

# Undergraduate Students' Attitude towards Utilization of Library Information Resources in Universities in South-South Nigeria

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## Abstract

*This study investigates Undergraduate students' attitude towards utilization of Library information resources in Universities in South-South, Nigeria. The objectives were to determine whether students' attitude and perception significantly influence utilization of information resources. Survey design involving the use of questionnaire was employed for this study. The population for this study constituted all 21,119 registered Library users in five Universities in South-South. The stratified sampling and accidental techniques were used for this study. The sample of the study was 1015 students drawn from five Universities in this zone. The data collected were analyzed using the SPSS version 10.0 (1999) The instrument was validated by experts and the reliability coefficient of 0.84 was established using Cronbach alpha method. The independent t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to test the hypotheses. The result shows that students' attitude towards the use of Library resources significantly influence their utilization of information resources. It also shows that there is significance influence of students' perception of Library facilities on utilization of information resources among undergraduates. It was concluded that undergraduates' attitude and perception have significant influence on utilization of Library information resources. Library facilities should be brought to state of the arts standard for enhancement of the students' perception of the Library resources. The undergraduate students should develop positive attitude towards the use of information resource because information is needed in their academic pursuits and also in their day to day lives. While, it is said that information is the strength of any society, it is also the strength of every individual. It was recommended that awareness programmes be organized by the University Libraries quarterly to boost the perception of the library users thereby inculcating a positive attitude towards resource utilization.*

**Key words:** Academic Libraries, Information resources, Resource utilization, Attitude, Perception.

## Introduction

Academic Libraries aim to build and maintain a collection that will support and enhance instructional needs of the Institution. The Library is an information center saddled with the responsibility of generating information resources to address user's needs and demands, irrespective of classes or races in the society (Magoi & Gani 2014). The goals which include provision of information resources in print and non-print materials in support of the learning process in the main stream and distance learning components, provision of information resources to meet the requirements of the faculty members, students and researchers; provision of

information materials to support library users in their own personal development and to meet the specialized needs of the community in which the University is situated. Information resources are very vital in every Library and information center. The library strength depends on the amount of information resources it holds (Umoh, 2019). According to Ahiauzu, Kubo and Igben (2007) cited in Nwabueze and Ntogo-Sanghanen (2017), information resources are interpreted to mean only those resources that have been acquired and processed for use.

Utilization of information resources and services has been a concern from the time libraries changed from being cultural monuments to knowledge acquisition and information centres (Mwatela, A.2013). Librarians conceived the idea of educating the Library users in finding and locating information they need on the day to day activities through “Skills in Library Use and Services”. In spite of this, it has been observed that these resources are underutilized as most Libraries are found to be empty with only few students making use of the library on a daily basis.

A fundamental factor in information resources utilization is the ‘perceived’ information need. Awareness of existence of an information resource is a major determinant of its use. However, Byamugisha, Odongo and Nasinyama (2010) posited that information use on the other hand, is a behavior that consists of the physical and mental acts involved in incorporating the information found into the person’s existing knowledge base. Therefore, students cannot function effectively without the acquisition of enough information either for course/ academic work or daily functioning. Since information utilization can be considered as one Important attribute for academic development and it constitutes one of the most important factors for research, there is need therefore to investigate the possible causes of lack of utilization of Library resources and services. The researcher intends to look at perception of Library facilities and attitude of students towards utilization of Library resources.

### **Statement of the Problem**

There has been growing concern about students’ use of library in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria. This concern arises due to the importance of the Library resources in the successful completion of their studies. Information is vital in everyday functioning. This is because as the saying goes an individual who is not informed is deformed and this can go a long way in influencing the activities of the individual. Therefore, students who deal directly with pieces of information on a daily basis are expected to utilize all forms of information relevant to their studies in print and non- print form.

Unfortunately, observations have shown that these resources are underutilized. Most children come to school ready and willing to learn. How school can best foster, strengthen their predisposition and ensure that they leave school with the motivation and capacity to continue learning throughout life has remained a matter of great concern. Without the development of the right attitudes and skills, graduates may not be well prepared to acquire the new knowledge for successful adaptation to changing circumstances.

