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INFLUENCE OF INFORMATION RESOURCES ON LIBRARY PATRONAGE AMONG LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE UNDERGRADUATES AT BENUE STATE UNIVERSITY, MAKURDI.

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Abstract
This study examines the influence of information resources on library patronage among Library and Information Science (LIS) undergraduates at Benue State University, Makurdi. The study aims to assess the accessibility of information resources, evaluate the level of library patronage, and determine the impact of resource relevance on students' engagement. A survey research design was employed, with a population of 325 registered LIS undergraduates. Data were collected using the Information Resources Accessibility Questionnaire (IRAQ) and the Library Patronage Questionnaire (LPQ), both validated by experts and tested for reliability, yielding Cronbach's alpha values of 0.76 and 0.79, respectively. The study utilized mean and standard deviation for descriptive analysis and linear regression to examine the relationship between information resources and library patronage. Findings indicate that Library resources like books, journals, and card catalogues were moderately accessible, while encyclopedias and indexes were less accessible, leading to moderate patronage focused on assignments and digital resources over print materials. A strong positive correlation ($r = 0.79$) showed that 62% of the variation in patronage was due to resource accessibility, with statistical analysis confirming its significant influence ($p < 0.05$). The study recommends expanding access to less available resources, enhancing digital collections, increasing student awareness of library services, and improving the library environment to foster greater patronage. Addressing additional influencing factors, such as library infrastructure and student engagement initiatives, could further enhance library utilization and academic success among LIS undergraduates.

Keywords: Information Resources, Library Patronage, Library Accessibility, Undergraduate Engagement, Benue State University

Introduction

Libraries, in their various forms, have long been foundational to the dissemination and preservation of knowledge. They are essential institutions that play a critical role in academic, cultural, and research endeavors. Libraries according to Gbemii-Ogunleye (2016) have been historically placed where knowledge is collected, preserved, and made accessible to those seeking it. The role of libraries in educational systems cannot be overstated, as they provide users—students, researchers, and faculty—with the necessary tools for learning and academic success. Libraries help shape the academic experience of their users by offering access to a wide range of resources that meet diverse educational needs. A library, as defined by the American Library Association (ALA, 2014), is "a collection of sources of information and similar resources, made accessible to a defined community for reference or borrowing." This reflects its core role in providing access to information that supports educational and research activities. Another definition by Ago and Uganneya (2016) states that a library is "an organized collection of information resources, in a variety of formats, available for use by individuals and groups for purposes of knowledge dissemination, preservation, and retrieval." This shows that libraries are not just physical spaces, but repositories of various resources, including both traditional materials and emerging digital formats, designed to meet the informational needs of their users.

As technology has evolved, so too has the role of libraries. The traditional role of libraries centered mainly on physical resources such as books, journals, and newspapers. However, the rise of digital resources has transformed libraries into hybrid environments where both physical and digital formats are essential to supporting academic activities. This shift is crucial, particularly in the context of academic libraries, where there is an increasing demand for diverse, up-to-date, and easily accessible resources (Ilo, Igbashal and Agoh, 2019). In modern academic settings, libraries according to the authors are expected to provide a blend of physical and digital resources to cater to the dynamic needs of students, researchers, and faculty. This transformation has increased the importance of providing information resources in flexible formats that can be accessed both on-site and remotely.

Information resources are integral to the functionality of libraries, and they encompass various types of materials that are essential for research and learning. According to the ALA (2014), information resources are “materials or services provided to meet the informational, educational, and recreational needs of users.” These resources include books, journals, e-books, online databases, multimedia, and other digital content that cater to the academic and research needs of library

users. In university libraries, Ugbagir (2016) noted that information resources are particularly crucial as they directly impact the success of students, faculty, and researchers. For students, libraries provide access to textbooks, research papers, e-learning tools, and multimedia materials that enhance their academic experience. Faculty and researchers, on the other hand, rely on specialized journals, research databases, and academic papers, which are essential for scholarly output and professional development.

The shift towards digital resources has significantly impacted libraries globally. Digital resources such as e-books, e-journals, and online databases have become indispensable in meeting the growing demand for accessible, up-to-date information. Okonoko, Ureki and Okonkwo (2022) emphasizes the importance of ensuring that information resources are available in various formats to accommodate different user preferences and technological capabilities. For academic libraries, the integration of digital resources alongside physical collections is crucial in supporting a flexible and inclusive learning environment. This is particularly relevant for modern-day learners, who value the ability to access resources remotely and at their convenience.

