

READING HABIT AS DETERMINANT OF LIBRARY USAGE AMONG UNDERGRADUATES OF PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN OYO STATE

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Abstract

This study examined reading habit as determinant of library usage in private universities in Oyo State, Nigeria. The objectives of the study include to evaluate the effects of students reading habit on library usage among students of private universities in Oyo State, Nigeria. This study adopted a descriptive survey research design which involved the use of questionnaire as the instrument for research data collection. The target population of the study comprised of 8020 library users who are undergraduates of the Ajayi Crowther University Library and Lead City University Library, while 481 of the undergraduates were selected based on the sample size calculation of "Taro Yamane" at confidence level of 95% and $P=0.5$. Data was gathered through a structured questionnaire which was analyzed with the use of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The First, and second research questions were analysed using descriptive statistics, while the research hypothesis was analysed using correlation analysis. The study established that good reading habits had significant effect on library usage among undergraduates of private universities in Oyo State. The study recommended that undergraduates should consider the university library as a place where they can actively engage themselves and enhance their knowledge as this would turn them into active library users. It also recommended that university libraries in Oyo State need to provide current and adequate information materials for the use of undergraduates. Therefore, libraries cannot afford to slack in their responsibilities.

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Introduction

Reading is a powerful means of communication that can form part of an individual to the extent that it becomes a habit which once developed, becomes very difficult to break. Reading is one of the fundamental building blocks of learning (Igwe, 2012). Therefore, becoming a skilled and adaptable reader enhances the chances of success at school and beyond. Reading is not just for school, but a lifelong process which aimed at lifelong learning. It is a process of thinking, recalling and relating concepts under the functioning of the written words (Toit, 2018). This provides experience through which the individual may expand his/her horizons of knowledge, identify, extend, intensify the interest in addition to gaining deeper

understanding about the subject of discourse, of other human beings and of the world space (Chettri, 2019).

Reading is an action of a person who reads and habit is a product of this action or learning. Like all other habits, the habit of reading in an individual develops over the course of time. It is an irrefutable fact that reading is paramount for academic development. Academic attainment at the tertiary level consists of some multiple characteristics that involve effective language use, efficient study skills, effective learning and students' personal features. In a university setting, success is connected to reading. This is because, to obtain the required grade points, students are

required to master all the courses taken by reading, so as to get the expected grade point (Nitza, 2016).

The reading habit influences the promotion of one's personal development in particular and social progress in general. Regular and systematic reading sharpens the intellect, refines the emotions, elevates taste and provides perspectives for one's living; and thereby prepares a person for an effective participation in the social, religious, cultural and political life (Jacob and Tina, 2020).

The meaning of reading has undergone many changes. In the past, reading was simply meant to extract visual information from any given codes or systems (Jamiah and Faiza, 2020). However, reading became much more complex and involved the understanding of a whole text composed of written signs. Reading is an active attempt on the part of reader to understand a writer's message. Reading is the art of interpreting printed and written words. Reading process is the interaction of what is in the head with what is on the page within a particular context that causes students to comprehend what they read (Florence, Igwe. and Lone, 2017). Thus, reading is the ability to recognise and examine words or sentences and understand the information within. Therefore, it is a cognitive process of understanding a written linguistic message and to examine and grasp the meaning of written or printed characters, words or sentences. Meanwhile, to ensure that university students develop a good reading habit, libraries should be made accessible and library services be made readily available to them.

Traditional reading habits of university undergraduates have now changed with the changing environment and working culture brought about by the infusion of digital technology into every strata of students' lives. Students are now looking for an opportunity to read contents in electronic mode. It reduces the burden over the person to keep staying inside the library and students can even read contents while travelling or while moving around the world due to current developments in information and

