

# Perceived Effect of Library User Education on Students' Library Patronage in Universities in Benue State, Nigeria

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**Abstract:** The study investigated the perceived effect of user education on students' library patronage in universities in Benue State, Nigeria. The study looked at the Perceived influence of library orientation and bibliographic instruction on students' library patronage. Two research questions guided the study while two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted a survey research design. The population for the study comprises 3400 library registered second year student users in the three universities in Benue State for the 2016/2017 session. The sample size for the study was 358 students who were selected using simple random sampling technique. The instrument employed for data collection was a self-constructed structured questionnaire titled "Perceived Effect of Library User Education on Students' Library Patronage Questionnaire" (PELUESLPQ) which was validated by experts. The reliability of the questionnaire was established using Cronbach Alpha method and a reliability coefficient of 0.80 was obtained. Data was collected and analyzed using Means and Standard Deviation to answer the research questions and Chi-Square statistic to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that, Library Orientation and Bibliographic Instruction have significant perceived effect on students' library patronage in the universities in Benue State. The study concluded that the user education programmes taught in the universities in Benue State have greatly impacted students' library patronage. Recommendations were made that, User education programmes should be made compulsory in universities since it equips students' with necessary skills in the use of library and efforts should be made to encourage students' attendance to user education lectures since the programme has been found to enable students to be self-reliant in the use of library

**Keywords:** Library, User Education, Library Orientation, Bibliographic Instruction and Library Patronage

## I. INTRODUCTION

Library as the heart of any university is established to provide information resources and services to support academic activities of their patrons, including students, teachers and other stakeholder in education development. In University Libraries in Nigeria, book and other library information resources are acquired to support the teaching, research and community services of the university. In order to effectively exploit the library resources, libraries developed programmes and activities to acquaint users on how to effectively exploit these resources to enhance their academic activities. This programme includes display, exhibitions,

library tour, course integrated programme and user education programme. User Education is one of such programmes and which is the focus of this study.

User education is one of the important programmes that the library organized for fresh students and other library users of higher institution of learning. It is an academic programmes designed by academic libraries to educate users including fresh students on how to effectively utilize the library resources and services. According to Agyen-Gyasi (2008) user education is designed to equip users with information skills and capacities that will enable them to make efficient use of library resources and services. According to the author, user education programmes provides a platform whereby librarians introduce new students and other library users to the complexities of university library facilities; which familiarize users who have little or no information seeking skills at all with a broad range of library resources in order to develop library skills and educate them on how to find materials using library catalogues, subject indexes, CD-Rom and the internet. In the view of Husen in Madiako (2013), user education represents an attempt by librarians to teach students on how to locate and use information effectively. This means that, library users need to acquire skills in identifying the purpose of information, the location of information and the use of information. User education also quickens the efforts of the users in accessing, retrieving and effectively utilizing the library materials. Quest for the use of library resources calls for the need to ensure that users have effective and efficient access to these resources. User education is expected to offer to fresh undergraduate students and the other library users the knowledge, skills and training on how to source and use the library system and services offered by the physical library building of the university as viewed by Ogunmodede and Emeahara, (2010).

The changing nature of higher education worldwide to meet the changes in the society, along with the ever increasing growth of library collections, technological developments in handling and retrieving technical information and fundamental changes in the nature of reference services, have justified the need for change in user education services in order that new models of education can be effective and improve the academic performance of students. The increase in student population and rapid advances in information

communication technology (ICT) have necessitated changes in user education programmes. These changes, according to Tiefel (1995) have created an urgency to teach users how to become more effective, efficient and independent in the information searching enterprise. In response to these, the roles of library user education have expanded from teaching tools to teaching concepts and from library instruction to information literacy and lifelong learning. The effective exploration of library resources and service is an indication of high library patronage. Reporting on the effect of library user education as a course on library patronage, Abubakar (2012) maintained that library user education will acquaint the user with library rules and expected behaviors of the students in handling and using library resources within and outside the library environment, exposed the students to the library services and resources, library units and the available media resources including all ICT(s) related domains that directly link information and the manner of using them

