



A Pilot Study on Teachers' Usage and Satisfaction with Library Services at an Academic Library

Mohammed Musa^{1*}

¹ Chief Olusegun Obasanjo Library, The Federal Polytechnic Damaturu, Damaturu, Yobe State

* Corresponding author: jabbule84@gmail.com

Abstract

This pilot study examines teachers' use and satisfaction with library resources and services at the Chief Olusegun Obasanjo Library located in the Federal Polytechnic Damaturu. Specifically, the study examines the frequency of library visits, reasons for usage, challenges faced, and the level of satisfaction experienced by teacher from the Institution. Data were collected through survey among 50 teachers. The findings reveal that a substantial portion of respondents visit the library regularly, emphasising its pivotal role in their academic responsibilities. However, while satisfaction levels are generally positive, some challenges have been identified (such as outdated materials and limited resources warrant attention) which reduced user experiences with the Library's services. To enhance teachers' experience, recommendations were made, including investing in current resources, expanding seating options, extending borrowing times, providing information literacy courses, and establishing effective feedback mechanisms. These measures could position the Library as a knowledge hub in the Polytechnic.

Keywords: *Library Use, Teachers, Library Services, User Satisfaction, Higher Education, Nigeria.*

Article Information:

Received: 11 October 2022
Revised: 28 November 2022
Accepted: 1 December 2022
Published: 2022

Vol. 12, No. 1, 2022

© MRN Publishing

Introduction

The significance of school libraries in educational institutions cannot be overstated. As education stands at the core of societal progress and individual growth, the school library emerges as the indispensable heartbeat of this process (Kolade, 2001). This description underscores the critical role a library occupies in the academic ecosystem. Far from being a mere repository of books, a school library offers a multifaceted landscape of knowledge. Within its shelves, one finds a treasure trove of books, periodicals, newspapers, audio-visual materials, computers, study kits, and various other information-bearing materials. These resources are meticulously organized, providing students and educators with an invaluable repository for learning, personal exploration, and recreational pursuits.

Expanding upon this definition, Fayose (1983) provides an even more comprehensive understanding of the school library. It is, she posits, that essential space within the school where knowledge finds its physical embodiment. It is not only a house of books but a sanctuary for information in myriad forms, nurturing both intellectual pursuits and personal interests. A well-equipped school library, according to Fayose, contains the universe within its walls, offering students and teachers an expansive canvas upon which they can paint their educational journeys.

Owate and Okpa-Troha (2013) further amplify the essence of a school library by emphasizing its role in enriching and supporting the educational enterprise. These libraries are not passive entities; they are dynamic entities professionally managed to provide services that enrich the educational experiences of students and teachers alike. They offer a lifeline to learners at all levels, from the most novice kindergartners to

the most erudite high school seniors. In doing so, they facilitate learning, inspire creativity, and foster a lifelong love for exploration and discovery.

In essence, the school library is not merely a physical space; it is the intellectual heartbeat of the institution (Kolade, 2001). It is a space where dreams are nurtured, where knowledge is curated, and where the seeds of wisdom are sown. In the following sections, we embark on a journey to explore how this sacred space functions at Chief Olusegun Obasanjo Library, and how it shapes the educational experiences of its users, particularly the student teachers who represent the future torchbearers of our education system. Through this study, we aim to shed light on the frequency of library usage, the motivations behind visits, the challenges faced, and, most importantly, the level of use and satisfaction with the library's resources and services.

Literature Review

The satisfaction of teachers with library services in academic institutions is a critical aspect of the overall educational experience. It directly influences their teaching and research capabilities, and by extension, the quality of education provided to students. This literature review explores the key dimensions of teachers' usage and satisfaction with library services at academic libraries, drawing insights from previous research and studies in this field.

Teachers, as educators and researchers, rely heavily on academic libraries for various purposes, including curriculum development, lesson planning, conducting research, and staying updated with the latest educational materials. Their satisfaction



with library services is pivotal in ensuring that these needs are met effectively. A satisfied teaching faculty is more likely to be productive, innovative, and committed to their roles in academia.

