

Influence of Students' Characteristics in the Use of Library Resources in Colleges of Education in Edo State, Nigeria

Bosah, L. E.

Amadasu, M. E.

College of Education Library, Ekiadolor, Benin, Edo State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

The effectiveness or success of any library in achieving its stated goals is measured by the users' ability to effectively make use of its resources. Thus, assessing the use of library resources by students has become a major focus for most library scholars. In this light, several scholars have noted the low utilization of library resources by colleges of education students. This survey examines the influence of student's characteristics on the use of library resources. The population of the study consists of students of Colleges of Education, Ekiadolor and Igueben in Edo State. The School of Vocational and Technical Education, School of Arts and Social Sciences, School of Languages and School of Sciences were selected for the study. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample size from each of the four schools in proportion to the actual size of the group in the total population. A sample size of 372 students was used for the study. Questionnaire on Assessment of Use of College Library Resources (QAUCLR) is used for data collection. The data analysis techniques used are Analysis of Variance, t-test, and Chi square. The analysis of the data collected indicates among other things that the academic level of students does not affect their use of library resources. The study recommends that male students should be targeted in an effort to improve the use of library resources and teachers should engage the students with serious assignments that could encourage them to use the library regularly.

Keywords: *Assessment, Use, College, Library Resources, students*

INTRODUCTION

Libraries in general are built to enhance effective learning, teaching, and research. Students and other users of college libraries require up to-date information to keep abreast of current development in their areas of study, specialization, and responsibility. Okiy (2000) maintains that the main reason why libraries exist is to provide the right materials to meet the information needs of their users. Ifidon (1999) also opines that the major objective of the African university library is to provide materials and services which will now and in the future best contribute to the fulfillment of the objectives of the university. The library provides relevant print and non-print resources for students and staff and every members of the public for their course work, essays, term papers, thesis, dissertation, research and personal development. Also, the objective of any library is to provide organized information materials for effective utilization since it stocks a variety of books, journals and other documents in different subject areas, format and media. Mabawonku (1992) points that academic libraries exist for the benefit of students and teachers. In order to function and serve the information

needs of users, the library needs to have both print and electronic materials like CD-ROM database, E-journals, Internet etc. Similarly, Clarke (1997) also points out in a general manner, that library objectives are the provision of information, stimulation of education, research, recreational facilities, promotion of cultural activities and the preservation of recorded knowledge of man. It is instructive to note that the effectiveness or success of any library in achieving the above stated goals is measured by the effective use of its resources by users. Thus, assessing the use of library resources by students has become a major focus for most library scholars. Kellaher (2005) gives six reasons why library assessment from user's perspective is very important:

1. The place of initiative services,
2. The quality of these services,
3. The flexibility of these services,
4. Users ability to effect changes to services they receive,
5. How initiative service can fit with mainstream services, and
6. How the library might develop mechanisms for assuring quality in library resources and services.

Amkpa (2000) in his study of the University of Maiduguri Library discovers that majority of students did not use the library effectively because they do not use the library catalogues. Okiy (2000) also assesses student and faculty use of academic libraries in Nigeria with particular reference to Delta State University, Abraka. She finds that respondents used books more than other reading materials and they tend to find materials by browsing the shelves. Dina (1983); Unomah (1987); Maliki and Uche (2007) have separately noted the poor use of library resources at colleges of education in Nigeria. In the light of this, various school managements have made it a point of duty to train their new students on how to use the school library during their orientation programmes.

