

UTILISATION OF LIBRARY INFORMATION RESOURCES FOR ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES AMONG OFFICER CADETS IN UNIVERSITIES IN NORTH-WEST, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated utilization of library information resources for academic activities among officer cadets in universities North-west, Nigeria. Three research questions guided the study in line with the research objectives. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The study population comprised four thousand and twenty-seven (4,027) officer cadets in universities in North-west, Nigeria with sample size of 351. A structured questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. Data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentage, mean and standard deviation with criterion mean of 2.50 benchmark. Findings revealed that the extent to which officer cadets engaged in academic activities was high, the types of library information resources used by officer cadets was positive. Based on the findings, the study concluded that officer cadets in universities in North-west, Nigeria need. The study recommended that the management of universities in North-west, Nigeria should enhance in providing other information resources like abstract, indexing, yearbooks, atlas by making these information resources available it will enhance the officer cadet's performance in the universities. Also the officer cadets should also be sensitized by the universities library management on the role utilisation of library information resources could play in their military career too, rather than academic activities alone.

Keywords: Academic Activities, Library Information Resources, Universities, North-west, Nigeria.

Introduction

In educational institutions of all levels, the teachers encourage the students' participation in activities that would contribute in a significant manner in honing their knowledge, competencies and abilities. In some cases, the participation in these activities is manageable, whereas, in other cases, there are occurrence of various types of problems and challenges. The problems and challenges are required to be overcome and prevented from assuming a major form. In other words, they need to be curbed from giving rise to barriers. Students need to be versed in terms of academic activities. Through implementation of academic activities, they are able to collect the data that is necessary for their research projects or theses. When the students are participating in academic activities, they need to be well-versed in terms of job duties, methods and procedures.

Furthermore, they need to inculcate the traits of diligence, conscientiousness, morality and ethics. The students should form positive viewpoints and develop motivation towards acquisition of education. Hence, when they are participating in various types of academic activities, they need to develop wholehearted enthusiasm. The academic activities are formulated in a manner that would facilitate understanding of academic subjects, achieving educational goals and leading to up-gradation of the overall system of education. The various aspects that need to be taken into account in organising academic activities are, grade levels of students, academic subjects and lesson plans, learning abilities of students, academic needs and requirements, educational goals and the overall system of education. Furthermore, there is the needs to ensure that the academic activities are pleasurable and students develop motivation towards it. Within the course of participation in various academic activities, there are occurrences of different kinds of problems as well. But there are also the needs to make

sure the solutions are provided to the problems in an adequate manner. Furthermore, they need to be prevented from giving rise to barriers within the course of implementation of tasks and activities.

Officer Cadets in universities like Nigeria Defence Academy, Kaduna typically participate in a range of academic activities in addition to their military training. These activities are designed to provide them with a well-rounded education and prepare them for leadership roles in the service. Also, undergraduate education is a transformative journey, extending beyond simply attending lectures and taking exams. A rich tapestry of academic activities contributes to a well-rounded educational experience, fostering critical thinking, research skills, and personal growth. The academic activities are; Coursework and lectures, this foundational element involves attending lectures, participating in discussions, completing assignments, and taking examinations. It provides the core knowledge base in a chosen field. While seemingly passive, active engagement in lectures, including note-taking and asking questions, significantly enhances learning. Research is also one of the academic activities, students may participate in faculty-led research project, conduct independent research under faculty supervision. Research activities cultivate critical thinking, analytical skills, and the ability to synthesize information. So also, Group discussion; students learn to work effectively in diverse teams, negotiate ideas, and contribute to a shared goal. These activities mirror real-world work environments and prepare students for collaborative professional roles. Lastly, Physical training; officer cadets will participate in field exercises to apply their classroom learning to real-world scenarios. These exercises will help them develop their leadership, teamwork, and decision-making skills. Engaging in a variety of academic activities is essential for fulfilling and successful undergraduate

experience. These activities not only enhance academic performance but also foster personal growth, develop valuable skills, and prepare students for future careers.

Library information resources are materials or information resources acquired by the library to meet the information needs of library patrons. Library information resources are vital ingredients in the library. They enable libraries to render their services to the user community. A library without resources will lose its relevance in the society. Popoola and Haliso (2019) described library information resources as information-bearing materials that are in both printed and electronic formats such as textbooks, journals, indexes, abstracts, newspapers, magazines, tapes, diskettes, CD-ROM, OPAC etc. These materials are the raw materials acquired by the library, catalogued and preserved for them to be retrieved by users to help them get the information they need. All other information-bearing materials that can be found in a modern library that are provided in response to the information needs of users are also called library resources (Edoka, 2020). Library information resources can be seen as those library materials, which could be in print or non-print format that provide information of any kind to library users ranging to all grade levels. Information resources are one of the products that define libraries in terms of what they stand for. In a normal situation, the types of information resources in a library are relatively directed at the category of users they are expected to serve.

