



# Awareness and Accessibility of library resources for enhanced service-delivery of healthcare workers in government tertiary hospitals in Abuja, Nigeria

Anthonia Ifeoma OKAFOR\*<sup>1</sup>, Rose NJOROGÉ<sup>2</sup>, Grace KIMANI<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Department of Library and Information Science

School of Education, Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya

\*Corresponding author's email: ifytonia9@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> njoroge.rose@ku.ac.ke

<sup>3</sup> kimani.grace@ku.ac.ke

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## ABSTRACT

The study titled awareness and accessibility of library resources for enhanced service delivery of healthcare workers in government tertiary Hospitals was carried out to establish the frequency of access to available library resources by healthcare workers for enhanced service delivery in government tertiary hospitals in Abuja-Nigeria; determine how awareness of library resources has influenced service delivery of healthcare workers in government tertiary hospitals in Abuja-Nigeria; 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 numbers of the questionnaire distributed are 353; the numbers retrieved are 333. The study concludes that there is a link between awareness and access to library resources and enhance service delivery by healthcare workers. The influence of accessing library resources on healthcare service delivery of healthcare workers is attributable to healthcare workers' awareness of the relevance of library resources.

**Key words:** Library, hospital library, service-delivery, accessibility, healthcare worker

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The libraries as institutions have the responsibility of sourcing, selecting, acquisition of information resources in all formats, processing, organizing, and dissemination to users [1]. Information experts organized resources in various formats; making them available in digital, physical, bibliographic, or intellectual access; also offer programmes and services

with the objective of encouraging intellectual learning for society advancement, with the objective of educating, enlightening, or entertaining groups of clients" [2, 3, 4]. The library has exercised the duty of availing a variety of information resources, as well as providing a safe, quiet and serene environment for the users [5, 6]. A library is considered useful to the clientele when its materials and activities are relevant and appropriate as posited by [7]. Library resources include books, manuscripts, newspapers, magazines, encyclopaedias, dictionaries, research reports, indexes, abstracts, globes, maps, e-journals, e-books, journals, brochures, government publications, catalogs, files, reports, microfiche, microfilm, micro cards, computer tapes, punched cards, email, databases on CD-ROM, summaries, internet, video cassettes, floppy disks, microforms, computers, bibliographies, directories [8, 9].

A hospital library is a special type of library because it is meant for a specialised group of users – the healthcare workers. According to American Library Association (ALA) (2010) Glossary, a special type of library is the one that is "created, financed, and administered by a corporate firm or Private Corporation or other special interest group of an agency to address the information needs of its employees or members in pursuit of its objectives." Special library collections and services are intended to serve the parent organization's interests. The hospital library caters to healthcare workers and focused on health-related resources thus: Medline – is a bibliographic database that contains citations and abstracts, used for biomedical health journals. Healthcare professionals, nurses, clinicians, and researchers make use of it. Cochrane is a British international organization formed to organize medical

research findings to facilitate evidence-based choices about health interventions involving policymakers, health professionals, and patients. Pub Med is a free search engine that accesses the Medline databases of references and abstracts on life sciences and biomedical topics.

Accessibility is the ability of a clientele to search and retrieve the library's resources [10]. Information resources in the libraries are meant for people to use without wasting the users' time and energy through the ease of access. Different resources of the library which are human, print and electronic, and non-print must work together to attain the goal of providing information resources and making them accessible and utilizable for the users. 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 [11]. Access to this information allows the benefit of globalization if used wisely. [12] affirmed that access and utilization of library resources are critical for ensuring an efficient research procedure. The availability of a source of information does not always translate to accessibility; even if the source is available, access to it may be hindered [13]. Accessibility deals with the problem of storage, display, and transmission of resources to users, and to make resources accessible requires skills that when lacking render resources available, but not accessible [14]. Access to available library resources cannot guarantee utilization. What the librarian should acquire for the users must be relevant to them. Irrelevant resources drive users away from utilizing the library resources.

