

USE OF LIBRARY AMONG UNDERGRADUATES OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE IN  
KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

*This study focused its attention on the use of library among university agricultural science students in Kwara State, Nigeria. Specifically, frequency of library use, resources available vis-a-vis impact on the academic performance of the students, factors associated with efficient use of library and the attitudes of students to library use were investigated. A well structured questionnaire was used to elicit information from 200 respondents selected through a stratified systematic random sampling from the two universities in Kwara State namely: University of Ilorin and the Kwara State University. Results revealed that majority (79%) of the students were below 25 years of age; about 57% were male, 97% unmarried, while 32.5% were fresh students. About 66% of the students used the library occasionally, 39% used information section mostly, 82% accessed agricultural books often, and 65.5% of the students visited the library during examination periods only. Also, majority of the respondents agreed that the prevailing library collections meet their research needs while most of the students exhibited a positive attitude towards the importance and need for them to adopt the use of library regularly with most of them believing that it will help them to record an increment in their examination score and general academic performance. It was further revealed that Cumulative Grade Points ( $r = 0.181$ ;  $p = 0.032$ ), level of the students ( $r = 0.129$ ;  $p = 0.049$ ), and (proposed) specialization ( $r = 0.158$ ;  $p = 0.032$ ) were significantly related to respondents' attitude to library use. Major constraints factors to library use among the respondents include ageing collections and difficulty in locating books. It was recommended that lecturers should involve the students in activities that will make them to make use of the library more often thereby enhancing improvement in their academic performance.*

Keywords:

Introduction

Academic libraries are established to support teaching, learning and research in institutions by building and maintaining a collection that will support and enhance the instructional needs of the institution (Mason, 2010). According to Ajayi and Ogunyemi (2011), academic libraries foster information literacy and provide resources to both students and staffs. Academic libraries are essential to the core missions of educational institutions across the nations. The Library has a unique position as a potential educational force (Nwezeh and Shabi, 2011). Franscotti *et al.*

(2007) revealed that libraries were trying to be innovative and more appealing to its users. However, in recent times, the relevance and use of the library has been an issue of debate. Ajayi and Ogunyemi (2011) highlighted the growing concern over students' use of the libraries in higher institutions in Nigeria. Akin and Ajayi (2008) and Onuoha and Subair (2013) attested to this fact by revealing the decline in the use of libraries within tertiary institutions. Yusuf and Iwu (2010) further opined that even though libraries are used, they are, however, reduced to seasonal periods as most students make use of the library when preparing for examinations. These show that a lot of students may not be taking advantage of the resources provided by the library which might explain why many students experience poor performance in their respective course of study. It is in this light that the study intends to examine the use of library among University Agricultural Students in order to provide useful insights and information that will enhance the efficient functioning of the university libraries and its use by the students. This invariably will improve students' academic performance. The study therefore intends to focus on the following objectives:

The general objective of the study is to evaluate the use of library among University Agricultural Students in Kwara State, Nigeria while the specific objectives are to:

- (i) describe the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents
- (ii) determine the frequency of use of the library
- (iii) identify the resources available for use in the library by the respondents
- (iv) identify the factors that influence the effective use of library among students of agriculture in the study areas.
- (v) Determine agricultural science students' attitude towards utilization of library services in the study area

The study further tested a hypothesis which was stated in the null form:

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant relationship between selected respondents' socio-economic characteristics and their attitude towards the use of library.

### Methodology

The study was carried out in Kwara State, Nigeria. The state is geographically located between latitude 7°20' and 11°05' north of the equator longitude 2°5' and 6°45' east of the prime meridian (Ogunlade, Oladele and Babatunde, 2009). It is located in North Central Nigeria. The two major Universities in the state were selected for this study which were University of Ilorin (a Federal owned University) and Kwara State University (a State owned University). The population for the study was the total number of agricultural students in the two institutions. A well structured questionnaire was used to elicit information from two hundred (200) agricultural students in the Universities. The respondents comprised of 200 level to 500 level students which were selected using a stratified systematic random sampling technique.

Data were collected on the socio-economic characteristics of the students, their frequency of use of their university library, resources available for use in these libraries, factors that influence the effective use of these libraries and the students' attitude towards the use of library services in their institutions. These variables were measured as follows:

Use of Library: Respondents were asked series of questions such as number of times per week they visited the library, section of the library most visited, type of book accessed and period of visit.

