Awareness and Ease of Accessibility of Library Resources among Students of Ekiti State Polytechnic, Isan-Ekiti

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Abstract

This study was conducted to determine the awareness and use of library resources among students of Ekiti State Polytechnic, Isan Ekiti (EKSPOLY). The study adopted a quantitative method that deployed a questionnaire-based survey research design. The population of the study was 129 students in EKSPOLY. A total enumeration sampling technique was adopted for the study. Electronic questionnaire was used for the data collection. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics. Findings revealed that majority of the respondents were aware of text books. The findings also showed that textbooks and dictionaries were easily accessible. The benefits of library resources include lifelong learning, updating knowledge and learning skills and to help in passing exams. It was recommended that Polytechnic library staff should regularly conduct current awareness services through orientation programmes, newsletters, and digital platforms to raise awareness about the available resources.

Keywords: Awareness, Ease of accessibility, Use of Library resources, Polytechnic Library

Introduction

The polytechnic system is an educational framework that offers students post-secondary technical education programmes, which include practical and experiential training in a specialised area of study. These programmes lead to the attainment of diplomas or certificates, such as the National Diploma (ND) and Higher National Diploma (HND). Polytechnic programmes generally have duration of four years, including a compulsory one-year internship programme

(AbdulWahab, 2025). This educational approach serves as a viable substitute for conventional academic instruction, catering specifically to students who possess a keen interest in pursuing professional paths within technical domains such as engineering and skilled crafts like carpentry and plumbing. Polytechnic students engage in the pursuit of education and training in technical, vocational, or practical disciplines (Ogungbe, 2019). Typically, individuals in these programmes prioritise the acquisition of practical skills and information that are intended to equip students for particular professional paths across diverse sectors, including engineering, technology, healthcare, business, and other fields.

Polytechnic students exhibit a wide range of backgrounds and have a collective goal of attaining practical proficiency in their respective areas of specialisation. These students participate in a range of academic endeavours, including research, analysis, assignments, and class presentations, among others. These activities are essential for their academic progress and necessitate the utilisation of library resources to enhance their knowledge and conduct research. Ntui and Udah, (2015) and Adeeko and Adetimirin, (2021) assert that library resources include a wide range of items, including conventional print media such as books, journals, newspapers, and maps, as well as audiovisual assets like records, audio cassettes, video cassettes, and projectors. Libraries curate diverse collections including many formats, such as printed materials, reproductions, maps, pictures, microfiches, CD-ROMs, computer software, online databases, internet resources, electronic books, e-journals, and other forms of media.

The use of library resources depends greatly on the level of awareness of such resources among students. Awareness refers to the cognitive understanding or perception of a certain scenario or set of facts (Akpojotor, 2016). It encompasses elements such as consciousness, recognition, realisation, grasp, and acknowledgment. Furthermore, it entails a sense of care, being well-informed, and possessing a level of interest or familiarity in relation to a specific situation or development. Awareness is the cognitive recognition of the existence of something or the comprehension of a particular situation or topic in the current moment, which is informed by either acquired information or personal experience (Cambridge, 2023). Eiriemiokhale and Oladele (2017) described the concept of awareness of library resources to an individual's understanding of the presence and availability of resources within a library setting. Awareness is a crucial means of facilitating the use of library resources among the students.

The ease of accessibility of library resources determines the use of such resources.

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Accessibility of library materials is the extent to which library materials, services, and facilities are usable, accessible, and comprehendible by all users, no matter their physical, cognitive, or technological capacity, for the purposes of their academic, research, as well as information requirements (Agyeiku, 2021). This means that library materials must be created and made available in a manner that is inclusive, equitable, as well as barrier-free in such a manner as to enable every user to consume and utilise them efficiently. Access to library materials will likely provides and encourages quality fiction in the development of students' reading and reading for pleasure habit as well as enhance students' intellectual, aesthetic, aesthetic, cultural as well as emotional development

The significance of library resources in polytechnic education cannot be overstated. Academic success is closely linked to the use of vital tools, which include a variety of resources that offer valuable knowledge. Library resources play a crucial role in facilitating students' access to relevant materials within their field of study, whether it is for completing assignments, preparing for examinations, or engaging in personal enrichment and leisure activities. For students to excel in their academic pursuits, it is crucial to prioritize the accessibility of library information resources. These resources play a significant role in developing students' awareness and encouraging their active use. Lack of awareness usually hamstrings the level of accessibility of library resources among students. As such, this study is set to ascertain the awareness level and ease of accessibility of library resources among students of EKSPOLY.

Research questions

The following questions are raised to guide the study

1. What is the level of awareness of library resources among students of EKSPOLY?
2. What is the ease of accessibility of library information resources among students of EKSPOLY?
3. What are the benefits of using library resources among EKSPOLY students?

