieve information resources from their libraries, it is high time librarians consider teaching their users efficient information retrieval techniques a serious business that would not only help in advancing their worth to the society, but sustain their profession in this changing times where librarians are constantly threatened by the vicissitude of information and communication technologies. Accordingly, teaching users what they need to know about information retrieval should not only be on theoretical terms but should also incorporate and lay more emphasis on the practical terms of teaching users how to articulate their information needs to retrieve information resources based on library search tools.

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