Resources Available for Use: Students were presented with a list of statements on library resources and their responses indicating the availability, accessibility and relevance of these resources were rated on a 5-point likert type scale of Strongly agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly disagree (1).

Factor Influencing Effective Use of Library: Respondents were presented with a list of statements and they were asked to indicate their perception of these statements as factors influencing their effective use of library resources. Their responses were rated on a 5-point likert type scale of Strongly agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly disagree (1).

Attitude Towards Utilization of Library Services: A list of attitudinal statements were presented to the respondents and they were asked to their perception which was then rated on a 5-point likert type scale of Strongly agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly disagree (1).

Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, means and ranks were used to analyze the data obtained while chi-square and correlation analyses were used to determine the relationship between selected socio-economic characteristics of the respondents and their attitude towards library use.

## Results and Discussion

Table 1: Socio-economic characteristics of respondents

Socio-economic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age interval		
Below 20	59	29.5
21-24	99	49.5
25-28	38	19.0
29 and above	4	4.0
Gender		
Male	113	56.5
Female	87	43.5
Marital status		
Single	194	97.0
Married	6	3.0
Religion		
Christian	130	65.0
Islam	68	34.0
Traditional	2	1.0
Department		
Animal production	28	14.0
Agricultural extension	37	18.5
Agronomy	4	2.0
Crop protection	12	4.0

Forestry	7	3.5
Home economics and Food science	12	6.0
Agric economics	10	5.0
No department	94	47.0
Level		
200	65	32.5
300	51	25.5
400	38	19.0
500	46	23.0
Mode of Entry		
UME	168	84
Remedial/ predegree	10	5.0
Direct entry	22	11.0

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Table 1 presents the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. As shown in Table 1, majority (79%) of the respondents were below 25 years of age, more than half (56.5%) were male students and almost all (97%) of the respondents were single. This is in consonance with what is expected of young students in order to give them opportunity to focus on their studies and not be distracted by the added responsibility attached to family life. Also Table 1 revealed that about 32.5% of the respondents are fresh students at the 200 level while more than half of the students (53%) were in various departments and areas of specialization. The remaining (47%) were yet to be distributed to their respective departments due to their current Level in the degree programme and the nature of the faculty policy obtainable in their institutions.

Table 2: Respondents' use of library

Use of Library	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Frequency of Visit		
1-2 times per week	29	14.5
3-4 times per week	25	12.5
5-6 times per week	10	5.0
Occasionally	132	66.0
Does not make use of the library	4	2.0
Sections		
Circulation	58	29.0
Potters	23	11.5
Information	78	39.0
Reprographics	5	2.5
Reference	36	18.0
Books Read		
Agric related	164	82.0
Non agric related	36	18.0
Period		
Before exam	36	18.0
During exams	131	65.5
Both	33	16.5

Source: Field Survey, 2013.

Results from Table 2 revealed that majority (66%) of the respondents used the library occasionally while most of them (82%) accessed agricultural related resources during their visit. This may be as a result of the fact that most of the respondents are students specializing in one area of agriculture or the other. However it is worthy of note that majority (65.5%) of the respondents make use of the library during examination periods only. This finding agrees with Yusuf and Iwu (2010) which revealed that the use of library is usually reduced to seasonal periods as most students make use of the library when preparing for examinations.

Table 3: Resources available for use in the library

Resources	SD	D	UD	A	SA	Mean Score	Rank
Computers in the library are accessible	67 (33.5%)	38 (19.0%)	15 (7.5%)	56 (28.0%)	24 (12.0%)	2.66	9th
Computers are adequate and workable	39 (19.5%)	56 (28.0%)	36 (18%)	46 (23.0%)	23 (11.5%)	2.79	6th
Printing facilities are adequate and available	33 (16.5%)	60 (30%)	49 (24.5%)	42 (21.0%)	16 (8.0%)	2.74	8th
Library collection meet my research	22 (11%)	46 (23%)	34 (17%)	75 (37.5%)	23 (11.5%)	3.16	3rd
Photocopying facilities are available and adequate	13 (6.5%)	38 (19.0%)	28 (14.0%)	91 (45.5%)	30 (15.0%)	3.43	1st
Resources are appropriate for my courses needs	21 (10.5%)	38 (19.0%)	52 (26.0%)	71 (35.5%)	18 (9.0%)	3.14	4th
User properties kept in cloak is safe	30 (15%)	50 (25.0%)	42 (21.0%)	50 (25.0%)	28 (14.0%)	2.98	5th
Different types of paper are open to students	25 (12.5%)	33 (16.5%)	50 (25.0%)	60 (30.0%)	32 (16.0%)	3.21	2nd
There are enough good seats and table in the library that can accommodate all potential readers	46 (23%)	44 (22.0%)	38 (19.0%)	51 (25.5%)	21 (10.5%)	2.78	7th

Note: Strongly Agree = SA, Agree = A, Undecided = UD, Disagree = D, Strongly Disagree = SD  
Source: Field Survey, 2013.

