

LEVEL OF AWARENESS AND UTILIZATION OF INFORMATION RESOURCES FOR LEARNING ACTIVITIES BY STUDENTS OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN KANO STATE

by

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Abstract

The study investigated on Level of awareness and utilization of information resources for learning activities by students of colleges of education in Kano state. These were set to answer two research questions which include Do the students of Colleges of Education in Kano state aware of information resources? and what type of information resources used by student in the study area? The study employed a cross-sectional survey research design, targeting a population of 22,518 students from three Colleges of Education: Federal College of Education Bichi, Sa'adatu Rimi College of Education Kumbotso, and Kano State College of Education, Science and Remedial Studies. A proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure fair representation across the colleges. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.89, indicating a high level of internal consistency. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize and interpret the findings effectively. The study found students exhibit varying levels of awareness and utilization of information resources, with printed textbooks being the most recognized (mean = 3.79) and online journals the least (mean = 1.87). Overall, printed materials are more familiar to students than digital resources, particularly online journals and encyclopaedias and low utilization. The study recommended that Colleges should regularly organize workshops, seminars, and orientation sessions to introduce students to the full range of available information resources, especially digital ones. These programs should focus on how to locate, access, and effectively use both print and electronic materials for academic purposes and among others

Keywords: Awareness, Utilization, Information resources, Learning Activities, College of education

Introduction

Academic libraries are integral components of tertiary institutions, established to support teaching, learning, and research. Among these, college libraries typically found in Colleges of Education serve the specific purpose of providing diverse information resources that cater to the academic needs of students. These resources encompass both print materials, such as books, journals, magazines, and newspapers, and digital content, including online databases,

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e-books, and multimedia tools (Fraley, 2022). The wide range of available materials ensures that students can access the necessary resources to complement their coursework and engage in independent study. Information resources are essential to the academic development of students, offering content that supports assignments, required readings, and research endeavours activities that often lead to innovation and intellectual growth. More than mere repositories of information, academic libraries function as learning hubs, offering a suite of services such as book lending, current awareness services, selective dissemination of information, and round-the-clock access to online academic materials.

For students to effectively utilize these resources, they must be made aware of their availability and trained in how to access and use them. College libraries regularly organize orientation sessions, workshops, and tutorials aimed at familiarizing students with the various tools and resources at their disposal. Additionally, library staff and academic faculty play a crucial role by integrating information literacy instruction into the curriculum and guiding students through the research process (Thompson & Lupton, 2020).

Colleges of Education in Nigeria, library resources are particularly critical to student success; to enhance academic performance but also foster personal development and career readiness. By offering access to a broad spectrum of resources, college libraries equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to excel academically and contribute meaningfully to society (Donaldson & Pope, 2017). Ensuring equitable and convenient access to these resources remains a core objective of college libraries. While physical materials can be used within the library during operational hours, digital resources are often available 24/7 via the library's online portal. Furthermore, accessibility features such as assistive technologies and adaptive equipment are provided to support students with disabilities or special needs, thereby promoting an inclusive learning environment (Sah & Sahu, 2020).

Students engage with information resources for various academic and personal purposes, including completing assignments, studying for exams, conducting research, and exploring personal interests (Frumkin & Leibowitz, 2021). Through structured guidance, students learn to assess the credibility of sources, synthesize information, and apply it effectively in their academic work. The strategic use of library resources not only contributes to academic achievement but also cultivates essential skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and information literacy competencies vital for success in today's knowledge-driven world.

The rationale for studying the awareness and utilization of information resources for learning activities by students of Colleges of Education in Kano State stems from the critical role that access to and effective use of information resources play in enhancing academic performance, research capabilities, and overall student development. Despite the availability of both print and digital resources in college libraries, there is often a gap between resource provision and actual student usage, which may be attributed to limited awareness, inadequate information literacy skills, or accessibility challenges. Understanding the extent of students' awareness and how they utilize these resources is essential for improving library services, guiding institutional policy, and ensuring that students are equipped with the necessary tools

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to succeed in their academic pursuits and professional careers. This study is to investigate the Level of awareness and utilization of information resources for learning activities by students

