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INFORMATION NEEDS OF STUDENTS IN NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA IN THE DIGITAL ERA: MAKURDI STUDY CENTRE.

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**INFORMATION NEEDS OF STUDENTS IN NATIONAL OPEN
UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA IN THE DIGITAL ERA: MAKURDI STUDY
CENTRE.**

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the information needs and seeking behaviour of undergraduate students of National Open University of Nigeria, Makurdi Study Centre. A survey was carried out, with samples of respondents from the Study Area. The sample consisted of 111 undergraduate students selected for the study. Simple Sampling method was used. The results provide an insight into the student's information seeking behaviour and the information sources used in digital era. The study makes recommendations that could lead to the improvement of students' information seeking behavior and use of information resources.

Key Words: Information Needs, Digital Era, Information Sources, information seeking.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

It is a common belief that we live in an Information Age. Meeting our needs, from the most basic to the most sophisticated, is information dependent. In a complex and highly structured world, the need for information is felt at all levels of society, regardless of an individual's location, social condition or intellectual achievement. Over the years, libraries have become organized as information centers. Rapid developments in the information and communication technologies in the last few decades have enabled libraries to transform themselves from storehouses of printed materials into gateways to the world of information, which is evidence of the human needs for information.

Haruna & Mabawonku (2001) noted that information needs are diverse and constantly changing. The information need is something not directly observable but has its structures unseen; it exists in the mind of the users. Understanding the information needs of library clientele is necessary for planning and providing high quality library services, as well as to avoid misallocating resources. Understanding users' various approaches to seeking information in the new age, characterized by wide-spread and voluminous production and consumption of information, is also important. Agosto (2005) opined that when librarians and other designers of

information services understand users' information seeking behavior, they can adjust their services and resources to these patterns, and thus offer better services to the users.

Information is an important tool used in the realization of any objective or goal of the library. Information is an important factor in any library because they are needed by users. Every library user needs information of increasing variety and diversity of levels, frequencies, volumes and with ease.

Information need (or need for information) is a factual situation in which, there exists an inseparable interconnection with "information" and "need", information needs can therefore be said to be the amount of positive information an individual or group of users need to have for their work, recreation and many others like satisfaction. Singh & Satija, Fiankor & Adams, as cited in Adeniyi (2007) information needs arise wherever individuals find themselves in a situation requiring knowledge to deal with the situation as they see fit. In other words, lack of information needed to accomplish a task results in information need which several authors have variously described and explained.

According to Adeniyi (2007) information needs are diverse and constantly changing and not amenable to generalization. Information needs can be social, economic, political, cultural or educational. However, information need is

characterized mostly by the information seeking behaviour of the person in need of information.

For Fatima & Ahmad (2008) information needs is a broad term, which involves a set of actions that an individual, such as undergraduates, take to express information needs, seek information, evaluate and select information and finally uses this information to satisfy his/her information needs. It is therefore described as an individual's way and manner of gathering and obtaining information for personal use, knowledge, updating and development. In other words, information needs involve active or purposeful information as a result of the need to complete course assignment, prepare for class discussions, seminars, workshops, conferences, or write final year research paper.

Though, Singh & Satija (2006) see information needs as a human process that requires adaptive and reflective control over the information seeker in which information seeking behaviour results from their cognition of some needs, perceived by the user, who as a consequence makes demand upon a formal system such as libraries and information centres or some other person in order to satisfy the perceived information needs.

Singh & Satija (2006) further pointed out that information needs essentially refers to the location of discrete knowledge elements concerned with the three basic resources namely, people, information and system.

Bruce (2005) opined that information plays a significant role in our daily professional and personal lives and we are constantly challenged to take charge of the information that we need for work, fun and everyday decisions and tasks. For Abubakar (2010) it deals with behaviour and actions exhibited by human beings in their search for information to satisfy diverse information needs. Kakai et al., 2004; Wilson, 2008; Mustaffa et al., (2012) were of the opinion that information needs therefore is the purposive seeking of information by individuals as a consequence of a need to satisfy goals.

Kari, 2004; Bajpai et al (2009) in the course of seeking, the individual may interact with manual information systems such as journals or a library, or with computer-based systems such as the World Wide Web.

Today ICT impact is much more in academic library system. The changing technologies have brought a more sophisticated and higher speed of communication among students of National Open University of Nigeria, Kanchio Makurdi Study Centre. Academic libraries are responding to this change in the learning and research environment. It changes in the behavior of library users. Libraries are adding new electronic information resources and bringing services for the benefit of users. In the early 21century higher education has become a competitive enterprise. At present the information and knowledge revolution is very elevated. The increase in information available on the Web has affected

information seeking behavior due to the many electronic resources that are available in the library. To Kadli (2011) information in a large variety of containers and in many different locations, are all available in one place. Information seeking behaviour is the purposive seeking for information as a consequence of a need to satisfy some goal.

According to Wilson (2000) in the course of seeking, the individual may interact with manual information systems or with computer-based systems. To Abels (2004) information seeking behavior is expressed in various forms, from reading printed material to research and experimentation. Users actively seek current information from the various media available in libraries. So, no one can deny that knowledge and information are vital.

1.2 Statement of Problem

A number of problems have been identified as being responsible for the backwardness and retardation in the general growth of information in the digital age especially in the National Open University of Nigeria Makurdi Study Centre. The ideal library in our contemporary world can be described as a facility where every member of the community is offered the full benefits of the latest information in both print and digital formats.

However, Makurdi Study Centre of National Open University of Nigeria Library has been criticized on the grounds that there's absence of internet service and few printed materials for students to utilize. To Mustaffa, Ahmad, Baqi (2012) they opined that infrastructure is another problem in most libraries in most study centres of National Open University of Nigeria as compare to conventional universities in Nigeria. Mustaffa et al (2012) further posited cost is also a factor in the low use of ICT in digital era by National Open University of Nigeria across various Study Centres. The cost per minute of internet use is higher in Africa than elsewhere. Therefore, it is not safe to generalize the reasons for seeking information or needs for information. Factors that influence information needs of students include age, gender, educational level, and situation. One thing that is clear from information needs of students at the National Open University of Nigeria is that there is low level of information utilization.

Information seekers encounter various challenges. According to Tahir (2008) he identified seventeen possible problems students face in acquiring information for teaching, academic and research. Other challenges on the list were information sources located far away, lack of time, lack of training in information literacy skills, lack of knowledge in using the library, language barrier and incompetent or not well trained library staff.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The main aims of the study are to investigate the information needs of students in National Open University of Nigeria in the digital era with emphasis on Kanshio Study Centre Makurdi.

To manage library resources and make them accessible for students and to attain cost effectiveness in the university library services and promote the use of library information resources, this study sought to establish ways of improving the information seeking needs of students. To attain these purpose, the researcher outline the following objectives:

1. To establish the undergraduate students' Information needs of students at the National Open University of Nigeria, Kanshio Makurdi Study Centre.
2. To explore various ways students seek information at National Open University of Nigeria, Kanshio Makurdi Study Centre.
3. To explore various types of library services available in the Study Centre.
4. To establish sources of obtaining information by students at NOUN Study Centre, Makurdi.
5. To establish the frequency of visit to digital resource by students of NOUN, Makurdi Study Centre.
6. To explore the reasons/purpose students seek for information at the Study Centre.

