ADEQUATE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION RESOURCES; A CATALYST FOR OPTIMAL UTILIZATION IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES BY STUDENTS OF TERTIARY INSTITUTION IN BENUE STATE

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Abstract

The library is an important aspect of the education system which support education in general. It plays an important role in the teaching and learning process. This study examined adequate of library and information resources as a catalyst for optimal utilization of library resources among students in tertiary institutions Nigeria. The population of the study comprises all the undergraduate students in the Ten tertiary institutions in Benue state namely, Benue State University Makurdi, Benue State polytechnic Ugbokolo, Joseh Tarka University Makurdi, College of Education katsina\Ala, Akperen Orshi Polytechnic Yandev, Akawe Torkula Polytechnic Makurdi, Nigeria army Institute of Technology and environment studies. Purposive sampling technique was employed to select 30 undergraduate students each from the four departments, making a total of one hundred and twenty (120) undergraduates in all. Four research questions guided the study. The instrument titled "Utilization of Library Resources Questionnaire" (ULRQ) developed by the researchers was used for data collection. The validated instrument by experts for data collection had a reliability coefficient of 0.76. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The major findings of the study are that there are adequate library resources in the library for students' use and that students use the library mainly for consultation of books and reference materials. It was concluded that the extent of the use of library resources and utilization is not a key determinant for students' academic activeness. A number of recommendations were put forward for improvement of library use but the most prominent suggestion was that more up to date and relevant information sources should be acquired for the library.

Introduction

Tertiary education refers to post-secondary education received at universities (government or privately funded), monotechnic, polytechnics and colleges of education. After completing a secondary education, students may enroll in a tertiary institution or acquire a vocational education. Students are required to sit for the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board Entrance Examination (JAMB) as well as the Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSCE) or General Certificate Examination (GCE) and meet varying cut-off marks to gain admission

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into a tertiary institution. Tertiary education focuses on learning endeavors in specialized fields (UNESCO, 2018). Today's undergraduate students are the future of the country and the hope of the nation. Their moral levels directly associate with the prosperity or the decline of the nation. How to guide undergraduate students to build correct outlook on life, and values, to master scientific outlook on world and methodology, and to hold noble morals and affections is the responsibility of tertiary education, and also contribute to national development and affordable quality learning opportunities by developing and promoting effective use of innovative learning resources. The common resources available in school library which include books, general reference, non-fiction and fiction periodicals, newspapers, journals, audio materials, disc, phonographic records, audio tapes and cassettes (Onanya & Adeoji, 2008).

The library is a place where information resources are, and are used, has been defined in different ways. The library is at the heart of the education enterprise and one of the most important educational services (NPE, 2013). It is a collection of books, serials and non-book materials kept for the purpose of reading and consultation. According to Alokun, as citied in Ukim, (2008), library is a place, building or room where a collection of books and other library materials are properly arranged in a building or room for promotion of human knowledge. The school library is an important tool in the school system as it supports the school curriculum and provides means by which school achieve her educational objectives and goals. It does this by making available library resources which encourage self-development among students as they use the resources in the library in learning and research activities. The school library is a store of materials and equipment for use by teachers and the students. Libraries are the place that most students study. Libraries are the best place for cultivating students' morals.

Libraries differ from one to another. Today's libraries are different from those of the past in kinds, contents, services and layout. It is therefore expected that the future libraries will continue to vary as they will constantly strive to find ways to expand a perfect their services in the light of dynamism of technology to meet the need of its clienteles and organizations. According to Azumi (2004), libraries are classified according to their purposes, content and pattern of service rendered. When these criteria are used, we can identify six types of libraries: - Private, Special, Public, Academic, National and School libraries. Azumi further explained that school libraries operate at primary and secondary levels. The collection is primarily meant for young people and includes both print and non-print materials. For a library to play its full role in an institution its collection must not only include books but other materials such as general and specialized reference collections, made up of journals, newspapers, manuscripts, historical maps, government publications, clippings, letters, the sis and audio-visual materials. The main purpose of the library is to support the objectives of the institution, which is to promote teaching, learning and research. The significance of institutional libraries lies in the fact that they are repositories of knowledge that provide the vital under pinning for national development Ukim, (2008). Also, the importance of libraries to education generally lies in the fact that they provide necessary information to lecturers, students and researchers and community services. Onadiran (1989) opined that an institutional library is the centre and image of the institution. It is a true representation of the totality of that which the institution stands for and exists. In essence, the library is to support the academic programmes of its particular institution. Education and library are inseparable. Therefore, students and the library are in separable. The library is meant to serve the undergraduates, post-graduates, lecturers and other members of the academic community.

