

Students' use of information resources of the Federal University Library, Dutse Library, Dutse, Jigawa State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated students' use of information resources of the Federal University Library, Dutse, Jigawa State. A response rate of 98% (294) out of the 300 randomly distributed questionnaires from students of Federal University, Dutse. The study is intended to unravel the academic resources used by students in academic libraries and how well they are meeting the academic information resource needs of their students. The findings of the study revealed that academic information resources used by the students include but not limited to textbooks, journals, newspapers, magazines, computers (for general use), e-books, e-journals, internet services, reference materials, audio-visual materials and CD-ROM. It also revealed that, majority of the students frequently use academic information resources to make reference to learning materials being taught by their lecturers. In addition, it revealed that, library environment is not very conducive for reading, materials needed not always available and in some cases materials available are outdated. It also revealed that there is lack of seating space especially during library peak period, and that, only 7% of students use the library catalogue (manual or OPAC) as a result, majority of them locate information resources directly on the shelves by themselves or by requesting from a library staff. The study recommended the introduction of information literacy courses including library user skill to students, academic libraries also are to evaluate their information resources frequently in order to keep them up-to-date, students are encouraged to use the various forms of catalogue (manual and OPAC) available in their libraries, learning environment are to be made conducive as much as possible to encourage reading and learning, academic libraries are to acquire multiple copies of relevant materials, and that library staff should be willing to assist students at every point of need and that they should be treated with respect in order to make them feel important.

Key Words: Academic, Information, Institution, Nigeria, Resources, Students, Tertiary

Introduction

Education is undoubtedly a great contributor to nations' socio-economic development. According to Gupta and Gupta (1997), it is the most powerful tool for change and must therefore train the minds of the educated to cope with the change. Schiller (2008) also sees education as an investment in human capital that produces a return to the individual in the form of higher earnings and social returns or spillovers that are important factor in generating more rapid growth. It should be noted that much of the training of the cream of the human capital of any country takes place in academic institutions

such as universities, polytechnics, colleges of educations and their affiliates. This is because higher institutions have been known to play a central role in developing the knowledge base of individuals, societies and organizations. According to Okwakol (2009), higher education institutions are charged with the formation of human capital through teaching, building knowledge base through research and knowledge development, and dissemination and use of knowledge by interacting with the knowledge users.

One of the objectives of setting up a university is to encourage and promote

scholarship and conduct research in all field of learning and human endeavour. As stated in the National Policy on Education, one of the goals of university education is to acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to become self-reliant and useful members of the society (FME, 2004).

An academic library is a library that is attached to a higher educational institution and serves two complementary purposes: (a) to support the curriculum and (b) to support the research of the university faculty and students. They are libraries attached to tertiary institutions such as universities, polytechnic institutions, colleges of education, colleges of agriculture, colleges of technology and also research institutes (Akpohonor, 2005).

Academic libraries are information centres established in support of the mission of the parent institution to generate knowledge, equip people with knowledge in order to serve the society and advance the well being of mankind. Khanna (2014), defines academic libraries as special libraries found in educational institutions and whose main purpose of serving the special needs of the specialized homogenous clientele.

Behind the mission and vision of the university education is the university library. The three major infrastructures are teachers/classrooms, laboratories and libraries that contain a rich and balanced collection and equipment that can support the teaching and learning process as well as research (Ajibero 2004). The academic libraries in an educational institution also plays a part in supporting the research efforts and this role is more stronger in academic libraries than in public libraries , the library helps to conserve the research potential of the university or college.

Aguolu (2002) noted that the university library is the heart of the university. This is because, the academic health, intellectual vitality and effectiveness of any university depends largely upon the state of health and excellence of its library which is its lifeblood.

The academic library is the nerve centre or the hub around which scholarship revolves. It is an indispensable instrument for intellectual development. A well stocked academic library is a storehouse of information, or a record of human experience to which users may turn to for data or information. Jubb and Green (2007), observe that academic libraries have for centuries played critically important roles in supporting research in all subjects and disciplines within their host universities or colleges.

Academic libraries generally are usually started on the same year of establishment of its parent institution; they also evolve and develop as the parent institution develops. In Nigeria, the history of academic libraries generally can be traced back to the establishment of the University of Ibadan in 1948 which first started in University College, Ibadan; as pointed out earlier that the establishment of higher institutions simultaneously establishes the academic library. From the period of independence, universities known as second generation universities were established in Zaria, Ife, Benin and University of Ilorin Library established in 1976 the same year the university was established. Also, the continuous establishment of several private universities all over the country in different years has given rise to proliferation of academic libraries in Nigeria both the private and government sectors of education and as such the selection, acquisition, processing, storage and dissemination of

academic information resources becomes part and parcel of any functional institution of higher learning.