User education in universities ranges from basic information up to the more formal structure and systematized programmes of instruction. With varied degrees of effectiveness, the forms of user education (whichever adopted) aims at teaching library users how to make optimal use of the library and its resources, through the acquisition of skills in identification, location, retrieval and exploitation of information resources. Library user education programmes include, library orientation, bibliographic instruction and information literacy among others. Uganneya (2016) identified various user education programme including library instructions, course related instruction, course integrated and formal course in bibliography. Library user education programmes taught in Universities in Benue State include Library Orientation and Bibliographic Instruction among others.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Library orientation is primarily concerned with ways of introducing the user to the general techniques of library usage, services available in the libraries and the layout of the library. Venter (2010) defined library orientation as adjusting the new library users to library use in order to achieve efficiency. According to the author, library orientation in an academic environment enable users make use of library resources and services adequately to their own satisfaction, help library users to feel at home in the library and trust the competency of the library staff, and enable library users become skilled at finding information and thus foster feelings of confidence and independence. Library orientation equips a user with enough knowledge on the use of the library as it enables the user to use the library resources effectively and efficiently (Ogunmodede & Emeahara, 2010). A study conducted by Afolabi (2010) on the impact of library orientation programme on the use of library resources by the students revealed that student who took part in the orientation programme visited the library very often, used the library resources for their assignments and reported a positive impact on their scores, while their counterparts who did not take part

in the programme mostly visited the library for leisure purpose

Bibliographic instruction consists of instructional programs designed to teach library users how to locate the information they need quickly and effectively. Its goal is to teach users how to search, evaluate, and use information and how to use the library effectively and independently. The general objectives of bibliographic instruction according to Association College Research Libraries (2000) are to help users understand how information is defined by experts and recognizes how that knowledge can help determine the direction of his/her search for specific information, understands the importance of the organizational content, bibliographic structure, function and use of information sources, identify useful information from information sources or information systems, and understands the way collections of information sources are physically organized and accessed. A study conducted by Audu (2011) to investigate the effect of bibliographic instruction on library patronage of user education revealed that the programme suffered from inadequate staff and poorly motivated, poor methodological approach, inadequate, duration, content and facilities. A study conducted by Amkpa (2011) reported that majority of the students do not use catalogue owing to lack of bibliographic instruction skills. Another study conducted by Akor (2009) on the impact of library instruction on the utilization of library services by undergraduate students revealed that library instruction programme has made the students aware of the resources and services provided by the library. A study conducted by Wang (2012), reported that many respondents felt library bibliographic instruction is necessary and valuable for their academic pursuit.

It is in recognition that library users should properly be educated in order to effectively use the library, that universities introduce user education as a course. It is believed that effective user education programmes has an influence on students library patronage. Library patronage is the act of perusing the library stock, asking for assistance from library staff, actually finding information of value, borrowing a book in the library, studying one's own material in the library, coming into the library or merely meeting with friends in the library. Uganneya (2016) defines library patronage as the extent to which library resources and services are used by library users in pursuit of their academic activities. Oyesiku (2000) pointed out that effective use of library by staff and students is expected to be the principal objective of establishing libraries in academic institutions. To achieve this objective, the librarians have to instruct the students on how to use the library and also familiarize the students with the techniques of library use and information retrieval. It is believed that when library users are educated on the ways and manner the various library resources and services are organized for use, users will be better off in their exploitation and use of library resources and services to enhance their academic activities.

In spite the introduction of user education programmes in the universities in Benue State, there are still evidence of low patronages, users frustration and a shift of loyalty by library users (students) as observed by the researcher which necessitate this study. It has been observed by the researcher through experience in the course of her working in the library that despite the importance accorded to user education programmes, many users seem not to have good knowledge or skill needed to use the library resources and services. It is also the observation of the researcher that many students do not know how to go about searching for information to satisfy their information needs; they lack the basic skills and competencies required for the utilization of library and information resources on their entrance into institutions of higher learning. Furthermore, through interaction with students, the researcher observe that a good number of them have never even been to a library before. The result is that they find it difficult to make use of the library resources, hence a source of concern to the researcher. It is in view of this that the researcher seeks to investigate the perceived effect of user education on students' library patronage in universities in Benue State.

#### Research questions

Two Research questions were formulated to guide the study

- i. What is the perceived effect of Library Orientation on Students' library patronage in the universities in Benue State?
- ii. What is the perceived effect of Bibliographic instruction on students' library patronage in the universities in Benue State?

