



Availability and utilization of library resources for enhanced service-delivery of healthcare workers in government tertiary hospitals, Abuja Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study titled availability and utilization of library information resources for enhanced service delivery of healthcare workers in government tertiary hospital in Abuja-Nigeria was carried out to ascertain the library resources for healthcare workers' service-delivery enhancement in tertiary hospital Abuja, Nigeria; to investigate if the healthcare workers service delivery is enhanced through using those resources; the problem envisaged by healthcare workers in accessing and using the library resources and possible solutions. The respondents are healthcare workers in the categories of doctors; nurses; medical laboratory scientists and pharmacists. A descriptive research design was adopted with the use of Questionnaires to elicit information from the healthcare workers. The objective of the study was to investigate information resources availability and utilization for the enhancement of the healthcare workers' service

delivery in the hospitals under study. The numbers of the questionnaire distributed are 353; the numbers retrieved are 333. The major findings are limited numbers of relevant library information resources both in print and electronically. Poor internet connectivity and lack of computers, also an epileptic power supply, and a lack of seasoned personnel to pilot library activities. The study recommended – improvement in the provision of current and enough health information resources; librarians to involve healthcare workers in making requisitions in order to avoid irrelevant resources; management of the hospital to vote more funds to the library for the subscription of e-resources in good time.

Key words: service delivery, availability, health, healthcare worker, utilization, hospital library

1.INTRODUCTION

Service delivery is the ability to produce the required result, based on the task at hand. Service delivery in the health sector according to [2] is a special process describing a complete and integrated approach for performing a special project type that is a fundamental input to population health status, along with other factors including social determinants of health. In healthcare, service delivery is part of a health system where patients receive the care and supplies to which they are permitted. People not going to the hospital for treatment shows the trust of getting healed from the activities of healthcare workers is not guaranteed.

Delivery of healthcare services is a reflection of the extent of inputs into the health system, such as the health personnel, supplies and procurement, and financing and others. Ensuring the availability of health information resources that meet a

minimum quality standard and ensuring that there is access to them are key functions of a hospital library. When available resources are adequate, accessible, and utilizable; it will promote service delivery [7]. The "Draft National Policy (DNP) on Information Resources and Services (IRS) of 1991" emphasizes that every piece of information should be available to everyone, in formats that can be supplied through all communication channels and delivered at a comprehensible level [21]. Availability is the ability of the library to acquire and stock enough resources for users for their research activities. It helps to ease the research work of the clientele, which at the same time help to enhance their research activities.

[17] denote information resources provided in the library, which aids users to acquire knowledge. [9] posited that availability implies sourcing, and acquiring information resources for users to satisfy their quest for information. There may be libraries without resources in some of the hospitals; some have resources that are not relevant, and some have

resources but are manned by non-professionals. Such hospital libraries just mentioned are far from the reality of helping their users to enhance service delivery.

[18] opined that total mental being; physical and social well-being is health. Healthcare is the prevention, diagnosis, and cure of illness and injury in people. Healthcare workers are professionals trained to take absolute care of human beings who are sick and those who are injured, by giving first aids and also administering curative drugs for the wellness of the patients. [4] defined healthcare worker as one who delivers care and services to the sick and ailing, either directly as doctors and nurses or indirectly as aids. They include physicians, nurses, pharmacists, radiologists, dentists, ophthalmologists, medical laboratory scientists, and others not mentioned. Hospitals exist because of the services of healthcare workers, which are crucial for posterity.

Library services are very crucial to the actualization of service delivery in the health sector. Healthcare workers need materials in the library to broaden their knowledge of handling health matters. The main role of the library is to source health information in all its ramifications, acquire them where necessary, process them according to the experts in health professions, organize them for easy access and use, make them available when the need arises, and always ready to offer reference services to the users – physically or remotely as the case may be. A hospital library is a special type of library because its service is for specialized users who are healthcare workers.

