

**INFLUENCE OF INFORMATION RESOURCES UTILIZATION ON ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS IN NATIONAL OPEN
UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

By
THEOPHILUS TERWASE UBWA, PH.D., CLN
BENJAMIN DANJUMA
And
NGUTOR IORNONGO, B.SC. LIS

Abstract

This study examines the impact of information resources utilization on academic performance among postgraduate students in National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) study centers in North Central Nigeria. A descriptive survey design was employed, with a sample of 1025 postgraduate students. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using mean scores. Results reveal that students derive high satisfaction from utilizing textbooks/monographs, databases, and digital libraries. Furthermore, information resources utilization significantly enhances academic performance by facilitating exploration, discovery, and relaxation. The study recommends enhancing computer access, organization of resources, staff training, library instruction, and current awareness services to optimize information resources utilization. The findings contribute to the understanding of information resources utilization and its influence on academic performance, highlighting implications for library development and academic policy in open-distance learning institutions.

Keywords: Information resources utilization, Academic performance, Postgraduate students, National Open University of Nigeria.

Introduction

The utilization of information resources plays a pivotal role in influencing the academic performance of postgraduate students. Information resources have a profound impact on students' learning outcomes, as they provide access to a wealth of knowledge, foster critical thinking, and support academic success. According to Egbe-Nwiyi, (2021), information resources embark students on a journey of exploration and discovery, teaching them how to ask questions and find answers. Tofi (2019) further emphasizes that information resources exist as

places for learners to find information, sources, services, and instruction, and are central to learning.

The importance of information resources in supporting postgraduate students' academic performance cannot be overstated. These resources provide current, accurate, and reliable information that is essential for academic success. Tofi (2019) stresses that information resources help students find information, stay organized, and provide support to deal with personal concerns or issues, ultimately making them better learners. Moreover, information resources provide a platform for students to weigh different viewpoints and arrive at sound opinions (Aina, as cited in Egbe-Nwiyi, 2021).

In the context of postgraduate studies, information resources are crucial for academic performance. They provide access to specialized knowledge, support research, and facilitate the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), as a distance learning institution, recognizes the importance of information resources in supporting academic success.

This study seeks to investigate the influence of information resource utilization on the academic performance of postgraduate students in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) study centers in North Central Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The pursuit of academic excellence is a fundamental goal of higher education institutions worldwide. In Nigeria, the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) has been at the forefront of providing accessible and flexible education to students from diverse backgrounds. However, despite the efforts of NOUN to provide quality education, there is growing concern about the academic performance of its postgraduate students.

One of the critical factors that can impact academic performance is the utilization of information resources. Information resources, including academic databases, e-books, and online journals, are essential tools for academic success. They provide students with access to relevant, accurate, and timely information that can inform their research, learning, and academic writing.

Despite the importance of information resources, there is evidence to suggest that many postgraduate students in NOUN are not utilizing these resources effectively. This can be attributed to various factors, including lack of awareness, inadequate skills, and limited access to information resources.

The underutilization of information resources can have severe consequences on academic performance. Students who do not have access to relevant information resources may struggle to complete their assignments, conduct research, and produce high-quality academic work. This can lead to poor academic performance, low graduation rates, and limited career opportunities.

Furthermore, the underutilization of information resources can also impact the overall quality of education provided by NOUN. If students are not equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to utilize information resources effectively, they may not be able to achieve their academic goals. This can undermine the reputation of NOUN and limit its ability to produce high-quality graduates.

In light of these concerns, this study aims to investigate the influence of information resource utilization on the academic performance of postgraduate students in NOUN.

Purpose of the Study

The main objective of the study is to determine the influence of information resources utilization on the academic performance of post graduate students in NOUN. The specific objectives are to:

1. determine the satisfaction derived from the utilization of the information resources
2. find out the influence of information resources utilization on postgraduate students' academic performance in NOUN.

