
Instructional Guide and Regulatory Signage as Determinants of Students' Utilisation of Information Services in University Libraries in the United Kingdom

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ABSTRACT

This study was to examine library signage and students' utilisation of information services in university libraries in the United Kingdom. This study adopted survey research design. The study was conducted in university libraries in the United Kingdom. The population of the study was 4220 registered undergraduate students in faculty of education. The simple random sampling technique was used in selecting 2 Universities in the United Kingdom, alongside 4220 registered undergraduate students which constituted the sample size for the study. The researcher developed instrument entitled "Library Signage and Students Utilization of Information Services Questionnaire" (LSSUISQ), used in collecting data for the study. The instrument was given to three research experts for face validation. Two assessors were from the Department of Education Foundations, Guidance and Counselling and one from Library Science Unit of the Department of Educational Technology and Library Science. A trial testing of the instrument was carried out using 30 registered students who did not take part in the actual study. Thereafter, the internal consistency of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha method. The reliability coefficient index of .86 was obtained. The Regression Coefficient Analysis was used to answer research questions of Simple Linear Regression Analysis, while the F-value of the Simple Linear Regression Analysis was used to test null hypotheses at .05 alpha level. The study concluded that Instructional guide and regulatory signage foster independent and critical thinking. It solves way-finding problem in unfamiliar environment. It was therefore recommended that management of universities should ensure that library signage constitutes orientation content for freshmen; this will aid the young students to be acquainted with information, directional, instructional and regulatory signs in academic libraries

KEYWORDS: Library Signage, instructional guide, regulatory signage Students' Utilisation, Information Services, University Libraries, Way-finding

Introduction

The university library is an important element in supporting learning process. It plays a key role as a place for access to information, knowledge building, and problem solving. The nature and quality of the environment in the university library also influences how and what students learn. This requires that the university library should be designed so that students are directed to the materials they need as well as navigate easily and independently, especially to find information they need for learning and pleasure. Libraries are growing organisms and in this digital age, users are expected to find them more complex and confusing than ever before. Regular visitors to a library need help to inform and guide them through the continual

changes that a library undergoes. Polger and Stemper (2014) posited that this assistance is often provided through signage, which must be regularly reviewed and updated. According to Ahn (2011), signage is the methodology of arranging indicators to guide people to their destinations.

Instructional guide is another signage required or used in university library. Reitz (2004) postulated that instructional guide, also referred to as bibliographic instruction (BI), user education and library orientation, consists of instructional programs designed to teach library users how to locate the information that they need quickly and effectively. It usually covers the library's system of organizing materials, the structure of the literature of the field, research methodologies appropriate to the academic discipline, and specific resources and finding tools. It prepares individuals to make immediate and lifelong use of information effectively by teaching the concepts and logic of information access and evaluation, and by fostering independence and critical thinking. Becker (2013) opined that some university libraries offer specialised instructional signage. Lecturers when incorporating instructional signage into information literacy instruction, instructional signs can teach students how to succeed through long, complex, and difficult tasks, while still keeping the learning experience engaging. Library instructional signage is evolving to adapt to the changing concepts of information use and understanding.

Johnston and Mandel (2014) described regulatory signage as signs that explain rules like emergency and fire signage or internal regulations about library specific policies. Regulatory signs include "library rules," "No Talking with cell phone in the library", or "Emergency Exit" signs. Kyung (2000) posits that regulation signage restricts certain behaviours for the maintenance of security and order and bookshelf signage: classifications signs, front label, sign or phrase in the end of shelf. While information signs are there to put people in the know, it is the regulatory signs that tell them what they can and cannot do. Regulatory signage refers to signs in university libraries required to restrict unwanted behaviours and a measure to ensure compliance to library rules and regulations. Therefore, university libraries require regulatory signs to guide against theft of physical materials, which will invariably protect the library resources and enhance utilisation of information services by students in university libraries.

Perhaps this is possible if our local university libraries apply appropriate signage or adopt signage system to provide the necessary guide or information required to aid utilization of library information by students and other library users. This can be achieved through systematic evaluation of the library's services.