Federal University, Dutse is one of the nine universities established by the federal government in the year 2011. The establishment of the university gave birth to the university library same year. The establishment of the library by the university is to carry out the following objectives

- a. To provide materials in support of teaching and research of learning process
- b. To provide materials to meet the requirements of faculty specialist, post graduate students and other researchers
- c. To provide materials to assist the library user in his/her personal self-development
- d. To cooperate with other university libraries with a view to developing a network of academic library resources and teaching faculties
- e. To meet specialized information needs of the community within which the university is situated.

In achieving the above objectives, the university library consists of the main library that is named after the pioneer Vice Chancellor of the institution in person of Professor J.D. Amin. This is for his efforts and commitment to the library in general and in particular the erection of a befitting structure for the library which was relocated to in the year 2015.

The main library consists of nine operational divisions namely;

1. The Collection Development Division
2. The Technical Service Division
3. The Reader Service Division

4. Educational and Information Division
5. The Serial Division
6. The E-library Division
7. The Bindery Division
8. Administrative Division
9. Faculty and Branch Libraries

It also consists of nine faculty libraries in Agriculture, Sciences, Arts, Social & Management Sciences, Medicine, Postgraduate, Entrepreneurship, IJMB, as well as a satellite library located at Rasheed Shekoni Teaching Hospital. The library has collections based on the following disciplines; agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture, forestry and wild life management, economics, English language, linguistics, computer science, cyber security, information technology, software engineer, biotechnology, botany, chemistry, environmental management & technology, mathematics, microbiology, physics, zoology, biochemistry, biology, human anatomy, medicine & surgery, accounting, actuarial science, banking and finance, business administration and taxation with a grown collection of about 15,000 volumes and a seating capacity of about 500 users at a time.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study was to examine the use of academic information resources among students of tertiary institution in Nigeria. Specific objectives include the following:

- a. To identify the academic information resources provided by J.D. Amin Library
- b. To examine the frequency of library use by students

- c. To examine how students locate information materials
- d. To examine the problems that hindered students in the use of information resources
- e. To make recommendations on how best to improve library services in J.D. Amin Library

N= Population size
 e= Margin of error
 Z= Z-score
 P= Standard deviation

Methods

Quantitative research was used as a suitable approach for this study employing a survey method with the use of questionnaire to gather data from a population of 300 respondent students randomly selected in J.D. Amin library, Federal University, Dutse. The questionnaires contained both close and open ended questions on the resources provided by Federal University, Dutse library and their use of library resources and services. The data was analyzed using simple percentage and frequency.

The term 'population' refers to a well-defined group from which a sample can be drawn and which is specified in very concrete terms (Neuman, 2000). An example of a population can be a person, a group, an organization, a written document or symbolic message, or even a social action under investigation. The population of this study consisted of students of Federal University, Dutse. The total population of the study is approximately 5,500 while the sample size is 300. The choice of sample size is justified by calculating the sample size using the standard formula with confidence level of 95% and 5.5% margin of error.

$$\frac{Z^2 \times P(1-P)}{e^2}$$

$$1 + \left(\frac{Z^2 \times P(1-P)}{e^2 N} \right)$$

Where

Findings

The age distribution of students as revealed by this research respondent is from the range of 19 years to 41 years

Out of the total of 100 questionnaires distributed to respondents, 294 were duly filled and returned. Out of the total number of respondents, 213 were male with 72.4% while 81 were female representing 27.6%

The data in table 1 above revealed the academic information resources used by students which are both in print and non print academic information resources in its collection which include textbooks, journals, Newspapers, Magazines, Computers for general use, e-books, e-journals, internet services, reference materials, audio visual materials and CD ROM. This is inline with the work of Buraimoh O. & Oyefeso (2013).

Table 3 above revealed that majority of the students representing 144 (48.9%) make use of the library frequently, 90 (30.6% make use of the library very frequently, 36 (12.2%) use occasionally and 24 (8.2%) rarely use the library.

Table 4 reveals the purposes for which students make use of the library, 87 (29.6%) of the students use the library for the purpose of making reference to learning resources, 78 (26.5%) to read for examination, 54 (18.4%) for research purposes, 33 (11.2%) to borrow information resources, 21 (7.1%) for group discussion and 12 (4.1%) for group discussion

Table 5 shows the distribution by where most reading is done revealed that students do most of their reading in the library which is indicated by 150 (51%)

respondents, 93 (31.6%) read in the lecture rooms while 42 (14.3%) read at home or in their hostels.

