

**STUDENT'S UTILIZATION OF AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE LIBRARY, KABBA**

BY

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Abstract

A survey of students utilization of College of Agriculture Library Kabba was carried out during the 2006/2007 academic session. The result of the study showed that the Ordinary National Diploma (N.D) students use the library more than other programmes student. This is evident in the finding where 115(63.8%) of the respondents use the library very frequently. The result further showed that majority of the students (58.3%) use the library for one - two hours daily. It was also discovered that reserved materia is of the library were mostly consulted 45 (25%).

Introduction

University libraries are established primarily to support teaching, learning and research activities of their parent institution. To achieve this, the libraries have as their major function the provision of information resources and its dissemination within the university and academic set-up. Okiy (1998). However students of various levels in the university need to know what the library has in stock for them being a university library and as the collections and services of the library are usually consciously built up and organized for maximum utilization by the clientele that the library material are meant for.

The contributions which libraries can make to the intellectual

development of individuals in the society and to the realization and fulfillment of educational objectives cannot be easily over-emphasized. The library occupies a prominent and unparallel position in the educational development in the a country.

Many of the developing countries are in the process of adapting entirely new programmes in agriculture with a complete reorganization and administration of agricultural education, research and extension services. The interest of government officials in the creation of excellence at every level has resulted in the realization that the library and documentation services of the highest quality are indispensable. It is therefore necessary for the library to periodically examine the extent

to which these facilities and services are utilized as this will assist the library management in the planning and management of their activities as well as in evaluating the performance and achievement of their goals. Therefore, library user education has become a veritable tool for this assessment. Thus, knowledge of the level and extent of the use of any library is seen as a vital component of the planning process that provides librarians and library administrators with feedback information on service delivery in response to user needs and preferences. This knowledge is therefore considered an important factor in the management of libraries.

This study is an attempt to determine the frequency of the use of the library by the National Diploma (ND) and Higher National Diploma (HND) students of College of Agriculture Kabba. It also attempts to identify the library resources most often used, the length of time student spent in the library and the importance of the library to their studies.

Background of the Study Area

The college was established in 1963 with the first intake of the students in April 1964. The College was under the administration of the Northern Region Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources with her

headquarters at Kabba until April 1968 when the college was administered and managed by the Institute for Agricultural Research, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria (IAR-ABU). By October 1, 1968 all facilities and staff were formally transferred to Division of Agriculture and Live Stock Services Training (DALST ABU) which was later named Division of Agricultural Colleges Ahmadu Bello University(DAC-ABU) . Today, the College of Agriculture Kaba is one of the three colleges in DAC-ABU. The two other colleges are situated at Samaru and Kaduna all in Kaduna State. The library is located in one large room capable of accommodating approximately 160 readers at a time with 1696 volume of books. Presently the library acquired two (2) Computers with the view of acquiring more for an e-library project. The library is fitted with dozen of ceiling fans and fluorescent tubes which provide cooling and lighting in the library. The library is presently manned by a total of 6 staff in the following categories Professional (1) Paraprofessional (4) who run shift duties and (1) typist. Access point to information materials in the library include Author/title, subject and student project catalogue. It has long been recognized; however that Samaru School could not adequately deal with

agricultural problems and techniques specific to the reverine areas. The College of Agriculture Kabba fills this gap hence courses offered are N.D, H.N.D horticulture and landscaping, general agriculture, agricultural technology, agricultural extension management, certificate courses, and currently, fishery courses are being introduced as well as pre N.D training.

Amongst the goals of Kabba College of Agriculture are;

- To provide technical training in agriculture.
- To equip trainees with adequate technical knowledge, practical skills and proper attitude for efficient extension work.
- To initiate a programme of specialization within the schools to meet the agricultural needs of the country.
- To contribute and further agricultural development all over Nigeria and West Africa.