#### Hypotheses

Two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance

- i. Library Orientation has no significant perceived effect on students' library patronage in the universities in Benue State
- ii. Bibliographic Instruction has no significant perceived effect on students' library patronage in the universities in Benue State

### III. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a survey research design. The population for the study comprises 3400 library registered second year students users in the three universities in Benue State for the 2016/2017 session. These universities are University of Agriculture Makurdi, Benue State University Makurdi and University of Mkar, Mkar. The sample size for the study was 358 students. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane Formula for sample size determination. In selecting the sample for the study, simple random sampling technique was adopted. The instrument employed for data collection was a self constructed structured questionnaire titled "Perceived Effect of Library User Education on Students' Library Patronage Questionnaire" (PELUESLPQ) which was

validated by experts. The reliability of the questionnaire was established using Cronbach Alpha method and a reliability coefficient of 0.80 was obtained. Data was collected and analyzed using Means and Standard Deviation to answer the research questions and Chi-Square statistic to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. A benchmark of 2.50 was used for the study. Item with a Mean value of 2.50 and above was considered 'Perceived Effect' while those below 2.50 were considered "No perceived Effect"

### IV. RESULTS

*Research Question One:* What is the perceived effect of Library Orientation on Students' library patronage in the universities in Benue State?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Perceived Effect of Library Orientation on Students' Library Patronage

S/N	Item Statement	Mean	Std Dev	Decision
1	Library orientation helps me to learn about the key library resources for my academic pursuit	3.25	.83	P. Effect
2	Library orientation helps me to learn about the key library services for my academic pursuit	3.26	.93	P. Effect
3	Library orientation teaches me how to identify library resources	3.31	.86	P. Effect
4	Library orientation teaches me how to identify library services	3.37	.88	P. Effect
5	Library orientation foster the feeling of confidence in me in the use of library	3.39	.74	P. Effect
6	Library orientation helps me to become skilled at finding information in the library.	3.31	.91	P. Effect
7	Library orientation teaches me to know the needed research tools in the library for my studies	2.36	1.02	No P.Effect
8	Library orientation helps me to align myself with the use of the library	3.22	.90	P. Effect
9	Library orientation teaches me to trust the competency of the library staff	2.27	1.03	No P.Effect
10	Library orientation helps me to feel at home in the library	3.25	.80	Effect
11	Library orientation helps me to know about the physical layout of the library	3.28	.80	Effect

12	Library orientation teaches me efficient use of the library	3.22	.92	Effect
13	Library orientation has enabled me to be a self-reliant library user.	3.29	.95	Effect
14	Library orientation enhance my collaborative relationship with library staff	2.37	.99	No P.Effect
	GRAND MEAN	3.08	.90	P. Effect

Source: Field Work (2017), P. Effect=Perceived Effect, No P. Effect=No Perceived Effect

Results in table1 shows that only three out of the fourteen (14) items has no effect on students’ library patronage with mean score ranges between 2.27-2.37 (i.e items 7, 9 and 14) while others have mean ranges between 3.22-3.39. The grand mean of all the items was revealed to be 3.08 and SD= .90. This shows that there is a high perceived effect of library orientation on students’ library patronage in the universities in Benue State.

*Research Question two:* What is the perceived effect of Bibliographic Instruction on Students’ library patronage in the universities in Benue State?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Perceived Effect of Bibliographic Instruction on Students’ Library Patronage

S/N	Item Statement	Mean	Std Dev.	Decision
15	Library bibliographic instruction helps me to be skillful in identifying relevant information resources from the library for my academic pursuits.	3.35	.83	P. Effect
16	Library bibliographic instruction helps me to be skillful in identifying relevant information services from the library for my academic pursuits	3.27	.83	P. Effect
17	Library bibliographic Instruction acquaint me with the use of reference works	3.26	.83	P. Effect
18	Library bibliographic Instruction acquaint me with the use of periodicals	3.29	.85	P. Effect
19	Library bibliographic Instruction acquaint me with the use of books in the library	3.25	.80	P. Effect
20	Library bibliographic Instruction teaches me how to use the card catalogue	2.27	.94	No P.Effect
21	Bibliographic Instruction teaches me how to use the indexes	3.25	.90	Effect
22	Library bibliographic Instruction teaches me the proper form of making a scientific bibliography	2.18	1.13	No P.Effect

23	Library bibliographic Instruction teaches me how to prepare a scientific report	2.39	1.00	No P.Effect
24	Library bibliographic Instruction helps me to understand the classification system used in the library	3.27	.71	Effect
25	Library bibliographic Instruction teaches me how to follow a citation trail	3.22	.86	Effect
26	Library bibliographic Instruction teaches me how to locate library resources in different disciplines	3.37	.75	Effect
27	Library bibliographic Instruction teaches me how to search for journal articles	2.48	.81	No P.Effect
28	Library bibliographic Instruction teaches me how to retrieve print journal articles	3.32	.95	Effect
29	Library bibliographic Instruction teaches me effective use of the library	2.30	.89	No P.Effect
	GRAND MEAN	2.96	.87	P. Effect

Source: field Work (2017) P. Effect=Perceived Effect, No P. Effect=No Perceived Effect

Results in table2 shows that only five (5) out of the fifteen (15) items has no perceived effect on students’ library patronage with mean score ranges between 2.18-2.48 (i.e items 20, 22, 23, 27 and 29) while others have mean ranges between 3.22-3.37. The grand mean of all the items was revealed to be 2.96 and SD= .87. This shows that there is a high perceived effect of bibliographic instruction on students’ library patronage in the universities in Benue State.