Utilization is the ability of healthcare workers to use library resources of any format, be it print, electronic, non-print, and human resources. It expresses the ease of utilization of library materials in any format. Information utilization according to [1] is the maximum and practical use of library resources that the user identifies, locates, and acquires to solve problems. Healthcare workers use the library to facilitate research and information acquisition for enhanced service delivery as part of their job requirements. Utilization of library resources is contingent on its relevancy and accessibility to the users and this can be achieved when the users are requested to make requisitions by the librarian [13]. Organization of library resources, shelving, space, time of operation, staff as well as the conduciveness of the library environment determine the utilization of the library by the clientele [11]. Utilization of library resources makes the performance of the workers to be improved more than what it used to be when they are not in use. However, the utilization of library resources determines the service delivery of the healthcare worker.

Hospital library services worldwide have different approaches. [6], in America established that nurses use evidence-based library resources and services in healthcare settings because the availability, as well as utilization of library materials and services, has a favourable effect on both patients and nursing outcomes. A study in America by [14] on the impacts of librarian-offered services in hospital environments established that services of the library to the clinicians are effective, time-saving for healthcare workers, and appropriate information is provided for decision-making. The length of a patient's waiting time was cut in half when the

librarian was asked to conduct a literature search relating to the patient's case. [15] enumerated some of the challenges confronting hospital librarianship in Nigeria including inefficient internet availability; skill deficiency among hospital librarians; services of the library are still evolving; unable to get library materials and books – particularly local journals; delay in periodical supply; under-trained hospital librarians; and poor budget for hospital libraries. [12], found that while the medical library has some of the needed resources and services, the librarian does not provide them adequately. [19], evaluated the use of libraries and observed the noncooperation of the library staff with the users.

It is against these backdrops that this study is intended to assess the availability and utilization of library resources by selected healthcare workers for enhanced service delivery in government tertiary hospitals in Abuja, Nigeria.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Library information resources and services develop individuals and professions and are very vital in meeting information needs of healthcare workers, especially evidence-based library resources. Despite the fact that the Nigerian government instituted libraries in the hospitals to aid the healthcare workers in getting vital information for the enhancement of their service delivery, it appears not much is known with regard to the extent to which the hospital's library resources are available, accessible, and utilized by healthcare workers in Nigeria. The “Draft National Policy (DNP) on Information Resources and Services (IRS) of 1991” emphasizes that every information should be available to everyone, in formats that can be supplied through all communication channels and delivered at a comprehensible level. Scholarly studies on the availability, access, and use of library resources appear to be scanty. The few available studies focused on access to library e-resources by health workers and also accessibility and use of library information resource collections in the educational sector i.e. universities and some other tertiary institutions. Apparently, the researcher has not come across research on the availability, accessibility as well as utilization of libraries by healthcare workers for enhanced service delivery in government tertiary hospitals in Abuja-Nigeria, hence this study, and this current research fill the gap.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to assess the availability, accessibility, and utilization of libraries by healthcare workers.

The objectives of the study were to ascertain the type of library resources available for the healthcare workers' enhanced service delivery and to determine how utilization of library resources can influence the service delivery of healthcare workers in government tertiary hospitals in Abuja-Nigeria. The outcome of this study will encourage the hospital management to attach more importance to information resources provided by the library by voting for more funds for the acquisition of necessary resources for the healthcare

workers; Help the library in acquiring relevant health information resources because of involving the healthcare workers in making requisitions will help to checkmate irrelevant resources; and there will be opportunities for the librarians to be vast in Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The independent variables in this study are available, and utilization of library information resources, the dependent variable is the service delivery that will be enhanced through the use of library resources. The intervening variables are the acquisition of relevant health information resources; good cataloguing and organization; proper display; well-organized circulation services; and aiding users for easy usage. Enhanced service delivery is the response variable that could bring about by the explanatory variables indicated as possible causes- which are the availability, and utilization of library resources. Interventions to enhance service delivery would include among other things: the acquisition of relevant health information resources; proper cataloguing and organization; and well-organized circulation service.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

