Information Needs and Dissemination of National Centre for Technology Management (Nacetem), Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed information needs and dissemination of the National Centre for Technology Management (NACETEM), Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. The study focused on the adequacy of existing holdings in the research institute determines the recency of materials in the library and evaluate the environmental condition of the library. The study was a descriptive survey which involved the design of questionnaire that was administered to staff and library clientele. The findings revealed that the highest percentage of the library clientele were researchers 45.8%, followed by the administrative and accounts staff 45.9% and planning officers accounted for 8.3% being the least among the library users. Also, majority 61% agreed that the materials were adequate. The study further showed that majority 64% of the materials were relatively recent. The study further revealed that 33.3% of the respondents described the environment as conducive for reading and learning. This study concluded that the agency is living up to its mandate as an institution for science, technology and innovation management (STI). However, the information needs of the agency needs to be explored to assist the management to provide current materials for the use of the staff and other users.

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Introduction

Libraries in research institutes have the mandates of their parent institutions to organize, procure and disseminate relevant information to their clientele. The needs of the clientele have to be searched for and disseminated. This approach makes it specific and essentially tailored to the needs of the clientele. However, the quantity and quality of the information that is available in the library determines whether such information actually meets the needs of the clientele at any point in time. This study essentially aims at knowing the available materials at the National Centre for Technology Management (NACETEM), Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria and ex-ray whether such information actually meet the needs of the clientele in order to advice the management to equip the library and strategize for new challenges. NACETEM is an agency of the Federal Ministry of Science and Technology with the primary mandate of science, technology and innovation policy research in Nigeria.

In the research institutes, there is always a purpose for the use of information. The researchers may need information for certain purpose and this suggests that the information is needed. This was why Prasad (2000) said that the presence of what might be called an information purpose is a necessary condition of information need. He went further that there are two necessary conditions of information need:
(1) the presence of an information purpose,
(2) the information in question contributes to the achievement of the purpose.

He opined that there is no field of human activities where information is not a component whether research and development, business and industry, the information has to be acquired, processed, stored, retrieved and disseminated for communication. Indeed, the effectiveness of performance in all these spheres of activity depends largely upon the availability of information at the right time and in the right quantity. Prasad concluded by advising that the ultimate aim of any information retrieval system is to supply and deliver the information which can precisely match the information requests or requirements. It can be argued further that the success of the information service is more likely to be achieved by adjusting the services to meet the needs of an individuals rather than trying to match the output of the information systems.

It has been seen that the users do not always need the information requested by them, they lack a genuine purpose for the use of information. This implies that the claimed rests upon a judgement about users' information purpose. The judgement is required to see whether the information in question contribute to the achievement of the information purpose. Idled curiosity may not a legitimate reason for information needs. The attribution of information needs requires the making a value judgement.

The Concept of Information Needs

Information needs can be described as an individual or group's desire to locate and obtain information to satisfy a conscious or unconscious need. Majid (2013) opined that in order to effectively meet the information needs of different segments of the society, it is important to adequately understand their information needs. Bitso (2012) agreed with this assertion, defined information need as a function of the current knowledge state of an individual that may be stable and well defined such as is often the case in selective dissemination of information, or may vaguely state or ill-defined such as during exploratory search sessions.

Shafi and Wani (2011) posited that information need is an area which involves exact and accurate study of information requirements among different stakeholders of a profession. The advances in user and behavioural studies, living patterns,

standards and styles and varied dimensions to information need and it's seeking behaviours.

Information needs are related to, but distinct from information requirements. An example is that a need is hunger; the requirement is food. This view was corroborated by Miranda and Tarapanoff (2008) when they defined information as a state or process started when one perceives that there is a gap between the information and knowledge available to solve a problem and the actual solution of the problem.

To identify information needs, one must discover how the users choose, formulate and express their basic questions (problems or subjects) regarding their activity. This is important to describe how their knowledge systems work (cognitively, emotionally and socially).

Case (2007) stated that information need is a recognition that your knowledge is inadequate to satisfy a goal that you have. Information seeking arises from the fact that individual needs information- whether to satisfy a present or future need- that individual is required to consult some sources.

Udofia (2012) was of the opinion that information needs could enhance development. This view was corroborated by Majid (2013). He stated that in order to effectively meet the information needs of different segments of the society, it is important to adequately understand their information needs.

This assertion was corroborated by Prasad H.N. (2000) he observed that there is no field of human activity where information is not a component.

Whether research and development, business and industry, the information has to be acquired, processed, stored, retrieved and disseminated for communication. Indeed, the effectiveness of performance in all these spheres of activity depends largely upon the availability of information at the right time in right quantity.

He concluded by advising that the ultimate aim of any information retrieval system is to supply and delivers the information. We can precisely match the information requests or requirements. It is beyond doubt that the success of the information service is more likely to be achieved by adjusting the services to meet needs of an individual rather than trying to match the output of the information systems.

In the research institutes, there is always a purpose for the use of information. The researchers may need the information for a certain purpose and this suggests that the information is needed. This was why Prasad (2000) said that the presence of what might be called an information purpose is a necessary condition of information need. He classified information need into two:

(1) The presence of an information purpose,
(2) The information in question contributes to the achievement of the purpose.

The information users do not always need the information requested by them. They lack a genuine purpose for the use of information. This implies that the claim rests upon a judgment about the user's information purpose. The judgment is required to see whether the information in question contributes to the achievement of the information purpose, Idle curiosity may not be a legitimate reason for information need.

