

UTILIZATION OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION RESOURCES FOR COURSE CONTENT DEVELOPMENT BY ACADEMIC STAFF IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN IMO STATE, NIGERIA.

By

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Abstract:

This study investigated the utilization of library and information resources for course content development by academic staff in tertiary institutions in Imo State, Nigeria. Two research questions were posed and two hypothesis were formulated to guide the study. The literature was reviewed under the major concepts of the study. The study is descriptive survey adopting correlational method. This study was conducted in six tertiary institutions in Imo State with the population of 3,179 academic staff, deriving the sample size of 354 respondents using Taro yamanne statistical formular. Data collected were analysed using mean scores and Pearson “r” was used to test the level of relationship. The findings revealed that the extent of utilization of library and information resources by academic staff is very high. And that there is significant relationship between course content development and utilization of information resources. Based on the findings, the researcher recommended that academic staff should pay closer attention to developing course content; define the course goal; select relevant instructional materials, and possibly do an improvisation of instructional resource where the need arises.

Keywords: Information Resources, Academic Staff, course content development, Utilization and Academic Libraries.

Introduction

Academic libraries play a central role in advancing the goals of higher education by actively supporting teaching, learning, and research in alignment with the mission and vision of their parent institutions. Their collections and services must be comprehensive, current, and diverse enough to effectively meet the needs of the institution's academic programs. For this reason, academic libraries are often seen as the intellectual heart of a campus. If we were to view

tertiary institutions as “Temples” of knowledge, then the academic library would be the “Altar” — the central organ from which the rhythm and intensity of scholarly life are set across the entire academic community.

Academic libraries are institutions established within tertiary education settings such as universities, polytechnics, monotechnics, colleges of education, and similar organizations. They form an essential and inseparable component of these institutions, with a primary role of providing information resources and services that support the broader aims of education and research. This perspective is echoed by Okiy (2011), who emphasized that academic libraries in Nigeria play a pivotal role in helping institutions achieve their core mandates of teaching, research, and community engagement. As such, the importance of academic libraries in higher education institutions cannot be overstated. Bitagi and Garba (2008) even likened academic institutions and their libraries to identical twins, sharing responsibilities and functions in equal measure. Academic libraries according to Ukwueze and Osuagwu (2023) play the tripartite roles of teaching, learning and research.

Despite this vital role, university education in Nigeria is grappling with significant challenges in adapting to the evolving demands of the 21st century. Issues such as rapid population growth, inadequate library infrastructure, and chronic underfunding are undermining the ability of libraries to serve their intended purpose. For Nigerian tertiary institutions to truly foster intellectual, cultural, and technological advancement among students and faculty, substantial improvements in library resources and services are necessary. Without such support, the broader educational objectives may remain out of reach. Therefore, for academic staff to

effectively fulfill their teaching responsibilities—central to this study—it is essential that they are backed by robust and accessible information resources.

Information resources include all formats through which knowledge can be stored, accessed, and distributed. This encompasses textbooks, academic journals, serial publications, CD-ROMs, videotapes, audio cassettes, magnetic storage devices, computers, and internet-based tools—all capable of serving the varying research and teaching needs of academic staff, regardless of location.

Course content development refers to designing, organizing, writing and arranging of instructional materials (lectures, readings, multimedia, assessment, etc.) that make up a course. Academic staff is primarily responsible, often collaborating with librarians, multimedia experts and sometimes information specialists. The goal is to produce content that supports the learning outcomes of the course that is pedagogically sound, accessible, relevant and engaging.

For lecturers to effectively carry out their duties, access to comprehensive library and information services is essential. Without such support, their ability to teach and engage in scholarly activities would be significantly hindered. In today's knowledge-driven world, information is a crucial element for societal progress. Governments, organizations, and professionals worldwide rely on accurate and timely information to function effectively. As Iyiade & Ajani (2008) noted, one of the most vital information needs is that which helps individuals overcome uncertainty and solve problems.

