

Student's Approach and Effective Utilization of Information Resources in University Libraries: A Case Study of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, St John's Campus,

By

¹Vincent C. Opara, ²Gift I. Nwosu & ³Oghogho Faith Othuke

¹University library, David Umahi Federal University of Health Science, Ebonyi State, Nigeria
oparachima77@gmail.com,

²Rivers State College of Health Science and Management Technology, Port Harcourt, Nigeria
gingift1@gmail.com

³Department of Library and Information Science
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education
Othukefaith35@gmail.com

Abstract

This study researched on student's approach and effective utilization of information resources in university libraries: a case study of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, St John's campus. The population comprised of per-time undergraduates registered in the St. John's campus branch library. A Descriptive research design was adopted for the study, and an Accidental sampling technique was used to select 85 the respondents as they visit the university library for a period of two weeks in order to get many respondents. The apparatus for data collection was a well structured questionnaire. 85 copies of questionnaire were administered, 78 were found valid and usable for analysis. Data was analyzed using mean score. The study revealed that Students' knowledge of information handling skills significantly influenced the effective utilization of library resources and that student's attitude towards information resources significantly influenced the effective utilization of library resources and student information needs significantly influenced the effective utilization of library resources. Also, this research revealed that there exist strong relationship between students' information searching ability and the effective utilization of library resources. The study therefore advised that Librarians need to strive to provide appropriate library skills education programs that can be easily accessed within a user-friendly environment and librarians should endeavor to provide instruction throughout the semester for students at all levels, targeting students who are not familiar with use of university libraries.

Keywords: Student, Approach, Utilization, Information resources, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education

Introduction

University libraries are universally recognized and regarded as important social-education institution for the dissemination and diffusion of knowledge and information which can enhance the academic performance of students and the quality of research within academic institutions of learning. No efficient community, institution or organization can be considered complete without the support of a library and its services. A library can be described as a systematic acquisition of information materials in different formats, originating, storing, preserving and made available and accessible for use (Hammad Ramzan & Diljit Singh, 2010). Libraries are the hub of all learning activities when there are sufficient information resources which are functionally utilized. Edom, (2012) defines library as a collection of information related resources and other literary materials kept for reading, study and consultation. The library is one of the major sources of information for student, which is why every respectable institution maintains a supportive library (Olajide & Otunla, 2015). According to Garba (2004), the significance of the library in the academic life of students lies on the degree of effective and efficient use of the library. Students who use the library frequently perform better in their academics. Also, there is no library without a well stocked information resources, this is because it determines how well information need of users are satisfied. It is important that university library's stocks its collection with information resources to enable it satisfy the quest of the user. The resources where information is presented gives raise to the term information resources if there are no resources, the primary goal of the library is defeated; Aliyu (2006) in Akanwa and Udo-Anyanwu (2017) posits that information resources are made up of a variety of materials in which information could be stored, retrieved and disseminated for use. Okiki (2013) defines information resources as those information-bearing materials that are in both printed and electronic formats, such as textbooks, journals, indexes, abstracts, newspapers and magazines, reports, CD-ROM databases, the internet/Email, video tapes/cassettes, diskettes magnetic disk, computers, microforms and so on. According to Bitagi and Oziokwo (2015), information resources are all the library materials or facilities which the librarian rely upon to provide information services that meet with the information needs of its users.

The Library cannot complete its primary goal if its resources are under-utilized. Therefore, Utilization of information resources refers to the extent to which the available information resources are used by student for the purpose of satisfying their information needs in the quest to undertake research needs, recreational needs etc (Igwele & Opara). Therefore, it becomes crucial for students to make maximum utilization of the available information resources to improve the quality of research and enhance academic performances of students. In addition to that, Okpeke and Odunlade (2014) argued that, effective utilization of information resources is hinged on the user approach to navigate libraries collections. The university libraries are meant to "provide" all the different aspects of knowledge taught in the university. Consequently, university libraries are sometimes organized in decentralized manner with a main library co-ordinating the other campus libraries. This is the situation in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Library where other campus libraries are co-ordinated by the main library. The same with the Ignatius Ajuru University

of Education Library with branch library at St John's Campus, Iwofe road, Port Harcourt City. Although, there have been a focus on the students approach on the effective use of information resources in the libraries, but with respect to the Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Library and branch libraries no explicit research yet. This forms the focus of this research.

