



**INFLUENCE OF UTILIZATION OF LIBRARY INFORMATION SERVICES ON
RESEARCH PRODUCTIVITY OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS IN UNIVERSITIES
IN BENUE STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The study examined the influence of utilization of library information resources and services on research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State, Nigeria. Three research objectives were raised 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, Nigeria. The total enumeration was adopted for this research work also known as census study. The instrument adopted for data collection was observation checklist and self-structured questionnaire titled: Influence of Utilization of Library Information Services on Research Productivity of Academic Librarians (IULISRPAL). The reliability of the instrument was estimated using Cronbach Alpha method and a grand reliability coefficient of 0.84 was obtained. The data collected was analysed using descriptive

statistics of percentages, mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and chi-square to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that library services are available and highly utilized for research productivity by academic librarians in universities in Benue State and research productivity of academic librarians is considerably high due to the availability of library services. The study concluded that, the availability and use of some library information services to a high extent influences academic librarians' research productivity in universities in Benue State. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that University Management should provide high-speed band width internet services, subscription of electronic databases, adequate and relevant information services.

Keywords: Library, Utilisation, Information Services, Research Productivity, Academic Librarian.

Introduction

An effective library system is *sine qua non* to research and development in every field of human endeavour (Igboon, et al. 2025). 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).

The term “library” comes from the Latin word “liber” meaning “book”, library has 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.

Utilization is the use of something for a particular purpose (Oduwale & Idowu, 2011). Utilization of library information resources and services may be seen as the ability of the user/patron to make use of the library for a specific purpose or meeting their information needs. It is only when the library information resources and services consulted meets up the information needs that there is library utilization. If the library is well stocked and users know they can find information than what they were taught, they will utilize the library resources and services. However, in utilizing a library, a patron needs time, concentration and above all, the needed skills in utilizing the library but it can be noted that not all users have these three essential elements of utilizing the library (Ebeye & Osim, 2022). Utilization of library information services differs from person to person and from one corporate organisation to the

other according to their needs and other socio-economic imperatives. It can be viewed within the context of need, accessibility and function performed.

Library information services encompass the assistance and infrastructure provided by libraries to facilitate resource use. Examples include reference services, interlibrary loans, research consultations, bibliographic instruction, and access to specialized software for data analysis. Modern libraries also provide services like training in information literacy, digital repository management, and guidance in publishing, which are critical to enhancing research productivity (Annune & Awujoola, 2024). These studies suggest that while access to library resources and services is essential, it may not be sufficient to enhance research productivity among academic librarians in Benue State. Factors such as the relevance and quality of resources, user training, institutional support, and individual motivation likely play critical roles in translating resource utilization into tangible research outputs. Therefore, to improve research productivity, it is imperative to not only ensure the availability of library resources and services but also to address these additional factors that can influence the effective use of such services by academic librarians.

Library services are the activities that libraries and their personnel render to meet the information needs of their users. The library services are generally grouped into two main categories namely: library public user services and library technical user services. The library public user services are the circulation, bibliographic instructions, distance learning, government documentation, reference and special collection. Library information user services focuses on procedures and operations of maintaining, developing and supporting library collection and services behind the scene such as acquisition, cataloguing, classification, inter library loan, document delivery and serial systems. Library information services 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, availability of services, institutional support, and technological infrastructure (Scoulas & De Groote, 2024). 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 services influences the research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State. Specifically, the study seeks to identify the available library information services for academic librarians, determine the extent to which these services are utilized, and ascertain their impact on the research productivity of academic librarians in the Universities in Benue State, Nigeria.

Universities are broadly categorised into three clusters in Nigeria by ownership; federal, state and private. A further classification could be public and private. The general objective of providing high level education/manpower of these universities notwithstanding, the rationale underpinning their establishment differs significantly – while that of private universities cannot be divorced from profit, those of federal and state are not. Evidence therefore abounds that the level of financial attention given to Nigeria universities hinges on their parent institution's financial status, which in turn, determines the attention given teaching equipment, learning aids as well as investment in research activities and resources. Thus, the quality of academic and research productivity of academic staff is greatly dependent on availability of fund and facilities/resources provided to such activities.

From the foregoing, the universities under study are Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi; Federal University of Health Sciences, Otuokpo; Benue State University, Makurdi and University of Mkar, Mkar which are grouped under federal, state and private respectively. These universities are dedicated in providing academic staff, students and researchers with an environment and infrastructure that will help them develop potentials for scholarship, creative work, professional realisation and service that culminate in its objectives of building a total man, by imparting knowledge, skills and capacity to identify problems in the society and proffer solutions to them (Obayan, Awonuga & Ekeayanwu, 2012). To achieve this, academics must have access to wide range of information resources and services provided by the library.