communication technologies (ICTs). Traditional libraries and digital libraries supply each other to meet the needs of various kinds of readers (Liebscher, Abels, and Denman, 2017). Younger generation students sometimes prefer reading through the internet or following up book reviews as such opportunities can be thought as effective means for fostering reading habits (Boakye, 2018). It is on this premise that this study systematically investigated reading habits, as determinants of library usage among undergraduates in private universities in Oyo State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The literatures have shown that students of this generation are more inclined to digital forms of information and prefer to get information through these means. However, experiences of different library professionals on the job overtime have shown that undergraduates are often busy with trivial things other than embarking on serious academic reading and making use of different library facilities which are meant to aid their academic productivity. Similarly, literature has revealed that even with the availability of digital library, electronic resources and the physical resources (books, journals, periodicals, maps, graphs, etc.), it has still been noticed that these resources are being underutilised by students. Anecdotal evidences have equally shown that a lesser percentage of undergraduates use library facilities to improve their reading habits nor literacy skills. Hence there is a need to examine what influences library usage among university students. Whereas, most available works in this area have concentrated on the effect of reading habit, available studies did not deal with reading habit as determinant of library usage of undergraduates. Hence, this study examined the reading habit as determinant of library use by undergraduates of private universities, in Oyo State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the study

The aim of this study is to examine whether the reading habit of undergraduates determines their library usage. Specific objectives are to:

- i. determine levels of Library Usage among students of private Universities in Oyo State, Nigeria;
- ii. investigate the levels of reading habit among students of private Universities in Oyo State, Nigeria;
- iii. examine if students' reading habit does not have significant influence on library usage among students of private Universities in Oyo State.

Hypothesis

Students' reading habit does not have significant influence on library usage among students of private Universities in Oyo State.

Literature Review

Reading is the capacity to understand words contained in a printed or non-printed material and make use of the information for self-improvement and advancement (Odu, 2017). Reading habit was a well-planned and deliberate pattern of study which has attained a form of consistency on the part of students toward understanding academic subjects and passing at examinations. Reading habits determine the academic achievements of students to a great extent. Both reading and academic achievements are interrelated and dependent on each other. Students often come from different environments and localities with different levels of academic achievement. Therefore, they differ in the pattern of reading habit. While some students have good reading habits, others tend to exhibit poor reading habits. Academic achievement means how much knowledge the individual has acquired from the school (Eliana, et. al, 2015)

Effective reading is important avenue of effective learning and reading is interrelated with the total educational process and hence, educational success requires successful

reading habit. Santiago Mengual-Andrés, Rosabel Roig-Vila & Josefa Blasco Mira, (2016) believed that, reading is the identification of the symbols and the association of appropriate meaning with them. It requires identification and comprehension. Before the advent of the television, both the young and the old found enough time to read. Apart from teachers, other professionals used to spend their leisure time in reading both English and vernacular literature. English medium schools almost always demanded extra reading from their students. But all these have become a thing of the past.

The activity of reading is regarded as a habit when it is repeatedly carried out. In measurable terms reading habits is often considered in terms of the amount of materials being read, the frequency of reading as well as the average time spent on reading, and this habit can be cultivated (Santiago Mengual-Andrés, Rosabel Roig-Vila & Josefa Blasco Mira, 2016). Reading, which is a long-term habit starting with the very early ages, is the prominent gateway to the knowledge room. It can be assumed as a practice that assists individuals to gain creativeness and develops their critical thinking capacities. In this sense, reading habit is an important tool for the development of personalities and mental capacities of individuals. In addition to personal and mental developments, reading is an access to social, economic and civic life (Donald Leu & Laurie, 2017). Moreover, all reading patterns in terms of emotional response enhance emotional satisfaction of individuals. Reading interests often refer to the selection of subject matter or preference for a genre of literature being read (Todd, 2018). It is, therefore, often believed that an individual has developed a reading habit and interests when such activity is repeatedly carried out voluntarily for academic exercise and leisure. It is believed that this habit and interests could be nurtured at an early age. There would naturally be differences in interests between individuals of different age, gender and greatly influenced by internal factors such as the home, motivation and attitude as well as external factors such as peers, schools,

teachers, and the library facilities available to the individuals.