Empowering educators through access to relevant information in accessible formats is one of the most effective ways to drive academic engagement and innovation. Academic librarians must proactively develop and implement strategies to ensure that a sufficient range of

information resources is available to meet the specific needs of lecturers for indepth course content development as the basis for effective instructional delivery. These resources are critical for tasks such as designing course outlines, preparing lesson plans, and achieving instructional goals. Consequently, understanding the unique information needs of academic staff is essential for developing effective library collections and improving institutional support systems.

Information needs of academic staff in tertiary institutions come in various forms: - teaching and research work, community services, current affairs and health/social welfare. They also include governmental/political issues, business and economic affairs, technical/science, environmental matters, and general administration among others. Information needs refer to the extent to which information is required by the lecturers in relation to their job. There is a link between information needs and job performed. Specifically, information needs of faculty are related to teaching, research and publications. Therefore, there is need to understand library users so as to be able to meet their information needs. Khan and Shafique (2011) stated that: understanding the user is the half battle in providing information services.

As research across various disciplines continues to evolve in complexity and depth, both academic staff and students are increasingly recognizing the pivotal role libraries play in supporting daily teaching, learning, and research activities. Libraries serve as vital hubs for accessing up-to-date scientific and technological information, available in both print and digital formats. In this context, it is expected that academic staff in tertiary institutions make active use of these resources to enhance educational delivery and scholarly inquiry.

However, no matter how extensive or current a library's collection may be, its true value lies in its usage. Without meaningful engagement from academic staff, the wealth of information

housed in these libraries remains untapped and ineffective. Therefore, the importance of fully utilizing library resources cannot be overstated—it is through consistent and purposeful use that these resources fulfill their intended purpose in the academic environment.

Statement of the Problem

Tertiary institutions should be a preparatory ground that should supply different sectors of the nation with productive manpower in diverse fields of human endeavor. This all-encompassing objective can only be achieved through effective and qualitative instructional delivery by the academic staff of these tertiary institutions which should be backed up with adequate provision of information resources for onward course content development as a strong implement for enhanced service delivery. Instead of this to be the case, there is said to be a serious decline in the quality and standard of Education which has led to the idiomatic question: “Is it that the barber is not experienced or that his implements are not effective?” This implies an investigation into whether the problem lies with students’ attitude to learning or the lecturers’ effectiveness in services delivery orchestrated by shallow and empty course content. It is on this backdrop that the researcher identified the need to investigate the extent to which utilization of information resources can affect course content development or that the information resources that should constitute the implement or tool for proper equipment were not made available. Because effective teaching method without adequate content which is borne out of research based on effective utilization of Library and information resources cannot accomplish the educational goal of producing resourceful individuals.

However, this research work tends to through awareness advocate for utilization of information resources by academic staff, and as well ascertain the major challenges facing academic staff in course content development in tertiary institutions.

Research Questions

In line with the purpose of this study, the following research questions were posed:

- i. What is the extent of utilization of information resources by Academic Staff?
- ii. What is the extent to which course content development by the academic staff correlates with utilization of information resources?

Review of Literature

Library Information Resources

Information resources encompass a wide range of materials and equipment collected by libraries to meet the information needs of both current and future users. According to Aliyu (2006), these resources consist of various materials that store, retrieve, and disseminate information for users' benefit. Specifically, information resources include books, newspapers, journals, magazines, dissertations, technical reports, and other printed materials. Additionally, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and electronic resources have emerged as vital tools for storing and sharing information globally, overcoming geographical barriers, and catering to the diverse needs of academic staff (researchers), especially in higher education institutions, which is the primary focus of this study.

Information services in academic libraries refer to the different methods and strategies employed by library professionals to acquire, organize, store, retrieve, and disseminate information to researchers and users. The range of services provided by any library largely

depends on the quality of its resources and the expertise of its staff. Aju and Ape (2011) pointed out that libraries are responsible for acquiring, processing, storing, retrieving, and sharing recorded information for reading, study, and consultation. Traditional library services include bibliographic compilations, indexing, abstracting, selective dissemination of information, and current awareness services, which help researchers access needed information quickly from printed resources. With the integration of ICT, these services are now delivered more efficiently through online platforms, making it essential for academic libraries to combine traditional and modern information resources to meet the contemporary demands of researchers.

