RECENCY AND MUTILATION AS FACTORS AFFECTING USE OF LIBRARY BY THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF TWO FEDERAL UNIVERSITIES IN NORTH-CENTRAL, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

This study focused on recency and mutilation as factors affecting use of library by the undergraduate students of two Universities in North-Central Nigeria. It adopted a descriptive survey design and had a population of 11,732 undergraduate students from two selected federal universities in north-Central Nigeria. The study used proportionate stratified random sampling technique to sample 500 undergraduate students. Five hundred (500) copies of questionnaire were distributed and four hundred and twenty nine (429) returned; representing a return rate of 86%. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of percentages as well as mean and standard deviation frequency. The decision rule for research questions one through three was based on whether the mean score value was lower than or above the criterion mean value of 2.50 bench-mark. The findings of the study revealed that the use of library resources among undergraduate students is relatively low, Mutilation of library resources negatively affect undergraduate students use of library. The study also revealed that the libraries studied have no up-to-date textbooks and journals but have Internet facilities. Finally, the study recommended that library management should source funds from various levels of government and non-governmental organisation in order to equip the libraries with current textbooks, journals and internet facilities in the two universities in North-central Nigeria.

Key words: Mutilation, Recency, Undergraduate student, University, Use of Library.

INTRODUCTION

Universities are important institutions that provide conducive learning environment for individuals. They are referred to as centres where individuals are trained to acquire basic research knowledge and skills in different fields of human endeavour. Universities worldwide need specific tools necessary for improvement and development. They are usually seen to have played an important role in the increase of social, economic, scientific, and technological manpower development of any nation. It is well known that universities provide much needed skilled manpower through training that help to develop various sectors of the nation's economy.

One of the targeted aims and objectives of many universities is to impact learning, teaching, research knowledge and community services which are needed for nation building. To support this view, Eze and Uzoigwe (2013) stressed that one of the major objectives of universities is to promote scholarship, research and learning in various fields. In order to achieve the set up goals of the universities, there is need for universities to establish well equipped libraries, with huge collections of both print and E- resources that will enhance students and faculty members' performance on learning and research. It is also important that resources should be adequate in these libraries.

Academic libraries are very necessary when establishing universities. They are usually an integral part of the university system, since they support the goals of their parent institutions. They are mostly located in the heart of the universities, and their aim is to provide users with conducive learning environment and resources that will enhance their intellectual performance. They encourage instructing; learning and research exercises of both students and faculty members of the universities. Oyewusi and Oyeboade, (2009) defined university library as the scholastic heart of the university framework and its essence is to provide students and faculty members with necessary material and enabling environment that support instructing, learning and research exercises in the universities.

Therefore, for any university library to stand the test of time there is need for acquiring of sufficient library resources to attract students and lecturers who are mostly the primary patrons.

Utilisation of library and its resources are usually important variable in determining the effectiveness of services provided by libraries. A better understanding of library use and its resources would make libraries improve in acquiring of resources and service delivery to their users. Therefore, it is necessary for university libraries to have adequate and available resources for its users. It is a well-known fact that availability of information resources can improve use of library and its resources.

Furthermore, library policies could also encourage students to frequently use the library. That is to say that if library policies are user friendly, students' patronisation of the

24

library and utilisation of its resources will be highly enhanced. Library policies are set of guidelines and controls that guide the utilization and operations of the library. These policies are considered and approved by the university management. The policies normally enable the university librarian achieve the goals of the library. Okoro and Udoumoh (2007) stated that library policies are set of rules having the compel of law, recommended by an authority, identifying with the activities of those under the power's control.

Also, policy such as mutilation is a very strong policy that strengthens the resources of libraries, and this is why it is one of the factors that can encourage students to use library resources. Maidino and Zainab (2012) observed that there have been reports of loss, theft, fraud and mutilation in libraries every day. In order to curtail such physical abuses on library resources particularly books, a campus- wide policy on mutilation should be designed. This policy should be applicable to users, who intentionally leave library with resources without passing through due processes.

