

An Appraisal Of Indexing And Abstracting Services In The Institute Of Education Library, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria

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Abstract: *The paper appraised indexing and abstracting services in the Institute of Education Library, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. It was guided by three research questions, to what extent are indexing and abstracting services utilized by customers of the Institute of Education Library, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria? What are the challenges of indexing and abstracting services in the Institute of Education Library, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria? Survey research method was adopted for the study and Random sampling technique was used to draw sample for the study. The population of the study consists of the professional Librarians and academic staff of the Institute of Education, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. Structured questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection, 22copies out of 30copies of the questionnaire were successfully retrieved. Frequency tables and percentages were used in analyzing the data collected. The findings of the study reveal that, indexing and abstracting services are available with the exception of Reviews, Author's abstract and descriptive abstracting services. Indexing services are moderately utilised with 59% response rate while abstracting services are not utilised with 50% response rate. Inadequate facilities, insufficient funds and lack of awareness are the major challenges militating against the effective provision of indexing and abstracting services in the Institute of Education library, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Among the recommendations: The Institute library should provide more Abstracting services such as Reviews, Author's abstract and descriptive abstracting service to mention a few.*

Keywords: *Indexing and Abstracting Services, Information Retrieval tools.*

I. Introduction

Indexing and Abstracting services are essential and basic tools for effective organization, storage, retrieval and access to the right information in the right format at the right time to the diverse library customers. Libraries, academic libraries inclusive are charged with the basic responsibility to select, acquire, process and make readily available information and information resources to the serving community to meet their varied and diverse information needs as well as to meet organizational aims and objectives. However, without adequate and appropriate information access and retrieval tools such as index and abstracts, the plethora of information that exists on most topics would be hopelessly disorganised, jumbled and carefully planned research process would be totally impossible. Aina (2004) said libraries, have devised tools such as catalogues, bibliographies, indexes, abstracts etc. which are expected to make users or readers aware of the variety of information carriers such as books, serials, audio-visual materials available in the library and information Centre's collections.

The fourth law of Library science championed by Ranganathan as cited in Bhatt (2011) "save the time of the reader". Time is important to every person and its management is a key to success in life. Information Managers need to possess the habit of saving the time of the customers. Gabriel (2012) stressed that Indexing and Abstracting services are the most comprehensive way to represents information, depicts professionalism and librarian's competency level, it also enable the availability of surrogate copies, specific components of a literary work and other descriptors with the sole aim and purpose of providing a well detailed, sieved and representation of information to meet the felt needs of patrons. The basic purpose of an index or an abstract is effective and efficient access to information either through structured record, such as books and databases or random stores of information, such as information found with internet search engines. For whatever purpose, what forms a good index or abstract both are tools that lead a user to extract information that is needed with no hurdles, no false paths and no irrelevant materials. The perfect index or abstract lead a user to totally pertinent information, seldom leads to trivial information and never, ever, lead to non-pertinent information (Cleveland & Cleveland, 2013). According to the British Indexing Standard as cited in Bakewell (1993) and Brown (2010) an index is a systematic arrangement of entries designed to enable users locate information in a document.

According to Lumumba (2006) the Institute of Education Ahmadu Bello University Zaria was established by the Northern Nigerian law No. 10 of 1965. It is semi-autonomous within the university's framework. The institute of Education library is primarily a reference library serving the university community in general and the institute staff in particular and most particularly the teeming number of students available within the Institute. At present there are approximately 56, 489 books and 75 volumes of journals.

II. Statement Of The Problem

Libraries and Information Centres normally acquire a large number of Information resources it runs into millions of various kind and format. This might include databases, books, journals, thesis, dissertations, workshop papers and conference proceedings etc. These volumes of information created, generated and stored are immense that without adequate Indexing and Abstracting services gaining access to the relevant and right information resources in the shortest possible time will be cumbersome and frustrating. Hence there is need to put in place functional Indexing and Abstracting services in order to facilitate quick and easy access to the relevant, comprehensive and right information resource.

III. Research Questions

1. What types of indexing and abstracting services are available in the Institute of Education Library, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria?
2. To what extent are indexing and abstracting services utilized by customers of the Institute of Education Library, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria?
3. What are the challenges of indexing and abstracting services in the Institute of Education Library, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria?

