A Survey of Computer Literacy Skills of Professionals and Paraprofessionals in College Libraries in Delta and Edo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to survey the computer literacy skills of professionals and paraprofessionals in college libraries in Delta and Edo State, Nigeria. A population of 150 professionals and paraprofessionals participated in the study. Descriptive survey design was adopted in carrying out the study. A questionnaire was used in the collection of data. Frequency counts and percentages were used to answer the research questions. The result of the analysis among others showed that most professionals and paraprofessionals acquire computer knowledge through computer/IT training programmes. Findings also reveals that respondents derived various benefits from computer usage such as getting official work done easily and faster and reduction of work load.

Introduction

Through the history of the world, libraries have been known as important institutions for the provision and preservation of human knowledge, (Anandara (2000), the ability to use computer effectively for various tasks has become a skill that is increasingly necessary as an essential part of everyone's education. Skills such as bookkeeping, clerical and administrative work, stock taking, and so forth now constitute the main subset of computerized practices that form the core "IT skills" package, spreadsheet, word processors and databases Todd (2012). Computers according to Cockrare (2013) provides some advantages to libraries; which include: allow easy integration of various activities facilitates co-operation and the formation of library networks, help to avoid duplication of effects within a library and between libraries in a network eliminate some uninteresting and respective task. It also Help to increase the range of services offered increase efficiency. Merina (2013) asserts that computer help librarians to accomplish special tasks involving editing, organizing and disseminating text. The adoption of computers in Delta and Edo states college libraries requires that the professionals and paraprofessionals acquire/possess computer skills which will enable them to manipulate the machine.

Ivencevich and Matteson (2014) noted that the information age which is sweeping the world requires personnel (staff) who understand and can use computers. Computer skills are essential because it subsequently increase staff productivity

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to survey the computer skills of professionals and paraprofessionals in Delta and Edo state. The following particular objectives thus arise from the study:

- Find out the educational qualification of professionals and paraprofessionals in college libraries in Delta and Edo state
- Assess and determine the level of computer skills of professionals and paraprofessional in college libraries in Delta and Edo states
- Find out the avenue through which the professionals and paraprofessionals in the college libraries in Delta and Edo states became computer literates
- Find out where the professionals and paraprofessional in the college libraries use computers.
- Find out the benefits which professionals and paraprofessionals derived from the use of computers
- Identify the problems associated with their use of computer

Literature Review

In the Information Technology (IT) driven age, everyone which include professionals and paraprofessional requires computer competence skills to survive. The Importance of the concept of computer literacy has been recognized by many American Library Association- ALA (2000) defines computer literacy as the ability to locate, evaluate and effectively use it (Carpenter 2001) defines computer literacy as the ability to access, evaluate, organize and use computer in order to learn., solve problems, make decisions in formal and informal learning context, at work, home and in educational setting. The effectiveness of computer literacy skills represents the capability of using computer optimally in problem- solving and /or critically thinking. The ability to create information and knowledge is the ultimate product of computer literacy since it enables knowledge creation (Wilson, 2011)

In practice some professionals and paraprofessionals and other information professional do not possess adequate knowledge or have much awareness in the use of computers during library operations. The level of competence in the use of computers and common computer application by librarians in Nigeria cannot be measured of compared with that of the Western world, (Goodluck, 2008).

According to Akintunde (2013) the creation of awareness and teaching of computer skills should be done through: promotion and encouragement of computer literacy for all. Raising the level of knowledge about Information Technology

(IT) and the level of competence in using personal computers, enable better returns from investment in Information Technology (IT) professionals and paraprofessional lives and as such they must have knowledge of a wide variety of scholarly and information sources and follow trends related to publishing computers. The media effectively oversee the selection and organization of library materials (Fidelis, 2012)

Marina (2013), considers computer literacy as a "key to lifelong learning" which includes information literacy, information technology literacy, literacy skills, information skills and learning to earn.

Research Methods

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of this study consisted of 150 professional and paraprofessional library staff from Delta and Edo states college libraries. Data for this study was collected with the use of a well-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire entitled. "Survey of computer literacy skills" questionnaire (SCLSQ).

The questionnaire was divided into two sections: Section A focused on the personal data of the respondents. Section B focuses on questions that are meant to assess the computer literacy skills of professionals and paraprofessionals. The questionnaire was administered to all the professionals and paraprofessionals library staff in all the college libraries in Delta and Edo State. The responses to the various items of the questionnaire were analyzed using frequency counts and percentage

