

ACQUISITION AND UTILIZATION OF LIBRARY INFORMATION RESOURCES FOR RESEARCH BY POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE IN UNIVERSITIES IN BENUE STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated acquisition and utilization of library information resources for research by postgraduate students of library and information science in universities in Benue State, Nigeria. Three research questions guided the study. Three hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Descriptive survey research design was employed. The population of the study was 91 comprising of librarians and postgraduate students. The entire population was used as sample size. The instrument for data collection was researcher-developed questionnaire titled "Acquisition and Utilization of Library Information Resources for Research by Postgraduate Questionnaire" (AULIRRPSQ). The questionnaire was validated by three experts. The reliability of the questionnaire was established using Cronbach's Alpha method and a reliability coefficient of 0.90 was obtained for librarians and 0.89 was obtained for postgraduate students. Data collected were analyzed using Frequency Counts, Percentages, Mean and Standard Deviation to answer research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Findings of the study revealed that, library information resources are highly acquired for research and there are different methods of acquiring and utilizing library information resources for research by postgraduate students of library and information science in universities in Benue State. The study concluded that, there are challenges associated with postgraduate students of library and information science utilizing library information

resources for research in universities in Benue State. The study therefore recommended among others that efforts should be made by universities in Benue state to curb the challenges and enhance effective utilization of library information resources through regular information literacy training.

Keywords: University Library, Librarian, Library and information resources, Acquisition, Utilization, Research, Postgraduate Students.

Introduction

Universities are tertiary institution where teaching, learning, research, and knowledge promote creation takes place. In other words, universities teaching, learning and research towards improving learning and knowledge dissemination to increase students' research activities, personal development, innovation, and socio-economic development (Maxwell, 2018). One of the key responsibilities of universities is to train students generally and postgraduate students in research in various disciplines to create knowledge and provide community services. Basically, as institution of higher learning, universities are research oriented which award academic degrees in several academic disciplines. These disciplines include Law, Accounting, Chemistry, Medicine and Library and Information Science among several others. To sustain the research and academic activities of these disciplines, university libraries have been established.

University libraries are the backbone of their parent institutions (the universities). They are integral part of university institutions established to meet information and research needs of both undergraduate and postgraduate students, staff, and the entire university community. Okiki (2013) affirm that, university libraries are a hub of all academic activities set up to promote all academic and intellectual excellence. In the same vein, Ogunrombi (2017) advanced that, university libraries are

fountain and reservoir of organized information resources of diverse kinds such as print, non-print and internet/electronic resources that have been carefully selected, acquired, organize and disseminated to cater for research and academic needs of various users by librarian.

Librarians are group of professionals trained in library schools to provide information and have acquired a minimum of first degree in Library and Information Science (Bello, 2018). Librarians professional duties are to manage both print and non-print information resources for effective use by library users. Therefore, librarians are expected to assist the library users to access information and make precise information available for utilization.

Furthermore, Aina (2014) stated that, librarians are information professionals trained in recognized institutions both internationally and nationally. These information professionals acquire either a bachelor's degree, Masters or PhD in Library and Information Science. Kulno (2016) documented that, librarians are solely responsible for the provision of information that support teaching, learning and research activities in educational institutions. Librarians as information providers are saddled with the responsibility of providing access and use to library information resources to researchers and postgraduate students.

Postgraduate students are students who have already obtained a degree and are studying in a university for a higher degree, such as Postgraduate diploma, Masters or Doctoral degree in a particular field of study (Brown & Holloway, 2018). According to Abubakar and Adetimirin (2016) Postgraduate students are group of students that require information for academic and research purpose. Postgraduate students are subjected to research activities in their studies to gain knowledge and research skills that will enable them to contribute meaningfully to societal development.