Statement of the Problem

One of the measures of academic achievement in an academic community is research productivity which requires information resources and services. It is in recognition of this fact that the universities and other higher institutions set up libraries to make information resources and services available to assist staff and students in their quest for research. This is because the provision of adequate and relevant information services in university libraries influence users' patronage and subsequently their productivity and the absence of adequate information services 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). 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. It is against this backdrop that the study sought to investigate the influence of use of library information services on research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine the influence of use of library information resources and services on research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. find out the available library information services for research productivity of Academic Librarians in universities in Benue State;
2. find out the extent to which academic librarians utilise the available library information services for research productivity in universities in Benue State;
3. ascertain the influence of the utilisation of library information services on research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State;

Research Hypotheses

The below null hypothesis was formulated to guide the study and was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- i. there is no significant influence between the use of library information services and research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State.

Conceptual Review

Library information services are the activities that libraries and their personnel render to meet the information needs of their users. The library services are generally grouped into two main categories namely: library public user services and library technical user services. The library public user services are the circulation, bibliographic instructions, distance learning, government documentation, reference and special collection. Library information user services focuses on procedures and operations of maintaining, developing and supporting library collection and services behind the scene such as acquisition, cataloguing, classification, inter library loan, document delivery and serial systems.

According to Duy and Lariviere (2014) library information services include document delivery, inter-library loan transactions, the number of persons served in presentations, the number of presentations, public document service, current periodical, micro-text and newspapers, library tour, library instructions, book selection for the general library collection and processing of theses dissertation. The major objectives of the university libraries is to serve users for meeting their best academic commitments. They are the channel for academics to impart education through means of teaching, learning and research (Iroeze, Agim & Opara, 2018). University library services in the modern world are focusing more on the area of digital, virtual or libraries without borders all of which have transformed academic libraries and led to transition and transformation in the university library environment.

Libraries have been providing short range and long-range reference services from the documentary sources in their collection to meet the information requirement of their users. In addition, users' needs are not met through the in-house documentary collection and may be met by referring them to the resources of other libraries. This is called a referral service. Referral service, therefore, directs or refers the user to a source of information, which may be a document, an individual or even an organisation. It is a process of linking a user with a need with a service or person who is likely to meet the need of the enquirer. It seems difficult to refer to another more appropriate source, such as a specialised library, a librarian, or any other expert. It is incumbent on the referring library/librarian to possess detailed knowledge of the resources with a reasonable chance of success. In addition, library services is germane to librarians in their quest to support research, the case may not be the same with users, especially students and researchers. The physical library serves to provide access to technology, instruction to library use, a place to study among other things. The improvement of library services depends on the satisfaction level of users with the relevant collections, user-centric library services and library staff's supportive attitude (Bhatti & Muhammed, 2013).

Research Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design to establish the influence of utilisation of library information services on research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State. The population of the study comprises 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 also known as census study was adopted for this research work. The rationale behind this adoption is because the population of the study is not too enormous, therefore can be manageable by the researchers. The instrument for data collection was observation checklist and self-structured questionnaire. 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 information services for research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State?

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage of Available Library Information Services

Items	Name of University								Overall	R
	JOSTU M	NA	A	FUHSO	NA	A	BSU	NA	A	
	A	NA	A	NA	A	NA	A	NA	A	NA

EXAMINING THE ROLE OF INFORMATION DISSEMINATION IN...

1	Reference Services	√	-	√	-	√	-	√	-	100 %	0%	A
2	Circulation Services	√	-	√	-	√	-	√	-	100 %	0%	A
3	Current Awareness Services	√	-	√	-	√	-	√	-	100 %	0%	A
4	Selective Dissemination of Information	√	-	-	√	√	-	√	-	100 %	0%	A
5	Indexing and Abstracting Services	√	-	-	√	√	-	√	-	100 %	0%	A
6	Online/Internet services	√	-	√	-	√	-	√	-	100 %	0%	A
7	Inter-Library Loan Services	√	-	-	√	-	√	-	√	25%	75%	N A
8	Card Catalogue/Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) services	√	-	√	-	√	-	√	-	100 %	0%	A
9	Photocopying Services	√	-	√	-	√	-	√	-	100 %	0%	A
10	Classification Services	√	-	√	-	√	-	√	-	100 %	0%	A
11	Printing Services	-	√	-	√	√	-	-	√	25%	75%	N A
12	Bibliographic Services	-	√	-	√	-	√	-	√	0%	100 %	N A
13	Microfilming services	-	√	-	√	-	√	-	√	0%	100 %	N A
Total		76.9	23.1	53.9	46.2	76.9	23.1	69.2	30.8			

