

Evaluating Information Needs and Satisfaction with Library Resources, Services, and Facilities among Postgraduate Students at Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper explored the information needs and library satisfaction of postgraduate students in Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria. Questionnaires were given to 200 postgraduate students in the Departments of Economics and Accounting with descriptive ex post facto design; 180 respondents replied and 180 forms were validated. The study identified sources of information that postgraduate students need, information seeking purposes, satisfaction with collections, services and facilities. Results indicate high adequacy of textbooks (94.4%), theses/dissertation (88.9%), periodicals (72.2%), and reading space (88.0%), and high satisfaction with reference (88.9%), and circulation (83.3%) services. Reduced satisfaction was recorded on reprographic services (50.0%), interlibrary loan (55.6%), internet/email access (61.5%) and lighting (55.6%). The dominant method of discovery was browsing shelves (88.9%). The research concludes that EKSU library is doing well in terms of physical collections and staff assistance but is vulnerable due to the inefficiency of ICT and other infrastructures and prescribes specific investment in electronic access, reprographic support and user training, and infrastructure enhancements.

Keywords: information needs; information seeking behaviour; library satisfaction; postgraduate students; universities.

Introduction

University libraries are very important in academic achievement of post graduate students since they offer access to scholarly materials, professional assistance services as well as appropriate learning centers. Postgraduate students required to do a lot of reading of academic materials so that they can accomplish coursework, do independent research and write theses or dissertations. This consequently means that the supply and quality of library resources and services have a great impact on research output and academic performance. Ajiboye et al. (2023) also agree that access to good library collections and effective services is still a critical factor in the performance of postgraduate research in Nigerian universities

Empirical studies undertaken in institutions of higher learning in Nigeria have demonstrated that postgraduate students have a high demand of information resources. Such as textbooks, scholarly journals, theses and dissertation, research reports, and electronic databases. The growing reliance on digital scholarship has placed pressure on the use of electronic materials although print materials still remain extensively used. Nevertheless, it has been shown that ICT infrastructure, unreliable internet connectivity, and restricted access to subscribed databases remain issues in most Nigerian university libraries that impair efficient research work (Jibrin, 2024).

In addition, user competence and institutional capacity influence the information seeking behaviour amongst postgraduate students. Some of the Nigerian researches indicate that students often use traditional means like browsing shelves and using the services of the librarian, despite the presence of electronic discovery tools. Mayowa-Adebara (2022) explains this tendency by the lack of information literacy and the absence of knowledge about the use of more complex search methods. Similarly, Sahabi (2024) notes that the adoption of OPACs and electronic

resources is still low because of technical issues and insufficient orientation of users. Therefore, a mixture of electronic and manual approaches to search of information is relatively common amongst postgraduate students.so

Besides the methods of access and information seeking, user satisfaction is another parameter of library effectiveness. Satisfaction is about the perception of library collections, service delivery and physical library facilities like reading space, lighting and ventilation. Nigerian surveys are always characterized by great satisfaction with employee support services and central printing source. Conversely, the level of lower satisfaction is often linked with technology-based service such as reprographic services, interlibrary loan service, and electronic access systems. According to Olowoporoku et al. (2024), dissatisfaction is associated with inefficiency of the system, the instability of power supply, and the lack of technical support in the libraries of universities.

On a larger scale, the research of libraries on an international level confirms the necessity of constant evaluation of customer requirements and the quality of services provided. According to the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, academic libraries are supposed to focus on digital access, research support services, and user-centred innovations to be able to be relevant in a highly dynamic scholarly setting (IFLA, 2022). Such an international perspective also highlights the importance of local research, which can produce evidence-based context-specific enhancements.

It is against this backdrop that the current research examines information needs and Ssatisfaction with library resources, services, and facilities among of postgraduate students in Ekiti State University. Relying mainly on Nigerian empirical research and placing the results within the framework of the global scholarly library discourse, the research aims to offer evidence-based guidelines on how to improve library services and provide the services to the postgraduate research in a more efficient way.