Another factor that could encourage the use of library is recency of information resources. Recency of library resources is also necessary for adequate use of library resources. Library resources that contain current information attract users to libraries. Resources with latest trends, current issues and invention in a specific field of human endeavour are what users demand for. Students prefer using current materials both in print or electronic format, especially when doing their assignments and conducting research work. Mbofung (2003) stressed that the nature of the research thesis is to a substantial degree subject to the quality, amount, recency of resources counseled and cited. Thus, information resources such as journals, books, newspapers, Internet services should be made available in the libraries. Journals usually contain current and updated information about a particular field. In view of this, Enakrire and John (2012) stated that, the use of journals for diverse purposes, include the storing and repackaging of the content of information in it to buttress their research as they carry the most recent information. However, it should be noted that, university libraries that do not have recent materials are likely to negatively affect the students' use of the library and its resources.

Therefore, for a university library to be worth calling a library there is need, for its resources to be fully utilised. Results from several researches and personal observations have shown that there is a low usage of library and its resources by undergraduate students (Awojobi, 2004: Eze and Uzoigwe, 2013). This situation has become worrisome, because adequate use of library and its resources is very essential for completion of undergraduate studies by students.

It is based on the above statement that the researchers decided to investigate recency and mutilation as probable factors affecting use of library and its resources.

Statement of the Problem

University libraries usually support the objectives of universities by providing adequate library resources that enhance the intellectual performance of undergraduate students. University management usually allocate adequate financial resources in order to equip the university library. Unfortunately several researches have revealed that there is low usage of library resources in university library.

Preliminary investigations by the researchers revealed that provision of recent information resources usually attract students to make use of library resources. Unfortunately, from the researcher's observation it is not so in most of federal university libraries in North central, Nigeria despite the financial resources allocated to them. It is therefore necessary to empirically decide the actual variable responsible for low use of library and its resources. Such knowledge is necessary in order to embark on appropriate measures to improve the student's level of library use and its resources to protect the future. In the light of the foregoing, this study investigates recency as factor affecting use of resources by undergraduate students of two selected universities in North Central Nigeria.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Ascertain the frequency of library use by the undergraduate students of the two universities in North-central, Nigeria.
2. Determine the effect of mutilation library resources by the undergraduate students of the two universities in North-central, Nigeria.
3. Find the effect of recency of information resources on the use of library resources by the undergraduate students' in the universities studied

Research questions

The study was guided by the following research questions

1. What is the frequency of library use by the undergraduate students of the two universities in North Central Nigeria?
2. What is the effect of mutilation of library resources by the undergraduate students of the two universities in North Central, Nigeria?
3. What is the effect of recency of information resources on the use of library resources by the undergraduate students in the universities?

LITERATURE REVIEW

In recent years, university libraries across the globe have become more useful in the area of providing enabling environment and provision of adequate resources for the benefit of the undergraduate students. However, these resources have not been fully utilised. Several researches conducted in the area of use of library and its resources could not

profound solution for underutilization of library resources. These studies intend to identify recency and mutilation of library resources as the major challenges for underutilisation. In view of this, Onifade, et al. (2013) revealed that university libraries must make sure that the resources within their libraries are well utilised as this is essential for better performance of undergraduate students. Effective utilisation of library resources is very important to undergraduate students especially the law students who need a lot of literature to satisfy their information needs.

Ekwelem et al. (2014) conducted a research in NnamdiAzikiwe Library, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The study shows that many of the respondents are under study and are mostly 200 level. The study further revealed that a large part of the students used the library to a large extent because of lack of space and table to study. This signifies that, students usually visit the library for reading of their notes and pleasure. These studies discussed low use of library and its resources but they did not state the effect of low use of library resources by undergraduate students which is the gap this study is trying to fill. Another factor necessary for students' use of information resources is the recency of the resources. Recency of library resources is very paramount for every library to survive the test of time. Therefore, any library without current and recent information resources is said to be redundant. Students, especially the final year students usually visit library in order to consult current and up to date information resources for their academic work. This is why, Iwara (2015) recommended that, the Institute of African Library ought to be overhauled as far as getting recent books, latest journals and varying media materials to make it most referenced library with a specific end goal to meet the information needs of the Institute of African Studies Researchers. Along these lines, information resources, for example, journals, books, daily papers, Internet services ought to be made accessible in the libraries.Similarly, Quadri, Adetimirin and Idowu (2014) in their study on availability and utilisation of library electronic resources by undergraduate students of privates' universities in Ogun State, revealed that up to date e-resources should be made available to the library users at all times to satisfy their information needs.
It is also necessary for libraries to establish policies that will enable effective utilisation of library resources. Ayoung, Boatbil and Banbil (2014) in assessing awareness of the existence of security policies for polytechnic libraries in Ghana, librarians of all selected Polytechnics clearly indicated that their libraries did not have any form of written library security policies. They further stated that common security breaches identified include book theft, non-book return, mutilation, intentional mis-shelving and Impersonation. Through multiple ticking, 72% of respondents said security breaches could be attributed to theft and book non-return, 70.8% attributed it to mutilation, 69.2% said it was intentional mis-shelving and 13% felt it was impersonation.

