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## Undergraduates' Use of Print Information Resources for Academic Activities in Universities libraries in Rivers state

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### Abstract

This study examined the extent of undergraduates' use of electronic information resources in University libraries in Rivers State. Two research questions guided the study, while two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study was 4,200 registered undergraduate library users from three universities in Rivers State. The sample size consisting of 350 undergraduates was drawn using proportionate random sampling technique. The research instrument adopted was the questionnaire. Simple mean was used to answer the research questions while z-test was used to test the hypothesis. The findings of the study revealed that the extent of undergraduates' use print information resources in university libraries in Rivers state is moderate. Recommendations made include that university libraries should create more awareness on the use of library and library resources, proper information retrieval education should be introduced to enable users have easy access to information resources. The library and librarians should collaborate with management and government in the provision of all the necessary facilities that will enable effective utilization of library resources by undergraduates in the universities. Collection development in the university libraries should be geared towards making more provision for print information resources since it has been observed to be used more by undergraduates in their research and assignments. Libraries and Librarians should create awareness on the existence of other information resources apart from books and journals since the present study has shown that apart from books and journals other information resources were hardly consulted during academic activities by undergraduates.

**Keywords:** Undergraduates', Information Resources, Print Information Resources, Universities Libraries

### Introduction

Undergraduates are students in tertiary institutions and are the major users of information resources. It is the duty of every student to seek and use information resources for research activities and carrying out of assignments. It is equally the duty of libraries and librarians to provide for the information needs of students both in print and electronic format in the university libraries.

Information resources are vital tools in the life of undergraduates because without information resources students will not be able to carry out their assignments and research appropriately. It is through information resources that scholars discover what has been done and what needs to be done in their cause of study.

Print information resources are information resources that can be accessed via the physical library, which means that users will have to visit the library to use them. They are resources in print or paper format, they include: journals, data archives, manuscripts, maps, books, magazines, thesis, newspapers, research reports, encyclopedia, newsletters, abstracts, conference proceedings and technical reports.

The print information resource system involves "the practice of collecting books and journals or other materials on hard copies and displaying them on long rows of shelves for users", (Hassan, 2001). These resources on the shelf could be tracked by the use of catalogue cards or by the use of online public access catalogue (OPAC). The catalogue card is a "3 x 5"

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inch card containing the bibliographic information of all the print information materials in the library to enable users' easy access to a library holdings. The OPAC on the other hand is an online database composed of bibliographic records describing the books and other materials owned by a library accessible via public terminal, (Ezekwu & Moukeme, 2012).

Be it as it may, undergraduate's utilization of information resources has different expectations. Liu (2006) is of the view that undergraduates irrespective of gender expect a highbred environment of both print and electronic resources in their university libraries since both have been proven to complement each other. Liu further stresses that undergraduates have always had this desire of meeting their information needs through a mix of print and electronic resources, even though reasons for supplementing one type for another might differ from time to time. Anunobi and Edoka (2010) further ascertain that undergraduates have a very high expectation from any information providing system to make available directly or remotely and in real time their needed information, format notwithstanding for this will facilitate the use of such information resources.

It was based on this observation that the researcher deems it fit to carry out this study in order to determine the extent undergraduate students use print information resources for academic activities in university libraries in Rivers state.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Undergraduates have been the major patrons of print information resources since the inception of universities. This has been the ideal until the introduction of electronic information resources into library practices which was prompted by the initiation of Information, Communication, and Technology (ICT).

The gap the researcher therefore intends to fill is to investigate the extent undergraduates make use of print information resources for research activities and carrying out of assignments in university libraries in Rivers state.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The general purpose of the study is to determine the extent of undergraduates' use of electronic information resources for academic activities in university libraries in Rivers state. The specific purposes are to determine:

1. The extent undergraduates use print information resources for research activities in university libraries in Rivers State
2. The extent undergraduates use print information resources for carrying out assignments in university libraries in Rivers State.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the extent of use of print information resources for research activities by undergraduates in university libraries in Rivers State?
2. What is the extent of use of print information resources for carrying out assignments by undergraduates in university libraries in Rivers State?