Statement of the Problem

One fundamental principle of academic libraries is that they are entirely accessible and actively used to improve teaching and learning. When students frequently utilize an academic library, they can reinforce their understanding in their respective fields, leading to the production of high-quality graduates. The library services at Ignatius Ajuru University of Education are structured to function on a self-service basis, encouraging students to make the most of the campus library as their primary source of information to aid their learning and knowledge development. However, based on observations and multiple visits, it has been noted that many students do not take advantage of most of the library's resources. Furthermore, during research and project presentations, a significant number of students struggle to provide sufficient literature to back their research efforts. Consequently, it appears that students may be facing technical difficulties in accessing the wealth of learning resources available, which can be accessed through services such as online platforms, wireless connectivity, and a computer lab fully integrated with the university's library and information system consortium. This study is therefore aimed at evaluating students' methods and the effective use of information resources in the Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Library located at St John's Campus.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study was to determine student approach and effective utilization of information resources in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Library: Study of St John's Campus. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Investigate the influence of students' knowledge of information handling skills on effective utilization of library resources Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Library, St John Campus.
2. Determine if students' information needs influence effective utilization of the library resource in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Library, St John Campus.
3. Find out if students' attitude towards information resources influences effective utilization of information resources in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Library, St John Campus.
4. Determine if students' information searching ability influences the effective utilization of library resources in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Library, St John Campus.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. How does students' knowledge of information handling skill influence the effective utilization of library resource?
2. What is the influence of students' information need on the effective utilization of library resources?
3. To what extent does students' attitude towards information resources influence the effective utilization of library resources?
4. What is the relationship between students' information searching ability and the effective utilization of library resource?

Review of Literature

Utilisation of library resources could be influenced by the availability of the information sources in the library to the user (Ani et al. 2022). Availability is the simple most important determinant of the overall extent to which an information channel is used (Akem et al. 2019). Both availability and technical quality influence library user's choice. When books and other information sources are available in the library for use, the library user is satisfied as his information needs are likely to be met. The user develops a positive attitude towards the library, while on the other hand, unavailability of information sources lead to user frustration. The location of a library can influence its use.

The academic library offers a variety of valuable information resources, available in both digital and print formats, to meet the information requirements of its community. Understanding and effectively responding to the characteristics of tertiary students who have grown up in a technology-rich environment can make the library an essential part of their academic journey. With the rapid developments in ICT, libraries have been adapting to the extensive options that technology provides. Today, both public and academic libraries give their users access to the internet, updated networks, and virtual as well as in-person services; however, some students remain unconnected due to various external factors, which enhances overall student engagement (Igwela & Opara). Research conducted by Oliver and Uchenna (2015) on the library usage by law students indicated that a significant number of law students only utilized the law library when preparing for exams. These results suggest that students perceive the library primarily as a quiet space for studying in anticipation of examinations, rather than a resource for everyday academic needs. Consequently, the library has yet to fulfill its primary objective, and there is a necessity for further efforts to ensure that students view it as their primary knowledge source not just during exams but throughout their academic experience.

Studies have addressed the two concepts of attitude and perception towards information resources in the library, especially electronic resources. Alkhanak and azmi, (2011) discussed attitude in general as the individuals' responses in preferential ways as a result of their beliefs. The

precise definition related to this study was defined by (Okiki, 2012) who referred to it as the students' reactions to exploring digital resources on account of their beliefs, their assumptions, and people's sentiments. Moreover, Brown and Duguid (2017) described student attitudinal behavior in the academic environment as print and electronic resources evaluation in either positive or negative manners that influence the respondents learning process. Hence, attitudinal behavior and perception towards the exploration of library resources is simply the propensity that the student adapts either, positively or negatively, for using both print digital resources of the library. Furthermore, there are empirical studies that have investigated the correlation between attitudinal behavior and perception of students, faculty, researchers, and librarians toward using the electronic resources, information services, and using the library. Igwela and Opara (2021) conducted a study that investigated availability and use of EIR by postgraduate's students. The study indicated that EIR was under-utilized in general because of the negative attitude of the students towards the use of library electronic resources.

