



USE OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES BY ACADEMIC STAFF OF NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES: *A case study*

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Abstract

Quality academic research activities can be successfully carried out if one depends on the library resources, therefore, this study examined the usage of libraries by the academics for their academics research work. The study employed descriptive survey research method to sample 318 respondents from a population of 326 academic staff. Questionnaire was used for data collections and descriptive statistics using IBM SPSS Statistics 2.0 in computing the statistical table to determine its frequencies and percentages. The findings of this study were; only few academics engage the libraries in their research and publishing activities. It was also discovered that most academics find it difficult to patronize and utilize the resources of these libraries despite its rich information resources. Libraries and its services are given little significance by researchers; unlike before, they no longer use the library for their purpose due to various perceived reasons. These days, internet is gradually taking over the mind of our academics thereby neglecting the library resources. The study finally recommended that; awareness and orientation should be created that will show the academics the importance of engaging the library in their research activities. Library should be made to review its services and functions that will attract the academics to patronize its services.

Keywords: academics, library, research, resources

Introduction

Academic staff is an integral part of the university system, inculcating sound knowledge into the mind of students. They are academic professionals who are responsible for planning, directing and undertaking academic teaching and research within higher education institutions. The following are included in list of academic staff; vice-chancellors, medical practitioners, dentists, veterinarians and other health care professionals who undertake lecturing or research activities, (Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) 2009). Research activities characterized academic staff. The growth and development of any academic staff depend greatly on research works. Therefore, academic staff's research activities are perceived to have a lot to do with academic libraries due to avalanche of huge information resources that could assist in research works.

Academic Library and Research Activities

University libraries by their very nature are expected to acquire, process into retrievable form, and make available the much needed information to the academic community and the public at large who may require them for their various teaching and research activities, (Popoola S.O. 2008). The role of academic libraries cannot be over emphasized, it provide information resources and services that support the attainment of the broad objectives of teaching, learning and research activities of the parent institution; that is to say, academic library effectively support the institutions to attain the key functions of teaching, research and community service, Bitagi & Garba (2014) and Okiy (2011). Research supports and developments cannot be separated from academic libraries, Hart & Kleinveldt (2011) "academic libraries

typically identify research support as a central pillar in their mission". The rational of every university library is to support the university in the following areas; learning, teaching and all forms of academic research. Library is the nucleus of any citadel of learning and as such, functional university can be rated, measured and quantified by functionality of library services and activities they rendered to its host institution. However, Akpoghiran (2008), Ajayi and Adetayo (2005) opined that the effectiveness of a library as an instrument of learning is determined by the success with which it is able to provide the user with the information he/she seeks.

Academic library creates an important cog in any institution of learning; it's a fulcrum in which universities activities hung upon. Umeozor & Afolabi (2014) quoting Ntui (2009) observed that teaching, learning, and research activities in universities cannot be properly achieved without effective libraries that would acquire and disseminate information materials. According to Obi (2005) obliged academic libraries to provide services to their users in order to achieve and complete their academic obligations.

In consideration of effectiveness and academic performance, it has been proven that academic libraries have huge impact in the overall academic wellbeing of its users (Cox and Jantti, 2012). Also, The Encyclopedia Americana (2000) reports that academic library is becoming an integral part of an electronic network that allows access to multiple information sources in a variety of media. It is very imperative to note that academics in various higher institutions of learning cannot undergo their teaching capability without thorough research that is aided by library services. One of the areas of this study is focused on the research activities of academic staff, as such; we can describe research according to some scholars as quest for knowledge.

Furthermore, it is a process of collecting, analyzing and interpreting information to answer questions. It could be defined as man's systematic and empirical investigation into existing but hidden elements in nature with the purpose of unearthing, restructuring and explaining such elements for the purpose of development, (Busher and Harter; 1980, Emojorho; 2013; Ifidon and Ifidon; 2007). Research is carried out holistically to expand our horizon. The academic staff of the universities is mandated to embark on rigorous research works that add values to the academic institutions, quality to their own academic prowess and virtuosity and to the nation at large. Hunter and Kuh (1987) concluded that research are conducted by the academics to contribute to knowledge, facilitate promotion, increase personal prestige as well as fulfilling scholarly obligations. Therefore, academic libraries must be positioned to support quest for knowledge.