### **Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant difference between the extent of use of electronic information resources for research activities by male and female undergraduates in university libraries in Rivers State.

2. There is no significant difference between the extent of use of electronic information resources for carrying out assignment by male and female undergraduates in university libraries in Rivers State.

## **Literature Review**

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Theory of Information Seeking Behaviour (TISB) by Wilson (1999)**

The present study is rooted on the theory of information seeking behaviour propounded by Wilson in 1999. The theory states that the urge to use a piece of information stems out of the user's need and this need is what propels a user to seek for information. In other words, information seeking arises as a consequence of a need perceived by the information user, who in order to satisfy it makes demand upon formal or informal sources or services, resulting in success or failure. Information seeking behaviour means any activity undergraduates may engage in other to identify information sources, search for information and use information. Basically, information seeking behaviour principally involves the purposive seeking for information as a consequence of a need to satisfy some goals. Undergraduates scout round for information to meet a particular need irrespective of the source or sources or format as long as the information is of value to them.

In the course of seeking for information, undergraduates may interact with manual information systems (such as books, newspapers, magazines, journals or other information materials in hard copy), or with electronic, online computer-based systems (such as the World Wide Web or other E-materials).The theory is suitable and relates to the present study in the sense that undergraduates are users of information in the universities and before they can use information, they have to seek and find it, therefore information seeking is prior to information use.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Information resources are information bearing materials that are in both print and also electronic forms. This includes journals, indexes, textbooks, abstracts, magazines, newspapers, reports, mail, videotapes/cassettes, diskettes, magnetic disks, computers, CDRoms, databases, microforms, electronic and Internet resources; government documents; periodicals, special collections, (Kpokwasili, Akanwa & Okorie, 2016).

However, Popoola and Haliso (2009) posited that information resources include related equipment, personnel, and capital. Popoola and Haliso's definition not only describes information resources as data, but also as infrastructure that are involved in information acquisition, information processing and information dissemination such as computers, laptop, audiovisual materials, mobile phones, tabs and people that are involved in enabling information get to their users such as the librarians and other information professionals.

Print information resources also known as traditional library system is a collection of books, manuscripts, journals, and other sources of recorded information. The print information resources are mostly classified and catalogued, arranged in shelves for easy accessibility for information users. The traditional library system has had overwhelming success in meeting the information needs of users by its approaches to selecting, acquiring, distributing,

and preserving information resources. Traditional library resources contain information in print formats such as textbooks, journals, indexes, newspapers and magazines, reports, video tapes, diskettes, and microforms, (Inyan, Enang (2015) & Oguniola (2011)).

Thus, we may define print information resources will be defined as the information resources that are in paper or print format which can be accessed by visiting the library and they include:

**Journals:** A journal is a collection of articles that discuss recent findings. Journal publication contains theoretical discussions and articles that critically review already published work. Other attributes of print journal include being peer-reviewed, which means that articles published in them were read and critically examined by more than one reviewer to ensure that it is in accordance to acceptable standard for publication. Print journals belong to the family of information resources called serials. Serial is any publication that is published in any medium issued under the same title in a succession of discrete parts usually numbered (or dated) and appearing either at regular or irregular intervals with no predetermined conclusion, (Bamidele, Omeluzor, & Amadi, 2013).

**Books:** The United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization defines a book as a "a non-periodical printed publication of at least 49 pages, exclusive of the cover pages, published in the country and made available to the public" (UNESCO, 1964). The print books are in paper or print format; they are usually accessed via the physical library and are usually referred to as hard copy. Hassan (2001) points out that the print format is still preferred by many undergraduates because the printed page is still more readable than a computer screen, a book can be transported more easily than a portable computer and one can flip through pages of a book. Paper documents last longer than magnetic media and it is also a flexible medium which a digital format cannot match up to. Ugah, (2007) reveals that textbooks account for most library visits by undergraduate students

**Dissertation/projects/thesis/seminar papers:** these are academic projects by post graduates and undergraduates' students as part of their contribution to scholarship. These projects are usually supervised by one or more supervisors and approved for different awards at the university level. The main difference between a thesis and a dissertation is when they are completed. The thesis is a project that marks the end of a master's program, while the dissertation marks the end of a doctoral study. Akuezebuilo and Agu (2003) opine that researchers must be careful not to duplicate errors commonly inherent in such works but to use only those studies that are completely executed, clearly reported, and relevant to their studies.