7. To establish the level of satisfaction derived from the use of information resources by students of NOUN, Makurdi Study Centre.
8. To establish the problems that undergraduate students encounter in information seeking.
9. To develop or adopt strategies to overcome the problems.

1.4 Research Questions

For the purpose of this research, the researcher develop the following questions to guide her work, these includes:

1. What types of information do the students of National Open University of Nigeria, Makurdi Study Centre need?
2. What type (s) of information resources do students need at NOUN Study Centre?
3. 'What type (s) of Library Services are available to students in the NOUN Study Centre?
4. What are the sources of obtaining information by students?
5. How often do you visit electronic resource Centre?
6. What are the Reasons/Purpose why the students seek for information?
7. What is the Level of satisfaction derived from the use of the resources?
8. What are the problems faced by students seeking for information services?

9. What Strategies can be adopted to overcome problems faced by students seeking information?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study will help pin point the various growth challenges face by students of National Open University of Nigeria as well as provide solutions to these challenges. Findings and recommendations from the study will enable librarians, managers, information users and seekers, and the government to rally together and develop better policies that will encourage students in acquiring information at finger tips any time they so deserve. The study will also bring out strategies and techniques that can be adopted by information providers, librarians and others to improve on their services.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study is limited to the investigation of information needs of students in National Open University of Nigeria, Kanshio Makurdi Study Centre in the digital era with National Open University of Nigeria, Kanshio Makurdi Study Centre as a case study. Findings and recommendations from the study may not be used to generalize all study centres of National Open University of Nigeria as the research could not reach out to more Study Centres in Nigeria due to financial constraints.

1.7 Definition of Terms

Library:an organized collection of sources of information and similar resources, made accessible to a defined community for reference or borrowing.

Librarian: is a person who works professionally in a library, help people find information and conduct research for personal and professional use.

NOUN:National Open University of Nigeria

Information need: is an individual or group's desire to locate and obtain information to satisfy a conscious or unconscious need.

ICT: Information and Communications Technology

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Related Literature

2.0 Introduction

This chapter will be reviewed under the following headings:

2.1 Conceptual framework

2.2.1 Information Needs of students in National Open Universities

2.2.2 Reasons/Purpose Students seek Information

2.2.3 Sources of Information Search by students

2.2.4 Problems faced by students seeking information in the Digital Era

2.2.5 Strategies of seeking information by Students

2.3 Empirical Studies

2.4 Summary of the Literature Reviews

2.1 Conceptual Framework

People need information to obtain answers to specific questions. Therefore, information need arise whenever individuals find themselves in a situation as they deem fit. According to Singh & Satija (2006) the concept needs can be known through the various terms such as want a state or fact of being without or having an insufficient, absence or deficiency of necessities, desire (an unsatisfied longing or craving), demand (to require, asking for what is due or asking for something, and

requirement (a need, a thing needed, necessary condition). To Fiankor & Adams (2004) sees information need as the amount of positive information an individual or group of people need to have for their work, recreation and many others like satisfaction. This however implies that lack of information needed into accomplish tasks results in information need. Their concept of information need also means the need for information whenever individuals are faced with situation that requires knowledge to handle such situation. Therefore, to Fiankor & Adams (2004) information need is a gap in person's knowledge, when experienced at the conscious level as a question, gives rise to a search for an answer. According to Tackie & Adams (2007) literature on information needs and information seeking, acknowledges that work related information seeking is different from everyday information seeking. In their view, information influencers, such as accessibility, availability, and familiarity of source consumed determines the suitability of the information.

Adelani (2002) opined to the fact that there are spectrums of factors that determine information needs and this include age, educational level and linguistic ability of the user as well as other job related factors such as rank and length of experience, the nature of work (i.e. management, research or teaching) the subject field, the stage that a project has reached, size of the immediate work team, nature of the institution where the user works (academic or industrial), size of the institution and

the communication structure within the institution. People according to Safahieh (2007) students essentially need information for five broad functions and these functions are the fact-finding function, which provides answers to specific question, the current awareness function, which keeps information up-to-date, the research function, which investigates a new field in-depth, the briefing function, which obtains a background understanding of an issue, and the stimulus function, which provides ideas to obtain stimulus.

2.2.1 Information Needs of Students in the National Open University

Information ranks next to the basic human needs as air, water, food and shelter. The collection, transfer and use are all pervasive and universal activities. Adekunmisi (2005) information needs of individual researcher and educational institution or academic environment where information is an essential ingredient for development had not so far been the subject of serious discussion in African countries. Kennedy (1997) wrote that the concept of information needs is similar to the physiological need for food and water. Kennedy (1997) further added, information needs thus, is dependent upon the problem situation from which the need for information arises. In this view, information need is a situation or task which depends on many factors and changes as the person goes from one stage of task to the next. Kuhlthau (1993) information needs is often understood as

evolving from a vague awareness of something used and as culminating in locating the information that contribute to understanding and meaning.

Leug (2002) thus, it is seen that there is a need to understand the users requirements because the root of any information seeking is believed to be the concept of information needs, which fall into various categories as need for new information; need to expand or clarify the information obtained; and need to confirm. Leug (2002) further added that the goal of user's information seeking activities is to find information that satisfies his or her information needs.

To Kuhlthau, as cited by Mohammed & Temboge (2010) information need is often understood in information science as evolving from a vague awareness of something missing and as culminating in locating information that contributes to understanding and meaning. Belkin, as in Adekunmisi (2005) information need is described as an anomalous state of knowledge. Mohammed & Temboge (2010) opined that a gap in individual's knowledge in sense making situations also affect the decision of an individual when faced with different sources of information to make a choice. Wilson (1997) also points out that there must be an attendant motive when a person experiences an information need. Adetoro (2005) opined that information need is what an individual ought to have for his work, his edification, his creation etc.

2.2.2 Reasons Student Seek for Information

Pareek & Madan (2013) opined that the purpose to which students seek information is to keep up-to-date and preparing researches are the two main reason of seeking information by the researchers. To Liyana & Noorhidawati (2014) writing article, solving the problems and general awareness are another purpose of seeking information by the researchers respectively which have less priority. They further outline other reasons to include: general awareness, preparing research, borrowing study material, reading Journals, reading news papers, to know new arrivals, internet surfing, prepare for exam, assignment, home work, debate, presentation, problems with school or studying and using of e-resources. To Cooke (2001) different student's access and use varying information resources for diverse reasons depending on various types of information resources available.

To Folorunsho & Haruna (2005) it was generally observed that students in National Open University of Nigeria sought information mainly for the purpose of updating their knowledge, preparing for examinations and doing assignments. Although one would have expected that students consult librarians / library staff, when seeking for information, it was however observed that students prefer discussing with colleagues or person(s) they consider more knowledgeable. This however, maybe attributed to the fact that discussing with colleagues or persons' considered as knowledgeable may give them better understanding of the topics

they are working on before they embark on a literature search or that students do not see the librarians/library staff as knowledgeable enough to assist them. To Adetoro (2005) it is however worrisome that students from both conventional and distance learning or Open Universities hardly consult the library catalogue, which is an indication that either the catalogue is not functioning well or that students lack the necessary skills to enable them make proper use of the library catalogue.