Statement of the Problem

Information resources play a crucial role in enhancing students' academic performance, learning experiences, and personal development, particularly in Colleges of Education in Nigeria. These resources ranging from print materials like books and journals to digital formats such as e-books and online databases are intended to support research, coursework, and lifelong learning. Despite their availability, preliminary observations in Federal College of Education, Kano and Bichi revealed a significant underutilization of these resources by students. This raises concerns about potential barriers such as lack of awareness, difficulty in access, inadequate orientation, and poor information literacy skills. Past studies, by Graham and Adebayo (2021) and Jain and Gupta (2021), confirm that similar challenges have led to low engagement with library resources in other contexts as well. While colleges regularly invest in acquiring and updating their information resources, the benefits are limited if students are unaware of or unable to effectively use them. This study, therefore, seeks to examine the level of awareness and utilization of information resources among students in selected Colleges of Education in Kano State.

Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the types of information resources used by student in the study area?
2. What are the levels of awareness of the students of Colleges of Education in Kano state in term of information resources?

Literature Review

Information resources refer to the various sources and formats through which individuals access, gather, and utilize data, knowledge, and insights on a wide range of topics. According to Beyene (2021) and Fosu & Darko-Ampem (2021), these resources are essential tools for learning, research, and informed decision-making across numerous fields and disciplines. They encompass a broad array of formats, including traditional print materials such as books, journals, newspapers, and magazines, as well as digital and electronic formats like online databases, digital libraries, e-books, and websites. Additionally, multimedia resources such as audio and video recordings, interactive platforms, info graphics, and data visualizations further enhance the ways in which information can be accessed and understood. Moreover, information resources include data-centric materials such as statistical reports, surveys, and datasets, which provide critical insights for analysis and evidence-based decision-making. As noted by Albert & Bireme (2017) and Edwards (2019), the diversity of these resources allows for their application in educational, professional, and personal contexts.

Awareness of information resources among students is vital for enriching their learning experience, improving academic performance, and supporting personal development. It

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refers to the level of understanding and knowledge students have about the various sources of information available to them such as books, journals, databases, websites, and multimedia materials (Agboola & Ajuwon, 2022). This awareness enables students to identify, access, and effectively utilize both print and electronic resources provided by their college libraries in pursuit of academic success. When students are well-informed about the information resources at their disposal, they are better equipped to engage in independent learning, conduct meaningful research, and achieve improved educational outcomes, thereby fostering a culture of lifelong learning (Gulati & Mittal, 2014; Balasubramani & Jacob, 2018). Promoting awareness through user education programs, orientation sessions, workshops, online tutorials, and collaboration between librarians, educators, and students is essential. Such initiatives ensure that students can take full advantage of available resources, ultimately enhancing their academic success and supporting their broader educational and professional goals.

The utilization of information resources by students in Colleges of Education is fundamental to their academic growth and overall success. These resources are essential for completing assignments, conducting research, expanding subject knowledge, and enriching the learning experience (Edwards, 2019; Etsidem, Obong & Akpan, 2020). Information resources encompass a wide range of materials and sources that contain data, knowledge, or insights, which can be accessed and used by individuals or institutions to fulfil specific information needs. Available in various formats such as print, electronic, and multimedia these resources support different academic and professional objectives. In the context of higher education, effective use of information resources equips students with the tools necessary for academic achievement, critical thinking, and lifelong learning.

Finding of Asongo, Agoh & Annune, (2024) revealed that the extent of awareness of available electronic information resources by academic librarians at Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria. The findings revealed E-Journals (= 3.17, SD = 1.10), E-Newspapers (= 3.15, SD = 1.01), E-Government documents (= 3.13, SD = 0.98), E-Books (= 3.09, SD = 1.07), Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) (= 3.09, SD = 0.98), E-Magazines (= 3.07, SD = 1.02), E-Manuscripts (= 3.04, SD = 0.97), Web Public Access Catalogue (WebPAC) (= 3.02, SD = 1.04), E-Lecture Note (= 3.02, SD = 1.04), Abstracting Database (= 2.91, SD = 1.15), Indexing Databases (= 2.83, SD = 1.12), E-Reference materials (= 2.78, SD = 1.15), CD ROM (= 2.78, SD = 1.15), E-Research Reports (= 2.22, SD = 1.23) and E-pre Print (= 2.13, SD = 1.15). The cluster Mean of (= 2.90) and Standard Deviation of (SD = 1.08) indicate that academic librarians at Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi, Benue State Nigeria are aware of available information resources to a high extent. The finding of this study agrees with the finding of Yebowaah and Plockey (2017) who in their study revealed that 65% of users are aware of the availability of electronic information resources in the library for users. The finding of this study is in line with Onmueme and Lulu-Pokula (2017) who found out that academic staff utilizes electronic information resources to a high extent due to their awareness of electronic information resources. It also corroborates with Madu (2019) who found out that there is high extent of

