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INFORMATION NEEDS AND RESOURCE UTILIZATION BY STATE LEGISLATORS IN LEGISLATIVE LIBRARIES IN THE BORNO AND YOBE STATES

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Introduction

Information is a very vital resource for economic and political development of any nation or state. Information according to Afolabi (2003), is a conveyor belt, change agent, a reinforcement of ideas and opinions. Ojedokun (2007) also defined information as statements of facts, figures, ideas and creative works of the human intellect which are logically or way of reasoning interrelated and have been communicated, recorded, published and or distributed formally and informally in any format. This implies that information is an important resource to individuals and organizations

The concept of resources has been applied in diverse realms, Dunsire (2013) defined resource as an entity, tangible or intangible that comprises intellectual and/or artistic content and is conceived, produced and/or issued as a unit, forming the basis of a single

Abstract

This study examined the information needs and resource utilization by state legislators in legislative libraries in the Borno and Yobe states. Three research questions and hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The population of the study was 52 which comprise 50 lawmakers in the two states Houses of Assembly and two librarians in the Houses of Assembly libraries. Since the population is manageable, the sample for the study was 51 respondents were used for the study as such no sampling. Three instruments were used for data collection. A 35 items 4-point Likert scale structured questionnaire, interview schedule and observation checklist were used as the instruments for the data collection. The data collected with the observation checklist and structured interview schedule were used to confirm or refute the findings from the

questionnaire. The data collected for this study were analyzed using mean and standard deviations for the research questions while the hypotheses were tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significance. The three hypotheses tested revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of more experienced and less experienced legislators. The results revealed the information needs of state legislators which include need to get information about past legislation; need to know the needs of his/her constituency; information on political and development and issues; information on local government policies among others. The challenges militating against information resource utilization by state legislators to meet their information needs in the libraries were also found. Strategies for enhancing information resource utilization among state legislators in meeting their information needs were also suggested which include that the librarian should introduce members to modern day library services and techniques and acquire current information sources.

Keywords: Information Needs, Resource Utilization, Legislators, Legislative, Library

bibliographic description. Resources can be used in the upgrade of knowledge about events and issues around them which if well managed could generate a positive change to organization or state. Haruna and Mabawunku (2001) expressed that needs arise when the state of processed knowledge is less than that needed to deal with some issues, and that information needs are diverse, consistently changing and amenable to generalization. The needs for information for problem solving based on critical thinking are inherent in all areas of human endeavours.

Obtaining information and using it intelligently has long been essential to the success of legislators. The need for utilization of information allows communities to work in concepts with public officials and elected lawmakers (Kirkwood, 2004). Lawmakers are also known as legislators are members of a legislative body who make laws within a given jurisdiction. They are in charge of law making and ensure that those laws are executed in the society. Legislators in houses of assembly are expected to play a vital role in delivery of information services that support decision making and provision of information which aid in the development of the states politically, socially and

economically. It is often very difficult to make decision, and polices without reasonable accurate information. It is therefore imperative that in any instance where decisions are needed to be made, accurate, timely, and relevant information should be consulted to ensure that informed decisions are made (Capuroo & Hjorland, 2003).

Information becomes knowledge when it performs the role of imparting change to individual, society or state. Library is one of the medium where information can be accessed in form of books, audio-tape and video. Sam (1996) defined a library as a repository of information is expected to help members to perform their social function by providing information needed for the execution of work. Library resources are those materials, both print and non-print, found in school libraries which support curricular and personal information needs. Depending of the need on organization, special libraries such as legislative libraries are often develop close working relationship with their users, so that libraries management is able to identify not only the organizational needs, the type of information needed and how it should be delivered.

Legislative libraries in some countries like America, Australia Britain, and Japan have advanced in their attempts to meet the information needs of their legislators. Brundin (2005) noted that The Library of Congress in the United States of America was established by an Act of Congress in 1800. The state legislative libraries in the different states of Nigeria were established to serve Parliamentarians and other officials in the States assemblies. The main objective of the States assembly library are to provide active and dynamic information services to support the legislative, deliberative and judicial functions of the legislature, acquire, organize and maintain literature and audio-visual materials necessary for legislative activities, provide specialized information services such as Newspapers clipping and library services.