**Monographs:** A monograph is a specialist work of writing on a single subject or an aspect of a subject, often by a single author, and usually on a scholarly subject. In library cataloging, monograph has a broader meaning, that of a non-serial publication complete in one volume (book) or a definite number of volumes. Thus it differs from a serial publication such as a magazine, journal, or newspaper. In this context only, books such as novels are monographs. (Campbell, Pentz & Borthwick, 2012).

**Conference proceedings:** A conference proceeding is the published record of a conference, congress, symposium, or other meeting sponsored by a society or association,

usually but not necessarily including abstracts or reports of papers presented by the participants. When the entire text of the papers presented is included, the result is called transactions, (conference proceeding).

**Newspapers/magazines:** magazines and newspapers contain public opinion on wide range of issues, (Akaezebuilo & Agu, 2003). Ideas and opinions in newspapers and magazine could help undergraduates do their research and also carryout their assignments. Magazines and newspapers belong to serial materials. According to Madu and Adeniran (2005) some of the characteristics of serials include, the editor might change; the content of each issue is different; the publication interval varies; they are published annually, bi-annually, monthly, quarterly, fortnightly, weekly and daily; no planned end to the sequence; currency (up-to-date); more expensive than books, and are usually subscribed to.

**Encyclopedia:** these are information sources that are very useful for correct definitions and clear understanding of specialized meaning of key terms and concepts, (Akaezebuilo & Agu, 2003). Encyclopedias are important tools for undergraduates doing their research and in carrying out o assignments.

**Technical reports, maps, atlas, manuscripts** are other educational materials in print form that undergraduates consult in their university libraries for different academic purposes. However, the use of information resources in academic libraries is a process comprising of initiation, selection, formulation, collection and preservation, (Kulthau, 1991). During this process, the information seekers experience feelings ranging from optimism and satisfaction to confusion and disappointment. Levels of frustration are usually very high for most people.

Students enrolling into the universities come from different backgrounds and have different levels of understanding of information services and resources as well as how to source and use them. It is assumed that the culture of information perception has an impact on information seeking and use among undergraduates. Information resource accessibility and usage are essential to undergraduates of any university.

### Empirical review

In a study by Waldman (2003) on freshmen's use of electronic resources and self-efficacy involving both postgraduate students and undergraduate students of Federal University of Technology, Yola, American University of Nigeria, Yola, Adamawa State University, Mubi. Survey research was used for the study. The target population of the study was 5,269 registered library users (students) of Federal University of Technology, Yola, American University of Nigeria, Yola and Adamawa State University, Mubi. A proportionate stratified sampling technique was used to obtain representative sample from each stratum. The total sample size for the study was 1,053. Data was collected using questionnaire which was analyzed using frequency counts and percentages and t-test to test the null hypothesis. The study revealed that male and female students use e-resources for different purposes. The findings reveal that the most common reasons students use electronic resources is for research activities such as writing of project/thesis/dissertation and for carrying out assignments. The mean value of male students was greater than that of female students in terms of the use of electronic resources in carrying out research and assignments. The

gap to fill in this study is to determine the extent the male and female undergraduates use the print in carrying out research and assignments.