Statement of the Problem

As library collections expand, materials are moved and re-shelved to make room for new items with little consideration to student's way finding needs. Recent observations have shown that most librarians and libraries are not aware of students' frustration in terms of haphazard arrangement of materials and confusing library signage. Some librarians interviewed admitted to the inadequacy of signage in libraries, while others are of the opinion that these signs are usually put in place but not adhered to by users. It is therefore based on this contradiction that the researcher attempted to examine library signage and students' utilisation of information service in university libraries in the United Kingdom.

Purpose of the study

The main objective of this study was to examine library signage and students' utilisation of information services in university libraries in the United Kingdom. Specifically, the study sought:

1. To examine extent to which instructional guide predict students' utilisation of information services in university libraries in the United Kingdom.
2. To assess the extent to which regulatory signage predict students' utilisation of information services in university libraries in the United Kingdom.

Research Questions

1. What is the extent to which instructional guide predict students' utilisation of information services in university libraries in the United Kingdom?
2. What is the extent to which regulatory signage predict students' utilisation of information services in university libraries in the United Kingdom?

Research Hypotheses

- H0₁. There is no significant extent to which instructional guide predicts students' utilisation of information services in universities in the United Kingdom.
- H0₂. There is no significant extent to which regulatory signage predicts students' utilisation of information services in universities in the United Kingdom.

Literature Review

Concept of Library Signage

According to Ahn (2011), signage is the methodology of arranging indicators to guide people to their destinations. Signs are tools that aid in way-finding. Architectural indicators such as light, color, materials, and pathways also play a large role in signage. A successful signage system is intuitive and self-navigable, and it protects the overall visual integrity of the site. Also, signage is specific to its place and visitors. Signs improve and are most times integral to a clearly designed way-finding program. The function of a sign is to identify, inform, direct, restrict or permit. A good signage recedes into the background while providing clear information when needed. In addition, sign codes, life safety issues and disabled universal guidelines need to be included to meet the national and world-wide requirements. Mandel and Johnston (2016) posit that successfully designed signage helps visitors find their way, makes information accessible, provides enhanced experience. In addition, an inclusive assessment of the environment and issues that affect orientation for the first-time visitors is imperative to a successful signage and way-finding program. Successfully designed signage and posters in library can be key measures of library marketing to invite potential users.

Kyung (2000) listed 6 types of library signage such as location signage, directional signage, identification signage, informational signage, regulatory signage and bookshelf signage. Location signage shows the whole picture including the location and interrelations of objects in library; direction signage leads library users to their destinations, while identification signage identifies certain object by putting a title on it. Information signage contains necessary information for library users to use appropriate data, tools and facilities of library. The signage includes administrators' intentions, general information, restrictions, opening hours, titles of facilities and exhibitions, handling descriptions and operational manuals. Regulation signage restricts certain behaviours for the maintenance of security and order and bookshelf signage: classifications signs, front label, sign or phrase in the end of shelf.

Concept of Utilization of Information Services

Abagai, (2008) sees library as a store of knowledge, indispensable to the success of any functional education. Abagai further stresses that education without the services of library is half-baked education that can only produce narrow minded individual which will not be productive to their community. The most important aspect of library is the extent to which students utilize library information service. Hence, what could aid utilization of library information services, such as signage system required not to be treated with levity.

Ikenwe and Adegilero-Iwari (2014) opine that utilization and user satisfaction of academic library services has become an imperative concern in recent times. There is no doubt that satisfaction of library services influences the degree in which the services are used and it has been found to be an important factor that affects the use or non-use of library services. The library is a repository of knowledge and a dynamic social institution, an indispensable resource centre for reliable information and meant to preserve the recorded knowledge of man for use. Aina (2004) emphasizes that a library is concerned with the collection, processing, storage and dissemination of recorded information for the purpose of reading, study and consultation. Aina stresses that for any library to attain this goal; many activities are performed by the library that translates to library and information services. Idowu (2011) list the following library services according to the international standard; online public access catalogue and user services, reference service, bibliographic service, current awareness service, document delivery, inter-library loans and union catalogues, audiovisual services, customer relations and user education, internet access and access to web-based resources.