[18] asserted that contemporary library collections include print resources such as newspapers, manuscripts, books, journals, government documents, abstracts, and indexes; grey literature such as projects, and theses; art reproductions, films, sound, and video recordings, maps, and atlas, photographs, microfiches, CD-ROMs, computer software, online resources such as databases, e-journals, e-books, and other media. Since in the 1970s, nurses have been encouraged to use research-based information sources (Estabrooks, 2009), and current changes in the medical field have made access to the "best evidence" even more important. Clinical skills and patient choices are combined with the greatest available research evidence in evidence-based practice [16]. Evidence-based practice enhances healthcare quality and lowers costs, and health managers play a key role in promoting the implementation of research-based nursing practice [3]. As a result of this drive, attempts to raise nurses' understanding of the advantages of incorporating scientific material into medical choices have been redoubled [8]. Nurses typically attribute their low regard for scientific resources to inaccessibility, which includes restricted physical access to information resources, the ability to comprehend and apply the information obtained, and/or a lack of time to seek out research and incorporate to comprehend and apply the information obtained, and/or a lack of time to seek out research and incorporate it into clinical practice [5]. This study will build on previous research by looking at how healthcare workers use library-based evidence-based information resources and how that related to the services they give in order to improve their service delivery.

2.1 Summary of the Research Gap

Libraries are critical resources in healthcare settings for conducting searches and gaining access to open-source and other forms of research-based knowledge. Information resources can be used for a variety of purposes, including writing conference papers, upholding and offering medical

care for patients, and assisting with physical and psychosocial needs. Ignorance of library services, not having the need and nonpromotional of library activities are prerequisites of poor patronage of libraries by the clientele. The extent of the relevance, organization, and usefulness of a piece of information, therefore, is contingent upon why and when it is sought for the retrieval, access, and use of one type of information, especially when accessed and utilized successfully or not. The review of empirical literature related to the subject area showed that a number of studies have investigated some specific library resources in terms of different attributes particularly, in the educational sector. For instance, some studies dealt extensively with the availability, access, and utilization of certain library resources for educational purposes such as learning and academic achievement in universities. For instance, [21], universities in South-South, Nigeria; [14], [20] focused on the perception of serial publications accessibility and its contribution to students' learning process in the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Despite the merit of these studies, it differs significantly from this current study, which focuses on the availability, and utilization of all libraries by healthcare workers for enhancing health services delivery in government tertiary hospitals in Abuja, Nigeria. The utilization of library resources for teaching and learning was mainly to enhance the learning and academic achievement of participants. Unlike in the educational sector, library resources, and services are needed in tertiary hospitals for career development, professional advancement, and more importantly for improving healthcare service delivery to patients. This makes this study imperative. So far, the closest study to the current one was that by [10] who examined health information materials availability and pattern of use among medical doctors in teaching hospitals in south-East Nigeria. However, the scope of the above study was limited to health information resources, which was just a fraction of library resources. More so, its focus was on doctors only while this current study focused on different categories of healthcare workers ranging from nurses, medical laboratory scientists, and doctors to pharmacists.

3. METHODOLOGY

For purpose of this study, a descriptive research design was used with questionnaires to elicit information from the respondents. The design enabled the researcher to establish the current status of availability, and utilization of libraries by healthcare workers for enhanced service delivery in government tertiary hospitals in Abuja Nigeria, also helped the researcher to analyze the healthcare workers' attitudes, opinions, expectations, and perceptions towards availability, and utilization of libraries for their service delivery. The data collected were analyzed using percentages, frequency, and cross-tabulations.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Respondents' Questionnaire's rate of return

A total of 353 respondents were sampled from the selected tertiary hospitals. 333 (94.3%) numbers of questionnaires out

of 353 were filled and returned. 20 (5.7%) numbers of questionnaires out of 353 were not returned. The response rate was encouraging because out of 353 questionnaires distributed to the respondents, 333 (94.3%) were successfully

filled and returned while only 20 representing 5.7% were not returned.

