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Attitudes of Undergraduate Students Toward the Use of Library Information Resources: A Case of Two Universities in Oyo State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study addresses the underutilization of library resources driven by negative user perceptions among higher education students. The purpose of this research was to investigate the attitudes of undergraduate students toward the use of library information resources at two universities in Oyo State, Nigeria. Adopting a multi-stage sampling technique, a structured questionnaire was administered to collect data from a sample of 379 undergraduates, yielding 353 usable responses for analysis. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression. The results and discussion revealed that undergraduates generally held negative attitudes toward library resources (mean = 3.38), with physical books being the most frequently used material on a weekly basis. OLS regression indicated a significant positive relationship between positive attitudes and the hours spent utilizing library assets (coefficient = 0.1778), while final-year status and specific academic programs significantly influenced library engagement. In conclusion, fostering positive attitudes is essential to maximizing resource utilization. Stakeholders must upgrade library facilities, update obsolete materials, and implement robust information literacy training to enhance student engagement.

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1. INTRODUCTION

One of the goals of establishing a university is to promote and stimulate study and research in all domains of human endeavours. In ensuring that these objectives are met, there is need to satisfy undergraduates' information needs. As such, students must be conversant with various Library Information Resources (LIRs) resources that can help them get the information that they need. Ogunduyilemi & Mabawonku (2018) described library resources as the resources that libraries collect, process, store, and disseminate to users who may need a variety of library services. According to Abubakar, Mallo, & Suleman (2020), library resources are broadly categorized into printed and non-printed materials.

Other important factors that may influence the frequency of use of LIRs, are the individual user's attitude. It should be noted that libraries may contribute to the growth of knowledge not just by providing LIRs, but also by ensuring that those resources are used efficiently. Alabi & Mutula (2020), defined "use" as degree to which academics adopt and apply information and communication technologies (ICTs) to achieve specific teaching, learning, or research goals

From the above definitions, use implies the act of employing something to achieve a purpose. Igun & Adogbeji (2014) in their definition, refer to the use of resources as the act of utilizing available materials for research and educational purposes. Idubor (2015) states that the length of time undergraduates spend using library resources on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis can be used to quantify the frequency of use. Frequency of use describes the regularity with which students access and utilize resources (Bankole, Adelodun, & Sulaiman, 2024). This was why Ishola & Obadare (2014) opined that continuous use of the library, no matter the type, enlarges the knowledge base of its user.

However, for any of the LIRs to be utilized effectively and efficiently, they must be adequate in currency, depth, quality, and diversity. Other important factors that may influence the frequency of use, as well as the location of use of LIRs, are the individual's attitudes. Hence, for effective use of LIRs, attitudes of students becomes important. Ukachi, Onuoha, & Nwachukwu (2014) refers to attitudes as students' reactions to using library resources based on their assumptions and beliefs

According to Olufemi & Adewuyi (2023), attitude refers to an individual's positive or negative evaluation, feelings, and willingness to respond toward a person, place, object, or event. Attitudes of students towards using electronic resources in the medical library at the University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka, were evaluated by Sivathaasan, N., Murugathas K., & Chandrasekar, K. (2014). The findings showed that attitudes among students had an impact on how electronics resources were used. Students adopted positive attitudes towards accessing electronic resources as a result of their perceived benefits. The findings of Okhawere, Isibor, & Otoghile (2017) on attitudes of undergraduate students in Nigerian universities towards library resources revealed that undergraduates had positive attitudes towards use of library resources

Alokluk (2020) investigated the attitudes of students on using library resources. The results showed that students felt positive attitudes about using library resources A study conducted in university libraries in Nigeria revealed that students' attitudes significantly influence the use of electronic information resources, as negative or indifferent attitudes among undergraduates can lead to low utilization of library information resources (Afolabi & Afolabi, 2024).