Instructional Signage and Students' Utilization of Information Services

Reitz (2004) postulates that library instruction, also called bibliographic instruction (BI), user education and library orientation consists of "instructional programs designed to teach library users how to locate the information they need quickly and effectively. It usually covers the library's system of organizing materials, the structure of the literature of the field, research methodologies appropriate to the academic discipline, and specific resources and finding tools (library catalogue, indexes and abstracting services, bibliographic databases, etc.)" (Reitz, 2004). It prepares individuals to make immediate and lifelong use of information effectively by teaching the concepts and logic of information access and evaluation, and by fostering information independence and critical thinking.

Grassian and Kaplowitz (2010) state that library instruction "began in the nineteenth century, with instruction in library use offered by a number of libraries in the United States between 1876 and 1910, and then ramped up in the early twentieth century". In a 1912 American Library Association survey, 57% of respondents offered required or elective library instruction courses. Academic library instruction was for the most part dormant in the library profession from the late 1930s until the early 1960s. Some librarians were still participating in classroom instruction but the literature shows little activity on the topic. Academic library instruction mushroomed during the 1960s and early 1970s. This resulted in the founding of the Library Orientation Exchange (LOEX), a non-profit, self-supporting educational clearinghouse, in the early 1970s. The first conference was held at Eastern Michigan in 1973 and has been held annually around the United States ever since. The LOEX borrowing collection consists of print materials such as one-page hand-outs, bibliographies, and subject guides; instructional videos and audio tapes; and CD-ROMS. By 1999, LOEX had over 650 members in the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, Europe, Australia, Israel, Lebanon, and South Africa" (Lorenzen, 2001).

Luca and Narayan (2016) aver that instructional signage helps users to better utilize the library. However, Luca and Narayan maintain that instructional signage is also one of the most common types of poor signage; when a user encounters an issue; helpful staff members are quick to prepare a handmade sign explaining the correct procedure. These accumulate and become outdated and cause clutter.

Regulatory Signage and Students' Utilization of Information Services

Johnston and Mandel (2014) opine that regulatory signs explain rules and can be external regulations like emergency and fire signage or internal regulations about library-specific policies. Regulatory signs might include "Library Rules," "No Talking with Cell Phones in the Library," or "Emergency Exit" signs. Coker, (2013) posits that regulation signage restricts certain behaviours for the maintenance of security and order and bookshelf signage. Such signs include; classifications signs, front label, sign or phrase in the end of shelf. While the informational signs are there to put people in the know, it's the regulatory signs that tell them what they can and cannot do. This implies that regulatory signs in academic libraries are those signs required to restrict unwanted behaviours and a measure to ensure compliance to library rules and regulations. Library regulatory signage helps to checkmate student's misconduct and violation of collection security in academic libraries.

According to Bello (2003), book theft is a major security issue in libraries, particularly in academic libraries, with special collections being the most targeted materials. Therefore, academic libraries require regulatory signs to guide against book theft, such as book theft is prohibited. Like most scholars on library abuse, Lorenzen (2006) described the most common forms of noncompliance attitude of library users relating to theft of physical materials, theft or alteration of data, and theft of money.

Admi (2014) avers that regulatory signage is really good because such signage could save a life. Regulatory signs give warning to students in the library. It plays the same role traffic signs play to road users, like for example, different signs across the road may save one life, and without these signs, one could be facing troubles and accidents. Likewise, students could be facing big troubles without regulatory signs in library. That is why it is really important to have them, and to pay attention to them. Dwight (2008) notes that some of the most important signs are regulatory signs; these signs tell people the regulations or requirements of the area. Is smoking in the area not allowed? How will people know without a regulatory sign with a no smoking allowed symbol? Regulatory signs need to be clearly visible to warn of rules or regulations of which the disregard might constitute a violation of the law or regulate behavior in public places. Academic libraries are not exemption. The messages on every type of regulatory sign should be crystal clear, and as short as possible. Too many signs can be just as bad as too few. Aside from that, the rules are simple; regulatory signs set rules and regulations for the library. Utilization of Information services in academic libraries can only take place when students do not violate library rules.