A similar study was carried out to investigate gender differences in the use of academic resources in FUTA University library by Funmilayo (2013). The study was carried out in FUTA academic library over a period of 6 months. The daily record of library users and facilities utilized were taken during this period, while a structured interview schedule was used in eliciting information from 600 respondents randomly selected for the study over the period of the research. Areas considered are readers' advisory, references, internet facilities, e books and loan section. Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages. Findings reveal that males visit the library more frequently than females. 76.67% of the male visit library for reading and book loans; 65% visit library for internet facilities; 61%, to access books; 56%, for e-book and reference books respectively; 42%, for nonfictions; 34%, for advisory services while 15% visit to read magazines and comics. The situation is not same with the females as 85.0% visit the library to read, 72.0% to borrow or return books, 65 and 54% do so for fictions and nonfictions respectively, 59.33% do so to access textbooks, 38.33% for internet facilities and reference books respectively while 15% visit the library to access ebooks. It could be inferred that most of the males visit the library mainly for reading, research, book loans, internet facilities, e- books and reference books accessibility while most of the females visit the library for reading, book loans, research advisory services and non-fiction accessibilities. When comparing their visit, both genders have similar purposes in terms of reading, book loans, and research. However, there are differences in terms of internet usage, e- books and reference books which are mostly accessed by the male students. The similarity in the studies is in the area of use of academic resources and method of data analysis. Both studies were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The dissimilarities are, while Funmilayo (2013) made use of structured interview in eliciting information from respondents, the present study made use of structured questionnaire in eliciting information from respondents. While Funmilayo's research was carried out in FUTA library Akure, the present study was carried out in universities in Rivers State. Funmilayo's study involved 600 respondents selected using simple random sampling technique, while the present study involved 400 respondents selected using proportionate sampling technique. The gap in the present study is to determine the

extent the male and female undergraduates use different types of electronic and print information resources in their research activities and carrying out of assignments in university libraries in Rivers state.

## Method

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of this study is the undergraduate library users of the three universities in Rivers state. This comprises 4,200 registered undergraduate library users from university of Port Harcourt, 1,200 registered undergraduate library users from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and 1,600 registered undergraduate library users from Rivers state University of Science and Technology, making a total population of 7000 undergraduate library users. The population was collated from the circulation librarians in charge of attending to registered library users from the three universities under study from 2016-till date, (personal communication). The undergraduate library users are chosen for the study because they make regular use of the libraries. The sample size for the study constituted 350 respondents which is 5% of the total population of the 7000 library users in the three universities in Rivers state. The proportionate sampling technique was used to select users from each of the universities in Rivers State to be certain that equal participation is ensured. To determine the sample size of the study, the researcher employed the statistical formula by Taro Yamene (1964). The instrument used for the data collection of this study is a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. It is a 5 likert-scaled questionnaire titled "Extent of Undergraduates' Use of Electronic Information Resources in University Libraries in Rivers State. While the mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Mean ratings below 3.00 were regarded as low extent, mean ratings from 3.00 - 3.99 were regarded as moderate extent while mean ratings between 4.00 -5.00 were regarded as high extent. The Z-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses. The null hypothesis was rejected where the calculated *P*-value associated with the z-cal was less than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance.

## Data Analysis

### Research Question 1

**What is the extent of use of print information resources for research activities by undergraduates in university libraries in Rivers State?**

**Table 1:** Mean ratings on the extent of use of print information resources for research activities by undergraduates in university libraries in Rivers State.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	journals	4.19	1.25	High Extent
2.	books	4.33	1.19	High Extent
3.	Dissertations/projects/theses	3.56	1.36	Moderate Extent
4.	Seminar papers	3.32	1.42	Moderate Extent
5.	Monographs	2.78	1.52	Low Extent
6.	Conference proceedings	2.37	1.41	Low Extent
7.	Technical reports	2.50	1.47	Low Extent
8.	Newspapers	2.81	1.53	Low Extent
9.	Magazines	2.70	1.49	Low Extent
10.	Maps	2.70	1.56	Low Extent

11. Encyclopedia	3.66	1.43	Moderate Extent
12. Abstracts	3.84	1.45	Moderate Extent
13. Manuscripts	3.23	1.70	Moderate Extent
<b>Mean of Means</b>	<b>3.23</b>	<b>1.44</b>	<b>Moderate Extent</b>