A study conducted in Nigeria by Onifade et al. (2013) indicated that postgraduate students frequently visit the library to obtain materials for their research. This suggests that the library was well-equipped with resources that undergraduate students required for their research, including internet access. However, it was noted that time was the primary constraint regarding internet access. As a result, although the library may have everything users need, the time required to access it can pose a challenge. Haruna and Oyelekan (2010) discovered that many users found themselves visiting the library multiple times due to reliable internet services. When the library is fully outfitted with ICT services, such as internet access on library computers, it is likely to draw in more users compared to a library lacking ICT facilities. This is because the absence of ICT resources in the library may compel users to seek internet services elsewhere.

Fasa and Temitope (2018) carried out a study to explore how undergraduate students at the University of Medical Science in Ondo, Ondo State, Nigeria utilize library information resources. The results indicated that the participants acknowledged the presence of all resources listed in the questionnaire. The majority of respondents reported using library information resources to gather general information, prepare for exams, complete assignments, and conduct research. Additionally, the findings showed that most respondents used the library information resources on an occasional basis, with textbooks being identified as the most frequently utilized resources among them. The results also indicated that only a small number of respondents faced difficulties in accessing library information resources.

In a related study conducted by Ona et al. (2020) on the relationship between undergraduates' information retrieval skills and their usage of library resources at a Nigerian university of education. The whole undergraduate student body at Tai Solarin University of Education in Ijagun, Ogun State, makes up the study's population. The study was conducted at Nigeria's first university of education. Using a stratified sampling technique, 800 undergraduates from the university's five colleges made up the sample size. The data was analyzed and interpreted using a frequency

distribution table, mean, standard deviation, and percentage. The findings revealed among other things that the undergraduates possess poor skills in the use of internet search engines for information retrieval. However, they possess average skills in the use of abstracts and the library catalogue. Also, the students possess poor skills in the use of Indexes but they possess good skills in the use of bibliographies. The study shows that there is a significant relationship between the information retrieval skills possessed and the frequency of use of library information resources by undergraduates.

Methodology

The study adopted a survey design. The population comprised of the part-time undergraduate students at the branch library in St. Johns Campus that use the library, between 2022-2023 academic sections. A total number of 85 respondents were used for the study. Accidental sampling technique was used to select the respondents as they visit the university library for a period of two weeks in order to get many respondents. A self-constructed questionnaire were designed and distributed to collect the data from the respondents. The questionnaire was a 4 point likert scale (ranging from 4-1). Out of 85 copies of questionnaire administered, 78 were found valid for analyses. The data was analysed using mean scores. Based on the mean of 2.50, the decision was that any item with a mean of 2.50 and above was accepted while any item with a mean below 2.50 was not accepted

Analysis of data and discussion

Demographic characteristics of the respondents

The sex distribution of the respondents shows that more than half 52(66.7%) of the respondents were females while 26(33.3%) were males. Based on their academic level, 8(10.3%) were in year 1, 15(19.2%) were in year 2, 18(23.1%) were in year 3, and 37(47.4%) were in year 4. Finally, faculty distribution of the respondents showed that 39(50.0%) of the respondents were from faculty of science, 14(17.9%) were from vocational and technical faculty, 19(24.4%) were from natural and applied science faculty, and 6(7.7%) were from education faculty.

Research Question 1: How does students' knowledge of information handling skill influence the effective utilization of library resource?

Table 1: Effect of students' knowledge of information handling skill on effective utilization of library resource.