People according to Safahieh (2007) essentially need information for five broad functions and these functions are the fact finding function, which provides answers to specific question, the current awareness function, which keeps information up-to-date, the research function, which investigates a new field in-depth, the briefing function, which obtains a background understanding of an issue, and the stimulus function, which provides ideas to obtain stimulus.

2.2.3 Sources of Information Search by Students

Connaway (2008) outline five sources of information commonly used by students to access information: the Internet search engines (e.g Google, Yahoo, and AltaVista); Online Public Access Catalogues(OPAC); Online Databases (e.g. Elsevier, IEEE, and ACM); printed materials (such as books, encyclopedia, journals, periodicals, magazines, gazetteers) and Digital Library such as Dspace@UM and DigiLibraries.com.

Nowadays, most users value Internet search engines for their convenience for searching for information. Google has been identified as their first choice for fast searches, thus bypassing other information resources. This has been evident in previous studies, such as Julien & Barker (2009) who have consistently demonstrated that information seekers rely heavily on the Internet to search for information. Reports by Connaway (2008) and Jamali & Asadi (2010) have shown that Google in particular is the search engine of choice.

Furthermore, Liu & Yang (2004) reported that graduate students have a strong preference for easy and fast information retrieval, with the highest percentage using internet search engines as their primary information resource. However, this study addresses the distance education domain, which may be particularly influenced by individual and environmental factors.

Despite constant findings of a strong preference to use Google as a primary information resource, information seekers reportedly choose different sources for different information needs, as stated by Agosto & Hughes-Hassell (2005) and Singh (2008) more recently, McKay & Buchanan (2011) explored how users utilize different information resources, including library catalogues, library databases, and Google Scholar. Their findings indicate that although users used different information resources, they still used short and simple searches. The study also revealed that library resources were difficult to use. To Connaway

(2008) this might imply that users are often acquainted with a basic search as imposed by internet search engines, they then desired the same features to be provided by other information resources especially the ones offered by libraries.

To Azubuike (2006) he opined that National Open University of Nigeria students' need librarians' support in finding new ways to make connections between the user and the materials that will facilitate intelligent inquiry and the creation of new knowledge. To Diso (2010) how will librarians provide this traditional service in the new environment? Can library services be restructured to present high-quality, trusted information in digital form to meet the needs of users for truly useful material as well as for immediate, convenient access?

Anderson (2006) opined that the digital resources available in a library play a prominent role in facilitating access to the required information to the user in an expediency manner. Electronic resource is one of the emerging environment in libraries and information communication in the competitive service. According to Gbaje (2010) E-Resources usually consist of e-books, e-Journals, articles, newspaper, thesis, dissertation, databases and CD-ROMs, which are likely to be the alternative to the print media. The familiarity and use of electronic information resources in the libraries for rapid development is necessary and important. Commenting on the advantages of electronic resources, Dadzie (2005) writes that electronic resources are invaluable research tools that complement the print based

resources in a traditional library setting. Their advantages, according to her include: access to information that might be restricted to the user due to geographical location or finances, access to more current information, and provision of extensive links to additional resources of related contents. The rapid growth of new technologies has changed the communication process and reduced the cost of communication for individuals.

Gbaje (2010) was of the opinion that information sources can be seen as the most recent development in information technology and are among the most powerful tools ever invented in human history. Kumar & Kumar (2008) electronic information sources are becoming more and more important for the academic community.

2.2.4 Problems faced by Students Seeking for Information in the Digital Era

Ascertaining the problems faced during the information seeking process, Liyana & Noorhidawati (2014) outline some problems faced by students while seeking information; thus it is difficult to deal with the large amount of information available, it is difficult to ensure that information sources are trustworthy, it is difficult to understand the information found, it is difficult to know where to find relevant information, it is difficult to categorize my information needs, it is difficult to know how to access information sources, it is difficult to find information that is relevant to the search subject etc. their study reported that most

students have problems in seeking information, specifically when looking for journal articles that were not fully accessible where only the abstract was available. Although the participants indicated that they could find the information that they desired but they were having problem with information excessive, difficulties to ensure the trustworthiness of the information and difficulties in understanding the information found. This is compounded with the study conducted by Korobili (2011) who investigated philosophy and engineering graduate students and reported that the problems faced were too much time needed to retrieve the needed information, and problems to retrieve records of good quality and relevant to the information need. The major problem noted by the respondents in seeking information is however in the area of material unavailability. To Rahman & Ali (2010) because of inadequate and irrelevant library collections, lack of information infrastructures, ineffective library services, lack of money to use fee-based information services, inadequately trained and less co-operative library staff. Most students also noted obsolete materials as another major problem. An indication that the university library may not be providing resources to suit the information needs of students.

According to Heery as cited by Rahman & Ali (2010) problems facing non-traditional students are not caused by their reluctance to adopt to the traditional system, but rather by the inability of educational institutions to provide appropriate

support mechanisms to meet the needs of a significant group of students. However, non-traditional students share a number of problems; for example, shortage of time affects nearly all cadres of nontraditional students (distance learners, evening, correspondence, open learning and school holiday). To Korobili (2011) the shortage of time is attributed to their modes of learning, which are detached, from regular systems of learning. Korobili (2011) further opined that many of them leave their offices at 4.00 pm after a days' work and rush to class for lectures or to read on their own. Therefore, time management poses a real challenge in fulfilling their academic needs because other responsibilities and commitments cause difficulties. Such students also find it difficult to access library materials due to inadequate study skills. This means that they need support and encouragement from qualified library staff.

Information seekers encounter various challenges. According to Tahir (2008) he identified seventeen possible problems students face in acquiring information for teaching, academic and research. Other challenges on the list were information sources located far away, lack of time, lack of training in information literacy skills, lack of knowledge in using the library, language barrier and incompetent or not well trained library staff.

2.2.5 Strategies of seeking for information

Bates as in Vakkari (2000) suggests that a searcher's behavior can be characterized by search strategies which in turn are made up of sequences of search strategies. To Vakkari (2000), strategies are the immediate choices or actions taken in the light of the current focus of attention and state of the search. Strategies also refer to combinations of strategies used in order to accomplish information access tasks. Thus strategies are sequences of strategies which, viewed together, help achieve some aspect or sub goal of the user's main goals. Bates enumerates a set of search strategies which she groups into four categories, which are paraphrased slightly below.

- Term strategies: refer to strategies for adjusting words and phrases within the current query. These include making use of term suggestions provided by the search system and selecting terms from an online thesaurus.
- Information structure strategies: are techniques for moving through information or link structures to find sources or information within sources. An example of an information structure tactic for an academic researcher is looking at the research articles that cite a given paper, and following the citation chain. Another example is, when searching within an online collection or Web site, following promising hyperlinks or searching within a

category of information, e.g., searching only within the technology section of a news Web site.