The attribution of information needs requires the making value judgment. Shafi and Wani (2011) stated that information need is an area which involves exact and accurate study of information requirements among different stakeholders of a profession. The information needs of the research institutions have to be explored to assist the management to provide adequate and current materials in the library to enhance the

research and training capacity of different categories of staff in the institutes especially the researchers.

According to Okogwu and Nnam (2013) information seeking arises from the fact that an individual needs information whether to satisfy immediate need or future need, he is required to consult some information sources.

The quality and quantity of information an individual has access to depend on the sources of information available to his disposal. Information needs of researchers in the Research institutes may involve reading of printed materials to research and experimentation and electronic media.

Dhawan (2014) opines that information generated for communication and dissemination is of different types. They include bibliographic information, practical information, referral information, statistical data, analytical information, condensed information, consolidated information, and repackaged information.

However the information needs of the researchers in the research institutes may be determined by the following factors as corroborated by (Okogwu and Nnam,2013).

Specific Objectives of the Study
• To assess the adequacy of existing holdings in the selected research institute,
• To determine the recency of materials in the library
• To evaluate the environmental condition of the library

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive survey design. Data collection was done by means of questionnaire, oral interview and personal observation among staff and the library users of the National Center for Technology Management, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. Data analysis was done by means of descriptive statistics (percentage distribution). Data presentation was done in charts and tables respectively.

Results and Discussions

The analysis of sociodemographic characteristics of respondents (Table 1) revealed that majority 60.8% were males while females accounted for 39.2%. Besides, the highest percentage of the library clientele were researchers 45.8%, followed by the administrative and accounts staff 45.9% and planning officers accounted for 8.3% being the least among the library users.

The examination of the frequency of library use showed that each of the library users 57.1% occasionally visit the library, 24.5% visit the library daily and weekly 14.3% while Seldom visit to the library accounted for the least percentage 4.1%. Additionally, the analysis revealed that books 41.7% were the most consulted among library resources followed by Newspapers 40.5%. Also, journals accounted for 9.5%, reference materials 4.8% and others 3.6% respectively. This corroborate the study of Opele and Unegbu (2012) who reported that hardcopy materials are still in use in many libraries even in this digital age.

When it comes to adequacy of resources in the libraries, Figure 1 revealed that majority 61% agreed that the materials were adequate while 32% said the materials were inadequate, 4.9% others opined that the materials were grossly inadequate while 2.4% said the materials were very adequate. The study further investigated the recency of most of the materials in the library.

Figure 2 revealed that, majority 64% of the materials were described as being relatively recent. Besides, 31.7% describes same materials as being old while majority being recent accounted for 4.3% of the total responses.

Table 1. Sociodemographic characteristics of respondents

| Parameters	Grouping	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	60.8
	Female	39.2
	Total	100
Category of Clientele	Planning Officer	8.3
	Admin Officer	31.3
	Account Officer	14.6
	Research Officers	45.8
	Total	100
Frequency of library use	Daily	24.5
	Weekly	14.3
	Occasionally	57.1
	Seldom visit the library	4.1
	Total	100
Materials often consulted	Books	41.7
	Newspapers	40.5
	Journals	9.5
	Reference materials	4.8
	Others	3.6
	Total	100

Table 2. Environmental condition of the library

Library Environment	Percentage
Reading area is extremely distractive	23.5%
Not conducive for learning	13.7%
Too much noise in the library	17.6%
Library staff not friendly	2.0%
The library is conducive for reading and learning	33.3%
Library staff take time to locate library materials	7.8%
Issue of better furniture should have been included	2.0%

Multiple response analysis
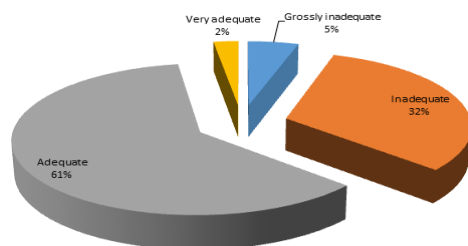
Figure 1. Adequacy of resources in the library

This implies that the management of the agency is focused and living up to its mandate as an institution for science, technology and innovation management. It also means that the management is well dispose to the library. The adequacy means that the agency is investing on the library in the procurement of relevant information resources for the use of clientele.
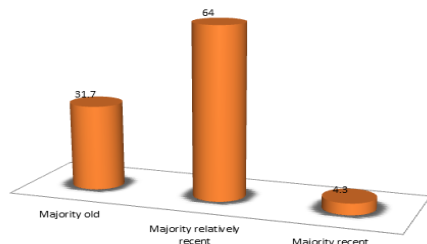
Figure 2. Recency of materials in the library

The study evaluated the environmental condition of the library, Table 2 thus revealed that 33.3% of the respondents described the environment as conducive for reading and learning while 23.5% others described the environment as extremely distractive. This means that users have different opinions on the environmental condition of the library. This calls for the construction of a more conducive reading and learning structure for the library clientele

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study concluded that the agency is living up to its mandate. However, the information needs of the agency needs to be explored to assist the management to provide current materials for the use of the staff and other users. The agency also needs to speed up the process of automating the library. In addition, there is a need for total reorganisation of the library for enhanced information services. There is a need for the construction of a more conducive reading and learning structure for the library clientele.

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