As displayed in Table 3, the mean of means of 3.23 indicated that the extent of use of print information resources for research activities by undergraduates in university libraries in Rivers State is moderate. The analysis of the items shows that out of the 13 listed print information resources, two which are: journals (mean 4.19) and books (mean 4.33) are used to a high extent for research activities. Five which are dissertations/projects/theses (mean 3.56), seminar papers (3.32), encyclopedia (mean 3.66), abstracts (mean 3.84), and manuscripts (mean 3.23) are used to a moderate extent for research activities. The remaining six print information resources are used to a low extent for research activities and they include: monographs (mean 2.78), conference proceedings (mean 2.37), technical reports (mean 2.50),

newspapers (mean 2.81), magazines (mean 2.70) and maps (mean 2.70).

In terms of how dispersed the respondents' ratings of their use of print information resources for research activities were, the standard deviation scores which ranged from 1.19 (e-books) and 1.70 (manuscripts) shows that there was less variation in the respondents' ratings of their use of e-books for research activities but were most diverse in the ratings of their use of manuscripts.

**Research Question 2**

**What is the extent of use of print information resources for carrying out assignments by undergraduates in university libraries in Rivers State?**

**Table 2:** Mean ratings on the extent of use of print information resources for carrying out assignments by undergraduates in university libraries in Rivers State.

S/N Items	Mean	SD	Remark
1. Journals	4.27	1.31	High Extent
2. Books	4.35	1.14	High Extent
3. Dissertations/projects/theses	3.70	1.26	Moderate Extent
4. Seminar papers	3.07	1.50	Moderate Extent
5. Monographs	2.41	1.54	Low Extent
6. Conference proceedings	2.40	1.42	Low Extent
7. Technical reports	2.55	1.42	Low Extent
8. Newspapers	2.67	1.45	Low Extent
9. Magazines	2.72	1.57	Low Extent
10. Maps	2.34	1.47	Low Extent
11. Encyclopedia	2.28	1.40	Low Extent
12. Abstracts	2.99	1.67	Low Extent
13. Manuscripts	2.72	1.65	Low Extent
<b>Mean of Means</b>	<b>2.95</b>	<b>1.44</b>	<b>Low Extent</b>

Table 4 shows the mean of means of 2.95 which is an indication that the extent of use of print information resources for carrying out assignments by undergraduates in university libraries in Rivers State is low. The item by item analysis shows that out of the 13 listed print information resources, Two are used to a high extent for carrying out assignments and they include: journals (mean =4.27) and books (mean =4.35).

Dissertations/projects/theses (mean =3.70) and seminar papers (mean =3.07) are used to a moderate extent while monographs (mean = 2.41), conference proceedings (mean= 2.40), technical reports (mean 2.55), newspapers (mean =2.67), magazines (mean = 2.72), maps (mean = 2.34), abstracts (mean = 2.99), manuscripts (mean = 2.72) are used to a low extent for carrying out assignments.

The standard deviation scores ranged from 1.14 and 1.65. While books has the least, manuscripts has the highest. This shows that there is less variation in the respondents' ratings of their use of books for carrying out assignments. However, they are most diverse in the ratings of their use of manuscripts.

**Test of Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis One:**

**There is no significant difference between the extent of use of print information resources for research activities by male and female undergraduates in university libraries in Rivers State.**

**Table 3:** z-test comparison of male and female undergraduates' mean ratings on the extent of use of print information resources for research activities

Source of variation	N	Mean	SD	df	z-cal	P-value	Remark
Male	199	3.64	.96	337	3.25	.00	Significant
Female	140	3.29	.96				

The result in Table 11 shows that the calculated z-value (3.25) and the corresponding P-value (.00) which is less

than the stipulated 0.05 level of significance indicates that the difference between the extent of use of print

information resources for research activities by male and female undergraduates in university libraries in Rivers State was significant. The null hypothesis therefore was rejected.

