



Role of Academic Libraries in Enhancing Research Productivity among Students in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

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KEY WORDS

Academic Libraries,
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ABSTRACT

This study examined the role of academic libraries in enhancing research productivity among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The study was motivated by the increasing concern over poor research quality, inadequate utilization of library resources, and challenges affecting academic research among students. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. A total of 350 respondents were selected from universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education across Nigeria using simple random sampling technique. Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection, while the data collected were analyzed using frequency tables, percentages, and mean scores. The findings of the study revealed that academic libraries significantly enhance students' research productivity through the provision of textbooks, journals, electronic databases, internet facilities, and librarians' assistance. The study also discovered that inadequate funding; outdated materials, poor internet connectivity, irregular power supply, and low awareness of library services were major challenges affecting effective library utilization in tertiary institutions. The study concluded that academic libraries remain essential for improving students' research productivity and academic development in Nigeria. The study recommended adequate funding of academic libraries, modernization of library facilities, and regular orientation programmes for students on effective library usage and research skills.

1. Introduction

Academic libraries play a significant role in the educational development of students in tertiary institutions across Nigeria. In the modern academic environment, research has become an essential component of higher education because it contributes to knowledge acquisition, innovation, critical thinking, and national development. Students in universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education are expected to engage in various forms of academic research such as assignments, seminars, projects, dissertations, and thesis writing. Consequently, the availability and effective utilization of academic libraries have become indispensable in enhancing students' research productivity. Academic libraries serve as organized centers for information resources, providing access to textbooks, journals, reference materials, electronic databases, internet facilities, and other scholarly resources that support teaching, learning, and research activities. In Nigeria, tertiary institutions rely heavily on academic libraries to achieve their educational objectives. The rapid growth of information and communication technology has further transformed academic libraries from traditional book repositories into digital information centers that provide both print and electronic resources.

Through services such as online databases, digital repositories, internet access, indexing services, and research assistance, academic libraries help students to locate relevant and current information needed for academic work. Librarians also assist students by teaching information literacy skills, citation methods, and research techniques necessary for quality academic output. Therefore, the effectiveness of academic libraries directly influences the quality and quantity

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of students' research productivity in tertiary institutions. Despite the importance of academic libraries, many tertiary institutions in Nigeria face several challenges that hinder their ability to support students' research effectively. These challenges include inadequate funding, outdated materials, poor internet connectivity, insufficient digital resources, erratic power supply, shortage of qualified library personnel, and low utilization of library facilities by students. In some institutions, students depend more on social media and unverified internet sources rather than scholarly materials available in the library. This situation negatively affects the quality of research conducted by students and contributes to poor academic performance and low research productivity. It is against this background that this study seeks to examine the role of academic libraries in enhancing research productivity among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The study will investigate how library resources, services, and facilities contribute to students' academic research activities, identify the challenges facing academic libraries, and suggest possible strategies for improving library services in order to promote effective research productivity among students in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Problem

Research productivity among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria has become a major concern due to the declining quality of academic research, poor referencing practices, plagiarism, and overdependence on unreliable internet sources. Although academic libraries are established to support teaching, learning, and research activities, many students still experience difficulties in accessing adequate and current research materials needed for effective academic work. In several tertiary institutions, library facilities and services are either insufficient or underutilized, thereby limiting students' ability to conduct quality research. Furthermore, challenges such as inadequate funding of libraries, outdated books and journals, poor internet connectivity, shortage of digital resources, and inadequate information literacy skills among students have negatively affected the effectiveness of academic libraries in Nigeria. As a result, many students struggle to produce high-quality assignments, projects, dissertations, and other academic research works. Despite the recognized importance of academic libraries in educational development, there is still uncertainty regarding the extent to which these libraries contribute to enhancing students' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the role of academic libraries in enhancing research productivity among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. To what extent do academic library resources and services enhance research productivity among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria?
2. What are the challenges facing academic libraries in supporting students' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Nigeria?
3. What strategies can be adopted to improve academic library services for enhanced research productivity among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria?

