

## ***Influence of Library Staff Background on Students' Interest on Library Resources in Taraba State University, Jalingo***

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### **Abstract**

*The study investigated the influence of library staff background on students' interest on library resources in Taraba State University, Jalingo. Two objectives and two null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Descriptive survey research design was used for the study and a sample of fifty (50) undergraduate students and eighteen (18) library staff were selected using simple random sampling technique, out of the total population of one thousand five hundred and ten (1,510) students. The two null hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics of Regression analysis and t-test. The results showed that library staff background had significant influence on students' interest on library resources and significant difference was not found between male and female students' interest on library resources. The study concluded that library staff background had significant influence on students' interest on library resources; and that male and female students' interests in library resources do not differ significantly. The study recommended deployment of reasonable number of library personnel in the Faculty of Education and main university library, supply of current and relevant books and provision of internet services in the libraries, as strategies for increasing interest of students on library resources in the University.*

**Keywords:** Library, Staff, Background, Interest, Library, Resources

### **Introduction**

Students in the learning environment scout for information from different sources within and outside the environment, to enrich themselves professionally, in their chosen careers or fields of specialization. It becomes mandatory for every academic institution in the world that was established for the frontier of knowledge to establish libraries that are equipped with recent materials, which include periodicals, textbooks, journals, pamphlets, magazines, theses and dissertations for the sole aim of

professional review and upgrade among students and lecturers of the Academic environment.

Libraries are handled and managed by librarians who have the requisite training in the field of library and information science and other related fields at various degree of affiliation. The affiliation ranges from National Diploma (ND), Higher National Diploma (HND), Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS), Master of Library Science (MLS) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) in Library Science. Any of these background gives automatic membership into the librarianship. Library and Information is a generic term that encompasses any occupation that is involved in any aspect of the information cycle, such as generation, processing, storage, dissemination and preservation of information (Aina, 2016). It is therefore not surprising that it is one of the largest professions in the world, covering such fields as journalism, broadcasting, records management, printing, publishing, book trade, museum and information and communication technologies etc (Aina, 2016).

Stonier (1991) highlighted the importance of information as the most important factor in the modern production system as opposed to land, labour and capital. Because, if one possessed enough information one could reduce the requirements of land, labour and capital. Library staff background means academic background of staff who are directly or remotely connected with any information and librarianship activity; it can be termed as academic qualification. Delineating information professionals will therefore be a daunting task because, the area is broad. The training received in the institutions of higher learning in the field of library and information management or related fields equip a library professional with the background to handle library resources for proper preservation and encouragement of learners to develop positive interest in the library resources.

It has been observed that library staff background does not come from similar training background, having found themselves in the field of library professional. The staff work tirelessly to ensure the mission of the library is accomplished in accordance with the stated objectives. The paper intended to investigate whether the variation in the staff academic background promotes students' interest in the university libraries.

Interest on the other hand, signifies the feeling of wanting to give your attention to something or of wanting to be involved with and to discover more about something. Interest portrays the level of internal urge or enjoyment in performing a task. It is an internal motivation that is geared towards enjoyment and personal conviction. Sani (2017), affirmed that intrinsic motivation implies performing a task not because of its instrumental value, rather because of the interest students have towards the task. The researcher further affirmed that, beautification of learning environment which includes

the library resources have further gone to develop students' interest towards learning and patronage of library resources for upgrade. It has been reported by Sani (2017), that students' interest varies in academic environment as a result of variation of preparedness of the learning environment for students to dislike or like certain events and situations. The interest develops on certain factors in the environment which improve the students' wellbeing in the learning environment. Schools that have enough facilities, which include good classrooms, hostels accommodation, practical facilities, recent books and other library resources, internet service and computer accessories in the electronic libraries go a long way in developing students interest in the school environment and patronage or interest in library resources of the institution (Okebukola, 1996). Relevant studies indicated scholars' contribution in various ways to the present title which include: Sani (2018), revealed that functional library with human and material resources promotes students' interest on library resources as well as effective study habit among students. Lonsdale (2003), affirmed that library personnel and facilities have direct connection with students' interest and achievement in academics. Also, Ekong and Manasseh (2017) revealed that staff attitude and academic profile (library staff background) influence library usage.