From the fore-going, it is clear that no teacher is an encyclopedia of all knowledge, nor can, an institution exists and successfully carryout its programme without adequate library resources. Thus, for any institutional library to discharge their cardinal responsibilities successfully adequate resources are indispensable. A quality school library requires three quality library resources which include personnel, materials and facilities. The resources according to (Ukim, 2008) include:

i.   Adequate financial resources without which the whole system will collapse,

ii.   Availability of articulates staff that will be able to guide the user, build relevant up to date and balanced collection and maintain it in an orderly manner for easy use.

iii.   A decent but not too fanciful building that can provide a conducive atmosphere for learning which an integral part of a good library.

The library is for use, which according to Edoka (2000), include the facilities, personnel and information materials. Utilization of library therefore refers to the reported use of information sources in the library by users (which could be students, lecturers, or researchers, etc.). This involves the frequency of patronizing the library, frequency of borrowing books, kinds and age of information sources used Colin, (1990). Utilization of library resources simply means using of library resources. A person or thing that uses something somewhere or someplace to achieve his or her purposes is a utilizer or user. In the same context, one can state that those who make use of the library materials for their benefits are library users or utilizers. Also, those who enter the library and find such library materials useful are library users. Hence, people who go either to the public, private, special school or academic libraries for some genuine reasons, requiring the attention of the library staff, are known as the library users or utilizers. Utilization of library resources therefore means the total use that library facilities, personnel and information resources are put to use.

Library users in tertiary institution can be divided up administratively into external and internal `users. The internal users consist of undergraduates, post-graduates, lecturers, research fellows and other members of the tertiary institutions, while the external users are those who are not members of the institution, but are also served by the libraries but under certain specific official arrangement. The availability of these resources however may not necessarily mean their accessibility. This is because they may be there but physically can never be positioned in areas people or users can make and use of them. Availability therefore refers to physical accessibility to information resources in the library. There has been no such study on utilization of library resources by students to the best knowledge of the researchers in the study area. The choice of the area lies in the fact that it is a new university with moderate resources and its investigation will enable the researchers know the extent of library use by the students, and the impediments of library use by the students. It is generally expected that institutional libraries should be fully utilized in order to enhance teaching and learning. When a library is regularly used, by students they are able to up-date their knowledge in their fields of specialization and become more effective in the discharge of their duties as students. Above all the quality of graduates produced by the institution will be high compared to their counter parts elsewhere. Also, the inadequate use of library's collection will not justify the large sum of money spent on acquisition of materials and it will likely affect the quality of teaching and learning in the institution. It may likely result to production of half-baked graduates. A number of factors influence the use of institutional library collections. These include availability of library materials, location, age of collection, and user education. Availability of materials certainly influences the use of a library. The frequent use of a library will be influenced by the availability of the information sources in the library to the user. Availability is the simple most important determinant of the overall extent to which an information channel is used. Both availability and technical quality influence the selection of first 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, on the other hand, unavailability of information sources leads to user frustration. The location of a library can influence its use. The extent of library use is partly dependent on the distance between the library and users' home or office. Ranganathan, cited in Ukim (2008), noted that a library located faraway from user's residence, its use will below. On the other hand, proximity of the library to the user's residence is likely to maximize library use. Also, the age of the collection affects its use. In most libraries current information sources are likely to be used than retrospective ones. As information sources become older with time, the frequency of their use declines. This is particularly important in a technological oriented library where currency of information is frequently needed by users who have to keep abreast of current developments in their fields. Another factor that influences the use of the library is user education. A major reason why institutional libraries spend some time educating their users is to improve their skills on library use. User

education certainly has some effect on library use. It therefore follows that failure on the part of users to locate needed sources of information is partly due to lack of inadequate user education.

There is every need to use effective strategies to improve library use. Ranganathan in Ukim, (2008) noted that teacher must suggest, provoke and guide reading and has to create interest where it does not exist. The lecturer can thus promote use of information sources in the library through teaching and research while the librarian will also do this through use of the library instruction. Other strategies for improving library use by students is that there must be provision of extensive materials (books and non-book materials) alike for study, teaching and research for the benefit of both students and staff. Another strategy for effective use of the library is to encourage the students to develop the life-long habit of good reading with a view to encourage independent study. This can be taken care of, through the provision of adequate materials to encourage independent study. Library materials should be preserved for further usage through cataloguing, classification and binding. In this way those trials are used for a long time. By so doing, it places proper tools in their hands thus avoiding theft and mutilation of books. In this way students are encouraged to use the library.

