

Availability of Information Resources as Correlate of Students' Observance of Library Regulations in Academic Libraries in Imo State

Adaora J. *UDO-ANYANWU* Ph.D¹ and Adaeze N. *NZEWI* Ph.D²

Department of Library and Information Science, Imo State University, Owerri¹ and Pharmaceutical Library Agulu Campus, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Library, Awka²
 adaorautoanyanwu@yahoo.com¹ adaezenzewi60@yahoo.com²

Abstract

Purpose: The study focused on availability of information resources as correlate of students' observance of library regulations in academic libraries in Imo State. It sought to know the extent of availability of information resources and its influence on students' observance of library regulations.

Methodology: Descriptive survey and Correlational study were adopted for the study while rating scale was used to elicit data for the study. A sample of 379 students was drawn from a population of 31,302 students from the tertiary institutions studied. Data collected were analysed with mean, standard deviation and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses formulated at 0.05 level of significance.

Findings: It was revealed that: students observe library regulations to a high extent; majority of information resources are available at a low extent. It was also discovered that there is a very low correlation between availability of information resources and students' observance of library regulations.

Implications: The study recommended that all types of information resources should be made available for students' use to enhance learning and research in tertiary institutions. Other factors that encourage observance of library regulations should be considered in libraries.

Originality/Value: This work has not been published in any journal before. Its originality lies in its ability to discover that availability of information resources though very important, does not guarantee absolute observance of library regulations.

Keywords: Observance, Regulations, Availability, Information Resources, Library

Introduction

Academic libraries have for centuries played critically important roles in supporting research in all subjects and disciplines within their host universities or colleges. The main purpose of an academic library as stated by Aina (2004) is to support the objectives of an academic environment in the areas of learning, teaching, research, and service. Effective library services are only possible when there is qualitative and quantitative adequacy of relevant library resources. This simply implies that satisfactory library and information services are impossible without adequate library resources. Since the library is charged with the responsibility of meeting the information needs of users, these information needs are met using information resources.

Every piece of information material in the library that brings solution to a user's information need is called an information resource. Adomi (2012) stated that information resources are resources or materials from which people receive ideas, meaningful messages, enlightenment and

direction that will enable them to accomplish tasks, take decisions and solve problems. Popoola and Haliso cited in Okiki (2013) asserted that information resources as those information-bearing materials that are in both printed and electronic formats, such as textbooks, journals, indexes, abstracts, newspapers and magazines, reports, CD-ROM databases, the internet/e-mail, video tapes/cassettes, diskettes magnetic disk, computers, micro forms and so on. The effectiveness or success of an academic library is measured by the availability and effective use of its information resources.

The unavailability of library materials in large quantity in some libraries has been seen to contribute to the disappearance of materials in libraries and hiding of library materials. In the Nigerian situation, few titles are bought, and this leads to demand being more than supply, because of this, students resort to means of getting these materials without observing the regulations with regards to their use. If the library is well stocked and the students know they can use the materials, there

may be no room for non-observance of the regulations regarding their use.

Statement of the Problem

Academic libraries have been faced with varying degrees of non-compliant attitude to the use of their resources, this in one way or the other affect both the resources, services and other users of the library. The problem of non-compliance to library regulations leads to; loss of resources, vandalization of resources and equipment, lack of funds, user dissatisfaction among others. The extent of this problem varies from one library to another. In some cases the extent of the problem is restricted that it seems to be minor while in some others it is immense that it calls for serious actions. Any action to be taken requires answering the question, what could be the possible factors responsible for the problem?

The researcher therefore wonders if availability of information resources influences students' observance of library regulations in tertiary institutions in Imo State. There is no empirical evidence on this state of affairs. This is the research problem this study intends to solve.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate availability of information resources as correlate of students' observance of library regulations in academic libraries in Imo State. The specific objectives are to:

- i. ascertain the extent of observance of library regulations by students of tertiary institutions in Imo State.
- ii. ascertain the students' ranking on the extent of availability of information resources.