Table 1: Number of distributed questionnaires among healthcare professionals and rate of return

Name of Hospital	No. of Questionnaire Distributed and Returned by Healthcare Professionals								Total	
	Doctor		Nurse		Pharmacist		Medical Lab. Scientist		No. distributed	No. returned
	No. distributed	No. returned	No. distributed	No. returned	No. distributed	No. returned	No. distributed	No. returned		
UA TH	49(13.9%)	47(13.3%)	90(25.5%)	82(23.2%)	6(1.7%)	6(1.7%)	8(2.3%)	8(2.3%)	153(43.3%)	143(40.5%)
NH A	70(19.8%)	69(19.5%)	105(29.7%)	96(27.2%)	15(4.2%)	15(4.2%)	10(2.8%)	10(2.8%)	200(56.7%)	190(53.8%)
Total	119(33.7%)	116(32.9%)	195(55.2%)	178(50.4%)	21(5.9%)	21(5.9%)	18(5.1%)	18(5.1%)	353(100%)	333(94.3%)

Source: Survey data, 2022

The breakdown of the analysis in Table 1, across the four categories of healthcare professionals used for this study, shows a high rate of return among Pharmacists and Medical Laboratory Scientists with the entire respondents 21 and 18, representing 5.9% and 5.1% respectively returning their questionnaire. The high rate of return among these sets of healthcare professionals may not be unconnected with their small population when compared to doctors and nurses, which makes it much easier to follow up and track them for retrieval of the research instrument.

More so, out of the 119 representing 33.7% of questionnaires that were distributed among doctors, 116 (32.9%) were fully completed and returned. However, the nursing profession has the highest number of unreturned questionnaires with only a return rate of 178 (50.4%) out of 195 (55.2%) copies that were given. The reason may be due to the fact that nurses constituted the greatest population of this study. Apparently, this makes it a bit challenging to absolutely follow up on all the respondents. Overall, the analysis indicates that out of 353 (100.0%) copies of a questionnaire distributed to the respondents, 333 representing 94.3% were successfully retrieved and returned.

Table 2: Healthcare workers' awareness of library resources in their hospitals

Are you aware of any library resources in your hospital	Healthcare workers' profession				Total
	Doctor	Nurse	Pharmacist	Med. Lab. Scientist	
Yes	108(32.4%)	138(41.4%)	20(6.3%)	15(4.5%)	281(84.4%)
No	2(0.6%)	12(3.6%)	0(0.0%)	1(0.3%)	15(4.5%)
I don't know	6(1.8%)	28(8.4%)	1(0.3%)	2(0.6%)	37(11.1%)
Total	116(34.8%)	178(48.9%)	21(9.0%)	18(7.2%)	333(100.0%)

Source: Okafor's Survey, 2022

Note: Figures in parenthesis are in percentage

The result in Table 2, shows that most of the respondents (84.4%) admitted to being aware of library resources in the hospital. The breakdown indicates that more of the nurses (41.4%) agreed to be aware of available library resources in their hospitals, followed by 32.4% of doctors, pharmacists (6.3%), and a few of the Medical Laboratory Scientists (4.5%). This high awareness level portends good reasons for access and utilization of library resources because awareness precedes access and utilization. Thus, the overwhelming

proportion of the respondents who are aware of existing library resources is critical for improving access and effective utilization of library resources, which ultimately impact positively on healthcare workers' service delivery. A number of scholars have assessed awareness of library resources among patrons with mixed findings. While some scholars reported a high awareness level, others reported a low awareness level.

Table 3: Healthcare workers’ utilization of library resources and their specific areas of service delivery that have been enhanced