A fundamental aspect of teachers' interaction with academic libraries is the frequency of their visits. Research by Ranawella and Rajapaksha (2017) found that a significant proportion of teachers visit the library regularly, with a majority doing so multiple times a week. This underscores the library's role as a central resource hub for teachers. Frequent visits enable teachers to access a diverse range of materials, collaborate with colleagues, and engage in professional development activities.

Understanding the motivations behind teachers' library visits provides valuable insights into their specific needs and expectations. Several studies (Gyesi, 2020; Hu et al., 2014) have identified common reasons for teachers' library use, including:

1. **Research and Scholarly Activities:** Teachers visit libraries to access academic journals, research databases, and reference materials crucial for their research and publications.
2. **Curriculum Development:** They rely on libraries to gather resources for curriculum design, lesson planning, and instructional materials development.
3. **Professional Development:** Libraries offer opportunities for attending workshops, seminars, and training sessions that enhance teaching and pedagogical skills.
4. **Collaboration:** Teachers often use libraries as meeting spaces for collaborative projects, fostering interdisciplinary research and idea exchange.

While libraries play a central role in supporting teachers' work, they also encounter challenges in their interactions with library services. Research by Corpuz (2020) identifies some common challenges faced by library users, including:

1. **Access to Current Resources:** Teachers often express frustration when libraries lack up-to-date materials relevant to their subject areas.
2. **Limited Opening Hours:** Inflexible library hours can pose challenges for teachers, especially those with busy schedules.
3. **Technical Issues:** Problems with accessing electronic resources, such as databases or e-books, can hinder research and teaching activities.

User satisfaction with library services is a pivotal factor in determining the effectiveness of libraries in supporting teachers. Studies by Olayemi (2020), Oyewumi et al. (2020) and Twum et al. (2022) have shown that satisfied teachers are more likely to make extensive use of library resources, contribute to a positive institutional reputation, and act as advocates for library services.

In conclusion, teachers' usage and satisfaction with library services at academic libraries are crucial for their professional development and the enhancement of the overall educational experience. Understanding the patterns, motivations, and challenges of teacher-library interactions is vital for academic institutions and libraries to tailor their services to meet the evolving needs of this key user group effectively.

Methodology

This study utilised a survey research design. A survey approach is particularly well-suited for exploring the opinions, behaviours, and preferences of a diverse group of individuals. It allowed the researcher to gather insights into the experiences and perceptions of teachers regarding library resources and services.

The target population for this study consisted of the 289 teachers at the Federal Polytechnic Damaturu who patronise the

Chief Olusegun Obasanjo Library. These individuals represent the core segment of the Polytechnic (Salisu, 2002) and were considered suitable respondents due to their role in shaping the education of future teachers.

To select an adequate sample from the population, we employed the Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table of sample size determination, which yielded 50 as sample size, which was statistically appropriate and would yield meaningful results. An impressive response rate of 96% was achieved when the questionnaire was administered on the sample, indicating a high level of interest and engagement from the participants.

Data for this study was primarily collected through the use of structured questionnaires. The questionnaire was designed in Likert-type response format. The thus collected were analysed using descriptive statistical tools to calculate percentages and summarise the frequency of responses, such as frequency of library visits, reasons for visits, duration of stays, and user satisfaction levels.

Results and Discussions

In this section, the findings on users' use and satisfaction with library resources and services at Chief Olusegun Obasanjo Library. We also delve into the implications of these results, shedding light on their significance for the academic community and the library itself.

Frequency of Library Visits

The survey results as depicted in Figure 1 revealed that teachers at the Federal Polytechnic Damaturu demonstrate varying patterns of library usage (visitations). Notably, 35% of respondents mentioned that they visit the library every 2-3 days, indicating a consistent engagement with the library's resources. A further 11% visit daily, while 13% visit weekly. These findings underscore the significance of the library as a regular destination for a substantial portion of the academic community. The high frequency of library visits suggests that the library is indeed an integral part of the academic routine for many teachers. This underscores the library's role as a knowledge hub that facilitates continuous learning and research.