- Query reformulation strategies: examples include narrowing a given query specification by using more specific terms or gaining more control over the structure of the query by using Boolean operators.
- Monitoring strategies: monitoring refers to keeping track of a situation as it unfolds. Bates discusses several high-level monitoring strategies, including making a cost-benefit analysis of current or anticipated actions (weighing), continuously comparing the current state with the original goal (checking), recognizing patterns across common strategies, and recording incomplete paths to enable returning at a later time. Bates also notes that one of the fundamental issues in search strategies is determining when to stop; monitoring strategies can help with this determination.

Bates, also notes that some search tasks are straightforward enough that a strategy per se is not required. Simple fact-searching on the Web is an example of this; the searcher opens a Web browser, navigates to a search engine entry form, types in their information need, and scans the retrieval results to find the answer or a link to a page that contains the answer.

2.3 Empirical Studies

Dhyani (1974) conducted a survey of 100 readers at Rajasthan University Library, Jaipur. The study revealed that generally the readers showed interest in using the library at college level. As result, university libraries are functioning at a sub-optimal level or their effectiveness is not at the required level. Sethi (2001) studied the information-seeking behavior of social science faculty in Indian universities. Respondents preferred journals, books, government documents and reference sources for meeting their information needs.

Gowda & Shivalingaiah (2001) conduct a study about Information Seeking Patterns of Researchers in the University Libraries in Karnataka state, India. The study reveals that the research scholars depend upon their respective university library as their channel of information which is followed by Internet facility. The research scholars prefer to gather research articles which serve their research purposes and to visit the library to borrow books.

In Nigeria, Adelani (2002) in his study, he drew attention to the fact that there are spectrums of factors affecting information needs and this include age, educational level and linguistic ability of the user as well as other job related factors such as rank and length of experience, the nature of work (i.e. management, research or teaching) the subject field, the stage that a project has reached, size of the immediate work team, nature of the institution where the user works (academic or

industrial), size of the institution and the communication structure within the institution.

Owalabi, Jimoh & Okpeh (2010) in their study of information seeking behaviour of polytechnic students discovered that 285 (59.4%) of their respondents needs information in relation to their academic. It shows that students use information primarily for academic purposes. The study concluded that students at the polytechnic seek information to improve their academic performance. In a different study carried out by Fatima & Ahmad (2008), the findings show that 30 (50%) of the respondents seeks information on career development and other reason include seeking information for problem solving, keeping up-to-date and the need to write an article or research paper.

Ajiboye & Tella (2007) conducted a study on university undergraduate's information seeking behaviour in University of Ilorin, the research survey show that 12% of the respondents (students) required information for their personal development, while 11.25% claimed that they sought for information on health matter, and 64.1% sought for information for their academic development, 9.3% seeks information to secure employment.

Also, the study of Adeniyi (2007) reveals that lecturers of Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ogun State seek for information in order to get information on teaching and research, while Oyediran-Tidings (2004) in her empirical research on

information needs and seeking behaviour of library users reveals that greater percentage of the respondents usually seek for information concerning their course. To her, this is not unexpected because the quest for certificate in their respective field of study forms their primary aim of being in the college.

From the various studies carried out by various authors in different places, it is quite obvious that the reasons why individuals seek for information varies in line with the educational and economic background of the individual.

2.4 Summary of the Reviews

This chapter highlighted the conceptual frame work studies. All the studies highlighted the need for information in the digital era especially when it concerned academic activities and problems faced by students. It is also noted that the presence of information alone provides a reliable value system for the students.

In reviewing literature related works to this study, it has been observed that there is relatively small number of studies done on students seeking information especially at National Open University of Nigeria, Kanchio Makurdi Study Centre. The researcher has also found that there is no such study carried out in the Centre. (i.e at National Open University of Nigeria, Kanchio Makurdi Study Centre).

This study is therefore not only an attempt to bridge the gap but also answer such questions as what kinds of information do students need at National Open University of Nigeria, Kanchio Makurdi Study Centre? For what purpose do

students seek information in the National Open University of Nigeria, Kanchio Makurdi Study Centre? What problems are associated with the realization of the student's information needs at National Open University of Nigeria, Kanchio Makurdi Study Centre? What are the problems faced by students seeking information in digital era?

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methodology used in collecting data. It covers the area of study, population, sample and sampling technique, instrumentation, research design, validation of instruments, method of data collection and method of data analysis. Relevant literature were reviewed from the various authorities in the previous chapter. This chapter will dwell into the description of the research method of investigation employed by the researcher in the course of her study.

3.2 Research Design

The descriptive survey method of research was used, the approach systematically describes detailed facts and characteristics of the given area. Unlike some of the other methods that give casual, correlation analysis, this method does not serve to explain relationships, test hypothesis and make predictions. It ascertains what

others have done in the same area and similar situations and benefits from their experience in making future plans and decisions.

3.3 Area of Study

The area of study is National Open University of Nigeria Kanchio, Makurdi Study Centre, Benue State. The National Open University was initially established on 22 July 1983 as springboard for open and distance learning in Nigeria. It was suspended by the government on 25 April 1984. However, its resuscitation was begun on the 12 of April 2001 by the former President of Nigeria, Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo. The University operates from its Administrative Headquarters in Victoria Island, Lagos, with Study Centres throughout the country with a mandate to teach, conduct research and carry out other educational services. The University has 9 faculties which include Agricultural sciences, Education, Humanities, Social Sciences, Arts, Health Sciences, Management Sciences, Law, Science and Technology which offers both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. There are altogether 50 Academic departments which offer Certificate programmes, Diplomas, Bachelor's degrees, Master's degrees and a Ph. D. degree. The University also has Centre for Life-Long Learning and Workplace Training and Academic Certificate Programmes.

3.4 Population of the Study

Population is regarded as the universe or entire group whose characteristics are to be studied. It is the totality of units having certain defined characteristics in common. It is regarded as the entire items, which are of interests to our investigation. For the purpose of this research, our population is made of all 1118 undergraduate students of the Study Centre of the National Open University of Nigeria, Kanchio Makurdi. *Source:* (Office of the Coordinator; Dr. Godwin Akpe).

3.5 Sample and Sampling Techniques

According to Nworgu as cited in Tingir (2013) the concept of sampling implies the act of selecting a portion of a population for investigation. There are several sampling methods for selecting representative sample. For the purpose of this work, a sample of 111 students in the study area were used for the study.

A random sampling method was used to select the data. Tingir (2013) opined that a technique of sampling is the procedure whereby a researcher is able to infer the characteristics of a population through the studies of a few members of or sets of the population.

3.6 Instrumentation

The instrument used here is questionnaire. The questionnaire used in this work is divided into two sections via; section A and section B. Section A is made up of

personal data of respondents while section B contained actual questions that elicit respondents and were required to tick as appropriate against the options provided by the researcher.

3.7 Validation of Instrument

The researcher carefully designed the questionnaire, took it to the supervisor who is a specialist in research methodology for vetting before she administer them to the respondents.