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awareness among academic staff and their extent of awareness has increased their extent of electronic information resources utilization.

The findings of Abdullahi , Isyaku and Ahmed (2019) Revealed that the level of awareness of the library materials in Bauchi State College of Agriculture Library. Figures from the table depict that most of the respondents were highly aware of textbooks 115(88%) and project reports 103(79%). However, most of the respondents 108(83%), 118(91%), 84(65%), 128(98%) and 126(97%) have low awareness or not aware of the library resources in Bauchi State College of Agriculture Library.

Finding Asongo, Agoh & Annune, (2024) of revealed extent of utilization of electronic information resources by academic librarians for research output at Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria. The findings revealed E-Journals (= 3.35, SD = 0.97), Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) (= 3.22, SD = 0.89), Abstracting Database (= 3.21, SD = 0.94) E-Government documents (= 3.20, SD = 1.02), E-Books (= 3.11, SD = 1.10), E-Magazines (= 3.09, SD = 1.07), E-Manuscripts (= 3.04, SD = 0.97), E-Newspapers (= 3.02, SD = 1.06), E-Reference materials (= 3.00, SD = 1.05), CD ROM (= 2.93, SD = 1.12) Web Public Access Catalogue (WebPAC), (= 2.91, SD = 1.03), Indexing Databases (= 2.83, SD = 1.14), E-Lecture Note (= 2.80, SD = 1.09), E-Research Reports (= 2.13, SD = 1.20) and E-pre Print (= 2.07, SD = 1.12). The grand Mean of (= 2.93) and Standard Deviation of (SD = 1.05) indicate that academic librarians at Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi, Benue State Nigeria utilized electronic information resources for research output to a high extent. The finding of this study is in line with the finding of Sajene (2017) whose study revealed that mails (e-mails), search engines, websites, online public access catalogue (OPAC), electronic journals (e-journals), full text databases, institutional repositories (IRs) and compact disc-read only memory (CD-ROMs) are the frequently utilized electronic information resources. The finding of this study corroborates with Acheampong, Mingle, Smart and Kofi (2020) whose study revealed that majority of the scientists used electronic information resources. The finding of this study agrees with Onmueme and Lulu-Pokula (2017) who noted that academic staff utilizes electronic information resources to a high extent. The finding of this study is in line with the finding of Madu (2019) who found out that extent of awareness among academic staff has increased their extent of electronic information resources utilization.

Research Methodology

The study employed a cross-sectional survey research design, targeting a population of 22,518 students from three Colleges of Education: Federal College of Education Bichi, Sa'adatu Rimi College of Education Kumbotso, and Kano State College of Education, Science and Remedial Studies. at sample size of 378 which represent the total population of 22,518 students. A proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure fair representation across the colleges. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.89, indicating a high level of internal consistency. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize and interpret the findings effectively.

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Data Analysis

A total of 378 questionnaires were distributed to the targeted respondents across the three Colleges of Education involved in the study. The distribution and retrieval process was supported by three research assistants, each assigned to one of the colleges. Of the questionnaires distributed, 301 were correctly completed and returned, yielding a response rate of 79.3%. The remaining 77 questionnaires, representing 20.7%, were not returned.

What are the levels of awareness of the students of Colleges of Education in Kano state on information resources?