However, acquiring information resources is only one part of the equation; ensuring their accessibility and retrievability for effective use is equally important. Information resources are the tools or equipment that store and transmit information, with the resource itself acting as the container and the information as the content. Libraries and information centers are evaluated based on their ability to store and retrieve information accurately and efficiently. The effectiveness of a library's information storage and retrieval systems determines how easily users can access the required information. This is why libraries place a strong emphasis on developing robust systems for information management, which has led to the development of advanced technologies to improve storage and retrieval processes.

Information can be stored in various formats, depending on the medium's compatibility with the content. It is crucial to distinguish between different types of information resources, which can be broadly classified into two categories:

- 1. Print or Book Resources**
- 2. Non-Book Resources/Materials**

Print or Book Resources

These are physical, printed materials, and they include:

- **Textbooks**
- **Reference resources** – such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, and atlases
- **Serials/Periodicals** – including journals, magazines, and newspapers
- **Manuscripts**
- **Gray Literature**

Non-Book Resources

Non-book or non-print materials are resources that can be perceived visually or audibly. These resources are commonly referred to as audiovisual materials, multimedia, ICT resources, teaching aids, and instructional media. Non-book materials can be further divided into three categories:

- **Visuals:** Resources that can only be perceived through sight. These materials are useful for those with sight and include books, posters, charts, models, handbills, filmstrips, transparencies, microfilms, photographs, and pictures.
- **Audios:** Resources whose content is received through the sense of hearing, catering to individuals with visual impairments. These include radios, phonographic records, audio tapes, and cassette players.
- **Audio-Visuals:** This category combines both visual and auditory elements, making it the most advanced and recent type of information resource. Thanks to ICT, audiovisuals offer a rich and engaging way to communicate with large audiences over long distances.

Examples of audiovisual resources include television sets, computers, VCD players, and other modern ICT devices.

This has to do with effective use of library and information resources. Cox and Janti (2013) defined use as the activity that measures the value of an item to a library or information system. They argued that use is the single most important criterion for determining library collections, making it essential for guiding the library's collection development efforts. In the context of academic libraries, utilization can be seen as the end goal of processes like acquisition, organization, and preservation of information resources.

Utilizing library resources means actively applying the acquired information in practical, meaningful ways. The extent to which information is utilized varies based on individual and organizational needs, as well as social, economic, and professional factors. According to Alegbelleye (1987), the utilization of information is influenced by the type of work being done, the profession, or the specific function of the individual or organization involved. The researcher concurs with Alegbelleye's view, particularly regarding academic staff, whose information needs are largely driven by their teaching and research objectives. Itoga (1992) categorized information utilization into three types of understanding:

1. **Perceptual Understanding:** This involves the way users perceive and access information based on their behaviors, gestures, and expressions.
2. **Normative or Objective Understanding:** In this context, information provision and utilization are driven by the user's objectives and purpose in seeking the information.
3. **Contextual and Subjective Understanding:** Here, the use of information depends on the subjective meaning attached to it by the user.

The availability, accessibility, and utilization of information resources are influenced by the complex behaviors and needs of users, which are shaped by economic, social, political, cultural, and technological factors. As users become increasingly sophisticated in their demands, the success of information utilization hinges on its ability to meet these evolving needs effectively. Ultimately, the utility of library resources is determined by how well they satisfy the information requirements of the user community.

Information is such a vital resource and critical element to human existence and the society at large that is quite indispensable. The need to become informed and knowledgeable individuals leads to the process of “identifying information needs.” Zawawi and Majid (2001) submitted that this process alone cannot work without knowing the ways individuals articulate, seek, evaluate, select and finally use the required information which is commonly known as “Information Seeking Behavior.”

According to Davadason and Lingam (1997), the understanding of information needs and information seeking behavior of various professional group is essential as it helps in the planning implementation, and operation of information system and services in the given work settings. The working environment and type of task performed by individual shape their information needs and the ways they acquire, select and use this information.