Similarly, the National Commission of Colleges of Education (NCCE) which is the regulatory body for colleges of education recommends that librarians should teach G.S.E. 110 (Introduction to User Education) in all colleges of education to encourage the use of the library resources. In spite of these measures taken to boost the use of the library resources in colleges of education, the use of these libraries resources still remains abysmally poor. It is important to note that the home as well as the school background is bound to influence the use of library resources. This is because the type of home from which a student comes may determine his awareness of library facilities, how to use them and their external value (Maliki and Uche, 2007). However, the effect of student characteristics on the use of library resources has remained a *Cinderella* in library research. In other words, little or no systematic study has been conducted to assess the effect of student characteristics on the use of library resources in Colleges of Education in Edo State in particular and Nigeria in general. Accordingly, the following research questions were raised for validated:

1. Is there any significant difference in the use of library resources among students in different faculty at the colleges of education in Edo State?
2. Is there any significant difference in the use of library resources among students in different levels at the college of education in Edo State?

3. Is there any significant difference in the use of library resources between the male and female students at the college of education in Edo State?
4. What is the role of parental educational background in the student use of library resources in colleges of education in Edo State?

METHOD

This study adopted the survey research design. The population of the study consist of students of Colleges of Education, Ekiadolor and Igueben in Edo State. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample size from each of the four schools in proportion to the actual size of the group in the total population. Forty-six students were sampled in the School of Vocational and Technical Education, 47 from the School of Arts and Social Sciences, 47 in the School of Languages and 46 from the School of Sciences. A total of 186 sample were drawn from each of the two Colleges of Education used for the study. Hence, a sample size of 372 students in all was used for the study. The instrument for data collection was made up of 186 students each from the colleges. Questionnaire on Assessment of Use of College Library Resources (QAUCLR) was used for data collection. Out of the 375 copies of questionnaire administered, 345 questionnaires were retrieved and analysed for the study representing a response rate of 92%. Content and face validity of the instrument were established using experts in librarianship in Benin City. Their comments, corrections and recommendations made on the test items were effected before the pilot testing. Therefore, there is confidence in the content and construct validity of the instrument. The test/retest method was used to determine the reliability coefficient of the research instrument. Reliability was an average score of 0.78. The data analysis techniques used are Analysis of Variance, t-test, Levene's Test of variance and Chi square.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the student background variables employed in the study. It indicates that the majority of the respondents were females while only 31.8% of them were males. The table also indicates that 45.5%, 35.4% and 19.1% of the respondents were from 100 level, 200 level and 300 level respectively. It also shows that about 31.0% of the students do not use the library resources for a week while 22.3%, 23.5% and 23.2% of the students use the library between 1-5 hours, 6-12 hours and above 12 hours respectively in a week. Finally, it indicates that 15.7% of the students' parents had no formal education, 34.8% had primary education, 37.1% had secondary education while only 12.5% of them had tertiary education as their highest educational qualification. Table 2 presents the results of the analysis in the differences in the use of library resources among students in different faculties at the Colleges of Education in Edo State. The ANOVA table shows the sum of squares and the mean sum of squares for the two tests: the between group and within group variances. These are presented in columns 2 and 4 respectively. The degrees of freedom are presented in column 3 while the F - value and significant level is presented in columns 5 and 6 respectively. The F - test reveals that there are significant differences in the use of library resources among students in different faculties at the colleges of education in Edo State. The *f-value* of 14.273 was significant at 0,05 level of significance. This

implies that students' academic discipline affects their use of library services. The finding is strongly supported by Omehia and Obi (2008); Andaleeb and Simmonds (1998), Eskola (1998) and Leckie and Fullerton (1999). Table 3 shows the result of the analysis on the difference in the use of library resources among students is different levels at the colleges of education in Edo State. The table shows the sum of squares and the mean sum of squares for the two tests: the between group and within group variances. These are presented in columns 2 and 4 respectively. The degrees of freedom are presented in column 3 while F - value and significant level is presented in columns 5 and 6 respectively. The F-ratio value of 0.133 reveals that there are no significant differences in the use of library resources among students in different levels at the colleges of education in Edo State. The F-value of 0.133 was not significant at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that students' academic level does not affect their use of library services.

