

## **CHALLENGES FACING UNDERGRADUATES ON THE USE OF LIBRARY SERVICES: A CASE STUDY ON FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE, ABEOKUTA**

<sup>1</sup>A. O. LASODE, <sup>2</sup>F. A. YUSUF AND <sup>1</sup>A. B. KOIKI

<sup>1</sup>Department of Home Science and Management, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria.

<sup>2</sup>Department of Arts and Social Science Education, Faculty of Education, Osun State University, Ipetu-Ijesa, Osun State, Nigeria.

\*Corresponding author: [abolanlelasode@yahoo.com](mailto:abolanlelasode@yahoo.com)

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study investigated the challenges facing undergraduates on the use of library services in Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB). The objectives were to assess the attitude and level of satisfaction of undergraduates as well as the challenges they face on the use of library services. This study adopted the descriptive survey design. The sample of 180 respondents, who were undergraduates, was randomly selected from all Colleges of the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta. The instrument used to elicit responses from the respondents was a questionnaire designed by the authors while descriptive statistic was employed to analyse the data. Findings of this study revealed that majority of the respondents (55.00%) agreed that there is enough space in the library, 75.00% agreed that there is adequate number of staff in the library, 76.67% agreed that there are spacious shelves to house books, and 85.00% agreed that the library is conducive for learning. On the other hand, majority of the respondents (64.45%) disagreed that the library has current textbooks and 83.89% disagreed that the internet services in the library are accessible. Students' attitude towards the use of library varied, majority of the respondents (78.33%) agreed that the library is meant for reading or studying and not only during examination period. The major challenges identified by undergraduates in the use of the library services are inadequate up-to-date books in the library and tight academic schedules of students while the minor challenges include poor infrastructural facilities and insufficient space to accommodate users. It was recommended that libraries should ensure that adequate orientation and training are given to students on the use of the library services.

**Keywords:** Challenges, Undergraduates, Library Services

### **INTRODUCTION**

A library is a collection of sources, resources, and services, and the structure in which it is housed; it is organized for use and maintained by a public body, an institution, or a private individual. It can mean the collection itself, the building or room that

houses such a collection or both (Ogbebor, 2011). Libraries are defined as organized collection of published and unpublished books and audiovisual materials with the aid of services of staff that are able to provide and interpret such materials as required to meet the information, research, educational and

recreational needs of its users (Ogbebor, 2011). In line with this, Onwubiko & Uzoigwe (2004) defined library as an information centre located in an organization, institute, agency, industry, and government agencies to satisfy the information needs of the individual client and the realization of its broad goals and objectives. There are different types of libraries namely; Public, National, Special, and Academic libraries.

The University library is an academic library. Aje (1977) defined the academic library as one that is attached to an institution of higher learning of the status of a university or college and serving primarily students and teachers, even though they may extend services to others. He thus sees the library as a social institution that is more than a building having books and allied materials, building or physical plant, personnel and clients as its components.

Academic libraries are libraries attached to tertiary institutions such as universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, colleges of agriculture, colleges of technology and research institutes (Akporhonor, 2005). Singh & Kaur (2009) stressed that preservation and access to knowledge and information is the main mandate of academic libraries alongside supporting the mission of their parent institutions which is teaching and research. Pritchard (1996) stated that academic libraries are not separate units but part of the institution and their quality must be determined by their relationship with the outcomes that are important to the college or university.

Ishola & Obadare (2014) found that there was high level of availability of information sources in the selected Nigeria Universities they studied, high level of accessibility of

information sources and that library users access information sources daily. They found that services provided in the libraries were conventional, reactive and product oriented rather than proactive, customer oriented, innovative, and augmentative. Moreover, Madukoma *et al* (2013) found that library instruction helps students to identify their information needs and search for information in the library and that it has positive effect and positive relationship on undergraduate students' academic performance.