Items	Mean	Decision
Ability to locate/identify materials in the library shelves motivates me to visit library frequently.	3.59	High
The ability to identify needed materials in the library shelves motivates me to visit the library.	3.40	High
Ease of retrieval of information from the library shelves makes me utilize the library resources.	3.27	High
The effective organization of books in the library motivates me to seek for information from the library	2.94	High
My knowledge of handling of books helps in the utilization of the library.	2.99	High
My knowledge of handling library catalogue aids me in the effective use of the library resources	2.94	High
My knowledge of handling library database helps me in the utilization of library.	3.15	High
Grand mean	3.18	

Table 1 showed the responses derived from the respondents on the effect of students' knowledge of information handling skill on effective utilization of library resource. Based on the responses, a grand mean = 3.18 was derived. This is greater than the criterion mean = 2.5 indicating that the students' knowledge of information handling skill influence the effective utilization of library resource to a high extent. The highest proportion in each of the items showed that, 46(59.0%) each strongly agreed that the ability to locate/identify materials in the library shelves motivates me to visit library frequently.

Research Question 2: What is the influence of student's information need on the effective utilization of library resources?

Table 2: Effect of students' information need on the effective utilization of library resources

Items	Mean	Decision
My information needs on assignment influences the effective utilization of library resources.	3.01	high
My information needs for examination influences the effective utilization of library resources.	3.10	high
My information needs on personal development influences the effective utilization of information.	2.91	high
My information needs on career development influences the utilization of library resources.	3.08	high
My information needs for educational development influences the utilization of library resources.	3.24	high
Grand mean	3.07	

Table 2 showed the responses derived from the respondents on the effect of students' information need on the effective utilization of library resources. Based on the responses, a grand mean = 3.07 was derived. This is greater than the criterion mean = 2.5 indicating that the students information need influences the effective utilization of library resources to a high extent.

Research Question3: To what extent does student's attitude towards information resources affect their effective utilization of library resources?

Table 3: Extent of student's attitude towards information resources on effective utilization of library resources

Items	Mean	Decision
Library helps me to cultivate a habit of self – study	3.26	High
My attitude towards information sources affect my use of the library.	3.29	high
My attitude towards library database affects the use of the library.	2.46	low
My attitude towards library catalogue affects the use of the library.	2.69	high
My attitude towards books affects the use of the library.	3.05	high
My attitude towards indexes affects the use of the library	2.41	low
Grand mean	2.86	

Table 3 showed the responses derived from the respondents on the extent of student's attitude towards information resources on effective utilization of library resources. Based on the responses, a grand mean = 2.86 was derived. This is greater than the criterion mean = 2.5 indicating that the student's attitude towards information resources influenced the effective utilization of library resources to a high extent.

Research Question4: What is the influence of students' information searching ability on the effective utilization of library resource?

Table 4: Influence of students' information searching ability on effective utilization of library resource

Items	Mean	Decision
Library helps me to cultivate a habit of self – study.	3.03	High
My ability to identify information and needs enhances the utilization of the library.	3.24	high
My ability to navigate through the library databases enhances my use of library.	3.52	high
My ability to retrieve information resources via library databases enhances my use of the library.	2.93	high
My ability to use bookman operator enhances my use of the library.	3.23	high
My ability to use library online resources enhances my use of the library.	3.18	high
My ability to use library catalogue enhances my use of the library	3.42	high
Grand mean	3.09	

Table 4 showed the responses derived from the respondents on the influence of students' information searching ability on the effective utilization of library resource. Based on the responses, a grand mean = 3.09 was derived. This is greater than the criterion mean = 2.5 indicating that students' information searching ability influence the effective utilization of library resource.

Discussion of Findings

Knowledge of Information Handling Skills and the Effective Utilization of Library Resources

Findings from this study revealed that Students' knowledge of information handling skills significantly influenced the effective utilization of library resources. This discovery corresponds with the findings of Ejike and Amaoge (2017) who conducted a study to examine the strategies for effective utilization of library resources and services by distance education students in Nigeria. The findings revealed that NTI students use the library for the purpose of acquisition of knowledge, consulting reference materials in the library, writing assignment, reading for examinations, consulting journals among others. It equally revealed that they had little or no knowledge on how to utilize library services, poor cataloguing and classification method, time constrain due to the nature of the programme, inadequate number of staff, among others were some of the factors affecting effective utilization of library resources and services.

However, the result from this study disagrees with the findings of Aderibigbe and Emmanuel (2012) who observed that there was frequent usage of resources of the library; however, these users had no sufficient knowledge on accessing materials and in that regard the library personnel had to guide them in accessing information in the library. These findings support the argument that the library users also need some orientation so as to be able to access the materials themselves in the library and hence using little time compared to when getting assistance from the library personnel.

