Library User Education Programme for Covenant University Freshmen: Impact, Challenges and Possible Solutions.

by
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Abstract
This study looked into the various types of user- education offered in Covenant University. These include library orientation, teaching of use of library and study skills, basic bibliographic instructions etc. The research revealed that the highest impact of user education on students is equipping them with good search skills as indicated by 93.9% respondents, acquainting them with available resources and their format as represented by 82.6% and exposing them to library rules and regulations among others. The major challenges hindering students from maximizing user education is that of scheduling library orientation too close to resumption as portrayed by 711 (90.8%) respondents and large number of student participants, resulting in noise. The study recommends that the orientation be scheduled after conclusion of admissions so that all students will benefit from it. More periods should be allocated to the teaching of use of library and study skills as well as that of orientation. The study concludes by encouraging Covenant University library to keep building search skills in its new patrons while making adjustments where necessary. It also encourages other university libraries lacking in this regard to follow suit.

Introduction
Libraries remain the props on which all academic activities of their mother institutions revolve. They exist to ensure that information resources are acquired, processed, preserved and accessed. Efficiency in exploring and utilizing such resources depends largely on the extent to which users are educated on the types and formats of the resources as well as the skills required to access them. User education therefore comprises the gamut of activities ranging from education to individual instruction which libraries provide to users to enable them maximize the library resources and services. .(Klaib, 2010) maintains that user education programme is organised in order to inculcate in users library use skills such as bibliographic education and information literacy skills. Oji (2009) citing Morris (1990) maintains that users' education is instruction given to users to help them make the best use of the library. There are two types of library user's education: library orientation and bibliographic instruction. Library orientation is mainly concerned with introducing the users to the library generally and the services available. This may include the organisation of the library and the general principles governing the use of the library. On the other hand, bibliographic instruction is concerned with introducing the users to the sources of information and the best ways to use them.

Library User Education For Covenant University Freshmen
Covenant University is a mission university poised to raising a new generation of leaders. People who will find themselves in the position of leadership must be those who place value on reading. Covenant university library acquires, and processes information sources in all areas of knowledge. Students who

secure admission to universities come from various secondary schools some of which have no libraries. In respect of this, the library organises various activities which properly position its fresh students to explore the library's avalanche of resources without stress. Such include teaching of use of library and study skills, library orientation, bibliographic instruction, and individualized instruction

Literature Review
Ogunmodede and Emeahara (2010) stated that the essence of library use education is to equip the users of the library with enough knowledge and skills on the use of library resources effectively and efficiently. They also observed that the resources in the library are so complex that an average library user cannot comprehend them, therefore, library use instructions is so vital on how to access and utilize the resources maximally. Library users require knowledge on the organisation of bibliographic information about specific resources relevant to them. They get such information through bibliographic instruction. Naser (2004) investigated the supporting role of the academic bibliographic programmes in Academic Library for the Scientific Research. In his study, he found out that the programme is increasing student use of the library and at the same time, it improves their research skills. Rockman (2002) submitted that library orientation programme at college and University libraries provide course related instructions and other methods to enhance student's development of information literacy skills. Naser (2004) listed the following as the purpose of students orientation programme:
   a. provides students with good ideas about information sources
   b. develops students skills in information organising

c. develops in students the understanding of ethical and legal matters such as copyright laws in relation to authorship and publishing

Survey conducted by Akhtar (1986) revealed that majority of the students do not know how knowledge is organised; in another words, that the students lack understanding and skills on organisation of knowledge for retrieval purpose. They find their answers after series of individual instructions from library staff. Library guides also serve useful purposes in introducing the resources, services, staff including the rules and regulations to new staff. Bhati (2010) stressed that user education programme in Pakistan are designed to introduce new and potential users to the collections, facilities, organisation and services of the university library. He concluded that new and potential users of the library should be provided with guide books containing the orientation programmes which would be useful to them.

Lamptey (2010) submitted that improving user's knowledge of the library resources could be a motivating factor for more usage and more demands on the library; he also stressed that library orientation is a welcoming activity and is always part of the entire university's orientation programme for first year students. He concluded that there is need for library orientation / instruction in the use of libraries and information services at all level of educational institution; at the post- graduate level detailed instructions in methods of searching and formulation of clear requests and referencing are necessary.