Meanwhile, Daramola (2013) revealed that there is no significant difference in the use of textbooks and library loans by both genders. Also, Ahmed (2015) revealed that no significant difference was found in challenges of electronic information resources according to gender of students. Gender was not a barrier in the interest and utilization of electronic information resources in the library. Applegate (2016) found that gender difference does not exist in the use of public library among library users. It is against this background that this study investigates the influence of library staff background on students' interest on library resources in Faculty of Education, Taraba State University, Jalingo.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Personal experience revealed that students and lecturers in Academic environment visit libraries situated in the Departments, Faculties, and University's main libraries, only to study their notebooks brought into the libraries, without developing interest on the resources kept for patronage in those libraries. This might happen as a result of losing interest in what the libraries have for patronage. Most of the students assumed that the resources in the libraries are obsolete and do not have internet service as well as electronic division that would go a long way in arousal of interest of library users in the environment, which constitutes the problem of the study. It has been observed that students no longer have much interest on hardcopy resources rather, a soft resources to browse and have access to useful information in the libraries. If the libraries are deficient, that weakens their morale in the patronage of library resources, which also constitutes the problem of the study.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study was to investigate the influence of library staff background on students' interest on library resources in Taraba State University, Jalingo. Therefore, the specific objectives of the study include:

1. To determine the influence of library staff background on students interest on library resources in Faculty of Education, Taraba State University, Jalingo.
2. To find out whether difference exists in the interest of students on library resources of Faculty of Education, Taraba State University based on gender.

### **Research Hypotheses**

**Ho1** There is no significant influence of library staff background on students' interest on library resources.

**Ho2** Significant difference does not exist between male and female students' interest on library resources.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted descriptive survey research design because the study used the representative sample of the respondents to study the entire population of students in the Faculty of Education, Taraba State University, Jalingo. The findings are generalised to the entire students of the Faculty. The study population comprised of the entire students of Faculty of Education, Taraba State University, from 200-400 level in the 2018/2019 Academic Session. Also, the library staff in the Faculty of Education and the main university library constituted the population. Faculty of Education has a total number of one thousand five hundred and ten (1,510) students comprising both males and females across the five departments of the Faculty. Every figure on students' data was given by the Departments of Guidance and Counselling, Science Education, Educational Foundations, Social Science Education and Arts Education. The total number of library staff was Eighteen (18) which comprises both the specialists and non-specialists. The study sample, which consisted of both male and female students of Faculty of Education, was taken from 200-400 levels as they are conversant with the University and Faculty facilities, including the libraries available in the school. A total of fifty (50) students sample were taken based on the guidance of Krejcie and Morgan's table (1970), for determining sample size of research purpose, using the total population as the guide or criterion for selection. The sampling procedure/technique that was used to select the sample students was the use of probability sampling technique of simple random with replacement. Numbers were written in different pieces of paper folded which consisted of both even and odd numbers, those who picked odd numbers were automatically selected in all the departments of the Faculty, thereby returning the papers that contained the number back for reselection again, that was how the sample students were selected.

The instruments for data collection were the self-developed instrument titled: Library Staff Background and Students Interest Questionnaire (LSBSIQ), and a check list for library staff. The LSBSIQ, which had three sections, was used to elicit responses from the respondents. Section A consisted of the biodata of the respondents which had two (2) items, Section B consisted of library staff Background and Students Interest with seven (7) items, Section C consisted of Gender and Students interest with six (6) items in total. The instruments were validated by three (3) Senior Academics of Measurement and Evaluation and Science Education of Faculty of Education, Taraba State University. The response options of the Likert scale type was used including Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. Also reliability of the instrument was determined using pilot testing by subjecting the instrument to a selected sample of students outside the Faculty of Education. The Faculty used was Faculty of Social Sciences which has similarity with the Faculty of Education in terms of programmes run in the university. Twenty (20) students, selected at random from 200 to 400 levels, filled the questionnaire. After the pilot testing exercise, the data collected was subjected for reliability analysis using cronbach alpha method and the general reliability coefficient value for the instrument was 0.73 reliability value. The value was statistically significant for research purpose. Kolo (2003) affirmed that the reliability value of 0.5 and above is significant for research purpose in Education, which rendered the instrument highly significant to measure the theme of the study.

Also the check list for library staff was designed to ascertain the professional affiliation and Academic Qualification of the Library staff in the University. The checklist had two (2) items namely: Professional background and Educational Qualification of staff. The check list was filled by the library staff of the university. The total number of staff in both Faculty of Education and Main Libraries was eighteen (18), all the staff were taken and issued the check list for data collection.