It is important to know the extent of library use because one's impression of library use may be entirely different with what is on the ground. It is also true that such factors like number of hours a library is open and the library's programme of instruction amongst many other factors may influence library use and it is only by an investigation that the true cause may be established. The investigation of the library will enable us know the extent of library use. It will also enable us know the number of hours the library is open, and the library's programme of instruction as it affects the use of the library. In view if this, the researchers decided to embark on this study to the use made of libraries b students as no research has really been undertaken on adequate library and information resources as a catalyst for optimal utilization by students in the area. Hence, the need for this study, to investigate the adequacy of library and information resources as a catalyst for optimal utilization by students in ternary institution using ten tertiary institutions in Benue as a case study.

Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are to find out the level of availability of library resources, extent of utilization of library resources by students, the factors that hinder the use of the library by the students as well as the strategies that could be adopted to improve library resources utilization.

Research Questions

This study is guided by the following questions.

1.   What are the types of information resources available in academic libraries?
2.   What is the extent of utilization of library resources by undergraduate students in tertiary institutions in Benue state?
3.   What factors hinder effective utilization of library resources for undergraduate students?
4.   What strategies could be adopted to improve the utilization of library resources students in tertiary institutions?

Methods

This study employed a descriptive survey method. The population of the study comprises all the undergraduate students in the ten tertiary institutions in Benue State. Purposive sampling technique was employed to select 12 undergraduate students each from the ten institutions, making a total of one hundred and twenty (120) undergraduates in all. Four research questions guided the study. The instrument titled "Adequate Library and Information Resources; A Catalyst for Optimal Utilization Questionnaire (ALIRU)" developed by the researchers was used for data collection. The validated instrument by experts for data collection had a reliability coefficient of 0.76. The data gathered through questionnaire were presented in tables while descriptive statistics (percentage and mean score) were used in the data analysis. A 4-point scale was used. The mid-point of 2.5criterion mean is accepted as positive response. Any mean score that is 2.5 above is considered as positive and accepted. And any mean score below 2.5 is considered as negative and rejected. For the percentage 50% is regarded as positive and accepted while any below 50% is regarded as negative and not accepted.

Results

Research Question1: What are the types of information resources available in library for students?

Table1: Mean Responses of types of Information Resources Available in the Library

S/N	Library Resources	AA	A	FA	NA	Mean	Decision
1	Textbooks	65	55	0	0	3.54	Accepted
2	Journals	42	66	12	0	3.25	Accepted
3	Newspapers	45	52	23	0	3.18	Accepted
4	Research monographs, indexes and abstracts	45	58	17	0	3.21	Accepted
5	Dissertations	73	47	0	0	2.78	Accepted
6	Translations and proceedings	24	44	52	0	2.77	Accepted
7	Oral History	0	0	0	120	1.00	Rejected
8	Periodicals	37	53	30	0	3.06	Accepted
9	Interment services	105	15	0	0	3.88	Accepted
10	Encyclopedia	110	10	0	0	3.92	Accepted
11	Dictionaries	120	0	0	0	4.00	Accepted
12	Posters	84	24	12	0	3.60	Accepted
13	Manuals	48	65	7	0	3.34	Accepted
14	CD Roms	23	97	0	0	3.19	Accepted
15	Cassettes (Audio &Video)	45	60	15	0	3.00	Accepted
16	Atlases, maps & globes	69	51	0	0	3.59	Accepted

Key: - AA=Actively Available A=Available FA=Fairly Available NA=Not Available

Table 1 shows the mean response of types of library resources availability in library for optimal utilization by students. The mean scores show that out of the 16 library resources listed, with the exception of one, oral history with mean score of 1.00, all the rest recorded between 2.77 mean score to 4.00. Item 7 have been negatively rated and rejected while the other library resources are positively rated and accepted. This means that all the 15 Library resources are adequately available for effective utilization by undergraduate students for academic activeness.

Research Question 2: What is the extent of utilization of library resources by undergraduate students in Tertiary institution?