It is important for library services to focus more on the use of resources provided for their patrons. According to Whitmire (2002), academic library resources are considered a good measure of an institution's excellence and quality. Popoola (2008) opined that the information resources and services available in institutional information systems must be capable of supporting research activities among the students and faculty members. Iyoro (2004) also identified accessibility as one of the pre-requisites of information use. Ugah (2008) declared that the more accessible information sources are, the more likely they are to be used and readers tend to use information sources that require the least effort to access.

The research is concerned with the academic library in Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB).

Services rendered in FUNAAB library are as follows:

1. Reference Services: Reference queries are handled by the Reference Librarian as long as the library opens.
2. Serials: The serial room housing journals and other ephemeral collection is open only

to lecturers, final year students and those undergraduates referred to specific journals by their lecturers. Researchers from other institutions may also use it on request.

3. Bibliographic Services: At present, Bibliographic Services are also offered. The library provides current awareness services by publishing

Index to Agricultural news and articles in selected Nigerian newspapers and magazines.

Catalogue of serials received in the Library. Current contents of periodical recently received by the Library.

4. Borrowing Services: Each student is entitled to borrow four books for two weeks while lecturers are entitled to ten books for four weeks each.

5. Reserve Book Services: Books in high demand or those with few copies are shelved in this section of the library. Also, those recommended by the lecturers to be put on reserve are also held there. These books can only be consulted within this section of the library. Before books are released, students are expected to submit their identity cards to the staff on duty at the desk. These cards are returned when the book consulted is returned and checked by the staff.

6. Inter-Library Loan Services: As part of inter-library cooperation, some books may be borrowed from other University libraries on inter-library loan on behalf of our library users. These books may be released to the user who requested for them.

The major objective of the study investigated the challenges facing undergraduate

students on the use of library services in FUNAAB. The study seeks to assess the standard of library services at FUNAAB, to examine the attitudes of undergraduate students towards the use of the library, to identify the factors affecting the use of the library services, and to examine the level of satisfaction of undergraduate students when using the library services.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What is the standard of library services provided at FUNAAB?

What are the attitudes of undergraduates towards the use of the library services?

What are the challenges faced by undergraduates in the use of the library services?

What is the level of satisfaction of undergraduates when using the library services?

### METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the descriptive survey design to study the challenges facing undergraduates on the use of library services of the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB). The total population of undergraduates in the study area is over 14,120 comprising 61.18 % male and 38.82% female. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 180 respondents who are undergraduates from the nine (9) Colleges of the University. A questionnaire on challenges facing undergraduates on the use of library services (A case study on FUNAAB) was developed for this study using Yes or No, aware or not aware, SA or A or D or SD and major factor or not minor factor and not a factor respectively. A pilot study was carried out in FUNAAB on twenty (20) respondents to test for the validity and it was found to be 0.72. The questionnaire was used for data collection. The descriptive statistical tools

were adopted to analyze the data collected.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents**

VARIABLES	FREQ	PERCENT
Sex		
Male	92	51.11
Female	88	48.89
Age (years)		
16-20	80	44.44
21-25	93	51.67
26-30	7	3.89
Colleges		
College of Food Technology and Human Ecology (COLFHEC)	17	9.44
College of Animal Science and Livestock Production (COLANIM)	42	23.33
College of Natural Sciences (COLNAS)	30	16.67
College of Management Sciences (COLMAS)	30	16.67
College of Agricultural Management and Rural Development (COLAMRUD)	15	8.33
College of Veterinary Medicine (COLVET)	1	0.56
College of Environment Resource Management (COLERM)	17	9.44
College of Engineering (COLENG)	5	2.78
College of Plant Science and Crop Production (COLPLANT)	23	12.78
Levels		
100	45	25.00
200	82	45.56
300	35	19.44
400	14	7.78
500	4	2.22

Table 1 shows that 51.11% of the respondents were males, while 48.89% were females. It also indicates that the age of the respondents ranged from 16 to 30 years. Highest percentage of respondents (51.7%) was within 21 to 25 years of age, while 44.44% are within the ages of 16 to 20 years, and 3.89% were within the ages of 26 to 30.