Most researchers have continually bothered themselves to find out what probably would have been the cause of these problems. Factors identified included; social media facilities, perception of library facilities, lack of skills in utilizing library resources, peer influence among other factors. It was on this basis that this study was carried out to examine students' variables (attitude and perception) towards utilization of information resources in south-south, Nigeria

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objective of this study is to investigate whether:

1. Attitude significantly influence utilization of Library resources among undergraduates.
2. Perception significantly influence utilization of Library resources by undergraduates.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were posed to guide this study;

1. Does attitude significantly influence utilization of information resources among undergraduates?
2. Does perception of Library resources significantly influence utilization of information resources among undergraduates?

### **Null Hypotheses**

The hypotheses were stated in null form as follows:

1. Students' attitude towards the use library does not significantly influence utilization of information resources among undergraduates.
2. There is no significant influence of students' perception of Library facilities on utilization of information resources among undergraduates.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study centered on Students' attitude towards utilization of Library information resources among undergraduates of Universities in South-South, Nigeria. The independent variables used in the study are attitude and perception of library facilities while the dependent variable is utilization of library resources. Undergraduates of University Library users in South-South Nigeria were used for this study.

### **Significance of the Study**

The result of this study may be beneficial to the government, University Libraries and Library users. It may enable the policy makers to formulate appropriate policies that may enhance the type of information resources to be donated or bought for the Library. It is equally expected that this study may help the government to provide adequate fund for sustaining Library services. It may help the University Libraries to purchase resources that will attract

students to make use of them. It may help library users and staff to develop positive attitudes to use of Library resources.

### Methodology

The design adopted for this study was a survey research design. The research was conducted in five of the six states that constitute the South-South zone of Nigeria. The population of this study constituted all 21,119 registered Library users in these Universities in South-South. The stratified sampling and accidental techniques were used for this study. The sample of the study was 1015 students drawn from five Universities in this zone. The instrument used for data collection was the questionnaire. The questionnaire had two sections, Section A contained items that source for information on demographic data on the respondents. Section B comprised of items that measure the variables that are continuous. The questionnaire was constructed after the Likert scale with four-point alternative responses ranging from strongly agree(SA), Agree(A), Strongly disagree(SD) and Disagree(D). This instrument was validated by experts and the reliability was measured using Cronbach alpha. The data collected were analyzed using the SPSS version 10.0(1999). The independent t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to test the hypotheses.

### Results

**Null Hypothesis 1:** The null hypothesis states that students' attitude towards the use of Library resources does not significantly influence their utilization of information resources.

To tests this hypothesis, undergraduates with attitude score of less than the mean of 13.55, were classified as having negative attitude while those above were considered as having positive attitude. The utilization of Library resources amongst undergraduates with positive and negative attitude were compared using the independent t-test analysis as reported in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Independent t-test analysis of the influence of attitude on utilization

Attitude	n	$\bar{x}$	SD	t	p-level
Positive	494	27.36	6.35	12.2987*	.000
Negative	506	22.18	6.27		
Total	24.74	6.82			

*\*significant at the 0.05 level of significance*

The result shows that undergraduates with positive attitude have significantly higher utilization of Library resources than those with negative attitude ( $t=12.987$ ;  $p=0.000$ ). hence the null hypothesis is rejected at the 0.05 level of significance.

**Null Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant influence of students' perception of Library facilities on utilization of information resources among undergraduates.

To test this hypothesis, the perception of Library facilities was categorized into levels using the formula  $\bar{x} + 1SD$ . Undergraduates with  $\bar{x} - 1SD$  and below were classified as having low level of perception, those between  $\bar{x} - 1SD$  and  $\bar{x} + 1SD$  were considered as having moderate perception, while those above  $\bar{x} + 1SD$  were considered as having high level of perception of Library facilities. Then the utilization of Library resources was compared across these three levels of perception of Library facilities using the one-way analysis of variance. The result is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Summary data and one-way analysis of variance of the influence of level perception of Library facilities on utilization of information resources.