Table1: Mean and Percentage Responses of Undergraduate Students on the Extent of Utilization of Library for Academic Activeness

S/N	Library Resources	VHE	HE	ME	LE	Mean	Decision
1	Textbooks	68	39	13	0	3.48	Accepted
		(57%)	(33%)	(10%)	(0%)		
2	Journals	62	50	8	0	3.45	Accepted
		(51%)	(42%)	(7%)	(0%)		
3	Newspapers	30	28	32	30	2.48	Accepted
		(25%)	(23%)	(27%)	(25%)		
4	Research monographs, Indexes and abstracts	26	38	33	23	2.64	Accepted
		(22%)	(32%)	(28%)	(19%)		
5	Dissertations	62	50	8	0	3.45	Accepted
		(51%)	(42%)	(7%)	(0%)		
6	Translations and proceedings	21	9	86	3	2.38	Accepted
		(17%)	(8%)	(72%))	(3%		
7	Internet services	72	25	12	11	3.32	Accepted
		(60%)	(20%)	(10%)	(9%)		
8	Encyclopedia	40	20	50	10	2.75	Accepted
		(33%)	(17%)	(42%)	(8%)		
9	Dictionaries	65	23	20	12	3.16	Accepted
		(54%)	(19%)	(17%)	(10%)		
10	Atlases, maps & globes	24	40	38	28	2.67	Accepted
		(20%)	(33%)	(32%)	(23%)		

Key = VHE = very high extent, HE = high extent ME = moderate extent, LE low extent.

Table 2 shows the mean and percentage responses of undergraduate students on the extent of library utilization for academic achievement. The table shows that all the library resources have a mean score of 2.34 and above. This implies that all the items for the library resources were rated positively and accepted. Items 1, 2, 5, 7 and 9 which include textbooks, journals, internet services, dissertations, and dictionaries had percentage 50% and above and as a result regarded as positive and accepted, indicating the resources were used to a very high extent by the undergraduate students for academic activeness while those below 50% were being utilized to a varying extent.

Research Question 3: What factors hinder effective utilization utilization of library resources for undergraduate student's academic activeness?

Tables 3: Mean Response of Undergraduate Students on the Factors that Hinder the Effective Utilization of Library Resources

S/N	Factors that Hinder	AH	H	PH	DH	Mean	Decision
1	Non-involvement of lecturers in books selection	67	32	8	13	3.28	Accepted
2	Not many journals	40	69	11	0	3.24	Accepted
3	No up to date maternal	53	48	29	0	2.62	Accepted
4	Unavailability of automatic generator	23	42	30	25	2.53	Accepted
5	Unavailability of air conditioners	31	45	34	10	2.81	Accepted
6	Inadequate library staff	64	56	0	0	3.53	Accepted
7	Poor library instruction	40	54	26	0	3.11	Accepted
8	Users not informed of new library resources	37	55	18	10	2.99	Accepted
9	Non availability of library resources and internet services	78	42	0	0	3.65	Accepted
10	Location of the library	47	58	10	5	3.23	Accepted

Key=AH =Actually Hinders, H = Hinders, PH =Partially Hinder DH= Don't Hinder.

Table 3 shows the mean response of factors that hinder the effective utilization of library resources by undergraduate in tertiary. The mean scores shows that all the factors listed scored nothing less 2.5 and infact scored 2.53 to 3.63 mean scores. By this, it means all the factors are rated positively and are accepted.

Research Question 3: What strategies could be adopted to improve the utilization of library resources by undergraduate students for academic activeness?

Tables4: Mean Responses of Undergraduate Students on the strategies to improve the Utilization of Library Resources

S/N	Strategies adopted to improve the utilization of library resources	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1	Buy more relevant books	79	41	0	0	3.66	Accepted
2	Buy multiple copies of books, journals and other library resources	83	37	0	0	3.69	Accepted
3	Fund library adequately	90	30	0	0	3.75	Accepted
4	More departmental libraries needed	66	34	6	4	3.18	Accepted
5	Adequate provision of internet services and air conditioners	100	20	0	0	3.83	Accepted
6	Increase professional staff	88	21	11	0	3.77	Accepted
7	Improve library instruction	65	42	13	0	3.43	Accepted
8	Informed users of new library resources	36	59	15	10	2.93	Accepted
9	Automatic generator needed	51	63	6	0	2.54	Accepted
10	Locate library in a central place	35	55	16	14	2.93	Accepted

Key=SA=Strongly Agreed, A=Agreed, D=Disagreed, SD=Strongly Disagreed

Table 4 shows the mean scores of the strategies that should be adopted to improve the utilization of library

resources by undergraduate students for academic activeness. The mean scores revealed that all the above listed items are rated positively and accepted asnonefallsbelow2.5 mean score. This implies that all the items in the table.