Benue State University (BSU), located in Makurdi, Nigeria, is a growing institution that, like other universities, relies on its library to provide crucial resources to its academic community. The university's library plays an integral role in enhancing the academic and research capabilities of its students, faculty, and researchers. The availability, accessibility, and quality of information resources at the BSU Library are key factors that influence the level of patronage it receives. Folorunso and Njoku (2016) noted that current, relevant, and easily accessible resources are vital in determining library patronage. Similarly, Bem-Bura (2015) observed that students, faculty, and researchers rely on libraries for various types of information resources—such as textbooks, journals, and specialized databases—that are essential for academic and research activities. The increasing importance of digital resources in university libraries is especially pertinent to BSU Library. As Ugbagir (2016) pointed out, libraries with a broad range of digital resources—including e-books, e-journals, and online databases—are better positioned to meet the needs of students who are more familiar with technology and prefer online access. For modern learners, the ability to access resources online is essential for improving library usage and making it a valuable resource. Moreover, the rise of remote learning and flexible study schedules further emphasizes the need for libraries to offer digital content that can be accessed at any time and from anywhere (Tofi and Kashimana, 2019).

To enhance patronage at BSU Library, it is essential to ensure that the

information resources—both physical and digital—are organized in an accessible, user-friendly manner. The integration of intuitive catalog systems and digital platforms will significantly improve the user experience and encourage more frequent use of the library's resources. In conclusion, libraries are critical to supporting education by providing access to the right information resources. The case of Benue State University Library highlights the importance of maintaining a comprehensive and up-to-date collection of both physical and digital resources that meet the diverse needs of students, faculty, and researchers. By ensuring easy access to relevant materials, the library can enhance its patronage and continue to serve as a vital academic resource for the university community.

The geographical context of Benue State University (BSU) is vital to this study as it highlights the challenges students face in accessing information resources, both physical and digital, due to factors like inconsistent internet connectivity and limited access to modern library materials. As BSU serves a diverse student population, particularly Library and Information Science (LIS) undergraduates, it is essential to understand how these challenges impact library usage patterns. This research is particularly relevant given the transition from print to digital resources, especially in regions with inconsistent technological infrastructure. By focusing on LIS students, the study aims to evaluate how digital and physical resources influence their library patronage, ultimately contributing to the development of library services at BSU. The findings will offer insights into how the university can better align its resources with the evolving needs of its students and improve the academic experience of future information professionals.

Statement of the Problem

The library at Benue State University (BSU) plays a critical role in supporting the academic needs of students, including Library and Information Science (LIS) undergraduates. Despite the availability of a wide range of information resources, including physical materials and digital resources, according to Ilo, Igbashal and Agoh (2019), there is a noticeable gap in how these resources influence library patronage among LIS students. Issues such as accessibility, awareness, and relevance of these resources may hinder their effective use, which can negatively affect academic success and the preparation of students for future careers in information management.

This study seeks to explore the factors that influence the library patronage of LIS undergraduates at BSU by examining how various information resources impact their usage patterns. By identifying barriers to resource utilization and opportunities for improvement, the research aims to provide actionable

recommendations for enhancing library services and resource management. Ultimately, the study seeks to foster a more effective library environment that better meets the academic needs of LIS students, supporting their success and preparing them for professional roles in an increasingly digital landscape.

Objectives of the Study

- examine the accessibility of information resources at Benue State University, Makurdi.
- examine the library patronage at Benue State University, Makurdi.
- assess the impact of the relevance of information resources on students' and faculty members' engagement with the library.

Research Questions

- What is the level of accessibility of information resources by Library and Information Science Undergraduates at Benue State University, Makurdi?
- What is the level of library patronage among Library and Information Science Undergraduates at Benue State University, Makurdi?
- What is the influence of information resources on Library and Information Science Undergraduates library patronage at Benue State University?

Hypothesis

H_{01}: Information resources do not significantly influence library patronage among Library and Information Science Undergraduates at Benue State University.

