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Bassey, Umo Antigha
Department Of Library and
Information Science
Faculty of Education
University Of Calabar
Calabar, Nigeria

Uzoh-Cobham, E
Department Of Social Work
Faculty of Social Sciences
University Of Calabar
Calabar , Nigeria

Correspondence:
Bassey, Umo Antigha
Department Of Library and
Information Science
Faculty of Education
University Of Calabar
Calabar, Nigeria

Processing Of Information and Performance of Secondary School Libraries as Social Organisations in Cross River State, Nigeria

Bassey, Umo Antigha, Uzoh-Cobham, E

Abstract

This paper is an empirical analysis of the relationship between processing of information and performance of secondary school libraries in Cross River State. The study specifically aimed at determining if there exists significant relationship between processing of information and performance of libraries as social organisations. Census sampling technique was utilized and a total of 342 respondents were studied, utilizing both primary and secondary data in a causal research design. Using a one-way Analysis of Variance, the result revealed that library personnel from school libraries with low level of processing information had significant performance than library personnel from average or high information processing libraries. It was concluded that processing of information significantly influences the performance of library staff and recommended that school organisations should put in place facilities for information processing. Library personnel should be trained on processing of information in order to create a link between processing of information and performance of school as social organisations aim at optimizing potential of library users.

Keywords: Processing of Information, Library performance, Secondary Schools, Social Organisation

Introduction and the Problem

The continuity of any organisation is anchored on its sustainable performance. Any organisation that performance level is considered low in pure entrepreneurial drive should be discontinued. Secondary school libraries are not structured on entrepreneurial motives, especially public secondary school libraries which are social in orientation, to ensure that educational resources are available to the students in order to enhance learning process. The performance of secondary school libraries are measured in terms of their achieving the purpose for which secondary school libraries were established to serve.

One cardinal objective of secondary school library organisations is information processing, which is a process of acquisition, recording, assembling and retrieval of information or data. The major aim of this study was to examine if secondary school libraries in Cross River State carry out information processing function in order to enhance the overall performance of school organisation in terms of students' learning outcome and scholarship.

Every library material should go through physical processing process by library staff. Processing of information to enhance teaching and learning lies entirely on the expertise of school library personnel (Aina, 2004) In this regard major issues are raised, such as: school organisations having skilled library staff with information processing competence; and having the required information and communication technology facilities to process information for use in secondary school libraries in Cross River State. This study aims at determining if there exists significant relationship between processing of information by library staff or personnel and performance of secondary school libraries.

Conceptual Review

Information Processing

Vladimir (2015) define processing of information in libraries as the process of acquiring, organizing, retrieving, displaying and dissemination of the various information that enters

into the library in different stages before shelving such information for end users to come and utilize. Kmetz (1998) identifies four stages of information processing by library staff for effective decision making and performance of school organisation to include: acquisition and retrieval, storage, transformation and transmission. In acquisition and retrieval of information, data could be sourced from anywhere, be it through an individual within or outside the school organisation. Storing the information is done with computer, but it should not be stored in the primary memory of the computer to avoid being wiped out. Information are modified when they are to be used by different people and for different purposes; thus, the library staff interprets information in a way that will best enhance life-long learning skills of the users within the school community. The library staff transforms the information in the curriculum and mission of the school by providing only materials that will best suit and contain the curriculum needs that will bring great benefits to the users. At the transmission stage, the information gets into the hands of the user for consumption and the entire process starts afresh. This situation reveals the cyclical nature of information processing in any organisation. Library resources have to be processed in order to satisfy end users' needs. To enhance spread of knowledge, learning and teaching, information processing becomes a critical function of library and the library staff duties. In this case, the capacity of library staff to process information is very critical component of information processing and availability and accessibility of information communication tools like computers becomes imperative for school organisation's performance.

Performance of school library organisation

The essence of processing information in school library is to enhance its overall performance vis-à-vis that of its personnel or staff. Donnelly, Gibson and Ivancevich (1984) defined performance as accomplishment of goals, which requires possession of abilities and capacity for service delivery. Bassey and Iji's (2018) study of organizational performance reveals that dynamics within and outside organisations influenced their performance. Information processing is one of the internal dynamics which is within the library unit of any school organisation, being a subsystem of its own (Bassey, Takim and Hayford, 2014). Generally, performance entails how organisations strive and reach its vision, mission and goals. The school library information processing should be assessed to see if it helps the school organisation attain its goals.