Research Questions

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

- i. What is the extent of observance of library regulations by students of tertiary institutions in Imo State?
- ii. What is the students' ranking on the extent of availability of information resources?

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis stated in the null form is formulated to guide this study at 0.05 level of significance:

H_{01} : There is no significant correlation between the extent of availability of information resources and level of students' observance of library regulations.

Literature Review

Undergraduate students must comply with the rules and regulations of their institutions' libraries and library staff instructions. They must subject themselves to the procedures necessary for the safety of the library's collections and properties. Owolabi, Idowu and Aliu's (2015) study on level of compliance of students to library rules and regulations showed that the undergraduate students most of the time observe and comply with the library rules and regulations to a reasonable extent. Also, Omosekejimi, Ojeme and Eghworo (2015) discovered that undergraduate students in Federal University of Petroleum Resources Effurun (FUPRE) are aware of the rules and regulations in the university library and they comply with them very often. However, the finding of Akanbi (2007) showed that almost all the students find it difficult to comply with rules and regulations as contained in the library guide published by the library and made available to all registered users and that of Nina-Okpousung (2011) that the extent to which male and female users complied with library policies was low.

Availability of Information Resources and Observance of Library Regulations

Academic libraries are integral part of the institutions they serve. They have for long been recognized as the heart of their institutions. They design their collections and services to meet the institutional programmes of their parent institutions. Fayose (2000) viewed information resources as those materials which enable libraries to carry out their functions effectively. They are made up of books and other information bearing media with the goal of meeting the information needs of its users while Adomi (2006) viewed them as information bearing materials which enable the library to fulfil its goal of meeting the information needs of its users. Libraries in their efforts to provide a broad array of resources to meet the needs of their users, collect resources in various sizes and formats over a period of time. Adeoye and Popoola (2011) opined that library resources are the stock in trade of librarians. These are the materials in the library that make services possible. They are the materials which users come to consult, read or borrow. Library resources are many and varied but they can be divided into three broad categories namely "printed, non printed and electronic information resources". The printed materials are books, pamphlets, periodicals, newspapers and reference resources. Non-printed resources can be grouped into three (i.e. audio, visual and audio-visual). We also have electronic information

resources in the libraries such as databases, internet, etc.

Academic libraries do well to justify the confidence reposed on them by the academic community and “outsiders” by providing the users with the needed information resources and services even in the midst of scarcity and economic recession (Edom, 2008). Academic libraries foster information literacy and provide resources to both students and staff. Library services must create a balance between specific research and information needs and usable collection of information materials to meet the needs of the institution’s academic programmes (Osaghale, 2008). Ubogu (2006) stated that libraries should provide access to information resources, expert professional support to facilitate thorough and accurate use of all library resources, access to library materials and services to the community.

According to Mason (2010), an academic library has the mission to build and maintain a collection that will support and enhance the instructional needs of the institution. He also supported other researchers that academic library is to provide access to all sources of information. Akinade (2002) opined that people’s expectations are high when searching for information and they feel frustrated when their expectations could not be met. Therefore, users and their information needs must be understood in order to provide effective services to them. This entails conducting users’ survey, procuring relevant and adequate reading materials in their fields of study, processing the materials for easy retrieval. This will minimize frustration which can lead to non-observance of library regulations.

The ratio of books available in most Nigerian academic libraries is quite low and discouraging. For instance, a ratio of 2 book volume and 0.3 periodicals to a reader is reported in most Nigerian university libraries as against 307 volumes of books and 0.51 periodicals per reader in Nottingham University library (Ifidon, 2000). This can be highly frustrating for users when their needs regarding those resources are not adequately met. This can lead to their not following led down procedures for library use hence leading to the non-observance of library regulations. Attamah and Ezema (2007) noted that the cause of book loss and lifting of pages of library books is mainly as a result of demand outstripping supply of reading materials. If reading materials are readily available when needed, certainly few readers may attempt illegal methods of getting them. Such delinquent

behaviours may be curbed by acquisition of multiple copies of library materials.