Researchers in the past decades have devoted efforts to examining learners reading habits. With their endeavors, these researchers have discovered that reading habits are associated with students' gender, age, educational background, academic performance and professional growth. There have been attempts to categorise readers (Siriwatchana Kaeophanuek, Jaitip Na-Songkhla, and Prachyanun Nilsook, 2018).

The "dormant readers" were those who liked to read and considered themselves readers but did not take the time to read regularly or update their knowledge. They were not negative to reading but gave priority to other activities such as sports, social life and school work (Cheng, Pamela Lan, 2017). They would read during convenient times such as during school breaks or after completion of major projects. The second and third groups were the non-committed and unmotivated readers. Those in these two groups have negative attitude towards reading and did not like to read. The non-committed readers were open to suggestion of reading in the future and have positive attitudes towards other readers. The unmotivated readers were not open to the suggestion of future reading and were negative towards people who do read (Cheng, Pamela Lan, 2017).

Reading habit tends to be associated with course work and examinations, rarely with pleasure. However, it is obvious that irrespective of the discipline it will be difficult if not impossible for students to exhibit their talents when they failed to read extensively. The more the students watch the reading of their instructors, the more they need to attempt it. The more the students listen to teachers read to them, the better they get to be in reading (Erez Porat, et. al, 2017). The habit of reading improved children's reading skills. Hence, the issue of reading whether it is for learning or leisure is important since it helps broaden young people's experiences and knowledge (Leonel Francisco & Claire Madrazo, 2019).

A good reading habit is necessary for a healthy intellectual growth and plays a very crucial role in enabling a person to achieve practical efficiency. Furthermore, an individual's interests are determined to a considerable extent by the amount he will read and the intensity with which he will pursue his reading activity (Iftanti, 2015). By reading books, one gets confirmation or rejection of one's own ideas, which makes one think more critically about right and wrong in the society. Reading provides people with a sense of values, which enable them gradually to develop the greatest of all virtues, that is the ability to understand rather than condemn (Yudhi Arifan & Harunur Rosyid, 2016). Books can also be very comforting, especially at times when one doubts one's self and one's beliefs. Pleasure reading furthers the development of reading as life-long habit which strengthens both language skills and fluency of children as well as improve their reading skill when they read for pleasure. Reading volume both inside and outside the school has a significant impact on the development of the reading speed and fluency of students. It also improves their vocabulary, general knowledge, overall verbal ability and academic achievements (Atiso, 2002).

Reading habit is a fundamental practice that can leave a positive effect on all age groups. Ogunbodede, et. al, (2020) in the study "Evaluation of user satisfaction of information resources and services" stressed further that the acquisition of knowledge through reading is a decent approach. However, it must be productive information, it must encourage a man to get on in a profession, pass an examination, be great at decision, or get hold of a status for learning. Reading is the demonstration of getting importance from printed or composed words, which is the reason for learning and one of the key ingredients in regular daily existence. Reading is generally connected with books as just the composed words give a total picture of the demonstration of reading. It implies that through reading, the individual can fabricate or settle things, appreciate stories, find what others accept and create

thoughtful convictions of their own (Sanjay Kumar Pandey & M. P. Singh, 2015).

Reading opens door to the accumulated knowledge of centuries which helps to enrich, illuminate the minds, and widen the mental and spiritual horizon of the reader because the continuous reading of material will serve as a means of strengthening the development of reading". The significance of reading as one of the fundamental skills which everybody acknowledges is a basic tool for survival in the present-day world. Peris, and Otike (2016) observed that the significance of reading cannot be ignored. Reading is important to literacy and it is an emancipatory apparatus that frees one from ignorance, academic infection, destitution and frustration (Shodele, 2013).

Reading is a vital part of life which is not just about pleasure yet a need; the fundamental device of training. Reading is key for each and each person so as to manage new and developing learning in the evolving universe of technological advances (Erin, McAfee Shame, 2018).

There are many factors that motivate reading among undergraduates. An international survey has shown that nearly half out of 450 of the United Kingdom students participating in the study said that they read for relaxation while majority of the children from twelve developing countries such as Kenya, Cameroon, and Senegal revealed that they read for passing examinations (Belshaw, 2014).