Statement of the problem

Despite the beauty and sweet smelling savor of academic libraries, little recognition and patronage has been given to it by our amiable academicians as perceived by the researcher. In Nigeria, socio-political and economic challenges hampered barely every sector of our human life. This has greatly affected to some extent our academic activities. Most academic writers have virtually concluded that libraries are placed in least priority and also, academic activities are being paralyzed by various unfriendly activities of the government thereby killing learning and research activities. Aguola

(1982) in Edem (2007) posited that the Nigerian university librarians seems to be preoccupied with basic library duties like acquisition, processing and preservation with basic library duties like acquisition, processing and preservation without giving proper services to the use of library for research work. It is in this regard that this research intends to investigate the use of university libraries by academic staff of Nigerian universities.

Objectives of the study

- To ascertain if academics still engage in using university libraries for their research and publishing activities
- To evaluate the frequency and regularity of library use in the course of their research and publishing activities
- To determine the academics' alternative sources of information for their work
- To determine how well they subscribed to journal article in their field of knowledge.

Methodology

Descriptive survey research method was adopted for the study. The population of the study was 326 academic staff and 318 were sampled for the study using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) technique for sample size. The study further adopted questionnaire for data collections and, the data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics adopting *IBM SPSS Statistics 20* in computing the statistical table to determine its frequencies and percentages.

Bingham University Karu runs two campuses i.e. Jos medical Campus and the main campus in Karu, Nasawara State of Nigeria. The population of academic staff is (326) and (318) are the sampled for this study as this sample is believed to give 95% confidence rate and 2.5% margin of error,

this is in line with Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Meanwhile, table 1 revealed that a total number of 315 (99%) questionnaire were filled, returned and found usable for this study. All the presentation and analysis of this study shall be calculated based on these returned numbers of questionnaire.

Results/ Discussion

Table 1: Sample size for the study

Bingham University Karu	Academic staff population	Sample size	Number of questionnaire returned
	326	318	315

Table 2: Rate of Usage of Bingham University Library

	Frequency	Percent
Everyday	10	3
Twice in a week	15	5
3-4 Times	22	7
Once in a week	15	5
Once in a month	40	13
I don't Use the library	213	67
Total	315	100.0

Table 2 and 3 critically revealed the rate at which the library is being put to use by the academic staff. In table 2, the percentage of users of the library every day is 10 (3%), those using the library twice a week account for 15 (5%), 3-4 times a week recorded 22

(7%) response, those that use the library once in a week and once in a month are 15 (5%) and 40 (13%) respectively and, finally those respondent that doesn't use the university at all are 213 (67%).

Table 3: The Last time you make use of the Library

Day	Frequenc y	Percent
Yesterday	20	6.3
Last week	35	11.1
Last month	40	12.7
Last semester	30	9.5
Don't Remember	190	60.3
Total	315	100.0

Table 3 showed the last time the academics used Bingham University library. About 20 (6%) of users use the library yesterday, last week 35 (11%) used the library, 40 (13%) used the library last month. In last semester, only 30 (10%) patronized the library and finally, 190 (60%) respondent didn't remember the last time they use the library.

It can be deduced from above presentations that library patronage by the academics could be perceived to be very poor; library is designed to aid teaching and provide information services (Buckland 2007). Therefore, serious effort must be put in place by academic libraries to draw attention of academics to the beauty of services it offers. We are in the era of

publicity using every resources to market the information products and other forms of current awareness services that the library has in stocks, (Madhusudham 2008, Nooshinfard & Ziaei 2011 and Umeozor & Afolabi 2014). Lack of library patronage as revealed in this study might have serious implication on the academics in their research work and performance. Library provide services to locate, evaluate and access quality information in variety of formats (Gbaje & Okojie 2010) but the inability of the academics to acquaint themselves with these services could hinder the quality of their research work as perceived by the researcher.

Table 4: Indicate other library apart from Bingham

Statement	Frequency	Percent
Yes	70	22.2
No	245	77.8
Total	315	100.0

In furtherance to know if they use other libraries apart from Bingham university library, table 4 therefore shows that 70 (22%) respondent do make use of other libraries and subsequently, a total of 245 (78%) don't patronize other institution's libraries or academic libraries. This could

still be attributed to lack of reading culture of an average Nigerians and their ignorance to library services. We could also reason that these habits of our academics towards library usage are as result of academic libraries not meeting their interest and aspiration. Inadequate services rendered by

libraries or provision of poor and sere in environment that could not motivate users to

study and carry out research work could put many library patrons off the library.