Since the primary function of legislative library is to assist and support the lawmakers to carry out their primary functions of making decisions for the betterment of the society through the provision of information resources. There is need to examine the information needs and resource utilization of state legislators. Some governments, especially in the north9eastern ngiera have made several efforts to provide help and enlighten the legislative arm. These efforts include but not limited to the establishment of the legislative library across the states. However, to the best knowledge of the researcher,

no study has been carried out on information needs and resource utilization by state legislators in legislative libraries in Adamawa and Taraba states. This is the gap which this study intends to fill.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide this study:

1. What are the information needs of State Legislators in Borno and Yobe states?
2. What are the challenges militating against utilization of information resources by state legislators in meeting their information needs?
3. What are the strategies for enhancing information resource utilization among state legislators in meeting their information needs?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of more experienced and less experienced legislators on needs of State Legislators in Borno and Yobe states.
- Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of more experienced and less experienced legislators on the challenges militating against utilization of information resources by state legislators in meeting their information needs.
- Ho₃: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of more experienced and less experienced legislators on the strategies for enhancing information resource utilization among state legislators in meeting their information needs

Methodology

The design for this study is descriptive survey research design. The study was carried out in Borno and Yobe States. The two states are in the North-East geo-political zone of Nigeria which is comprised of six States, namely Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe. In the North East zone, there are six State houses of assembly and libraries which are located within assembly complexes. The choice of Borno and Yobe was because of the

similarity within the people of the two states and the states were created from old Borno state.

The population of the study was 52 which made of 50 legislators and two legislative librarians from the Borno and Yobe states. This population is made up of 25 and 24 Members from Borno and Yobe State respectively. There are two Librarians at the head of the respective legislative libraries in each state who deals with the day to day management of the library operations. The sample for the study was 52 which comprise all the 50 Members in the two states' houses of assembly and the two Librarians in charge of the state parliamentary libraries in Borno and Yobe states were used for the study. There was be no sampling as the number is manageable.

Three instruments were used for collecting data. A 35 items 4-point Likert scale structured questionnaire, interview schedule and observation checklist were used as the instruments for the data collection. The draft instruments were validated by three experts. The reliability of the instrument was found to be: Cluster A = 0.92; Cluster B = 0.84; and Cluster C = 0.90. With regards to these results, the instrument was considered suitable for this study. The questionnaire was administered to the respondents with the help of the Clerks of the Houses of Assembly. The researcher also conducted an interview to librarians of state parliamentary libraries using interview guide on the extent of library utilization and the type of information resources provided to meet the information needs of the state legislators. The data collected for this study were analyzed using means and standard deviations to analyze the research questions. Any item with mean rating of 2.50 and above was accepted as positive responses. The hypotheses were tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significance. However, the data collected with the observation checklist and structured interview schedule were used to confirm or refute the findings from the questionnaire.

Results

What are the information needs of State Legislators in Borno and Yobe states?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Respondents on the information needs of State Legislators in Borno and Yobe states.

N = 50

S/N	Items Statement	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	To get information about past Legislation	3.53	0.82	Needed
2	To know the needs of my Constituency	3.49	1.01	Needed
3	Information on political and development & issues	3.07	1.27	Needed
4	Information on Local Government policies	3.11	0.98	Needed

5	Information on law and legislative principles	3.44	0.85	Needed
6	Information on education	3.38	1.09	Needed
7	Information on health matters	3.08	1.26	Needed
8	Information on public relations	2.98	1.74	Needed
9	Information on agriculture	3.57	0.98	Needed
10	Information on economic matters	3.06	0.73	Needed
11	Information on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)	2.46	1.20	Not Needed

Key: \bar{X} = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, N = Number of Respondents.

Table result in Table 1 revealed that all the items on information needs of state legislators have mean values ranged from 2.98 to 3.57 except one (item No. 11) which has mean value of 2.46. This implies that the mean value of each of the item was above the cut-off point of 2.50, which indicated that the state legislators agreed on 10 out of the 11 items as information needs by state legislators. The table also showed that the standard deviation (SD) of the 11 items ranged from 0.73 to 1.79. This indicated that the respondents were not very far from one and another in their responses.

