

**UTILIZATION OF GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS FOR EFFECTIVE RESEARCH
BY ACADEMIC STAFF IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN KADUNA STATE**

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Abstract

This study investigates the utilization of government documents for effective research by academic staff in university libraries in Kaduna state. A descriptive survey research design was employed. The study's population comprised 4,500 academic staff from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Kaduna State University, Kaduna. A sample size of 355 academic staff was selected using Dusick sample calculator formula. Data collection was facilitated through a structured questionnaire titled "Utilization of government documents questionnaire (UGDQ) and an observation checklist (OC). Descriptive statistics (percentage, mean and standard deviation) were calculated using SPSS version 22. The findings indicate that a significant proportion of government documents were acquired for research purposes in the university libraries. Moreover, academic staff universally acknowledged the utilization of government documents in various research endeavors. The study recommends that government document libraries should subscribe to online government documents and equip the government document section with ICT information retrieval tools.

Keywords: University Libraries, Government Documents, Academic Staff, Effective Research

Introduction

University libraries provide access to government documents which are essential information resources for academic staff conducting research. These documents also help academic staff and the general public to stay informed about government laws and policies. According to Nkamnebe, Udem and Nkamnebe (2014), university libraries aim to meet the information, research and curriculum needs of students, faculty and staff. Government documents, being one of the information resources provided by the university library are indispensable information resources for research in different areas of specialization enabling the university to achieve her objectives of teaching, learning and research. Similarly,

government documents are authoritative documents issued by or on behalf of the government (Ibegbulam, 2021). They include publications of an official character, instructional, descriptive or historical in nature published by government departments.

Examples of government documents, include administrative reports, report of committee, tribunal proceedings, technical reports, statistical reports, institutional bulletins, official gazettes, annual reports, government body journals, bulletins, newsletters among others (Asogwa, 2009). These documents serve as tools of awareness, enabling the academic staff and the general public to stay informed about government activities. However, despite the importance of government documents, their utilization in Nigerian university libraries remains low (Lulu-Pokubo & Wate, 2022). Therefore, it is in the light of the above mentioned problem that this study aims to examine the types of government documents available in university libraries and their areas of use for research by the academic staff in Kaduna state.

Purpose of the Study

1. Identify the kinds of government documents acquired by university libraries in Kaduna state;
2. Identify the areas of use of government documents for research in university libraries in Kaduna state.

Literature Review

University libraries play a crucial role in supporting academic programs by providing relevant information resources to meet the information and research needs of its students, faculty and staff (Nkamnebe, Udem and Nkamnebe, 2014). These information resources

provided by the university libraries, include journals, books, manuscripts, audiovisual materials, thesis, dissertations, government documents among others.

Government Document

Government documents are primary sources of information on various areas, including law, politics, economics, administration, history, cultural among others. They are essential for research, educational and propaganda purposes. Similarly, government documents especially those in the areas of research findings, committee and commission reports and audiovisual materials serve as good materials for research, educational and propaganda purposes and therefore serve as vital tools for research across different disciplines (Mole, 2023). This is also align with Ezema and Okafor (2010) observation that government documents occupy a critical space in research literature in the area of humanities, social sciences and science and technology as they provide information regarding public policy statement, statistical evidence and regulation of activities of organization, institutions and professional associations.

Furthermore, Ibegbulum (2021) stated that government documents are series of information on the areas of socio-political and economic life of any nation. They also provide excellent resource materials in many areas most of which concern our everyday life. Moreover, Udensi (2010) discovered that theses, government documents, monographs and newspapers/magazines are the most available Africana resources in the university libraries used by users in the areas of Arts and social sciences for research purposes.

Government documents are also used in the areas of law where law students, law practitioners and law lecturers use judiciary publications such as the laws of federation, state law, Hansard law reports, legislation or parliamentary papers among other resources for their information needs (Lane, 2013). From the foregoing, it can be deduce that government documents serve as reference materials used for research in different areas, enabling the

academic staff and the general public to stay informed about government activities, encourage participation of academic staff in democratic governance and sensitizes the general public on the economic condition of the country.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population consisted of 4,500 academic staff drawn from three (3) faculties (faculty of social sciences, humanity and medicine) from the two selected universities; Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Kaduna State University, Kaduna. These were obtained from the Dua-December-Newsletters (2022) of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Council Annual Report of Kaduna State University, Kaduna. A sample size of 355 academic staff was selected using Dusick sample calculator formula. A total of 296 questionnaires were retrieved, representing a 95% return rate. Data analysis was performed using frequency count, percentage, mean and standard deviation with SPSS version 22.