IV. Objectives Of The Study

1. To discover the types of indexing and abstracting services available in the Institute of Education Library, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria.
2. To find out the extent of the utilization of indexing and abstracting services by customers of the Institute of Education Library, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria.
3. To ascertain the challenges of indexing and abstracting services in the Institute of Education Library, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria.

V. Review Of Related Literature

An index can be seen as a pointer to the intellectual content of the material, index therefore is not information but rather it shows where the information can be obtained. In support of the above Bonn as cited in Khan (2014) viewed an index as a detailed alphabetical list of the names, terms, topics, places, formulae, numbers, or other significant items in a completed work (such as book, set or bound journal) with exact page references to material discussed in that work. Index is a systematic guide to items contained in or concepts derived from a collection (document, group of documents, or set of objects). It is arranged in a known or stated order, usually different from that of the items or concepts within the collection itself. Reitz (2004) defined Indexing as the "process of compiling one or more indexes for a single publication such as a monograph or multivolume references work or adding entries for new document to an open end index covering a particular publication format (example newspapers), works of a specific literacy form (biography, book reviews etc.) or the literature of an academic field discipline or group of disciplines

An abstract is the intellectual summary of the content of the material; it gives the reader a clue whether a document is relevant or otherwise. Boston College Library Glossary (2014) viewed Abstract as (1) a short summary of an article in a scholarly journal. It usually appears at the beginning of the article. (2) A printed or electronic index to journal, magazine, newspaper, articles that not only provides a citation to the articles, but also a brief summary of each article. (3) A summary of a paper presented at a conference. The full text of the paper is not always published. An abstract is "the terse presentation in (as far as possible) the author's own language, of all the points made in the same order as in the original piece of primary documentary information – that can be a book, a research report, a periodical article, a speech, the proceedings of a conference, an interview, etc.". (Khan, 2014) Accordingly Gabriel (2012) Opined that Indexing and abstracting services were useful and efficient mediums for effective dissemination of Research findings. The study revealed that there is a significant association between articles indexed and abstracted for consultation by patrons.

Musa and Dangani (2013) studied the Assessment of the use of indexing and abstracting services by patrons of Federal College of Education Katsina library their findings revealed that lack of use of indexing and abstracting services by patrons is largely due to lack of awareness of its availability. The study also reveals that lack of professional staff and funds and production are the major problems faced in the course of providing indexing and abstracting services.

Umar, Mohammed and Shittu (2014) conducted a research on the assessment of indexing and abstracting services in NuhuBamalli Polytechnic Library, Zaria, Nigeria. The finding reveals that all the types of indexes and Abstracts are available in the Polytechnic library. Subject index is the most highly used with 62.5%, followed by citation index with 25% response. While on the other hand the finding of the research shows that subject Abstract is the most highly used with 62.5% response rate followed by Descriptive Abstract with 37.5%. The research also indicated that Academic Staffs are the major users of Indexes and Abstracts with 62.5% followed by the student with 37.5%. The implication of the finding is that Administrative staff hardly consults index and Abstract.

VI. Methodology

Survey research method was used for the study, Aina (2003) asserted that survey research is a systematic and comprehensive collection of information that reflects the opinions, attitudes, feelings, beliefs and behaviors of people on an issue. This involves the collection of data about a target population using a selected Sample and putting together the results of findings obtained from analysis of the sample as representative of the whole population later generalize the results obtained from the whole population.. The population of the study consists of the professional librarians and the academic staff of the Institute of Education, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria. 24 respondents representing 30% of the population were randomly selected to serve as the sample of the study. Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection and 22 out of 24 Questionnaires were successfully retrieved. Descriptive statistics; tables and percentages were used in analyzing the data collected.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The results of the data obtained from the completed questionnaires are presented by analyzing the research questions that guided the study. Thus, the analysis of the data collected is given in the next page:

Table 1.1 Types of indexing services available in the Institute of Education Library, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria.

| S/NO. | Types of indexing services | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------|----------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1. | Subject Index | 08 | 36.4% |
| 2. | Title Index | 02 | 09% |
| 3. | Author Index | 01 | 4.5% |
| 4. | Chain Index | 02 | 09% |
| 5. | Specific Index | 01 | 4.5% |
| 6. | Back of Book Index | 07 | 31.8% |
| 7. | Relative Index | 01 | 4.5% |
| Total | | 22 | 100% |

Respondents were asked to indicate the types of indexing services available in the Institute of education library Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria. Table 1.1 above reveal that subject index have the highest response rate of 36.4% while specific index have the lowest response rate of 4.5% only.