A study on reading problems in Sri Lanka secondary schools found three major hindrances to the promotion of reading habits. These include; preference to chat and listen to the radio; insufficient reading resources in school libraries to be borrowed and preference for television viewing. Most reading was done mainly for examination purposes. (Siddiq, Scherer. & Tondeur, 2015)

Findings from previous research on the influence of gender on students' reading habits are inconsistent. No gender differences on time spent reading and reading habits among Malaysian students, while others did report gender differences in reading habits. Females generally spent

more time reading than their male counterparts, and report has it that males spent more time on extracurricular reading than female students. It seems that the relationships between gender and reading habits vary by reading purposes (Hatlevik, Gréta Björk Guðmundsdóttir & Massimo Loi, 2015; Margarida, et. al, 2015; Ujevbe, et.al, 2020; Seo, Erba, Altschwager, & Geana, 2019 & Martin, Dig EuLit, 2012)

The explanation for the gender differences in reading habits has been discussed in previous studies. Women read fiction more often than men because, women are more often encouraged to engage in reading activities as children or simply because they are better Female students spend more time indoors than males, they are more likely to read than male students. Gender differences in reading might be influenced by inherent biological, social and cultural factors or based on the development of early literacy readers (Sheikh, & Loan, 2010).

Field of study is also reported as an important factor that affects the reading habits of undergraduate students. In research on reading newspapers among US students, students from a humanities major read more than those from natural sciences, humanities, and mathematics (Sheikh, & Loan, 2010). Taiwanese students from arts and architecture majors spent much more time on reading than those from other majors (Chen, 2007). Art-based students have more positive attitudes towards reading than Information Technology-based students. They claimed that art-based students reveal positive attitudes toward reading and read more simply because they are required to do so. In brief, the academic discipline of students shapes their reading habits (Karim, & Hasan, 2007).

Hometown status (urban/rural) was found to be a predictor for students' reading habits. The problems of low level of literacy and lack of a healthy reading tradition in rural areas (poor literary environment), students who grew up in a rural area tend to enjoy reading less than students who grew up in a urban area and they spent less time on reading (per day) than their urban counterparts. Since the

development of reading is facilitated by the environments for literacy experiences, the communities or areas where students grow up can predict their reading habits (Le, Tran, Trinh, Nguyen, Nguyen, Vuong, & Vuong, 2019).

Students reading habits are influenced by their family background. Indeed, the fundamentals of reading engagement are laid down in a family environment (Le, etal, 2019). In a study of college students (US), it reported that students who live in a rich home literary environment (providing both reading materials such as books and newspapers, and reading events such as reading circles or reading aloud) are identified as having a positive attitude toward reading (Wang, 2000). Altogether, the higher the educational level of the parent the more time students spent on extracurricular reading. More so, educated parents tend to place high expectations on their children and more often provide them with various language practices, they contribute strong effects on reading skills and achievement of their children (Bano, Jabeen, & Qutoshi, 2018). To some extent, family background can be used to explain students reading habits.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design which involves the use of questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. The target population of the study comprised of undergraduates of the Ajayi Crowther University Library and Lead City University Library, who are registered undergraduates totaling 3,900users at Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo and 4,120 at the Lead City University, Ibadan. The sample size was calculated using “Taro Yamane” solving formulae thus making the sample size to be 481. The questionnaire for gathering data was administered online via Google form. Data were analysed with simple descriptive statistics run on SPSS 26 package. which involves the use of tables and simple percentage calculation? The hypothesis was tested via linear regression analysis.

Results and discussion

Table 4.1 Questionnaire Returns Rate

Questionnaire	Respondent	Percentage (%)
Returned	481	100%
Not Returned	Nil	Nil
Total	481	100%

Source: Field survey 2020

Research Question One

What are the levels of library usage among students of private universities in Oyo State, Nigeria?