Research is a scientific way of systematically acquiring information on a phenomenon. Igbal and Mahmood (2017) averred that, to research is to conduct research, collect data and analyse. The research skills acquired by postgraduate students enable them to identify societal needs and investigate a phenomenon as well as proffer solutions to their research worries. The solution to their research worries can be effectively and efficiently carried out with the utilization of library information resources.

Library Information Resources (LIR) according to Oyewusi and Oyeboade (2019) are collections of all texts and bibliographic information sources as well as information technology such as those that support browsing, authoring, and communication like computer and the internet. In essence, library information resources are all information bearing materials in print, non-print and electronic/internet formats carefully selected and acquired for educational and research purposes to achieve academic excellence. The types of library information resources acquired by university libraries across print, non-print, and electronic/digital formats (Dike, 2017). The purpose of library information resources is for utilization by researchers and postgraduate students in a university (Lal, 2019). However, utilization of library information resources can only be achievable with adequate and frequent acquisition of the resources.

Acquisition of library information resources is the act of obtaining information bearing materials to make up a library collection. According to Aghadiuno, Agbo and Onyekweodiri (2015), acquisition of library information resources is the process of purchasing information resources that have been carefully selected by a library. The methods of acquiring library information resources by universities include purchase, donations, gifts and exchange, bequeath, legal deposit, membership to associations, online subscription and direct ordering (Maheswarappa & Ebnazar, 2018). These processes are carried out by librarians in university libraries to ensure that postgraduate students have easy access to library information resources for effective utilization for their research activities.

Utilization entails making use of library information resources. Chimah and Nwokocha (2023) stated that, utilization is the actual putting into appropriate use

acquired library information resources. Utilization of library information resources by postgraduate student is the act of systematically consulting or interacting with diverse library information resources for the purpose of finding out more about a phenomenon by students involved in studies of higher learning. Omekwu (2021) documented that, utilization of library information resources has been of concern since libraries changed from cultural monuments to knowledge acquisition centers. Therefore, utilization is the extent to which library users make use of library information resources to meet their information needs. The quality of research is directly influenced by the acquisition of library information resources. The relevance of library information resources for study and research by postgraduate students therefore cannot be over emphasized.

Statement of the Problem

Library information resources play a pivotal role in the university as a whole. They are used for study, teaching and research purposes. This is dependent on acquisition of these sources. Where the acquisition of library information resources is faulty, effective use of the resources for research and any other purposes will be adversely affected.

Despite the vital role that library information resources play in educational activities of postgraduate students, there are still some observed challenges in the utilization of these resources for research. Regardless of the huge efforts and financial resources made by universities in Benue State to acquire information resources for their libraries, the researcher has observed that, postgraduate students in these universities do not easily access appropriate and relevant information resources that can enhance and enrich their research activities. The resultant consequences of the

situation is that, there will be poor research work and poor graduates being churned out by the universities. And when this happens, universities will produce graduates that cannot bring about the desired national development the society crave for. It is against this backdrop that this study was instituted.

Research Questions

The study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the types of information resources acquired by university libraries for research by postgraduate students of library and information science in Benue State?
2. What are the methods of acquiring information resources by university libraries for research by postgraduate students of library and information science in Benue State?
3. What is the extent to which postgraduate students of library and information science utilize information resources for research in universities in Benue State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0. 05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean response of respondents on the types of information resources acquired by university libraries for research for postgraduate students of library and information science in universities in Benue State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean response of respondents on the methods of acquiring library information resources by university libraries for

research for postgraduate students of library and information science in universities in Benue State.

3. There is no significant difference in the mean response of respondents on the extent to which postgraduate students of library and information science utilize library information resources for research in universities in Benue State.