*Hypothesis One:* Library Orientation has no significant perceived effect on students’ library patronage in the universities in Benue State

Table 3: Chi-Square Test of the Perceived effect of Library Orientation on Students Library Patronage

	Df	$\chi^2 cal$	Sig	Alpha Level	Remark
Pearson Chi-square	35	2741.062	.000	.05	Significant
Number of Valid Cases		353			

Table3 shows a Chi-square calculated value of 2741.062, degree of freedom df=35 and a sig (P-value=0.00) which is less than the alpha value ( $\alpha=.05$ ). Since  $P<.05$ , the result is significant, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This implied that, Library Orientation has a significant perceived effect on students’ library patronage in the universities in Benue State.

*Hypothesis Two:* Bibliographic Instruction does not have significant perceived effect on students’ library patronage in the universities in Benue State

Table 4: Chi-Square Test of the Perceived Effect of Bibliographic Instruction on Students Library Patronage

	Df	$\chi^2_{cal}$	Sig	Alpha Level	Remark
Pearson Chi-square	36	2982.555	.000	.05	Significant
Number of Valid Cases		353			

Table 4 shows a Chi-square calculated value of 2982.555, degree of freedom  $df=36$  and a sig (P-value=0.00) which is less than the alpha value ( $\alpha=.05$ ). Since  $P<.05$ , the result is significant, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This implied that, Bibliographic Instruction has a significant perceived effect on students' library patronage in the universities in Benue State.

## V. DISCUSSION

Findings of the study as shown on table1 revealed that, library orientation has perceived effect of students' library patronage in the universities in Benue State. This is evident in that, the students agreed to 12 items out of the 14 items on the perceived effect of library orientation on students' library patronage. In the same vein, the finding on table3 revealed that, library orientation has significant effect of students' library patronage. This finding corroborates that of Venter (2010) who asserted that library orientation in an academic environment enable users make use of library resources and services adequately to their own satisfaction, help library users to feel at home in the library and trust the competency of the library staff, and enable library users become skilled at finding information and thus foster feelings of confidence and independence. The finding also agrees with the assertion of Ogunmodede, (2010) who submitted that Library orientation equips a user with enough knowledge on the use of the library as it enables the user to use the library resources effectively and efficiently. Similarly, the finding corroborate that of Afolabi (2010) whose study on the impact of library orientation programme on the use of library resources by the students revealed that student who took part in the orientation programme visited the library very often, used the library resources for their assignments and reported a positive impact on their scores, while their counterparts who did not take part in the programme mostly visited the library for leisure purpose. To this end therefore, library orientation exerts significant perceived effect on students' library patronage in the universities in Benue State.

Findings of the study as shown on table2 revealed that, bibliographic instruction has perceived effect of students' library patronage in the universities in Benue State. This is evident in that, the students agreed to 10 items out of the 15 items on the perceived effect of bibliographic instruction on students' library patronage. In the same vein a test of similar hypothesis revealed a significant perceived effect of bibliographic instruction of students' library patronage. This finding is in agreement with that of Wang (2012) who reported in his study that, many respondents felt library

bibliographic instruction is necessary and valuable for their academic pursuit. The finding also corroborates that of Akor (2009) who reported that library instruction (bibliographic instruction) programme has made the students aware of the resources and services provided by the library. The finding contradicts that of Amkpa (2011) who discovered that majority of the students do not use catalogue owing to lack of skills. From this finding therefore, bibliographic instruction as embedded in library user education programme taught in the universities in Benue State has a significant perceived effect on the students' library patronage.

## VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the study concluded that user education programmes taught in the universities in Benue State have significant perceived effect on students' library patronage. The user education programmes has positively affected the students library patronage.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made

- i. User education programmes should be made compulsory in universities since it equips students' with necessary skills in the use of library
- ii. User education programmes enable them to be self-reliant in the use of library hence efforts should be made to encourage students' attendance to user education programmes.

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