Method

This study adopted survey research design. Analytical survey is used when collecting first-hand information from people in their natural settings for the purpose of getting detailed descriptions. The study was conducted in University libraries in the United Kingdom. The population of the study was 4220 registered undergraduate students in faculty of education. The simple random sampling technique was used in selecting 2 Universities in the United Kingdom, alongside 4220 registered undergraduate students which constituted the sample size for the study. The researcher developed instrument entitled "Library Signage and

Students Utilization of Information Services Questionnaire” (LSSUISQ), used in collecting data for the study. The instrument was given to three research experts for face validation. Two assessors were from the Department of Education Foundations, Guidance and Counselling and one from Library Science Unit of the Department of Educational Technology and Library Science. A trial testing of the instrument was carried out using 30 registered students who did not take part in the actual study. Thereafter, the internal consistency of the instrument was determined using Cronbach’s Alpha method. The reliability coefficient index of .86 was obtained. The Regression Coefficient Analysis was used to answer research questions of Simple Linear Regression Analysis, while the F-value of the Simple Linear Regression Analysis was used to test null hypotheses at .05 alpha level.

Result and Discussion

Research Question One: What is the extent to which instructional guide predict students utilization of information services in University libraries in the United Kingdom?

Table 1: Simple linear regression analysis for the extent to which instructional guide predicts student’s utilization of information services in University libraries in the United Kingdom

Variable	R	R Square	Extent of prediction	Remark
Instructional Guide				
	.107	.011	1.1%	Low Extent
Students Utilization of Information services				

The outcome in Table 1 indicates the R for the strength of the relationship and R^2 for the determination of the extent to which instructional guide predict or determine students’ utilization of information service in University libraries in the United Kingdom. The R-Value of .107 indicates a low extent of relationship between the two variables. The calculated R^2 of .011 which is the coefficient of determinant indicates that only 1.1% of students’ utilization and information service is predicted by instructional guide. This reveal that instructional guide to a low extent predicts students utilization of information service in University libraries in the United Kingdom.

Research Question Two: What is the extent to which regulatory signage predict student’s utilization of information services in University libraries in the United Kingdom?

Table 2: Simple linear regression analysis for the extent to which regulatory signage predicts student’s utilization of information services in University libraries in the United Kingdom

Variable	R	R Square	Extent of prediction	Remark
Regulatory Signage				
	.305	.093	9.3%	Low Extent
Students Utilization of Information services				

The result in Table 2 indicates the R for the strength of the relationship and R^2 for the determination of the extent to which regulatory signage predict or determine students’ utilization and information service in University libraries in the United Kingdom. The R-Value of .305 indicates a low extent of relationship between the two variables. The calculated

R^2 of .093 which is the coefficient of determinant indicates that only 9.3% of students' utilization of information service is predicted by regulatory signage. This indicate that regulatory signage to a low extent predicts students utilization and information service in University libraries in the United Kingdom.

Hypothesis one: There is no significant extent to which instructional guide predicts students' utilisation of information services in university libraries in the United Kingdom.

Table 3: Simple Linear Regression Analysis for the prediction between instructional guide and students' utilization of information service in university libraries in the United Kingdom

Variables Decision	Source	Sum of	Mean				
	Variation	Squares	df	Square	F-Cal	F-Crit	@ p<
							.05
Instructional Guide	Regression	07.551	1	07.551			
	Residual	47.283	396	23.604	4.556	3.89	*
Students Utilization Information Service	Total	54.834	397				

***Significant at p< .05**

The entries in Table 3 show that the calculated F-value of 4.556 is greater than the critical-F value of 3.89 at .05 level of significant with 1 and 397 degrees of freedom. The result is significant; therefore, the null hypothesis which states that the extent to which instructional guide predicts student's utilization of information service in university libraries in the United Kingdom is not significant is rejected. The result implies that instructional guide significantly predict students' utilization of information services in universities in the United Kingdom.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant extent to which regulatory signage predicts students' utilisation of information services in university libraries in the United Kingdom.