From Table 1, it is observed that highest percentage of respondents (23.33%) was

from COLANIM, followed by COLNAS and COLMAS with the same percentage of 16.7%, followed by COLPLANT with 12.78% of respondents. Respondents from COLFHEC and COLERM constituted the same percentage of 9.44%, followed by COLENG with 2.78% and then the least percentage of 0.6% was from COLVET.

Based on Levels, Table 1 shows that 45.56% of the respondents were from 200 Level, 25.00% were from 100 Level, while 19.44%

were from 300 Level. Respondents from 400 Level constituted 7.78% while 2.22% were from 500 Level. **RQ1:** What is the standard of library services at FUNAAB?

**Table 2: Distribution of respondents' view on standard of library services**

S/N	ITEMS	YES (%)	NO (%)
1	Does the library have enough space?	99(55.00)	81(45.00)
2	Does the library have enough staff?	135(75.00)	45(25.00)
3	Does the library have current text books?	75(41.67)	105(58.33)
4	Does the library have enough shelves for keeping books?	138(76.67)	42(23.33)
5	Is the library conducive for learning?	153(85.00)	27(15.00)

Table 2 shows that 55.00% of the respondents agreed that the library at FUNAAB has enough space while 45.00% disagreed with it. Table 2 reveals that 75.00% of the respondents agreed that the library has enough staff while 25.00% disagreed with this measure of standard of the library. Table 2 indicates that 41.67% of the respondents agreed that the library has current

textbooks while 58.33% disagreed with this item. However, 76.70% and 85.00% of the respondents agreed that the library has enough shelves and that the library is conducive for learning, respectively.

**RQ2:** What are the attitudes of undergraduates towards the use of the library services?

**Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to attitudes towards the use of the library services**

S/N	ITEMS	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
1	I prefer going to the library to read/study.	81(45.00)	87(48.33)	8(4.44)	4(2.22)
2	Going to the library is not a waste of time.	116(64.44)	57(31.67)	4(2.22)	3(1.67)
3	I enjoy reading in the library.	73(40.44)	93(51.67)	11(6.11)	3(1.67)
4	I am always distracted when I go to the library.	7(3.89)	18(10.00)	93(51.67)	62(34.44)
5	Library is meant for reading during the examination period alone.	3(1.67)	7(3.89)	36(20.00)	134(74.44)
6	Reading in the library is not pleasurable to me.	5(2.78)	20(11.11)	83(46.11)	72(40.00)
7	Going to the library is a waste of time.	4(2.22)	2(1.11)	50(27.78)	124(68.89)
8	Reading in the library is not enjoyable.	-	15(8.33)	86(47.78)	79(43.89)
9	Going to the library prevents distraction.	48(26.67)	94(52.22)	21(11.67)	17(9.44)
10	Library is meant for reading and not only during the examination period.	-	143(79.44)	33(18.33)	4(2.22)

Table 3 shows that 93.33% of the respondents prefer going to the library to read/study while 96.11% of the respondents saw going to the library as not a waste of time. Table 3 indicates that 92.11% of the respondents enjoy reading in the library while 78.89% of the respondents agreed that going to the library prevent distraction. However, 86.11% of the respondents disagree with the statement that "I am always distracted when I go to the library" while 86.11% of the respondents disagree with the statement that reading in the library is not pleasurable to them. Also, Ta-

ble 3 reveals that 96.67% of the respondents disagree with the statement that going to the library is a waste of time while 91.67% of the respondents disagree with the statement that reading in the library is not enjoyable. Table 3 indicates that 79.44% of the respondents agree that the library is meant for reading and not only during examination period.