Many academic libraries in Nigeria have not been able to acquire collections comprehensive enough to meet the needs of their users due to inadequate fund. Ajayi and Akinniyi (2004) found frustration among information seekers due to the non-availability of sources. Omoniyi (2002) further observed that some important factors that prevent libraries from purchasing adequate numbers of books are economic problems and monetary allocations which have over the years, been drastically reduced in some universities while some other universities are not given any. Afolabi (1993) also agreed that since economic depression has deprived users of the ability to purchase or make photocopies of the few books that are available, the greedy ones are likely to steal and mutilate library materials.

Effective library service is based on the availability of information resources (these information resources are purveyors of knowledge). If students who come to the library has the confidence that their information needs will be met, there is every tendency that they will abide by the library regulations in order to benefit from its services but if it is contrary, the students may resort to anti-library behaviours since they know that they have nothing to lose.

Research Methodology

In this study, the researcher adopted survey descriptive design and simple linear correlational design. The population of the study is 31,302 users of the five libraries studied. The population is made up of all registered users of the libraries studied within the period this research was carried out. A sample of 379 was used for this study. This is derived using Krejcie and Morgan’s (1970) table for determining sample size for research activities. To select individual respondents from each of the five (5) institutions, proportionate sampling technique was adopted. The instrument that was used to elicit data for this study was a four-point rating scale developed by the researchers. In analysing the data collected for the study, the researcher used descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to identify the level of relationships. The test of significance for the hypotheses was done at 0.05 alpha level using t-test statistical tool. **Decision Rule:** If $p\text{-value} \leq 0.05$, reject null (H_0) and accept the alternative (H_A).

Data Analyses and presentation

Research Question 1: What is the extent of observance of library regulations by students of tertiary institutions in Imo State?

Table 1: Extent of Students' Observance of Library Regulations

S/n	Question items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean	Standard deviation	Decision
1	Users must be registered in the library	193	162	24	0	3.45	0.612	High Extent
2	Maintenance of silence in the library	144	203	32	0	3.30	0.615	High Extent
3	Consulted books are to be left on the reading table.	145	137	97	0	3.13	0.790	High Extent
4	No group discussion is allowed in the library.	131	121	116	11	2.98	0.877	High Extent
5	Removal of library materials from the library must be authorized	205	153	21	0	3.49	0.601	High Extent
6	No use of mobile phones in the library	95	146	121	17	2.84	0.852	High Extent
7	Food items are not allowed in the library	93	168	101	17	2.89	0.825	High Extent
8	No reservation of seats for friends	126	169	70	14	3.07	0.813	High Extent
9	No tearing of library materials	146	160	65	8	3.17	0.783	High Extent
10	No holding of books beyond due date	177	152	48	2	3.33	0.712	High Extent
Grand Mean						3.16	0.327	High Extent

The result in Table 1 shows a summary of the responses of the extent students observe library regulations. Ten (10) question items were considered for this purpose. The result indicates that students observe library regulations to a high extent as the result report a grand mean of 3.16. The result has further shown that students observe that the following library regulations; 'Users must be registered in the library', 'Maintenance of silence in

the library', 'Removal of library materials from the library must be authorized' 'Consulted books are to be left on the reading table', 'No group discussion is allowed in the library', 'No use of mobile phones in the library', 'Food items are not allowed in the library', 'No reservation of seats for friends', 'No tearing of library materials', and 'No holding of books beyond due date' are to a high extent as their mean scores fall within 2.50 to 3.49.

Research Question 2: What is the students' ranking on the extent of availability of information resources?