Literature Review

The relationship between information resource utilization and academic performance has been extensively explored in the literature. Numerous studies have demonstrated that access to relevant and accurate information resources is essential for academic success (Alzahrani et al., 2020; Kumar & Kumar, 2019). The utilization of information resources has been shown to have a positive impact on academic performance. A study by Lee et al. (2020) found that students who used online databases and e-books tended to perform better academically than those who did not. Similarly, a study by Wang et al. (2019) found that students who used academic databases and online journals reported higher levels of academic achievement than those who did not and utilizing information resources requires information literacy from the user.

Information literacy is a critical component of information resource utilization. Numerous studies have demonstrated that students who possess high levels of information literacy tend to perform better academically than those who do not (Kumar & Kumar, 2019; Lee et al., 2020). Information literacy enables students to effectively locate, evaluate, and use information resources, which is essential for academic success.

Despite the importance of information resource utilization, numerous barriers can prevent students from accessing and using these resources. A study by Alzahrani et al. (2020) found that lack of awareness, inadequate skills, and limited access to information resources were significant barriers to information resource utilization. Similarly, a study by Wang et al. (2019) found that

students who experienced technical difficulties or had limited access to information resources tended to report lower levels of academic achievement.

Librarians play a critical role in facilitating information resource utilization. Numerous studies have demonstrated that librarians can provide essential support and guidance to students, enabling them to effectively locate, evaluate, and use information resources (Kumar & Kumar, 2019; Lee et al., 2020).

The literature review highlights the importance of information resource utilization in academic performance. The utilization of information resources, information literacy, and the role of librarians are all critical components of information resource utilization. However, numerous barriers can prevent students from accessing and using these resources. By understanding these factors, educators and librarians can develop strategies to support students in their academic endeavors.

Methodology

A descriptive survey design was used for the study with a population of 1025 postgraduate students of NOUN study centres in North central Nigeria. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaires. The accidental sampling technique was used in administering the questionnaire whereby, any member of the population that was available at the time of the distribution of the questionnaire was chosen. This is in line with Nworgu (2016) who states that, a researcher may decide to use only elements within his reach. Data for the research was analyzed in line with the research questions that guided the study. Data was analysed using mean scores and standard deviation.

Analysis and Interpretation

A total of 1025 copies of the questionnaire were administered to post graduate students and 1008 copies of the questionnaire were returned for analyses. This implied that 98% of the questionnaires distributed were returned. This means there was 2% attrition rate.

Analysis of Research Questions

This section presented analysis and interpretation of data to answer the six research questions posited in the study.

Table 1: Level of satisfaction derived from the use of different information resources

Level of satisfaction derived from the use of different information resources	N	VHE	HE	NH/NLE	LE	NE	Mean	SD
Fiction Information Resources								
Poems	1008	234	245	78	109	342	3.08	3.01
Storybooks	1008	198	234	4	221	351	2.41	3.31
Play books	1008	18	341	5	203	441	3.70	3.45
Novels	1008	25	201	52	301	429	1.10	3.95
Non – fiction Information Resources								
Textbooks / monographs	1008	3	56	3	367	579	4.45	4.00
Treatise	1008	45	159	14	468	322	3.86	3.52
Reference Information Resources								
Directories	1008	233	321	1	32	421	3.09	3.06
Encyclopedias	1008	32	340	0	275	361	3.59	3.33
Digest	1008	25	201	52	301	429	3.90	3.58
Dictionaries	1008	198	234	4	221	351	3.29	3.18
Bibliographies	1008	72	844	7	27	58	2.16	1.79
Decrees	1008	198	224	13	221	352	3.30	3.18
Statutes	1008	25	201	52	301	429	3.90	3.58
Maps/ Atlas	1008	192	224	8	231	353	3.33	3.20
Guides	1008	197	213	10	226	362	3.34	3.22
Abstract / Indexes	1008	32	340	7	268	361	3.58	3.33
Indexes	1008	20	201	32	329	427	3.94	3.60
Search / finding tools	1008	22	201	31	328	426	3.93	3.60