**RQ3:** What are the challenges faced by undergraduates in the use of the library services?

**Table 4: Distribution of respondents according to challenges faced by undergraduates in the use of library services**

S/ N	ITEMS	CHALLENGE		
		Major (%)	Minor (%)	Not a challenge (%)
1	Inadequate up-to-date books.	112(62.22)	53(29.44)	15(8.33)
2.	Poor infrastructural facilities.	56(31.11)	72(40.00)	52(28.89)
3.	Tight academic schedules.	78(43.33)	73(40.56)	29(16.11)
4.	Insufficient space.	68(37.78)	70(38.89)	42(23.33)
5.	Insufficient staff.	21(11.67)	61(33.89)	98(54.44)
6.	Unfriendly attitude of library staff.	44(24.44)	67(37.22)	69(38.33)
7.	Un-conducive reading environment.	48(26.67)	40(22.22)	92(51.11)
8.	Library rules of not allowing edibles (food, water, and so on).	35(19.44)	41(22.78)	104(57.78)

Table 4 shows that 62.22% of the respondents identified inadequate up-to-date books as major challenge, 29.44% noted it is a minor challenge while 8.33% said it is not a challenge.

Table 4 reveals that on poor infrastructural facilities, 31.11% of the respondents indicated it is a major challenge, 40.00% identified it as a minor challenge while 28.89% said it is not a challenge. However, on tight academic schedules, 43.33% of the respon-

dents said that it is a major challenge, 40.56% said it is a minor challenge while 16.11% noted that it is not a challenge. But, majority of the respondents identified that the following are not challenges: Library rules of not allowing edibles with 57.78%; insufficient staff with 54.44%; and un conducive reading environment with 51.11%.

**RQ4:** What is the level of satisfaction of undergraduates when using the library

**Table 5: Distribution of respondents on their level of satisfaction when using the library services**

S/N	ITEMS	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
1.	The opening hours and the closing hours of the library are suitable to me.	70(38.89)	74(41.11)	23(12.78)	13(7.22)
2.	Reading in the school library is not convenient in terms of environmental conditions.	11(6.11)	30(16.67)	78(43.33)	61(33.89)
3.	I am pleased with the quality of materials in the library.	27(15.00)	82(45.55)	48(26.67)	23(12.78)
4.	The books in the library are outdated.	35(19.44)	76(42.22)	19(10.56)	50(27.78)
5.	The internet services in the library are accessible any time.	8(4.44)	21(11.67)	67(37.22)	84(46.67)
6.	The opening hours and the closing hours are unfavourable.	17(9.44)	27(15.00)	74(41.11)	62(34.44)
7.	Reading in the school library makes me comfortable.	59(32.78)	98(54.44)	12(6.67)	11(6.11)
8.	I am displeased with the quality of the materials in the library.	19(10.56)	60(33.33)	68(37.78)	33(18.33)
9.	Library books are up to date.	13(7.22)	51(28.33)	84(46.67)	32(17.78)
10.	The internet services are inaccessible at particular times.	65(36.11)	76(42.22)	22(12.22)	17(9.44)

Table 5 shows that a total of 80.00% of the respondents agree that the opening and closing hours of the library are suitable, while 20.00% disagree that it is suitable. But on the converse statement that the opening and closing hours are unfavourable, a total of 75.55% disagree while 24.45% agree.

Table 5 also reveals that a total of 22.78% of the respondents agree that reading in the library is not convenient in terms of environmental conditions while 77.22% of the respondents disagree. However, on the converse statement, 87.22% agree that reading in the school library makes them comfortable.

On the quality of the materials in the library, Table 5 shows that 60.55% of the respondents agree that they are pleased with the quality while 39.45% disagree. But 56.11% disagree with the converse statement while 43.89% agree with it.

Table 5 indicates that 61.66% of the respondents agree that the library books are outdated which means it may be a challenge while 38.34% disagree. Moreover, on the converse statement, 64.45% of the respondents disagree with it while 35.55% agree with the statement.

