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Undergraduate Students' Perceptions, Usefulness and Awareness about Electronic Library Section of Basug Library

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Abstract:

The aim of this study is to determine the undergraduate students' perceptions toward BASUG e-library section as well as their awareness and usage of the BASUG e-library resources and services. In order to come up with meaningful findings, a self-report online questionnaire-item was developed and sent to the group of undergraduate students via their emails for quick responses and less time-consuming. The findings showed that, majority of the undergraduate students; about 69 percent do not use BASUG e-library section. They mostly indicated that they only visit the other sections of the library to avail themselves with the hard copy resources and some even affirmed that their inability to access electronic resources as their reasons for not attending the e-section.; Very few of them commented that sometimes they access e-resources offline to benefit themselves. The study shows that the gender and ages of the respondents have significant effects on attending e-library section. This research recommended the teaching of information literacy skills among undergraduate students as the number one priority followed by introducing commercial services such as student's online registrations activities, type settings or proof readings services and other services that will attract students to frequent visit of e-library section.

Keywords: e-library, e-resources, awareness, usage, undergraduate students

1. Introduction

The place "electronic library section" is a section or department in the library or any type of libraries where information is stored electronically and made accessible through electronic systems or computer systems. Among these electronic resources include OPAC, Online Databases, CD-ROMs, E-books, E-journals, Open Access Software, Resources in Webs, internet resources, just to mention but a few. The valuable features of these resources are multiple access speed, richer in content, reuse, timeliness and one can access this type of service anywhere, at any time provided there is internet connectivity and subscriptions, Mohammed and Ahmad (2018). Baro et al. (2013) opined that, the term "electronic library", "virtual library" and "digital library" are used synonymously. According to another scholar, Daniel (2012) sees e-library as a collection of networked digital information resources and associated technical and managerial infrastructure. The electronic library is understood to incorporate data and metadata in various formats that are produced or assembled in order to provide services to users.

However, the e-library department contains electronic information resources that are somewhat special information resources that are available in computer processable form. It contained collections that are stored in digital formats as opposed to print, microforms or other media. It can also be accessed only through computers (Baro et al. 2013). It is the nature of e-library resources to appear in computer terminal point or other e-devices that make them accessible via screen form. By virtue of this, any types of libraries that separate a particular place to the users to have access of information resources via computer and other gadgets mostly with internet connections or offline resources accessing softly using computer terminals were regarded as an E-Library department. The department or section is mostly under the Reader's Section/Division and sometimes separate to carry out their duties as well as the responsibilities independently for efficient service delivery to their users.

The e-resources subscribing at the E-library department in mostly Nigerian Universities library are AJOL, Academic Journals, BOOKBOON, Dissertation and Theses, HINARI database, SAGE, EBSCO hostdatabase, Law-Pavilion, JABSCO, CALIBER database as well as conversion information resources. Tsakonas (2006) as cited in Mohammed and Ahmad, (2018), affirmed that Electronic Libraries provides electronic information resources in electronic format and these include

the resources that are available on the internet such as e-books, e-journals, online databases, CD-ROM and other based electronic networks among others.

However, Sutton and Jacoby (2008) found i that postgraduate students prefer accessing documents online, and rely heavily on library collections. In a similar vein, George et al. (2006) discovered that postgraduates' respondents prefer to search on the internet, and still consider library electronic resources, especially databases and e-journals. Interestingly, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, announced that, over 80 percent of today's active, peer-reviewed journals are now available in some electronic format (Boyce et al., 2004). NCREL, (2006) are of the view that, about 99% of Schools in the United State of America have the Internet and mostly were utilized. Therefore, with regard to this, we understand that computer and the internet-based use in developed countries are like a pen and pencil in Africa and also computer and internet still maintained their comfort (Mohammed and Ahmad 2018). Thus, in light of the above, we understand that postgraduate students are necessarily and fully utilizing e-library in their own institution while their counterpart undergraduate students are left behind in terms of the frequent visit and proper utilization of the e-library section.

