

**PERCEIVED INFLUENCE OF USE OF LIBRARY INFORMATION RESOURCES ON
RESEARCH PRODUCTIVITY OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS IN UNIVERSITIES IN BENUE
STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The study examined the perceived influence of use of library information resources on research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State, Nigeria. Three research objectives were raised with corresponding research questions and one hypothesis formulated to guide the study. The study adopted survey research design. The population for the study comprised of 71 academic librarians in universities in Benue State. The total enumeration was adopted for this research work. This means that the researcher used total enumeration also known as census study. The instruments adopted for data collection were self-constructed observation checklist and questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire was determined using Cronbach Alpha method and a grand reliability coefficient of 0.84 was obtained. The data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and chi-square to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that library information resources and services are available and highly utilised for research productivity by academic librarians in universities in Benue State and the research productivity of academic librarians is also considerably high due to the availability of library information resources and services. The study concluded that, the availability and use of some library information resources to a high extent influences academic librarians' research productivity in universities in Benue State. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations among others were made. University Management should provide adequate and relevant information resources that would enhance the research productivity of academic librarians. Lastly, academic librarians should make continuous use of the available information resources for the enhancement of their research productivity.

Keywords: Library, Use of Information Resources, Research Productivity, Academic Librarian.

Introduction

The term "library" comes from the Latin word "liber" meaning "book". Library is the collection of books and other informational materials made available to students and researchers for reading,

studying and references (Akpan, Agam & Bassey, 2018). The library can be seen as an extension of education (Awotola & Adewale, 2018). The authors further stated that libraries are classified according to their purposes, content, pattern of service rendered and the roles of these libraries are similar which is to effectively support the institutions to attain the key function of teaching, learning and research services. When these criteria are used, seven types of libraries can be identified viz: school, public, special, private, national, research and academic libraries. University libraries are the type of library established in a university for the purpose of supporting its objectives which is to promote teaching, learning and research. This is why Shehu, Urhefe and Aworo (2015) argues that university libraries/academic libraries stand to support teaching, learning and research in ways consistent with and supportive of the institution's mission and goals.

Library is the life-wire of any educational institution and the importance of its resources and services on research productivity of academics cannot be overemphasised. An effective library system is *sine qua non* to research and development in every field of human endeavour. The library is at the heart of education enterprise and one of the most important educational services which is classified according to its purpose, content and pattern of service rendered. The roles of these libraries are similar in nature which is to promote the tripartite objectives of learning, teaching and research through the provision of adequate and relevant information resources (in both print and non-print format) and services to the users (National Policy on Education, 2013).

Library information resources refer to the physical and digital materials available in a library that support academic and research activities. These include books, journals, databases, theses, conference proceedings, and multimedia. With the rise of digital libraries and electronic databases, access to these resources has become increasingly diverse and user-oriented. The availability and quality of these resources significantly affect how effectively academic librarians can conduct research. Resources must be up-to-date, relevant to current academic trends, and aligned with the research needs

of librarians. Ankrah and Atuase (2018), asserts that library resources are developing and increasing at very astronomical speed due to the advent of information technology. The author further asserts that library resources i.e. human resources, physical resources, printed and e-resources are essentially important in preparing students and researchers to conduct their researches.

The use of library information resources has a direct and indirect influence on the research productivity of academic librarians. Directly, it provides the tools and materials necessary for conducting rigorous research. Indirectly, it fosters an environment conducive to intellectual inquiry, skill enhancement, and collaboration. This relationship is mediated by factors such as user skills, resource availability, institutional support, and technological infrastructure (Scoulas & De-Groote, 2024). Library utilisation is therefore, the concern of librarians, information scientists and in fact, the educational sector at large. This is because no nation or institution can develop without creative and imaginative utilisation of accumulated information. It may be appropriate to deduce that the decision-making of an individual to a great extent depends on the degree of information utilised. The author further states that effective utilisation will be achieved if relevant, timely and adequate information resources are provided alongside needed services in the libraries. It can be viewed within the context of need, accessibility and function performed. Scientists and researchers all over the world need to know about the information tools and resources available for better utilization towards enhancing their research activities.