Table 5: Reason for not using Bingham University Library

Statement	Frequency	Percent
The Materials I need are not there are not in the library	85	27.0
The environment is not conducive for me	35	11.1
I don't have the time	65	20.6
I get what I need from the internet	130	41.3
Total	315	100.0

Table 5 enumerated series of likely reasons academics were not putting Bingham University library to use. It was revealed that 85 (27%) don't found their needed information resources (Materials), 35(11%) considered the library environment as not conducive for them to carry out their study. Meanwhile, 65(20%) do not have the time to pay visit or use the library and, finally 130 (41%) get all their needs from the internet. The proliferation of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has brought tremendous search for information by the general populace. The internet is taken to be a major source of information; it is a pool where ideas and information are

tapped. It is also believe that the internet has become a universal library, where books journals, articles and other materials can be sources right within the confines of individuals' homes in any part of the globe (Akpoghirann 2008 & Ndukwe 2003). It is very obvious that the coming of internet brings series of reasons why many library patrons run away from the library. Except libraries begin to bring in automation and other forms of technological modernization to provide needed information to the users, library might be a shadow of itself in this technological epoch as perceived by the researcher.

Table 6

Statement	Frequency	Percent
Public cybercafé	12	4.0
Through the university e-library	25	8
Use of modem	80	25.4
I don't use the internet	8	3.0
Through my smart phone	190	60.3
Total	315	100.0

Table 6 revealed the respondents access to the internet, 12 (4%) of the respondents adopt the use of public cybercafé, 25(8%) of the respondents use university e-library, 80(25%) of the entire respondents make use of modem. Those that did not use the internet are 8(3%) and majority of the respondents i.e. 190(60%) do access the internet via their smart phones. The current technological advancement in information and technology (ICTs) has made it so easy to access the internet even from the palm of our hands. Many people prefer using their smart phones to gain access to the internet. This may be attributed to the convenience enjoyed while using smart phones. Private telephone and mobile network operators are currently providing internet access; this has enable subscribers to have personal internet access on mobile telephone (Adomi 2012; Adomi, Ebaivwie & Ogugua, 2011). Also, the introduction of various smartphones, I pads, iPhones, androids, blackberry and window phones bundled with internet data

by mobile operators (Adepetun 2012) may have contributed to the significance rate at which many academics surf the internet. This proliferation in internet services have created a tremendous information search among people and thereby causing a little challenge to the use of libraries as perceived by the researcher. People now believe that e-books and other information resources can be accessed and downloaded with ease without necessarily visit the library. Availability of all forms of information resources in academic library are highly imperative if the library is to meet with the information needs of academics for their research works (Bitag & Udoudou 2013), meanwhile it is observed that information resources are becoming costly to acquire thereby becoming inadequate in most academic libraries and the available ones are becoming obsolete and could not meet the demand for current research (Bitagi & Garba 2014).

Table 7: Regularity of visit to the Internet

Time	Frequency	Percent
Everyday	92	29.2
Twice a week	80	25.4
3-4 times a week	100	32
Once in two weeks	25	8
Once a month	18	6
Total	315	100.0

Table 7 showed the regularity of visit to the Internet by the respondents. In everyday, 92 (29%) of respondents visit the Internet in twice a week 80 (25%) surf the nets. 100 (32%) of the respondents visit the net at least 3-4 times a week also, 25 (8%) prefer to visit the Internet and finally, a total of 18 (6%) do visit the Internet once a month. Many telecommunication companies have introduced series of incentives to their subscribers thereby making them to pay

regular visit to the Internet and explore other services like social media/networking sites. Meanwhile, study has shown that they use the Internet mainly for educational purposes rather than for entertainment (Kumar R. & Kaur A., (Spring 2006). Also, Becker(1998) conducted a study on the Internet use by 2,500 teachers from public and private schools of U.S. The study revealed that 90% of the teachers had Internet access. A majority of the teachers with 59% response

had Internet access at home. A majority of the teachers (68%) used the Internet to find information resources for preparing their lessons. A majority of the teachers with 62% response used Web search engines to find information resources. Bavakutty and Salih (1999) conducted a study at Calicut University which showed that students, research scholars, and teachers used the

Internet for the purpose of study, research and teaching, respectively. It is very clear now that the rate at which academics pay visits to internet cannot be compared to the visitations they made to the library. Bingham University Library therefore may need to quickly double their effort in providing quality internet provision to boost their services and relevance in this technological epoch.