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However, some research studies have revealed the negative attitudes of students towards the use of LIRs. The attitudes of Nigerian military school students towards the use of LIRs was examined by Okeke (2017). The findings showed that respondents had negative attitudes of library resources. Attitudes is an important concept in the use of library information resources by students and an important component to examine in the study of human behaviour. This means that if undergraduate has a negative attitudes about using LIRs, the most likely conclusion is that he/she would either not use the resources at all, or only use them occasionally. Wang & Bai (2016) assessed university students' attitudes, awareness, and use of e-books in China. The study revealed that e-books were mostly used for leisure by students. A study in Nigerian university libraries showed that students' attitudes play a major role in determining the extent of electronic information resource use, as unfavorable attitudes reduce the level of utilization among undergraduates (Edward, Makinde, & Oserada, 2024).

Okeji & Agbanu (2020) conducted research on the utilization of law library resources by undergraduate law students in three selected universities in southeast Nigeria. They discovered that the attitudes of the law students in the utilisation of law library resources were negative due to outdated resources. According to Tella (2023), a study on library services and user satisfaction found that students' negative attitudes toward library materials are often influenced by the lack of current and sufficient information resources. This, in turn, significantly hinders the effective use of library information resources among undergraduates. A recent study indicated that inadequate and outdated library resources contribute to users' negative attitudes and low patronage, making students' attitudes an important factor in the effective use of library information resources (Michael & Olayemi, 2023).

Hence, for effective use of LIRs, attitudes of students (positive or negative) become important. This is because individuals' attitudes will determine how they will use LIRs. A positive attitudes of LIRs will likely increase their usage, while negative attitudes to use of LIRs will likely result in a low utilization level. For students to benefit maximally from the resources that are available in the library, they are expected to use the available resources effectively. Such usage has to do with their attitudes based on how they perceive the resources. Evidence has shown that students in Nigerian universities have not been seen to use the library's resources more frequently. They only went to the library when they had examinations. This has resulted in the decrease and thus, underutilization of such resources by many institutions of higher learning. Based on the aforementioned, this study investigates attitudes toward the use of LIRs by undergraduates of Lead City University and the University of Ibadan.

2. METHODS

The population of this study was 19,430 undergraduate students of the University of Ibadan, and the Lead City University which are based in Ibadan, Oyo State. The University of Ibadan had a total number of 15,158 undergraduates while Lead City University had a total number of 4,272 undergraduates by the data collected from the Management Information Systems Unit of the University of Ibadan and the Academic Planning Unit of Lead City University.

A multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted for this study. The first stage involved a purposive selection of three faculties that are found at the two universities for the sake of uniformity. The second stage was a purposive selection of all the departments that were

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found among the selected faculties at the two universities. The third stage involved a random selection of six departments each from the list of the selected departments in the two universities to give a total of twelve departments. In the fourth and last stage, 5% of the students were randomly selected from each of the 12 selected departments. Based on this, 42 students were selected from Lead City University, while the sample size from the University of Ibadan was 337 to give a total sample size of 379. A total of 353 questionnaires that were fully filled were used for this study. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics, such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution, as well as OLS.

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3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Descriptive statistics of the variables used in regression analysis

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age (years)		
<21	82	23.23
21-24	212	60.05
>24	59	16.72
Mean	22.29	
Standard deviation	2.35	
Sex	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Female	181	51.27
Male	172	48.93
The course of study	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Educational management	52	14.73
Guidance counseling	57	16.15
Chemistry	81	22.95
Physics	40	11.33
Psychology	56	15.86
Sociology	67	18.98
Residency status	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Off-campus	194	54.96
On-campus	159	45.04
Study level	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
200	152	43.06
300	122	34.56
400	79	22.38
Monthly allowance (₦)	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
<10,000.00	64	18.13
10,000.00-19,000.00	185	52.41
20,000.00-29,000.00	73	20.68
>29,000.00	31	8.78
Mean	15,155.81	
Standard deviation	8,116.42.00	
Hours of surfing the internet	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
<10	239	67.71
10-19	77	21.81
20-29	25	7.08
>29	12	3.40
Mean	8.6879	
Standard deviation	9.2845	
Type of library resources	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Print	159	45.04
Non-print	194	54.96
Training status on how to use	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
LIRs:		
No	217	61.47
Yes	136	38.53

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the variables used in regression analysis
Source: Data analysis, 2022

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Note: 1 USD = ₦411.93 official rate as of the time the survey was conducted