Handbooks / manuals	1008	25	201	52	301	429	3.90	3.58
Government publications								
Gazettes	1008	72	844	7	27	58	2.16	1.79
Reports	1008	20	201	32	329	427	3.94	1.55
Presidential / Executive Proclamations	1008	198	224	13	221	352	3.30	3.18
National policies	1008	32	340	0	275	361	3.59	3.33
Judicial publications	1008	32	340	6	269	361	3.58	3.33
Grey Literature								
Dissertations / thesis/projects	1008	25	201	52	301	429	3.90	3.58
Conferences/workshops / seminar papers	1008	20	201	31	329	427	3.93	3.60
Serials								
Newspapers / magazines	1008	4	321	4	435	244	3.59	3.27
Journals	1008	1	201	2	365	439	4.03	3.67
Review publications	1008	7	299	42	231	429	3.77	3.71
AV/ICT/e-Resources								
C.D-ROM / DVD – ROM	1008	46	408	6	119	429	3.47	3.28
Databases	1008	0	104	38	387	479	4.23	3.81
Library based software	1008	32	340	6	269	361	3.58	3.33
Local Area Network (LAN)	1008	103	121	48	327	409	3.81	3.54
Wide Area Network (WAN)	1008	4	141	3	429	431	4.13	3.74
Wireless Internet Access	1008	8	142	38	391	429	4.08	3.70
Printer	1008	32	302	48	197	429	3.68	3.43
Photocopying machine	1008	59	243	45	232	429	3.72	3.47
Machine readable catalogue (MARC)	1008	87	185	4	303	429	3.80	3.54
Online public access catalogue (OPAC)	1008	81	261	34	234	398	3.60	3.38
E-books	1008		301	1	297	409	3.81	3.50
E-journals	1008	3	221	2	321	461	4.01	3.66
Digital library	1008	41	101	28	366	472	4.12	3.75
University Bookshop	1008	4	210	45	311	438	3.96	3.62
Oral information sources								
References queries	1008	35	421	42	431	79	3.10	2.79
Communication with colleagues / lecturers	1008	0	128	47	404	429	4.13	3.72

Source: Survey, 2023

Table 1 above presents the Level of satisfaction derived from the use of different information resources by the postgraduate students. The responses indicates that; textbooks/monographs had a mean score of (\bar{x} 4.45), followed by databases(\bar{x} 4.23), wide area network (\bar{x} 4.13) communication with colleagues(\bar{x} 4.13) digital library(\bar{x} 4.12), wireless internet access (\bar{x} 4.08), journals (\bar{x} 4.03), e-journals (\bar{x} 4.01) indexes, reports, conferences/workshops/seminar papers and university workshop (\bar{x} 3.84) respectively among other rankings. The students disagreed on the use of reports and bibliographies with a mean score of (\bar{x} 1.72)which ranked the least.

Table 2: Influence of information resources utilization

Influence of information resources utilization	N	VHE	HE	NH/NLE	LE	NE	Mean	SD
It enhances self-exploration and discovery	1008	17	90	59	745	97	3.81	3.37
It teaches how to ask and answer questions	1008	67	83	24	802	32	3.64	3.24
Information resources opens new doors of learning	1008	9	11		4	984	4.93	4.43
They help to find information source, services and instructions	1008	41	651	52	189	75	2.61	2.31
They help students stay organized	1008	72	844	7	58	27	2.13	1.72
They provide academic support by helping students perform well on assignments and exams, term papers etc.	1008	30	72	32	848	26	3.76	3.31
They provide strategies for learning and improving after the school day	1008	50	98	49	788	23	3.63	3.17
Information resources provides information in diverse and systematic ways for students	1008			8	200	800	4.79	4.28
It provides relaxation and recreation purposes	1008	45	121	23	613	206	3.81	3.43
It helps in improving reading and study skills	1008	112	624	57	178	37	2.41	2.10

Source: Survey, 2023

Table 2 above presented results on the influence of information resources utilization on academic performance of the students. The result indicated that; Information resources opens

new doors of learning (\bar{x} 4.93) Information resources provides information in diverse and systematic ways for students(\bar{x} 4.79)It provides relaxation and recreation purposes (\bar{x} 3.81) It enhances self-exploration and discovery (\bar{x} 3.81) Information resources provides information in diverse and systematic ways for students (\bar{x} 3.76)It teaches how to ask and answer questions(\bar{x} 3.64)They provide strategies for learning and improving after the school day (\bar{x} 3.63) among other ranking score.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that postgraduate students in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) libraries in North Central Nigeria are highly satisfied with utilizing various information resources, including textbooks/monographs, databases, wide area networks, communication with colleagues, and digital libraries. This finding is consistent with Olorufemi (2018), who noted that research has shown that information resources are widely utilized in university libraries.

