

Influence of Library Environment, Internet Connectivity, Institutional Repositories on Utilization of Information Resources by Students of Federal Universities in South South, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of library environment, internet connectivity, and institutional repositories on utilization of information resources by students of federal universities in South South, Nigeria. The study was guided by three research questions and three hypotheses. The researchers adopted correlational research design. The instrument used to collect data for this study was a researchers'-made questionnaire which was rated using the four point Likert scale. The population of the study was 4,503 registered library users of the federal universities studied out of which a sample of 450. Proportionate and random sampling techniques were adopted. In analysing the data collected, Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level using t-test statistics. The findings revealed that: there is a very high significant relationship between library environment and utilization of information resources; there is a very high significant relationship between internet connectivity and utilization of information resources and there is a very low no significant relationship between institutional repositories and utilization of information resources. Based on the findings, the researchers recommended that: conducive library environment should be provided for effective function and comfort of the library users; the library should be connected to an efficient internet service provider and made accessible to the students as far as they are within the school premises; and the university library should create awareness of the existence of institutional repositories so the students can make use of the resources contained therein.

Keywords: Library, Environment, Internet, Institutional Repositories, Utilization, Information Resource

Introduction

The establishment of university libraries helps in meeting the diverse information needs of the academic community which comprises of students (undergraduates and postgraduates), lecturers, administrators, and staff. Undergraduates are mainly the users of the university library. An undergraduate is a student who is enrolled in a tertiary institution that has not graduated yet. Olorunfemi and Ipadeola (2021) opined that library users are very essential in any university library; users are the most important component in any library environment because the mission of every academic library is to provide excellent services to the users. Libraries are collection of sources of information that are available for reading, borrowing and for reference. These collections are referred to as information resources. University libraries have a variety of information resources (print and non-print materials) which are to be utilized by the students. Onwubiko and Uzoigwe (2012), see information resources as the totality of information materials that form a library collection. The print materials are in the form of books (monographs) and serials, while the non-print materials are in the form of audio-visual materials (multi-media resources). Akanwa and Udo-Anyanwu (2017) stated that recently, information resources in the library have evolved to include electronic information resources such as: e-books, e-journals, preprints, e-thesis or dissertation among others and students are expected to use these information resources to gain knowledge of subjects or courses taught in the university. Effective library services are only possible when there is qualitative and quantitative adequacy of relevant information resources.

It is important to note that the effectiveness of a library does not depend on the collection or resources and facilities only but also on the users. The functions and services of a library cannot be said to be effective without their utilization by users. Library utilization however, refers to the extent of usage of libraries by students. In view of this, students in tertiary institutions especially the university studied make use of the library for academic materials, assistance and guidance for research (Echem, 2018). It has been observed that in Nigeria, there is poor reading culture hence there are certain factors that need to be available for users to make optimal use of libraries. These involve but not limited to library environment, internet connectivity and institutional repositories (IR).

The conduciveness and adequacy of the library environment play effective role in the utilization of the library and deriving satisfaction from its resources by users to a great extent. A good library is that whose environment is conducive and attractive, free from noise, has durable and comfortable furniture, well ventilated, good lightening/illumination etc., for meaningful study. Any library where these facilities are inadequately provided could result in low level of use by the undergraduate students. McVey and Nock as cited by Oyedum (2011) asserted that things such as light, temperature and sound if not properly incorporated into the library design may negatively affect human beings and impede learning. The undergraduate students, for instance, who use the library resources in carrying out any type of academic work or for other reasons, will be encouraged to do so if only the library environment is conducive. Environmental factors such as noise, ventilation and lighting are variables that are likely to influence quality information service delivery to the clientele. This is because no proper concentration can be achieved if the library environment is noisy, dark or stuffy. Adequate lighting of libraries could be derived from natural light or even an electric power plant and is a very crucial requirement in libraries. Without adequate lighting, a library cannot perform its functions, particularly when it is expected to open to users till late hours. The library environment must also be environmentally friendly and safe.

