

Chapter 12

Managing Future Library Services for the Medical Sciences: A Pharmacy Library Experience

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ABSTRACT

This chapter documents the experience of upgrading services in the Faculty of Pharmacy Library, University of Ibadan, Nigeria and future management plans. The participatory and “give-back-to-community” approach, future mappings of users, faculty and library management are documented using a descriptive survey with questionnaire and interviews for data collection. Data was analyzed using frequency counts and percentages, and interview findings are thematically discussed. It was revealed that users expected top rate technology facilities and learning commons with augmented and virtual reality-utilized classrooms and laboratories to replay lectures, experiments, and real-time demonstrations. Online reference-services, booking makerspaces with lecturers locally and internationally solving pharmaceutical problems in prime time, were expected. Strategic planning, technology training, crowdfunding, and human resources collaboration were recommended for implementation of these future services.

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INTRODUCTION

Information remains the prime commodity of the present age and the library as information provider is no longer defined simply as a building or physical repository that houses information. The librarian is no longer given the primary ‘gatekeeper’ or guide to information role, but is proactive in services delivery in meeting the information needs and information utilization aims of users. The library is seen as a learning cultural and information centre. Its role has changed over time, becoming more faceted and multifarious (Abdulsalami, Okezie and Agbo, 2013) and for a special library or a library serving a particular special purpose, it is specifically designed to reach out to the local community it belongs to, and even beyond (Oyelude, 2003; Varheim, 2009; Johnson, 2010).

Library e-resources cannot be relegated to the background in library services usage. In the digital age, electronic resources are invaluable, creating opportunities to learn more from farther afield than close by or face to face. E-resources enable and aid librarians to provide better services to the user community. Kenchakkanavar (2014), summed up some reasons why libraries need e-resources as follows: E-resources can be quickly searched and accessed as information sources, by more than one user. The emerging technology of e-resources facilitates library users to access e-databases in large numbers. Realizing that services both analogue and electronic are invaluable to library users, the experiences of managing users and their expectations especially for future improvement after recent upgrade of facilities is the focus of this chapter. Serving and satisfying users in the basic medical sciences is the goal and how to do so, by monitoring and evaluation is what the exercise hopes to achieve.

BACKGROUND

The Faculty of Pharmacy Library, University of Ibadan was set up in the 1980/81 academic session. The Faculty of Pharmacy Library is a synergy. It has associate collaboration of all library information resources such as print, non-print and electronic databases with the central library called the Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan. Its collections are anchored largely on the central library. Collections such as text books, reference resources and pharmacy relevant online electronic databases are adequately supplied by the central library while other information resources such as periodicals, projects and dissertations, off-line electronic resources were also supplied by the faculty for user consultation. Adequate provision of information had increased the number of users in the library which automatically indicates the satisfaction level of library users.

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