Are accepted and considered as steps to be taken in order to improve the effective use of the library resources for academic achievement of undergraduate students.

Discussion of Findings

The findings revealed that the undergraduate students interact extensively with the library resources. Hence, library resources usage in learning is an important factor in predicting undergraduates' academic activeness. This opposes the opinion that many students use internet services for connecting and chatting friends and relatives, which hinders good reading and studying habits (Afuwape & Aanu, 2001). Table 1 showed that adequate library resources are available for undergraduate students' use in the library for academic activeness. Out of the sixteen library resources listed only one was not available and the rest are available. This finding is in line with Emezi (1996) that an institutional library should endeavour to provide extensive materials (books and non-book materials alike) for study, teaching and research for the benefit of both the students and staff. Hence, for an institution to serve all in society, its information sources must be diverse and varied in nature in order to improve teaching and learning.

In addition, Table 2 showed that majority of the undergraduate students said they used textbooks, journals, internet services, dissertations and dictionaries more frequently than other library resources. One reason for this is that textbooks are more in number than any other library resource. A second reason is that the undergraduate students relied heavily on journal, dissertations and online materials essentially for research purposes. The findings also revealed that undergraduate students use journals frequently to enable them keep abreast with current development in their fields. The findings also revealed that a number of undergraduate students come to the library to read newspapers, while a few makes use of indexes and abstracts and research reports. The indexes and abstracts tell them where information can be found. Such information could be in books, pamphlets, conference/workshop paper and journals or non-print form. Indexes and abstracts supply enough details to trace these materials. Research reports enable the undergraduate students know areas where research has been undertaken. It must however, be stressed that undergraduate students need to be patronizing more of the library resources available in the library. This is in line with Awojobi (2004) who recommended that library users should make use of as many library resources as possible and not restrict themselves to a few.

Moreover, the result in Table 3 indicated that majority of the undergraduate students are of the view that a major impediment to their use of the library is the non-availability of library resources and internet services. This is because students are concerned with current information sources to update their knowledge in their fields of specialization in order to earn a good living after schools. This result is in line with the findings of Ochogwu (2007), Aguolu & Aguolu (2002) in their research report, that the impediments to library use by students include lack of funds, facilities, inadequate staff and lack of proactive librarians. This assertion is true because information service delivery involves funds, good condition of service for personnel as well as qualified staff. Poor academic performance is related to negative utilization of library resources as a result of impediment to the use of library by undergraduate students.

Table 4 shows the strategies that should be adopted for effective utilization of library resource by undergraduate students. The findings as revealed by research question four also show that undergraduate students were of the view that more relevant books should be acquired for the library, multiple copies of books should be purchased for the library to promote more library patronage. This is to ensure that some copies will still be available for use, even if a number are borrowed. A number of undergraduate students also, suggested adequate funding of the

library, increase in the number of departmental libraries, and increase in number of professional staff need and acquisition of some automatic generators amongst other reasons that will promote adequate library use. Undergraduate students were also of the view that their lecturers should be involved in book selection policy of the library and that library instruction in the school should be improved upon. These strategies should be taken to improve undergraduate students' use of the library to yield the desired result.

Conclusion

The study investigated adequate library and information resources as a catalyst for optimal utilization of library resources among undergraduate students in Nigerian tertiary institutions in Benue state. The specific objectives of the study are to find out the level of availability of library resources in the tertiary Institution, and determine the extent of use of the library resources by undergraduate students. It is also to find out the factors that impede library, use by undergraduate students and make some suggestions for improvement of library use. The major findings of the study are that there are adequate library resources in the library for students' use and that students use the library mainly for consultation of books and reference materials. They also use it for research purpose and borrowing of books. Furthermore, undergraduate students utilized internet services, books and dissertations more than other library resources.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations are made: -

1.   Uptodateandrelevantinformationsourceshouldbeacquiredforthelibraryby the government through the institutional management, stakeholders and

Non-governmental organizations.

2.   Good study habit should be encouraged among students by using library resources.

3.   Additionalprofessionalandpara-professionallibrarystaffshouldbeemployed by the management of tertiary institutions.

4.   More funds should be approved for the academic library. The National University Commission's directive of commitment of 5% of the university's annual budget to the library should be implemented. This will enable the institutional library to meet all its financial obligations.

5.   An automatic generator should be acquired for the library to be providing power in case of failure from the public supply. Similarly, the air-conditioning system should be provided and made functional for the library.

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