Table 1: Level of Awareness of Information Resources

Items	VLA		LA		MA		HA		NHA	Mean	STD		
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F				
Printed textbooks	1	3	20	6.6	60	19.9	180	59.8	40	13.3			
Printed Magazines	100	33.2	101	133.6	80	26.6	20	6.6	0	3.79	.77		
Printed Journals		40	13.3	120	39.9	80	26.6	41	13.6	20	6.6	2.60	1.09
Printed Dictionaries	60	19.9	40	13.3	160	53.2	40	13.3	1	.3	2.67	.88	
Printed Encyclopedias	40	13.3	240	79.7	20	6.6	1	.3	0	0	1.94	.46	
Printed almanac		1	.3	240	79.7	40	13.3	20	6.6	0	0	2.26	.58
Printed year books	80	26.6	180	59.8	40	13.3	1	.3	0	0	1.87	.61	
Printed maps		20	6.6	220	73.1	60	19.9	1	.3	0	0	2.14	.51
Printed Project		19	6.3	81	26.9	80	26.6	121	40.2	0	0	3.00	.97
Printed Pass question Papers		40	13.3	120	39.9	80	26.6	41	13.6	20	6.6	2.60	1.09
Online booka		20	6.6	80	26.6	80	26.6	121	40.2	0	0	3.00	.97
Online magazines		60	19.9	200	66.4	39	13.0	2	0.7	0	0	1.94	.59
Online journal	100	33.2	140	46.5	60	19.9	1	.3	0	0	1.87	.73	
Online newspaper		40	13.3	200	66.4	20	6.6	41	13.6	0	0	2.21	.46
Online project		25	8.3	240	79.9	34	11.3	2	0.7	0	0	2.07	.46
Online databases													
)AGORA, JSTOR, HINNARI, EBSCO, etc)		40	13.3	180	59.8	40	13.3	41	13.6	0	0	2.27	.86
CD ROMs/DVDs		25	8.3	240	79.7	34	11.3	2	0.7	0	0	2.07	.46
Online past questions													
Papers		60	19.91	180	59.8	40	13.3	21	7.0	0	0	2.07	.87
Online reference materials		20	6.6	220	73.1	57	18.4	4	1.3	0	0	2.14	.51

(Source: Field Data, 2024) Key: VL: Very Low Aware 1 LA: Low Aware 2 MA: Moderately Aware 3 HA: High Aware 4

VHA: Very High Aware 5

Based on the data presented in Table 1, the overall level of awareness of information resources among students in Colleges of Education in Kano State appears to be moderate to low. While students show high awareness of printed textbooks (mean = 3.79), indicating that they are well recognized as a key academic resource, awareness levels for most other resources are significantly lower. Resources such as printed magazines (mean = 2.07), printed journals (mean = 2.07), online journals (mean = 1.87), and online magazines (mean = 1.94) fall well below the moderate awareness threshold of 3.0. Even essential academic tools like online databases (mean = 2.27) and online reference materials (mean = 2.14) have low awareness levels. This suggests that while students are familiar with a few traditional resources, particularly printed textbooks and to some extent printed projects and online books (both with a mean of 3.00), their awareness of a broad range of valuable print and digital academic materials is limited. This gap in awareness may hinder their ability to utilize diverse and high-quality information necessary for academic success.