3.8 Method of Data Collection

The researcher personally visit the National Open University of Nigeria, Makurdi Study Centre where she administer the questionnaire to respondents who are all students. Each respondent were given a copy of the questionnaire to tick (✓) the best option that suit the reason why he/she seek information.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

The research will make use of frequency counts and simple percentages in analyzing the data that were generated. Decision reached on a particular research question as follows: where the response is 50% and above shows agreement and where it is 49% and below it shows disagreement.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

4.1 Introduction

This chapter would highlight the data obtained in the course of this research. The chapter deals with the following sub-headings:

- Response rate
- Data presentation
- Analysis
- Interpretation
- Discussion of Findings

4.2 Response Rate

The researcher distributed 111 copies of questionnaire to respondents and all the copies were dully completed and returned which was used for the study.

4.3 Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion

The data collected for this study were analyzed using frequency distribution and percentages and presented in tables.

4.3.1 Presentation and Analysis of Respondents

TABLE 4.1: Research Question one: ‘What types of information do the students of National Open University of Nigeria, Makurdi Study Centre need?’

	SA		A		D		SD		U	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Kinds of information students need										
Academic	74	66.7	27	24.0	5	4.6	3	2.8	2	1.8
Research	56	50.4	44	39.7	0	0.0	8	7.2	3	2.7
Health tips	38	34.2	66	59.4	4	3.7	2	1.8	1	0.9
Politics	22	19.9	20	18	66	59.4	0	0.0	3	2.7
Others	5	4.5	4	3.7	2	1.8	90	81	10	9

Source: field survey 2019.

From the above table, the first item; 74 respondents (66.7%) strongly agree, 27(24.0%) answered agree, 5(4.6%) disagree, 3(2.8%) strongly disagreed while another 2(1.9%) were undecided. In the second item, 56 respondents (50.4%) strongly agree, 44(39.7%) answered agree, 0(0.0%) disagree, 8(7.2%) strongly disagreed while another 3(2.7%) were undecided.

The third item has 38 respondents (34.2%) strongly agree, 66(59.4%) answered agree, 4(3.7%) disagree, 2(1.8%) strongly disagreed while another 1(0.9%) were undecided. In the fourth item, 22 respondents (19.9%) strongly agree, 20(18.0%) answered agree, 66(59.4%) disagree, 0(0.0%) strongly disagreed while another 3(2.7%) were undecided.

Also gathered in the fifth item, 5 respondents (4.5%) strongly agree, 4(3.7%) answered agree, 2(1.8%) disagree, 90(81.0%) strongly disagreed while

another 10(9.0%) were undecided.

From the result of the study, one could conclude that students need information mostly about research and academic related issues. Hence, most of the questionnaire completed by them shows that more than 50% respondents strongly agreed that they seek information concerning academic and research activities. On the other hand, less than 35% strongly agreed that they seek information about health tips, politics and others.

This result collaborates with Adeniyi (2007) who reveals that lecturers of Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ogun State seek for information in order to get information on teaching and research.

TABLE 4.2 Research Question TWO: ‘What type (s) of information resources do students need at NOUN Study Centre?’

Type (s) of information resources	SA		A		D		SD		U	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Textbooks	78	70.2	12	10.8	11	9.9	2	1.9	8	7.2
Newspapers	55	49.5	34	30.7	20	18.0	0	0.0	2	1.8
Journals	33	29.7	11	9.9	33	29.7	15	13.6	19	17.1
Electronic Media	66	59.4	40	36.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	4.6
Library catalogue	31	28.0	16	14.4	48	43.2	15	13.5	1	0.9

Source: field survey 2019.

The above table shows items to which respondents have answered. In the first item, 78(70.2%) responded to strongly agree, 12(10.8%) answered agree, 11(9.9%) disagree, 2(1.9%) for strongly disagree while another

8(7.2%) were undecided. In the second item, it was gathered that 55(49.5%) went for strongly agree, 34(30.7%) answered agree, 20(18.0%) disagree, none went for strongly disagree while 2(1.8%) were undecided.

The third item gathered thus: 33(29.7%) for strongly agree, 11(9.9%) for agree, 33(29.7%) for disagree, 15(13.6%) for strongly disagree, and 19(17.1%) answered undecided. The fourth item has 66(59.4%) responded to strongly agree, another 40(36.0%) for agree, 0(0.0%) disagree, 0(0.0%) strongly disagree while 5(4.6%) were undecided. And the fifth item has 31(28.0%) for strongly agree, 16(14.4%) for agree, 48(43.2%) for disagree, 15(13.5%) for strongly disagree and 1(0.9%) were undecided.

From the result of the study, one could deduce that electronic media, textbooks and newspapers are the types of information resources that have been needed most frequently by the students, they are strongly agreed by the students as the key information resources. These can be seen in the percentage of respondents; textbooks 78 (70.2%), newspapers 55 (49.5%) and electronic media 66 (59.4%).

On the other hand, it is not surprise that majority of students strongly disagree with Library catalogue and Journals as information resources. This can be attested to in the percentage count; Library catalogue 31 (28.0%) and Journals 33 (29.7%). This explain total disagreement with the information resources.

It was also discovered that most students could not assess the journals and

sometimes even information found on the card catalogue were nowhere found on the library catalogue.

TABLE4.3 Research Question Three: 'What type (s) of Library Services are available to students in the NOUN Study Centre?'

Type (s) of Library Services	SA		A		D		SD		U	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Circulation	88	79.2	15	13.5	3	2.7	5	4.6	0	0.0
Printing	90	81.0	5	4.6	3	2.7	3	2.7	10	9
Documentation Delivery	16	14.4	5	4.6	17	15.3	67	60.3	6	5.4
Research	84	75.7	8	7.2	9	8.1	3	2.7	7	6.3
Others	33	29.7	56	50.4	17	15.3	5	4.6	0	0.0

Source: field survey 2019.

The above table shows items to which respondents have answered. In the first item, 88(79.2%) responded to strongly agree, 15(13.5%) answered agree, 3 (2.7%) for disagree, 5 (4.6%) strongly disagree while 0(0.0%) were undecided. In the second item, it was gathered that 90(81.0%) went for strongly agree, 5(4.6%) agree, 3(2.7%) went for disagree, 3(2.7%) strongly disagree while 10(9.0%) were undecided.

The third item gathered thus: 16(14.4%) for strongly agree, 5(4.6%) for agree, 17(15.3%) disagree, 67(60.3%) for strongly disagree, and 6(5.4%) answered undecided. The fourth item has 84(75.7%) responded to strongly agree, another 8(7.2%) for agree, 9(8.1%) answered disagree, 3(2.7%) strongly disagree while 7(6.3%) were undecided. The fifth item has 33(29.7%) for strongly agree, 56(50.4%) for agree, 17(15.3%) for disagree, 5(4.6%) strongly disagree

and none were undecided.

The researcher discovered that, majority of the students made use of printing services 90(81.0) followed by circulation services 88(79.2) and research services 84(75.7%). This shows total agreement with these three services rendered by the University library. The researcher also discovered that the research services and printing services were key to student’s quest for information.

On the other hand, 67 (60.3%) respondent strongly disagree with the services of Documentation Delivery and other services. This explains where the University library services are inadequate and need to be improved upon.