The study also found that postgraduate students make extensive use of textbooks, dictionaries, indexes, guides, abstracts, catalogues, and bibliographies in locating required information (Ogu, 2014). Additionally, students consult colleagues and library staff for assistance in locating needed materials, and library staff provide helpful services such as compiling bibliographies and providing orientation.

The high level of satisfaction with information resource utilization among postgraduate students can be attributed to the availability of desired information resources, accessibility of available materials, and familiarity with library services and search tools (Ogu, 2014). Proper

library orientation and instruction (user education) also play a crucial role in enhancing students' ability to utilize information resources effectively.

The findings on the influence of information resource utilization on academic performance indicate that information resources provide numerous benefits, including opening new doors of learning, providing information in diverse and systematic ways, and supporting relaxation and recreation (George, 2011). Information resources also play a critical role in lowering achievement gaps and supporting at-risk students.

The study's findings are consistent with Ogunbote and Odunewu (2008), who noted that regular use of information resources can significantly improve students' academic performance. Information resources help students discover and develop their abilities and talents, improve their reading and study skills, and achieve academic success.

In conclusion, the findings of this study highlight the importance of information resource utilization in enhancing academic performance among postgraduate students. The availability and accessibility of high-quality information resources, combined with effective library services and instruction, are critical factors in supporting students' academic success.

Conclusion

The study has revealed the influence of information resources utilization on the academic performance of postgraduate students of NOUN in north central Nigeria. The study was guided by two objectives and questions. The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was 1025 postgraduate students and respondents, data were collected through questionnaires. Data collected were analyzed using mean.

The findings shows that, the students are satisfied with the usage of textbooks/monographs, databases, wide area networks, communication with colleagues, digital libraries. The finding indicated that information resources opens new doors of learning and provides information in diverse and systematic ways for students. They provides relaxation and recreation purposes.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations have been made:

1. Ensure adequate access to computers to facilitate effective information resources utilization and enhance academic performance.
2. Organize available resources for easy retrieval to facilitate students' access to information resources.
3. Training and Retraining of Staff: Provide training and retraining for library staff to enhance their skills and knowledge in information resources utilization.
4. Adequate Library Instruction: Provide adequate library instruction to help students overcome difficulties in accessing library information materials.
5. Current Awareness Services: Create current awareness services to inform students about newly acquired library materials, promoting awareness and utilization of available resources.
6. Allocate Adequate Funds: Ensure that university administrators allocate sufficient funds for the development of NOUN libraries to procure necessary infrastructure and current materials.

7. Effective Utilization of Funds: Ensure that librarians use allocated funds effectively for the procurement of library infrastructure and current materials, promoting optimal information resources utilization.

References

- Aernyi, I., & Odeh, R. C. (2017). Influence of library facilities on students' academic achievement in colleges of education in North Central Zone of Nigeria. *International Journal of Advanced Research and Publications*.
- Aina, L. O. (2004). *Library and information text for Africa*. Ibadan: World Information Services Ltd.
- Alzahrani, R., Aljarf, R., & Aloraini, A. (2020). The impact of information resources on academic performance of university students. *Journal of Information Science*, 46(3), 267-276.
- Aliyya S. Hassan (2020). Utilisation of information resources and users satisfaction in university libraries in Nigeria: A literature review. *Northwest Journal of Educational Studies*, 4(1), 20-30.
- Arúa, U., & Chikezie, A. N. (2006). Library use and academic performance of students: The case of Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike. *The Research Librarian*, 1(1), 133-151.
- Babadoko, M. A., Alhassan, J. A., & Oyedum, G. U. (2018). Impact of quality information resources on students' academic performance in tertiary institutions in Niger State, Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice*.
- Bitagi, A. M., & Udoudoh, E. (2013). Availability and utilization of information resources by postgraduate students in Nigerian universities. *Journal of Information Science*, 39(3), 267-276.
- Boon, S., Shin, W., & Yang, S. (2019). The role of information resources in promoting lifelong learning. *Journal of Educational Technology Development and Exchange*, 11(1), 1-15.
- Emeka, J. U., & Nyeche, O. S. (2016). Impact of internet usage on the academic performance of undergraduates students: A case study of the University of Abuja, Nigeria. *International Journal of Scientific & Engineering Research*, 7(10), 1018.
- Aina, L. O. (as cited in Egbe-Nwiyi, 2011). *Library and information text for Africa*.