2. Statement of the Problem

It was observed that undergraduate students are frequently visiting of BASUG library and mostly to read their lecture notes and materials given to them by their lecturers. It was noticed that some students did not even know the importance of e-library section, some they even neglected the knowledge acquired during their foundation course on The Use of Library and Computer Appreciation. This and many more reasons encouraged the researcher to conduct a study in order to come up with a recommendations that will motivate the undergraduate students to be more frequent to the e-library section and services as well as to avail themselves with the e-resources subscribed by the University management.

3. Methodology

The population for this study was undergraduate students from a different level of study. Hence, it is impossible to undertake the whole population into study due to many factors. A convenience sample was drawn from this population where three hundred students (n=300) have been selected to represent the total number of undergraduate students who are currently studying in Bauchi State University, Gadau (BASUG). This Convenience sampling refers to the collection of information from members of the population who are conveniently available to provide it, (Sekaran, 2003 cited in Yusoff et al. 2009). A self-report: online (link) questionnaire approach was sent to generate data in this study. The method was chosen because the designed questionnaire could be collected within a short period of time where the respondents can receive the links via their email and quickly answer the questions and any doubts that the respondents might have on any questionnaire item could be clarified on the spot. However, those that provide their email addresses received the questionnaire link instantly to fill and submit.

4. Research Objectives

- To determines the respondents' perceptions about whether gender and age have an effect towards awareness and usefulness of BASUG e-library section.
- To determines the respondents' perceptions about the awareness of BASUG e-library section.
- To find out the respondents' perceptions about the usefulness of BASUG e-library section.

5. Research Questions

- What are the effects of demographic information of the respondents such as gender and age towards awareness and usefulness of BASUG e-library section?
- What are the respondents' perceptions about the awareness of BASUG e-library section?
- What are the respondents' perceptions about the usefulness of BASUG e-library section?

6. Results and Discussions

6.1. Research Question 1

What are the effects of demographic information of the respondents such as gender and age towards awareness and usefulness of BASUG e-library section?

From the investigation conducted, the findings indicate that majority of the respondents were male respondents which accounted for 74.50%, only 25.50.0% are female respondents. This shows that males are the majority undergraduate students at the Bauchi State University Gadau at the same time male respondents have more awareness and high usage of BASUG e-library section than their female counterpart, (See Figure 1).

Figure 1

In terms of age of the respondents, the findings indicate that majority of the respondents were between 19 – 22 years old which accounted for 65.50%, only 23.30% are above 23 years old while 12.10% are between 15 – 18 years old. Therefore, those with high percentage are more aware and usage of BASUG e-library section, compare with their counterpart age group, (See Figure 2).

Figure 2

The survey found out that the gender and age of the respondents have an effect in student level of awareness and usage of BASUG e-library section. Males are the majority of the respondents that are aware of the existing e-library and utilize it for their own goods. This might be due to the fact that female respondents have anxiety towards using e-resources compare to the male respondents. However, the survey indicated that, majority of the 19 – 22 years old respondents' perceived e-library section to be useful at Bauchi State University Gadau. This study also revealed that, 19 – 22 years old respondents are conversant with the computer and other electronic gadgets. Additionally, young age students are of the habit of using an Internet to access information in the e-library section compare with the old age group.

- Research Question 2: What are the respondents' perceptions about the awareness of BASUG e-library section?

S/N	Items	Number of Positive Response	%	Number of Negative Response	%	Total
1.	I am not aware that BASUG e-library section has sufficient internet connectivity.	207 (Yes)	69.0	93 (No)	31.0	300
2.	I am not aware that BASUG e-library section has subscribed relevance databases of my department/faculty.	211 (Yes)	70.3	89 (No)	29.7	300
3.	I do not have any idea that BASUG e-library section is for all students.	257 (Yes)	85.7	43 (No)	14.3	300
4.	I do not have any interest to attend BASUG e-library section.	46(Yes)	15.3	252 (No)	84.0	300
5.	I have an interest but I don't know how to attend the BASUG e-library section.	200 (Yes)	66.7	100 (No)	33.3	300
6.	I am not aware that using BASUG e-library section makes it easier to do my study (e.g. assignment).	98 (Yes)	32.7	202 (No)	67.3	300
7.	I find BASUG e-library section time-consuming.	137(Yes)	45.7	163 (No)	54.3	300