Literature Review

A review of previous works done on the use of special libraries in academic institutions shows that a lot has been written, but studies on the use of Agricultural Libraries are very scanty. Okiy(1998) in her study of the relevance of Special Libraries to their parent bodies informed the establishment of

the earliest agricultural research libraries in Nigeria in the 1920's In this regard, the colonial government needed to produce cash crops for their factories in England. They required relevant libraries for appropriate research into various cash crops which are indigenous to Nigeria, such as palm trees, cocoa, rubber, groundnuts etc. In the years that followed, more agricultural libraries were established when relevant bodies were being established.

Eden and Lawal (1996) posit that one of the ways of stimulating the effective use of books and other materials stored in an academic library is by teaching the library user especially undergraduate and graduate students how to obtain information from available sources. This method of teaching is through user education or library skill course which should be made compulsory to all fresh students.

User education as defined by Mers (1972) is the " Instruction given to readers to help them make the best use of a library". The two types of user education in most of the Nigerian academic libraries include library orientation and bibliographic instruction. The library orientation normally takes place within the first week of freshmen arrival and introduces library users to the use and services in the library

while bibliographic instruction introduces the use of various reference and retrieval mechanisms of the library.

Peizer and Leysen (1988) in a related study on library use and the information seeking behavior of agric students at Iowa State University reported that the library was most frequently used for studying and for photocopying of materials. According to them, students perceived information that appeared in textbooks and course handouts as being current enough for their purposes.

Ten years later, Pelzer, Wiese and Leysen (1998) in a follow up study on agricultural and veterinary students of Iowa State University to determine the students' general use of the library and how they sought for information in an electronic environment observed that almost 60% of the students used the internet to locate current information.

Chikouzo and Aina (2001) revealed in their study on information needs and sources of information used by agric. students of the University of Zimbabwe that majority of veterinary students sought information only when there was a specific need like writing an assignment or study for a test or an examination.

Amkpa's (2000) study of the use of University of Maiduguri Library found that majority of

students did not use the library effectively because they do not make use the library catalogue. Okey (2000) assesses student and faculty use of academic libraries in Nigeria with particular reference to Delta State University, Abraka. She found that respondents use books more than other reading materials and they tended to find materials by browsing the shelves.

Methodology

Questionnaire was the only instrument used for the purpose of data collection.

An estimated population of 242 students was obtained from the Registry's Officers as the number of those that registered in the institution during the 2006/2007 academic session.

Therefore, using a stratified sampling procedure, a sample of 180 respondents was arrived at to effectively capture the basic characteristics of the population of the study. With the assistance of library staff, 242 copies of the questionnaire were distributed randomly to readers (Students) coming to the library at specific periods of the day (8:00am - 2:00pm) and (3.00pm- 10.00pm) for a period of two weeks between October and November 2007 of 2006/2007 academic session.

At the end of the period, 180 copies of the questionnaire were completed and returned to the library staff and some were

returned at the library exit, thus a response rate of 89%

Finding and Discussions

The data collected indicated that 180 (89%) respondent filled and returned the questionnaire within the period. This response of 89% is considered adequate for discussion. Out of the 180 respondents, gender distribution

indicates 158(87.7%) as males and 22(12.2%) as females.

Analysis further revealed that out of the 180 respondents, 112 (62.2%) are National Diploma students (N.D) while 32(17.8%) are Higher National Diploma students (H.N.D.) and 36(20%) are certificate and pre-national Diploma students. (Table 1).

Table 1: Distribution according to levels of study

Level of study	Response	Percentage
Certificate in Poultry	8	4.4
Certificate in Horticulture	1	0.5
Pre-National Diploma	27	15
National Diploma	112	62.2
Higher National Diploma	32	17.8
Total	180	100

Respondents were further asked to indicate the number of times they use the library while in the college and the result showed that out of the 180 respondents, 32 (17.7%) used the library

very frequently. 98 (54%) used it often while 50 (27.7%) used it occasionally. Thus, it could be inferred that the frequency of library use is high among respondents.

