

Utilization of Library Resources and Services by Postgraduate Students of National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS), Abuja

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Abstract

Libraries play important roles as reliable and beneficial information providers in students' academic success and performance. The study aims to assess the use of resources and services by the Postgraduate students of NILDS. A Survey Research Method was used for the study. The study population comprised all the postgraduate students who sat for a core course final examination, which was seventy-five (75). The questionnaire, interview and observation approaches were used as data collection instruments. The findings revealed that most of the respondents occasionally use the library, the resources are relevant/adequate, they are satisfied with the assistance, and the seating space was too small and inadequate. Based on the findings, it was recommended, among other things, that the management should intensify the effort of moving to the permanent staff where there is enough space to accommodate the postgraduate students, especially when exams are approaching, and to reduce the noise from the classes during lectures to make maximum use of the resources and services.

Keywords: *Library use, Information resources, Services, Postgraduate students*

Introduction

Libraries worldwide are the major providers of information resources of various types. The library is an ally for those seeking knowledge (Ukaegbu,2020). The main functions of libraries, particularly those situated under organizations, are to support the programs of the organization by fulfilling the aims and objectives of that organization. NILDS Institute library's function is to fulfil the mandates of NILDS. The Library is established for research, teaching and study purposes. The Library tries as much as possible to develop its collections in all research areas and courses offered in the Institute.

The Library has primary responsibilities to select, acquire, organize, store, preserve and access information resources of various types and forms. It also provides a conducive environment for students, researchers and other staff for their research, study and leisure reading. The Library offers information resources and services for legislative research in print and

electronic (e) format. The Library's range of services and resources are dedicated to support the researchers, legislators, legislative staff, Postgraduate students, and other staff of the Institute.

The Institute's Library has information resources in various disciplines, such as Legislative Studies, Economics, Law, Political science, Administration, Sociology, and History. It holds a stock of over 12,000 volumes of books and over 6000 volumes of journals. Specifically, the resources /collection include books in print and electronic format, Journals in print and electronic format, local and international newspapers, magazines, the postgraduate students' thesis, the Institute's Publications, Reports on pieces of training organized by the Institute, Photo Albums of the Institute's events, CD/DVD. In addition, the Library's archival information resources include Treaties, Legislative debates, Constitutional amendment reports, Law reports, Acts, Decrees, National Assembly proceedings, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, etc.

The services rendered by the library include:

- Providing training for researchers, students, legislators and legislative staff on how to use the library resources and services
- Access to Internet service
- Online access to the library's resources
- Subscribes to print and online newspapers, magazines, open-access database
- Selective Dissemination of Information
- Current Awareness Services, e.g. send a list of new arrivals to users
- Indexing on relevant topics
- Online reference service
- Encourages and promotes the use of resources

The National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS) offer Masters's Degree programmes in Legislative Drafting, Legislative Studies, Parliamentary Administration, Elections and Party Politics, Constitutional Law and Constitutional Development. The objectives of the Master's Degree programme of the Institute are to equip the legislators, legislative staff and public members with the knowledge and skills required for improved performance of their functions (NILDS, 2019). The postgraduate students are expected to make use of the Institute's Library. They must use the library resources and services to meet their information needs.

Problem Statement

The utilization of a library's resources and services is doubtful because users need to be aware of the library's facilities. After all, libraries do not precisely know the user's needs (Rocio, 1986). It is observed from the library use statistics that the usage of the Institute Library by postgraduate students is low despite the rich resources, services and Internet services provided by the Institute, which is expected to attract the Postgraduate students. This research is carried out against this problem to determine the potential cause of negative library usage.

Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent do the postgraduate students of the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS), Abuja, use the Library resources and services?
2. What are the purposes of using the Library resources and services by the postgraduate students of the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS), Abuja?
3. What are the types of resources and services used by the postgraduate students of the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS), Abuja?
4. What suggestions do the postgraduate students of the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS), Abuja, want to proffer on the resources to be added to the collection and ways to improve the services provided by the Library?

Literature Review

Library user study may be any study relating to library use in all aspects (Rocio 1987). User study is a variable tool for assessing libraries and their services. User surveys offer a good opportunity to look at things from the users of the library's perspectives (Hakala and Nygren, 2010, cited by Calsson, 2020). Information is a vital and indispensable component of any academic environment. Libraries play fundamental roles in providing information resources and services for studies and research. For postgraduate students, doing their assignments and writing their thesis and dissertation will require them to delve into appropriate and reliable information resources that are reliable. United Kingdom (U.K). Evidence also suggests that universities, which succeed in engaging students to use library resources, are rewarded with higher academic outcomes among those students. Comparative research in South Africa and the United States (U. S.) has given similar results (SCONUL, 2021).

