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Health Information Literacy As A Predictor Of Community Information Service Utilization Among Citizens In Public/National Libraries In South Western Nigeria

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Background to the Study

The significance of health information to community development has been variously highlighted and justified by various authors. Ties (2013) stressed that health information is a critical component of community system and is essential for generating and reporting data for the national level which in the long run enhances development. In support of this, the World Health Organization (WHO) (2014) affirmed that health information gives clearer picture of health and sickness across entire population and this knowledge can help prevent the spread of disease and improve individual health.

Unfortunately, the potential of public/national library to achieve this by employing Community Information Service (CIS) has been overlooked by many authors. Islam (2010) defined CIS as services that offer survival information such as that related to health, housing, income, legal protection, economic opportunities and political right. They are services offered by librarians and libraries to provide people with information relevant to their everyday life, particularly those in the lower economic and disadvantaged groups who need to learn how to obtain, understand and use information. It was intended to reduce deprivation and illiteracy in rural areas. Summarily CIS revolves round information meant for the survival and growth of the community which in the long run would make citizens better and ready to contribute meaningfully to societal development.

However CIS in Nigerian public and national libraries in respect of health and other areas has been bedevilled by factors such as negative economics and political situation, lack of adequate and professional workforce, non computerization of services, lack of well defined policies, neglect from government, unimpressive facilities, low patronage, lack of current materials and poor funding (Abiola and Olatokunbo, 2012). Apart from these, previous health related CIS utilisation in Nigerian public libraries concentrated much on HIV/AIDS (Bamise, Adedigba, 2009 and Edewor 2010). Medical Libraries only exist as special library which are strictly meant for health professionals and Nigeria is yet to own its own national library of medicine. Furthermore, very scanty literature exists which relate CIS in Nigerian public libraries to health related factor such as health information literacy.

According to Connie (2011) the Medical Library Association defined Health Information Literacy (HIL) as the set of abilities needed to recognise health information needs, identify likely information sources and use them to retrieve relevant information, assess the quality of

the information and its applicability to a specific situation and analyze, understand and use the information to make good health decisions. The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP) (2013) stated that HIL is the ability to obtain, process and understand basic health information and services to make appropriate health decisions. According to the ODPHP, 12% of USA adults were health literacy proficient. Studies show that as many as half of all adults in all socio-economic level struggle with health literacy and also lack the ability to understand and use the information need to make good health decisions (Medical Library Association, 2014). Past studies such as those conducted by Issa, Blessing and Daura (2009) Portmann and Rousch (2004) have linked information literacy to use of library. Based on this premise, HIL is a likely predictor of CIS utilization in public libraries.

This study aimed at investigating health information literacy as a predictor of community information service utilization in south western Nigerian public libraries due to the fact that a good understanding of health literacy rate would assist the government in planning and educating citizens in respect of health management and how public libraries could be well funded to achieve community health literacy. Based on these premise and in conjunction with the indispensability of health information literacy to community information service utilisation in public libraries as well as few empirical research studies on these variables especially in Nigeria, this study focused investigation on the relationship between health information literacy and CIS utilization in selected public libraries in south western Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Proper utilization of health information in public libraries by community members is likely to reduce mortality rate and generate healthy citizens that are eager to ensure community development. However, observation and literature have shown that community members suffer from information poverty and rarely visit and use health materials in public libraries. Could this be as a result of inability of poor health information literacy? In Nigeria, observation shows that citizens rarely attend seminars, workshop and outreach on health literacy due to poverty and cultural believe. Due to insufficient literature and the points above, this study therefore investigated health information literacy as a correlate of CIS utilization in selected public/national libraries in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to investigate health information literacy as a correlate of CIS utilization in selected public/national libraries in south western Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. measure community members health information literacy level
2. assess community information service utilization among citizens
3. examine the relationship between health information literacy and CIS utilization in selected public/national libraries in south western Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What is the health information literacy level of community members?
2. What is the assessment of CIS utilization in the selected public/national libraries?

Hypotheses

The following hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between health information literacy and CIS utilization in sampled public/national libraries.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is all public/national libraries in south western Nigeria. This is consequent on the fact that they are close to the grassroots. Also this study considered the relationship between health information literacy and CIS utilization in public libraries. Health information literacy covered: task definition, information seeking strategy, location and access, information use, synthesis and evaluation. Also, CIS utilization covered community services such as research, selective dissemination of information, current awareness services and internet services.