Literature review

Various studies have been carried out to know the awareness level of library resources among students for instance, Manzo and Kannan (2020) investigated the awareness and accessibility of electronic information resources by students in Nigeria Polytechnics. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The study population was 51,661 students from 12 polytechnics across Nigeria with a sample size of 1033. Data were collected using questionnaire. The findings showed 30.9% of the respondents are not aware of libraries e-books. Only 20.6% of the respondents are familiar with the e-conference proceedings in the libraries while 12.1% were moderately familiar with it. Twenty seven percent of the respondents reported having awareness of the e-journals available in the libraries. From the pattern of response from the respondents, it is evident the awareness level is very low and not adequate. Consequently, there is a need for regular enlightenment through library orientation among the students on the use of e-resources available in the library.

Danlami et al. (2019) studied awareness of library resources in Bauchi State College of Agricultural library. The study adopted descriptive survey research and 142 respondents was the study population. The questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. Results from the study revealed most of the respondents 126 (97%) are not aware of the e-books in the library. Also, a high percentage of the respondents 118 (91%) are not familiar with the audio-visual resources in the library. Likewise, it was revealed 118 (91%) of the respondents do not know the reference materials in the library. One hundred and eight of the respondents attested to not knowing the newspapers/magazines are available information resource in the library. The findings from the study imply that the students have a low level of awareness of the library resources in Bauchi State agricultural library. As such, it was suggested that the management of the school should make proper provision to introduce general studies on the use of library in their curriculum. This will help the students to gain more requisite knowledge of the library and its importance to the academic community.

Beyond awareness, the accessibility of library resources is a crucial factor in determining their utilisation. Eiriemiokhale and Oladele (2017) cited Kumar, Singh and Yadave (2011) opined that gaining access to the correct information is a challenging goal since information is very much available, yet users are not assured if it exists as well as where it can be found. Librarians must ensure optimum utilization of the few available materials the library procures in justification of

the cost of procuring them. Osaheni Oni et al. (2023) cited Adeoye and Popoola (2011) reported that a library user could face five possible types of inaccessibility problems. These include conceptual, linguistic, critical, bibliographic as well as physical inaccessibility. It can thus be opined that the more accessible information sources are, the greater the chances of their use. Readers will be disposed towards utilizing information sources requiring less effort to retrieve. The foundation of the principles of library services revolves around information exploitation. The subject considers optimum utilization of services as well as library materials. For a library to worth its salt, the materials as well as services it offers must endeavour to meet as well as fulfill users' requirements. Nonetheless, users' perception, a means by which a user form perception of as well as references regarding library materials, services as well as staff in the area of how their expectation are met by them must be utilized to measure library performance. (Oladije & Fabunmi, 2011).

Likewise, studies have been caried out to explore the accessibility of library resources among students, such as Aghadiuno et al. (2021) who examined a study on the influence of student's awareness, accessibility and usability of library and information resources in Isa Mustapha Agwal L Polytechnic, Lafia. The descriptive research design was carried out and the population consisted of 4300 students. The findings showed the participants with a mean score of 3.91 make use of books in the library. A high number of the participants with a mean score of 3.70 make use of the electronic information resources available in the library. In the same vein, participants with a mean score of 3.70 again make use of the magazines, while participants with the mean score of 3.60 use the map at regular interval for their academic activities. The findings of this study indicate that students are aware of the library resources available to them, as evidenced by their mean scores on the usage of various resources (books, electronic information resources, magazines, and maps). Furthermore, the results show that students find the library resources easily accessible, as they are able to use them regularly for their academic activities. However, to further facilitate students' use of library resources, it is recommended that lecture timetables allocate specific time for library use.

Eriemiokhale and Ibeun (2017) investigated the accessibility of library resources by students of Kwara state University Malete, Nigeria. The study adopted survey research design with a sample size of 240 students from six colleges. The study found that 193 (80.4%) of the respondents agreed to the accessibility of books in their library. Also, 190 (79.2%) of the

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respondents agreed to the accessibility of journal materials in the library. Likewise, 192 (80%) of the respondents' agreed to the accessibility of dictionaries in the library. While, 170 (70.8%) of the respondents attested to the accessibility of encyclopedia to them in the library. It can be deduced from the study that the library resources are generally accessible to them in the students. As such, it was recommended that the library should apportion time to orientate the students on the usefulness and how to go about accessing the available library resources.

Mubofu and Malekani (2021) examined accessibility of library resources and support services by distance learners in Tanzania. The study utilised a cross-section survey research method. The target population used for the study were 33 postgraduate students. A structured questionnaire with close ended questions was the instrument used to gather data. Result showed 21(64%) of the respondents affirmed they have access to the library resources and services. This finding implies that majority of the respondents attested to the availability of library resources to them. It was recommended that the management should promote more on the use of available information resources in the library for the betterment of students' academic performance.

Some studies have revealed the benefits of library resources to the students. The study of Eriemiokhale and Ibeun (2017) on the accessibility of library resources by students of Kwara state University Malete, Nigeria revealed that 197(82%) of the respondents make use of information materials available in the library to acquire academic knowledge, while 187(78%) use the library information resources to pass examination and 190(79%) for research purposes. As such, the implication is that the academic productivity of students in educational institutions depends on the level of access to quality information resource.