Statement of the Problem

Although university libraries have central role in facilitating postgraduate research, there has been an indication that a significant number of postgraduate students in the Nigerian universities still find it difficult to fulfill their requirements in terms of information. Despite the multiple provision of resources, services, and facilities by the academic libraries, there exist disparities between the resources and services on the one hand, and the requirements of postgraduate students to carry out strong research and learning activities, on the other hand. Specifically, access to electronic resources, inefficient information search practices, and the different degrees of satisfaction with the library services and facilities might create a negative impact on the productivity of the researchers. At Ekiti State University, there is a paucity of empirical evidence about how postgraduate students determine their information requirements, strategies they use to pursue the information and their overall satisfaction on the provisions of the library. This gap leads to a systematic research that is required to make evidence-based changes in library services.

Objectives of the study

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- i. identify the information needs of postgraduate students
- ii. determine the methods postgraduate students use to locate information
- iii. ascertain the purposes for which postgraduate students use the library
- iv. assess postgraduate students' satisfaction with library facilities
- v. assess postgraduate students' satisfaction with library services

Literature Review

Sources of Information that Postgraduate Students needs.

The awareness of the information sources needed by the postgraduate students is an essential aspect of assessing the efficiency of the academic libraries. Nigerian university-based research has shown that advanced research and studies undertaken by the postgraduate students

need a combination of both print and electronic materials in order to be assisted. In a multi-institutional study of Southwest Nigerian federal universities, Ajiboye et al. (2023) discovered that the most important sources of information to be used during postgraduate research were textbooks, scholarly journals, theses, and dissertations. Their results found that textbooks were considered important in basic knowledge, whereas journals and theses were needed in order to get up-to-date and specialized studies. In a case study of university libraries in Kaduna State, Jibrin (2024) noted that postgraduate students were relying more and more on electronic journals, institutional repositories and online databases to conduct their research. The study however indicated that accessibility to the subscribed databases was limited presenting a constraint to the exposure of students to the recent global scholarship. These results indicate that despite the fact that core information requirements are well laid, institutional capacity defines how well such requirements are satisfied.

Reasons Why Postgraduate Students need information.

In addition to determining information sources, the literature also points out the uses which drive postgraduate students into using information. The studies always indicate that postgraduate students mainly need information in an academic and research connected field. In a study on postgraduate students at the National Open University of Nigeria, Mayowa-Adebara (2022) discovered that the most prevalent reasons for information use were a thesis, coursework, development of a literature review, and seminar and publication preparation. In a similar research, Ajiboye et al. (2023) found out that postgraduate students in Southwest Nigeria utilized library sources primarily to complete empirical research and be informed about events in their areas. Notably, the research has highlighted that the use of information spurred at the dissertation phase and was research-based. As a result, the coordination of the library collections with the priorities of postgraduate research becomes essential. Cumulatively, all these studies indicate that postgraduate information seeking tends to be very instrumental and research-driven as opposed to recreational.

Strategies Postgraduate Students use to find the information.

Another significant line of the literature deals with the approaches used by the postgraduate students to find the necessary information. A hybrid pattern of information seeking with a combination of traditional and electronic information seeking has always been observed in the Nigerian studies. In a case study of Kaduna State University, Sahabi (2024) discovered that postgraduate students mostly used to browse library shelves and meet librarians despite having access to OPACs and electronic databases. The author claims that this was the choice of familiarity with print-based systems and low confidence in digital searching equipment. Likewise, Mayowa-Adebara (2022) also indicated that the use of OPACs and electronic resources was still low despite their availability because of the lack of information literacy. Conversely, Jibrin (2024) observed that postgraduate students who had prior experience on digital research environment were more likely to be dependent on electronic databases and online search engines. These results have shown that the approach to information seeking is highly dependent on both the competencies and exposure of the users and the credibility of the library ICT infrastructure.

Satisfaction of Postgraduate students with Library collections.