Research productivity is the measure of scholarly output, such as journal articles, books, conference papers, and other academic contributions. It reflects the intellectual activity and professional development of academic librarians (Ajiboye, et al. 2023). Factors influencing research productivity include time availability, institutional support, skill level, access to information, and collaboration opportunities. The ability to access and utilize library resources and services plays a pivotal role in enabling consistent and high-quality research output. A study by Hoffmann, Berg and Koufogiannakis

(2017) identified factors that contribute to the research success of academic librarians. Their research emphasized the significance of individual attributes, peer and community support, and institutional structures in enhancing research productivity. They concluded that fostering an environment that focuses on these areas is likely to promote research output among librarians.

Academic librarians are members of academic staff of a university who are solely responsible for activities such as administrative, professional, teaching, research, scholarship and innovation which represent their career pathways (Kulno, 2016). Academic librarians are information professionals working in university libraries. Their dual roles as facilitators of information for others and as researchers themselves place them at a unique intersection of resource utilization and knowledge generation. Their research productivity not only contributes to personal career development but also enhances the credibility and impact of their institutions (Hoffmann, Berg & Koufogiannakis, 2017). The major focus of this study therefore, is to examine how the utilization of library information resources influences the research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State. Specifically, the study seeks to identify the available library information resources for academic librarians, determine the extent to which these resources are utilized, and ascertain their impact on the research productivity of academic librarians in the region.

Statement of the Problem

One of the measures of academic achievement in an academic community is research productivity which requires information resources. It is in recognition of this fact that the universities and other higher institutions set up libraries to make information resources available to assist staff and students in their quest for research. This is because the provision of adequate and relevant information resources in university libraries influence users' patronage and subsequently their productivity and the absence of adequate information resources on the other hand retards or limits maximum utilisation of information resources in the library and hence hampers productivity.

However, in spite of the huge benefits, investment and capital outlay on acquisition of library resources, services and facilities, there is a declined in research productivity of academic librarians according to Tsafe, Basaka and Muhammed (2018) and Umar and Kabir (2018). The authors asserted that some librarians have not been measuring up in writing and publishing research works, particularly among those in public university libraries in Nigeria. A preliminary observation by the researcher, also points to the fact that some academic librarians remained on the same rank for many years perhaps as a result of low publication deficit. The low level of research productivity of academic librarians ultimately results in stagnation on the same rank, frustration, low morale and poor visibility locally and internationally in their field of study.

The researcher hence seeks answers to questions like “are these information resources available in university libraries in Benue State? To what extent are these resources utilised by academic librarians? To what extent does the utilisation of these resources influence the research productivity of academic librarians? It is against this backdrop that the study sought to investigate the perceived influence of use of library information resources on research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

In order to achieve the above research objectives, the following research questions guided the study:

1. what are the available library resources for research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State?
2. what is the extent to which academic librarians use the available library information resources for research productivity in universities in Benue State?
3. what is the influence of use of library information resources on research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State?

Research Hypothesis

The null hypothesis was guided the study and was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Use of library information resources has no significant influence on research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State.

Review of Related Empirical Studies

Ajiboye, Bokoh, Bello and Idowu (2023) revealed that library information such textbooks, world wide web, and e-book, books and e-books were the major resources that enhanced postgraduate students research activities by the respondents. Also reference and WiFi services, referral services and user education were library services that promote postgraduate students research activities. The study further revealed that books, journals, print journals, internet, reference services and reprographic services were the most influencing library services among postgraduate students.