Osagie (2003) summarised the need of library use education to include enabling users to:
a. know how to use the library catalogue in any library.
b. understand the classification scheme in any library so as to be able to locate materials.
c. see the library catalogue as index to the library holdings and use them for that purpose.
d. see the library as a repository of knowledge that determines the success of the students' academic programme.

In the same way, Sanni et. al. (2007) pointed out the essence of users education programme. They stressed that it helps to publicize library services, improve the image of the library and above all users education programme are the best ways to implement Ranganathan's five laws of library science. They also submitted that in the process of users' education in libraries, the librarian familiarizes the users with the library materials, also the teaching of library skills can be done in form of instruction on the various steps involved on the use of library. They

summarized by saying that this can be done in various forms such as the teaching of the use of library, library orientation for fresh users and library manual or guide can be given to users on registration.

Methods of Library User Education
The need for library education gives rise to various methods. It could be carried out on group or individual basis. According to Aina (2004), there are various methods of library use education. He explained that it could be one- to- one session, library orientation/tours or classroom instructions. He further stressed that in one- to- one session, the reference librarian take a new user round the various sections of the library. The reference librarian explains to the user the activities of the different sections without distracting the staff in the sections. The user is also enlightened on the basic services of the library and on how to search for materials

Ogunmodede and Emeahara (2010) in citing Akande (2002) reported that library orientation involves taking fresh undergraduates on a guided tour of the library, they cited the case of University of Ibadan and stressed that the programme features events like talk, exhibition, demonstration, guided tour and so on.

Purpose of Study
The main purpose of this study includes are to:
1. enquire about the availability of user education programme for fresh students in Covenant University
2. find out the types of users education programme available for new intakes Covenant University
3. examine the effects of users education programme on new students in Covenant University
4. identify the challenges associated with users education programme for new students in Covenant University.
5. suggest ways of improving users education programme for new students in Covenant University.

Methodology
The research design for this study is descriptive survey. The population of the study comprises all the 100 level students in the two colleges of the university, College of Science and Technology (CST) and College of Development Studies (CDS). The data were collected through copies of questionnaires which were distributed among students during one of the compulsory lectures (Use of Library and Study Skills) as all the students were expected to be in

attendance. The total numbers of new students is one thousand eight hundred (1,800). A total number of 900 copies of questionnaires were administered while 783 were returned and found usable this represents 87% (percent) response rate. Data were analysed using percentage methods.

Presentation of Findings
Table 1 shows the age distribution of the respondents. 571 (72.9%) students are between 15 – 18 years while 119 (15.2%) range from 19- 21. Only 4 (0.5%) of the entire respondents are between 22 years and above. A total of 89 (11.4%) respondents did not fill their age. This implies that majority of the student in 100 level in are between 15- 18 years.

Table 2 represents available user education programme in Covenant University. According to the table, teaching of Use of Library and Study Skills attracted the highest number of responses, 643 representing 82.1% of the total respondents. This shows that teaching this course is given serious attention. Library tour attracted 606 (77.4%) indicating that students recognize the various efforts put in place to ensure that they are conducted round the library from time to time in order to get acquainted with the various sections, resources, services , staff etc. Library orientation attracted 544(69.5%) responses while the responses for bibliographic instruction is 256(33.8%) as seen in the table.

Table 1: Age of Respondents

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
15- 18 Years	571	72.9%
19- 21 Years	119	15.2%
22 and above	4	0.5 %
No Response	89	11.4%
Total	**783**	**100%**

Table 2: Available user Education Programme

Name of programme	Frequency	Percentage
Library Orientation	544	69.5%
Library Tour	606	77.4%
Individual Instruction	427	54.5%
Teaching of Use of Library / Study Skill	643	82.1%
Basic Bibliographic Instruction	256	33.8%

Table 3: Impact of user education programme on students

Impact	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un- Decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Acquainting students with available information resources and their formats	647 (82.6%)	-	136 (17.4%)	-	-
Exposes students to the services provided by the library	588 (75.1%)	-	195 (24.9%)	-	-
Equips students with good search skills	735 (93.9%)	-	48 (6.1%)	-	-
Helps students to become independent learners	426 (54.4%)	-	357 (45.6%)	-	-
Help students to exploit available resources to boost academic performance	632 (80.7%)	-	151 (19.3%)	-	-
Exposes the students to library rules and regulations	375 (47.9)	-	408 (52.1%)	-	-