In this era of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), information can be accessed anywhere at any time through the internet. Users now prefer to stay at the comfort of the homes to access the information they need. This, if allowed, will strip the library of its users. Libraries have integrated internet services to their users, in this case mostly students. Having internet connectivity in the library can be a motivating factor to attract the students especially when it is at no cost. Users gain easy access to online resources such as full text, e-journals, e-books, library catalogue, email, etc. through internet services. They make use of internet usage opportunities provided by the library to communicate, share knowledge, ideas, disseminate and store information and get satisfied. Muhammed and Garko (2012) stated that broadband internet access is an essential ICT services to the library which improve information flow and ease exchange and sharing of ideas between library users and libraries.

Institutional repository is another factor that can enhance utilization of university libraries. Institutional repository is a compendium of research output emanating from a particular university. Users are exposed to the research world through free and unrestricted online availability of resources stocked in institutional repositories. Adewumi (2012) observed that institutional repositories operate well in an open access environment which offers free access to digital content without restrictions. In recent years institutional repositories have become effective in disseminating scientific data and scholarly communication (Okumu, 2015). Visibility of research work is highly motivational and can influence utilization of the library.

It is based on this background that this study on influence of library environment, internet connectivity, and institutional repositories on the utilization of information resources by students of federal universities in South South, Nigeria is carried out.

Statement of the Problem

Information resources in print and non-print formats are the bedrock of library services. That is to say that without them, no meaningful service will be rendered in libraries. The availability of information resources enhances the achievement of the goals and objectives of university libraries. The potentials of these resources can only be achieved when they are effectively utilized by library users. Effective utilization of library resources improves the reading habits of students and complement teaching and learning done in the classroom among other benefits. It has however been discovered that the university libraries are not adequately utilized by students. The researcher wonders if it could be as a result of factors such as library environment, internet connectivity and institutional repositories. This is what this study is set to find out.

Research Questions

The following questions are posed for the study:

1. What is the relationship between library environment and utilization of information resources?
2. What is the relationship between internet connectivity and utilization of information resources?
3. What is the relation between institutional repositories and utilization of information resources?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses stated in the null form are formulated to guide this study at 0.05 level of significance:

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between the library environment and utilization of information resources by students of federal universities in South South, Nigeria.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between internet connectivity and utilization of information resources.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between institutional repositories and utilization of information resources.

Literature Review

The university library is a place where information resources are acquired, organized, processed, stored and made available to meet the information needs of students, lecturers and the entire university community. The library is set up to serve its parent institution, considered as an organ around which all academic activities revolve (Onifade, Ogbuiyi & Omeluzor, 2013). The university library is seen as a reservoir of knowledge where information resources are kept in diverse forms like books, journals, online data basis and other sources. As a repository for knowledge in all forms and shapes, it brings the user in contact with the world in fulfillment of its function. (Agbo & Onyekweodiri, 2014). As such, university libraries in Nigeria must continue to remain relevant by ensuring that their resources are not only acquired but also used.

Utilization of information resources is essential for the justification of the existence and survival of any university library. Information resources' utilization in academic libraries is a process comprising of initiation, selection, formulation, collection and preservation (Kuhlthau cited in Echem, 2018). The utilization of information resources is a function of how proper the resources are organized and made available for use. There are certain factors that influence the utilization of university libraries. They include: library environment, staff attitude, internet connectivity, internet connectivity, user education, institutional repositories among others.

An environment entails the conditions or influences under which any individual or thing exists, lives or develops. It contains influencing elements or conditions. The university library environment encompasses all the circumstances, people, events around the library which can have potential effects, positive or negative on the library usage. The library environment according to Akanwa, Okorie and Uwazuruike (2018) is usually made up of three elements, which include the following:

- System environment within which the library's freedom is circumscribed.
- The clientele environment which brought the library into being. The clientele or user therefore cannot afford to be a stranger in the world he represents.
- The physical plant or entity environment i.e. the library building, staff and its intellectual content.