Table 1: Analysis of the Respondents' Opinions about Awareness of BASUG E-Library Section

In table 1, the response to item 1 indicates that 207(69.0%) respondents agreed, that they are not aware BASUG e-library section has sufficient internet connectivity, only 93(31.0%) of the respondents are aware of the e-library sufficient network system. . It is true that there is a network problem in the faculties and other places within the campus but in some places like the library, ICT and other head offices the connection is a bit better. In item 2, 211(70.3%) the respondents responded positively to the statement that they are not aware of the BASUG e-library section has subscribed relevance databases of my department/faculty, only 89(29.7%) were aware. Response to item 3, indicated that 257(85.7%) of the respondents agreed that they don't have any idea that BASUG e-library section is for all students while the remaining 43(14.3%) disagree with the statement.

In item 4, only 46(15.3%) agreed that they don't have any interest to attend BASUG e-library section, majority of them (252 = 84.0%) have the interest to attend BASUG e-library section. The respondents also agreed with item 5, 200(66.7%) that they have an interest but they don't know how to attend the BASUG e-library section only 100(33.3%) agreed with this statement. In item 6, 202(67.3%) respondents indicated that, they are not aware using BASUG e-library section will make them easier to do their study (e.g. assignment), very few of them i.e. 98(32.7) were aware of this information. Finally, in item 7, 163(54.3%) respondents disagreed that they find BASUG e-library section time-consuming while 137(45.7%) agreed on this statement.

Thus, the overall findings of the above table showed that majority of the respondents were not aware of the BASUG e-library considering the aforementioned findings. It is discovered that these respondents were not visiting the BASUG e-library section. Hence, it is responsible for librarians as well as their lecturers to make them appreciate the existence of this particular section of the library through recommendations and suggestions. However, the majority of them reacted positively that they don't have any idea that BASUG e-library section is for all students. This issue also needs to be seriously considered and find a solution that led them be aware of the BASUG e-library section such as its usage, easiness, and general processes of its accessibility. This may improve the section to be highly useful and accessible to an extent that students utilize electronic resources more frequently than the print materials within a shortest period of time.

- Research Question 3: What are the respondents' perceptions about the usefulness of BASUG e-library section?

S/N	Items	Number of Positive Response	%	Number of Negative Response	%	Total
1.	I have never use BASUG e-library section to access e-resources despite I know the section.	257 (Yes)	85.7	43 (No)	14.3	300
2.	I have never visited BASUG e-library section because I don't know whether it is functions.	257 (Yes)	85.7	43 (No)	14.3	300
3.	I prepare to use hardcopy resources more than e-resources at the BASUG e-library section.	112 (Yes)	37.3	188 (No)	62.7	300
4.	I did not feel any supported to use of BASUG e-library section.	112 (Yes)	37.3	188 (No)	62.7	300
5.	BASUG e-library section did not help my study (research or assignment).	238 (Yes)	79.3	62 (No)	20.7	300
6.	I do not have the appropriate skills to use BASUG e-resources effectively.	235 (Yes)	78.3	65 (No)	21.7	300
7.	It is hard to search and use e-resources at BASUG e-library section.	248 (Yes)	82.7	52 (No)	17.3	300
8.	I did not find BASUG e-library resources useful in my study.	252 (Yes)	84.7	46 (No)	15.3	300

Table 2: Analysis of the Respondents' Opinions about the Usefulness of BASUG E-Library Section

With regards to table 2, item 1, 257 (85.7%) respondents indicated that they have never use BASUG e-library section to access e-resources despite knowing the section only 43(14.3%) know and use the BASUG e-library section. This corresponds with the findings of item 2, 257 (85.7%) where respondents positively responded that they have never visited the BASUG e-library section because they don't know whether it functions only 43(14.3%) of these respondents negatively responded about this statement. However, some of the respondents again responded positively that 112 (37.3%) to item 3, that they prepare to use hardcopy resources more than e-resources at the BASUG e-library section, while 188(62.7%) agreed with this statement. This corresponds with the statement in item 4, 188(62.7%) where respondents responded that they feel supported to use the BASUG e-library section while 112 (37.3%) respondents are not(See table 2).