A lot of information and information resources are available of different types and in different formats. Academic libraries base their selection and acquisition of information resources based on the ultimate objective of the parent institution. It is the duty of the Librarian to select those resources that will satisfy the information needs of users. Man also has limits to his information needs. It is in the quest to delimit the information requirement of men that

Maurice (1969) observed that: information needs can be expressed in the question, what information would further this job and this research and could be recognized as doing so by the recipient?

Lecturers in tertiary institution, as professionals fall under one of the categories of users according to Uchegbu (2002). Lecturers' are group of researchers that seek information to assist them in their academic work, most importantly to prepare lecture materials to support their teaching, for self-development and also to know the latest development in their field. Lecturers also have to demonstrate strong research prowess as well as sound teaching and administrative skills. A lecturer that fails to consult different and quality information resources but relies on his residual knowledge or a textbook will find himself in an embarrassing situation when confronted by his students.

Information needs is described as an individual or group's desire to locate and obtain information to satisfy a conscious or an unconscious need. This is why user studies are significant to library practice. User study as used in this context can be defined as the scientific diagnosis of the information needs of library users within the aim of effective service provision through an effective and adequate library and information resources. This is an age – long academic exercise, usually motivated by the eagerness to accomplish the goal of information explosion and strong drive for excellence in every human endeavor. Emasealu (2013) posited that there have been studies about the information needs of various interest groups and professional portraying their peculiarities and sources consulted to meet their needs.

However, information needs of individual in any society are influenced by the purpose and goal at hand. The more Urgent and vital the information need, the more desperate the search,

speed and accessibility of information are also factors that lead to effective information utilization. Information need of users may be categorized according to the purpose and perhaps the nature of the user. The purpose of information and its usefulness to the solution of a task at hand may lead to its demand and use.

Course Content Development.

Course content development refers to the process through which academic staff design, organize, produce and refine the teaching and learning materials, assessments, learning activities and other resources that make up a course or module offered in a university, polytechnic or similar institution.

Information resources are the bedrock of effective teaching, research and curriculum design in higher education. In tertiary institutions, academic staff relies heavily on both print and electronic information resources to develop, enrich and update course content (Onwuagbaizu, Ahiauzu & Okiridu, 2025). The effective utilization of these resources ensures that course materials are current, evidence-based and aligned with academic professional standards. The integration of these resources in course content development promotes academic quality, research innovations and professional growth of lecturers (Aina, 2014).

Information resources include textbooks, journals, thesis, conference papers, government report, online databases, institutional repositories and Open Educational Resource (OERs) (popoola & Haliso, 2009). Academic staff utilizes these resources to design course outline, update lecture notes, prepare assignment and integrate case studies and recent findings into classroom instructions. The process enhances the depth and breadth of course materials making them more effective of current trends and scholarly debates (Reiser & Dempsey, 2017).

Academic staff uses information resources for course content development through consulting curriculum documents, textbooks and scholarly journals to ensure that course contents aligns with institutional and accreditation standards (Biggs & Tang, 2011). They also source current, relevant and up-to-date literature from scholarly databases such as Scopus, JSTOR and ResearchGate allows lecturers to integrate contemporary knowledge into their course materials (Chugh, Ledger & Shields, 2017). Libraries provide access to catalogues, databases and reference services helping lecturers locate quality materials for teaching and learning. (Ela-Diseph, 2021). Again course content development can be achieved by the utilization of resources, through collaborative platforms and institutional networks, academic staff sharing of teaching materials, lecture notes and research output that enhance content development (Onwuagbaizu, et al, 2025).

To improve course content development, institutions and academic staff should: Incorporate stakeholder feedback (students, industry experts, accreditation bodies) to ensure relevance (Reiser & Dempsey, 2017). Apply backward design, aligning teaching and assessment with learning outcomes (Biggs & Tang, 2011). Integrate technology and e-learning tools to promote flexible and accessible learning (Ayeni, Adewunmi, & Ekanoye, 2019). Encourage continuous professional development in pedagogy and instructional design (Cotta, de Souza Ferreira, & de Aguiar Franco, 2024). Promote collaboration among faculty members for peer review and content sharing (Chugh et al., 2017).