Table 8: Cost of internet data plan subscription in a month

Cost	Frequency	Percent
₦1500:00	145	46.0
₦2000:00	90	28.6
₦6000:00	45	14.3
₦10000:00	20	6.3
I don't purchase data plan	15	4.8
Total	315	100.0

In table 8, the cost of internet data plan subscription in a given period of time was revealed. The table shows that 145 (46%) of respondents spend the sum of #1500:00 per month, 90 (28%) spend #2000:00 per month on subscription of internet. The sum of #6000:00 is being spent by 45 (14%) of respondents, 20 (6%) of the entire respondents do spend #1000:00 and finally on this table, 15(5%) of the respondents don't purchase data plan for internet services. Considering the economic factor of the Nigerian populace, many respondents

preferred affordable subscription that will not bite too hard into their income. Also, the table has clearly shown that the academics spend so much of their income on internet subscriptions. It is believed that their research quests are better gotten from the internet and as such, time and resources therefore turned to it. Kumar R. & Kaur A., (Spring 2006) concluded that Engineering teachers in India feel a bit handicapped in updating their knowledge base quickly without using the Internet for their research and classroom teaching activities.

Table 9: Number of journals you subscribe to

	Frequency	Percent
1-2	44	14.0
3-4	21	6.7
5-6	11	4.0
7-8	4	1.3
9-10	2	1.0
None	233	74.0
Total	315	100.0

In table 9, journals being subscribed to by the academics are tabulated. 44(14%)

represent respondents that subscribe to 1-2 numbers of journals, the respondents that

subscribed to 3-4 journals are about 21(6%). A total of 11(4%) subscribed to 5-6 journals, 4(1%) subscribed to 7-8 numbers of journals, 2(1%) subscribed to 9-10 journals while, 233(74%) of respondents did not subscribed to a single journals. Academics

are supposed to acquaint themselves with current information in their various fields of

knowledge, for academics to succeed in his research work, he/she much read wide about other people's research work. The need to subscribe and purchase researcher's journals is very important. The rate at which academic staff of Bingham University subscribed to journals as revealed in this table is not encouraging and such; awareness must be created to educate them.

Table 10: Number of your publication from 2010 to 2016

	Frequency	Percent
1-3	105	33.3
4-7	74	23.5
8-11	33	10.5
12 & above	8	2.5
None	95	30.2
Total	315	100.0

The table revealed the numbers of publications being published by the academics in various academic journals. The respondents with publications range of 1-3 had 50(33%), 4-7 publications recorded 74(23.5%), those respondents with a range of 8-11 are reported to have 33(10.5%) of publications, respondents that ranged from 12& above had 8(2.5%) and a total of 95(30.2%) had no records of any publications. The rate of none publications by some staff is a bit alarming. This could affect the research standards of the concerned staff and its negative impacts on the students.

Findings

The major findings of this work are enumerated as follows:

1. The study shows that libraries exist in Bingham University, only few academics engage these libraries in their research and publishing activities.
2. It is revealed that most academics find it difficult to patronize and utilize the resources of these libraries despite its rich information resources.
3. The academics are found to be using personal subscribed internet services as alternative to source for information for their research work.
4. The rate at which the academics subscribe and purchase journal articles to aid them in their academic works is very poor and discouraging.

Conclusion

In Nigeria, libraries and its services are given low priority by academics and students; the reading culture is experiencing serious aberration, these have created challenges to the libraries in which libraries now face obscurity. Academics no longer found it necessary to consult libraries for their research work. Considering the situation in the Bingham University, it looks as if the Internet is gradually substituting libraries thereby drawing all attentions of academics to it (Internet); this conformed to Udukwe (2003) that Internet has become a universal library. Academics seems to have forgotten the reliability and authenticity of library resources and The Encyclopedia American (2000) revealed that academic library is becoming an integral part of an electronic network that allows access to multiple information sources in a variety of media. Library is an integral part of any academic institution and as such, qualitative research work is rooted in the services of the library, and we can therefore conclude that

library and research activities are inseparable.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made from the findings of this study:

1. The library should create awareness and orientation that will show the academics the importance of engaging the library in their research activities.
2. Library should be made to review its services and functions that will attract the academics to patronize its services.
3. Library should include and provide other ways to assist academics to sources for better and reliable sources of information different from its orthodox services.
4. Education and orientation, seminars and workshops should be organized for academics to show the role of academic research journals and peer review works in the success of research works.

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