One of the measures that are often employed to measure the effectiveness of a library is user satisfaction with library collections. Studies have shown that the postgraduate students are mostly satisfied with the access to core print collections. For instance, Ajiboye et al. (2023) indicated that the level of satisfaction with textbooks and theses was high in the surveyed universities as a result of the continuous collection building in the traditional format. The satisfaction with electronic collections is, however, not so consistent. Jibrin (2024) discovered that postgraduate students appreciated the digital resources they had access to, however, expressed dissatisfaction with the coverage of databases and restriction of access. This gap underscores the importance of having a balanced investment in both the print and electronic resources so as to satisfy the various postgraduate research requirements.

Satisfaction of Postgraduate students with Library Services and Facilities.

Post graduate students satisfaction with library services and facilities have been given a great scholarly consideration. In their research on the impact of Koha library management systems in Southwest Nigerian universities, Olowoporoku et al. (2024) determined that postgraduate students were highly satisfied with the services provided by the staff members (including reference assistance and circulation services). The authors explained this by the professionalism of the librarians and their service delivery to the users. On the other hand, the services that were technology-dependent had lower ratings on satisfaction. Sahabi (2024) named the instability of the power supply, the loss of systems, and insufficient technical support as the main factors that influence the satisfaction with the electronic services. Mayowa-Adebara (2022) also observed that overall user satisfaction was compromised by low access to functional ICT facilities despite the general satisfaction of physical facilities like reading space. These findings imply that the reliability of the infrastructure can be considered equally important in the formation of library experiences of postgraduate students.

Research design and methodology

This study used a descriptive ex post facto research design to investigate the postgraduate students' information needs and satisfaction with the library in Ekiti State University. The population of the study comprised of 200 postgraduate students in the Departments of Economics and Accounting. The total enumeration (census) where all the students in the two departments were involved in the study was adopted. There were a number of reasons why this was an effective approach. First, the population was relatively small and total enumeration was possible and more representative than sampling. Second, the time and financial resources available to conduct the study curtailed the possibility of expanding the survey to other departments. The researcher administered the questionnaire directly to the respondents (200 copies). Out of these, 180 questionnaires were returned, which gave a response rate of 90 percent, and all questionnaires returned were considered usable to analyze. The response rate is high, which means that the research results will be representative of the postgraduate population

within the chosen departments. The collected data was analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency count and simple percentages.

Results and Discussion

Demographics

Table 1. Demographic and Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
25-30	50	27.8	27.8
31-35	20	11.1	38.9
36-40	30	16.7	55.6
41-45	25	13.9	69.5
46-50	30	16.7	86.2
51-55	20	11.1	97.3
56-60	5	2.7	100
61-65	0	0	
Total	180	100	

Table 1 showed that 50(27.8%) of the respondents were within the age range of 25-30 years, 20(11.1%) were within the age range of 31-35 years, 30(16.7%) were within the age range of 36-40 years, 25(13.9%) were within the age range of 41-45 years, 30(16.7%) were within the range of 46-50 years, 20(11.1%) were within the age range of 51-55 years, 5(2.7%) were within the range of 56-60 years, while 0(0%) were within the range of 61-65 years.

Table 2. Distribution of Respondents by Level

Level	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Ph.D. Students	30	16.7	16.7
Master students	100	55.5	72.2
M.Phil./Ph.D. Students	30	16.7	88.9
M.Phil.	20	11.1	100

Total	180	100	
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Table 2 showed that 30(16.7%) of the respondents were Ph.D. students, 100(55.5%) were master students, 30(16.7%) of the respondents were M.Phil. /Ph.D., while 20(11.1%) were M.Phil. students.

Sources of Information that Postgraduate Students need.

Table 3. The distribution of post-graduate students according to the adequacy of various information resources

Library resources	Adequacy/Percentage	Inadequacy/Percentage
Textbooks	170 94.4%	10 5.5%
Reference Books	120 66.7%	60 33.3%
Periodicals	130 72.2%	50 27.8%
Newspapers	150 83.3%	30 16.6%
Reports	100 55%	80 44.4%
Theses/Dissertation	160 88.9%	11.1 6.2%

The study's first objective was to identify the information sources that post-graduate students need. The findings, as detailed in Table 3, reveal a clear hierarchy of perceived resource adequacy. The respondents evaluated the sufficiency of the different information sources at the library (Table 3). The vast majority (94.4) considered textbooks to be sufficient to their needs; 88.9% expressed the same with regards to theses/ dissertations. Adequacy ratings were also high with newspapers (83.3), periodicals (72.2) and so on. Two-third or slightly more of the respondents found reference books (66.7%) and research reports (55.0%) adequate. The

implication of these results is that the demand of core scholarly materials (textbooks, theses, journals) is well met by the library, and more specialised or peripheral materials (reports) might be unavailable.