Effective utilization of the library and its resources by users to a great extent depends on the conduciveness and adequacy of the entire environment of the library. Some scholars have carried out studies to determine the relationship between library environment and utilization of library resources and services. Echem and Udo-Anyanwu (2018) discovered that a strong, positive and significant relationship exist between the library environment and students' use of the library.

Also the study of Folorunso and Njoku (2016) revealed that there is a significant relationship between the independent variables (library environment and user education) and the dependent variable (use of library). However, that of Okorie (2018) showed that the extent of relationship between the environmental factors and use of library information resources in the federal universities studied is very low, negative and significant.

The use of the Internet in the educational environment has facilitated easy access to many resources, and significant increase in information utilization. The internet provides a variety of services that enable communication and access to electronic information for many different purposes. These include: Telnet, File Transfer Protocol, Gopher, E-Resources/Electronic Journals, Online Databases and CD-ROM Databases facilities (Echem, 2018). Utilization of library resources by users in recent times is attributed to the availability of internet facility. The penetration of internet technology and computer revolution in the society has changed our way of life and a lot of transactions are now done electronically (Imhonopi & Urim, 2011). It is interesting to note also that the internet is seen as the storehouse of information and a frontier of knowledge across the globe. The internet provides a wealth of information in any subject field and students are using the internet increasingly as it occupies an important place among various information sources (Mostofa, 2011). Adedokun, Magaji and Makinde (2018) investigated the correlation between Internet use and library patronage among students in selected senior secondary schools in Ojo Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria and discovered that there is no significant relationship between Internet use and library patronage.

Institutional Repositories (IR) is an online locus for collecting, preserving and disseminating in digital form, the intellectual output of an institution such as research journal articles, theses, dissertations, normal academic materials, administrative document, course notes, etc. (Malweta & Ella, 2017). In the simplest sense of the term, Adewole-Odeshi and Ezechukwu(2020) defined institutional repository as an electronic archive of the scholarly output of an institution, stored in a digital format, where search and recovery are allowed for its national or international use. Universities and other institutions are now addressing the issue of access to scholarly information using the IR. Despite many opportunities that present themselves, many countries in Africa and Nigeria in particular are yet to utilize the privilege offered by these resources to internationalize their research sources (Ezema, 2010). The full benefits of institutional digital repository can be achieved only if stakeholders involved are fully aware of its potential roles. On the status of institutional repositories in federal and state tertiary institutions in Imo State, Nigeria, Iheanacho-Kelechi (2019) discovered that the institutions studied have little contents in their online repository limited to only technical reports and research articles. Nunda and Elia (2019) in their study on Institutional repositories adoption and use in selected Tanzanian higher learning institutions, found low adoption rate of institutional repositories among students.

Research Methodology

The researchers adopted correlational research design involving Pearson Product Moment Correlation approach. The instrument that was used to elicit data for this study was a researcher-made questionnaire which was rated using the four point Likert scale. The population of the study was 4,503 undergraduate students of the federal universities studied. The sample of the study was 450. This was derived from 10% of the population. Stratified sampling technique was used. Simple random sampling was further used to select individual respondents. In analysing the data that were collected for the study, the researcher used Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) to

identify the level of relationships. The test of significance for the hypotheses was done at 0.05 alpha level using t-test statistical tool. **Decision Rule:** For the correlation analyses, the decision was as follows: 0.00 – 0.20 = very low relationship (VLR), 0.21 – 0.40 = low relationship (LR), 0.41 – 0.60 = moderate/fair relationship (M/FR), 0.61 – 0.80 = high relationship (HR) and 0.81 – 1.00 = very high relationship (VHR). If $p\text{-value} \leq 0.05$, reject null (H_0) and accept the alternative (H_A)

Data Analyses and Presentation

Out of the 450 copies of instrument distributed and returned, 397 copies were found in useable form showing 88%. Analyses were carried out based on that. The presentations are organized according to the research questions and hypotheses.