Literature Review

The theoretical framework was anchored on Information Utility Theory propounded by Ross J. Todd in 1994. Under the conceptual framework, concepts such as university libraries, librarians, postgraduate students, research, library information resources, acquisition, and utilization were reviewed. For the review of related empirical studies, Hadley School Committee (2014) and Jegede (2020) identified types of information resources to include books, audio-visual materials, software media and newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, microfilm, films, slides, disc records, audiotapes, computer software, CD-ROMs, Online Public Access Catalogue, and the Internet. The finding of this study agrees with Amenga (2024). This study aligns with that of Chima and Nwokocha (2023) who asserted that utilization is the actual harnessing and putting into appropriate use the acquired information resources for research work. The finding of this study is in line with Ogor, Faga and Lushima (2024) whose study discovered a high extent of information utilization among students as they utilize a range of information resources such as textbooks, journals, newspapers/magazines, encyclopedias, projects, abstracts and atlases. The finding of this study corroborates with Asongo, Agoh and Annune (2024) whose study found out that, information resources in the library are utilized for research output to a high extent. The study

disagrees with Amenga (2024) whose study noticed that, postgraduate students utilize information resources in university libraries to a low extent.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and was carried out in Benue State Nigeria. The entire population of 91respondents was used as sample size for the study because it was sizeable and manageable. Two questionnaires, one for librarians and one for postgraduate students of library and information science both self-developed were used for data collection. The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by three experts. The internal consistency was calculated using Cronbach Alpha method and reliability coefficient of 0.90 was obtained for librarians and 0.89 for postgraduate students. Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation to answer research questions and hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion

The results of the study are presented according to research questions answered below:

Research Question 1: What are the types of information resources acquired by university libraries for research by postgraduate students of library and information science in in Benue State?

Table 1: Frequency and Percentages of Responses on types of information resources acquired by university libraries for research by postgraduate students of library and information science in Benue State.

S/No	Item Statement	N	Acquired	Not	Decision
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		Freq.		%	Acquired		
					Freq.	%	
1	Textbooks	56	54	96.4	2	3.6	A
2	Periodicals	56	53	94.6	3	5.4	A
3	Catalogues (Indexes, abstracts, maps etc	56	2	3.6	54	96.4	NA
4	Documents (federal/state governments and united nations publications e.g., executive, legislatives, and judicial arms of government)	56	2	3.6	54	96.4	NA
5	Realia and models	56	55	98.2	1	1.8	A
6	Internet//online databases/CD-ROM, Fax, computers	56	55	98.2	1	1.8	A
7	Audio-Visual materials (Video tapes, record players, radio and cassettes)	56	55	98.2	1	1.8	A
8	Special materials (minutes, commentaries, papers on people, correspondences etc.)	56	55	98.2	1	1.8	A
9	Project works (theses and dissertations)	56	55	98.2	1	1.8	A
10	Reference materials (Encyclopedias, etc.)	56	55	98.2	1	1.8	A

Key: A=Acquired, NA= Not Acquired.

Based on the results in Table 1, the first finding of the study revealed that textbooks, periodicals, internet/online databases/CD-ROM, Fax, computers, Audio-Visual materials, special materials (such as minutes, correspondences), project works and reference materials are types of information resources acquired by university libraries for research for postgraduate students of library and information science in

universities in Benue State. However, documents (federal or state governments and United Nations publications like executive, legislatives, and judicial arms of government) as well as realia and models were not acquired. The finding of this study is in line with Hadley School Committee (2014) and Jegede (2020) who identified types of information resources to include books, audio-visual materials, software media and newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, microfilm, films, slides, disc records, audiotapes, computer software, CD-ROMs, Online Public Access Catalogue, and the Internet. The finding of this study agrees with Amenga (2024) whose study revealed that newspapers, newsletters, almanac, professional journals, reports, yearbooks, gazettes, indexes and abstracts were the types of information resources acquired for utilization by postgraduate students in the universities.