However, Shrestha (2008) opined that many students are vulnerable to overloaded information and are not keen on using the Library's resources; they prefer internet resources, as its interface is easy to use. She advised that to ensure that students get lifelong education, libraries should be made accessible, and library resources and services should be available. Similarly, Kumah(2015) study revealed that graduate students have adopted and continue to use the Internet for their academic and research work at the expense of or without considering the importance and the quality of traditional information centres. In the same vein, Alokuk(2020) stated that due to the development in technology, the utilization of library services could be more optimal in most learning institutions, which limits the realization of educational benefits that accrue from library use. Similarly, a study carried out by Onifade et al (2013) revealed that the majority of postgraduate students use the Library sparingly.

The findings of the study conducted by Tukur and Kannan (2021) on the challenges affecting the use of information resources and services by postgraduate students revealed that the constraint expressed by the graduate students of the universities studied are: poor Internet connectivity, power failure, no current and appropriate information resources, inadequate

number of staff. Although there are many sources of information, SCONUL (2021) emphasized that the Library continues to fulfil its role as the heart of the university, despite the move away from print and towards electronic resources. Apart from providing information resources to their users, Adeyemi (2017) noted that the provision of spaces for study, reading and quiet contemplations and research remained a major service offered by a library. The library's work contributes directly to the Institution's academic mission and equips students with the skills and knowledge they need to achieve academically and maximize their employability.

Methodology

The survey method was used to assess the library resources and services from the perspectives of NILDS postgraduate students. Questionnaires, interviews and observations were the instruments used to collect data. Seventy-five (75) questionnaires were distributed to all the postgraduate students in the exam hall during an exam period. The exam was a core course where all the students were expected to sit for it. A total of 55 questionnaires were completed and returned. The return rate was 73% percent. The returned questionnaires were coded, which enabled the researcher to calculate sums. The Data was analyzed using Descriptive Statistics of Frequency and Percentages, and the result is presented in tables, while the responses from the interview and observation were incorporated into the discussion of the findings.

Data Analysis, Discussions and Interpretation of Results

This section presents the data analysis, discussion and presentation of results. The results are as follows:

The gender distribution of the responses is 35(60%) Male and 22 (40%) Female.

Table 1: Course of Study

S/N	Course of Study	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
1.	Masters in Legislative Studies	24	43.63
2.	Masters in Law, Legislative Drafting	8	14.55
3.	Masters in Parliamentary Administration	15	27.27
4.	Masters in Election & Party Politics	7	12.73
5.	Postgraduate Diploma in Election & Party Management	1	1.82
Total		55	100

The distribution of respondents by course in table 1 showed that the majority, 24 (43.63%), are students of Masters in Legislative Studies, 8(14.55%) Masters in Law, 15(27.27%) Masters in Parliamentary Administration, 7(12.73%) Masters in Elections and Party Politics, while 1(1.82%) Postgraduate diploma students

Table 2: Age Distribution

S/N	Age Distribution	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
a.	20-30	5	9.09
b.	31-40	20	36.36
c.	41-50	25	45.45
d.	51-60	5	9.09
e.	60 and above	0	-
Total		55	100

The age distribution, as shown in Table 2, indicated that 20(36.36%) are between the ages of 31-40, the majority of the respondents, 25 (45.45%), are between the ages of 41-50, while five (9.09%) are between 51-60, another five (9.09%) are between the ages of 20-30.

Table 3: Level of Education

S/N	Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
1.	HND	1	1.82
2.	BA/BSc	27	49.09
3.	MA/MSc	22	40
4.	M.Phil.	1	1.82
5.	PhD	1	1.82
6.	Other	3	5.45
Total		55	100

The level of education of the respondents is displayed in table 3. The result indicated that 1(1.82%) has an HND degree, and the majority, 27 (49.09%), have B.A/B.Sc. Degrees, 22 (40%) have M.A/M.Sc. For degrees, 1 (1.82%) has an MPhil degree, 1 (1.82%) has a PhD degree, while 3 respondents to the "other category" did not specify their level of education.

In an attempt to determine whether the PG students are registered members of the Library, the result showed that the majority, 37 (67.27%), are registered members, while 18 (32.73%) are not registered members of the Library.

Table 4: How often do you use the Library?

How often do you use the library?	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
Very often	10	18.18
Often	15	27.27

Occasionally	26	47.27
Never	5	9.09
Total	55	100

To ascertain the frequency with which respondents use the library for various activities, the result in table 4 indicated that 10 (18.18%) reported that they use the Library very often, 15 (27.27%) use the Library often, majority 26 (47.27%) occasionally use the library, 5 (9.09%) indicated they never used the Library. This is in line with Onifade et al. (2013) study that also showed that Postgraduate students use the Library sparingly.

Table 5: What do you use the Library for?