Table 3 reveals the perception of the respondents on the availability, accessibility and relevance of library resources. The results revealed that the respondents rated high the availability and accessibility of photocopying facilities and presence of daily newspapers. This is revealed by their means score of 3.43 and 3.21 respectively. Also, majority of the respondents agreed that the prevailing library collections met their research needs and that the available library resources are appropriate for their course needs. These were with a mean score of 3.16 and 3.14 respectively. The respondents however indicated that though computers were available in the library, they were not accessible for use by the students.

Table 4: Factors influencing effective use of library

Factors	SD	D	UD	A	SA	Mean Score	Rank
Power supply in the library is very frequent	15 (7.5%)	28 (14.0%)	32 (14.0%)	89 (16.0%)	36 (44.5%)	3.51	3rd
Quick access to textbooks	12 (6.0%)	43 (21.5%)	26 (13.0%)	94 (47.0%)	25 (12.5%)	3.38	4th
Proximity of the library to student's hostel	8 (4.0%)	32 (16.0%)	31 (15.5%)	105 (52.5%)	24 (12.0%)	3.52	2nd
The atmosphere of library is conducive for learning.	11 (5.5%)	26 (13.0%)	29 (14.5%)	96 (48.0%)	38 (19.0%)	3.62	1st
Librarians are harsh in attending to library users	27 (13.5%)	65 (32.5%)	51 (25.5%)	41 (20.5%)	16 (8.0%)	2.77	9th
Difficulties in locating books arranged in the shelves	27 (13.5%)	55 (27.5%)	27 (13.5%)	73 (36.5%)	18 (9.0%)	3.00	7th
The library is cool to learning (AC/FAN)	19 (9.5%)	42 (21.0%)	35 (17.5%)	81 (40.5%)	23 (11.5%)	3.23	5th
Books are up to date	38 (19.0%)	36 (18.0%)	54 (27.0%)	54 (27.0%)	18 (9.0%)	2.89	8th
Textbooks are obsolete (old and recessing)	14 (7.0%)	50 (25.0%)	47 (23.5%)	53 (26.5%)	36 (18.0%)	3.23	5 <sup>th</sup>
Books are haphazardly arranged in the library	32 (16%)	59 (29.5%)	54 (27.0%)	43 (21.5%)	12 (6.0%)	2.72	10 <sup>th</sup>
There are enough good seats and table in the library that can accommodate all potential readers	53 (26.5%)	44 (22.0%)	29 (14.5%)	55 (27.5%)	19 (9.5%)	2.72	10 <sup>th</sup>
There is no proper security in the library thus users life is at risk	55 (27.5%)	64 (32.0%)	26 (13.0%)	43 (21.5%)	12 (6.0%)	2.47	12 <sup>th</sup>
There is gender discrimination between sexes	68 (34%)	50 (25.0%)	37 (18.5%)	39 (19.5%)	6 (3.0%)	2.32	13 <sup>th</sup>

Note: Strongly Agree = SA, Agree = A, Undecided = UD, Disagree = D, Strongly Disagree = SD  
Source: Field Survey, 2013.

Results from Table 4 show the respondents' perception of factors that influences their effective use of the libraries in their institution. The result revealed that some major positive factors that serve as incentive to the students' willingness to use the library are the conducive atmosphere in the library, the proximity of the library to the students' hostels and the adequate power supply in the library premises. On the other hand, the table also revealed some major constraints factors that is militating against effective library use. These include ageing collections and their difficulty in locating books in the library which may be as a result of the fact that books are haphazardly arranged in the library.

