INFORMATION NEEDS AND SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF NURSES IN SOME SELECTED HOSPITALS IN EKPOMA, EDO STATE, NIGERIA.

BY
GLADYS NGOZI ONYIA

CHIEF LIBRARIANS DELTA STATE POLYTECHNIC OGWAS-UKU

ngozionyia@gmail.com

OSAHENI ONI (CLN)
AUCHI POLYTECHNIC LIBRARY, AUCHI, EDO STATE,   NIGERIA
chiefonism@yahoo.com

Abstract

This study investigated the information seeking behaviour of nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma, Edo state. A descriptive survey design was adopted and questionnaire was the instrument used to obtain data. Thirty copies (30) of the questionnaires were distributed, returned completed and used for the study. Four (4) research questions were raised. The data collected were analyzed through the use of simple descriptive analysis of frequency counts, percentages and mean. The stated findings of this study are that most nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma need information in the area of diagnosis, drug therapy, health development/current medical treatment and medical information on the Internet. Frequent power outage, high cost information resources, lack of search skills, high cost of internet access, inadequate materials in library, lack of adequate time, no nearby library and slow internet response are the major challenges militating against information needs of nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma. The study recommends that government should engage Internet service providers in dialogue to proffer solution to the high cost of Internet accessibility, poor network and bandwidth that is preventing vast majority of the citizenry including nurses' smooth access to current information and nurses on their own should create time for research and self development. Knowing full well that, current information is an essential ingredient to effective service delivery.

Introduction

Information need and seeking involves the search, retrieval, recognition, and application of meaningful content (Kingrey, 2002). Kingrey emphasized that the search may be explicit or implicit, the retrieval may be the result of specific strategies or serendipity; the resulting

information may be embraced or rejected; the entire experience may be carried through to a logical conclusion or aborted in midstream, and there may be a million other potential results. Savolainen (2005) defined everyday life information seeking as the process of acquisition of various informational (both cognitive and expressive) elements, which people employ to orient themselves in daily life or to solve problems not directly connected with the performance of professional tasks or full-time study. Information need is defined in this study as recognition that the nurse's knowledge is inadequate to perform a task (Case, 2007).

Case (2006) noted that information behaviour is a field which deals with information and people. The scholar explained that there must be subjective expression for a person to experience information need and to engage in information-seekingbehaviour. It is crucial to understand the concept of information-seeking behaviour before embarking on health information-seeking behaviour. Wozar and Worona,(2003) posited that the exponential growth of medical resources available online and other sources, health sciences libraries and other sources of information are better able to reach nurses at the point of care. Ajuwon (2006) stated that the availability of information resources such as computers and internet provided easy access to recent and reliable results of clinical research on everyday medical practice which nurses can access for improvement and acquire some knowledge of current medical treatment techniques and breakthroughs. Cogdill (2003) carried out a research on information related behaviour of nursing practitioners (NPs) and found that nurses most frequently needed drug therapy and diagnosis related information. The scholar further revealed that the information resources nursing practitioners used most frequently were consultations with colleagues, drug reference manuals, textbooks and protocol manuals. Nurses worldwide including the ones in Ekpoma need a wide variety of health information materials to enable themrender effective and efficient service to the patients.

Dee and Stanley (2005) opined that as a result of time constraints, many of them prefer to obtain information from resources that are convenient, easy to use, and reliable. Authors revealed from their study that professional colleagues and other healthcare providers, especially physicians, are the most consulted for information by nurses. Print materials are another group or preferred sources of information, including nursing textbooks and journals (Dee & Stanley, 2005). According to McKnight (2006),most nurses work in hospitals, and the majority of hospital employees are nurses. They are responsible not only for following physicians' orders and performing routine duties, but also for maintaining a constant surveillance of their patients, especially in a critical care unit. Mouhouelo, Okessi and Kabore (2006) asserted that traditional nurses rely mostly on interpersonal contact and personal experience than either print or online resources. Estabrooks, Oleary, Ricker and Humphrey (2003) revealed that when nurses have problems, they preferred to seek information from colleagues rather than textual or electronic information. Nurses spend considerable time and efforts providing healthcare and medical treatment to patients. They need to use latest medical knowledge to support their healthcare practice as well as provide necessary information to patients and their families (Clarke & Aiken, 2003). Recognizing the importance of information for patient care, since the 1990s, nursing educators began to emphasize the importance of nurses' information skills, especially seeking and use of clinical information to effectively discharge their responsibilities (Dee & Stanley, 2005). Mcknight (2006) opines that nurses got their information skills from colleagues, and nurses' notes in the patients' charts they read. Pakenhan-Walsh, Priestley and Smith (1997) cited in Eda (2015) opined that computer and information training programme would enable nurses develop internet search skills which is a sine qua non and vital asset to any healthcare system development.