Table 6 is on the distribution by how information resources are located by students. Majority of the students representing 183 (62.3%) directly locate their information resources on the shelves, 84 (28.6%) make request from library staff, while only 21 (7.1%) locate information resources with the use of catalogue cards be it manual or OPAC.

Table 7 is on the distribution of the number of information resources borrowed per semester. The table revealed that about half of the students representing 126 (42.8%) do not borrow information resources from the library, 69 (23.5%) borrow between 4-7 books, 60 (20.4%) borrow between 1-3 books while 39 (13.3%) respondents borrow above 8 books per semester.

In analyzing the problems encountered by students in the use of information resources in Table 8, it revealed four (4) major problems. These problems are unconducive reading environment representing 93 (31.6%), materials needed not always available indicated by 69 (23.5%), outdated materials indicated by 57 (19.4) and no enough seating space indicated by 51 (17.3%).

Table 9 reveals four (4) most important measures to be taken in ensuring effective use of information resources in the library. 84 (28.6%) of the respondents indicated students education on the use of the library, 72 (24.5%) indicated making the library more conducive and the next most important to the above is that more seating space be made available with a respondent of 51 (17.3%), while 42 (14.3%) indicated as a measure acquisition of more information resources.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by gender

Sex	Frequency
Male	213
Female	81

Table 2: Academic information resources used by students

Parameter	Frequency	Percentage
Textbooks/journals	294	100
Newspapers and magazines	255	86.7
Computers for general use	234	79.6
e-book/e-journals	180	61.2
Other internet resources	180	61.2
General reference materials	60	20.4
Audio visual materials	60	20.4
CD ROM	12	4.1
Others	3	1

Table 3: Distribution by frequency of library usage

Parameter	Frequency	Percentage
Frequent	144	48.9
Very frequent	90	30.6
Occasionally	36	12.2
Rarely	24	8.2
Total	294	100.0

Table 4: Purpose for which students make use of the library

Parameter	Frequency	Percentage
To make reference to learning resources	87	29.6
To read for examination	78	26.5
For research purposes	54	18.4
To borrow books	33	11.2
For group discussion	21	7.1
To read newspapers /magazines	12	4.1
Others	9	3.1
Total	294	100

Table 5: Distribution by where most reading is done

Parameter	Frequency	Percentage
In the library	150	51
Lecture room	93	31.6
At home/hostel	42	14.3
Others	9	3.1
Total	294	100

Table 6: Distribution by how information resources are located

Parameter	Frequency	Percentage
Directly on the shelve	183	62.3
Request from the staff	84	28.6
Through library catalogue	21	7.1
Reserved book in the library	6	2
Total	294	100

Table 7: Distribution of the number of information resources borrowed per semester

Parameter	Frequency	Percentage
Nil	126	42.8
4 – 7	69	23.5
1 – 3	60	20.4
Above 8	39	13.3
Total	294	100

Table 8: Problems encountered by students in use of information resources

Parameter	Frequency	Percentage
Unconducive reading environment	93	31.6
Materials needed not always available	69	23.5
Materials are outdated	57	19.4
No enough seating space	51	17.3
Resources not well organized	12	4.1
Staff does not always cooperate	9	3.1
Other	3	1
Total	294	100

Table 9: Distribution on measures to be taken in ensuring effective use of information resources

Parameter	Frequency	Percentage
Student education on the use of the library	84	28.6
Making the library more conducive for reading	72	24.5
More seating space to be made available	51	17.3
Acquisition of more information resources	42	14.3
Others	30	10.2
Library staff to be more helpful	15	5.1
Total	294	100

Conclusion

The role of a functional academic library in student's performance cannot be over emphasized. Therefore, the deserved importance must be placed on academic libraries by their parent organization in making it possible to achieve the aims and objectives of its establishment which will by implication achieving that of its parent organization.

The following are recommended based on the findings of this study:

- a. Information literacy course including library user skills should be introduced in the institution to make the students information literate for life so that they could independently look for information resource on their own through the acquired skills.
- b. Since one of the major aims of any academic library is to provide users with easy access to information resources, it is extremely important for academic libraries to review their stocks from time to time in order for them to be up-to-date in stocking relevant materials that will satisfy the diverse needs of their users.
- c. Students should be encouraged to use the various forms of catalogue available for them before locating resources on the shelf.
- d. Learning environment should be made more conducive as much as possible as a motivation for students to effectively use the library.
- e. Acquisition of multiple copies of relevant materials should be encouraged.
- f. Library staff should be willing and ready to assist students at every point of their need and they should be treated with respect to make them feel important.

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