Service delivery according to [15] is a unique process that describes a comprehensive and integrated strategy for completing a specific project and/or task, which offers a full end-to-end lifecycle that can be used as a model for other projects with comparable features. Service delivery, along with other aspects such as socio-economic determinants of health, is a critical component of every health system and a key input to population health status. It is the component of the healthcare system where patients receive the treatment and supplies, to which they are entitled. The availability of the library offers an enabling atmosphere for library resources accessibility and consumption, as well as improving service delivery. If healthcare workers appropriately access and use library information resources, they are more likely to provide enhanced service delivery. [16] reported that the poor productivity in African universities' publications compared to its counterparts in the

western world is caused by a lack of accessibility as well as usage of information resources. He is of the opinion that accessibility and utilization enhance service delivery in the area of academic publication. In Kenya, [17] revealed that the inadequacy of health information professionals such as librarians has given room to non-professionals to manage data and information, which affects the quality and usage of such information. In a study at the University of Nairobi, [18] found that library and information resource awareness and knowledge, including the organisation and retrieval procedures, library skills, and information literacy as the central qualities that impact library resource consumption. In the United Kingdom, [19] in a study titled "examining factors in non-use of hospital library by healthcare personnel. It was revealed that ignorance of service, not having a need, and non-access based on shortcomings in the library promotion are the factors for reluctance in-library use.

The healthcare worker according to [20] is "someone who provides medical treatment and assistance to the sick and injured, either directly or indirectly". Healthcare workers include physicians, dentists, nurses, midwives, pharmacists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, medical laboratory scientists, technicians, and radiologists among others.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

The awareness and accessibility of Library information resources are the key resources for the professional development of individuals, especially healthcare workers. Nigerian government mandated tertiary hospitals to include library services for the enhancement of service delivery of the health workers through accessing their resources. It is not known if the health workers in tertiary hospitals are aware of the existence of libraries as well as accessing them for their service delivery enhancement. Scholarly studies on access to library resources are scanty, but mostly on 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 awareness and accessibility of libraries by healthcare workers for enhanced service delivery in government tertiary hospitals in Abuja-Nigeria, hence this study and this current research fills the gap.

This paper has the following as its objectives: to establish the awareness of the library, and to establish the frequency of access to available library resources to healthcare workers for enhanced service delivery in government tertiary hospitals in Abuja-Nigeria.

## 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Access to healthcare facilities is the first step towards achieving comprehensive healthcare. [21] argued that the library's success should be judged in terms of its functions, the undertakings it supports, and the results it produces, such as reference questions answered, circulation transactions, classes trained, as well as students enrolled. This also explains why the library staffs play such a crucial role since they must treat users as valuable guests in order to contribute to their pleasure. What happens due to the interactions and activities, the consequences or results (for instance, enabling student-learning achievement, increasing faculty productivity, and improving institutional reputation) are used to determine the library's effectiveness [22]. The relevant resources must be unwrapped and showcased in a manner that will enhance users' patronage and engender good relationships between the users and librarians, thereby, the frequency of access will be enhanced.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**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
UATH	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%)
NHA	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(100.0%)	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, 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.

In India, [23] conducted a study on the knowledge and usage of digital resources by medical college students at the government medical college in Jammu and Kashmir (India). The study was descriptive in nature, and data were gathered from undergraduate medical students via a questionnaire and an interview schedule. The study's findings established that medical students lack the literacy skills necessary to successfully complete their academic and research requirements. Additionally, the findings indicate that students frequently attribute their low regard for scientific resources to limited access, which includes restricted physical access to information materials.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research design was adopted with the use of Questionnaires to elicit information from the healthcare workers. The numbers of a questionnaire distributed are 353; the numbers retrieved are 333.

More so, out of the 119 representing 33.7% of questionnaires that were distributed among doctors, 116 (32.9%) were dully 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 the majority 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 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. The interview with the chief medical directors who are also doctors in the two hospitals submitted the fact that they are aware of the library and the services in their various hospitals. They admitted that they support those libraries because their service delivery as healthcare workers solely depends on information that libraries own as its responsibilities. 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. In line with the finding of this current study, [24] in a study on the use and impact of electronic resources at the Institute of Technology, Delhi found that the usage of electronic journals is increasing due to awareness among the users. [25] found in their study of medical and management Colleges in Bangalore that the users are well aware of e-resources and prefer to use the internet. On the contrary, [26] found that most library users are unaware of the quality and variety of information available in academic libraries owing to inadequate knowledge. Similarly, [27] reported a low awareness level of electronic information resources among Students of the College of Health Sciences in Olabisi Onabanjo University, Nigeria.