Table 2: Reason for using the library

Reason	Response	Percentage
Read own books	40	22.2
Borrow library books	35	19.4
Consult journal	25	13.9
Reference enquiry	14	7.8
Literature search	27	15
Read news papers	39	21.7
Copy documents	0	0

Table 2 above showed the various reasons why respondents visit the library and their percentages. It is interesting to note that reading personal books was the highest with 22.2%. Other reasons were borrowing of library books (19.4%) consult journals (13.8%) reference enquiry (7.7%) literature search (15%)

newspaper reading (21.6%) photocopying of documents recorded no response as at the time of the research, provision is being made to acquire a photocopy machine. This finding show that students must adopt the reading habit if they are to make progress in their academic work or live meaningful lives, Amaakaven (2004).

**Table 3:
Numbers of Hours Spent in the Library**

Number of hours	Response	Percentage
1-2 hours	105	58.3
3-4 hours	37	20.6
4-5 hours	9	5
Over 5 hours	29	16.1

Table 3. showed the number of hours students spent in the library studying. Analysis showed that 105(58.3%) of the respondents use the library for one to two hours a day. 37(20.5%) use it for between 3-4 hours, while 9 (5%) used the

library for between 4-5 hours daily and 29(16.1%) used the library for over 5 hours which shows that the highest users are those that study between 1 - 2hours and the least are those between 4 to 5 hours.

**Table 4:
Types of Materials Mostly Consulted**

Materials	Response	Percentage
Books	35	19.4
Journals	30	16.7
Reserved collections	45	25
Student projects	40	22.2
Abstracts	5	2.8
Reference materials	25	13.9

Table 4 shows that reserved books are the most consulted

library materials as evident by 45(25%) of the respondents.

This was closely followed by students' projects with 40(22.2%). Books in circulation followed with 35(19.4%) 30(16.6%) of respondents consulted journals as against 25(13.8%) who consulted reference materials. Abstracts recorded the least patronage

with 5(2.7%). This finding has shown that reserved collections were mostly consulted in the library. This finding has thus established that books are mostly consulted in the library as earlier funded by Osiobe, (1984)

Table 5: How Library Materials are Accessed

Access	Response	Percentage
Directly from shelves	120	66.7
Using the catalogue	13	7.2
Ask the libraries staff	30	16.6
Ask the libraries	17	9.4

Table 6: Knowledge of the Internet

Knowledge of internet	Response	Percentage
Yes	90	50
No	90	50

On table 6, Questions on the use of information communication technology especially on-line and internet services was asked. Surprisingly, equal number of the respondents 90 (50%) answered that they have some knowledge on the use of the internet or have basic knowledge of the use of the internet.

Though the Library was not on-line at the time of the study, digitization of the library materials is seriously being considered.

Respondent were unanimous in their comment on the need for a

standby generator to guarantee power supply when ever public electricity supply went off. Most of the comments also were on the need for the library to purchase more current and up to date books. They Also suggest that the library should be connected to the Internet.

Conclusion

This study has been able to provide useful information on the level of students' use of College of Agriculture Library Kabba which is one of the Division of Agricultural Colleges (DAC) the study had established that the National Diploma (N.D)

students are more regular users of the library than their Higher National Diploma (HND) and Certificate counterpart.

It is hereby recommended HND students should be encouraged to use the library by introducing them to the use of information resources in agricultural science, use of indexes, as well as abstracts.

Furthermore, the study had been able to show that majority of the students using the library facilities spent one-two hours daily in the library studying.

The study also shows that majority of the students come to the library to read their own books. Lecturers should be advised to give student assignment that can lead

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students to use library resources.

It is also interesting to note that at this era of information super-highway, the students were split evenly on their knowledge and application of the Internet to source for information. We can run away from the fact that computer is the in thing in information accessibility. The library authority should pursue vigorously the automation of the library

Finally, the findings of the research may be described as a contribution to the scanty literature on the use of library materials by agricultural students in Nigerian academic libraries.