Ekong and Ogunode (2022) examined influence of the use of library resources on postgraduate students' research in two Nigerian universities, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH) and University of Ibadan revealed that factors influencing library use have a negative and significant association with challenges faced when using the library and a positive significant association with postgraduate students of university library. The authors also found out that postgraduate students of university library have a positive and insignificant relationship with intensity information resources but show a positive and insignificant relationship with diversity of library services. The study concluded that the postgraduate students in LAUTECH and University of Ibadan use the university library for their research work.

Anunobi, and Emezie (2020) examined the Information Sources Preference of Post Graduate Students in Federal University of Technology Owerri, Nigeria. The study showed that postgraduate students in FUTO prefer electronic sources of information for research. Responses from both the questionnaire and interview showed that the major reason for preferred sources were easy and quick

access, ease of use, convenience and currency. It was also discovered that very few of the postgraduate students identified database subscription from the library as available sources of information for research. This implies that library prints and subscribed databases were not popular among postgraduate students as preferred sources of information for research. This finding however, point to the need for aggressive information literacy campaign for postgraduate students tailored towards creating awareness and use of library resources and databases to justify the university library's role in tertiary education.

According to the study carried out by Simisaye (2019), on research productivity of the academic staff in research institutes in South-West, Nigeria between 2009 - 2014. The study revealed some of the major factors hindering research productivity of academic staff in research institutes as family challenges, financial constraints, inadequate information accessibility, inadequate information literacy skills and inadequate motivation from employers.

Okhawere, Isibor and Otoghile (2019) asserted that University undergraduate student's perception of library resources (measured by the usefulness of services and competence of library staff) was high. Students also perceived the services provided by the University Library to be effective. However, the University management still has a lot to do to improve perception of library effectiveness. Recommendations include the regular hosting of enlightenment programs to improve students' level of awareness of services provided by university libraries.

Research Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design to establish the influence of use of library information resources and services on research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State. The population of the study comprised of seventy-one (71) academic librarians in the four universities in Benue State. Among the 71 academic librarians, 34 were from Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi; 4 were from Federal University of Health Sciences, Otuokpo; 26 were from Benue

State University, Makurdi and 7 were from University of Mkar, Mkar-Gboko. The total enumeration was adopted for this research work. This means that the researchers used total enumeration also known as census study. The rationale behind this adoption was because the population of the study was not too large, therefore can be manageable by the researchers. The instrument for data collection was observation checklist and questionnaire. The purpose of using observation checklist and questionnaire is to collect data on Use of Library Information Resources and Services on Research Productivity of Academic Librarians in Universities in Benue State, Nigeria. The instruments for data collection were subjected to face and content validation by three (3) experts. Two (2) experts were from the field of Library and Information Science and one expert from Test and Measurement. The final copy of the questionnaire was trial tested on thirty (30) academic librarians, 15 each from Nasarawa State University and 15 from Federal University, Lafia. Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. The reliability coefficient of 0.84 was obtained. The data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while the chi-square test of goodness of fit was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question One: What are the available library resources for research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State?

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage of Available Library Resources

S/NO	ITEMS	AVAILABLE		NOT AVAILABLE		DECISION
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	
1	Printed Textbooks	45	63.4	26.4	36.6	Available
2	Newspapers	51	71.8	20	28.2	Available
3	Magazines	53	74.6	18	25.4	Available
4	Encyclopaedias	57	80.3	14	19.7	Available
5	Dictionaries	52	73.2	19	26.8	Available
6	Handbooks	57	80.3	14	19.7	Available
7	Printed Journals	52	73.2	19	26.8	Available
8	Atlas and Maps	42	59.2	29	40.8	Available
9	Manuals	57	80.3	14	19.7	Available
10	Indexes/Abstracts	40	56.3	31	43.7	Available
11	Articles	60	84.5	11	15.5	Available

12	Monographs	59	83.1	12	16.9	Available
13	Electronic Databases	63	88.7	8	11.3	Available
14	Theses/Dissertations/Projects	71	100	0	0.00	Available
15	e-books/e-journals	62	87.3	9	12.7	Available