Data Analysis and Discussion

Table 1: Response Rate

Names of libraries	No of Questionnaire	No	%
Delta state polytechnic library, Ozoro	10	10	6.7
Delta State Polytechnic Library Otefe oghare	10	10	6.7
Delta State Polytechnic library Ogwashi-uke	8	8	5.3
Petroleum training institute Library, Effurun	20	19	12.6
Delta State School of Health technology library, Ofouma	8	8	5.3
College of Education Library, Warri	8	8	5.3
College of education library Agbor	10	10	6.7
Federal polytechnic, Auchi	16	16	10.7
College of education library Ekiadolor	10	10	6.7
Delta state college of Physical education library, Mosoga	6	6	4.0
Institute of management and technology Usen	10	9	6.0
Lighthouse Polytechnic, Benin	8	8	5.3
Shaka Momodu Polytechnic Benin	7	7	4.7
College of Education Igwueben	6	5	3.3
College of Agric Iguorhiaghi	6	6	4.0
School of Agric Aganebode	10	10	6.7
Total	153	100	150

Source: field study, 2013

Table 2: Gender Analysis of Respondents

Gender	Responses	Percentage %
Male	86	57.4
Female	64	42.6
Total	150	100

Source: field study, 2015

Table 2 shows that a total of 150 professionals and paraprofessionals responded to the distributed questionnaires. Of this 86 are male and 64 of them are females

Table 3: Educational Qualifications of Respondent

Educational Qualification	No	Percentage %
Diploma in LIS/LS	45	30
BLS/B.Sc	52	34.7
P.h.D	15	10
Total	150	100

Source: field study, 2015

From the table 3 respondents with bachelor's degree rank highest with 52(34.7%) followed by holders of diploma in library science. However 15(10%)of them are doctorate degree holders. The data shows that those who need to go for higher degree programme are in majority

Table 4: Avenue of Computer Literary

Avenues of computer literacy	Professional		Paraprofessional	
	No	%	No	%
Teaching by friends	12	8	10	6.6
Computer/IT training	30	20	23	15.33
Reading of books	15	10	11	7.3
Observing people	10	6.67	8	5.33
Formal training	20	13.33	11	7.33

Source: field study, 2015

Table 4 reveals the various avenues through which the respondents became computer literate. Majority of the professionals and paraprofessionals became computer literate through computer training programme with 30(20%), 23(5.33) respectively. There are several computer ICT training programmes that are available inside and outside the various colleges. Most of the respondents must have taken advantage of this computer IT training programme. This is probably why it ranked highest. Obviously people have the lowest percentage. It's not surprising because the use of computer is mainly practical and not just mere observation.

Table 5: The places where professionals and paraprofessional use the computer

Where professional and paraprofessional use computers	Professional		Paraprofessional	
	No	%	No	%
Cyber café	40	26.67	30	20
At home	28	18.67	20	13.33
In the office	20	13.33	12	8

Source: field study, 2015

As indicated by table 5 professionals use computer more at the cybercafé than in the office. Most paraprofessional indicated that they use computer more at home for internet surfing and word processing than any other place. This could be as a result of not having personal computer or laptop to use at home due to high cost of computer

Table 6: Benefits derived from the use of computers

Benefit derived from the use of computer	Professional		Paraprofessional	
	No	%	No	%
Getting my official work done easily and faster	50	33.33	30	20
Assist to type my own document	25	16.67	15	10
Reduction of work load	20	13.33	10	6.67

Source: field study, 2015

Table 6 shows majority of the professional indicated that the computer helps them in getting their official work done easily and faster. Few paraprofessionals indicated that the computer assist them to type their own documents. This table shows that professional and paraprofessional derived various benefits from computer use. This finding agrees with Henderson (2012) who stated that computer provides numerous benefits and advantages to both professionals and paraprofessional such as provision of speedy and easy access to information, facilitating of reformatting and combination of data from different sources etc.

Table7: Problems associated with the use of computer by professional and paraprofessional

Problems	Professional		Paraprofessional	
	No	%	No	%
Lack of inadequate computer skills	17	11.33	23	15.33
Inadequate computers	15	10	20	13.33
Power failure	10	6.67	12	8
Lack of sponsorship	13	8.67	15	10
High cost of computers	10	6.67	15	10

Source: field study, 2015

Table 7 shows that the problems associated with the use of computer by respondents. Majority of the paraprofessional indicated that lack of inadequate computer skills and inadequate computers are major problems they encountered with the use of computers. This discovery agrees with Adomi and Anie, (2003) that says that most professionals and paraprofessional do not possess a high level of computer skill and their use of computer is still maturing. Lack of sponsorship and high cost of computer were indicated as a problem for both professional and paraprofessionals.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The purpose of this study is to survey the computer literacy skills of professionals and paraprofessionals in college libraries in Delta and Edo state. The study reveals that most professionals and paraprofessionals became computer literate through computer/IT training programmes. The study show that majority of the respondents are professionals. The study shows that both professionals and paraprofessional use the computer in the cybercafé than in their various offices. Majority of them agreed that the benefit from the use of computer and that it helps them to do their official work easily and faster. Majority of the professional and paraprofessional encounter problems of lack of inadequate computer skills, inadequate computers and frequent power failures

Based on the study, the use of computer literacy should be taken seriously by professionals and paraprofessionals and also adequate computer skills enlightenment should be encourage.

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