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Extent of Digital Library Usage among Undergraduates: A case study of the Department of Educational Management and Policy of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka

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Abstract

This study investigated the extent of utilization of digital library for improved academic performance among final year students of the Department of Educational Management and Policy, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. Two research questions guided the study. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of study comprised 148 final year students in the area of study. A sample of 100 final year students was drawn from the population using simple random sampling technique. Researchers' developed questionnaire titled, "Digital Library Usage Questionnaire (DLUQ) which was validated by three experts was the instrument used for data collection. The internal consistency of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach's Alpha and this yielded the reliability co-efficient index of 0.75. Mean was used to answer the research questions. The result of the study among others indicated that the extent to which final year students of the department of Educational Management and Policy, Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State to a moderate extent utilize the departmental library e-books and University digital textbooks was high. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that the school management should motivate students to utilize digital libraries by ensuring that adequate technological infrastructure and hardware, such as reliable servers, modern computers, smart classrooms, and uninterrupted power supply

Keywords: Digital library, Academic Performance

Introduction

Digital library can be seen as the power house where education, knowledge and information are accessed. Digital library in educational system offers students accessibility to vast range of valuable resources with an internet connection to expand

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their knowledge or explore new ideas and topics. In agreement to this, Koch, Hansen and Jacobsen (2019) stated that the demands of the modern age may not be met without the development of digital libraries in the universities. Moreover, the fast-changing development of e-learning has made digital libraries a convenient and efficient way to access various resources such as e-books, academic journals, databases, and other online resources that may not be available in traditional libraries.

Digital libraries according to Kabir and Sheikh (2022) are internet site purposely meant for the creation and preservation of electronic book collections and holdings of other kinds of materials, without the need for end users to purchase the materials they want to consult. In other words, digital libraries are place for networked collection of digital texts, documents, images, sounds, data, software and many more. Kadir, Samsudin and Seman (2023) in their view defined digital libraries as resource environment for accessing educational materials available for use electronically.

The idea of digital library gained popularity in Nigerian universities as a result of advancements in information and communication technology (ICT). In Nnamdi Azikiwe University, students' usage of digital library became more visible with the incorporation of e-learning and writing of most general studies (GS) courses digitally. Moreover, digital library satisfy the information needs of the Nnamdi Azikiwe University students through various moods of services including having digitalized university, faculty and departmental libraries. Thus, in this study the digital library services covered are the faculty e-books and digital textbooks made available in the university libraries. This is because the two are always readily domiciled in specific disciplines available in the universities for students' use and according to Platino (2023) they are delimited to specific disciplines which can directly improves students' academic

performance in general. For much of emphasis that Khan and Shahzad (2022) stated that e-books and digital textbooks are electronic versions of textbooks and learning materials for effective teaching and learning exercises. This assertion by extension is a clear pointer that the primary aim of upholding e-books and digital textbooks in schools especially in the university is to help in improving students' academic performance. In view of the above, the fact remains that the goal of a faculty digital library is to improve the academic performance of the students by providing current and reliable information at no cost and in accordance with accepted departmental standards. More importantly, faculty e-books and university library digital textbooks offer students the chance to access popular software such as Omeka, DSpace, EPrints, and Bepress for open sources. These software applications are meant to make original source code freely available to students.

The importance of e-books and digital textbooks for students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University cannot be over emphasized. They are freely accessible at no cost for different academic purposes such as choosing project topics, project writing, coursework, assignments and peer tutoring among others. Despite the above and other benefits of e-books and digital textbooks readily available at department, faculty and university digital libraries however, personal observation of the researchers show that most Nnamdi Azikiwe University students, especially those in final years do not utilize these benefits therein. Instead, most final year students seem to use digital libraries for other activities other than for academic purposes. Such as internet fraud, social and business networking. These could be the reason for the poor academic performance in the continuous assessment and examinations.