Research Question Two

What are the challenges militating against utilization of information resources by state legislators in meeting their information needs?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Respondents on the challenges faced by Members in utilizing the information resources to meet their information needs.

$N = 50$

S/N	Items Statement	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	Unavailability of adequate information resources	3.77	0.49	Agreed
2	Incomplete information materials	3.42	0.71	Agreed
3	Incompetent library personnel	3.31	1.38	Agreed
4	Some information materials outdated	2.46	0.69	Disagreed
5	Library staff are not cooperative	2.41	1.91	Disagreed
6	Information highly unorganized in the libraries	3.39	1.04	Agreed
7	Lack of internet facilities	2.86	1.11	Agreed
8	Difficult to know when new materials are acquired by library/information Centre	2.95	0.83	Agreed

9	Information too vast	3.00	0.37	Agreed
10	Available information materials highly unorganized	3.40	1.83	Agreed
11	Poor current awareness services	3.82	1.61	Agreed
12	Bureau staff unwilling to supply needed information	2.38	0.87	Disagreed

Key: \bar{X} = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, N = Number of Respondents.

Table result in Table 2 revealed that nine out of 12 items on challenges militating against utilization of information resources by state legislators have mean values ranged from 2.86 to 3.82 while three items (No. 4, 5 and 12) have mean values ranged from 2.38 to 2.46. This implies that the mean value of each of the nine out of 12 items was above the cut-off point of 2.50, which indicated that the state legislators agreed on nine out of the 12 items as challenges militating against utilization of information resources by state legislators. The table also showed that the standard deviation (SD) of the 12 items ranged from 0.87 to 1.91. This indicated that the respondents were not very far from one and another in their responses.

Research Question Three

What are the strategies for enhancing information resource utilization among state legislators in meeting their information needs?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Respondents on the strategies for enhancing information resource utilization among state legislators in meeting their information needs

$N = 50$

S/N	Items Statement	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	Augmentation of information materials in the library	3.08	0.71	Appropriate
2	Retrain a reference librarian to take care of member's needs.	3.29	1.22	Appropriate
3	Enhance current awareness service (CAS)	3.10	1.06	Appropriate
4	The librarian should assist members learn how to browse the internet and send/receive e-mail	2.98	1.83	Appropriate
5	Introduce members to modern day library services and techniques	3.27	1.14	Appropriate
6	Arrange available information sources for easy retrieval	2.95	0.97	Appropriate

7	Acquire current information sources in the library	3.28	0.81	Appropriate
8	The library should engage in interlibrary loan services	3.51	0.99	Appropriate
9	Internet facilities be acquired	2.86	1.76	Appropriate
10	More trained staff be employed	3.18	1.60	Appropriate
11	Introduce selective dissemination of information	3.38	1.43	Appropriate
12	Acquire current information sources	2.81	0.87	Appropriate

Key: \bar{X} = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, N = Number of Respondents.

Table results in Table 3 revealed that all the items on strategies for enhancing information resource utilization among state legislators have mean values ranged from 2.81 to 3.51. This implies that the mean value of each of the item was above the cut-off point of 2.50, which indicated that the state legislators agreed on all the 12 items as appropriate strategies for enhancing information resource utilization among state legislators. The table also showed that the standard deviation (SD) of all the items ranged from 0.71 to 1.83. This indicated that the respondents were not very far from one and another in their responses.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of more experienced and less experienced legislators on information needs of State Legislators in Borno and Yobe states.

The data for testing hypothesis one is presented in Table 4.

Table 4

T-test analysis of responses of more experienced and less experienced legislators on the information needs of State Legislators in Borno and Yobe states

N_1 (More experienced) = 32

N_2 (Less experienced) = 18

S/N	Items	\bar{X}_1	SD_1	\bar{X}_2	SD_2	t-cal	Sig (2-tailed)	Decision
1	To get information about past Legislation	3.87	0.89	3.72	0.66	1.92	0.07	NS
2	To know the needs of my Constituency	3.55	0.79	3.14	0.88	0.61	0.71	NS
3	Information on political and development & issues	3.93	0.89	2.91	0.86	0.13	0.90	NS