In view of this, Inyang, Usang and Ayanlade (2014) in their study showed that a greater proportion of the subjects above 70% indicated that mutilation of library books and materials have effect on library services, 81% of the students agreed that mutilation denies library users of lending services, 82% were of the view that it discourages library users to request for such books and materials.

The above studies discussed the importance of having a policy on mutilation as well as its general effect on library use. However the present study intends to investigate the effect of mutilation policy on use of library among undergraduate students.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of this study, descriptive survey research design was adopted. A total of 11,732 undergraduate students for the population from two selected federal universities in north-Central Nigeria. The study used proportionate stratified random sampling technique to sample 500 undergraduate students. Five hundred (500) copies of questionnaire were distributed and four hundred and twenty nine (429) returned; representing a return rate of 86%. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of percentages as well as mean and standard deviation frequency. The decision rule for research questions one through three was based on whether the mean score value was lower than or above the criterion mean value of 2.50 bench-mark.

RESULTS

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Profile	Frequency	Percentage (%)
University		
Unilorin	234	47
FUTM	195	39
TOTAL	429	86
Gender		
Male	295	69
Female	134	31
TOTAL	429	100
Faculties		
Arts	103	24
Social science	131	31
Engineering	131	31
Education	64	14
TOTAL	429	100

Table 1 shows the breakdown of the copies of the questionnaire returned. The Table shows that 234 (47%) copies of the questionnaire were returned from University of Ilorin and Federal University of Technology Minna returned 195 (39%) copies of the questionnaire. The General response rate was 86% success. However, the table alsoshowed that 295 (69%) of the respondents were males, while 134 (31%) of them were females.

Furthermore, reveals that 131(31%) of the respondents being the majority were from the Faculties of Arts and Engineering respectively, 103(24%) of the respondents were from Social Sciences, while 64 (14%) of them were from faculty of Education.

Table 2: Frequency of library use and its resources

S/No	Statements	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	x	σ
1	I visit the library daily	99 (27.80%)	51 (11.80%)	59 (13.70%)	120 (46.70%)	2.21	1.29
2	I visit the library twice a week	96 (22.30%)	52 (11.80%)	120 (27.80%)	200 (46.40%)	2.01	1.18
3	I visit the library thrice a week	266 (61.70%)	53 (11.80%)	44 (10.20%)	54 (12.50%)	3.26	1.07
4	I visit the library once a month	51 (11.80%)	54 (11.80%)	50 (11.60%)	293 (68.00%)	1.63	1.05
5	I visit the library once a semester	83 (19.30%)	55 (11.80%)	63 (14.60%)	275 (63.80%)	1.76	1.17

Key: SA (4) = Strongly agree A (3) =Agree D (2) = Disagree SD (1) = strongly disagree,Mean= x
Standard deviation=σ

Table 2 revealed that out of the five items listed for students to indicate the extent they make use of the federal university libraries and their resources in North -central Nigeria, only one of the items yielded high mean score of 3.26 which was above the 2.50 mark on the 4-point Likert scale with the statement; I visit the library thrice in a week. All the other four items produced low mean values below 2.50, these items include item 1: I visit the library daily (x =2.21); item 2: I visit the library twic e a week (x =2.01); item 4: I visit the library once a month (x = 1.63); item 5: I visit the library once a semester (x =1.76).