Results and Discussion

Research Question 1: What are the types of government documents acquired for use in the library?

Research question one which is the examination of the observation checklist obtained from the university libraries under study.

Table 1: The Types of Government Documents Acquired for Use in the Library

S/N	GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS	ABU	KASU	%	R
1	Parliamentary publications, e.g. reports from the parliaments	√	√	100%	A
2	Executive publications, e.g. reports of events and activities	√	√	100%	A
3	Memorandum of government	√	√	100%	A
4	Act of parliaments	√	X	50%	A
5	Legal proceedings	√	X	50%	A
6	Laws of the federation/regions	√	√	100%	A
7	Technical reports	√	√	100%	A
8	Tribunal proceedings	√	X	50%	A
9	Statistical reports	√	√	100%	A
10	Institutional bulletins, e.g. WAEC and JAMB, Conference papers, seminar papers, workshop papers, lectures of government organization etc	√	√	100%	A
11	Administrative report of local, state and federal	X	X	0%	NA

12	government of Nigeria Report of committee/commission/panel	√	√	100%	A
13	Official gazettes	√	√	100%	A
14	Government body journals of bulletins, newsletters etc	√	X	50%	A
15	Parliamentary debates	√	X	50%	A
16	Top official government members photographs, maps, charts etc	√	√	100%	A
17	Government computer (databases), CD-ROM	X	√	100%	A
18	Judicial publications, records of activities of Nigerian police, armies etc	√	√	100%	A
19	Bills	√	√	100%	A
20	Annual volumes of laws	√	√	100%	A
21	Publications of international organizations, e.g. OAU, WHO, ECOWAS etc	√	X	50%	A
22	Annual report of ministries, governmental departments etc	√	X	50%	A
23	Annual report of quasi-government organizations	X	√	50%	A
24	Parliamentary debates of Nigerian governments	√	X	50%	A
25	Nigerian constitution and Allied publications	√	√	100%	A
26	Serial publications of government ministries and departments, e.g. Nigerian trade journals by ministry	√	√	100%	A
27	Nigerian newspapers	√	√	100%	A
28	Nigerian magazines	√	√	100%	A
29	Annual abstract of statistics reports	√	√	100%	A
30	Parastatals, organizations and financial institutions	√	√	100%	A
31	Federal government ACTS	X	X	0%	NA
32	Government annual budget and estimates	√	√	100%	A
33	Speeches of head of state and state governors	√	√	100%	A
34	Economics surveys	√	X	50%	A
35	Government white papers	√	X	50%	A
36	Parastatals, organizations and financial institutions	X	X	0%	NA

Key: Acquired (A), Percentage (%), Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) Zaria, Kaduna State University (KASU), Kaduna.

Results on Table 1 show the various types of government documents acquired by the university libraries. The observation checklists revealed that these libraries possess parliamentary publications, technical reports, statistical reports, institutional bulletins, judicial publications among others. However, some government documents, such as administrative reports, federal government ACTS and parastatals, organization and financial institutions were unavailable. The observation checklists also revealed that the types of government documents acquired vary between universities, although some common government

documents exist, including parliamentary publications, technical reports and statistical reports. This supports previous research by Okwor, Mole and Ihekwoaba (2015), which identified similar types of government documents in university libraries (administrative report, technical report, statistical report, institutional bulletins among others). This consolidate the fact that government documents are information resources produce either periodically, weekly, monthly etc. by the arms of government and distributed to the various university libraries for consultation.