Ashcroft and Watts (2005) opined that unreliable electricity supplies and prohibitively high costs of Internet service providers (ISPs), hardware and software were barriers to ICT provision. Oduwole and Akpati (2003) stated in their study that power supply outage in Nigeria is one major

problem to information accessibility. Ajuwon (2006) stressed that due to funding constraints, many libraries in Nigeria are no longer able to meet the needs of users in terms of providing new and recent materials. The scholar further emphasized that Internet access is still a major challenge in Nigeria as majority of the people including nurses cannot afford the high initial cost of personal computers and connection fees. Sitzia (2002) reported that nurses identified lack of search skills and knowledge as a barrier they faced when seeking for information. However, a lot of studies have been conducted on information seeking behaviour of nurses in Hospitals in Nigeria by scholars but none have been found on information needs and seeking behaviour of nurses in hospital in Ekpoma metropolis, this present study will fill this gap.

1.2   Statement of the Problem

Information is an essential ingredient to the development of any profession. It is a well-known fact that information brings about knowledge and knowledge is power. Access and use of health related information among nurses is important to provide a high quality of health services and to solve various health issues. The effectiveness and efficiency of nurses depend to a large extent on the amount of information at their disposal. Nurses spend considerable time and efforts providing healthcare and medical treatment to patients. The work performed by nurses is multifaceted, with varying levels of complexity. To accomplish these multifaceted tasks, nurses require extensive and adequate information. They need to use latest medical knowledge to support their healthcare practice as well as provide necessary information to patients and their families. It is against this background that this study attempts to investigate the information needs and seeking behavior of nursesin some selected hospitals in Ekpoma, Edo state

Objectives

i.   determine the information needs of nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma.

ii.   ascertain the channels of information consulted by nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma.

iii.   find out the how nurses in hospitals inEkpomaacquired their information search and use skills.

iv.   examine challenges the nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma experienced in their information needs and seeking behavior

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in the study:

i.   What are the information needs of nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma?

ii.   What are the channels used by nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma in their information seeking?

iii.   How do nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma acquire their information search and use skills?

iv.   What are the challenges militating against the information need and seeking behaviour of nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma?

Methodology

This study adopts the descriptive survey design, a descriptive survey is considered appropriate because it provide a general framework for the collection of appropriate data. A descriptive design studies both large and small population by selecting and studying

samples chosen from the population to discover the relative incidence and distribution. This method was also considered appropriate because the research is concerned with the exploration of the current status of information needs and seeking behaviour of the nurses in some selected hospitals in Ekpoma. The population of this study consists of all nurses in the selected hospitals in Ekpoma. The hospitals are: General hospitals, Faith hospital, Eromosele hospital, Calvary hospitaland Ukuoboh hospital. Thirty (30) nurses were selected and use in the study using purposive sampling techniques. According to Aina (2004), researcher can deliberately selects certain individuals from a population and seek their opinions. The consensus of the opinion of the selected individual would be fairly representative of the whole population. The research instrument used for this study is the questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered to the nurses in their respective hospital by the researcher. The data generated from the study were analysed using frequency counts, percentage and mean to answer the research questions raised.

Result and Interpretations

Table1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	No	%
Male	24	80
Female	6	20
Total	**30**	**100**

Table1 shows the gender distribution of respondents with female 24(80%) and male 6 (30%). This is an indication that there are more females in nursing profession in hospitals in Ekpoma, Edo state than the males. The analysis above obviously reveals that nursing profession is female dominated profession.

Table 2:   **Highest Qualification of the Respondents**

Highest Qualification	No	%
Registered nurse certificate	16	53
HND/BSc	11	37
PGD Public health/health education	3	10
M.PH	---	---
Others	--	---
Total	**30**	**100**

Table 2 shows the highest qualifications of the respondents. Thus: 16 (53%) of the respondents have registered nursing certificate. HND/BSc holders came second with 11(36%), while, 3(10%) of the respondents have PGD Public health/health education. None of the respondents have M.PH and others certificate. This study clearly revealed that a majority of the nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma, Edo State have Registered nurse certificate.

Research Question one

What are the information needs of nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma?