Research Methodology

This study employed survey design to examine the influence of information resources on library patronage among Library and Information Science undergraduates at Benue State University, Makurdi. The population of the study comprised all library registered LIS undergraduates at Benue State. In total 325 LIS undergraduates were found to have registered with the university library, and considered as Respondents of this study. The research collected data through researcher Developed questionnaire to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between information resources and library patronage. The instruments used are the Information Resources Accessibility Questionnaire (IRAQ) and the Library Patronage Questionnaire (LPQ). The IRAQ consist of two sections (A and B). Section A represent the demographic information of respondents. Section B contain 10 items rated on a four-point scale

(LA), and Very Lowly Accessible (VLA) with numerical points of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The LPQ also consist of two sections (A and B). Section A represent the demographic information of respondents. Section B contain 10 items rated on a four-point scale of Very Often (VO), Often (O), Sometimes (S), and Rarely (R) with numerical points of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

The research instruments were subjected to face validation by three Library and Information Science experts. The suggestions made by the experts were used to modify the final version of the questionnaires, which were then trial tested on Library and information Science undergraduates at University of Nigeria Nsukka to determine reliability. Reliability indices of 0.76 and 0.79 were obtained for IRAQ and LPQ respectively, using Cronbach's alpha. The face-to-face method of data collection was employed in this study. This approach enabled the first author to purposively administer 311 copies of the research instrument to the undergraduates during data collection.

Data gathered were first coded and cleaned using Microsoft Excel, then analyzed with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer research question 1 and 2 while linear regression was used to answer research question 3. Real limits of numbers were used to make decisions for research questions 1 and 2 with 3.50-4.00 for VHA/VO, 2.50-3.49 HA/O, 1.50-2.49 for LA/S, and 0.5-1.49 for VLA/R. Correlation coefficient associated with regression analysis was used to make decision for research question 3. For the hypothesis, the formulated hypothesis was tested using analysis of variance associated with regression analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

Results: Summary and Discussion of findings

This section presented the results of data analysis and interpretation in line with the specific objectives that guided the study.

Level of Accessibility of Information Resources by Library and Information Science (LIS) Undergraduates at Benue State University, Makurdi

Table 1: **Mean and Standard deviation of respondents on the level of accessibility of information resources by LIS undergraduates at Benue State University, Makurdi**

S/N	Item Statement (N = 311)	Mean ()	SD	Remark
1	Books	2.94	0.83	High Accessible
2	Card Catalogue,	2.55	0.69	High Accessible
3	Bibliographies,	2.37	0.70	Lowly Accessible
4	Encyclopedias,	2.04	0.53	Lowly Accessible
5	Dissertations	2.75	0.63	High Accessible
6	Magazines	2.16	0.60	Lowly Accessible
7	Journals,	2.71	0.76	High Accessible
8	Theses,	2.71	0.71	High Accessible
9	Manuals,	2.30	0.75	Lowly Accessible
10	Indexes,	2.32	0.76	Lowly Accessible
	Cluster Mean	**2.48**	**0.51**	**Lowly Accessible**

Key: N = Number of respondents, = mean, SD = Standard Deviation.

Table 1 shows that items 1, 2, 5, 7 and 8 have mean ratings ranging from 2.50-3.49 set as benchmark for highly accessible information resources. This implies that information resources such as books (, SD = 0.83), card catalogue (, SD = 0.69), dissertations (, SD = 0.63), journals (, SD = 0.76), and theses (, SD = 0.71) are highly accessible by LIS undergraduates at Benue State University, Makurdi. Result also shows that items 3, 4, 6, 9 and 10 have mean ratings ranging from 1.50-2.49 set as benchmark for lowly accessible information resources. This implies that information resources such as bibliographies (, SD = 0.70), encyclopedias (, SD = 0.53), magazines (, SD = 0.60), manuals (, SD = 0.75), and indexes (, SD = 0.76) are lowly accessible by LIS undergraduates at Benue State University, Makurdi. From the result, books (, SD = 0.83) is the most highly accessible information resource, while encyclopedias (, SD = 0.53) is the least. Overall the result shows that there is low accessibility of information resources by library and information science (LIS) undergraduates at Benue State University, Makurdi, implies that students may face challenges in acquiring essential academic materials, which could hinder their research, learning, and overall academic performance. This limitation may also reduce effective utilization of library services, necessitating improvements in resource availability, digital access, and library support services to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

Level of Library Patronage among Library and Information Science Undergraduates at Benue State University, Makurdi

Table 2: **Mean and Standard deviation of respondents on the level of service quality in libraries in State universities in Enugu and Imo States**