Table 4.2

Levels of library usage among the students of private universities in Oyo State

S/N	ITEMS	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The formal orientation on library resources had a positive effect on my library usage.	165(34.3)	150(31.2)	144(29.9)	22(4.6)
2	I read in my university library on a daily basis.	63(13.1)	166(34.5)	210(43.7)	42(8.7)
3	Library usage attracts rewards in my school.	125(26.0)	141(29.3)	138(28.7)	77(16.0)
4	I usually use my university library electronic resources.	82(17.0)	131(27.2)	215(44.7)	53(11.0)
5	I use my university library only during the examination period.	71(14.8)	127(26.4)	195(40.5)	88(18.3)
6	I use library mostly as a result of encouragement from my lecturers.	87(18.1)	133(27.7)	206(42.8)	55(11.4)
7	We observe library period in my school time table.	76(15.8)	91(18.9)	202(42.0)	112(23.3)
8	I use to visit library resources for my assignments.	139(28.9)	210(43.7)	102(21.2)	30(6.2)
9	The attitude of the library staff encourages me to use the library.	111(23.1)	165(34.3)	164(34.1)	41(8.5)
10	I enjoy reading in the library for its quietness.	163(33.9)	180(37.4)	105(21.8)	33(6.9)
11	I use the library because its resources are easily accessible physically and electronically.	177(36.8)	157(32.6)	126(26.2)	21(4.4)
12	I use library because it provides me with past question papers for my registered courses in the university.	93(19.3)	150(31.2)	152(31.6)	86(17.9)
13	Current and relevant information resources provided by library encourage me to use library.	165(34.3)	165(34.3)	126(26.2)	25(5.2)
14	What I use the library mainly to do is to have access to book loan.	72(15.0)	144(29.9)	181(37.6)	84(17.5)

Figures in parentheses are in percentages (%)

Discussion of findings

Table 4.2 above showed the item-by-item analyses of the ten items used in soliciting the views of sampled students of private universities in Oyo State in relation to their levels of library usage. Majority [34.3 + 31.2 = 65.5% from item one - The formal orientation on library resources had a positive effect on my library usage) to 28.9 + 43.7 = 72.6% item ten - I use library resources for my assignments] agreed/strongly agree with performing the action described by the statements in relation to their use of the university library. The implication of this is that majority of the respondents make use of the library one way or the other which is reflected by their agreement to the actions specified by virtually all the 14 items under Library Usage. From the analysis above, it can be

concluded that most of the respondents are conversant with the use of the library for both their scholarly work and other related ones. The study has been able to establish that majority of the respondents make use of the library. These findings share the same view with the findings of Abiola, (2016) which states that university undergraduates are conversant with the use of the library for scholarly activities.

Research Question Two

What is the level of reading habit among the students of private universities in Oyo State?

Tables 4.3, depicts the level of reading habit among the students of private Universities in Oyo State.

Table 4.3

Level of reading habit among the students of private universities in Oyo State

S/N	ITEMS	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I love reading textbooks from various fields.	120(24.9)	319(66.3)	32(6.70)	10(2.1)
2	I read books and use periodicals to get informed, develop personally, and keep me up-to-date.	101(21.0)	346(71.9)	27(5.6)	7(1.5)
3	Despite my busy schedule and social life, I still find time to read books.	169(35.1)	288(59.8)	17(3.5)	7(1.5)
4	Reading at my spare time is something I do effortlessly.	107(22.2)	209(43.4)	38(7.9)	115(23.9)
4	I have a positive reading drive which helps me before and during examinations.	175(36.4)	275(57.2)	27(5.6)	4(0.8)
5	I read, at least, a book in a week.	116(24.1)	293(60.9)	53(11.0)	19(4.0)

Table 4.3, depicts the item-by-item analyses of the five items used to ascertain the views of sampled students of private universities in Oyo State in relation to their level of reading habit. Majority [24.9 + 66.3 = 91.2% from item one - *I love reading textbooks from various fields*) to 24.1 + 60.9 = 85% item five - *I read at least a book in a week*] agreed that they performed the action described by the statements. This implies that majority of the respondents have inculcated the habit of reading. The least in terms of the item-by-item analysis is for item 4, which is 65.6%, attesting to the fact that the respondents for this study have developed good reading habit over time. From the foregoing analysis it can be concluded that majority of the students do read at least a book in a week. In response to the research question two, what is the level of reading habit

among the students of private universities in Oyo State, the study showed, that majority of the respondents read books and uses periodicals to get informed, develop personally, and keep themselves up-to-date. The response to research question two also revealed that despite busy schedule and social life of the respondents, they still find time to read books, with majority of the respondents who strongly agreed with the notion. Research question two also revealed that majority of the respondents read, at least, a book in a week. These findings are also similar to the findings of Sheikh & Loan (2010) that indicated, that college students had positive attitude towards reading.