What do you use the library for?	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
a. To read library books	36	56.36
b. To read newspapers & magazines	13	24.64
c. To do assignments	34	61.82
d. To do photocopy	28	50.91
e. To use the Internet	15	27.27
f. To read lecture notes/handouts	31	56.36
g. To rest/relax	5	9.09

Postgraduate students use the Library for various reasons, and a question was sought to find out what they use the Library for. It was discovered from table 5 that the highest number of respondents, 36 (56.36%), use the Library to read books, 13 (24.64%) use the Library to read newspapers/magazines, 34 (61.82%) use the library to do assignments, 28 (50.91%) use the library for photocopying, 15 (27.27%) indicated that they use the Library to use the Internet, 31 (56.36%) use the Library to read lecture notes/handouts, and 5 (9.09%) use the Library to rest/relax. It is not surprising that most respondents use the library to read books. This is expected since the Library has books that cover virtually all the areas of subjects taught in the Institute.

To find out whether the respondents were aware of the information resources and services available in the Library, the results show that the majority of the postgraduate students, 44 (89.8%), indicated that they were aware of the resources, while 5 (10.2%) indicated they are not aware of the resources. The high rate of the respondents' awareness of information resources and services may be because of bringing the postgraduate students physically to the Library to see the resources.

Table 6: The Information Resources and Services Aware of

Information resources and services	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
a. Books	44	80
b. Journals	23	41.82
c. E-books/e-journals	7	12.73
d. Internet	23	41.82
e. Newspapers/Magazines	14	25.45
f. Photocopy services	32	58.18
g. Online catalogue/online access to library resources	1	1.82
h. Photo albums of NILDS event	1	1.82
i. CDs of webinars and interviews	-	-
j. New arrival list	4	7.27
k. Library website	1	1.82

The second part of the question seeks to identify the specific resources and services that the postgraduate students are aware of; a list of resources and services was given for postgraduate students to tick as many as possible. The responses are indicated in table 6 as 44 (80%) books, 23 (41.82%) journals, 7 (12.73%) e-books and e-journals, 23 (41.82%) internet, 14 (25.45%) newspapers/magazines, 32 (58.18%) photocopy, 1 online catalogue online access to library resources, 1 (1.82%) photo albums of NILDS events, 4 (7.27%) new arrivals list, 1 (1.82%) library website, while nobody is aware of C.Ds of webinars and interviews. Most postgraduate students indicated the resources they are aware of as books. This is expected because books constitute the dominant information resource available in the Library. On the contrary, only one is aware of the online catalogue (OPAC), and only one student is aware of the Library website. This implies they must include the benefits of accessing library resources and services virtually.

The respondents were asked whether they have problems using the resources listed in table 6, the majority, 44 (93.62%), indicated that they have problems using the resources, and only 3 (6.38%) indicated that they do not have a problem using the resources. The response to the "if yes, specify" category indicated that they have problems using e-books and e-journals, online catalogues and the Internet. From these responses, the Library management may have assumed that all postgraduate students are familiar with the use of Libraries just because they might have used libraries at their undergraduate levels, which might have resulted in not giving them adequate orientation on the use of the Library.

Table 7: Adequacy/Relevance of the Resources and Services

Adequacy/Relevance of resources	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
a. Adequate	42	76.36
b. Not adequate	3	5.45
c. Not sure	10	18.18
Total	55	100

When asked whether the library resources are adequate, the responses in Table 7 revealed that the majority, 42 (76.36%), indicated that they are adequate, 3 (5.45%) stated that the resources are not adequate, while as much as 10 (18.18%) stated that they are not sure.

In an attempt to find out if the respondents have ever asked for assistance from library staff, the results indicated that as many as 45 (81.82%) respondents indicated yes, while 10 (18.81%) stated that they did not ask for assistance.

When the respondents were further asked whether they were satisfied with the assistance given to them by the library staff, the majority, 45 (88.24%), indicated that they were satisfied with the assistance given to them, while 6 (11.76%) indicated that they were not satisfied with the assistance given to them.

When asked if the respondents had a formal orientation on the use of the library, the responses show that the majority of postgraduate students, 45 (81.82%), indicated that they had a formal orientation, while 10 (18.81%) did not. This may result from the 10 respondents who indicated that they did not have a formal orientation and may not have attended the orientation held.

Table 8: Usefulness of Orientation on Use of Library Resources and Services

How useful was it how to use the library resources?	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
Very useful	21	38.18
Useful	24	43.64
Not useful	3	5.45
Not sure	7	12.73
Total	55	100

When they were further asked whether the orientation was useful on how to use the library resources, the responses in table 8 indicated that 21 (38.18%) stated that it was very useful, majority of them, 24 (43.64%), stated that it was useful, 3 (5.45%) did not find it useful, while 7 (12.73%) were not sure whether it was useful.