The students selected satisfactorily filled the questionnaire. Wait and take approach was used to avoid missing instrument. The exercise was conducted and concluded within Seventy Two (72) hours. The data generated were analysed using simple regression analysis and t-test statistics.

## **Presentation of Results**

**Ho1** There is no significant influence of library staff background on students' interest on library resources.

**Table 1:** Regression Analysis for influence of library staff background on students' interest on library resources

<b>Model</b>	<b>Sum of square</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>R. Square</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Sig</b>
Regression	75.352	1	75.352	9.540	.166	14.067	.003
Residual	379.148	48	7.899			.378	
<b>Total</b>	<b>454.500</b>	<b>49</b>					

A simple linear regression was calculated to determine the influence of library staff background on students' interest on library resources. The table of analysis shows a significant regression equation was found.  $F = 9.540$ ,  $P=0.003$  with  $R^2$  of 0.166 as coefficient determinant. As the p-value is less than the alpha level, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that library staff background has significant influence on students' interest on library resources.

**Ho2** Significant difference does not exist between male and female students' interest on library resources.

**Table 2:** t-test statistics for the difference between male and female students' interest on library resources

<b>Gender</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. deviation</b>	<b>St error</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Male	35	21.8286	3.15749	.53371	0.060
Female	15	20.0667	2.43389	.62843	

t-test statistics revealed that significant gender difference does not exist in the interest of students' on library resources. As the result of the analysis showed that p-value (0.060) is greater than alpha. On the basis of this, the null hypothesis was retained. Significant difference does not exist between male and female students' interest on library resources.

### **Discussion of findings**

A finding of the study revealed that library staff background has significant influence on students' interest on library resources in Faculty of Education, Taraba State University, Jalingo. The responses of the respondents to the questionnaire and checklist used for data collection indicated that the University library staff are willing to help students in the libraries most especially in the area of difficulties, which contributes to students' interest. Moreover, the library staff encourage students to patronise library resources, most especially the new arrivals to improve themselves in their course of study. The Faculty and university libraries have adequate number of staff that managed and organised library resources, ranging from librarians and non-

librarians which have contributed to the present study finding. The finding corroborates different findings in both positive and negative forms. This includes, the finding of Sani (2018), which revealed that functional library with human and material resources promotes students' interest on library resources as well as effective study habit among students. The findings went contrary to that of Owate and Iroha (2013), which revealed that library human and material resources do not encourage students' patronage among the library users of secondary schools. The researchers further revealed that service to capture the interest of the users are lacking in some libraries. The finding also tallies with that of Lonsdale (2003), which affirmed that library personnel and facilities have direct connection with students' interest and achievement in academics. The finding also corroborates that of Ekong and Manasseh (2017), which revealed that staff attitude and academic profile influence library usage.

Another finding of the study revealed that significant difference does not exist between male and female students' in their interest on library resources. The respondents revealed that the library staff do not discriminate among students' in the use of library facilities which contributes to the present finding. Also, the number of staff in the libraries as well as mix gender combination among the library personnel also contribute to the present study finding. The finding corroborates that of Daramola (2013), which revealed that there is no significant difference in the use of textbooks and library loans by both genders. Also, the finding tallies with that of Ahmed (2015), which revealed that no significant difference in challenges of electronic information resources according to gender of students. The researcher further affirmed that gender was not a barrier in the internet and utilization of electronic information resources in the library. The finding also corroborates that of Applegate (2016), which revealed that gender difference does not exist in the use of public library among library users.

### **Conclusion**

The study concludes that library staff background had influence on students' interest on library resources in Faculty of Education, Taraba State University, Jalingo. Also, Male and female students of Faculty of Education Taraba State University have no difference on interest on library resources. The libraries in Taraba State University are handled by both specialists and non specialists of Library and Information Science. Also both male and female students in Taraba State University have equal and high interest on library resources.

### **Recommendations**

1. Taraba state government in collaboration with Taraba State University council should employ good number of library personnel in Faculty of Education and university main libraries for continuous research and professional upgrade of students and lecturers.

2. Recent and relevant books should be supplied as well as internet service should be installed in the libraries to develop more interest of students in library materials of the university.

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