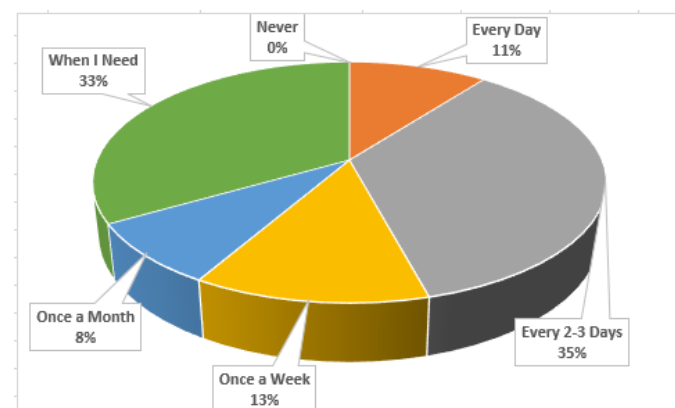


Figure 1. Distribution of Respondents by Frequency of Library Visits

Reasons for Library Visits

The results pertaining to the reasons teachers visit the library at the case study institution reveal the diverse motivations that drive teachers to engage with the Library (see Figure 2). Notably, the majority of teachers, accounting for approximately 35.42% of users, visit the library with the primary goal of preparing papers. This underscores the library's critical role in supporting scholarly activities, where teachers seek access to academic journals, reference materials, and research databases to inform their writing and publications. Additionally, a significant

proportion, representing 25% of users, visit the library with the aim of gathering new information. This indicates that teachers recognise the library as a dynamic source of up-to-date knowledge relevant to their subject areas. The library serves as a repository of current information and research, facilitating their efforts to stay informed and integrate the latest insights into their teaching and scholarship.

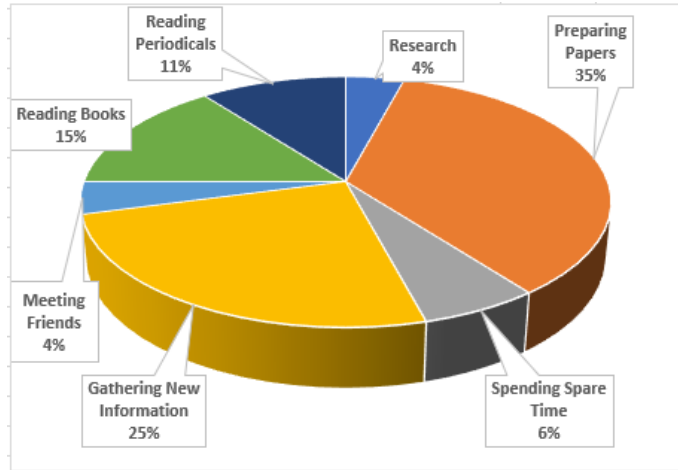


Figure 2. Distribution of Respondents by Reasons for Library Visits

Further, the finding that 14.58% of users visit the library for reading books reflects the enduring allure of print materials within the academic community. Books continue to hold value as foundational resources for teachers, offering in-depth exploration of topics and comprehensive insights that complement their educational activities. The results also reveal that teachers visit the library for various other purposes, including spending spare time, meeting friends, and reading periodicals, albeit with smaller percentages. These findings suggest that the library serves as not only a professional hub but also a space for relaxation and social interaction.

Interestingly, the category *Using Audio-Visuals* received no responses, implying that at the case study institution, teachers may not frequently turn to audio-visual materials as part of their educational or research processes. Overall, the results highlight the many roles of the library in catering to the multiple needs and motivations of teachers. It functions as a nexus of scholarly resources, a source of current information, a repository of print materials, and a versatile space for both professional and leisurely pursuits, ultimately enriching the academic experiences of teachers at the institution.