Table 2A: Extent of Availability of Information Resources

S/n	Question items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean	Standard deviation	Decision
1	Textbooks	186	192	1	0	3.49	0.506	High Extent
2	Reference materials	179	142	58	0	3.32	0.724	High Extent
3	Journals	136	161	82	0	3.14	0.746	High Extent
4	Audio visual	12	55	175	137	1.85	0.782	Low

	materials							Extent
5	Electronic resources	13	76	174	116	1.96	0.803	Low Extent
6	Graphic materials	8	46	179	146	1.78	0.737	Low Extent
7	Manuscripts	24	59	175	121	1.96	0.854	Low Extent
8	Pamphlets	6	54	172	147	1.79	0.741	Low Extent
9	Microforms	3	54	174	148	1.77	0.716	Low Extent
10	Periodicals	87	123	121	48	2.66	0.970	High Extent
Grand Mean						2.38	0.352	Low Extent

Result in Table 2A shows respondents' opinion on the extent at which information resources are made available. The result reports that 'textbooks', 'references materials', 'journals' and 'periodicals' were available to a high extent while information resources such as 'audio visual materials', 'electronic

resources', 'graphic materials', 'manuscripts', 'pamphlets', and 'microforms' availability is to a low extent which account for mean scores within 1.50 to 2.49. The result has further reported a grand mean of 2.38 meaning that the availability of the majority of the information resources was to a 'low extent'.

Table 2B: Correlation between Availability of Information Resources and Students' Observance of Library Regulations

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	Decision
Extent of Observance	379	3.16	0.327	0.022	0.673	Accept H ₀
Availability of information resources	379	2.38	0.352			

See page 140 for SPSS Output

The result in Table 2B shows the extent of correlation coefficient between availability of information resources and students' observance of library regulations. The result reveals a very low relationship existing between availability of information resources and students' observance of library regulations as the result accounts for a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.022 which indicates about 2.2% explanation with a mean of 2.38 for availability of information resources and 3.16 for the extent of observance.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant correlation between the extent of availability of information resources and level of students' observance of library regulations.

Table 2B above further reported the correlation coefficient and the level of correlation between the extent of availability of information resources and level of students' observances of library regulations. The result has shown that we shall accept the null hypothesis (H₀) and conclude

that there is no significant co-relationship between the extent of availability of information resources and level of students' observances of library regulations as the correlation coefficient accounts 0.022 and a p-value of 0.673.

Discussion of Findings

Extent of Observance

The result of the analysis in Table 1 indicates that students observe library regulations to a high extent. Library rules and regulations are to ensure that all who use the library obtain maximum benefit from its facilities, and they also provide legitimacy for punishing the offenders. Undergraduate students must comply with the rules and regulations of the library and library staff instructions. This finding that students observe library regulations to a high extent is surprising to the researcher. This is because at the rate with which crimes are committed in libraries, one would ordinarily conclude that library regulations are not observed to a high extent. However, this result is in

line with the findings of Owolabi, Idowu and Aliu (2015) on level of compliance of students to library rules and regulations which showed that the undergraduate students most of the time observe and comply with the library rules and regulations to a reasonable extent. Also, Omosekejimi, Ojeme and Eghworo (2015) discovered that undergraduate students in Federal University of Petroleum Resources Effurun (FUPRE) are aware of the rules and regulations in the university library and they comply with them very often.

The finding does not agree with the finding of Akanbi (2007) that almost all the students find it difficult to comply with rules and regulations as contained in the library guide published by the library and made available to all registered users and that of Nina-Okpousung (2011) that the extent to which male and female users complied with library policies was low.

Availability of Information Resources and Observance of Library Regulations

The finding reported in Table 2 in respect of research question two (2) was that the availability of majority of the information resources was reported to a 'low extent'. The result accounted a very low relationship existing between availability of information resources and students' observance of library regulations. There is no significant co-relationship between the extent of availability of information resources and level of students' observance of library regulations. This finding is in tandem with Adeoye (2011) who stated that some of the information resources are not made available though library resources are the stock in trade of librarians. This situation was bemoaned by Ifidon (2000) who revealed that the ratio of books available in most Nigerian academic libraries is quite low and discouraging. For instance, a ratio of 2 book volume and 0.3 periodicals to a reader is reported in most Nigerian university libraries as against 307 volumes of books and 0.51 periodicals per reader in Nottingham University library. This can be highly frustrating for users when their needs regarding those resources are not adequately met. This can lead to their not following led down procedures for library use hence leading to the non-observance of library regulations.