4	Information on Local Government policies	2.74	0.68	2.76	0.87	1.32	0.67	NS
5	Information on law and legislative principles	2.85	0.92	2.83	0.82	1.43	0.09	NS
6	Information on education	3.78	0.76	3.52	0.62	1.02	0.70	NS
7	Information on health matters	3.74	0.88	3.76	0.87	0.11	0.74	NS
8	Information on public relations	3.55	0.72	3.53	0.62	0.17	0.55	NS
9	Information on agriculture	3.43	0.82	3.22	0.70	1.60	0.43	NS
10	Information on economic matters	3.75	0.74	3.55	0.92	1.39	0.75	NS
11	Information on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)	2.93	0.62	3.85	0.73	0.68	0.67	NS

Key: NS = Not Significant

\bar{X}_1 = Mean score of More experienced

SD₁ = Standard Deviation (More experienced)

Sig (2 tailed) = Significant level of two means

N₁ = Number of More experienced

S = Significant t-cal = calculated value

\bar{X}_2 = Mean score of Less experienced

SD₂ = Standard Deviation (Less experienced)

df = degree of freedom = 47

N₂ = Number of Less experienced

The data presented in Table 4 revealed that all the 11 items had their calculated t-cal values ranged from 0.11 to 1.92 which were less than t-table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and at 47 degree of freedom (df). This indicated that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the two groups of respondents on the information needs of state legislators in the two states. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of more experienced and less experienced legislators on the 11 items was accepted.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of more experienced and less experienced legislators on the challenges militating against utilization of information resources by state legislators in meeting their information needs. The data for testing hypothesis two are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

t-test analysis of responses of more experienced and less experienced legislators on the challenges militating against utilization of information resources by state legislators in meeting their information needs

N₁ (More experienced) = 32

N₂ (Less experienced) = 18

S/N	Items	\bar{X}_1	SD ₁	\bar{X}_2	SD ₂	t-cal	Sig (2-tailed)	Decision
1	Unavailability of adequate information resources	3.63	0.72	3.44	0.80	1.64	0.62	NS
2	Incomplete information materials	3.75	0.74	3.95	0.92	1.39	0.71	NS
3	Incompetent library personnel	3.21	0.77	3.06	0.92	0.85	0.40	NS
4	Some information materials outdated	2.93	0.62	2.85	0.73	0.68	0.67	NS
5	Library staff are not cooperative	3.95	0.77	3.97	0.66	1.16	0.09	NS
6	Information highly unorganized in the libraries	3.20	0.73	3.17	0.75	1.49	0.24	NS
7	Lack of internet facilities	3.13	0.77	3.01	0.79	0.83	0.95	NS
8	Difficult to know when new materials are acquired by library/information Centre	2.93	0.56	2.90	0.68	1.24	0.19	NS
9	Information too vast	3.95	0.69	3.89	0.67	0.95	0.28	NS
10	Available information materials highly unorganized	2.75	0.92	2.79	0.69	0.91	0.17	NS
11	Poor current awareness services	3.13	0.77	3.01	0.79	0.83	1.95	NS
12	Bureau staff unwilling to supply needed information	2.75	0.92	2.79	0.69	0.91	0.17	NS

The data presented in Table 5 revealed that all the 12 items had their calculated t-cal values ranged from 0.68 to 1.95 which were less than t-table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and at 47 degree of freedom (df). This indicated that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the two groups of respondents on the challenges militating against utilization of information resources by state legislators. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of more experienced and less experienced legislators on the 12 items was accepted.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of more experienced and less experienced legislators on the strategies for enhancing information resource utilization among state legislators in meeting their information needs.

The data for testing hypothesis three are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

T-test analysis of responses of more experienced and less experienced legislators on the strategies for enhancing information resource utilization among state legislators in meeting their information needs