However, this research intends to investigate utilisation of library information resources for academic activities among officer cadets in universities in North-west, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Officer Cadets in military and para-military universities in North-west, Nigeria, a variety of essential information resources and services are available to support academic and professional development, including textbook, journals, newspapers, magazines, nobels, reference materials, and students projects. These resources form the backbone of library services, enabling access to current research, historical records, and practical theses tailored to officer cadets' training needs. Despite this foundation, significant challenges persist in utilization and effectiveness use of these available information resources, the cadet's inadequate ability to access and use these resources effectively and efficiently. This limitation increasingly by rigorous nature of their training which leaves them with the little time to access the information resources. Additionally, inadequate infrastructure, unreliable library period on their time-table, also inadequate spaces for the installations of various library resources has been seen as another challenge facing the officer cadets academic performance, but still they are struggling to effectively utilise the library's information resources, both in print and digital formats.

Utilization of library resources looks at the extent to which the user uses the library to satisfy their information wants, and it is a yardstick for retaining a document among the library collections.

In this 21st century, library users (Officer Cadets) inclusive are expected to be familiar and fully skilled on how to utilise library information resources both format (print and non-print) resources which will positively influence their academic activities. However, extant literature has revealed that many students in academic institution particularly those attached to military and para-military institution are not making effective use of institutions library in other to access information resources available in

the university libraries to enhance academic activities. Could these challenges be due to challenges in library resources utilization, including poor material arrangement, staff attitudes, lack of books, funding, accommodation, orientation, restricted hours in the libraries Ternenge and Agipu (2019). To address this research concern, the researchers investigated Utilisation of library information resources on academic activities of officer cadets in universities in North-west, Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What is the extent to which officer cadets engage in academic activities in universities in North-west, Nigeria;
2. What types of library information resources officer cadets utilise in universities in North-west, Nigeria;

Literature Review

The academic activities are formulated in a manner that would facilitate in understanding academic subjects, achieving educational goals and leading to up-gradation of the overall system of education (Davis, 2021). The various aspects that need to be taken into account in organising academic activities are, grade levels of students, academic subjects and lesson plans, learning abilities of students, academic needs and requirements, educational goals and the overall system of education. Tor and Malgwi (2020) asserted that these academic activities are fundamental to the survival of universities in the modern world. It is more so because the quality of programmes of instruction and output of universities in terms of graduates and research are all dependent on the effectiveness and efficiency of academic activities. Mkumbo et al. (2023) averred that home sickness, poor time management skills, difficulty in understanding academic work, inadequate finance are some of the challenges faced by

first year university students in adjusting to university life and academic activities. Consequently, Martinez et al. (2023) postulated that institutional, socio cultural and socio-economic factors as barriers to academic success of first year students. Similarly, Suleiman (2023) reported in their studies in Delta State that funding patterns and financial management in secondary schools create foundational challenges that carry into higher education. Nkedishu and Onyekwe, (2024) equally reported that inadequate finance, institutional and student factors are inhibitors to academic success in public universities in Nigeria.

Popoola and Haliso (2019) further stressed that for an academic library to be effective, it must have enough information resources and sufficiently well-trained information professionals. These types of Information resources are regarded as information bearing materials that exists in printed and electronic formats, such as journals, textbooks, abstracts, indexes, magazines, newspapers, reports, diskettes magnetic disk, the internet/Email, video, CD-ROM databases, microforms, computers, and so on (Popoola and Haliso cited in Okiki (2020). More so, information resources are print, non-print as well as electronic materials that can be accessed either manually or electronically by library users. User's information needs can be met by a library through acquiring, organising and making accessible relevant information resources with the aid of appropriate facilities.

Ariful and Samzida (2021) conducted a study to investigate the factors affecting academic performance at Rabindra University, Bangladesh, aiming to identify both success and failure factors. The study utilized primary data collected through a combination of convenient and cluster random sampling methods. Two distinct questionnaires were developed, one for students and another for faculty members. A 4-

point Likert scale was employed to measure responses, also facilitate quantitative analysis of the data collection. The research findings were revealed several key positive and negative factors influencing academic performance. The study recommended that a broader discourse on improving educational outcomes in Bangladesh, reinforcing the notion that quality education is fundamental for national development. The study also emphasized the need for a supportive learning environment and the importance of student's engagement in their academic pursuits to foster a culture of excellence in higher education. The gap intent to cover in this current study the content is similar with the previous study under review, but difference in methodology and scope in which the previous study was carried out in Bangladesh, while the current study will be carried in Nigeria.

Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey research design. The descriptive survey research design was used because it is a survey type of research that is characterized by population and sample as well as the use of data collection instrument. The study population comprised four thousand and twenty-seven (4,027) Officer Cadets in military and para-military universities in North-west, Nigeria. The study adopted multi-stage sampling technique to determine the size of the study with sample size of 351 officer cadets in military and para-military universities in North-west, Nigeria, using Krijcie and Morgan's formula sampling technique. A close-ended structured questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. Data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentage, mean and standard deviation with criterion mean of 2.50 benchmark. A total of 351 copies of questionnaire were administered to officer cadets

and the response rate showed the returned of 323 copies of the questionnaire representing 92% response rate.

Results and Discussion

Research Question One: What is the extent to which officer cadets engage in academic activities in universities in North-west, Nigeria?

Table 1: Extent to which officer cadets engage in academic activities in universities in North-west, Nigeria

S/N	STATEMENTS	VHE 4	HE 3	LE 2	VLE 1	N	FX	X	SD	Decision
1.	I attend lectures regularly based on the time table in the university.	185 (57.3%)	110 (34.1%)	22 (6.8%)	6 (1.9%)	32 3	111 2	3.4 4	0.6 7	High
2.	I always do my assignment any time it is given to us in the university.	160 (49.5%)	123 (38.1%)	28 (8.7%)	12 (3.7%)	32 3	107 0	3.3 1	0.7 3	High
3.	I sat for the mid-term test any time it is scheduled in the university.	105 (32.5%)	116 (35.9%)	65 (20.1%)	37 (11.5%)	32 3	934 9	2.8 9	0.9 1	High
4.	I sat for the both semesters examinations at the end of every semester in the university.	92 (28.5%)	114 (35.3%)	74 (22.9%)	43 (13.3%)	32 3	889 5	2.7 5	0.9 6	Low

5.	I participate in group discussion with my course mates to understand what is been taught in the class better.	65 (20.1%)	104 (32.2%)	90 (27.9%)	64 (19.8%)	32 3	803	2.4 9	1.0 0	Low
6.	I participate in the field-work activities to acquire practical knowledge in the university.	55 (17.0%)	98 (30.3%)	100 (31.0%)	70 (21.7%)	32 3	769	2.3 8	1.0 3	Low
7.	I present my seminar paper at the end of every semester and final project at the end of my final year.	72 (22.3%)	108 (33.4%)	91 (28.2%)	52 (16.1%)	32 3	843	2.6 1	0.9 4	Low
8.	I participate fully in the physical training and examination in the university.	64 (19.8%)	102 (31.6%)	90 (27.9%)	67 (20.7%)	32 3	800	2.4 8	1.0 2	Low
Weighted Mean								2.7 9		

Decision: Average Weighted Mean =2.79

The data presented in Table 1 was analyzed for the extent to which officer cadets engage in academic activities in universities in North-west, Nigeria. The results revealed that majority of the respondents indicated that statements with mean scores equal and above the weighted mean of 2.79 were high. On the other hand, majority of the

respondents indicated that statements with mean scores lower than the weighted mean of 2.79 were low.

Specifically, the Table above revealed that I attend lectures regularly based on the time table in the university with a mean score of ($\bar{X}=3.44$; $SD=0.67$) was the highest rated statement that officer cadets engaged on. While I participate in the field-work activities to acquire practical knowledge in the university with a mean score of ($\bar{X}=2.38$; $SD=1.03$) was the lowest rated statement that officer cadets engaged on in universities in North-west, Nigeria. Thus, with a weighted mean score of 2.79 which is above the criterion mean of 2.50, it can be deduced that the extent of academic activities of officer cadets in universities in North-west, Nigeria was high.

The result of the study showed the types of academic activities among officer cadets in universities in North-west, Nigeria. The findings revealed different types of academic activities engage in by officer cadets. These academic activities include: group discussion, field work activities, Lectures regularly, assignment, mid-term test, semester examination. The availability of these academic activities reflects a comprehensive performance of officer cadets. This finding corroborates the finding of Bhatia (2019) that the various types of academic activities are: debates, group discussions, assignments, projects, reports, competitions, events, quizzes, presentations, field-work, encourage the participation of students in these activities, i.e. grade levels of students, academic subjects and concepts, learning abilities of students, academic goals and objectives and the overall system of education.