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the variables used in the regression analysis, as some of them may be relevant in undergraduates' use of LIRs. The results of the demographic characteristics of the undergraduates shows that the majority of the undergraduates were from the University of Ibadan. This may be due to the fact that the population of students at the University of Ibadan a public university outnumbered those at Lead City University which is a private institution. The result is however in support of Ogunduyilemi & Mabawonku (2018) who indicated that respondents from the University of Ibadan were more than that of Lead City University. The results on the age distribution of the student indicate that a large number of them were between the age of 21-24 years. The minimum age of admission into most Nigerian universities for undergraduate studies is 16 years and a student that enrolled for a four-year course is expected to graduate at age 20, all things being equal.

To this end, the higher age range recorded could be attributed to delays in gaining admission into the university as well as incessant strikes by the Academic Staff Union of Universities among others. The sex distribution of the undergraduates indicates that the majority of them were females implying that more female students now attend universities. This may however be linked to the enforcement of the girl-child education policy in the country. Also, it could be a result of the courses selected, a majority of which are female-dominated. This supports the view of Adetunla (2016), Ogunduyilemi, & Mabawonku (2018) who stated that a majority of the students they studied were female. Findings on the course of study distribution of undergraduates shows that a large number of the respondents were offering chemistry as a course.

Results on the residency distribution of the undergraduates revealed that the majority of the undergraduates were based outside the campus. This may be due to inadequate on-campus accommodation for students which forced many of them to stay off-campus. This may have an effect on the use of LIRs by students given the epileptic nature of the electricity supply in the country and this was adequately captured as one of the challenges to the use of LIRs by the respondents. Hayelom (2014) concluded that undergraduates who live at a far distance might be deprived of LIRs. On the other hand, there is a high probability that respondents who live near the library will have access to the library and use its resources more. The results on the level of study of the respondents shows that a majority of the undergraduates represented in the study were at the 200 level. This is at variance with the study of Bankole, Ajiboye, & Otunla (2015) who stated that the least respondents were those in the 200 level. The average monthly allowance of respondents revealed that a large proportion of them received between ₦10,000 - ₦19,000 as their monthly allowance. This may have implications on their use of online databases as those with low monthly allowance may not be able to purchase data to access some online LIRs.

The hours of surfing the internet for LIRs by the respondents revealed that the majority of the respondents spent below ten hours surfing the internet for LIRs. The types of LIRs used by the undergraduates revealed that a majority of the undergraduates preferred non-print resources to print resources. This may be because most of the print LIRs available in libraries are obsolete. This is in line with the study of Bassey & Odu (2015), Dukic & Striskovic (2015) who stated that the majority of the respondents preferred using electronic resources to print resources. Findings on other training on how to use LIRs shows that a majority of the respondents did not receive any other training on how to use LIRs. Inadequate

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skills and training to retrieve LIRs were reported to be one of the challenges to the use of LIRs. The hours of other training on how to use LIRs indicate that the majority of the undergraduates did not receive any other training on how to use LIRs.

Table 2. The effect of undergraduates attitudes as well as other attributes on the use of library information resources

Variables	Coefficients	Robust Std.Errors	Z	P>|z|
Age	0.0092	0.0107	0.85	0.394
Sex	-0.0080	0.0392	-0.20	0.838
300 level	0.0475	0.0475	1.00	0.318
400 level	0.1414 **	0.0639	2.21	0.024
Monthly Allowance	0.0027	0.0027	0.55	0.584
Attitudes	0.1778***	0.0390	4.44	0.000
Constant	3.3453 ***	0.2381	14.05	0.000
Pseudo R Squared	0.6148			
P value	0.000			

Source: Data analysis, 2022

Note: For categorical variables, it is given for a discrete change 0 to 1. The reference group for the categorical variables are: female, 200 level, educational management and negative attitudes. *** and ** represent significant at 1% and 5% respectively

Table 2 shows results of the effect of undergraduates' attitudes toward the use of LIRs. As indicated in the table, undergraduates' attitude as well as some of their demographic characteristics were able to explain 61.48% of the variations in the time they spent on LIRs. The percentage was statistically significant at the $P < 0.01$ level. Out of the 11 independent variables included in the regression, only five had a significant effect on the dependent variable (hours spent on LIRs in a semester). The variables with statistically significant effects are 400 level, chemistry, physics, psychology, and attitudes. It then means that undergraduates' attitudes with other intervening variables combined significantly to explain the hours they spent on LIRs. As presented in the table, the coefficient of the 400 level which stood at 0.1414 is positive. It shows that 400-level students spent more time on LIRs compared to their 200-level counterparts.