It is noted from Table 5 that 16.11% of the respondents agree that the internet services in the library are accessible any time, while 83.89% disagree which means it may be a challenge. On the converse statement, 78.33% strongly agree with the statement while 21.67% of the respondents disagree.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

### Standard of the library services

It can be concluded from the findings that the library has enough space to accommodate users; hence it is not a challenge to the use of the library services. Majority of the respondents (75.00%) of the respondents

agreed that there is enough staff which shows that there are enough staffs and this finding is in line with that of (Solola, 1983) that the quality of services rendered to users or readers in any library reflect the quality of the staff. He argued that if a library is managed by well experienced and cultured staff, users will always be encouraged to make use of the library.

#### **Attitudes towards the use of the library services**

Majority of undergraduates (96.11%) agree that going to the library is not a waste of time which shows positive attitude towards the use of library. Majority of respondents (92.11%) agreed that they enjoy reading in the library which indicates that the library is conducive for reading. It is also revealed in this study that majority of the students (79.44%) agreed that library is not only meant for reading during examination period as some may think. This is in line with findings of Oyesiku & Oduwale (2004) which submitted that students use the library mostly during examinations to study and to do class assignments.

#### **Challenges faced in the use of library services**

There are challenges affecting the use of library services in FUNAAB. Some of them can be classified as major while some are minor. Findings of this research show that inadequate up-to-date books in the library and tight academic schedules of students are the major challenges affecting the use of the library while the minor challenge are; poor infrastructural facilities and insufficient space to accommodate users. Also Nimsomboon & Nagata (2003), in a study of Thammasat University Library identified a list of problems encountered while using the library, one of which is inadequacy and

outdated resources such as books, journal, newspaper, computer terminals. Insufficient staffs, unfriendly attitude of library staffs, unconducive reading environment and library rules are not challenges affecting the use of library services by students of FUNAAB. This is in line with research findings of Udo-Anyanwu, Jeff-Okafor & Mbagwu (2012) who compared the use of library resources between students at Imo State University and Alvan-Ikoku Federal College of Education and the study also identified insufficient library space as the greatest problem facing the use of both libraries.

#### **Level of satisfaction of undergraduate students on the use of library services.**

From the findings of this study, majority of the respondents (80.00%) agreed with opening hours and closing hours of the library as being adequate. Majority of the respondents (77.22%) disagreed that reading in the school library is not convenient in terms of environmental conditions, which means that reading in the library is convenient for students in terms of environmental conditions. Majority of the respondents (60.55%) also agreed that they are pleased with the materials in the library while 39.45% disagreed. This is in line with a study of the accessibility and use of the library of the Federal Polytechnic Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria by Oluwadare (2006) which revealed that 25.7% of his study respondents claimed that they hardly use the library because materials in the library do not meet their needs.

Few respondents (16.11%) agreed that internet services in the library are accessible any time while 83.89% disagreed. Hence it can be concluded that that internet services in the library are not accessible any time.



## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, the findings of this study present a clear pattern of library use among undergraduates in FUNAAB. From the findings, it is obvious that undergraduates still make use of the university library. There are some challenges affecting the use of library services in FUNAAB. The major challenges are inadequate up-to-date books in the library and tight academic schedules of students while the minor challenges include poor infrastructural facilities and insufficient space to accommodate users. Insufficient staffs, unfriendly attitude of library staffs, unconducive reading environment and library rules are identified as not challenges affecting the use of library services by students of FUNAAB. However, undergraduates are still faced with various challenges in the use of library which includes unavailability of current books and inaccessibility to internet services.

Based on the findings of this work, the following recommendations were made: Libraries should endeavour to provide relevant and up-to-date books to attract and retain more users in the library. Library should create awareness on the services they rendered.

The libraries in universities should also ensure that adequate orientation is given to students on the use of the library services.

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