Literature Review

Health Services in Nigeria

Health services in Nigeria are majorly anchored by the government. Wikipedia Contributors (2014) indicated that Nigerian Federal Government's role is mostly limited to coordinating the University Teaching Hospital and Federal Medical Centres, while the State Government manages the various general hospitals and the local government focus on dispensaries. Private providers of health care also have roles to play. There have been various efforts in

the past by government to ensure access to health. But they are being faced by challenges. For instance, Abdulraheem, Oladipo and Amodu (2011) stated that Primary Health Care Centres were established in both rural and urban areas with the intention of equity and easy access to health by year 2000, regrettably, citizens are still underserved. Most facilities are in various state of disrepair, with equipment being absent or obsolete. According to the WHO (2013) one of the problems affecting health sector in Nigeria is the lopsided distribution of health professionals in favour of urban centres. The Health System (2012) reported that Nigeria has the highest tuberculosis burden in Africa (311 per 100,000) and the 4th highest worldwide. An estimated 3.3 million Nigerian are living with HIV/AIDS and the mortality rate is 13.2 per 1000 (Index Mundi 2013). Consequently, those who are rich and could afford foreign health services have been boosting medical tourism in other nations. For instance, Danesi (2014) found that Nigerians contribute highly to medical tourism in India. Also, Ogunidipe (2011) declared that health professionals in United Kingdom, USA, Germany, South Africa and India are smiling to the banks due to high number of Nigerians who travel abroad on routine to seek medical attention.

Community Information Service in Nigeria

Islam (2010) described CIS as services offered by librarians and libraries to provide people with information relevant to their everyday life, particularly those in the lower economic and disadvantaged groups who need to learn how to obtain understand and use information. It is in this direction that Yahya (2009) posited that Nigeria has the potential to develop all sectors of human endeavour more especially of information services are fully enhanced in rural communities which form the majority of the population. According to Gist Area (2013) objectives of community information service in Nigeria include: integration of the poor into the society, raising the standard of living, increase employment and improve basic needs quality.

Also, Alegbeleye and Aina (2005) stated that CIS covers health information, neighbourhood information, agriculture and allied occupations, education, housing, employment, transportation religion, welfare and land. CISs are being hampered by various challenges in Nigeria. According to Yahya (2009) such challenges include high rate of illiteracy, non-implementation of information service polices, infrastructural problem, corruption, insecurity, and unstable power supply. Also, Igiomoh (2013) found that lack of specific budgeting, lack of training, inability of public libraries to render community information services effectively,

failure to acknowledge the power of information and payment of lip service to public library development by government were common enemies of CIS.

Information Literacy and Information Service Utilization

Issa, Blessing and Daura (2009) studied the effect of information literacy on use of library and found that there is a positive relationship. However, Walsh J. (2010) found that information literacy instruction did not increase the usage of library Portmann and Rousch (2004) discovered that information literacy significant, influenced library usage among undergraduates. Besides, Streatfield and Markless (2008) that information literacy impacts use of library resources and in the long run higher education performance

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study adopted the descriptive research design of the survey type. This design is considered appropriate because the independent variables were not be manipulated.

Population of the Study

The population of this study were members of community living in 6 state capitals in South Western, Nigeria.

Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Simple random sampling technique was used to distribute questionnaires to 40 users in each of the 6 Public and 4 National Libraries spread across 6 state capitals in South-Western Nigeria. The study total sample size was therefore 400.

Instrumentation

This is a 3-section questionnaire titled: Health Information Literacy and Community Information Service Utilization Questionnaire (HILCISUQ) designed for public library users.

Section A

This comprised demographic variables such as age and occupation.

Section B

This gathered data on health information literacy, using a likert – types scale developed by the researcher with items such as: task definition, information seeking behaviour, location

and access, information use, synthesis and evaluation. The likert points were: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

Section C

This gathered data on community information service utilisation. A 4 point likert scale was developed by researchers to measure this with items/services such as: research, selective dissemination of information, current awareness services, exhibition, internet service and so on. The likert points were: Very Highly Used (VHU), Highly Used (HU), Occasionally Used (OU) and Not Used (NU).

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

To ensure the validity of the instrument, it was presented to 10 medical librarians. Suggestions and corrections made by them assisted in validating the instrument. Also the reliability of the instrument was ascertained by administering copies to 50 community library users outside the scope of this study. All questionnaires were returned. Cronbach – alpha method was used to analyze the data collected and the reliability coefficient scale of the instrument was $r = 0.88$.

Results and Discussion of Findings

Response Rate

Table 1: Respondents' Response Rate

No of Que distributed	No of Que returned	Response rate %
400	336	84.0%

Out of the 400 questionnaires distributed, table 1 above shows that 336 were returned and found useful, the response rate was therefore 84.0%.

Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Range	Freq	%
16-25	82	24.4
26-35	77	22.9
36-45	91	27.1
46-55	57	17.0
56 & above	29	8.6
Total	336	100

From table 2 above 27.1% of the respondents were between ages 36-45, 24.4% were between ages 16-25, 22.9% were between 26-35, while 8.6% were between 56 and above. This implies that majority of those who visit public libraries are youths.