Table 4: Simple linear regression analysis for the prediction between regulatory signage and student's utilization of information service in university libraries in the United Kingdom

Variables Decision	Source	Sum of	Mean				
	Variation	Squares	df	Square	F-Cal	F-Crit	@ p<
							.05
Instructional Guide	Regression	78.527	1	78.53			
	Residual	76.307	396	21.66	40.57	3.89	*
Students Utilization Information Service	Total	54.834	397				

***Significant at p< .05**

The entries in Table 4 show that the calculated F-value of 40.57 is greater than the critical-F value of 3.89 at .05 level of significant with 1 and 397 degrees of freedom. The result is significant; therefore, the null hypothesis which states that the extent to which regulatory signage predicts student's utilization of information service in university libraries in the United Kingdom is not significant is rejected. The result means that regulatory signage significantly predict students' utilization of information services in university libraries in the United Kingdom.

Discussion of Findings

Instructional Guide and Students' Utilization of Information Services

The result of findings in Table 1 showed that all the identified items on instructional guide predict students' utilization of information services in university libraries in the United Kingdom. The reason is because instructional signage is a composition of exterior and interior designs to give instruction to library users. This result is in consonant with *Becker (2013)* who opined that instructional signs help library user to achieve specific research goals. Instructional signage in academic libraries can also provide benefit to students in the area of utilization of video games and gaming designed for information literacy. Similarly, the result of the data in Table 3 showed the extent to which instructional guide predict students' utilization of information services in university libraries in the United Kingdom is significant. The reason being that instructional signage teaches students how to locate the information they need quickly and effectively. The result is in agreement with *Luca and Narayan (2016)* who observed that instructional signage helps users to better utilize the library.

Regulatory Signage and Students' Utilization of Information Services

The result of findings in Table 2 showed that all the identified items on regulatory signage predict students' utilization of information services in university libraries in the United Kingdom. Regulation signage restricts certain behaviours for the maintenance of security and order and protection of bookshelf signage. Such signs include; classifications signs, front label, sign or phrase in the end of shelf. The finding is in line with *Coker, (2013)* maintained that regulation signage restricts certain behaviours for the maintenance of security and order and bookshelf signage. Such signs include; classifications signs, front label, sign or phrase in the end of shelf. Similarly, the result of the data presented in Table 4 showed the extent to which regulatory signage predict students' utilization of information services in universities in the United Kingdom is significant. The reason is that students are bound to obey library rules. Nobody is exempted from rules; hence regulatory signs inform students what they can and cannot do. This is in line with *Lorenzen (2006)* who postulated that regulatory signage is necessary in academic libraries to discourage mutilation of library materials.

Conclusion

Instructional guide and regulatory signage foster independent and critical thinking. It solves way-finding problem in unfamiliar environment, it helps library user to use the appropriate data, tools and facilities of the library, bringing about coordination in academic libraries and aid students in way-finding and effective retrieval of the needed information. Hence, library signage has great influence on students' utilization of information services in university libraries in the United Kingdom.

Recommendations

1. Management of universities should ensure that library signage constitutes orientation content for freshmen. This will aid the young students to be acquainted with information, directional, instructional and regulatory signs in academic libraries
2. Librarians should ensure that signs should contain clear and precise information and instructional signs should conform to the arrangement of materials on the shelf units to avoid confusion and frustration in accessing information and other library services.
3. University librarians should use regulatory signage to create more awareness of library rules and regulations and penalties attached to breaching the rules and regulations. This will help to reduce mutilation, theft and other forms of crime and misbehaviour in academic libraries.

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