S/N	Item Statement (N = 311)	Mean ()	SD	Remark
1	I visit the library on a daily basis	2.40	0.83	Sometime
2	Access library resources for assignments	2.59	0.80	Often
3	I find useful materials from the library database	2.80	0.73	Often
4	I enjoy using the library database	1.90	0.62	Sometime
5	Conversant with accessing library shelves	2.77	0.74	Often
6	Download materials easily online using library wi-fi	2.80	0.75	Often
7	I use library wi -fi to access library collections online	2.79	0.69	Often
8	Visit the library to study privately	2.58	0.70	Often
9	Read newspaper and other entertaining materials in the library	1.91	0.68	Sometime
10	I update my lecture notes in the library	2.40	0.65	Sometime
	Cluster Mean	**2.49**	**0.49**	**Sometimes**

Key: N = Number of respondents, = mean, SD = Standard Deviation.

Table 2 shows that items 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 have mean ratings ranging from 2.50-3.49 set as benchmark for "Often" library patronage. This implies that undergraduates often access library resources for assignments (, SD = 0.80), find useful materials from the library database (, SD = 0.73), conversant with accessing library shelves (, SD = 0.74), download materials easily online using library wi-fi (, SD = 0.75), use library wi-fi to access library collections online (, SD = 0.69), and visit the library to study privately (, SD = 0.70). Result also shows that items 1, 4, 9 and 10 have mean ratings ranging from 1.50-2.49 set as benchmark for "Sometime" library patronage. This implies that undergraduates sometime visit the library on a daily basis (, SD = 0.83), enjoy using the library database (, SD = 0.62), read newspaper and other entertaining materials in the library (, SD = 0.68), and update lecture notes in the library (, SD = 0.65). From the result, finding useful materials from the library database (, SD = 0.73), and downloading materials easily online using library wi-fi (, SD = 0.75) are the highest patronized library service, while using the library database (, SD = 0.62) is the least. Overall the result shows that there is low level of library patronage among LIS undergraduates at Benue State University, Makurdi, implies that information services may not be effectively meeting students' academic needs. This could lead to underutilization of resources, limited

research engagement, and weaker information literacy skills, highlighting the need for improved accessibility, user-centered services, and enhanced digital resources to boost library usage.

Influence of Information Resources on Library Patronage among Library and Information Science Undergraduates at Benue State University, Makurdi

Table 3: Linear regression analysis of the influence of information resources on library patronage among LIS undergraduates at Benue State University, Makurdi

Model	N	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2
1	311	0.79	0.62	0.62

Note=Number of Respondents, R = Correlation coefficient, R2 = Coefficient of determination

Result in Table 3 shows that the correlation coefficient (R) obtained between information resources and library patronage is 0.79. This shows that there is a high positive relationship between information resources and library patronage. By implication, an increase in information resources accessibility corresponds with increase in library patronage and vice versa. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination associated with the correlation coefficient of 0.79 is 0.62. The coefficient of determination shows that 62% variation in undergraduates' library patronage is attributed to information resources accessibility. This implies that 38% of the variation can be attributed to other factors other than information resources accessibility.