**Table 3:** Frequency of healthcare workers’ access to specific library resources available in government tertiary hospitals

Library Resources	Frequency of access to library resources					Totalk
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Others	
Newspapers	84(25.2%)	78(23.4%)	84(25.2%)	44(13.2%)	18(5.4%)	308(92.5%)
Magazines	30(9.0%)	54(16.2%)	111(33.3%)	46(13.8%)	17(5.1%)	258(77.5%)
Journals	87(26.1%)	70(21.0%)	103(30.9%)	26(7.8%)	17(5.1%)	303(91.0%)
Bibliographies	5(1.5%)	17(5.1%)	34(10.2%)	41(12.3%)	19(5.7%)	116(34.8%)
Directories	13(3.9%)	14(4.2%)	34(10.2%)	42(12.6%)	19(5.7%)	122(36.6%)
Up-to-Date	58(17.4)	46(13.8%)	115(34.5%)	21(6.3%)	17(5.1%)	257(77.2%)
Medscape	30(9.0%)	34(10.2%)	73(21.9%)	30(9.0%)	16(4.8%)	183(55.0%)
Nursing & Allied Health premium	51(15.3%)	39(11.7%)	46(13.8%)	17(5.1%)	18(5.4%)	171(51.4%)
Drugs.com	95(28.5%)	43(12.9%)	83(24.9%)	18(5.4%)	18(5.4%)	257(77.2%)
Mayo Clinic	24(7.2%)	20(6.0%)	71(21.3%)	29(8.7%)	18(5.4%)	162(48.6%)

Orphanet	13(3.9%)	10(3.0%)	31(9.3%)	18(5.4%)	18(5.4%)	90(27.0%)
Medgadget	13(3.9%)	9(2.7%)	41(12.3%)	17(5.1%)	19(5.7%)	99(29.7%)
WebMD	41(12.3%)	29(8.7%)	100(30.0%)	24(7.2%)	15(4.5%)	209(62.8%)
Health.gov	23(6.9%)	22(6.6%)	63(18.9%)	20(6.0%)	15(4.5%)	143(42.9%)
SPM ePatients blog	7(2.1%)	9(2.7%)	17(5.1%)	14(4.2%)	17(5.1%)	64(19.2%)
CINAHL	7(2.1%)	14(4.2%)	46(13.8%)	19(5.7%)	19(5.7%)	105(31.5%)
TALC-CD-ROM	4(1.2%)	13(3.9%)	14(4.2%)	14(4.2%)	19(5.7%)	64(19.2%)
AIDSLINE-CD-ROM	4(1.2%)	12(3.6%)	13(3.9%)	15(4.5%)	20(6.0%)	64(19.2%)
MEDLINE-CD-ROM	7(2.1%)	11(3.3%)	20(6.0%)	16(4.8%)	20(6.0%)	74(22.2%)
POLINE-CD-ROM	5(1.5%)	14(4.2%)	13(3.9%)	14(4.2%)	20(6.0%)	66(19.8%)
HINARI	34(10.2%)	30(9.0%)	143(42.9%)	22(6.6%)	19(5.7%)	248(74.5%)
ELINE	12(3.6%)	9(2.7%)	17(5.1%)	16(4.8%)	19(5.7%)	73(21.9%)
OVID	13(3.9%)	11(3.3%)	24(7.2%)	14(4.2)	21(6.3%)	83(24.9%)
Clinical Evidence	26(7.8%)	42(12.6%)	129(38.7%)	17(5.1%)	20(6.0%)	234(70.3%)
Clinicalkey	19(5.7%)	29(8.7%)	83(24.9%)	20(6.0%)	18(5.4%)	169(50.8%)
Medical e-journals	41(12.3%)	32(9.6%)	109(32.7%)	18(5.4%)	17(5.1%)	217(65.2%)
BioOne Complete	11(3.3%)	8(2.4%)	10(3.0%)	12(3.6%)	20(6.0%)	61(18.3%)
Medical dictionaries	165(49.5%)	18(5.4%)	17(5.1%)	7(2.1%)	16(4.8%)	223(67.0%)
Encyopedias	77(23.1%)	13(3.9%)	19(5.7%)	9(2.7%)	16(4.8%)	134(40.2%)
Medical newsletters	138(41.4%)	24(7.2%)	41(12.3%)	13(3.9%)	16(4.8%)	232(69.7%)
PubMed	31(9.3%)	26(7.8%)	121(36.3%)	23(6.9%)	15(4.5%)	216(64.9%)
EMBASE	16(4.8%)	14(4.2%)	29(8.7%)	16(4.8%)	18(5.4%)	93(27.9%)
Best Practices	23(6.9%)	18(5.4%)	58(17.4%)	14(4.2%)	19(5.7%)	132(39.6%)
Science direct	24(7.2%)	12(3.6%)	27(8.1%)	13(3.9%)	18(5.4%)	94(28.2%)
PubMed Central (PMC)	26(7.8%)	9(2.7%)	117(35.1%)	24(7.2%)	19(5.7%)	195(58.6%)