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between library environment and utilization of information resources?

Table 1: Coefficient of Relationship between Library Environment and Utilization of Information Resources

		nrR^2	Remark
397	.906	0.821	VHR

(Key: Sample Size (n), Coefficient of Correlation (r), Coefficient of Determinant (R^2) and Very High Relationship (VHR))

Analyses in Table 1 showed the coefficient of relationship between library environment and utilization of information resources. The coefficient of relationship between library environment and utilization of information resources is .906. This coefficient is positive, indicating that increase in library environment will bring about equal increase in utilization of information resources. The coefficient falls within the range of very high relationship (.81 – 1.00), indicating that the relationship between library environment and utilization of information resources is very high. The coefficient of determination of 0.821 indicates that 82.1% of variation in utilization of information resources is accounted for by library environment.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between internet connectivity and utilization of information resources?

Table 2: Coefficient of Relationship between Internet Connectivity and Utilization of Information Resources.

		nrR^2	Remark
397	.806	0.650	VHR

(Key: Sample Size (n), Coefficient of Correlation (r), Coefficient of Determinant (R^2), and Very High Relationship (VHR))

Presented in Table 2 is the coefficient of relationship between internet connectivity and utilization of information resources. The coefficient of relationship between internet connectivity and utilization of information resources is .806. This coefficient indicates that there is a positive relationship between internet connectivity and utilization of information resources. This means that the better the internet connectivity, the better the utilization of information resources. The coefficient also falls within the range .81 – 1.00 for very high relationship, indicating that the relationship between internet connectivity and utilization of information resources is very high. The coefficient of determinant of 0.650 indicates that 65.0% of variation in utilization of information resources is explained by internet connectivity.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between institutional repositories and utilization of information resources?

Table 3: Coefficient of Relationship between Institutional Repositories and Utilization of Information Resources.

	<i>n</i>	<i>rR²</i>	<i>Remark</i>
397 .031	0.001	VLR	

(Key: Sample Size (*n*), Coefficient of Correlation (*r*), Coefficient of Determinant (*R²*), and Very Low Relationship (VLR))

In Table 3 the coefficient of relationship between institutional repositories and utilization of information resources is revealed. The coefficient of relationship between institutional repositories and utilization of information resources is .031. The coefficient falls within the range of very low relationship (.01 – .20), indicating that the relationship between institutional repositories and utilization of information resources is very low. The coefficient of determination of 0.001 indicates that only 0.10% of variation in utilization of information resources is accounted for by institutional repository.

Testing of Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between library environment and utilization of information resources?

Table 4: Sample Size (*n*), Degree of Freedom (*df*), Calculated t-value (*t_{cal}*), p-value, Tabulated t-value (*t_{crit}*) and Decision

Observed t Value (t_{cal}) and Decision					
		nt_{cal}	df	$p - \text{value}$	t_{crit} Decision
397	42.54	397	.000	1.96	H_{01} is Rejected

The calculated and tabulated t-values are 42.54 and 1.96 respectively, while the p-value is 0.000. Since the calculated t-value is greater than the tabulated t-value and the p-value is less than the significant value of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, the relationship between

library environment and utilization of information resources is significant. The p-value (0.000) tells us that the probability of getting a correlation coefficient of .906 in a sample of 397 students if the null hypothesis was true is very low or nearly zero. Hence, there is a significant relationship between library environment and utilization of information resources.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between internet connectivity and utilization of information resources.

Table 5: Sample Size (*n*), Degree of Freedom (*df*), Calculated t-value (*t_{cal}*), p-value, Tabulated t-value (*t_{crit}*) and Decision

<i>nt_{cal}dfp – valuet_{crit}Decision</i>					
397	27.06	397	.000	1.96	<i>H₀₂</i> is Rejected

The calculated t-value of 27.06 which is greater than the tabulated t-value of 1.96 and the p-value of 0.000 which is less than the significant value of 0.05 showed that the coefficient of relationship is significant. The significance value (or p-value) of 0.000 tells us that the probability of getting a correlation coefficient of .806 in a sample of 397 students if the null hypothesis was true (that, there is no significant relationship between internet connectivity and utilization of information resources) is very low or nearly zero. This shows that there is a significant relationship between internet connectivity and utilization of information resources.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between institutional repositories and utilization of information resources?