These results were in line with Bokoh et.al. (2023) who claimed that textbooks was ranked as the top library assets as the mean score to assist postgraduate students in the process of conducting their research. Conversely, the lesser research report adequacy (55.0) could be the result of a lack of collection development in the region. It implies a possible necessity of the library to purchase or digitise additional conference proceedings, technical reports, and such like grey literature which can be essential in advanced research.

Methods postgraduate students use to locate information

Table 4. The distribution of post-graduate students according to the various methods for locating information

Methods	Yes /Percentage	No/Percentage
The library catalogue/OPAC	100 55.5%	80 44.4%
Library staff	90 50%	90 50%
Friends	70 38.9%	110 61.1%
Browsing Shelves	160 88.9%	20 11.2%

Table 4 provides the methods used by students to find information. Browsing shelves (88.9% by far) is the most widespread. The second one was the use of library catalogue (OPAC) at 55.5%. Fifty percent requested help of the library staff and the last common approach was consulting friends (38.9%). This hierarchy means that a lot of students show preference to direct and physical processes (browsing) rather than mediated or social.

This observation is in line with the literature in such settings. As Omeluzor and Aluko-Arowolo (2023) observe, their students used to visit the library regularly to see the librarians

and rely on offline resources at their institution. We also indicate that staff assistance is also high (50) though almost all (88.9) still find what they require through browsing. The use of friends is low (38.9) which proves that although peers may be able to recommend sources, students do not feel that the library is the most important discovery space.

Purpose of using the library

The third objective was to ascertain the purposes for which post-graduate students use the library. The data in Table 5 reveals that their primary motivations are aligned with core academic activities.

Table 5. The distribution of post-graduate students according to the purpose of using the library

S\N	Purpose	Yes	No
1	To read/borrow books	160 88.8%	20 11.1%
2	To consult periodicals	170 94.4%	10 5.5%
3	To read newspapers	100 55.5%	80 44.4%
4	To use internet/email	80 44.4%	100 55.5%
5	Photocopying of materials	120 66.7%	60 33.3%

Table 5 shows the purposes of using the library by students indicating their academic priority. Ninety-four point four percent (94.4) go to consult periodicals and 88.8 percent to read or borrow books. These large percentages imply that the most important motivations are remaining up to date with journals and having books to study or consult. This is aligned with other studies by Bokoh et al. (2023) who stated that postgraduate students in the Southwest Federal Universities in Nigeria found journals with very great frequency (mean score 3.62) and books (mean score

3.61). The authors explain this high usage as a necessity of research work, with academic priorities such as acquisition of knowledge and productivity.

Photocopying resources was used by 66.7% of respondents, reading newspapers (55.5) and using internet/email (44.4) followed thereafter. These motivational uses are similar to those recorded in other studies in Nigeria. The comparatively low internet/ email use (44.4) once again indicates the prevailing primacy of physical resources; it is possible that the students are using the library computer labs, or even off campus, instead of the library itself as their source of internet.

Postgraduate students' satisfaction with library facilities

Table 6. The level of satisfaction of postgraduate students on differences facilities available in the library

Library Facilities	Satisfied	Not satisfied
Spacing for reading	160 88%	20 11.1%
Cleanliness	130 72.2%	50 27.8%
Lighting	100 55.6%	80 44.4%
Furniture	110 61.1%	70 38.9
Ventilation	150 83.3%	30 16.7%

Table 6 indicates postgraduate satisfaction with the multiple facility attributes. Most of the students are satisfied with major features of library setting: 88.0% with reading space, 83.3% with air conditioning. The rating of cleanliness is 72.2% satisfaction. Furniture satisfaction stands at 61.1, and the lowest is that of lighting which stands at 55.6. The scores on space and ventilation are very high, which means that the library of EKSU has a comfortable atmosphere to study in such aspects. The obtained results align with the existing Nigerian research, which indicates the overall high levels of satisfaction with seating, lighting, and ventilation in university libraries (Umoh & Agwunobi, 2020).