Category of health workers	Specific areas of Enhanced service delivery	Yes	No	
Doctor	Patient diagnostic	115(34.5%)	1(0.3%)	
	Conduct diagnostic examinations	106(31.8%)	10(3.0%)	
	Health assessments,	102(30.6%)	14(4.2%)	
	Recommend medicine	103(30.9%)	13(3.9%)	
	Develop treatment strategies	91(27.3%)	25(7.5%)	
	Advise patients on health and wellness	74(22.2%)	42(12.6%)	
	Compile field visit and medical reports.	65(19.5%)	51(15.3%)	
	Training of students’ interns, Medical Social Workers and health staff in health facilities	1(0.3%)	115(34.5%)	
	Nurse	Care-giving	166(49.8%)	12(3.6%)
Effective communication skills		168(50.5%)	10(3.0%)	
Keep a record of pertinent medical history and symptoms.		162(48.6%)	16(4.8%)	
Collaborate with teams to develop care plans for patients		155(46.5%)	23(6.9%)	
Advocate for patients' health and well-being		152(45.6%)	26(7.8%)	
Observe and monitor patient health and record signs		167(50.2%)	11(3.3%)	
Administer drugs and treatment procedures		164(49.2%)	14(4.2%)	
Operate medical equipment		152(45.6%)	26(7.8%)	
Conduct diagnostic examinations		154(46.2%)	24(7.2%)	
Educate patients on disease management		157(47.1%)	21(6.3%)	
Provide medical support and counsel patients		152(45.6%)	26(7.8%)	
Pharmacist		Dispense prescriptions	17(5.1%)	4(1.2%)
		Maintain communication with prescribers	16(4.8%)	5(1.5%)
	Ensure safety of patients	19(5.7%)	2(0.6%)	
	Counsel patients	19(5.7%)	2(0.6%)	
	Collaborate with patients to improve their overall health	18(5.4%)	3(0.9%)	
	Manage and mentor pharmacy technicians, interns etc	16(4.8%)	5(1.5%)	
	Perform administrative tasks	15(4.5%)	6(1.8%)	
	Collaborate with other health workers	15(4.5%)	6(1.8%)	
	Medical Laboratory Scientist	Conduct an examination of bodily fluids and tissues for abnormal chemical concentrations, cells, or germs.	11(3.3%)	7(2.1%)
Prepare tissue for pathologists' microscopic inspection.		9(2.7%)	9(2.7%)	
Determine blood type for transfusions.		11(3.3%)	7(2.1%)	
Conduct and analyze medical research.		13(3.9%)	5(1.5%)	
Enhance the operation and maintenance of the hospital’s sophisticated instruments and equipment.		10(3.0%)	8(2.4%)	
Maintains proficiency in Laboratory Information Systems, which is critical to the laboratory's quality operations and patient care.		10(3.0%)	8(2.4%)	
Participates actively in quality improvement programs for ensuring that laboratory testing is accurate, timely, and meets the expectations of the client.		11(3.3%)	7(2.1%)	
Provides training and orientation to new Medical Laboratory Technologists in the administration and interpretation of tests.		12(3.6%)	6(1.8%)	

Source: Survey data, 2022

Table 3 above presents the results of the healthcare workers' utilization of library resources and their specific areas of service delivery that have been enhanced. From the result, it was observed that the overwhelming majority of doctors who utilized various library resources have led to enhanced service delivery in the following specific areas: patient diagnostic (34.5%), conduct diagnostic examinations (31.8%), health assessment (30.6%), recommend medication (30.9%), develop treatment strategies (27.3%), advise patients on health and wellness (22.2%), and compile field visit and medical reports (19.5%). Only in the training of students' interns, Medical Social Workers, and health staff in the health facilities did most (34.5%) said 'no'. The nurses agreed that the utilization of library resources has led to enhance service delivery in all the specific areas of their service. These include: care-giving (49.8%), effective communication skills (50.5%), keep a record of pertinent medical history and symptoms (48.6%), collaborate with teams to develop care plans for patients (46.5%), advocate for patients' health and wellbeing (45.6%), observe and monitor patient health and record signs (50.2%), administer drugs and treatment procedures (49.2%), operate medical equipment (45.6%), conduct diagnostic examinations (46.2%), educate patients on disease management (47.1%), and provide medical support and counsel patients (45.6%).

Furthermore, the results indicate that most of the pharmacists admitted that the utilization of library resources has enhanced

their service delivery in the specific areas of dispense prescriptions (5.1%), maintain communication with prescribers (4.8%), ensure the safety of patients (5.7%), counsel patients (5.7%), collaborate with patients to improve their overall health (5.4%), manage and mentor pharmacy technicians & interns (4.8%), perform administrative tasks (4.5%), and collaborate with other health workers (4.5%).