Duration of Stay in the Library

The results shown in Figure 3 regarding the duration of time that teachers spend when they visit the library at the case study is a veritable proxy for library usage rate by teachers. Half of the surveyed teachers spend less than one hour during each library visit. This suggests that a significant portion of educators may have specific and time-efficient goals when they come to the library. They likely visit with a focused agenda, such as quickly accessing specific resources, verifying information, or making brief consultations. These crisp and sharp users are followed a one-third of the respondents who allocate between one to two hours during their library visits. This group appears to engage in more extended and in-depth interactions with library resources. Teachers in this category may be conducting more extensive research, reading, or engaging in collaborative activities that require a more substantial time investment. A smaller but still notable percentage of teachers (8.33%) dedicate between three to four hours during their library visits. This suggests a subgroup of teachers who engage in prolonged research sessions,

curriculum development, or extensive reading. Their objectives may require more extensive exploration of library resources.

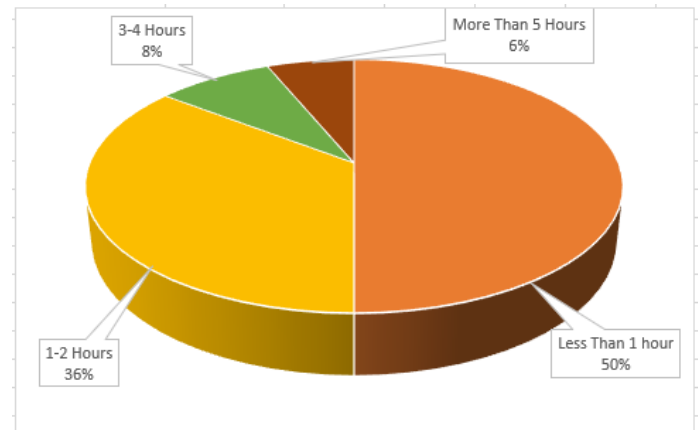


Figure 3. Duration of Stay in the Library

However, a minority of teachers (6.25%) spend more than five hours in the library during each visit. This group likely includes teachers who engage in extensive research, academic writing, or collaborative projects that demand substantial time investments. Their extended stays underscore the library’s role as a conducive and productive environment for scholarly work.

These diverse time allocations illustrate that teachers’ library visits are tailored to their specific needs and objectives. The library caters to educators with varying schedules and preferences, accommodating those seeking quick access to information, as well as those engaged in more extended research and academic activities. Understanding these patterns allows the institution to optimise its services and facilities to meet the diverse needs of its teaching faculty effectively.

User Satisfaction

The results concerning teachers’ satisfaction with the resources and services offered at the Chief Olusegun Obasanjo Library reveal that a significant majority of teachers, comprising 66.67% of users, responded affirmatively, while 33.33% of users indicated dissatisfaction. The fact that nearly two-thirds of the respondents expressed satisfaction is a positive indicator of the Library’s effectiveness in meeting the needs and expectations of its primary users. This group of satisfied teachers is likely to view the library as a valuable asset in their academic and research endeavours. Their positive feedback suggests that the library’s collections, facilities, and support services align well with their requirements, enhancing their teaching and scholarly pursuits.

The 33.33% of teachers who reported dissatisfaction signify an area that requires attention and improvement. While this group represents a minority, their feedback should not be overlooked. Their concerns may encompass various aspects, such as inadequate access to specific resources, issues with library facilities, or unmet service expectations. Addressing the concerns of this group can lead to enhancements in the library’s offerings and contribute to a more inclusive and satisfactory experience for all library users. Overall, the results on teachers’ level of satisfaction with the resources and services is generally positive, with a significant majority expressing satisfaction. However, the library should take the feedback from the dissatisfied minority seriously and consider it as an opportunity for targeted improvements.

Challenges Faced by Users

The results regarding the challenges faced by teachers when using library resources and services at the case study institution (see Figure 4) reflect the complexities of providing library services to a diverse group of users. The most frequently cited



challenge is the absence of up-to-date reading materials (39.58%). This concern is significant, as it directly affects the relevance and currency of the library’s collection. Teachers require access to the latest research, publications, and

educational materials to support their teaching and research activities. Addressing this challenge should be a priority for the library to ensure it remains a valuable resource.