Method

This study adopts the descriptive survey research design. The design is appropriate because it enables the researcher to obtain information from respondents concerning the role of academic libraries in enhancing research productivity among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. It also allows the researcher to gather data on students' opinions, experiences, and utilization of library resources and services. The population of the study consists of undergraduate students from selected tertiary institutions in Nigeria, including universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education. The target population is made up of students who utilize academic library resources for learning and research purposes. A total of three hundred and fifty (350) respondents were selected for the study. The respondents were drawn from selected tertiary institutions across Nigeria using simple random sampling technique. This

technique is considered suitable because it gives every student equal opportunity of being selected and ensures proper representation of the population. The researcher used questionnaire as the major instrument for data collection. The questionnaire contained structured questions designed to obtain information on the availability of library resources, utilization of library services, challenges affecting library usage, and the extent to which academic libraries enhance students' research productivity. The questionnaires were administered directly to the respondents by the researcher. The data collected for the study were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods such as frequency tables, percentages, and mean scores. These statistical tools help in organizing, interpreting, and presenting the data in a clear and understandable form for effective analysis of the findings.

Results

This session presents the analysis and interpretation of data collected for the study on the role of academic libraries in enhancing research productivity among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. A total of three hundred and fifty (350) questionnaires were distributed to respondents, while three hundred and thirty-five (335) copies were correctly completed and returned, representing 95.7% response rate. The data collected were analyzed using frequency tables, percentages, and mean scores.

Questionnaire Distribution and Return Rate

Questionnaire Distribution	Frequency	Percentage
Number Distributed	350	100%
Number Returned	335	95.7%
Number Not Returned	15	4.3%
Total	350	100%

The table above shows that out of 350 questionnaires distributed to respondents, 335 were properly completed and returned, while 15 were not returned.

Demographic Data of Respondents

Table 1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	165	49.3%
Female	170	50.7%
Total	335	100%

The table above indicates that 165 respondents representing 49.3% were male, while 170 respondents representing 50.7% were female.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Institution Type

Institution Type	Frequency	Percentage
Universities	150	44.8%
Polytechnics	95	28.4%
Colleges of Education	90	26.8%
Total	335	100%

The table above shows that 150 respondents representing 44.8% were from universities, 95 respondents representing 28.4% were from polytechnics, while 90 respondents representing 26.8% were from colleges of education.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Level of Study

Level	Frequency	Percentage
100 Level	70	20.9%
200 Level	85	25.4%
300 Level	90	26.9%
400 Level and Above	90	26.9%
Total	335	100%

The table above shows that students from different levels participated actively in the study.

Research Question One

To what extent do academic library resources and services enhance research productivity among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria?

Responses on the Extent Academic Libraries Enhance Research Productivity

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
Academic libraries provide access to textbooks and journals needed for research	160	120	30	25	3.24
Electronic databases improve students' research activities	170	110	35	20	3.28
Library internet facilities help students obtain current research materials	150	125	40	20	3.21
Librarians assist students in locating relevant research materials	145	130	35	25	3.18
Academic libraries improve the quality of students' assignments and projects	175	105	30	25	3.28

Grand Mean = 3.24

The table above reveals that respondents agreed that academic libraries enhance research productivity among students through the provision of textbooks, journals, electronic databases, internet facilities, and research assistance services. The grand mean score of 3.24 indicates positive responses from respondents.

Research Question Two

What are the challenges facing academic libraries in supporting students' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Nigeria?

Challenges Facing Academic Libraries

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
Inadequate funding affects library services	180	110	25	20	3.34
Poor internet connectivity limits access to digital resources	170	120	25	20	3.31
Outdated books and journals affect research quality	160	130	25	20	3.28
Irregular power supply affects effective library usage	175	115	25	20	3.33
Many students lack awareness of available library resources	150	125	35	25	3.19

Grand Mean = 3.29

The findings above indicate that inadequate funding, poor internet services, outdated materials, irregular electricity supply, and poor awareness of library resources are major challenges affecting academic libraries in Nigeria.