Table 1.2 Types of Abstracting services available in the Institute of Education Library, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria.

| S/NO. | Types of Abstracting services | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------|-------------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1. | Indicative Abstract | 07 | 31.8% |
| 2. | Informative Abstract | 02 | 09% |
| 3. | Critical Abstract | 03 | 13.6% |
| 4. | Subject Abstract | 10 | 45.5% |
| 5. | Descriptive Abstract | 0 | 0% |
| 6. | Author's Abstract | 0 | 0% |
| 7. | Reviews | 0 | 0% |
| Total | | 22 | 100% |

From table 1.2 above, it appears that all the types of abstracting services are available in the Institute of Education Library; Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria with the exception of descriptive abstract, Author's abstract and Reviews. Indicative abstract recorded the highest response rate of 31.8% and Subject abstract recorded the lowest response rate of 4.5%.

Table 1.3 Extent of the utilization of indexing and abstracting services by customers of the Institute of Education Library, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria.

| S/NO. | The Extent of Utilization of Indexing services | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------|--|-----------|----------------|
| 1. | Highly utilized | 07 | 31.8% |
| 2. | Moderately utilised | 13 | 59% |
| 3. | Not utilized | 02 | 09% |
| Total | | 22 | 100% |

Looking at table 1.3 above, it was discovered that indexing services are moderately utilised by customers of the Institute of Education Library, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria with 59% respond rate while 09% of the respondents reveal that indexing services are not utilised.

Table 1.4: Extent of the utilization of Abstracting services by customers of the Institute of Education Library, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria.

| S/NO. | The Extent of Utilization of Abstracting services | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------|---|-----------|----------------|
| 1. | Highly utilized | 04 | 18% |
| 2. | Moderately utilised | 07 | 31.8% |
| 3. | Not utilized | 11 | 50% |
| Total | | 22 | 100% |

It can be seen from the above table that abstracting services are not utilised with 50% response rate, 13.8% of the respondents said that abstracting services are moderately utilized while only 04 respondents (18%) highly utilized abstracting services.

Table 1.5: Challenges of indexing and abstracting services in the Institute of Education Library, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria.

| S/NO. | Types of challenges | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------|-----------------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1. | Inadequate facilities | 07 | 31.8% |
| 2. | Insufficient funds | 06 | 27.3% |
| 3. | Unqualified staff | 01 | 4.5% |
| 4. | Lack of awareness | 06 | 27.3% |
| 5. | Lack of training | 02 | 09% |
| Total | | 22 | 100% |

Table 1.5 displays that inadequate facilities representing 31.8% is the greatest challenge of indexing and abstracting services in the Institute of Education Library, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria while unqualified staff representing 4.5% is having the lowest respond rate. This means that, the institute posses qualified staff to perform indexing and abstracting activities

VII. Summary Of The Major Findings

The major findings of the study reveals that:

- I. Indexing and abstracting services are available with the exception of Reviews, Author's abstract and descriptive abstracting services, subject index have the highest response of 36.4% while specific index have the lowest response of 4.5% only. Indicative abstract and Subject abstract with 31.8% and 4.5% response rate respectively.
- II. Indexing services are moderately utilised with 59% response rate while abstracting services are not utilised with 50% response rate.
- III. Inadequate facilities, insufficient funds and lack of awareness with 31.8%, 27.3% and 27.3% response rate are the major challenges militating against the effective provision of indexing and abstracting services in the Institute of Education library, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

VIII. Conclusion

Indexing and abstracting services are veritable tools for effective, efficient and timely information retrieval. The study appraised indexing and abstracting services in the institute of Education library, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, it was discovered that all the indexing and abstracting services are available with the exception of Reviews, Author's abstract and descriptive abstracting services. Indexing services are moderately utilised while abstracting services are not utilised. Inadequate facilities, insufficient funds and lack of awareness are the major challenges militating against the effective provision of indexing and abstracting service in the Institute of Education library, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

IX. Recommendations

Based on the major findings of the study the following recommendations are made:

1. The Institute library should provide more Abstracting services such as Reviews, Author's abstract and descriptive abstracting service.
2. Library customers should be encouraged by the library to make proper utilization of the Indexing and Abstracting services through user education programme.
3. Adequate facilities and funds should be allocated to the library by the Institute; the library should also look for other means of generating revenue such as photocopying services, sell of index and abstracts etc.

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