Despite the importance of these information resources, several challenges hinder the effective utilization of information resources by academic staff especially developing countries like Nigeria. These include inadequate ICT infrastructure and internet connectivity, poor funding

of academic libraries, limited information literacy and inadequate institutional support (Gbaje, 2017). Such challenges restrict the ability of academic staff to produce the innovative and relevant course materials that meet global standards. The utilization of information resources of academic staff is vital by high-quality course content development in tertiary institutions. Effective use ensures that teaching materials are rich, current and aligned with, modern pedagogical standard.

Academic libraries are the intellectual backbones of tertiary institutions. They provide access to diverse information resources that support teaching, learning and research. One of their critical is assisting academic staff in course content development. The process of creating, updating and organizing instructional materials to reflect current knowledge pedagogy and technological advancement. Through effective provision of information resources, libraries ensure that course materials are relevant, current and align with institutional academic goals. The role of academic library in providing resources for academic staff in their course content development includes but are not limited to the following:-

- a. **Provision of diverse information resources:** academic libraries provide access to print and electronic resources such as textbooks, journals, thesis, databases and open educational resources (OERs) that enable lecturers to enrich their course materials. These resources offer both theoretical and empirical foundations needed to design updated course syllable and lecture content (Ifijeh & Yusuf, 2020).
- b. **Access to electronic databases and digital libraries:** libraries subscribe to online databases such as EBSCOhost, JSTOR, ScienceDirect and ProQuest, giving academic staff access and peer reviewed research output. These digital collections help lecturers

integrate new knowledge and emerging trends into their courses (Owolabi & Akintola, 2021).

- c. **Current Awareness and Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI):** through current awareness services (CAS) and SDI, librarians inform academic staff about newly acquired materials, recent publications, and relevant research outputs. This proactive information service helps lecturers stay abreast of developments in their disciplines (Okon & Odu, 2022).
- d. **Collaboration in Curriculum and Syllabus Review:** academic librarians often collaborate with departmental committees in reviewing or designing curricula. Their expertise in information organization and retrieval ensures that course content is supported by appropriate and accessible materials (Popoola, 2020).
- e. **Training and Information Literacy Development:** libraries organize information literacy training sessions to equip lecturers with the skills needed to locate, evaluate, and use information resources effectively. This enhances lecturers' ability to integrate credible information sources into their teaching materials (Ezeani, 2019).
- f. **Support for Open Educational Resources (OERs):** academic libraries play a leading role in promoting OER initiatives by curating, managing, and disseminating freely available instructional materials. These resources help lecturers adapt and reuse educational content in cost-effective ways (UNESCO, 2020).
- g. **Institutional Repository Management:** libraries maintain institutional repositories that preserve and provide access to scholarly works produced within the institution.

Academic staff can draw from these repositories when developing or revising course materials (Okiki, 2021).

Methodology

The study is centered on utilization of information resources by academic staff in tertiary institutions in Imo State, Nigeria. The study is descriptive survey adopting correlational method. This study was conducted in six tertiary institutions in Imo state. The population of this study is 3,179 academic staff. A sample size of 354 lecturers was used for the study. In order to determine a representative sample size of the academic staff to be drawn from the population of 3,179 academic staff, Taro Yamane's (1969) statistical formula was used to determine the sample size. The instrument that was used for data collection is a four point Rating Scale. The research questions were answered using mean scores and Pearson "r" was used to test the level of relationship.

Analyses

This focused on the presentation of results on the analyses of data collected in accordance with the research questions and hypothesis adopted for the study.

Research Question One: What is the extent of utilization of information resources by Academic Staff?