Table 3: Occupational Distribution of Respondents

Occupation	Freq	%
Students	101	30.0
Civil servants	72	21.4
Business owners	46	13.7
Company workers	19	5.7
Unemployed	98	29.2
Total	336	100

From table 3 above, 30% of the respondents were students, 29.2% were unemployed, 21.4% were civil servants while 5.7% were company workers. The combination of students and unemployed also showed that youth formed the majority user of public/national libraries.

Research Question 1: What is the health information literacy level of community members?

Table 4: Health Information Literacy

S/N	Item	\bar{x}	SD
	Task Definition:		
1.	I seek expert opinion about my health	1.06	0.39
2.	I do not consult others (friends / family) about my health	1.21	0.16
	Information Seeking Behaviour:		
3.	I use textbooks in the library to get health information	1.41	0.41
4.	I use journals / newspapers too	1.92	0.39
	Location and Access		
5.	I make use of card catalogue cabinet to get health materials from the shelf	1.07	0.63
6.	I make use of OPAC too	1.09	0.64
7.	I also make use of internet for health issues	1.12	0.21
	Information Use		
8.	I use health information wisely	2.60	0.55
9.	I crosscheck such information in other sources / materials	1.12	0.66
10.	I document the references or authors of such sources	1.71	0.62
	Synthesis		
11.	I always present new health ideas effectively to friends	2.10	0.41
12.	I always paraphrase new health ideas without wasting time	2.46	0.32
13.	I make use of APA format citation style	1.01	0.46

	Evaluation		
14.	I have presented papers on health information literacy	1.02	0.61
15.	I have published papers on health information literacy	1.01	0.08
16.	I love exhibitions on health	3.21	0.61
	Weighted Average	1.57	

Table 4 above indicates that out of 16 items listed, only 2 yielded high mean score between 2.60 and 3.21. Others yielded low mean scores between 1.01 and 2.46. The weighted average of 1.57 attested to the point that respondents exhibited low health information literacy. By implication, citizens have poor information seeking behaviour, poor information use, and lack ability to evaluate information in respect of health matters.

Research Question 2: What is the assessment of CIS utilization in the selected public/national libraries?

Table 5: Community Information Service Utilisation

S/N	Item	\bar{x}	SD
1.	Research	2.78	0.46
2.	Selective dissemination of information	1.24	0.56
3.	Current awareness services	1.41	0.32
4.	Referencing	1.28	0.77
5.	Exhibition	1.32	0.91
6.	Workshop / seminar	1.09	0.92
7.	Outreach programmes	1.06	0.31
8.	Borrowing	2.91	0.43
9.	Studying / reading	3.18	0.23
10.	Indexing	1.23	0.61
11.	e-mailing	1.07	0.76
12.	Photocopy	3.01	0.42
13.	Binding	1.99	0.88
14.	Relaxation	2.97	0.36
15.	Internet service	1.08	0.49
	Weighted Average	1.84	

Table 5 above reveals that out of 15 items listed, only 5 services (research, borrowing, studying, photocopy and relaxation) yielded high mean scores between 2.78 and 3.18. Others yielded low mean scores between 1.06 and 1.99. The weighted average of 1.84 attested to the fact that CIS is occasionally utilized in the community.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis One: There is no significant correlation between Health Information Literacy (HIL) and CIS utilization in the sampled public library.

Table 6: Correlation between HIL and CIS Utilization in Public/ National Libraries

Variable	N	Means	SD	Df	R	Sig (p)	Remark
HIL	336	26.11	7.15	334	0.078	0.000	Sig
CIS utilization	336	27.62	8.42				

Table 6 shows that the correlation coefficient between HIL and CIS utilization in public/national libraries is positive ($r=0.078$). Since $p=0.0000<0.05$, it is implied that there is positive significant correlation between HIL and CIS utilization in public/national libraries in south western Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not accepted. This was in support of the findings of Issa, Blessing and Daura (2009), Potmann and Rousch (2004) and Streatfield and Markless (2008) who discovered that information literacy impact use of library resources.

Summary of Findings

Major findings in this study are summarily presented thus:

1. Majority of public/national libraries users were youths
2. Respondents exhibited low health information literacy
3. CISs were occasionally utilized in the investigated community

Conclusion

This work empirically studied Health Information Literacy as a predictor of CIS utilization in public and national libraries in south western Nigeria. It was found that Health Information Literacy was low and it positively predicted CIS utilization. Consequently, CIS utilization depends on the level of health information literacy of citizens.

Recommendations

1. citizens should be re-orientated on the need to make use of health information resources;
2. more health resources should be acquired by community librarians;
3. community librarians should always be at alert to impact information literacy on library users; and
4. government should make more fund available to community libraries.

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