Methodology and Theoretical Framework

This study was a causal survey study of library personnel in Cross River State secondary school system to determine if there exists significant relationship between processing of information and performance of libraries as social organisations. Census sampling technique was utilized to study a total of 342 library personnel using One-way Analysis of Variance in analyzing primary data obtained. Secondary data was also used.

Theoretically, the general system theory of Easton (1965) was adopted as theoretical framework, as used in Merton (1936). Bassey (2012) noted functional theory as an outgrowth of general system theory. All parts of society and organisation have functions to perform. The success of parts makes for the overall performance of the system. Parts that are dysfunctional make for destruction of the system and parts that perform optimally promote the survival of the system. In the study, processing of the information was the independent variable, while performance of library organisation was the dependent variable. The null hypothesis of the study states that "processing of information does not significantly influence secondary school library performance.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Processing of information has no significant influence on performance of secondary school libraries in Cross River State. The dependent variable which is processing of information, was categorized into three (low – 1, average – 2 and high – 3), while the dependent variable is performance of secondary school libraries. One-Way Analysis of Variance was used as presented in Table 1. The result on Table 1 revealed that the calculated F-value of 63.568 is higher than the critical F-value of 3.00 at .05 level of significance with 2 and 298 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected. This result implies that, processing of information significantly influences library performance. In view of this, a further pattern of influence was employed using Fisher's Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis. The result is presented in Table 2.

The result of the analysis in Table 2 indicated that library personnel from low family of information processing had significantly higher mean achievement than library personnel from average and high processing of information family. Thus, library personnel from low processing of information had significant performance than library staff from average or high processing of information.

Table 1: Summary of data and one-way ANOVA of the influence of processing of information and library performance in secondary schools (N = 301)

Processing of Information		N	X	SD	
Low – 1		87	17.51	1.96	
Average – 2		136	19.26	.66	
High – 3		78	19.18	.75	
Total		301	18.73	1.44	
Source of variance	SS	Df	Ms	F-ratio	Sig
Between group	185.033	2	9.2516	63.568*	.000
Within group	433.705	298	1.455		
Total	618.738	300			

* Significant at .05 level, Critical F = 3.00, df = 298

Table 2: Fisher's Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis of the influence of processing of information on effective decision making by library personnel

(1) Processing of information	(2) Processing of information	Mean Difference (I – J)	Std. Error	Sig.
1.00	2.00	- 1.75896(*)	16562	.000
	3.00	-1.67374(*)	18812	.000
2.00	1.00	1.75896(*)	16562	.000
	3.00	.08522	17135	.619
3.00	1.00	1.67374(*)	18812	.000
	2.00	.08522	17135	.619

The mean difference is significant at the .05 level

Discussion of Findings

The result revealed that there is a significant influence of processing of information on library performance. The findings is in line with Kmetz (1998) who identified four stages of information processing by library staff which promotes the overall library performances in terms of acquisition and retrieval, storage and transformation. The primary aim and purpose of any library is the spreading of knowledge. Hence, it is the performance of library staff in processing information, which entails selecting of library materials and dissemination of information and also answering of queries made by users that enhance teaching and learning, thereby boosting the performance of school organisation in spreading knowledge.

Elaturoti (2001) buttresses the assertion that teaching and learning activities will be greatly enhanced through effective and efficient library information processing service. This service ultimately will only be properly and effectively done by library personnel that are well trained. Training of library staff as noted by Aina (2004) in collection development policy, selection, acquisition of information materials, conservation, preservation and weeding will foster performance of school library and information users in terms of school teachers and administrators, as well as student learning and academic performance.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study concluded that there is significant influence of processing of information on school library and school performance. Every effort should be put in place for the training of library staff to ensure that information is adequately processed by them. Institutions training library staff should improve curriculum to ensure that adequate time and attention is allocated in the curriculum of library academic programmes. Specifically, school management boards should ensure that only adequately trained personnel in librarianship and library skills with adequate bias in processing of information be employed and assigned duties in secondary school libraries in order to boost performance. Consequently, non-qualified personnel should not be assigned to manage secondary school libraries as currently practiced due to shortage of skilled manpower. Library is an institution which boosts performance and enhances optimal living by providing information for learners to optimize their learning potential. In this regard, it is also recommended that social workers be assigned to provide guidance to library users that redirect the latter to operate within the information processing policy of the school library. This awareness acquired as noted by Bassey, Akwaji and Abonor (2015) will help position library users to prepare for future challenges, therefore boosting performance, even at later career life.

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