Source: Survey data, 2022

The frequency at which healthcare workers gain access to various library resources available in government tertiary hospitals in Abuja, Nigeria was analyzed and the result is presented in Table 3. The frequency of access to library resources was determined on the basis of daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, and others. From the result, newspapers were frequently accessed on a daily (25.2%), monthly (25.2%), and weekly (23.4%) bases. Magazines were most frequently accessed on a monthly (33.3%) and quarterly (13.8%) basis. Journals were most frequently accessed monthly (30.9%), daily (26.1%), and weekly (21.0%); up-to-date was frequently accessed on a monthly (34.5%) basis, and Medscape was frequently accessed on a monthly (21.9%) basis. Other library resources that were most frequently accessed on monthly basis include drug.com (24.5%), Mayo Clinic (21.3%), WebMD (30.0%), HINARI (42.9%), clinical evidence (38.7%), clinicalkey (24.9%), medical e-journals (32.7%), PubMed (36.3%), and PubMed Central (PMC) (35.1%). Meanwhile, some library resources were most frequently accessed on daily basis. These include medical dictionaries (49.5%),

encycopedias (23.1%), and medical newsletters (41.4%).

More so, there were some library resources that were not too frequently accessed by the healthcare workers. These category of library resources overall frequency score of > 10% but < 20% rating from the survey. These include: bibliographies – quarterly (12.3%) monthly (10.2%); directories – quarterly (12.3%) and monthly (10.2%); Nursing & Allied Health premium – daily (15.3%), weekly (11.7%) and monthly (13.8%); Medgadget – monthly (12.3%); health.gov – monthly (18.9%), CINAHL – monthly (13.8%); Best Practices – monthly (17.4%). Thus, these library resources were considered as being frequently accessed on moderate basis.

Finally, there were those library resources that were not frequently accessed because their respective scores across the five units of measures used to determine frequency of access by healthcare workers were < 10%. These are: Orphanet – monthly (9.3%), SPM ePatients blog – 5.1% respectively on monthly and

others bases, TALC-CD-ROM – others category (5.7%), AIDSLINE-CD-ROM – others (6.0%), MEDLINE-CD-ROM – 6.0% on monthly and others bases respectively, POLINE-CD-ROM – others (6.0%), ELINE – others (5.7%) and 5.1% on monthly basis, OVID – others (6.3%), BioOne Complete – others (6.0%), EMBASE – 8.7% on monthly basis, and science direct – daily (7.2%) and monthly (8.1%) bases. From this result, it is obvious that a substantial number of the library resources are not frequently accessed by the healthcare workers in government tertiary hospitals in Abuja, Nigeria.

## 5. CONCLUSION

However, the study found that awareness and access to library resources enhanced service delivery of the four healthcare workers comprising nurses, doctors, medical laboratory scientists, and pharmacists. The study concludes that there is a link between awareness and access to library resources and enhance service delivery by healthcare workers. The influence of accessing library resources on the 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.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the study it was established that there is a link between awareness and access to library resources and service delivery, there is a need to better equip hospital libraries with relevant and up-to-date information resources to promote healthcare service delivery in tertiary hospitals.

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