Table 1 shows the available library resources for research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State. The result in table 1 reveal that a wide array of library resources is readily available to enhance the research productivity of academic librarians in universities across Benue State. Resources such as printed textbooks, newspapers, magazines, encyclopedias, and dictionaries are widely accessible, reflecting the robust provision of traditional library materials. Similarly, modern resources, including electronic databases, e-books, e-journals, and theses/dissertations, are also highly available, with many respondents confirming their presence in their libraries. Notably, resources like articles and monographs, which are vital for in-depth research, are overwhelmingly accessible, further underlining the libraries' commitment to academic excellence. Even specialized resources, such as indexes, abstracts, atlases, and maps, while slightly less prevalent, are still considered available and contribute meaningfully to academic exploration.

Research Question Two: What is the extent to which academic librarians use the available library information resources for research productivity in universities in Benue State?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Utilization of Library Information Resources by Academic Librarians

S/NO	ITEMS	\bar{x}	S.D	REMARK
1	Printed Textbooks	3.37	0.80	HE
2	Newspapers	3.25	0.97	HE
3	Magazines	3.13	1.00	HE
4	Encyclopaedias	2.79	0.79	HE
5	Dictionaries	2.97	1.03	HE
6	Handbooks	3.06	1.21	HE
7	Printed Journals	3.30	0.87	HE
8	Atlas and Maps	1.89	0.95	LE
9	Manuals	2.24	0.89	LE
10	Indexes/Abstracts	3.34	0.94	HE
11	Articles	3.38	0.93	HE
12	Monographs	2.04	0.60	LE
13	Electronic Databases	2.77	0.88	HE
14	Theses/Dissertations/Projects	2.99	0.96	HE

15	e-books/e-journals	2.93	1.05	HE
	GRAND MEAN	2.90	0.92	HE

Table 2 shows the extent to which academic librarians utilize available library information resources for research productivity in universities in Benue State. Resources such as printed textbooks, newspapers, magazines, encyclopaedias, and dictionaries are frequently utilized, as evidenced by their mean scores exceeding the benchmark mean of 2.50, reflecting their relevance in supporting research activities. Similarly, key scholarly tools like printed journals, articles, indexes/abstracts, and theses/dissertations are also employed to a high extent, showcasing their importance in academic work. However, a few resources, such as atlas and maps, manuals, and monographs, recorded lower mean scores, indicating they are used to a lesser extent by academic librarians, potentially due to limited application in their specific research needs. However, the analysis, based on the calculated grand mean of 2.90 with standard deviation of 0.92, indicates that academic librarians use these resources to a high extent (HE). This conclusion aligns with the professional benchmark that a grand mean of 2.50 or above denotes high utilization.

Research Question Three: What is the influence of use of library information resources on research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Utilization of Library Information Resources and Research Productivity of Academic Librarians

S/NO	ITEMS	\bar{x}	S.D	REMARK
1	library information resources help me to writes articles in librarianship	3.00	1.17	HE
2	library information resources assist me to investigate current and emerging trends in librarianship	2.80	1.13	HE
3	library resources facilitate my writing of term papers in library and information science	2.45	1.08	LE
4	library information resources assist me to keep abreast with librarianship development to enhance my research	2.62	0.87	HE
5	library information resources help me to write journals in the field of library and information science	2.44	0.77	LE
6	library information resources facilitate the exchange ideas with colleagues on librarianship research	2.15	0.69	LE
7	library information resources enable me to write books	2.42	0.75	LE

8	library information resources help me to stay up to date with current library policies	2.76	1.01	HE
	GRAND MEAN	2.58	0.93	HE

Table 3 shows the influence of the use of library information resources on the research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State. Result in table 5 reveal that, library information resources significantly aid librarians in writing articles in librarianship and investigating current and emerging trends in the field, demonstrating their importance in fostering scholarly engagement and professional growth. Additionally, these resources assist librarians in staying up-to-date with developments in librarianship and current library policies, further enhancing their research capabilities. However, the use of these resources has a limited impact on activities such as writing term papers, journals, or books, as well as facilitating idea exchange with colleagues. This suggests that while library information resources play a crucial role in certain aspects of research productivity, their application may not be fully maximized in other areas. Overall, with a grand mean of 2.58, which exceeds the benchmark of 2.50, the findings indicate that the use of library information resources has a high extent of influence on the research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State.