This is understandable given that the 400-level students were in their final year and could be that they needed more time on their final year projects. These findings also tally with the findings of Okwaraji et al. (2015) who showed that final-year students made use of LIRs more than those at other levels. Chemistry which had a coefficient of 0.1000 is negative, meaning that respondents studying chemistry spent less time on LIRs than their counterparts in educational management programs. Similarly, respondents in the physics program spent less time on LIRs than their colleagues in the educational management program. This could be attributed to the fact that the scientists were involved in laboratory activities that prevented them from engaging in the use of LIRs.

The result is similar to the findings of Unuabor, S. O., & Oseghale, G. C. O. (2018). who stated that the program in which students are enrolled might play a role in their usage of LIRs. In the same vein, a negative association exists between students in the psychology department and time use on LIRs. This implies that respondents in the psychology department spent less time on LIRs than their fellow students in the education management program.

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The only explanation for this could be due to the fact that the students in the psychology program were involved in practical activities associated with their course of study and this left them with little time for other activities including usage of LIRs. The findings are in support of Whitmire (2001) who indicated that a strong relationship exists between undergraduates' program of study and the use of LIRs. Finally, there is a direct relationship between attitudes and time use on LIRs. This indicates that respondents with positive attitudes towards LIRs spent more time on LIRs than their colleagues with negative attitudes. Perhaps this may be that students with the right attitudes towards LIRs enjoyed spending their time on LIRs.

3.2 Research Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between attitudes and use of library information resources among undergraduates of Lead City University and the University of Ibadan.

Table 3. Relationship between attitudes and use of library information resources among undergraduates

Variable	Pearson Chi square	Probability Value	Remarks
Location of use	6.6193	0.010	Significant
Purpose of use	7.3805	0.017	Significant

Source: Data analysis, 2022

Table 3 presents the results of hypothesis two formulated on the relationship between attitudes and use of LIRs among undergraduates. The results showed that a significant relationship exists between respondents' attitudes and use of LIRs (location of use, purpose of use) (Pearson Chi-square = 6.6193, 7.3805; P value = 0.010, 0.017) respectively. The implication of this is that attitudes (negative, and positive) have a relationship with the use of LIRs. The hypothesis is therefore rejected at a 0.05 level of significance.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that undergraduate students generally exhibit a negative attitude toward the use of library information resources, with books remaining the primary material utilized on a weekly basis. The empirical results demonstrate a significant positive relationship between students' attitudes and the time they spend utilizing library information resources, indicating that cultivating positive perceptions is crucial for increasing library engagement. Academic demographics play a substantial role in this dynamic; final-year students (400 level) utilize library information resources more extensively due to the demands of their research projects , whereas students in science programs, such as chemistry and physics, spend less time on these resources, likely constrained by their heavy laboratory commitments. Furthermore, while a clear preference for non-print resources exists among undergraduates due to the obsolete nature of available print materials , a significant portion of the student population lacks formal training on how to effectively retrieve and use these digital resources.

Several limitations exist within this study that shape its scope, particularly its geographical and institutional focus on only two specific universities within Oyo State, Nigeria. Additionally, the data relies on self-reported questionnaires , and the analysis is bounded by variables evaluated during the specific survey period. To address these challenges and

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enhance future utilization, it is highly recommended that university library management and stakeholders proactively provide modern facilities and update obsolete print collections to stimulate positive student attitudes. Libraries must design and implement targeted, continuous user-training programs to equip undergraduates with essential information retrieval skills, thereby mitigating the current deficit in library resource literacy. Finally, academic departments, especially within the sciences, should explore strategies to integrate digital library usage into practical and laboratory-heavy curricula, ensuring that students can efficiently balance field-specific assignments with comprehensive literature research.

5. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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