**Hypothesis Two:**

**There is no significant difference between the extent of use of print information resources for carrying out assignment by male and female undergraduates in university libraries in Rivers State.**

**Table 4:** z-test comparison of male and female undergraduates’ mean ratings on the extent of use of print information resources for carrying out assignments

Source of variation	N	Mean	SD	df	z-cal	P-value	Remark
Male	199	3.09	1.00	337	3.93	.00	Significant
Female	140	3.68	.82				

The result in Table 12 shows that the calculated z-value (3.93) and the corresponding P-value (.00) which is less than the stipulated 0.05 level of significance indicates that the difference between the extent of use of print information resources for carrying out assignments by male and female undergraduates in university libraries in Rivers State was significant. The null hypothesis therefore was rejected.

**Extent of use of print information resources for research activities by undergraduates in university libraries in Rivers State**

The findings for research question three indicate that undergraduate’s use of print information resources for research activities is moderate. The analysis of the items shows that out of the 13 listed print information resources, two which are: journals and books are used to a high extent for research activities. Apart from the two, five which are dissertations/projects/theses, seminar papers, encyclopedia, abstracts, and manuscripts are used to a moderate extent for research activities and the remaining six print information resources are used to a low extent for research activities and they include: monographs, conference proceedings, technical reports, newspapers, magazines and maps.

The finding of this study is relevant in the sense that it has provided further evidence that print book cannot be overlooked. Print resources cannot be replaced by electronic resources; electronic resources can only complement the print as was noted by Dadzie (2005). The findings of this study show that though the use of print resources is higher than the use of electronic resources for research activities in university libraries but it is still not enough. The moderate use of print information resources in the university libraries could be due to unavailability and inaccessibility as was observed by Aguolu and Aguolu, (2002). Who opines that sometimes learning materials might be available, i.e., the library has acquired them, but inaccessible to those who need them due to materials not being cataloged, miscataloged or misshelved. Proper storage and retrieval of information system is very vital in university libraries.

**Extent of use of print information resources for carrying out assignments by undergraduates in university libraries in Rivers State**

Result of research question four shows that the extent of use of print information resources for carrying out assignments by undergraduates in university libraries in

Rivers State is low. The analysis shows that out of the 13 listed print information resources only books and journals are used to a high extent for carrying out assignments. This result is evidence to the observation by the researcher that apart from books and journals, most of the other information resources are scarce in university libraries in Rivers state. Dissertations/projects/theses and seminar papers are used to a moderate extent while monographs, conference proceedings, technical reports, newspapers, magazines, maps, abstracts, manuscripts, are used to a low extent for carrying out assignments.

The general mean score for the use of print information resources for carrying out of assignment, though indicates low extent, print resources like journals and books are used at a high extent by undergraduates in university libraries in Rivers state which is in line with the findings by Yamson, Appiah and Tsegah (2018), whose research reveals that undergraduate always preferred print resources for their academic work. The finding of this study is very critical to the implementation of policies which has to be geared towards strategic planning for acquisition processes in the university libraries.

**Conclusion**

At the end of the study, the following conclusions are made. This study has shown that the extent of use of print information resources for academic activities in university libraries in River State is generally moderate. This is an indication that undergraduates patronize the library to make use of the library resources

**Recommendations**

1. Libraries and librarians should endeavor to create more awareness on the use of library and library resources, proper information retrieval education should be introduced to enable users have easy access to information resources in the library.
2. Collection development in the university libraries should be geared towards making more provision for print information resources since it has been observed to be used more by undergraduates in their research and assignments.
3. The library and librarians should collaborate with management and government in the provision of all the necessary facilities that will enable effective utilization of library resources by undergraduates in the universities.
4. Library management should endeavor to implement

policies that are geared towards strategic planning for acquisition processes in the university libraries.

5. Libraries and Librarians should create awareness on the existence of other information resources apart from books and journals since the present study has shown that apart from books and journals other information resources were hardly consulted during academic activities by undergraduates.

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