N₁ (More experienced) =32

N₂ (Less experienced) = 17

S/N	Items	\bar{X}_1	SD ₁	\bar{X}_2	SD ₂	t-cal	Sig (2-tailed)	Decision
1	Augmentation of information materials in the library	3.55	0.72	3.53	0.62	0.17	0.62	NS
2	Retrain a reference librarian to take care of members needs.	3.43	0.82	3.22	0.70	1.64	0.09	NS
3	Enhance current awareness service (CAS)	2.59	0.64	2.64	0.62	0.19	0.90	NS
4	The librarian should assist members learn how to browse the internet and send/receive e-mail	2.69	0.67	3.20	0.77	0.43	1.67	NS
5	Introduce members to modern day library services and techniques	3.83	0.71	3.85	0.75	1.11	1.18	NS
6	Arrange available information sources for easy retrieval	3.14	0.85	3.10	0.79	0.19	0.85	NS
7	Acquire current information sources in the library	3.11	0.76	3.05	0.76	0.30	0.47	NS
8	The library should engage in interlibrary loan services	3.56	0.49	3.54	0.46	1.13	1.76	NS
9	Internet facilities be acquired	3.63	0.57	3.68	0.61	1.39	0.92	NS
10	More trained staff be employed	2.96	0.78	3.01	0.67	1.07	0.68	NS
11	Introduce selective dissemination of information	3.61	0.70	3.60	0.72	0.85	1.38	NS
12	Acquire current information sources	3.26	0.77	3.20	0.70	0.81	1.19	NS

The data presented in Table 6 revealed that all the 12 items had their calculated t-cal values ranged from 0.8 to 1.95 which were less than t-table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and at 47 degree of freedom (df). This indicated that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the two groups of respondents on the strategies for enhancing information resource utilization among state legislators in the

states. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of more experienced and less experienced legislators on the 12 items was accepted.

Discussion of Findings

Findings from the results of the three research questions and the three hypotheses tested are the bases for the following discussions.

This study found out that the information needs of state legislators in Adamawa and Taraba states are: to get information about past legislation; to know the needs of his/her constituency; information on political and development and issues; information on local government policies; information on law and legislative principles; information on education; information on health matters; information on public relations; information on agriculture; and information on economic matters. This result is in agreement with the findings from the study conducted by Okogwu and Nnam (2013) that revealed that lecturers seek information for educational purposes which include for doing research work, for writing and presenting papers and for updating knowledge. Likewise, legislators need information on economic matters, political and developmental issues.

The study found out that the challenges militating against utilization of information resources by state legislators in meeting their information needs include: introduce members to modern day library services and techniques, acquire current information sources in the library and Internet facilities be acquired. This is in accordance with the findings of Iwhiwhu (2011) who expressed that legislators are faced with certain challenges in their bid for information to discharge their legislative activities. Iwhiwhu stated are that legislators do not make use of the library provided them due to inadequacy of library materials to meet their current information needs, lack of internet facilities, management lukewarm attitude in the provision of relevant and current information to the lawmakers

This found some strategies for enhancing information resource utilization among state legislators in meeting their information needs. This includes among others that the librarian should assist members learn how to browse the internet and send/receive e-mail, introduce members to modern day library services and techniques and acquire current information sources. This is in agreement with Nalumaga (2012) who stressed that legislators should

enhance their access and utilization of relevant information which include the personal subscription to important sources of information, hiring of personal information assistants and repackage information of necessity as well as taking rounds on information related errands.

The three hypotheses tested revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of more experienced and less experienced legislators on the three research questions. The results indicated that experience did not significantly affect their opinions on all the items.

Conclusion

Information is essential resource in decision making. Information is that which is transmitted by the act or process of communication, it may be message, a signal or a stimulus. Information involves the communication and reception of intelligence or knowledge. In a democratic setting, library is referred to as the hub of functional democracy. Libraries provide information resources in order to assist individuals, groups associations, and organizations to solve their information needs in performing their legitimate duties. In the process of carrying of legislative duets, legislators are often faced with some challenges militating against utilization of information resources in meeting their information needs. The major thrust of the study is to find out the information needs of State Legislators in Borno and Yobe states, the challenges militating against utilization of information resources by state legislators in meeting their information needs and suggest strategies for enhancing information resource utilization among state legislators in meeting their information needs.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were preferred:

- Librarians should provide the legislative library with information about past legislation.
- Materials on information on law and legislative principles should be provided in the library.
- Librarians should provide legislative library with adequate information resources.

- Librarians should ensure that competent library personnel employed to assist members in the library.
- Efforts should be made to equip legislative library with up-to-date information materials
- Constant augmentation of information materials in the library
- Continual retraining of reference librarian to take care of member's needs.

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