Research Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between students' reading habit and library usage among students of private universities in Oyo State.

Table 4.4

Inter-correlation matrix of students' reading habit and library usage among students of private universities in Oyo State

		LIBRARY USAGE	LEVEL OF READING HABIT
LIBRARYUSAGE	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.331**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	481	481
LEVEL OF READING HABIT	Correlation Coefficient	.331**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	481	481

Significant @ $p < 0.05$, r is the Spearman's r_h

The result in Table 4.4 shows that, there is a positive correlation between reading habit and library usage among students' of private universities in Oyo State. The table, revealed that the correlation coefficient for both variables (i.e. reading habit and library usage) are positive, significant and moderately low (reading habit & library usage = 0.331). This means that there is a statistical significant correlation between students' reading habit and library usage. The implication of this is that as reading habit improves, so is the library usage among students of private Universities in Oyo State.

Conclusion

Based on the results, the following can be deduced:

1. Reading habit and library usage have a statistically significant linear relationship ($p < .01$).
2. The direction of the relationship is positive (i.e., reading habit and library usage are positively correlated), meaning that these variables tend to increase together (i.e., greater reading habit is associated with greater library usage).
3. What is the significant relationship between students' reading habit and library usage among students of private Universities in Oyo State, the study showed that reading habit and library usage have a statistically significant linear relationship ($p < .01$). The study also revealed that the direction of the relationship is positive. This finding is similar to the findings which agreed that greater reading habit is associated with greater library usage (McIntosh, 2020).

Summary

The findings of the study revealed that most of the undergraduates read books and use periodicals to get informed, develop personally, and keep themselves up-to-date. It established that reading habits influences library usage. Research question two also revealed that majority of the respondents read, at least, a book in a week. These findings are also similar to the findings of Sheikh & Loan (2010) that indicated, that college students had positive attitude towards reading. This study has been able to establish that majority of the respondents make use of the library. These findings share the same view with the findings of Abiola, (2016) which states that university undergraduates are conversant with the use of the library for scholarly activities. The hypothesis of this study revealed that the direction of the relationship is positive. This finding is similar to the findings of McIntosh, (2020) which agreed that greater reading habit is associated with greater library usage.

Recommendations

Based on the earlier stated findings from the study, the following recommendations were made;

1. Library management should take cognisance of information needs of undergraduates, as they have different reasons for visiting the university library.
2. Adequate attention should be given to the provision of services such as book borrowing service, inter library loan service, weekend library service,
3. The library management should sustain the high level of user satisfaction by improving on providing current and relevant information resources.
4. Modern facilities and befitting services that would meet the needs and expectations of users should be acquired and made available with competent hands handling them for maximum profiting on the side of the student.

Significance of the study

1. To the librarians, the implication of the study is that user satisfaction is the essence of the library and it is the hub of library usage. Therefore, libraries cannot afford to slack in their responsibilities in making sure that the environment is physically, psychologically and academically attuned to attracting the students.
2. To the parent, positive reading habit is better inculcated in a child at a tender age by making sure there is adequate provision of facilities like reading tables, story books, etc.
3. To the students, reading is next to greater academic achievement. It is the only solid foundation to academic excellence and beyond, and the good news is that it can be learnt, developed and sustained via a consistent practice and determination.
4. To institutions of learning, it is good for management to be aware that the generation of students nowadays are digital millennials, who use technology and internet to get information

and visit the library regularly for fast sources of information to be used to meet their urgent needs

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