Postgraduate students' satisfaction with library services

Table 7. The level of satisfaction of the respondents on library services

Library Service	Satisfied/Percentage	Not satisfied/Percentage
Circulation services	150 83.3%	30 16.7%
References services	160 88.9%	20 11.1%
Reader orientation services	120 66.7%	60 33.3%
Interlibrary loan	100 55.6%	80 44.4
Reprographic	90 50%	90 50%
Internet/Email services	110 61.5%	70 38.9%

Based on Table 7, the large scores of satisfaction with the services that can be mediated by staff, i.e., by reference (88.9) and circulation (83.3), suggest that the users still value interpersonal and expertise-based library functions. This aligns with the works of Mayowa-Adebara (2022). Comparatively, the lesser satisfaction with reader orientation (66.7) and with technology-intensive services including internet/email (61.5), reprography (50.0) is congruent with the results of Sahabi and Otobo (2021) and Wiche (2023) who found that broken power, low-bandwidth, and insufficient ICT resources are common hindrances to the delivery of electronic services in Nigerian university libraries. The fact that the satisfaction with reprographic services is notably lower is in line with the empirical research study by Achugbue (2022), who discovered that despite the demand being high, reprography is continually hampered by the failure of equipment, shortage of spare-parts, and loss of power. These findings, when combined, are indicative of a staff-versus-infrastructure strain. The competence of personnel is perceived to be high and identifiable by the customers (Mayowa-Adebara, 2022), and the structural weaknesses of the system that may be outside of the immediate control of the frontline workers are the major

factors identified as drivers of dissatisfaction with technology-based services (Sahabi and Otobo, 2021; Wiche, 2023; Achugbue, 2022). Some form of solution to the sufficiency of those infrastructural limitations, by enhancing ICT investments, equipment maintenance programmes, and effective power supply, is thus a comforter to maintaining staff capacity in case overall user satisfaction is to be higher.

Conclusion

The findings revealed that the Ekiti State University library is generally satisfactory in meeting the core information needs of postgraduate students, particularly in the provision of print based resources and comfortable working conditions. The rating of textbooks, theses and dissertations, periodicals, reading space, and ventilation was quite high. Other services mediated by library staff, such as reference and circulation, are also highly approved by the users.

Nevertheless, there are some evident gaps in technology dependent and specialised services. Reprographic services, interlibrary loan, internet and email access, and lighting had lower ratings. Browsing the shelves is the most common method of discovery, whereas the use of the OPAC, staff assistance, and peer help is less frequently used. Postgraduate students' satisfaction with library services indicates that the library has the advantages of strong physical collections and competent staff, alongside certain limitations of infrastructure (ICT, reprography, power/maintenance) and collection of grey literature/reports limit its potential to deliver in full the advanced postgraduate research.

Recommendations

Based on the above findings, the research recommend as follows:

1. To ensure more postgraduate students visit the library physically, the library management should improve the library services and ensure that the barriers to physical library use

are reduced. This should incorporate things like longer opening hours, better lighting and furniture, and comfortable and well-maintained study areas..

2. The management of the library is advised to enhance the reliability of ICT and power by investing in the stability of campus internet connection, the number of library workstations and reliable power backup like UPS units or a generator. These will help boost the perpetual availability of electronic databases, OPAC and distance services upon which postgraduate research relies.
3. The library management ought to increase electronic access and digitise priority e-journals and databases and high-demand theses and dissertations as well as conference proceedings and locally held reports. It will cover deficiencies in specific, current resources, and allow postgraduates to carry out research at a distance.
4. The library management must then professionalise reprographic services by ensuring there is a maintenance plan timetable, availability of critical spare parts and in case of requirement, there can be temporary outsourced services to assist in high volume copying. This will minimise the time when equipment is not in operation and accelerate the process of delivering the required materials to students.

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