Research Question 2: What are the methods of acquiring information resources by university libraries for research by postgraduate students of library and information science in Benue State?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of responses on methods of acquiring information resources by university libraries for research by postgraduate students of library and information science in Benue State

S/No.	Item Statement	N	Std. Deviation		Decision
			Mean		
11	Purchase	56	4.00	0.00	A
12	Donations	56	4.00	0.00	A
13	Gifts	56	4.00	0.00	A

14	Exchange	56	4.00	0.00	A
15	Bequeath	56	2.23	1.16	D
16	Legal deposits	56	3.68	0.47	A
17	Professional Membership	56	2.98	0.59	A
18	Online Subscription	56	2.94	0.55	A
Grand Mean		56	3.48		A

Key: A=Agree, D= Disagree

Based on the results in Table 2, the second finding of the study revealed that purchase; donations, gifts, exchange, legal deposits, professional membership and online subscription are the methods of acquiring information resources by university libraries for research by postgraduate students of LIS in Benue State. The finding of this study corroborate with Amenga (2024) whose study revealed that purchasing, gifting, donations, direct, ordering, exchange, legal deposit, online subscription, and membership of association were the methods of acquiring information resources for utilization for postgraduates.

Research Question 3: What is the extent to which postgraduate students of library and information science utilize information resources for research in university libraries in Benue State?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation of respondents on extent to which postgraduate students of library and information science utilize information resources for research in university libraries in Benue State

S/No.		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
19	Textbooks	35	3.94	0.24	VHE
20	Periodicals	35	3.57	1.07	VHE
21	Catalogues, Indexes, etc.	35	3.57	0.98	VHE
22	Documents (federal/state and united nations publications)	35	1.80	0.93	VLE
23	Realia and models	35	1.31	0.80	VLE
24	Internet/online databases	35	2.97	0.51	HE
25	Audio-Visual materials	35	2.97	0.51	HE
26	Special materials (minutes, commentaries, papers on people, correspondences.)	35	3.43	0.85	HE
27	Project works (theses and dissertations)	35	3.20	0.68	HE
28	Reference materials (Encyclopedias, dictionaries.)	35	2.89	1.00	HE
	Grand Mean	35	2.75		HE

Key: VHE=Very High Extent, VLE=Very Low Extent, HE=High Extent

More so, based on the results in Table 3, the third finding of the study revealed that Postgraduate students of Library and Information Science utilize textbooks, periodicals (Journals, newspapers, magazines and more) and catalogues to a very high extent; and indexes, abstracts, maps, internet/online databases/CD-ROM, Fax,

computers, Audio-Visual materials (like Video tapes, record players, radio and cassettes), special materials (such as minutes, commentaries, papers on people, correspondences), project works (theses and dissertations) and reference materials (like Encyclopedias) to a high extent. However, they do not utilize documents (federal or state governments and United Nations publications like executive, legislatures, and judicial arms of government) as well as realia and models; or they do to a very low extent. This study aligns with that of Chima and Nwokocha (2023) who asserted that utilization is the actual harnessing and putting into appropriate use the acquired information resources for research work; and that when postgraduate students and other researchers utilize textbooks, journals, newspapers, magazines, indexes, abstracts, maps, internet/online databases/CD-ROM, Fax, computers, Audio-Visual materials, theses and dissertations as well as reference materials like Encyclopedias to a high extent, it helps to articulate research experience and output. The finding of this study is in line with Ogor, Faga and Lushima (2024) whose study discovered a high extent of information utilization among students as they utilize a range of information resources such as textbooks, journals, newspapers/magazines, encyclopedias, projects, abstracts and atlases. The finding of this study corroborates with Asongo, Agoh and Annune (2024) whose study found out that, information resources in the library are utilized for research output to a high extent. The finding of this study disagrees with Amenga (2024) whose study noticed that, postgraduate students utilize information resources in university libraries to a low extent.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the mean response of respondents on the types of information resources acquired by university libraries for research for postgraduate students of library and information science in universities in Benue State.