Research Question Three

What strategies can be adopted to improve academic library services for enhanced research productivity among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria?

Strategies for Improving Academic Library Services

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
Increased funding should be provided for academic libraries	190	100	25	20	3.37
Libraries should provide more electronic resources and databases	180	105	30	20	3.33
Stable internet and electricity should be provided	185	100	30	20	3.34
Students should be trained on effective library usage	165	120	30	20	3.28
Modern library facilities should be introduced in tertiary institutions	175	115	25	20	3.27

Grand Mean = 3.32

The table above shows that respondents agreed that increased funding, provision of electronic resources, stable internet services, students' orientation programmes, and modernization of library facilities are effective strategies for improving academic libraries and enhancing research productivity.

Findings

The findings of this study revealed that academic libraries play significant roles in enhancing research productivity among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The study discovered that access to textbooks, journals, electronic databases, internet facilities, and librarians' assistance positively influences students' academic research activities. This finding agrees with the study of Ajiboye et al. (2023), who found that library resources and services contribute significantly to students' research activities.

The study also found that several challenges hinder effective library services in tertiary institutions. Such challenges include inadequate funding, outdated information materials, poor internet connectivity, and irregular power supply. These findings are consistent with the findings of Bajoga (2024) and Olajide (2025), who identified poor library facilities and inadequate digital resources as major obstacles affecting students' academic performance and research activities.

Furthermore, the study revealed that increased funding, modernization of library facilities, provision of digital resources, and students' orientation programmes are important strategies for improving academic libraries in Nigeria. These measures will help to improve students' access to quality information resources and enhance their research productivity.

Summary of Findings

Based on the analysis carried out in this session, the following findings were made:

1. Academic libraries significantly enhance students' research productivity through the provision of textbooks, journals, electronic databases, internet facilities, and librarians' assistance.
2. Inadequate funding, outdated materials, poor internet connectivity, irregular electricity supply, and low awareness of library resources are major challenges affecting academic libraries in Nigeria.
3. Increased funding, modernization of library facilities, provision of digital resources, stable internet services, and students' orientation programmes are effective strategies for improving academic libraries and enhancing research productivity among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Conclusion

This study examined the role of academic libraries in enhancing research productivity among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The study established that academic libraries play significant roles in supporting teaching, learning, and research activities through the provision of textbooks, journals, reference materials, electronic databases, internet facilities, and professional assistance from librarians. The study further revealed that students who effectively utilize academic library resources tend to perform better in research-related academic activities such as assignments, seminars, projects, dissertations, and other scholarly works. Academic libraries therefore remain essential institutions for knowledge acquisition, information dissemination, and academic development in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The findings of the study also showed that several challenges hinder the effectiveness of academic libraries in promoting research productivity among students. Such challenges include inadequate funding, outdated library materials, poor internet connectivity, irregular electricity supply, shortage of digital resources, and low awareness of available library services among students. These problems have negatively affected students' access to reliable and current information resources necessary for quality academic research. As a result, many students rely heavily on unverified internet sources, thereby affecting the standard and credibility of their academic work. Furthermore, the study revealed that improving academic library services requires deliberate efforts from government, school administrators, librarians, and other stakeholders in the educational sector. The provision of adequate funding, acquisition of current print and electronic materials, modernization of library facilities, stable internet access, and regular orientation programmes for students were identified as important measures for enhancing the effectiveness of academic libraries in Nigeria. These improvements will not only increase students' research productivity but also contribute to educational advancement and national development. Generally, academic libraries remain indispensable in tertiary institutions because they provide the information resources and research support services necessary for effective academic work. The study therefore concludes that strengthening academic libraries through proper funding, technological advancement, and improved service delivery will significantly enhance research productivity among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Recommendations

1. Government and school administrators should provide adequate funding for academic libraries in tertiary institutions across Nigeria.
2. Tertiary institutions should modernize their academic libraries through the provision of digital facilities such as stable internet services, electronic libraries, computers, and uninterrupted power supply.
3. Librarians and school management should organize regular orientation and information literacy programmes for students on effective library usage and research skills.

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