TABLE4.4 Research Question Four: ‘What are the sources of obtaining information by students?’

Sources of obtaining information by students	SA		A		D		SD		U	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Digital library	84	75.7	19	17.1	6	5.4	2	1.8	0	0.0
Print sources	46	41.4	58	52.2	3	2.8	3	2.8	1	0.9
Library catalogue	51	46.0	58	52.2	1	0.9	0	0.0	1	0.9
Library data base	21	18.9	61	54.9	18	16.2	8	7.2	3	2.8
Internet search	101	91.0	9	8.1	0	0.0	1	0.9	0	0.0

Source: field survey 2019.

From the above table, the first item; 84 respondents (75.7%) strongly agree, 19(17.1%) answered agree, 6(5.4%) disagree, 2(1.8%) strongly disagreed while

none 0(0.0%) were undecided. In the second item, 46 respondents (41.4%) strongly agree, 58(52.2%) answered agree, 3(2.8%) disagree, 3(2.8%) strongly disagreed while none 1(0.9%) were undecided.

The third item has 51 respondents (46.0%) strongly agree, 58(52.2%) answered agree, 1(0.9%) disagree, 0(0.0%) strongly disagreed while another 1(0.9%) were undecided. In the fourth item, 21 respondents (18.9%) strongly agree, 61(54.9%) answered agree, 18(16.2%) disagree, 8(7.2%) strongly disagreed while another 3(2.8%) were undecided.

Also gathered in the fifth item, 101 respondents (91.0%) strongly agree, 9(8.1%) answered agree, 0(0.0%) disagree, 1(0.9%) strongly disagreed while none 0(0.0%) were undecided.

The result above shows that the respondents strongly agreed internet search is the best and the most source that students used to source for information. 101 respondents (91.0%) of the highest respondents strongly agreed, this is followed by digital library 84 respondents representing (75.7%) of the respondents also strongly agreed. The two sources are easily available and less time consuming.

On the other hand, it was noted that other sources exist but are not highly used by the students as compare to; internet search and digital library. More so, print sources, library catalogue, library data base were less sources used especially in dealing with volume of information, retrieving, where to locate the information and

the process of sorting out the information.

TABLE4.5 Research Question Five: ‘How often do you visit electronic resource Centre?’

Visit to electronic resource	SA		A		D		SD		U	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Daily	88	79.2	15	13.5	3	2.7	5	4.6	0	0.0
Weekly	62	55.8	38	34.2	6	5.4	0	0.0	5	4.6
Monthly	3	2.7	6	5.4	44	39.7	56	50.4	2	1.8
Yearly	0	0.0	8	7.2	48	43.2	33	29.7	22	19.9
Not at all	0	0.0	0	0.0	57	51.3	48	43.2	6	5.4

Source: field survey 2019.

The above shows items to which respondents have answered, the first item; 88 respondents (79.2%) strongly agree, 15(13.5%) answered agree, 3(2.7%) disagree, 5(4.6%) strongly disagreed while 0(0.0%) were undecided. In the second item, 62 respondents (55.8%) strongly agree, 38(34.2%) answered agree, 6(5.4%) disagree, 0(.0%) strongly disagreed while another 5(4.6%) were undecided.

The third item has 3 respondents (2.7%) strongly agree, 6(5.4%) answered agree, 44(39.7%) disagree, 56(50.4%) strongly disagreed while 2(1.8%) were undecided.

In the fourth item, no respondent (0.00%) strongly agree, 8(7.2%) answered agree, 48(43.2%) disagree, 33(29.7%) strongly disagreed while 22(19.9%) were undecided. Also gathered in the fifth item, no respondent

(0.00%) strongly agree, also no respondent (0.00%) answered agree, 57(51.3%) disagree, 48(43.2%) strongly disagreed while another 6(5.4%) were undecided.

From the result in the table above, it clearly shows that 88 respondents representing (79.2%) of the highest response agreed that they visit electronic resource otherwise called digital resource on a daily basis to search for information and 62 respondents representing (55.8%) visit on a weekly basis. The total agreement attest to the fact that the Study Centre deals mostly with online services. For instance, students take their TMA online, check assessment scores online, register their courses online, take exam on computer, check their result online etc. On the other hand, few students responded that they visit electronic resource once in a month i.e 3 respondents representing (2.7%) and none responded to visit yearly and also none responded not visiting at all. This clearly shows that the Study Centre embraces e-learning institution.

TABLE4.6 Research Question Six: ‘What are the Reasons/Purpose why the students seek for information?’

Reasons/Purpose students seek information	SA		A		D		SD		U	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Preparing for exam	68	61.2	22	19.8	16	14.4	0	0.0	5	4.6
Preparing researches	81	73.0	11	9.9	8	7.2	3	2.7	8	7.2
Keep up-date	19	17.0	3	2.8	22	19.8	64	57.6	3	2.8
Assignment	84	75.7	7	6.3	9	8.1	8	7.2	3	2.8

Study materials	64	57.6	19	17.0	3	2.8	22	19.8	3	2.8
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Source: field survey 2019.

From the above table, the first item; 68 respondents (61.2%) strongly agree, 22(19.8%) answered agree, 16(14.4%) disagree, 0(0.0%) strongly disagreed while another 5(4.6%) were undecided. In the second item, 81 respondents (73.0%) strongly agree, 11(9.9%) answered agree, 8(7.2%) disagree, 3(2.7%) strongly disagreed while another 8(7.2%) were undecided.

The third item has 19 respondents (17.0%) strongly agree, 3(2.8%) answered agree, 22(19.8%) disagree, 64(57.6%) strongly disagreed while another 3(2.8%) were undecided. In the fourth item, 84 respondents (75.7%) strongly agree, 7(6.3%) answered agree, 9(8.1%) disagree, 8(7.2%) strongly disagreed while another 3(2.8%) were undecided.

Also gathered in the fifth item, 64 respondents (57.6%) strongly agree, 19(17.0%) answered agree, 3(2.8%) disagree, 22(19.8%) strongly disagreed while another 3(2.8%) were undecided.

From the result above, one can deduce that the there's total compliance by the respondents. This shows that the study area is an academic environment and therefore the respondents were of opinion that they are seeking information mainly to prepare for exam, prepare for researches, assignment, study materials and keep up-date on academic activities.

This result shows similarities with the findings of a study carried out by Fatima &

Ahmad (2008), the findings show that 30 (50%) of the respondents seeks information on career development and other reason include seeking information for problem solving, keeping up-to-date and the need to write an article or research paper.

TABLE4.7 Research Question Seven: ‘What is the Level of satisfaction derived from the use of the resources?’

Level of satisfaction	HS		MS		FS		NS		U	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Audio/Video CDs	22	19.9	66	59.4	20	18.0	3	2.7	0	0.0
Online Search	78	70.2	2	1.9	12	10.8	19	17.1	0	0.0
Books	66	59.4	40	36.0	3	2.8	2	1.8	0	0.0
Newspapers	84	75.7	9	8.1	8	7.2	7	6.3	3	2.8
Magazines	4	3.7	5	4.5	90	81.0	10	9.0	2	1.8

Source: field survey 2019.