Table 4: Period of preference for library orientation

Period	Frequency	Percentage
First week of resumption	Nil	0 %
Second week of resumption	293	37.4%
Management's wish	120	15.3%
No response	370	47.3%
Total	783	100%

Table 3 is an illustration of the impact of user education programme on students. The table shows that the highest impact of user education on students is that of equipping them with good search skills. This is the response of 735 (93.9%) of the total respondents. With these skills, students are able to explore the avalanche of literature available in the library for better performance in their academic work. 647 respondents (82.4%) indicate that the programme equips students with information on the available information resources and their formats. Apart from exposing them to the available resources, 588(75.1%) respondents indicate that user education programme exposes them to various services available in the library. Though various resources are available in the library in various formats, 632 respondents indicate that it takes library education for them to exploit the contents of individual formats.

Other impacts include helping students to become independent learners and exposing them to library rules and regulations. This is as indicated by 426 (54.4) and 375(47.9) respondents respectively.

Table 4 above explains the period of preference for library orientation by students. As indicated in the table, 293respondents representing (37%) preferred the second week of resumption for library orientation while 120 respondents, representing (15.3%) indicated that they will want to have it anytime the Management wishes. However, not even a single student prefers the first week of resumption which eventually happens to be the period the orientation normally holds for all freshmen. A total of 370 (47.3%) students did not respond to any of the options in the table. This implies that they do not prefer any of the indicated periods for the orientation.

Table 5: Problems hindering students from maximizing user education programme

Problems	Frequency	Percentage
Insufficient period of library orientation and teaching of use of library/ study skills	567	72.4%
Large number of students resulting in noise and distraction	702	89.7%
Orientation is planned too early into the resumption date thereby some students miss out	711	90.8%

Table 6: Suggestions for improvement

Solution	Frequency	Percentage
More periods should be allotted to users education programmes	512	65.4%
User education programmes should be organized at college / departmental levels	678	86.6%
Library orientation should be organized after full resumption of all fresh students	714	91.2%

Table 5 represents the problems that hinder students from maximizing user education. The table reveals that the most serious problem is that orientation is planned too early into the resumption as indicated by 711 (90.8%) respondents. This is followed by the large number of students in the same class resulting in noise and distraction with 702 (89.7%) responses. Insufficient period for library orientation and teaching of use of library attracted 567 (72.4%) responses

Table 6 shows suggestions for improving the challenges hindering user education. The highest response was that library orientation should be organized after full resumption of all fresh students as indicated by 714 (91.2%) respondents. Some posit that user education programme should be organized at college/ departmental level 678(86.6%) response while 512(65.4%) respondents solicit that more periods be allotted to user education programme

Observations from the Result of the Study
Observation from table 4 shows that the largest number of respondents 370 (47.3%) did not respond to any of the options, rather they came up with suggestions which include:
   a. Orientation should be scheduled after full resumption of all new students.
   b. Orientation should be organized more than just once so that students who resumed later will have opportunity to participate

Conclusion and Recommendations
User education is a sure method through which first year students overcome "use of library phobia". The acquisition of skills paves way to full utilization of the avalanche of resources available in libraries. The onus therefore lies on Covenant University library to keep building search skills in its new patrons while making adjustments where necessary. Other university libraries lagging behind in this regard are also encouraged to brace up. Based on the finding of the study the following recommendations are made:

1. Library orientation should be organised after the resumption of all fresh students. It should be scheduled after conclusion of admission so as to ensure that all students benefit maximally.

2. Library orientation and the teaching of use of library and study skills should be carried out on departmental levels for the benefit of all students as the present system of combining all 100 level students encourages noise and distraction.

3. More periods should also be allotted to library orientations as well as for lectures on the Use of Library and Study Skills. The present method of one day for all freshmen discourages an in-depth study of the library, including the resources and services. Some students find it difficult to assimilate in overcrowded environments.

4. User education through the use of library guide should be encouraged since guides equip students with individualized opportunity to learn about the library and its resources

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