Most students fail to do their assignment even with the ready help which digital libraries offer. In most cases, students instead of doing their assignment themselves prefer

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to copy the assignment done by their friends and this seems to be more visible in all the academic levels of students, the final year students of the department of Educational Management and Policy, inclusive. Moreover, the failures and low grades recorded in various courses especially borrowed and general studies (GS) courses are increasing. There seems to be increased number of students re-siting for failed courses for more than once before graduation. This lead to clash of some courses during examinations, thereby making it difficult for some students not to fully comprehend, concentrate or have divided attention in their studies for better academic performance and by extension a probably reason for the constant increase in the rate of overstayed regular students in the department. All these observations no doubt seem to affect the general academic performance and by extension poor cumulative grade points.

On the other hand, most students tend to see the digital library as an unavoidable environment to be visited upon graduation for only doing final clearance. There is no doubt that not studying with e-books and digital textbooks by students may lead to poor comprehension and shallow knowledge resulting to incessant failures in some courses which ought to be passed when students utilize the knowledge from academic resources from the digital library. It is becoming almost impossible for many regular students to complete their four year course of study without re-sitting for at least two or three courses. All these rises a concern to the researchers to empirically investigate digital library usage for improved academic performance in the Department of Educational Management and Policy, Faculty of Education Nnamdi Azikiwe university, Awka

Purpose of the Study

This study investigated the extent of digital library usage among final year students of the department of Educational Management and Policy, Faculty of Education Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. Specifically, the study determined;

1. The extent to which final year students of the Department of Educational Management and Policy, Faculty of Education Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka

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2. The extent to which final year students of the Department of Educational Management and Policy, Faculty of Education Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka utilize the university digital textbooks for improved academic performance

Research Questions

The study was guided by these research questions:

1. To what extent do final year student of the Department of Educational Management and Policy, Faculty of Education Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka utilize the faculty e-books for improved academic performance?
2. To what extent do final year student of the Department of Educational Management and Policy, Faculty of Education Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka utilize the university digital textbooks for academic performance?

Method

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study and was carried out using the final year student of the Department of Educational Management and Policy, Faculty of Education Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. Two research questions guided the study. From the population of 148 final students a sample of 100 students was drawn using simple random sampling technique. Researchers' developed questionnaire titled "Digital Library Usage Questionnaire (DLUQ) which was validated by three experts was the instrument used for data collection. The interval consistency of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach's Alpha and this yielded coefficient value of 0.75 for the entire instrument. The direct administration and retrieval method was used for data collection. Mean was used to answer the research questions.

Results

Table 1: Mean ratings of respondents on the extent to which final year students utilize faculty e-books for improved academic performance

S/N	Items As a Student;	Mean	Remark
1	I frequently utilize faculty e-books and it has helped me in my academic research	3.31	HE
2	The recommendations for further search using faculty e-books has made me to gain in-depth knowledge in educational leadership	2.92	HE
3	The use of user-friendly apps from the faculty e-books has been helpful in examination preparations	3.08	HE
4	With the use of the faculty e-books I have improved my general reading habit	3.26	HE
5	I have used relevant e-books for updating my personal notes	3.13	HE
6	The utilization of the faculty e-books has increased my awareness on available resources for doing my assignments	3.28	HE
7	The utilization of the faculty e-books has provided me with study apps that has provided me with more training sessions for better grades in school examinations	3.30	HE
8	I have received adequate guidance to academic challenges with the use of faculty e-books	3.15	HE
9	the use of the available faculty e-books has helped me to navigate the difficulty departmental courses and this moderately improved my academic performance	3.78	HE
10	Using faculty e-books has helped me in choosing my research project	3.17	HE
GRAND MEAN		3.23	HE

The analysis in table 1 show the aggregated mean of 3.23 indicating that final year students of the department of Educational Management and Policy, Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, to a high extent utilize faculty library e-books for improved academic performance. The analysis of the items indicated that the respondents rated all the items high.