From the above table, the first item; 22 respondents (19.9%) strongly agree, 66(59.4%) answered agree, 20(18.0%) disagree, 3(2.7%) strongly disagreed while 0(0.0%) were undecided. In the second item, 78 respondents (70.2%) strongly agree, 2(1.9%) answered agree, 12(10.8%) disagree, 19(17.1%) strongly disagreed while 0(0.0%) were undecided.

The third item has 66 respondents (59.4%) strongly agree, 40(36.0%) answered agree, 3(2.8%) disagree, 2(1.8%) strongly disagreed while 0(0.0%) were undecided. In the fourth item, 84 respondents (75.7%) strongly agree, 9(8.1%) answered agree, 8(7.2%) disagree, 7(6.3%) strongly disagreed while

another 3(2.7%) were undecided.

Also gathered in the fifth item, 90 respondents (81.0%) strongly agree, 4(3.7%) answered agree, 5(4.5%) disagree, 10(9.0%) strongly disagreed while another 2(1.8%) were undecided.

From the result above, it is important to note that the respondents were highly satisfied with online search, books and newspapers. The gap between those that are fairly satisfied and those that are not satisfied is much.

It is also clearly attested to by respondents unsatisfactory of information; these is seen in the few percentage that highly satisfied with video/audio Cds 22 (19.9%) and 4 respondents representing (3.7%) for Magazines.

TABLE4.8 Research Question Eight: ‘What are the problems faced by students seeking for information services?’

Problems faced by students	SA		A		D		SD		U	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Difficult to deal with the large amount of information available	77	69.3	23	20.8	11	9.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
Too much time needed to retrieve the needed information (time management)	66	59.4	22	19.9	20	18.0	3	2.7	0	0.0
Material unavailability	11	9.9	33	29.7	19	17.1	33	29.7	15	13.6
It is difficult to find information that is relevant to the search subject	90	81.0	10	9.0	5	4.5	2	1.8	4	3.7
Difficult to know how to access information sources	88	79.2	3	2.7	15	13.5	0	0.0	5	4.6

Source: field survey 2019.

Data from the above table show thus; the first item; 77 respondents (69.3%) strongly agree, 23(20.8%) answered agree, 11(9.9%) disagree, 0(0.0%)

strongly disagreed while 0(0.0%) were undecided. In the second item, 66 respondents (59.4%) strongly agree, 22(19.9%) answered agree, 20(18.0%) disagree, 3(2.7%) strongly disagreed while 0(0.0%) were undecided.

The third item has 11 respondents (9.9%) strongly agree, 33(29.7%) answered agree, 19(17.1%) disagree, 33(29.7%) strongly disagreed while another 15(13.6%) were undecided. In the fourth item, 90 respondents (81.0%) strongly agree, 10(9.0%) answered agree, 5(4.5%) disagree, 2(1.8%) strongly disagreed while another 4(3.7%) were undecided.

Also gathered in the fifth item, 88 respondents (79.2%) strongly agree, 3(2.7%) answered agree, 15(13.5%) disagree, 0(0.0%) strongly disagreed while another 5(4.6%) were undecided.

From the above result, the respondents strongly agreed that these problems affect their academic studies especially in dealing with volume of information, retrieving, where to locate the information and the process of sorting out the information. One can also note that time is of essence to the students hence most of them complain that they are workers, and combining the work and academic is not easy.

Similarly, as observed by the researcher, the study conducted by Korobili (2011) who investigated philosophy and engineering graduate students and reported that the problems faced were too much time needed to retrieve the needed information, and problems to retrieve records of good quality and relevant to the information

need. The major problem noted by the respondents in seeking information is however in the area of material unavailability.

Also there is a corroboration of this result by the work of Rahman & Ali (2010) who investigated students of Law department and reported that because of inadequate and irrelevant library collections, lack of information infrastructures, ineffective library services, lack of money to use fee-based information services, inadequately trained and less co-operative library staff. Most students also noted obsolete materials as another major problem. This is an indication that the university library may not be providing resources to suit the information needs of students.

TABLE 4.9 Research Question Nine: ‘What Strategies can be adopted to overcome problems faced by students seeking information?’

	SA		A		D		SD		U	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Solution to problems faced by students										
Installation of Digital Library	68	61.2	31	28.0	9	8.1	1	0.9	2	1.8
Employment/upgrading of staff	62	55.9	46	41.4	1	0.9	1	0.9	1	0.9
Provision of e-books	49	44.1	58	52.2	0	0.0	4	3.7	0	0.0
Increased printed materials	44	39.5	62	55.9	3	2.8	2	1.8	0	0.0
Improved power supply	72	64.8	38	34.2	1	0.9	0	0.0	0	0.0

Source: field survey 2019.

From the above table, the first item; 68 respondents (61.2%) strongly agree, 31(28.0%) answered agree, 9(8.1%) disagree, 1(0.9%) strongly disagreed while another 2(1.8%) were undecided. In the second item, 62 respondents (55.9%) strongly agree, 46(41.4%) answered agree, 1(0.9%) disagree, 1(0.9%) strongly

disagreed while another 2(1.8%) were undecided.

The third item has 49 respondents (44.1%) strongly agree, 58(52.2%) answered agree, 0(0.0%) disagree, 4(3.7%) strongly disagreed, meanwhile none were undecided. In the fourth item, 44 respondents (39.5%) strongly agree, 62(55.9%) answered agree, 3(2.8%) disagree, 2(1.8%) strongly disagreed while 0(0.0%) were undecided.

Also gathered in the fifth item, 72 respondents (64.8%) strongly agree, 38(34.2%) answered agree, 1(0.9%) disagree, while none strongly disagree and none were undecided.

From the analysis, it is observed that the respondents totally agreed that; Installation of Digital Library, Employment/upgrading of staff, Provision of e-books, Increased printed materials and Improved power supply 68(61.2%), 62(55.9%), 58(52.2%), 62(55.9%), 72(64.8%) respectively can solve the problems been faced by the students in the Study Centre.

On the other hand, only few percentage of the respondents that strongly disagree with the above measures as solution to the problems. i.e 4 respondents representing 3.7% strongly disagree, 9 (8.1%) disagree while only 2(1.8) were undecided. This clearly shows that the above measures are the solution to the problems listed earlier.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary, Conclusion, Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Studies

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the results collected from the questionnaires were presented in a tabular form and results analyzed on a percentage method, this chapter will discuss the findings from the previous chapter, conclusion will be drawn and also recommendations will be made to assist the National Open University of Nigeria, Makurdi Study Centre, government of Nigeria, educational planners, researchers, institutions of higher learning's and other people who may wish to undertake research in the same area in the future.

5.2 Summary

This study was conducted to examine information needs and information seeking behavior of students in National Open University of Nigeria, Makurdi Study Centre. From this primary focus, nine research questions were generated for the study:

1. What types of information do the students of National Open University of Nigeria, Makurdi Study Centre need?

2. What type (s) of information resources do students need at NOUN Study Centre?
3. 'What type (s) of Library Services are available to students in the NOUN Study Centre?
4. What are the sources of obtaining information by students?
5. How often do you visit electronic resource Centre?
6. What are the Reasons/Purpose why the students seek for information?
7. What is the Level of satisfaction derived from the use of the resources?
8. What are the problems faced by students seeking for information services?
9. What Strategies can be adopted to overcome problems faced by students seeking information?