Research Question Two: What types of library information resources officer cadets utilize in universities in North-west, Nigeria?

Table 2 Types of information resources used by officer cadets

S/N	Statements	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	N	FX	X	S	Decision
1	I utilize textbooks any time I visit the university library for research purpose.	115 (35.6%)	125 (38.7%)	60 (18.6%)	23 (7.1%)	323	1042	3.16	0.84	High
2	I consult e-journals whenever I visit the university library for research purpose.	102 (31.6%)	120 (37.2%)	68 (21.1%)	33 (10.2%)	323	978	3.02	0.88	High
3	I access newspapers whenever I visit the university library for current information.	96 (29.7%)	110 (34.1%)	80 (24.8%)	37 (11.5%)	323	949	2.94	0.89	High
4	I access CD-ROM databases in the university library.	66 (20.4%)	102 (31.6%)	105 (32.5%)	50 (15.5%)	323	855	2.65	0.95	Low
5	I utilise Online databases any time I visit the university library for research work.	64 (19.8%)	98 (30.3%)	110 (34.1%)	51 (15.8%)	323	847	2.62	0.96	Low
6	I utilise Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) in the university library to search for a material in mind.	68 (21.1%)	104 (32.2%)	100 (31.0%)	51 (15.8%)	323	869	2.69	0.94	Low
7	I access reference	62	102	108	51	323	851	2.63	0.95	Low

	materials any time I	(19.2%)	(31.6%)	(33.4%)	(15.8%)					
	visit the university									
	library for									
	assignment.									
8	I consult student	60	95	112	56	323	837	2.59	0.97	Low
	projects any time I	(18.6%)	(29.4%)	(34.7%)	(17.3%)					
	visit the university									
	library for research									
	work.									

Decision: Average Weighted Mean = 2.79

Table 2 reveals the types of library information resources officer cadets utilise for academic activities in universities in North-west Nigeria. The average weighted mean (2.79) is the decision mean. All means above or equal to the weighted are considered information resources that are highly utilised for academic activities while all means below the average weighted are considered information resources that are not utilised. The finding of the study revealed the levels library information resources that utilised among officer cadets are: I utilise textbooks any time I visit the university library for research purpose (3.16), I consult e-journals whenever I visit the university library for research purpose (3.02), and I access newspapers whenever I visit the university library for current information (2.94).

However, the following library information resources are not utilised among officer cadets: I access CD-ROM databases in the university library (2.65), I utilise online databases any time I visit the university library for research work (2.62), I utilise Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) in the university library to search for a material in mind (2.69), I access reference materials any time I visit the university library for assignment

(2.63), I consult student projects any time I visit the university library for research work (2.59).

The study revealed the types of library information resources using by officer cadets in the universities in North-west, Nigeria. The findings revealed that library information resources in universities in North-west, Nigeria has positive influence on officer cadets' performance. The availability of the information resources in the university libraries reflects a comprehensive performance of officer cadets, following the findings; I utilize textbooks anytime, I visit the university library for research purpose, I consult e-journals whenever I visit the library, I access newspapers whenever I visit the library etc. However, this findings coincide with the study of Oluwatobi et al.(2020) who opined that most frequently used library materials is online database and this is followed by Dictionaries, books, encyclopaedia which are used daily while the least use materials is CD-ROM database. In contrast, Olajide and Adio (2018) examined the effective utilization of university library resources by under-graduate students at the Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Nigeria. They found that library resources like abstract, indexes, yearbooks, atlas were neither satisfactory nor readily available for use.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Management of military and para-military Universities in North-west, Nigeria should regularly engage the officer cadets in field work and physical training as these would help them to acquire practical knowledge of the profession.
2. Management of military and para-military Universities in North-west, Nigeria should also provide other information resources like abstract, indexing, yearbooks, atlas in other to improve the officer cadets reading capacity.

3. The Universities library management should also be organizing library sensitization programme for the officer cadets on how to be accessing the library information resources.
4. The management of military and para-military Universities in North-west, Nigeria should also be putting more emphasis on the importance of the university libraries towards the development of academic activities by making a proper and sufficient funding.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the extent to which officer cadets engage in academic activities was high, the types of library information resources officer cadets utilise for academic activities was high, and the perceived influence of utilisation of library information resources by officer cadets on academic activities was high. Thus, the study concluded that officer cadets in universities in North-west, Nigeria need to improve their attitudes towards the utilization of library information resources to enhance their academic activities.

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