Table 4 shows the result of the analysis in the differences in the use of library resources between the male and female students at the colleges of education in Edo State. From table 4, the Levene's Test of variance tests the hypothesis that male and female students have the same variance. The value of 0.827 is not significant; therefore the null hypothesis that the variances are the same is accepted. Observed that there are two rows in the table; the upper row labelled equal variance assumed is used for T-test analysis whenever Levene's test is not significant while the statistic in the equal variance not assumed row is used when Levene's test is significant. In our study, we made use of equal variances assumed statistics since our Levene's test is not significant. Using this approach, a t-value of -2.750 was obtained which is significant at 0.005.

On this basis, it can be concluded that, there are significant differences in the use of library resources between the male and female students. Table 5 shows the result of the group statistics from the t-test analysis. The male posted a mean of 2.17 while the female posted a mean of 2.52. From the analysis on table 5, it can be concluded that female students at the Colleges of Education in Edo State use the library resources more than their male counterpart. The finding is at variance with the findings of Aboyade (1984), Maliki and Uche (2007) who separately find greater tendency among male and female students in the use of resources available in the library. Table 6 shows the result of Chi-square. The Chi-square value of 108.9 is significant at 0.05. This implies that parental educational qualification of students affect their use of library resources. This finding agrees with Maliki and Uche (2007), Zaki (1991), Andaleeb and Simmonds (1998) which shows that parents with higher educational qualification tend to have relatively lesser number of family members and their children relatively use the resources available in the library for their academic growth more than users from parents of low academic qualification.

Table 1: Students Background Variables

Students Background Variables	No. of Respondents	%
Sex:		
Male	132	38.3
Female	213	61.7
Total	345	100

Academic Levels of Students:

100 Level	157	45.5
200 Level	122	35.4
300 Level	66	19.1
Total	345	100

Use of Library by Students:

0 Hours Per Week	107	31.0
1-5 Hours Per Week	77	22.3
6-12 Hours Per Week	81	23.5
Above 12 Hours Per Week	80	23.2
Total	345	100

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 2: ANOVA Summary Table

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	50.867	3	16.956	14.273	.000
Within Groups	405.086	341	1.188		
Total	455.954	344			

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 3: ANOVA Summary Table

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5.353	2	2.677	2.032	.133
Within Groups	405.600	342	1.318		
Total	455.954	344			

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 4: Result of the Analysis on Differences in the Use of Library Resources among Students in different levels at the Colleges of Education in Edo State.**Independent Samples Test**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				t-test for Equality of Means			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. 2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Use of Library by Students	Equal variances assumed	.048	.827	-2.746	343	.006	-.34688	.12634	-.59537	-.09839
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.750	279.174	.0050	-.34688	.12614	-.59519	-.09858

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 5: Group Statistics

		Sex of Respondents	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Use of Library By Students	Male		132	2.1742	1.13579	.09886
	Female		213	2.5211	1.14339	.07834

Source: Field Survey, 2012

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

College libraries exist mainly to meet the needs of its users whose majority are students. The under utilization of college library resources is already well noted in the literature by various scholars. The effect of student's characteristics on the use of library resources must occupy central location in any effort to boost the use of library resources at the colleges of education in Nigeria. The individual effects of student characteristics on use of

library resources must be understood if the problem of low utilization of library resources at the colleges of education can be addressed. This is vitally important for the purpose of policy intervention. The following recommendations therefore emanates from the findings.

- i The male students at the colleges of education should be targeted and the importance of using the library should be made explicit to them with a view to improving their use of library resources at the colleges of education.
- ii The 300 and 200 levels students must show good example to the 100 level students on the importance of using the library. This implies that they must be seen using the resources of the library by lower level students.
- iii The teachers in the various colleges must engage the students with serious assignment that will make the students to use the library resources
- iv Since parental educational background affects student's use of the library resources, it is absolutely important that proper library use orientation are carried out for the new in takes so that students whose parents are poor educationally can be informed of the importance of the library to their educational pursuit and how to make use of the library resources effectively.

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