Table 3: Information needs of Nurses in Hospitals in Ekpoma

Information needs	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total		Mean	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	X
Diagnosis	13	7	46	87	2	7	--	--	30	100	90	3.0
Drug therapy	2	7	22	73	6	20	--	--	30	100	86	2.9
Continuing professional development opportunity	3	10	19	63	2	7	6	20	30	100	79	2.6
Referral	2	7	18	60	10	33	--	--	30	100	82	2.7

Psycho-socio information about patient	3	10	14	47	5	17	8	27	30	100	72	2.4
Patients convalescence	11	37	16	53	3	10	--	--	30	100	98	3.3
Medical information on the Internet	6	20	20	67	4	13	--	--	30	100	96	3.2
Health development/ current medical treatment techniques	9	30	21	70	-	--	--	--	30	100	99	3.3
Epidemiology	9	30	11	37	6	20	4	13	30	100	88	2.8
Prognosis	8	27	12	40	10	33	--	--	30	100	88	2.9

Average or Criterion Mean (2.5)

Table 3 shows the information need of nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma. It is obvious from the table that 26 (87%) of the respondents with the mean score of 90 (3.0) indicated that they need information forDiagnosis. A majority of the respondents 22 (73%) with the mean score of 86 (2.9) indicated that they also need information fordrug therapy. The study also revealed that most of the nurses agreed that they need information in the area ofHealth development/current medical treatment techniques with 21(70%) and a mean score of 99(3.3). It is also clear from the table that 20 (67%) of the respondents with the mean score of 96(3.2) indicated that they need information forMedical information on the Internet. This study corroborates with the work of Ajuwon (2006), who stated that the availability of information resources such as computers and internet provided easy access to recent and reliable results of clinical research on everyday medical practice which nurses can access for improvement and acquire some knowledge of current medical treatment techniques and breakthroughs. The findings of this study also agrees with the study of Cogdill

(2003) who carried out a study on information related behaviour of nursing practitioners and revealed that most nurses frequently need information related to drug therapy and diagnosis.

Research question two

What are the channels used by nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma in their information seeking?

Table 4: Information channels used byNurses in Hospitals in Ekpoma.

Nurses information channels	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total		Mean	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	X
Library	--	--	4	13	21	70	5	17	30	100	59	2.0
Cyber café/internet	5	17	16	53	6	20	3	10	30	100	83	2.8
Mass media/newspaper stand	3	10	17	57	10	33	--	--	30	100	83	2.8
Community information centre	--	--	13	43	13	43	4	13	30	100	69	2.3
Personal collections/colleagues	1	3	22	73	5	17	2	7	30	100	82	2.7

Average or Criterion Mean (2.5)

Table 4 shows the channels of information use by nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma. One major channels of information given by 22 respondents (73%) and mean score of 82(2.7)is Personal collections/colleagues. Another major channels information use by nurses is the Mass media

/newspaper stand is with 17(57%) and 83(2.8) mean score. Cyber café/ internet ranked third from the study with 16(53%) and 83(2.8) mean score. The findings of this study corroborates the work of Mouhouelo, Okessi and Kabore (2006) who asserted that traditional nurses rely mostly on interpersonal contact and personal experience than either print or online resources. This was also supported by Estabrooks, Oleary, Ricker and Humphrey (2003) who stated that observation revealed that when nurses have problems, they preferred to seek information from colleagues rather than textual or electronic information.

Research question three

How do nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma acquire their information search and use skills?

Table 5: How Nurses in Hospitals in Ekpoma acquire their information search and use skills

How nurses acquire their information search and use skills	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total		Mean	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	X
Health/treatment manuals	8	27	19	63	2	7	1	3	30	100	94	3.1
Reading of information technology books	10	33	16	53	4	13	--	--	30	100	96	3.2
Trial and error	2	7	9	30	10	33	9	30	30	100	64	2.1
Practical/self teaching	3	10	12	40	5	17	10	33	30	100	68	2.3
Computer/information training programme	7	23	18	60	3	10	2	7	30	100	97	3.2
Friends/colleagues	8	27	20	67	2	7	--	--	30	100	96	3.2

Average or Criterion Mean (2.5)

Table 5 shows how nurses acquire their information search and use skills. A total of 20 (67%) respondents with 96 (3.2) mean score indicated that they acquire their information search and use skills from friends/ colleagues. This is followed by health/ treatment manual with 19 (63%) respondents with 94(3.1)mean score. Another major way nurses acquire their information search and use skills is through computer/information training programme with 18(60%) respondents and 97(3.2) mean score. A majority of the respondents with 16(53%) and 96(3.2) mean score also indicated that they acquire their information search and use skills through reading of information technology books. This study correlates the study of Mcknight (2006) who opines that nurses got their information skills from colleagues, and nurses' notes in the patients' charts they read. This study also corroborates the work of Pakenhan-Walsh, Priestley and Smith (1997) cited in Eda (2015) who opined that computer and information training programme would enable nurses develop internet search skills which is a sine qua non and vital asset to any healthcare development.