The literature on information needs and information seeking behavior was examined from past studies especially among students. A questionnaire was designed and then distributed among the students at the Study Centre of the University. Out of 111 questionnaire distributed, all were filled and returned. This gives a response rate of 100%. The data obtained from the survey was analyzed using simple percentage and discussed in chapter four (4).

This study explored the information seeking behaviour of students. The findings indicate that students rely heavily on the Internet as well as the university libraries, online resources information, though still using the physical library for hard copy

materials such as books, journals and papers. Some students mentioned problems such as difficulty locating information or the need for convenience and speed.

This study not only provides insight into students' information behaviour, it also raises some questions.

5.3 Conclusion

The results from the study based on the analysis in the previous chapter clearly show that undergraduate students in National Open University of Nigeria, Makurdi Study seek for information in relation to their academic and research needs. It is quite obvious that their desire to satisfy their educational and academic information needs influence them to seek for information.

The Internet plays a vital role in students' search for information. The majority of students indicated a preference for information that is available online using university library resources and/or the wider Internet resources. When students use the Internet, searching for and obtaining information are simultaneous and enable them to work in their offices or homes.

All reported using Web resources (library and non-library) though the perceived importance of the Web varies among disciplines. With the exception of problems mentioned by a few, students value the Internet because of its powerful search functionality that enables searching enormous amounts of information. They reported using Google for a general or known search for information.

Students use both print and electronic resources that are available through the university libraries. They search university library databases and indexes, online journals and other online resources for articles, conference proceedings, reference materials, images and other materials. Students also use the libraries' print resources, citing use of books, print journals and other materials. When they are unable to find the information they need using the university libraries, some students request items using the libraries' interlibrary loan service, use materials from local universities and colleges, or from public libraries.

The undergraduates from the studied institution do seek for information by browsing through the shelves and as well consulting the catalogue. The students as revealed hardly go through available bibliographic sources nor do they seek for information from staff working in the library.

The students basically visit the library with a view that they will update their knowledge. The undergraduates in the institution only visit the library when they are writing assignment or carrying out research. Non-availability of information materials is a major problem associated with students needs for information. In this age of Information and communication technology, where Internet has revolutionized every facet of librarianship, it is very important that librarians working in the various libraries should as a matter of urgency embraced the reality of ICT if they are to remain relevant to the information conscious society.

5.4 Recommendations

The researcher in view of the identified problems wishes to make the following recommendations in line with the findings of the study.

1. Introduction of Computerized or Digital Catalogue:- Many students who used the library are ICT compliant. This calls for the need to introduce digital catalogue to the libraries under study. When the libraries are automated, we can easily have access to information sources available in that library.
2. Provision of Current and Relevant Resources: there is need for the authorities in the institution under study to make provisions for the acquisition of relevant documents. Finance meant for the acquisition of library resources should be channeled appropriately.
3. Introduction of Internet / Virtual library as a Course: In view of the technological wind blowing across the information palace, it is imperative for a course on the Use of Internet and Virtual Libraries to be designed that will help in instructing the students on how to utilized the available technologies in accessing and meeting up with their information needs.
4. Recruitment of Qualified librarians: Most staff in the libraries are not core professional staff hence their capacity to deliver efficient services to their client has been impeded. This apparently reveals the need for the heads of

libraries to recruit qualified personal that will help in manipulating the available technologies and as well transformed the image of librarianship.

5. The considerable increase in the number of available resources makes it even more difficult for students to find the information they are looking for. Libraries can provide navigational aids available at all times that describe the physical library and the electronic library resources.
6. Accessibility is a key factor that affects graduate students' choices of resources and services. Libraries need to strive to provide more electronic resources that are easily accessed within a user-friendly environment.
7. Although students may have considerable experience in the process of inquiry, they are still new to their current university library.
8. Libraries need to create awareness among students about the services and resources that are available and how to use them.
9. The university libraries need to improve on their network and interlibrary cooperation to be able to meet the needs of this diversified student community wherever they are. The non-traditional students would only get the value for their money if the needs are met through quality and relevant information resources are provided.

5.5 Suggestion for Further Studies

There is need to carry out further study in the following area:

1. A comparative study of student's use of digital library in Open Universities:

The challenges and the way forward.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire on the Information needs of students in Open Universities in the digital era: A case study of National Open University of Nigeria, Kanshio, Makurdi Study Centre, Benue State.

Instruction: I will like you to please complete this questionnaire correctly and carefully by ticking (√). All information given will be treated as confidential. Thanks for your anticipating cooperation.

SECTION “A” PERSONAL DATA

1. NAME.....
2. GENDER: Male Female

SECTION “B”

Please note the following abbreviations

- SA = Strongly Agree
- A = Agree
- D = Disagree
- SD = Strongly Disagree
- U = Undecided

QUESTIONNAIRE

S/NO		SA	A	D	SD	U
1	Kinds of information students need at NOUN Study Centre Makurdi					
	Academic					
	Research					
	Health tips					
	Politics					
	Others					

S/NO		SA	A	D	SD	U
2	Type (s) of Library Services available to students NOUN Study Centre?					
	Circulation					
	Printing					
	Documentation Delivery					
	Research					
	Others					

S/NO		SA	A	D	SD	U
3	Type (s) of information resources students need at NOUN Study Centre					
	Textbooks					
	Newspapers					

	Journals					
	Electronic Media					
	Library catalogue					
S/NO		SA	A	D	SD	U
4	How often do you visit electronic resource?					
	Daily					
	Weekly					
	Monthly					
	Yearly					
	Not at all					

S/NO		SA	A	D	SD	U
5	Reasons/Purpose students seek information					
	Keep up-date					
	Preparing researches					
	Preparing for exam					
	Assignment					
	Study materials					

S/NO		HS	MS	FS	NS	U
6	Level of satisfaction of information derived from the resources by students in Digital Era					
	Audio/Video CDs					
	Online Search					
	Books					
	Newspapers					
	Magazines					

S/NO		SA	A	D	SD	U
7	What are the problems faced by students seeking information services?					
	Difficult to deal with the large amount of information available					
	Too much time needed to retrieve the needed information (time management)					
	Material unavailability					
	It is difficult to find information that is relevant to the search subject					
	Difficult to know how to access information sources					

S/NO		SA	A	D	SD	U
8	Strategies that can be adopted to overcome problems faced by students seeking information					
	Installation of Digital Library					
	Employment/upgrading of staff					
	Provision of e-books					
	Increased printed materials					
	Improved power supply					

S/NO		SA	A	D	SD	U
9	Strategies used to search for information					
	Query reformulation					
	Monitoring					
	Simple fact searching					
	Term search					
	Information structure					

S/NO		SA	A	D	SD	U
10	What are the sources of obtaining information by students?					
	Digital library					
	Print sources					
	Library catalogue					
	Library data base					
	Internet search					