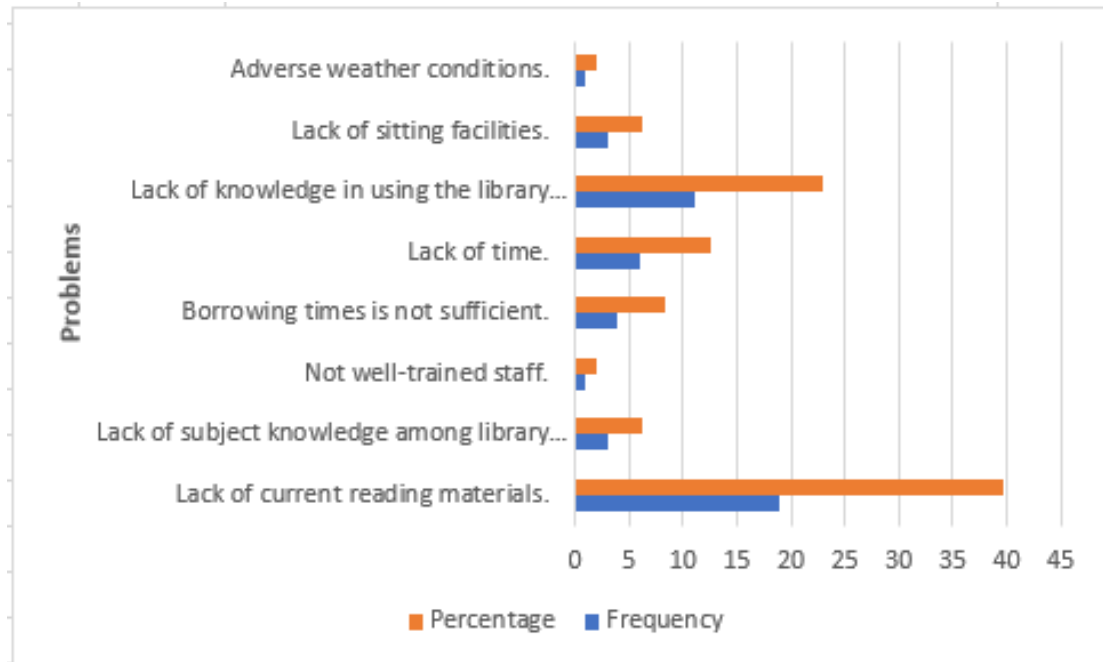


Figure 4. Challenges Confronting Library Users

To compound the first challenge is users’ skill deficit in library use. Nearly a quarter (22.92%) of respondents expressed a lack of knowledge in effectively utilising available library’s resources. This highlights the importance of providing user education and information literacy programs to empower teachers with the skills needed to navigate the library’s collections and electronic resources more efficiently. Also, a smaller but still notable percentage of teachers (8.33%) indicated that borrowing times are insufficient. This suggests that the library’s lending policies may need review to accommodate the varying needs and schedules of educators, especially those engaged in extensive research or curriculum development projects. Personal to the teachers is the problem associated with time constraints (12.50%). This may indicate that teachers face time constraints in their busy schedules, making it challenging to fully utilize the library’s resources and services. The library should consider flexible service hours or virtual access options to address this issue.

Furthermore, 6.25% of the respondents expressed concerns about the availability of sitting facilities within the library. Adequate seating is essential to create a conducive environment for research, study, and collaboration. Ensuring comfortable and sufficient seating arrangements should be a priority for the library. Finally, while less frequently mentioned, challenges such as the lack of subject knowledge among library staff, staff training, and adverse weather conditions should not be overlooked. These challenges, though less common, can still impact the overall user experience and should be addressed through staff development and facility improvements.