Student's Attitude towards Information Resources and the Effective Utilization of Library Resources

This study revealed that student's attitude towards information resources significantly influenced the effective utilization of library resources. This corresponds with the findings of James and Imelda (2018) who conducted a survey of library use instruction programme and how it influences the pattern of utilization of library resources and services in the University of Calabar was carried out. The study found out, among others that, the attitude towards library use instruction programme by undergraduates in the university of calabar was high, resulting to high level of patronage of the library: Also study by Oliver et al., (2015) found that the main use of the library was for the students to prepare themselves for the examinations and not otherwise. In that regard the library was only visited several times and not all the times. Visiting the library only occasionally cannot bring about effective utilization of the library resources. This is because the time to go through a large number of books will never be reached due to shortage of time. If the library is visited several times it is possible to go through a large number of materials found in the library. This is what can bring about effective utilization of the library.

Student Information Needs and the Effective Utilization of Library Resources

Findings from this study revealed that student information needs significantly influenced the effective utilization of library resources. This result is supported by the discovery of Uriel (2016) whose result revealed that the university library was used by students to support classroom activities and therefore students relied on the information resources available mostly in print format for academic support. It was revealed that students utilized the information resources that were available and accessible in the library. Also, Fasa and Temitope (2018) results showed that majority of the respondents use the library information resources for the purpose of obtaining general information, for examination, for assignment and for research. The findings also revealed that majority of the respondents use the library information resources occasionally, while textbooks were found to be the most utilized library resources by the respondents. A study in Nigeria by Onifade et al., (2013) showed that students in postgraduate studies were visiting the library most of the times in order to access materials for their research. In such a library it implies that it was fully equipped with what students taking undergraduate studies demanded for their research; these include internet access. However, it was argued that time was the main obligating factor in internet access. Therefore, sometimes the library can be full of whatever users need but yet the time of accessing the library may be a challenge.

Students' Information Searching Ability and the Effective Utilization of Library Resources

Discoveries from this research revealed that students' information searching ability influence the effective utilization of library resources. This finding does not correspond with the results from the work by Ejike and Amaoge (2017) who conducted a study to examine the strategies for effective utilization of library resources and services by distance education students in Nigeria. The findings revealed that students had little or no knowledge on how to utilize library services,

poor cataloguing and classification method, Time constrain due to the nature of the programme, inadequate number of staff, Insufficient power supply, Cost of materials like e- books and journals, Poor funding among others are some of the factors affecting effective utilization of library resources and services. Suggested solutions to issues affecting effective utilization of library resources and services by distance education students in Nigeria include organizing seminar, conferences, workshops for users by professionals in order to learn new skills, expansion of the library for more space by the library administrators, provision of sufficient and up-to-date textbooks and journals, employment of more library staff among others.

Conclusion

The findings of this study have given empirical evidence to substantiate the ongoing debate among researchers and stakeholders in the library profession on the need to look into the factors influencing the student approach on effective utilization of information resources. Consequently, the study revealed that knowledge of information handling skills, student information needs, student attitude and student's information searching ability influence the effective utilization of information resources in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Library: Study of St John's Campus. Thus, the implication of this finding is that the various approaches employed by students influence their effective utilization of information resources in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Library, St John Campus.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Accessibility is a key factor that affects students' choices of resources and services. Librarians need to strive to provide appropriate library skills programmes that are easily accessed within a user-friendly environment.
2. The considerable increase in the number of available resources makes it even more difficult to find them. Librarians can be creating awareness at all times of navigational aids available that describe the physical library and the electronic library resources.
3. Although students have varying abilities and experience related to finding and using resources, librarians can be providing instruction throughout the semester for students at all levels, targeting students who are not familiar with university libraries
4. Librarians need not assume the entire burden of instruction but can take a lead and work with academic staff to help educate the students regarding the resources available and how to find them.
5. The campus should create a library and information skills section to design and monitor timely interventions into the constantly changing information needs of students both for on- and off-campus students across programmes.

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