Table 5: Attitude towards Utilization of Library Services

Attitude towards Utilization	SD	D	UD	A	SA	Mean Score	Rank
I am tired of using the library	34 (17.0%)	53 (26.5%)	46 (23.0%)	49 (24.5%)	18 (9.0%)	2.82	9 <sup>th</sup>
I feel comfortable using the library	30 (15.0%)	24 (12.0%)	44 (22.0%)	86 (43.0%)	16 (8.0%)	3.17	5 <sup>th</sup>
Use of library will make me record increment in my exam score and performance	26 (13.0%)	40 (20.0%)	35 (17.5%)	75 (37.5%)	24 (12.0%)	3.16	6 <sup>th</sup>
Use of library will stimulate me to work harder	22 (11.0%)	28 (14.0%)	38 (19.0%)	84 (42.0%)	28 (14.0%)	3.34	2 <sup>nd</sup>
I enjoy library usage	16 (8.0%)	37 (18.5%)	46 (23.0%)	77 (38.5%)	24 (12.0%)	3.28	3 <sup>rd</sup>
I believe that the more often lecturers direct me to use the library, the more enjoy the course.	30 (15.0%)	45 (22.5%)	43 (21.5%)	58 (29.0%)	24 (12.0%)	3.01	4 <sup>th</sup>
I believe that it is important for me to learn how to use the library	11 (5.5%)	16 (8.0%)	46 (23.0%)	96 (48.0%)	31 (15.5%)	3.60	1 <sup>st</sup>
I get sinking feelings when I think of trying to use the library	30 (15.0%)	54 (27.0%)	44 (22.0%)	52 (26.0%)	20 (10.0%)	2.89	8 <sup>th</sup>
I think that it takes a long time to finish when I use the library	25 (12.5%)	59 (29.5%)	39 (19.5%)	66 (33.0%)	11 (5.5%)	2.90	7 <sup>th</sup>
Using the library makes me nervous	32 (16.0%)	65 (32.5%)	49 (24.5%)	38 (19.0%)	16 (8.0%)	2.71	10 <sup>th</sup>
Using the library is very frustrating to me and when I see people making use of the library per time	41 (20.5%)	72 (36.0%)	42 (21.0%)	31 (15.5%)	14 (7.0%)	2.52	12 <sup>th</sup>
I can learn more in other places than the library	32 (16.0%)	65 (32.5%)	49 (24.5%)	38 (19.0%)	16 (8.0%)	2.71	10 <sup>th</sup>

Note: Strongly Agree = SA, Agree = A, Undecided = UD, Disagree = D, Strongly Disagree = SD

Source: Field Survey, 2013.

Table 5 reveals the attitude of the students to utilization of the library resources in their institutions. The result generally shows that the respondents have a good and positive attitude to library use by their high agreement rating of statements like "I believe that it is important for me to learn how to use the library" (MS = 3.60), "Use of library will stimulate me to work harder" (MS = 3.34), "Use of library will make me record increment in my exam score and performance" (MS = 3.16), and their low agreement rating with statements like "I am tired of using the library" (MS = 2.82) and "Using the library makes me nervous" (MS = 2.71).



### Hypothesis Testing

$H_0$ : There is no significant relationship between selected respondents' socio-economic characteristics and their attitude towards library use.

Table 6: Relationship of some selected socio-economic characteristics with respondents' attitude to library use

Variable	Correlation/chi-square Coeff.	Remarks
Age	$r = 0.19$ $p = 0.785$	Not significant
Department/Specialization	$\chi^2 = 15.8$ $p = 0.025$	Significant
Gender	$\chi^2 = 0.180$ $p = 0.411$	Not significant
Level	$\chi^2 = 12.9$ $p = 0.049$	Significant
Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA)	$r = 0.181$ $p = 0.032$	Significant

Source: Data Analysis, 2013

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2- tailed)

$P \leq 0.05$  (significant)

$P > 0.05$  (not significant)

Data analysis revealed that respondents' department ( $\chi^2 = 15.8$ ;  $p = 0.025$ ), Level ( $\chi^2 = 12.9$ ;  $p = 0.049$ ) and cumulative grade point average ( $r = 0.181$ ;  $p = 0.032$ ) were significant and positively related with their attitude to library use. Thus the null hypothesis was rejected. The implication of this is that as the level and cumulative grade point average of students increases, they are more likely to have a positive attitude toward library use. Also respondents who are already in a department or area of specialization in agriculture are more likely to also exhibit a positive attitude towards library use than those who are not.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was revealed that the students generally were positively disposed to the use of library but most of them usually made use of it occasionally when the need arose and also during examination periods. Difficulty in locating books in the library and obsolete collections are the major factors highlighted by the respondents militating against effective library use by the students.

The study therefore recommends that lecturers should involve the students in activities that will make them to make use of the library more often thereby enhancing improvement in their academic performance. Also, the institutions should ensure that the libraries are upgraded with more recent book collections and they should employ measures that will ensure proper book arrangement in the library.



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