This section presents the responses to the questions asked if there are resources and services they would like to be added to the Library and suggestions for improving the resources and services. The responses are as follows:

The question that seeks to find out whether they would like to see resources and services added to the library, the result depicted that 19 (34.55%) said yes, while the majority, 36 (65.45%), said no. When asked to specify what resources and services they would like to see added, only one respondent stated that they would like something on avoiding plagiarism and how to use the software for plagiarism. The findings revealed that as many as 19 respondents would like resources and services added to the collection. It could be inferred that to fully satisfy the users' needs, the library still needs to improve its resources and services.

Table 9: Suggestions on Ways to Improve Resources and Services

Resources and services to improve on	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Inadequate/ not enough space for seating	23	41.82
2. Extend closing time to 8 pm	11	20
3. Increase photocopying to more than 10 copies	13	23.64
4. More reading materials/book	3	5.45
5. Additional ports of a laptop	9	16.36
6. More library staff to assist	8	14.55
7. Orientation for new staff	4	7.27
8. Offer weekend services during exams	5	9.09
9. Phone calls should be allowed in the library	3	5.45
10. Noise from class disturb	7	12.73
11. More computer systems	6	10.91
12. Accessing the library online	3	5.45

The respondents were given the freedom to respond in their own words to suggest ways in which the Library could improve its services and resources. The responses in Table 9 indicated that most of them suggested that reading space should be increased. This concurs with Alokuk's (2020) findings, which revealed that the respondents were dissatisfied with the availability of comfortable/ inadequate space to study. This was followed by allowing them to photocopy more than 10 copies and extending the closing time to at least 8 pm. This is in line with Kumah's (2015) study which showed that the problems encountered by graduate students in using the library included opening hours which were not convenient.

The interview was conducted to elicit the postgraduate students to suggest ways to improve the services rendered and the available resources. The responses from the interview indicated that the majority of them stated that the Library is too small and that there is not enough space to sit and read, especially when exams are approaching. They also suggested Library closing hours should be extended because most of them are civil servants. They can only use the Library effectively after office hours, and during the weekends. No wonder the analysis in table 3 shows that the majority of the respondents are between the ages of 41-50, and also more staff should be available to assist, especially when exams are approaching.

Observation by the researcher also shows that the Library is too small to accommodate the physical information resources and the students, especially when an exam is approaching and during the exams period.

Conclusion

Academic and research libraries collect several information resources and offer various services to support studies, learning and research. The Library must have a thorough knowledge of the utilization of the information resources and the services provided by the library by looking at things from the users' perspectives. This study showed that most of the respondents occasionally use the library, the resources are adequate, the resources they are mostly aware of are books, journals and the Internet, the services they are mostly aware of are photocopying and Internet services, and they visit the library to read books, handouts, and do their assignments. Their major challenges in using the Library are inadequate reading space, not allowing them to photocopy more than 10 pages, and the opening hours of the Library are not convenient

Recommendations

In the light of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. It is recommended that the NILDS management should intensify effort to ensure the movement of the Institute to its permanent site, which will enable the users to have a conducive environment to use the resources available in the Library effectively.
2. The Library management should extend the opening hours to at least 8 pm and open the Library on Sundays.
3. The NILDS management should increase the orientation time allocated to the Library so that the Library can effectively teach the postgraduate students how to use the e-resources and services, such as OPAC, the website and the database; thereby ensuring access to the Library resources and services virtually.

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Does Availability Determine Use? A Case Study of Undergraduate Students at the Federal University Lokoja

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Abstract

The research was set to shed light on the utilization of the library and its numerous resources based on the responses of undergrad users at the Federal University Lokoja (FUL) Library. A quantitative research methodology and a survey research design were used to analyze the four research questions posed for this study. The population comprised all registered Library users, and a structured questionnaire served as the research instrument for the study. Sampled responses from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods with tables and graphs. The study revealed that students' use of Information Resources in the library was mainly for Assignments/Reading, Examinations, and Project writing. Challenges that hinder the effective utilization of information resources are the attitude of librarians and the information literacy/orientation of students finally, increased utilization can be achieved through target-driven literacy and orientation programs alongside the provision of adequate information resources. The study buttressed the use strategy of Federal University Library Lokoja from the perspective of library users, which gives its novelty. The study has also shed light on possible issues that hinder the optimal use of resources. Finally, the study highlights building better librarians and library environs through literacy programs, training, and reengineering library spaces to cater to other activities like entertainment and fun to improve library use and orient clientele's behaviour.

Keywords: Library Use, University Libraries, Information resources,. Undergraduates

Introduction

The basic function of any university is to conserve and transmit existing knowledge through teaching and create new knowledge through research. According to Omotundes, et al. (2014) universities are to generate new knowledge and encourage transformation and adoption of innovation. Since this requires an atmosphere of research, libraries must provide access to