Table 1: Mean ratings of respondents on the extent to which final year students utilize university digital textbooks for improved academic performance

S/N	Items	Mean	Remark
	As a student;		
1	I have gained adequate knowledge topics on management of education system through my access to the university digital textbooks	3.81	HE
2	Using quality digital textbooks available in the university library has expanded my horizon in my academic pursuit	3.50	HE
3	Surfing most of digital textbooks on policy analysis in the university library has been useful for your academic research	3.01	HE
4	The use of digital textbooks in the university library has made me accessible to research statistics methods useful for related courses in educational foundations	3.34	HE
5	The accessibility to academic apps from the university library has enabled me to have access to the digital textbooks on leadership and administration useful for attempting my assignment in various courses in my course discipline	3.13	HE
6	My access to Google scholar from the university library digital textbooks has expanded my understanding in the difficulty areas in your field of study	3.78	HE
7	I have gained access to foreign text books that were useful in my personal study	3.59	HE
8	I have gained more technical support with the use of university library digital textbooks	3.57	HE
9	The use of digital textbooks in the university library gave me more access to personal devices for academic training	3.26	HE
10	Access to academic platforms has strengthened my academic collaborations with foreign scholars	4.11	HE
11	I expanded my learning boundaries with the with my access to the user-friendly platforms in the university library	2.82	HE
12	The use of relevant online textbooks from the university library has helped me in covering the course outlines and contents effortlessly	3.24	HE
	GRAND MEAN	3.43	Agree

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The analysis in table 2 show the aggregated mean of 3.43 indicating that final year students of the department of Educational Management and Policy, Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, to a high extent utilize university digital textbooks for improved academic performance. The analysis of the items indicated that the respondents rated all the items high.

DISCUSSION

This study found out that the extent to which the final students of the department of Educational Management and Policy utilize faculty e-books for improved academic performance is high. This could be seen in the respondents' ratings of students through the ten listed items which was high. This means that students' usage of digital library for their academic improvement. This finding is in line with Akinlolu, Awujoola, and Olawale (2023) whose result on the study conducted on library cooperation and use of digital library by postgraduate students in selected universities in south-west, Nigeria revealed that predominant purpose of digital library use by students in the selected universities is for examination preparation and to complete assignment. Similarly, (Joshua 2014) agreed that e-books offer students the chance to access relevant and current information from different subject area. The agreement on this finding is an indicator that utilization of e-books would offer a convenient and accessible way to access a vast range of resources so as to enable students to expand their knowledge. From the finding it is agreeable that e-books offer relevant digital information resources to all students so as to explore new knowledge in the studies.

The study also found out that the final students of the department of Educational Management and Policy utilize digital textbooks provided at the university library for improved academic

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performance. This finding is supported by Jonathan and Nwokocha (2013) who found out that digital textbooks offers electronic information resources that more informative, easy to access and more useful to learners. Importantly, digital library satisfy the information needs of the students through various moods of service and facilitates the standardization of communication facilities and housekeeping operations in the library. University digital textbooks primarily help to equip students with necessary knowledge and skills to discharge required academic duties and personal development. This finding is also in line with Ahammad (2019) whose findings revealed that the students' utilization of digital library services offers students with very good assessment. There is no doubt that digital libraries offer a convenient and efficient way to access various resources such as e-books, academic journals, databases, and other online resources that may not be available in traditional libraries. This would offer students liberty to search for and retrieve information relevant to their coursework. Digital textbooks also offers free digital software that helps to flourish the movement of open access resources without considering users' nationality, religion, race and colour etc

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers conclude that final year students of the department of educational management and policy, faculty of education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka to a high extent utilize digital libraries in both faculty and university libraries for improved academic performance. This is to say that students use relevant online textbooks to cover the course outlines and contents effortlessly

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

1. The school management should ensure that students utilize the available adequate digital library sources technological infrastructure and hardware, such as reliable servers, modern computers, smart classrooms, and uninterrupted power supply.
2. The university librarian should ensure that there is stable electricity and good internet connectivity so as to avoid these being the constraints that affect students' and lecturers' ability to fully utilize e-learning and digital library platforms.
3. The Dean and Heads of the Department should encourage the students to utilize the departmental library. Also the Head of department should also ensure the departmental library is stocked with e-books, journals and periodicals.
4. The students should be informed of the available digital library services so as to help them to fully utilize the e-learning sources

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