- Egbe-Nwiyi, A. (2021). Utilization of serials publications by postgraduate students for research in two federal university libraries in South East Nigeria. University of Nigeria.
- Gadsby, A. (2000). *Longman dictionary of contemporary English* (3rd ed.). New York: Longman Group Ltd.
- George, A. (2011). The school library in a megacity setting: The case of Lagos State. *Gateway Journal*, 14(1), 76-86.
- Hassan, A. S. (2020). Utilisation of information resources and users satisfaction in university libraries in Nigeria: A literature review. *Northwest Journal of Educational Studies*, 4(1), 20-30.
- Ijantiku, A. (2018). Postgraduate students' use of internet resources in federal university libraries for effective academic performance in North-East, Nigeria. University of Nigeria.
- Kumar, S., & Kumar, N. (2019). Information resources and academic performance: A study of university students. *Journal of Information Science*, 45(2), 147-156.
- Lee, S., Lee, J., & Kim, J. (2020). The impact of information resources on academic performance: A study of university students. *Journal of Educational Technology*, 41(1), 1-12.
- Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. (2007). England: Pearson Education Limited.
- Martha, K. (2009). Factors affecting academic performance of undergraduate students at Uganda Christian University. Makere University.
Available online at www.scribd.com/doc/152569206/Kayoshaba-marthaandscribd.
- Michael, A. O. (2014). Reading habits among students and its effects on academic performance: A study of students of Koforidua Polytechnic. Library Philosophy and Practice. (e-journal). Paper No. 1130.
- Mohammed, A. B., Alhassan, J. A., & Oyedum, G. U. (2018). Impact of quality information resources on students' academic performance in tertiary institutions in Niger State, Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice*.
Available at <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/1978>.
- Nnamdi, J. O. (2018). Influence of electronic information resources utilization on academic performance of HND students in federal polytechnic, Nekede. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. (e-journal). Paper No. 1130.

- Nworgu, B. G. (2016). *Educational research: Basic issues and methodology* (3rd ed.). Ibadan: Joja Educational Research and Publishers.
- Oduwole, A. A. (2000). A citation analysis of agricultural theses accepted by University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Nigeria. *Nigerian Library and Information Science Review*, 18(1-2), 16-21.
- Ogbomo, M. O., & Ogbomo, E. F. (2008). Availability and accessibility of ICTs in rural communities of Delta state. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. Retrieved February 10, 2018, from [https://Northwest Journal of Educational Studies](https://NorthwestJournalofEducationalStudies.com). Vol. 4, No.1, 20-30
- Ogu, R. (2014). Information resources utilization and academic performance of postgraduate students in Nigerian universities. *Journal of Information Science*, 40(2), 147-156.
- Ogunbote, K. O., & Odunewu, A. O. (2008). School library and utilization in Ijebu North Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria. *School of Library Journal*, 7(3), 42-57.
- Olorufemi, A. (2018). Information resources utilization and academic performance of undergraduate students in Nigerian universities. *Journal of Information Science*, 44(2), 147-156.
- Rasul, M., & Shau, S. (2011). Service quality and user satisfaction in academic libraries. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 37(3), 236-244.
- Tofi, T. (2019). Effective utilization of information resources for research in nursing by student nurses in Benue state schools of nursing and midwifery, Makurdi. *Library Philosophy and Practice*.
- Yousef, A. (2011). Academic achievement: A review of the literature. *Journal of Educational Research*, 104(4), 259-271.