Table 1: The Extent of Utilization of Information Resources by the Academic Staff of the Tertiary Institutions Studied

S/N	Information Resources	VHE (4)	HE (3)	LE (2)	VLE (1)	Mean	Decision
1	Books	151	82	12	6	3.52	Positive
2	Reference materials	103	119	22	7	3.27	Positive
3	Newspaper/Magazines	76	117	43	15	3.01	Positive
4	Journal	124	90	32	5	3.33	Positive
5	Thesis/Dissertations	68	118	46	19	2.94	Positive
6	Computer facilities	121	85	33	12	3.25	Positive

7	Audio/Visuals/Audio-visual facilities	37	97	74	43	2.51	Positive
8	Electronic/internet resources	129	81	28	13	3.30	Positive
9	E-books	63	115	45	28	2.85	Positive
10	Conference proceedings	30	121	74	26	2.62	Positive
11	Abstracts/Indexes.						
Grand mean						33.22	

Responses from Table 1 above shows the extent of utilization of the various information resources by the academic staff of the institutions studied. The grand mean value of 33.22 is an indication that all the information resources listed in the rating scale are being utilized to a very high extent. Information resources such as books, journals, electronic/internet resources, reference materials, computer facilities etc. top the list of information resources mostly utilized by the academic staff having high mean values.

Research Question two: What is the correlation between the extent of course content development for utilization of information resources?

Table 2: Correlation Coefficient of course content development for utilization of information resources.

Variable	N	Mean	Std Dev.	T	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	Decision
Course Content Dev.	251	37.56	1.889	19.289	0.774	0.016	Reject H ₀₃
Utilization of Info. Res	251	41.37	1.697				

The data on table 6 shows that since the t-calculated value of 19.289 has a p-value that is less than the 0.05 critical values, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is significant relationship between course content development and utilization of information resources.

The correlation coefficient of course content development with the utilization of information resources is 0.774. This shows that the academic staff utilizes about 77% of information resources in the development of their course content. In other words, the correlation

between course content development and utilization of information resources is “high” since the correlation coefficient falls between 0.61 and 0.80 and is therefore rated as “high relationship”.

Summary of Findings

Salient findings were made in this chapter and they are summarized as follows:

1. There is a very high extent of utilization of the various information resources by the academic staff of the institutions studied. Information resources such as books, journals, electronic/internet resources, reference materials, computer facilities etc. top the list of information resources mostly utilized by the academic staff.
2. There is significant relationship between course content developments for utilization of information resources by the academic staff of the institutions studied. The correlation coefficient revealed that the academic staff utilizes about 77% of information resources in the development of their course content. This finding is in agreement with the position of Davadson and Lingam (1997) that the understanding of information needs and information seeking behavior of various professional group is essential as it helps in the planning and implementation of programs and the operation of information services in a given work settings.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings and conclusion drawn, the following recommendations are made:

1. Academic Libraries should focus more on providing relevant and current information resources like books, journals, electronic resources, computer facilities and reference materials which the findings revealed to have the highest level of utilization by the

academic staff in these tertiary institutions under study. Part of this provision includes proper processing and organization of these resources in a manner that will guarantee its availability, accessibility for maximum utilization by the academic staff for effective instructional delivery.

2. The study having revealed a significant relationship between course content development for utilization of information resources, the academic staff should pay closer attention to observe the following in developing course content; define the course goal, interact with professional colleagues on some special topics, develop a course outline, select relevant instructional materials, and possibly do an improvisation of instructional resource where the need arises. The researcher also recommends that academic staff should seek for the assistance of a professional librarian in sourcing for lecture materials, and determine how to evaluate students' performances.

Conclusion

This research work investigated utilization of information resources by academic staff in tertiary institutions in Imo state. A study of 251 academic staff and 377 students from 6 tertiary institutions in Imo state revealed that there is a significant relationship between the academic staff levels of performance, and their utilization of information resources. Problems such as network issues in accessing electronic resources on campus, inadequate/outdated information resources, inadequate teaching and learning facilities, low/poor students' attendance to class, unconducive teaching and learning facilities were some of the major challenges facing the lecturers in their use of information resources. Based on these findings, we conclude that there is

a high relationship between information resources utilization and instructional delivery by academic staff of tertiary institutions; though some challenges hinder their use of information resources.

Useful recommendations were made to enhance the lecturers' use of information resources in tertiary institutions. Academic libraries are indispensable partners in course content development. By providing timely, relevant, and diverse information resources, and by training academic staff in effective information use, libraries strengthen the quality of teaching and learning in tertiary institutions. Strengthening collaboration between librarians and academic staff, improving ICT infrastructure, and increasing funding are essential to optimize this role.

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