However, the finding that there is no significant co-relationship between the extent of availability of information resources and level of students' observance of library regulations corroborates the statement of Attamah and Ezema (2007) that the cause of book loss and lifting of pages of library books is mainly as a result of demand outstripping supply of reading materials.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the researchers recommend that:

1. All measures to encourage students to maintain their observance of library regulations should be encouraged.
2. All types of information resources should be made available for students' use to enhance learning and research in tertiary institutions, this is because information resources are required for libraries to perform their duties effectively.
3. All other factors that encourage observance of library regulations should be put into consideration by the library management.

References

- Adeoye, M. O. & Popoola, S. O. (2011) Teaching effectiveness, availability, accessibility, and use of library and information resources among teaching staff of Schools of Nursing in Osun and Oyo State, Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice*, 525.
- Adomi, E. E. (2006). Mobile phone usage patterns of library and information science students in Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria. *Electronic Journal of Academic and Special Librarianship*.
- Adomi, E.E. (2012) *Information sources in the Humanities*. Benin: Ethiope Publishing Corporation.
- Afolabi, M. (1993). Factors influencing book theft and mutilation among library users and staff in Nigerian libraries. *Journal of Leading Libraries and Information Centres*, 1(3&4), 2-8.
- Aina, L. O. (2004). *Library and information science text for Africa*. Ibadan: Third World Information Services.
- Ajayi, N. A. & Akinniye, A. R. (2004). Accessibility of health information to primary health workers in some selected LGAs in Nigeria. *Owena Journal of Library and Information Science*, 1(2), 31-38.
- Akanbi, M. L. (2007). *Staff user interaction in university libraries: A case study*. Available at: <http://unilorin.edu.ng/publications/akanbiM.L.STAFFUSERINTERACTIONINUNIVERSITYLIBRARIES>. Doc. Accessed on 13/5/2014
- Akinade, O. J. (2002). Nigerian medical challenges for 21st century. In A. L.Mbashir & V. F. Adeoti. *The usage of library by faculty staff: Kogi State University, Anyigba in perspective*. (41-54). Nigerian Libraries, 41.

- Attamah, O. R. & Ezema, I. J. (2002). *Library and information services: A practical approach*. Enugu: Mikon Press.
- Edom, B. O. (2008). An empirical study of students' use of Imo State University library during vacation periods. *Nigerbiblios*, 19(1&2), 11-23.
- Fayose, O. (2000). *Library resources and their roles in education*. Ibadan: The Centre for External Studies, University of Ibadan.
- Ifidon, E. I. (2000). *Essentials of African university library management*. Lagos: National Library Press.
- Mason, M.K. (2010). Myths associated with undergraduate use of academic libraries. <http://www.mayok.com/papers/anxiety.html>
- Nina-Okpousung, M. O. (April, 2011). Library policies and overdue materials in Delta State Polytechnic Libraries, Nigeria. *Journal of Research in Education and Society (Online edition)*, 2(1), 199-207.
- Okiki, O.C. (2013). Availability of information resources for research output: Perception of academic staff members in Nigerian federal universities. *International Journal of Computer Science and Telecommunications*, 4(8), 26-33.
- Omoniyi, J. O. (2001). The security of computer and other electronic installations in university libraries. *Library Management*, 22(6&7), 272-277.
- Omosekejimi, A. F. Ojeme T. N. & Eghworo, O. R. (2015). Undergraduate students' awareness and compliance to library rules and regulations in a Nigerian university. *Information and Knowledge Management*, 5(10), 42-51. Available at www.iiste.org
- Osaghale, O. (2008). Faculty opinion as collection evaluation method: A case study of Redeemer's University. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. <http://unlib.unl.edu/LPP/osagahle.htm>
- Owolabi, S. E., Idowu, O. A. & Aliu, B. D. (2015). Awareness and compliance to library rules and regulations by undergraduate students in two university libraries in Southwest Nigeria. *International Journal of Library Science*, 4(1): pp. 1-6. doi: 10.5923/j.library.20150401.01.
- Ubogu, F. (2006). Trends in digital library material: Deterioration of library materials. *Nigerians Library and Information Science Review*, 3(1-2), 13-28