Table 3: The extent that library policy on theft and mutilation affect use of library resources

S/NO	Statements	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	x	σ
1	Charges posed on Library theft/ replacement of library resources discourage my use of library resources	265 61.3%	140 32.4%	7 2.0%	17 4.3%	3.52	0.99
2	Charges on mutilation of library materials scares me away from using library resources	272 63.0%	140 32.4%	3 1.1%	14 3.5%	3.56	1.1
3	Expulsion of students from university when caught stealing library resources affect my library use	213 49.3%	156 36.1%	6 1.7%	54 12.9%	3.23	0.96

Key: SA (4) = strongly agree A (3) =Agree D (2) = Disagree SD (1) = strongly disagree Mean= x
Standard deviation=σ

Table 3 reveals that three items were listed for students to indicate the extent policy on theft and mutilation affects student's use of two university libraries and all the three items listed yielded high mean scores of 3.52, 3.56 and 3.23 respectively. These items include item 1: charges pose on library theft/ replacement of library resources

discourage their use of library, item 2: charges on mutilation of library materials scares me away from using library resources and item 3: expulsion of students from university when caught stealing library resources affect their library use, showing that policy on theft and mutilation negatively affect students use of federal university libraries in North-central, Nigeria.

Table 4: The extent that recency of information resources affect use of library resource

S/NO	Statement	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	x	σ
1	The library has up-to-date textbook for my assignments	36 8.4%	121 28.1%	168 39.4%	104 24.1%	2.2	0.90
2	The library has current journals for my research	71 16.6%	62 14.4%	180 41.8%	116 27.2%	2.1	1.01
3	The library E-resources contains current information resources.	142 32.9%	158 36.7%	41 10.1%	88 20.3%	2.82	1.10
4	The library has internet facilities for online search of current resources.	163 38.2%	156 36.3%	50 11.6%	60 13.9%	2.98	1.02
5	The library has current encyclopaedia that enhances my academic work.	86 20.4%	33 7.7%	229 53.1%	81 18.8%	2.28	0.99

Key: SA (4) =   strongly agree A (3) =Agree D (2) = Disagree SD (1) = strongly disagree Mean= x

Standard deviation=σ

From Table 4 the students' responses shows that out of the five items listed on the effect of recency on students' use of federal university libraries in North -Central Nigeria: two had high mean scores which were above the 2.50 bench mark on 4 -point Likert scale. These items include item 3: The library E -resources contain current information resources ($\bar{x}$=2.82) and item 4: the library has Internet facilities for online search of current resources ($\bar{x}$=2.98). These were the ones with high mean scores showing that they assist students in getting current information resources, while the other three items produced low mean value below 2.50, showing that recency of library resources in federal university libraries in North -Central Nigeria negatively affects students' use of the library. These items were item 1: the library has up -to-date textbook for my assignments, item 2: the library has current journals for my research and item 5: The library has current encyclopaedia that enhances my academic work producing mean values of 2.20, 2.10 and 2.28 respectively.

DISCUSSION

Table 2 revealed that the use of library by the undergraduate students in North-Central, Nigeria is low. The low level of the use of the university libraries by the undergraduate students is as a result of Internet facilities available to everybody including the students. This finding is similar to that of Onwudinjo, Ogbonna and Nwadiogwa (2015) who revealed that the use of library by law students is relatively low.

Table 3 showed that charges on mutilation of library materials scare students away from using the library resources as well as expulsion of students from university when caught mutilating library resources. All these penalties affect students' use of library as indicated in the study. Probably, this could be why students prefer to use their mobile phones in browsing and searching for information and some of them borrow textbooks from their colleagues to read and study for fear of being expelled from the university. This result agrees with the findings of Inyang, Usang and Ayanlade (2014) who revealed that majority of the respondent agreed that mutilation policy reduced the availability and access to library materials and a greater proportion of the students agreed that mutilation policy denied library users of lending services.

Table 4 revealed that libraries studied had no up-to-date hard copy textbooks and journals for students' researches and assignments. However, availability of Internet facilities, online and e-resources with current information resources help students in their assignments and researches. This result agrees with the findings of Onwudinjo, Ogbonna and Nwadiogwa (2015) who revealed that there were no current and up to date resources in the law library; hence there was need for the provision of current and relevant law resources so as to improve researches.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it could be concluded that recency and mutilation of

library resources are important variables for effective use of library resources by the undergraduate students in the two universities in North-Central, Nigeria. Therefore, it is very important for university libraries in North-central, Nigeria to improve in the areas of provision of current information resources and review of mutilation policies. Once these issues are adequately addressed, it is expected that the use of library resources among undergraduate students in North-Central, Nigeria will tremendously improve.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are hereby provided:

1. Library Management should endeavour to provide funds to acquire up –to- date resources especially textbooks and journals.
2. Library Management should also try to enlighten student about the important of library use.
3. Policy on Mutilation should be reviewed so as to increased students' use of library and its resource

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