Table 4: t-test of Mean response of respondents on the types of information resources acquired by university libraries for research for postgraduate students of library and information science in universities in Benue State

Name of Institution	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	df	Sig(2-tailed)	Remarks
Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi	32	1.21	0.06	.000	54	1.000	NS
Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi	24	1.21	0.04				
56							

N = Number of Respondents, df = Degree of Freedom, NS = Not Significant

From Table 4 it can be seen that 32 respondents from Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi had the mean of 1.21 with the standard deviation of 0.06 and 24 respondents from Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi had the mean of 1.21 with the standard deviation of 0.04. To test for the difference, $t=.000$ with $df=54$ and had the computer calculated associated probability for decision taking = 1.000 denoted by P. Since P is greater than 0.05 (significance level), then the difference is not significant. Therefore, the hypothesis is not accepted. This implies that, there no significant difference in the mean response of respondents on the types of information

resources acquired by university libraries for research by postgraduate students of library and information science in universities in Benue State.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the mean response of respondents on the methods of acquiring library information resources by university libraries for research for postgraduate students of library and information science in universities in Benue State.

Table 5: t-test of Mean response of respondents on the methods of acquiring library information resources by university libraries for research for postgraduate students of library and information science in universities in Benue State

Name of Institution	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	df	Sig(2-tailed)	Remarks
Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi	32	3.41	0.16	-			
				2.621	54	0.011	S
Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi	24	3.57	0.28				
	56						

N = Number of Respondents, df = Degree of Freedom, S = Significant

From Table 5 it can be seen that 32 respondents from Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi had the mean of 3.41 with the standard deviation of 0.16 and 24 respondents from Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi had the mean of

3.57 with the standard deviation of 0.28. In order to test for the difference, $t = -2.621$ with $df = 54$ and had the computer calculated associated probability for decision taking = 0.011 denoted by P . Since P is less than 0.05 (significance level), then the difference is significant. The hypothesis is therefore, rejected. The implication is that, there is significant difference in the mean response of respondents on the methods of acquiring library information resources by university libraries for research for postgraduate students of library and information science in universities in Benue State.

Hypothesis three: There is no significant difference in the mean response of respondents on the extent to which postgraduate students of library and information science utilize library information resources for research in universities in Benue State.

Table 6: t-test of Mean response of respondents on the extent to which postgraduate students of library and information science utilize library information resources for research in universities in Benue State

Type of Library	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	df	Sig(2-tailed)	Remarks
Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University Makurdi	18	2.74	0.20				
				-.556	33	.582	NS
Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi	17	2.77	0.13				
	35						

N = Number of Respondents, df = Degree of Freedom, NS = Not Significant

From Table 6 it can be seen that 18 respondents from Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi had the mean of 2.74 with the standard deviation of 0.20 and 17

respondents from Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi had the mean of 2.77 with the standard deviation of 0.13. In order to test for the difference, $t = -.556$ with $df = 33$ and had the computer calculated associated probability for decision taking = 0.582 denoted by P . Since P is greater than 0.05 (significance level), then the difference is not significant. The hypothesis is not rejected. This implies that, there is significant difference in the mean response of respondents on the extent to which postgraduate students of library and information science utilize library information resources for research in universities in Benue State.

Recommendations

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

1. In order to enhance effective acquisition and utilization of library information resources, the universities should allocate adequate funds for acquisition of relevant and current library information resources.
2. There should be Library Collection Development Policies that will prioritize the postgraduate students' information needs and ensure that those resources acquired principally align with their research needs, interest and scope.
3. Postgraduate students should be given regular information literacy training and awareness campaigns to foster the development of their skills in locating, accessing, and utilizing library information resources effectively to enhance research activities.

4. Regular training of librarians on acquisition of information resources should be prioritized to enhance their cataloguing and classification skills for effective and efficient management of library information resources.

Conclusion

The study concluded that university libraries in Benue state, Nigeria utilize different methods to acquire information resources for research for postgraduate students of library and information science. Though, there are challenges associated with acquisition and utilization of library information resources for research by postgraduate students of library and information science but if given attention, there could be a drastic improvement in the utilization of information resources by postgraduate students of library and information science in universities in Benue state, Nigeria.

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