Perception of library facilities	n	$\bar{x}$	SD	F-ratio	P-level
Low	165	28.15	7.66		
Moderate	789	23.77	6.38		
High	46	29.13	5.19		
Total	1000	24.74	6.82		
Source of variance	SS	DF	MS		
Between groups	3543.612	2	1771.806	41.185*	.000
Within groups	42891.744	997	42.021		
Total	46435.356	999			

\*Significant at the 0.05 level of significant  $\bar{x}$  =mean, SD=standard deviation

The information in Table 2 shows that the students' perception of Library facilities significantly influences their utilization of information resources ( $F=41.021$ ;  $p=0.000$ ). Hence the null hypothesis states that there is no significant influence students' perception of Library facilities on utilization of information resources among undergraduates is rejected at the 0.05 level of significance. To find out how utilization of Library facilities influence utilization of information resources among undergraduates, a post hoc test using Fisher's Least significance difference (LSD) test was performed as reported in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Fisher's Least Significance test of the influence of perception of Library facilities on the Utilization of information resources among undergraduates.

Level of perception		mean difference(I- J)	standard error	p-level
(I)	(J)			
low	Moderate	4.17613	.56148	.000
	High	-9.8498	1.09360	.368
Moderate	High	-5.36111	.99487	.000

*\*significant at the 0.05 level of significance*

The information in Table3 shows that undergraduates with low perception of library facilities exhibit a significant higher level of utilization of information resources than those with low level of perception of library resources. It is also resources than those with low level of perception of library resources and those with high level of perception of library resources do not significantly differs in their utilization of information resources. However, the result also shows that undergraduates with high perception of Library facilities have a significantly higher utilization of information resources than those with moderate perception of Library facilities ( $d = -5.36111$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ).

### **Discussion of Findings.**

#### **Attitude significantly influence utilization of Library resources among undergraduates**

The first finding of this study shows that there is a significant influence of students' attitude towards use of Library information resources. This is supported by Sivathiaasan, Murugathas and Chandrasekar (2014), who posited that students had shown significant mean difference towards the attitude of usage of electronic information resources. Students could have the right perception towards utilization of information resources but negative attitude towards them due to lack of competence on retrieval skills and other computer skills. Ukachi, Onuoha and Nwachukwu (2014) confirmed that electronic information resources are not adequately utilized as the undergraduate students have negative attitude towards its use. The students assumed that additional special computing skills are required before one can be competent enough to effectively utilize these resources.

Positive attitude of students' utilization of library resources can be achieved if there is awareness of the subscribed electronic information resources by the Library management. This is supported by Okiki (2012), hence awareness of library resources should be made by Library management. This is very necessary because the perception of most student is that there are no information resources in the Library. Sivathaasan, Murugathas, & Chandrasekar (2014). confirm with the present study that a good proportion of the students cannot afford computers and the cost of accessing internet is extremely high. With changes in academic Libraries, Haroon and Ata (2010), posited that majority of the researchers (54.61%) considered that, the print journals are very important despite the presence of e-journals.

#### **Perception significantly influence utilization of Library resources by undergraduates**

Students perception of Library facilities directly influence their utilization of information resources. While there is no significant difference between students with high perception and those with low perception, yet students with high perception of Library facilities were significantly different with students with moderate perception. The result of this study is in line with Korobili, Tilikidou and Delistavrou (2016), who found out that the use of electronic resources by students is positively influenced by the respondents perceived usefulness of resources.

A study by Andaleeb and Simmon (2001) and Teoh and Tan (2011) are of same opinion that the use of academic library is influenced mostly by a user's perceived familiarity with the Library and its resources. It is very clear that since the University Library is the heart of the University, its perception determines its smooth existence and value to the users. Few studies, Nawmugera (2014) and Edissonn (2000) revealed that the students got information that the Libraries had relevant information materials to satisfy their needs and as such the participants perceived library services as good. There is need for regular assessment of the perception of the Library users through survey in order to address any negative perception the users may have so that the utilization of Library resources can be increased including improvement in services by staff and the environment.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the result of the findings, it was concluded that undergraduates' attitude and perception have significant influence on utilization of Library information resources. Students were not satisfied with the information resources available in the Libraries especially books and some journals, they felt that the materials were archaic. As such they developed negative attitude towards the use of its resources. However, more awareness on the electronic resources in the Library and how they could be accessed were not made. As much as these awareness programmes were made available to the students, there could be improvement in the utilization of Library resources.

### **Recommendations**

As a result of the findings, it was recommended that;

1. The government should equip the University Libraries in such a way that students will have the right perception on Library materials.
2. The University management should organize effective training programmes for the students quarterly, so that they will be able to use the Library resources especially the electronic resources.

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