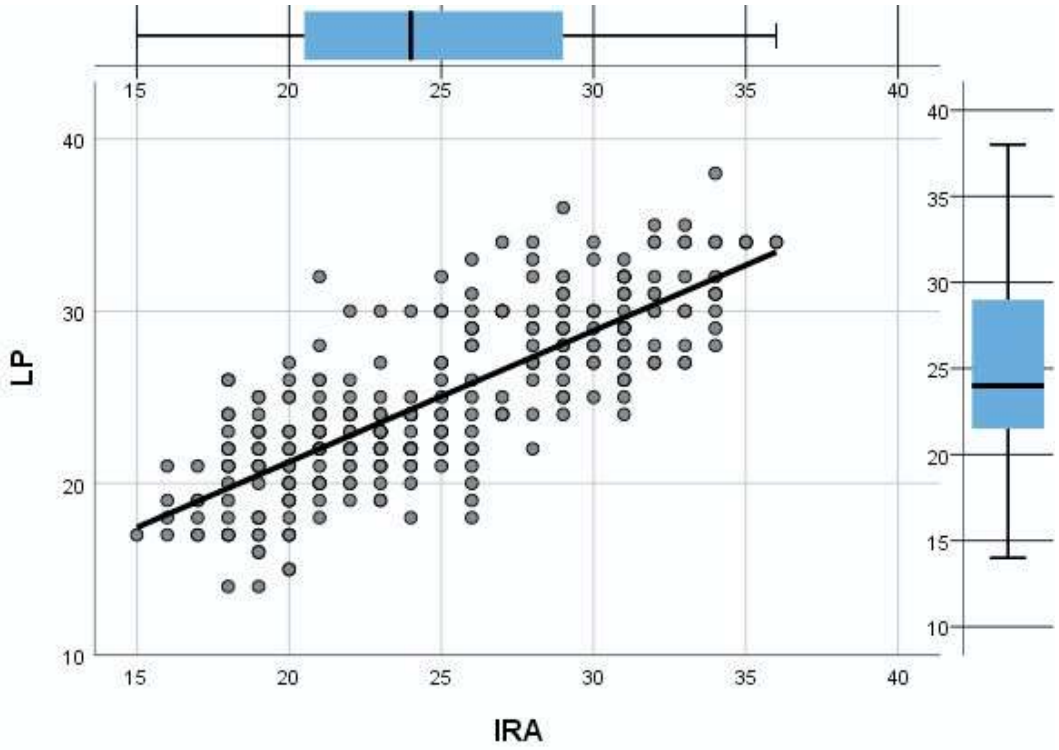


Figure 1: Regression graph of the influence of information resources accessibility (IRA) on library patronage

Figure 1 above further explains the influence of information resources on the level of library patronage among LIS undergraduates at Benue State University, Makurdi. The graph yields a linear and positive relationship as seen by the direction of the line of best fit, which slopes upward. .According to the graph, the relationship between information resources accessibility and library patronage is very high. This is because the data points are clustered around the line of best fit and are close to the line as well.

H_{01}: Information resources do not significantly influence library patronage among Library and Information Science Undergraduates at Benue State University.

Table 4: ANOVA F-test of no significant influence of information resources on the level of library patronage among LIS undergraduates in Benue State universities, Makurdi

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	4650.464	1	4650.464	511.911	0.00
	Residual	2807.118	309	9.085		
	Total	7457.582	310			

á = 0.05, Df = Degree of freedom

Table 4 reveals an F-ratio of 511.911 with associated exact probability value of 0.00 was obtained. This probability value of 0.00 was compared with 0.05 set as level of significant for testing the hypothesis and it was found to be significant because 0.00 is less than 0.05. The null hypothesis which stated information resources do not significantly influence library patronage among Library and Information Science Undergraduates at Benue State University, is therefore rejected. Inference drawn is that there is a significant influence of information resources on the level of library patronage among LIS undergraduates in Benue State University, Makurdi. This implies that information resources accessibility is a determinant of library patronage among LIS undergraduates in Benue State University, Makurdi.

Conclusion

The study indicates that LIS undergraduates at Benue State University, Makurdi, experience low accessibility to certain information resources, particularly bibliographies, encyclopedias, magazines, manuals, and indexes. While some materials like books, journals, and dissertations are more accessible, overall library patronage remains moderate to low, with students engaging more in digital resources and internet services than in physical collections or leisure reading. The strong correlation between resource accessibility and library patronage underscores the need for improved resource availability, better library organization, and targeted strategies to enhance student engagement with library services. Addressing these challenges will be crucial in fostering a more effective academic support system for LIS students.

Recommendations

- **Improve resource Availability:** Acquire additional copies of less available materials such as bibliographies, encyclopedias, magazines, manuals, and indexes, and provide digital versions where possible.
- **Enhance Digital Resources:** Expand online collections and improve digital access to key academic materials.

- **Increase Awareness and Training:** Conduct regular training sessions to educate students on how to effectively use library resources, including digital databases.
- **Strengthen Institutional Collaborations:** Partner with other universities and libraries for resource sharing and interlibrary loan programs.
- **Optimize Library Services and Environment:** Improve the library's physical setup, ensuring a more comfortable and conducive study atmosphere.
- **Encourage Leisure Reading:** Establish a well-curated section for non-academic reading to promote a reading culture among students.
- **Promote Active Library Engagement:** Implement outreach programs, library orientation sessions, and awareness campaigns to encourage students to utilize a broader range of library services.
- **Address Other Barriers to Patronage:** Investigate additional factors affecting library use, such as service quality, student preferences, and study habits, and take appropriate measures to address them.

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