Research Question 2: What are the areas of use of government documents for research in university libraries in Kaduna state?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Areas of Use of Government Documents for Research

S/ N	ITEMS	ABU		KASU		OVERALL		REM ARK	R
		S.D	\bar{x}	S.D	\bar{x}	S.D	\bar{x}		
1	For enquiries on historical and cultural matters	3.58	.61 3	3.31	.75 5	3.49	.67 4	A	1 st
2	For enquiries on political matters	3.40	.63 5	3.00	.80 4	3.27	.71 9	A	4 th
3	For enquiries on institutional bulletin matters e.g. conference, seminar , workshop etc	3.45	.62 5	2.87	.81 2	3.26	.74 3	A	5 th
4	For enquiries on educational matters	3.53	.60 1	3.19	.72 6	3.42	.66 4	A	2 nd
5	For enquiries on statistical matters	3.34	.74 1	3.10	.81 0	3.26	.77 1	A	5 th
6	For enquiries on legal matters	3.28	.76 0	2.94	.91 1	3.17	.82 7	A	8 th
7	For political self-development	3.25	.74 3	2.93	.92 7	3.15	.82 1	A	9 th
8	For enquiries on economic business matters	3.31	.71 3	3.00	.87 8	3.21	.78 3	A	6 th
9	For enquiries on international affairs	3.29	.74 8	2.97	.85 9	3.18	.79 9	A	7 th
10	For enquiries on agricultural matters	3.28	.81 7	3.22	.72 5	3.26	.78 8	A	5 th
11	For enquiries on government activities	3.35	.64 1	3.25	.75 0	3.32	.67 9	A	3 rd
12	For enquiries on geographical matters	3.17	.76 4	3.10	.78 4	3.15	.77 0	A	9 th
13	For enquiries on healthcare/medical matters	3.27	.80 1	3.26	.78 1	3.26	.79 3	A	5 th

OVERALL MEAN

3.26 .45
7

KEY: SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, D= Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) Zaria, Kaduna State University (KSU), Kaduna. \bar{x} = Mean, S.D = Standard Deviation

Results presented in table 2 reveal the areas where government documents are utilized for research in university libraries in Kaduna state. Based on the criterion mean of 2.50, the result indicate that the academic staff unanimously agreed on all 13 items as areas of use for government documents in university libraries in Kaduna State. This consensus was determined by the fact that all 13 items had mean values exceeding the 2.50 criterion. Furthermore, the overall mean of 3.26 surpassed the criterion, indicating that academic staff employ government documents for research in the listed areas. A standard deviation of .457 suggests homogeneity in respondents' answers.

The study's findings suggest that government documents are utilized for effective research in various areas, including historical and cultural matters, political matters, health matters, educational matters, statistical matters, legal matters, economic business matters, international affairs matters, government activities matters among others. These results align with Ezema's and Okafor's (2010) observation that government documents occupy a critical space in research literature in the areas of Humanities, Social Sciences and Science and Technology as they provide information regarding public policy statement, statistical evidence and regulation of activities of organization, institutions and professional associations. Suffice it to state here that government documents cover a broad range of disciplines, including law, political science, agriculture, economics, conflict resolution among others. This comprehensive coverage underscores the significance of government documents as a vital resource for research in various fields.

Summary of Findings

This section summarizes the study's findings based on the research questions. The data analysis and interpretation of results yielded the following key findings;

1. A significant percentage of government documents were acquired for research use in the university libraries.
2. Academic staff unanimously acknowledged the utilization of available government documents in various areas of specializations.

Recommendations of the Study

Based on the study's findings, the following recommendations are made;

1. Government document libraries should subscribe to online government documents to enhance accessibility.
2. Publishers of government documents should upload their publications online for easy retrieval.
3. Government documents sections should be equipped with ICT information retrieval tools to facilitate efficient searching and retrieval
4. Librarians should receiving training and retraining on ICT skills to effectively manage government document sections.
5. University libraries should provide adequate space and infrastructure, including reading tables, fans, air conditioners and comfortable seating to create a conducive environment for research and study.

Conclusion

The study found that university libraries in Kaduna state acquire a significant percentage of government documents for research purposes. Academic staff utilize these documents in various areas of specialization. To improve access and utilization, the study

recommends: Online subscription to government documents, Digital publications of government documents, Equipping government document sections with ICT tools, Training librarians in ICT skills, and Providing adequate library infrastructure and space

Overall, the study highlights the importance and areas of use of government documents in university research and provided recommendations for enhancing access and utilization

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