Research Hypothesis 1: Use of library information resources have no significant influence on research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State.

Table 4: Chi-Square Showing the Analysis of Library Information Resources and Research Productivity

Item	df	χ^2	Asymp.Sig
Chi-square	14	44.563 ^a	0.000
No. of valid case	15		

Table 4 shows that the χ^2 calculated is 17.719 and sig (p-value) is 0.000. Hence $p < 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that, use of library information resources has a significant influence on research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State. This means

that, library information resources play a crucial role in boosting the research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State by providing vital support for their scholarly activities.

Discussion of Findings

Findings in table 1 revealed that, a wide range of library resources, both traditional and modern, are readily available in universities across Benue State to support the research productivity of academic librarians. These include printed materials, electronic databases, e-resources, and specialized tools like indexes and abstracts, reflecting libraries' commitment to academic excellence. This finding agrees with the findings of Ajiboye, Bokoh, Bello and Idowu (2023) examined the 'influence of library resources and services on research activities among postgraduate students of southwest federal universities, Nigeria' and concluded that, there was a confirmation of high productivity in the area of number of research activities however, resources were available but information services be improved upon.

Findings in table 2 indicates that, academic librarians frequently use resources like printed textbooks, journals, articles, and theses/dissertations to support their research, highlighting their importance in academic work. However, resources like atlases, maps, manuals, and monographs are less utilized, likely due to their limited relevance to specific research needs. This finding aligns with the findings of Iroaganachi and Izuagbe (2018) who conducted research on comparative analysis of the impact of electronic information resources use towards research productivity of academic staff in Nigerian Universities and concluded that the extent of use of electronic information for research productivity varies considerably among academic staff by institution type.

The result in table 3 indicates also that, library information resources greatly assist academic librarians in writing articles, exploring current trends, and staying updated on developments in librarianship and library policies, boosting their research productivity. However, their impact is limited in activities like writing term papers, journals, books, or exchanging ideas with colleagues.

This result is in alignment with that of Iroaganachi and Izuagbe (2018) who conducted research on comparative analysis of the impact of electronic information resources use towards research productivity of academic staff in Nigerian Universities and disclosed that, electronic information resources' ability to facilitate the accomplishment of research tasks more quickly and provide more current information, form the greatest motivation for academic staff use of them.

Findings in table 4 revealed that, use of library information resources has a significant influence on research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State. This means that, library information resources play a crucial role in boosting the research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State by providing vital support for their scholarly activities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Universities in Benue State should continue to expand and diversify their library resources, ensuring sustained support for academic librarians' research productivity and commitment to academic excellence.
2. University libraries should assess and align their collections with the specific research needs of academic librarians, promoting the acquisition of highly utilized resources while exploring ways to increase the relevance and awareness of underutilized materials.
3. University libraries in Benue State should emphasize on the continuous acquisition, maintenance, and easy accessibility of up-to-date and diverse library information resources while also organizing periodic training and workshops on effective resource utilization to enhance librarians' ability to stay updated on current trends and improve their research productivity.

Conclusion

This study concluded that, the availability and use of some library information resources and services to a high extent influences academic librarians' research productivity in universities in Benue State. The findings of this study revealed that Academic Librarians in Universities in Benue State, Nigeria highly utilised the available library information resources to enhance their research productivity and their research productivity was considered high to some extent. This was due to the fact that academic librarians use the available library information resources extensively for research productivity.

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