Research question four

What are the challenges militating against the information need of nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma?

Table 6: Challenges militating against the information need of nurses inhospitals in Ekpoma

Challenge of information Search Skills	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total		Mean	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	X
Lack of search skills	24	80	2	7	3	10	1	3	30	100	109	3.6

Lack of computer/i-phones/i –pad	14	47	6	20	6	20	4	13	30	100	90	3.0
Lack of adequate time	21	70	9	30	--	--	--	--	30	100	111	3,7
High cost of internet access	23	77	4	13	3	10	--	--	30	100	110	3.7
No nearby library	19	63	3	10	7	23	1	3	30	100	9.4	3.1
High cost information resources	25	83	5	17	--	--	--	--	30	100	115	3.8
Frequent power outage	26	87	4	13	--	--	--	--	30	100	116	3.9
Slow internet response	17	57	3	10	4	13	6	20	30	100	91	3.0
Inadequate material in library	22	73	8	27	--	--	--	--	30	100	112	3.7

Average or Criterion Mean (3.0)

Table 6 presents the challenges militating against the information need of nurses encounter while seeking information. A total of 26 (87%) of the respondents with 116 (3.9) mean score indicated that frequent power outage is one of the major challenges militating against information needs of nurses. However, majority of the respondents also indicated that high cost information resources 25(83) with 115(3.8) mean score is another major challenges militating against nurses information need. Other responses are lack of search skills 24(80%) respondents with 109 (3.6) mean score, high cost of internet access with 23(77%) and 110(3.7) mean score, inadequate material in library 22(73%) with 112(3.7) mean score, lack of adequate time 21(70%) with 11(3.7) mean score, no nearby library 19(63%) with 94(3.1) and slow internet response 17(57%) with 91(3.0) mean score.

The study clearly reveals that frequent power outage, high cost information resources, lack of search skills, high cost of internet access, inadequate material in library, lack of adequate time, no nearby library and slow internet response are the major challenges militating against information needs of nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma. This finding agrees with Oduwole and Akpati (2003) who stated in their study that power supply outages in Nigeria is one major problem to information accessibility. This is in conformity with Ajuwon (2006) who stressed that due to funding constraints, many libraries in Nigeria are no longer able to meet the needs of users in terms of providing new and recent materials. The scholar further emphasized that Internet access is still a major challenge in Nigeria as majority of the people including nurses cannot afford the high initial cost of personal computers and connection fees. The study also corroborates the work of with Sitzia (2002) who reported that nurses identified the lack of search skills and knowledge as a barrier they faced when seeking for information.

Summary of research findings

i.   The study reveals that most nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma need information in the area of diagnosis, drug therapy, health development/current medical treatment and information for Medical information on the Internet.

ii. Personal collections/colleagues, Mass media /newspaper stand and Cyber café/ internet are the main channels of information use by nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma.

iii. It was discovered from the study friends/ colleagues, health/ treatment manual, computer/information training programme, and reading of information technology books are the waysnurses in hospitals in Ekpoma acquire their information search and use skills

iv. The study clearly reveals that frequent power outage, high cost information resources, lack of search skills, high cost of internet access, inadequate material in library, lack of adequate time, no nearby library and slow internet response are the major challenges militating against information needs of nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, it can be concluded that information is very crucial to nurses in their day to day activities. Nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma need information to perform their functions effectively especially in the area of diagnosis, drug therapy, health development and current medical treatment. To seek for information, most nurses consult internet, other Nurses/Midwives, journals, primary care online, pharmacopocia /referee manual, primary supervising physicians, textbooks and e-book/e- journal. Majority of the nurses in hospitals in Ekpoma acquired their information search and use skill from friends/ colleagues, health/ treatment manual, computer/information training programme, and reading of information technology books. However, the study clearly reveals that frequent power outage, high cost of information resources, lack of search skills, high cost of internet access, inadequate material in library, lack of adequate time, no nearby library and slow internet response are some of the problems nurses in hospital in Ekpoma face when seeking for information to carry out their professional duties.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations are hereby made:

i.   Government should try as much as possible to solve the epileptic power supply situation in the country. Alternative power supply should be provided and ensure that it is constantly maintained and functioning by hospital management board.