Undergraduate students responded positively to item 5 with 79.3 % of (238) respondents that the BASUG e-library section did not help in their study (e.g. research or assignment), while 62 (20.7%) disagree with the statement that BASUG e-library section helps students in their study (e.g. research or assignment). The response to item 6 indicates that 235(78.3%) respondents confessed that they don't have the appropriate skills to use BASUG e-resources effectively while 65(21.7%) disagreed with this statement. In item 7, 248(82.7%) respondents responded positively to the statement that it is hard to search and use e-resources at BASUG e-library section only 52(17.3%) of the respondents commented negatively that it is easy to search and use e-resources at BASUG e-library, this happening because of the lack of awareness towards BASUG e-library. Finally, in item 8, the majority of the respondents 252 (84.7%) did not find BASUG e-library resources useful in their study only 46 (15.3%) negatively agree with this statement. Thus, this shows that lack of usefulness of BASUG e-library resources is associated to lack of awareness. It is advisable that students should be engage with activities that will necessitate going to e-library in order to help them become conversant with use of e-resources adequately.

The overall survey shows that BASUG e-library section is not perceived to be useful by the students despite the fact that it function properly though, this is not unrelated to students attitude toward learning and limited enlightenment about the importance of e-learning and usages at libraries. For instance, Majority of the respondents indicated that they are not aware that the BASUG e-library section is for general students and it has sufficient internet connection as well as subscribed relevant databases for students' faculties which these led the section not perceived to be useful.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of this study show meaningful recommendations that can help to improve the usage of e-electronic resources by undergraduate students at the BASUG e-library section. This was in line with the objectives of the study. The study was also conducted with the aim of identifying the undergraduate students' perceptions about awareness and usefulness toward BASUG e-library section. From the results of this study, it was discovered that majority of the respondents are within 19 – 22 years old and most are males with a partial level of awareness about BASUG e-library section. They mostly lack proper orientation on how to use e-library resources. Some of them have no confidence to visit e-library rather use e-resources. As commented, many respondents need to inform about BASUG e-library resources and services. The following observations are recommended for University management and BASUG e-library staff system as well as other faculty members in order to make their students use BASUG e-library resources and services so as to go in line with the global trend in library and information utilization.

The study discovered that there is nouser education programme offered by the University that is purely teaching undergraduate students about the importance of BASUG e-library section. Therefore, the study recommended teaching information literacy skills training programme as a first priority.

The study observed that the services rendering in the BASUG e-library section are not enough to attract users to frequently visit the section. Thus, other services like type settings, photocopying, online registration activities need to be put in place for the benefit of students and other potential users of the library.

The staff of the e-library has neglected their duties of properly guiding their users on how to access, locate and use their needed online information resources. Therefore, library management needs to check out this issue and find out the solution with immediate effect. It also argued the University librarian to give serious attention to the e-library section because is a sensitive section that requires resourceful personnel for efficiency in dealing with the students and staff of the University.

It was also observed that some students are eager and abreast to use e-resources for their research and assignment may be because of the pressure of their lecturers but they don't know how to get the e-resources. Therefore, it is mandatory for the library instructors to teach them how to locates, access, evaluate and critically examine if not for that they may end of using open-sources e-resources that do not have any research substance.

It was again found that library subscribes databases such as HINARI, JEBCO, AJOL, LAW-PAVILLION, and other conversion resources but only care update or access during courses accreditation exercises. This is disheartening it is better to fully utilize these databases before the end of the subscription period and this can only happen if the library or university orient it students to understand and appreciated the use of databases.

The study recommends that the library should initiate workshops or training that can teach and enlighten the general students about how to access e-resources either from the databases or from the computer terminal in the library. The standard of the e-library is very stumpy because of the student capacity; therefore, the e-library section needs to be expanded with the availability of computer gadgets.

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