Finally, a large proportion of the medical laboratory scientists acknowledged that the utilization of library resources available in the government tertiary hospitals has led to enhanced service delivery in specific areas of conducting an examination of bodily fluids and tissues for abnormal chemical concentrations, cells, or germs (3.3%), determine blood type for transfusions (3.3%), conduct and analyze medical research (3.9%), enhance the operation and maintenance of the hospital's sophisticated instruments and equipment (3.0%), maintains proficiency in Laboratory Information Systems (3.0%), Participates actively in quality improvement programmes (3.3%), and provides training and orientation to new Medical Laboratory Technologists in the administration and interpretation of tests (12.5).

The findings across the four healthcare workers – doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and medical laboratory scientists indicate that the utilization of library resources influences almost all specific areas of healthcare service delivery in government tertiary hospitals in Abuja, Nigeria.

Table 4: Challenges of healthcare workers to availability and utilization of library resources for enhance service delivery

S/N	Challenges	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Inadequate information materials	61(18.3%)	160(48.0%)	87(26.1%)	25(7.5%)
2	Inadequate Internet supply	236(70.9%)	53(15.9%)	24(7.2%)	20(6.0%)
3	Lack of information retrieval skills	30(9.0%)	145(43.5%)	143(42.9%)	15(4.5%)
4	Complexity of the system in place	22(6.6%)	215(64.6%)	78(23.4%)	18(5.4%)
5	Poor arrangement of the library materials	26(7.8%)	158(47.4%)	133(39.9%)	16(4.8%)
6	Poor attitude by library staff	21(6.3%)	222(66.7%)	68(20.4%)	22(6.6%)
7	High penalties on return of late objects	15(4.5)	51(15.3)	63(18.9%)	204(61.3%)
8	Inadequate reading space	55(16.5%)	207(62.2%)	44(13.2%)	27(8.1%)
9	Lack of up-to-date resources	94(28.2%)	188(56.5%)	28(8.4%)	23(6.9%)

The challenges of healthcare workers to availability and utilization of library resources for enhancing service delivery were examined and results are presented in Table 4. The results show 18.3% of the healthcare workers strongly agreed and nearly half of them (48.0%) agreed that inadequate information materials constrain access and utilization of library resources for enhanced service delivery. However, fewer respondents (26.1%) and (7.5%) disagreed and strongly disagreed that inadequate information materials present a challenge.

4. CONCLUSION

This study assessed the availability and utilization of library resources by healthcare workers for enhanced service delivery

in government tertiary hospitals in Abuja, Nigeria. The study found that library resources are available in government tertiary hospitals in Abuja, Nigeria although on limited quantity with over 44 percent of the library resources being lowly available. This low availability of library resources implies that the hospitals may have not subscribed to some library information resources and/or they are in a form that is inaccessible to the healthcare professionals. The influence of utilized library resources on healthcare service delivery of healthcare workers is attributable to healthcare workers' awareness of the relevance of library resources to enhance healthcare service delivery in government tertiary hospitals in Abuja, Nigeria.

The influence of healthcare workers' utilization of library resources on service delivery enhancement in government tertiary hospitals in Abuja, Nigeria indicates that newspapers, magazines, journals, bibliographies, directories, up-to-date, Medscape, nursing & allied health premium, drug.com, mayo clinic, orphanet, WebMD, health.gov, CINAHL, HINARI, Eline, OVID, clinical evidence, clinicalkey, medical e-journal, medical dictionaries, PubMed, EMBASE, best practices, science direct, and PubMed Central (PMC) were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). This implies that the use of these library resources significantly influences the service delivery of healthcare workers in government tertiary hospitals in Abuja, Nigeria. It was concluded that adequate provision of these library resources presents an opportunity for enhancing service delivery of healthcare workers in government tertiary in Abuja, Nigeria. The study further shows that the four healthcare workers – doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and medical laboratory scientists who utilized various library resources had their service delivery enhanced in every specific area of their professional duties.

5. RECOMMENDATION

The government and development agency should consider increasing investment in hospital libraries for expanding library facilities such as space and other physical facilities including the acquisition of relevant information resources.

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