Table 6: Calculated t-value (*t_{cal}*), p-value, Tabulated t-value (*t_{crit}*) and Decision on the Relationship between institutional repositories and utilization of information resources.

<i>nt_{cal}dfp – valuet_{crit}Decision</i>					
397	0.62	397	.538	1.96	<i>H₀₂</i> is Accepted

The calculated and tabulated t-values are 0.62 and 1.96 respectively, while the p-value is 0.538. Since the calculated t-value is less than the tabulated t-value and the p-value is greater than the significant value of 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, the relationship between institutional repositories and utilization of information resources is not significant. The p-value (0.538) tells us that the probability of getting a correlation coefficient of .031 in a sample of 397 students if the null hypothesis was true (that, there was no relationship between institutional repositories and utilization of information resources) is very high or nearly one. Hence, there is no significant relationship between institutional repositories and utilization of information resources.

Discussion of Findings

Library Environment and utilization of Information Resources

This study discovered that the relationship between library environment and utilization of information resources is very high, positive and significant. This means that environmental factors such as well-designed building, lighting, ventilation, reading space, conveniences are put in place; there will be effective utilization of the library. This finding is in tandem with that of Echem and Udo-Anyanwu (2018) that a strong, positive and significant relationship exist between the library environment and students' use of the library. It also agree with that of Folorunso and Njoku (2016) that there is a significant relationship between the independent variables (library environment) and the dependent variable (use of library) This finding does not agree with that of Okorie (2018) who discovered that the extent of relationship between the environmental factors and use of library information resources in the federal universities is very low, negative and significant.

Internet Connectivity and Utilization of Information Resources

It was discovered that the relationship between internet connectivity and utilization of information resources is very high and there is a significant relationship between internet connectivity and utilization of information resources. This buttresses the fact that the use of the Internet in the library environment has facilitated easy access to many resources, and significant increase in information utilization. Mostofa (2011) opined that the internet provides a wealth of information in any subject field and students are using the internet increasingly as it occupies an important place among various information sources. The result of Adedokun, Magaji and Makinde (2018) showed no significant relationship between Internet use and library patronage.

Institutional Repositories and Utilization of Information Resources

The relationship between institutional repositories and utilization of information resources is very low. There is no significant relationship between institutional repositories and utilization of information resources. This finding may be attributed to the fact that the students may not be aware of institutional repositories and hence may not know their benefits. This is because the full benefits of institutional digital repository can be achieved only if stakeholders involved are fully aware of its potential roles. No wonder Iheanacho-Kelechi (2019) in her study discovered that the institutions studied have little contents in their online repository limited to only technical reports and research articles. Also, Nunda and Elia's (2019) findings indicate low adoption rate of institutional repositories among students.

Conclusion

The library users are the major reason for the establishment of university libraries. The utilization of the information resources in various formats contained in the library makes it worthwhile. There are a whole of lot media through which the students can get information. These media compete with the library and if the library management does nothing, it is bound to lose its users. The university libraries therefore need to put every effort to ensure that users are motivated to make effective utilization of information resources. The motivation can come through the library environment, internet connectivity, and the creation of awareness of the existence of institutional repositories.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researchers recommend that:

1. Conducive library environment should be provided in the universities for effective function of the libraries and to also ensure the comfort of the library users.
2. The library should be connected to an effective internet service provider. The internet connectivity should be made accessible to the students as far as they are within the school premises.
3. Institutional repositories are store houses of information resources emanating from the university. The university library should create awareness of the existence of institutional repositories so the students can make use of the resources contained therein.

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