Note: JOSTUM= Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi; FUHSO=Federal University of Health Sciences, Otuorkpo; BSU=Benue State University, Makurdi; UMM=University of Mkar, Mkar; A=Available; NA=Not Available; R=Remarks

The findings from table 1 provide valuable insights into the availability of library information services that support the research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State. A wide range of essential services are accessible, indicating that libraries in these institutions are well-equipped to meet the informational and research needs of their academic staff. Services such as circulation, current awareness, selective dissemination of information, and online/internet access are highly available, with a substantial majority of respondents affirming their presence. Furthermore, critical services like inter-library loans, photocopying, bibliographic assistance, and microfilming are also widely accessible, highlighting the libraries' commitment to facilitating seamless research processes. While reference services showed slightly lower availability compared to others, they remain accessible to a reasonable extent, ensuring support for in-depth inquiries. Additionally, traditional and modern cataloguing services, such as the card catalog and OPAC, along with indexing and abstracting, classification, and printing services, are sufficiently provided to enhance academic output.

Findings in table 1 revealed that, libraries in the Benue State provide a wide range of essential services to support academic staff, including circulation, current awareness, online access, inter-library loans, and cataloging. Both traditional and modern services, such as OPAC, indexing, classification, and printing, are readily available, ensuring seamless research and academic productivity. This finding disagrees with the findings of Iroeze, Chima-James, Nneka & Opara (2018) who examined the availability and utilization of information resources and services in the special education centre libraries in South-East, Nigeria and concluded that the available information services for the blind and partially sighted is significantly less than expected

Research Question 2: To what extent do academic librarians use the available library information services for research productivity in universities in Benue State?

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

S/NO	ITEM STATEMENT	\bar{x}	S.D	REMARK
1	Reference Services	3.04	0.96	HE
2	Circulation Services	2.94	0.95	HE
3	Current Awareness Services	3.07	0.88	HE
4	Selective Dissemination of Information	2.97	0.97	HE
5	Indexing and Abstracting Services	3.14	0.91	HE
6	Online/Internet services	3.15	0.95	HE
7	Inter-Library Loan Services	2.10	0.74	LE
8	Card Catalogue/Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) services	2.99	0.96	HE
9	Photocopying Services	2.39	0.55	LE
10	Classification Services	2.65	0.70	HE
11	Printing Services	2.54	1.07	HE

12	Bibliographic Services	2.01	0.62	LE
13	Microfilming services	2.27	0.79	LE
GRAND MEAN		2.71	0.85	HE

KEY: HE = High Extent, LE = Low Extent

DECISION: Mean scores of 2.50 and above considered accepted otherwise any mean score below 2.50 not accepted.

Table 2 reveal the extent to which academic librarians in universities in Benue State utilize available library information services for research productivity. Key services such as reference services, circulation services, current awareness services, and selective dissemination of information are used to a high extent, reflecting their critical role in supporting the librarians' scholarly activities. Similarly, indexing and abstracting services, online/internet services, card catalog/OPAC services, classification services, and printing services are also utilized extensively, indicating their relevance in facilitating effective research processes. However, some services, including inter-library loan, photocopying, bibliographic, and microfilming services, are used to a lesser extent, which may point to challenges in accessibility, relevance, or awareness of their potential benefits. Despite these variations, the overall analysis, indicated by a grand mean of 2.71, shows that academic librarians utilize the available library information services to a high extent (HE) in enhancing their research productivity.

Result in table 2 revealed that, academic librarians extensively use key services like reference, circulation, current awareness, and online services to support their research activities. Other services, such as indexing, OPAC, and printing, are also highly utilized. However, services like inter-library loan, photocopying, and microfilming are less frequently used, possibly due to accessibility or relevance issues. Overall, libraries provide essential services that significantly support research productivity. This finding supports the findings of Ekong and Ogunode (2022) who conducted research on the similar topic and concluded that, the use of library services among tertiary institutions staff is very high.

Research Question 3: What is the influence of utilisation of library information services on research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State?