Overall, the challenges identified in this survey reflect a range of issues that teachers encounter when using library resources and services. These challenges should be viewed as opportunities for improvement. By addressing the identified issues, such as updating reading materials, enhancing user education, and providing flexible borrowing policies, the library can better meet the diverse needs of its teaching faculty and create a more supportive and conducive environment for teaching and research.

Conclusion

In conclusion, teachers’ engagement with and satisfaction regarding library services within academic institutions are pivotal factors that significantly influence the quality of education. The frequency of teachers’ visits to academic libraries underscores the enduring importance of these knowledge repositories, providing educators with essential resources for research and teaching. Teachers’ motivations for library visits span a spectrum of needs, from research and curriculum development to professional growth and collaboration. User satisfaction emerges as a key factor, influencing not only teachers’ engagement with libraries but also their productivity. However, teachers face some challenges, such as access to current resources and occasional technical difficulties, necessitating solutions to enhance their library experiences.

Recommendations

The results and discussions underscore the pivotal role of the library as a consistent destination for teachers at the Federal Polytechnic, Damaturu. They also highlight the importance of supporting research and knowledge acquisition. To enhance user experience and satisfaction, the library should consider initiatives such as:

1. Increasing Access to Current Materials: Investing in up-to-date resources to address the issue of outdated reading materials.
2. Enhancing Seating Facilities: Expanding seating options to provide a comfortable and conducive study environment for users.
3. Extending Borrowing Time: Reviewing and possibly extending borrowing periods, particularly for academic staff.
4. User Education: Offering information literacy courses to empower users to make more effective use of library resources.



5. Feedback Mechanisms: Establishing robust feedback mechanisms to continuously gather user input and improve services.

References

- Corpuz, D. A. (2020). "Library resources and functional effectiveness of an academic library: meeting the challenges of the digital age." *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews*, 8(4), 238-245.
- Fayose, P. O. (1983). "Students use school library resources in Ibadan and Benin." *Nigerian Journal of Library and Information Science*, 2(2), 40-51.
- Gyesi, K. (2020). "Information seeking behaviour of graduate students of the University of Professional Studies, Accra (UPSA)." *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*, 4115, 1-24.
- Hu, C-P., Hu, Y., and Yan, W-W. (2014). "An empirical study of factors influencing user perception of university digital libraries in China." *Library & Information Science Research*, 36(3-4), 225-233.
- Kolade, H. K. (2001). Universal basic education programme in Nigeria: Implication for the teaching role of the school library. *Nigerian School Library Journal*, 4(1&2).
- Krejcie, R. V., and Morgan, D. W. (1970). "Determining sample size for research activities." *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30(3), 607-610.
- Olayemi, O. M. (2020). "Utilization and User Satisfaction of Public Library: A Study of Herbert Macaulay Library, Lagos State-Nigeria." *International Journal of Library and Information Studies*, 10(1), 18-26.
- Owate, C. N., and Okpa-Iroha, G. (2013). "The availability and utilization of school library resources in selected Secondary Schools in Rivers State." *Academic Journal, Educational Research Review*, 8(16), 1419-1460.
- Oyewumi, F. A., Owegboro, B., Opele, J. K. and Adewara, J. O. (2020). "Library User Satisfaction with the Use of Digital Information Services in University of Ilorin, Nigeria." *Jewel Journal of Librarianship*, 15(1), 65-75.
- Ranawella, T. C. and Rajapaksha, M. P. (2017). Use and user satisfaction with library services and resources at the main library of the General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka. *Journal of the University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka*, 20(2), 28-45.
- Salisu, B. (2002). "Motivational challenges in managing the core human resources of Nigerian polytechnics." In S. U. Jen (Ed.) *Issues and concepts in polytechnic education* (pp. 105-116). Yola, Nigeria: Paraclete Publishers.
- Twum, K. K., Adams, M., Budu, S. and Budu, R. A. A. (2022). "Achieving university libraries user loyalty through user satisfaction: the role of service quality." *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 32(1), 54-72.