ii. Government and the Hospital Management Board should ensure that libraries with adequate materials are established in various hospitals as a requirement for approval.

iii. Internet centre should be established in various hospitals to meet the information needs of nurses and other staff of the hospital.

iv. Government should engage Internet service providers in dialogue to proffer solution to the high cost of Internet accessibility, poor network and bandwidth that is preventing vast majority of the citizenry including nurses' smooth access to current information.

v.   Nurses on their own should create time for research or self development. Knowing full well that, current information is an essential ingredient to effective service delivery

<div align="center">

References

</div>

Aina, L.O. (2004). *Library and Informtion Science Text for Africa*. Ibadan: Third Text World information Services Limited.

Ajayi, N.A. (2005). Information seeking by nurses in the ObaferniAwolowo University Teaching Hospital.   Nigeria. Information Development, 21 (2).Retrieved September 10, 2008 from   http://idv.sagepub.*com/i* gi/content/abstractl21/2/121

Ajuwon, G.A. (2006). Use of the Internet for health information by physicians for patient care in a teaching hospital in Ibadan. Nigeria. Retrieved September 9, 2008 from http://www.pubmedicentral.nih.gov/articlerender.fcgi?

Ashroft, L. & Watts, C. (2005). ICT skills for information professionals in developing countries,   perspectives from a study of the electricity environment in Nigeria.*IFLA Journal,* 31(1), 6-12

Case, D.O. (2007). *Looking for information: A survey of research on information seeking, needs and behavior.* San Diego: Academic Press.

Case, D. (2006). Information behavior. *Annual Review of Information Science and Technology, 40*, 293-327.

Clarke, S. P. & Aiken, L. H. (2003). Failure to rescue: needless deaths are prime examples of the need for more nurses at the bedside. *The American Journal of Nursing*, 103(l), 42-47.

Cogdill, K.W. (2003). Information needs and information seeking in primary care: A study of nurse practitioners. *Journal of the Medical Library Association, 91*, 203-215.

Dee, C. & Stanley, E. E. (2005): Information seeking behaviour of nursing students and clinical nurses: implication for health sciences librarians. *Journal of Medical Library' Association.* 93 (2), 213-222

Eda, R.(2015). Information seeking behaviour of nurses in central hospitals in Delta and Edo states, Nigeria.(Unpublished M. sc dissertation). Department of library and information science, Delta state university Abraka

Estabrooks, C.A., O'Leary, K.A., Ricker, K.L. & Humphrey, C.K. (2008). The Internet and access to evidence: how are nurses positioned? *Journal ofAdvanced Nursing.*42, 73-81

Kingrey, K. P. (2002). Concept of information seeking and their presence in the practical library literature.*Libran Philosophy and Practice.*.4 (2).

Majid, S., Foo, S., Xue, Z., Luyt, B., Yun-Ke, C., Leng, T.Y. & Mokhtar, I.A. (2011). Information Use and Literature Searching Skills of Nurses. 3rd International Conference on Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Libraries, Athens, Greece, May 24-27.

Mcknight, M. (2006). The information seeking of on-duty critical care nurses: evidence from pa1icipant observation and in-context interviews. *Journal of Medical Library Association*.94 (2).

Mouhouelo, P. Okessi, A. &Kabore, M.P. (2006). Where there is no Internet: delivering health information via the blue trunk libraries. Retrieved August 1 3, 2015 from http://medicine.plosjournals.org/per/serv/?request=get documentsdoi

Oduwole, A.A. &Akpati, C.B. (2003).Accessibility and retrieval of electronic information at the university of agriculture library. Abeokuta, Nigeria. *Library Review, 52* (5), 228-233.

Pakenham-Waish, N., Priestley, C., & Smith, R. (1997).Meeting the information needs of health workers in developing countries.*BMJ 414*

Savolainen, R. (2005). Everyday life information seeking. In *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*. Miriam A. Drake, Florida. 155-163

Sitzia, J. (2002). Barriers to research utilization: the clinical setting and nurses themselves. *Intensive Critical Care Nursing* I 8 94).State of New Jersey (2004).Practical   nurse. Retrieved July, 05, 2008 from http://wehapps.dojtate.n fusjpcc/02750.htm.

Wozar, J. A. & Worona, P. C. (2003). The use of online information resources by nurses. *Journal of the Medical Library Association*, 91(2), 216-221