Table 2: Types of Information Resources Used by Students in the study area

Items	Never		Rarely		Sometime		Often		Always		Mean	STD
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Printed textbooks	6	1.9	20	6.6	55	18.3	180	59.8	40	13.3	3.79	.77
Printed magazines	101	33.6	100	33.2	80	26.6	20	6.6	0	0	2.07	.93
Printed Journals	42	14.0	118	39.2	140	46.5	1	.3	0	0	2.07	.94
Printed newspapers	40	13.3	120	39.3	80	26.6	41	13.6	20	6.6	2.66	
Printed dictionaries	60	19.9	40	13.3	160	53.2	40	13.3	1	.3	2.67	.88
Printed encyclopedia	40	13.3	240	79.7	20	6.6	1	.3	0	1.94	.46	
Printed almanac	120	39.9	121	40.2	40	13.3	20	6.6	0	0	2.26	.58
Printed year book	80	26.6	180	59.8	40	13.3	1	.3	0	0	1.87	.63
Printed maps	20	6.6	220	73.1	60	19.9	1	.3	0	0	2.14	.51
Printed Projects	19	6.3	81	26.9	80	26.6	121	40.2	0	0	3.00	.97
Printed pass question Papers	40	13.3	120	39.9	80	26.6	41	13.6	20	6.6	2.60	1.09
Online books	20	6.6	80	26.6	80	26.6	117	38.9	4	1.33	3.00	.97
Online magazines	60	19.9	200	66.4	39	13.0	2	0.7	0	0	1.94	.97
Online journals	98	32.6	140	46.5	60	19.9	1	.3	2	0.7	1.87	.73
Online Newspaper	40	13.3	200	66.4	20	6.6	41	13.6	0	0	2.21	.84
Online projects	25	8.3	234	77.7	34	11.3	6	2.0	2	0.7	2.07	.46
Online databases (AGORA, JSTOR, HINARI, EBSCO etc.)	40	13.3	180	59.8	40	13.3	41	13.6	0	0	2.27	.86
CD-ROMs/DVDs	25	8.3	240	79.9	34	11.3	2	0.7	0	0	2.07	.46
Online past question Papers	60	19.9	180	59.8	40	13.3	21	7.0	0	0	2.07	.46
Online Conference Materials	20	6.6	220	73.1	57	18.4	4	1.3	0	0	2.14	.51

According to the data in Table 2, students' utilization of various information resources is reflected in their mean scores, with scores above 3.0 indicating frequent use and those below 3.0 suggesting less frequent use. Printed Textbooks (mean = 3.79) and Online Books (mean = 3.00) are the most frequently used resources, highlighting strong student engagement with these formats. In contrast, Printed Encyclopedias (mean = 1.94), Online Magazines (mean = 1.94), and Online Journals (mean = 1.87) show significantly lower usage. The high reliance on Printed Textbooks and Online Books suggests that these are students' primary academic resources, potentially supporting better learning outcomes. However, the limited use of other material such as encyclopedias, magazines, and journals may indicate missed opportunities for accessing broader and more diverse information that could enhance students' academic depth and critical thinking.

Discussion of Findings

The findings reveal that students exhibit varying levels of awareness of information resources, with printed textbooks being the most recognized (mean = 3.79) and online journals the least (mean = 1.87). Overall, printed materials are more familiar to students than digital resources, particularly online journals and encyclopedias. The study also establishes a strong positive relationship between awareness and usage, indicating that greater awareness leads to increased use of resources. These results align with previous studies by Agboola and Ajuwon (2022) and Ahmed and Albert and Bireme (2017), which also found that students tend to be more aware of print resources than electronic ones, and that low awareness hampers the use of digital academic materials. The findings indicate that students in Colleges of Education in Kano primarily rely on Printed Textbooks (mean = 3.79) and Online Books (mean = 3.00), suggesting a strong preference for core academic materials. In contrast, resources such as Printed Encyclopedias and Online Magazines (both with a mean of 1.94) are significantly underutilized, reflecting limited engagement with supplementary materials. Students mainly use information resources for learning, exam preparation, assignments, and updating notes, with minimal use for research purposes. These findings are consistent with Agboola and Ajuwon (2022), who also observed a higher use of print materials among Nigerian college students. Similarly, Edwards (2019) found that accessibility barriers led to lower electronic resource usage among students with disabilities, reinforcing the Kano study's conclusion that printed materials are more frequently used than digital ones.

Conclusions

Conclusively, the findings indicated clear connection between students' awareness of information resources and their level of utilization. Resources with higher awareness, such as printed textbooks, are used more frequently, while those with low awareness, like online journals and encyclopedias, are significantly underutilized. Additionally, the results show that limited awareness contributes to the narrow focus on core academic materials, with supplementary and digital resources being largely overlooked.

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Recommendations

The study offered two recommendations:

1. Colleges should regularly organize workshops, seminars, and orientation sessions to introduce students to the full range of available information resources, especially digital ones. These programs should focus on how to locate, access, and effectively use both print and electronic materials for academic purposes.
2. Institutions should incorporate information literacy training into general education courses to equip students with the skills needed to identify, evaluate, and utilize diverse information resources. This will help students become more independent learners and improve their academic performance through better resource utilization.

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