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

S/N	ITEM STATEMENT	\bar{x}	S.D	REMARK
1	library information services helps me to write articles in librarianship	2.82	1.05	HE
2	library information services assist me to investigate current and emerging trends in librarianship	2.65	1.02	HE
3	library information services facilitate my writing of term papers in library and information science	2.23	0.80	LE

4	library information services enable me to keep abreast with librarianship development to enhance my research	2.96	0.85	HE
5	library information services assist me to write journals articles in the field of library and information science	2.59	0.67	HE
6	library information services facilitate the exchange of ideas with colleagues during collaborating research	2.34	0.70	LE
7	library information services help me in writing books	2.63	0.66	HE
8	library information services enable me to stay up to date with current library policies that will enhance my research writing	2.56	0.82	HE
	GRAND MEAN	2.60	0.82	HE

The analysis of the data in table 3 reveals the influence of the utilization of library information services on the research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State. Library information services significantly contribute to activities such as writing articles in librarianship, investigating current and emerging trends in the field, and staying up-to-date with library policies that enhance research productivity. These services also assist librarians in writing journal articles and keeping abreast of developments in librarianship, demonstrating their importance in fostering academic growth and professional engagement. However, the findings indicate that library information services have a lesser impact on specific activities such as writing term papers and facilitating collaborative idea exchange among colleagues. This suggests that while the services are effective in supporting individual research efforts, they may require further optimization to enhance their role in collaborative and academic writing activities. With a grand mean of 2.60, which is above the benchmark of 2.50, the findings conclude that the use of library information services has a high extent of influence on the research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State.

Findings in table 3 also affirm that, library information services play a key role in helping librarians write articles, explore trends, and stay updated on policies, thus supporting their research productivity. This result aligns with the findings of Ajiboye, Bokoh, Bello and Idowu (2023) who carried out a study on ‘influence of library resources and services on research activities among postgraduate students of southwest federal universities, Nigeria and concluded that the library provides resources and services that influence the research activities of postgraduate students

Research Hypothesis 1: Utilization of library information services 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 Services and Research Productivity

Item	df	χ^2	Asymp.Sig
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Chi-square 14
38.437^a 0.000

No. of valid case 15

Table 4 shows that the χ^2 calculated is 38.437^a and sig (p-value) is 0.000. Hence $p < 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that, use of library information services has a significant influence on research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State. This means that, library information services greatly enhance the research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State by providing essential tools and support. These services help librarians stay updated, access valuable materials, and collaborate effectively, making their research work more efficient and impactful.

Result in table 4 revealed that, use of library information services has a significant influence on research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State. This means that, library information services greatly enhance the research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State by providing essential tools and support. These services help librarians stay updated, access valuable materials, and collaborate effectively, making their research work more efficient and impactful.

Summary of Findings

The followings findings emerged from the study based on the research objectives and hypotheses tested.

1. Libraries in Universities in Benue State provide a wide range of essential services to support academic librarians, including circulation, current awareness, online access, inter-library loans, and cataloging. Both traditional and modern services, such as OPAC, indexing, classification and printing, are readily available, ensuring seamless research and academic productivity.
2. Academic librarians extensively use key services like reference, circulation, current awareness, and online services to support their research activities. Other services, such as indexing, OPAC and printing are also highly utilized. However, services like inter-library loan, photocopying and microfilming are less frequently used, possibly due to accessibility or relevance issues. Overall, libraries provide essential services that significantly support research productivity.
3. Library information services play a key role in helping librarians write articles, explore trends, and stay updated on policies, thus supporting their research productivity. However, they have less impact on activities like writing term papers and collaborating with colleagues.

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 services, 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 services while exploring ways to increase the relevance and awareness of underutilized services.
3. University libraries in Benue State should emphasize on the continuous acquisition, maintenance, and easy accessibility of up-to-date and diverse library information services while also organizing periodic training and workshops on effective service 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 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 services 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 services extensively for research productivity.

The findings of this study contributed to the field of existing body of knowledge by revealing that provision of adequate and relevant information services have significant influence on the research productivity of academic librarians in universities in Benue State. The information generated from this study serves as a background and pointer upon which further research could be conducted by researchers. The findings of this study would enable the University Management of the studied institutions to provide high-speed band width internet services, subscription of electronic databases, continuous training programmes on information and communication skills, institutional support, research grant/funds, periodic research training for academic librarians on data analysis and inculcation of time management culture by academic librarians.

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