Dagdag and Galiza (2020) assess the perceived library use, level of satisfaction, and benefits among 197 students of a higher education institution in Isabela, Philippines. Descriptive research design was employed to describe the library experiences of the 197 students of a college institution who used the school library for academic year 2017-2018. The findings showed that the library materials play a significant role in facilitating students' academic work. Additionally, the library resources were found to be highly beneficial for exam preparation. The library was also found to aid students' academic efficiency, with a mean score of 3.50 for the statement "The library enables me to be more efficient in my study". Furthermore, the library facilitates research, with a mean score of 3.46 for the statement "The library helps me pursue ideas and find the information I need". Lastly, the library provides students with current knowledge, with a mean score of 3.45

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for the statement "The library provides me current knowledge in my course". It can be deduced from the study that the library plays a vital role in supporting the academic success and efficiency of students, as it provides them with necessary resources, facilitates research, and helps them acquire current knowledge, ultimately enabling them to perform better academically.

Methodology

The study used descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was129 students at EKSPOLY. The entire population of 129 students was used as sample size. Total enumeration sampling technique was adopted for study. The data collection instrument for the study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised three scales; level of awareness, Ease of accessibility and Benefits scale. The questionnaire was divided into four sections- section A, B, C and D. The questionnaire was given to specialists from the Department of Library and Information Science to determine the instrument's face validity. Modifications to the instrument were made in response to their comments and ideas. The questionnaire was administered personally by the researcher to the respondents electronically. To facilitate quick access to the respondents. The respondents were assured of confidentiality of their responses and were asked to be as honest as possible. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation for the research questions. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) will be used for computing and analysing the data generated from the study.

Results

Questionnaire administration and return rate

A total of 129 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the students in Ekiti State Polytechnic Isan-Ekiti, Nigeria and all the copies were properly filled and found useful for analysis amounting to a 100 % response rate.

Distribution of questionnaire and return rate

Table 1: Sample population for the study

Name of Institution Where Questionnaire was Administered	Distribution	Return	Percentage (%)
Ekiti State Polytechnic Isan-Ekiti	129	129	100
Total	**129**	**129**	**100.0**

Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

	Options	**F**	**%**
Gender	Male	78	60.5
	Female	51	39.5
Age range	15 – 20	64	49.7
	21 - 25	48	37.2
	26 – 30	9	7
	31 – above	8	6.2
Level	ND 1	59	45.7
	ND 2	70	54.3
Department	Accountancy	50	38.8
	Agricultural Technology	29	22.5
	Computer science	30	23.3
	Electrical/Electronic Engineering	20	15.5
Total		**129**	**100**

Table 1 shows that 78 (60.5%) of the respondents were male, while 51 (39.5%) were female. This implies that more male students responded to the study than female students. Majority of the respondents 64 (49.7%) were within the age range of 15 - 20, followed by 21 – 25 years with 48 (37.2%), 26 – 30 years 9 (7%), while 31 years and above constitute 8 (6.2%). Most of the respondents 70(54.3%) were OND 2 while the least of the respondents 59 (45.7%) were Ordinary National Diploma one (OND 1). Finally, majority 50 (38.8%) studied accountancy, 30 (23.3%) studied computer science, 29 (22.5%) studied agricultural technology while the least respondents 20 (15.5%) studied electronic and electrical engineering. This implies that most of the respondents in Ekiti State Polytechnic studied accountancy.

Answers to research questions

Research question one: What is the level of awareness of library resources among students of EKSPOLY?

Table 2: Awareness of library resources among students of EKSPOLY

S/N	Items	VHA	%	HA	%	MA	%	NA	%	Mean
1.	Textbooks	67	51.9	13	10.1	42	32.6	7	5.4	3.09
2.	Computers	3	2.3	87	67.4	3	2.3	36	27.9	2.44
3.	Handbooks	3	2.3	83	64.3	8	6.2	35	27.1	2.42
4.	Abstract/Index	2	1.6	86	66.7	4	3.1	37	28.7	2.41
5.	Journals	3	2.3	82	63.6	6	4.7	38	29.5	2.39
6.	Newspaper/ Magazines	8	6.2	74	57.4	6	4.7	41	31.8	2.38
7.	Dictionaries	1	0.8	84	65.1	5	3.9	39	30.2	2.36
8.	Encyclopedia	3	2.3	76	58.9	10	7.8	40	31	2.33
9.	Atlas/Maps	12	9.3	62	48.1	10	7.8	45	34.9	2.32
10.	Bibliographies	5	3.9	73	56.6	9	7	42	32.6	2.32
11.	Online/ Database	4	3.1	73	56.6	9	7	43	33.3	2.29
12.	Manuals	7	5.4	62	48.1	8	6.2	52	40.3	2.19
13.	Directories	3	2.3	69	53.5	5	3.9	52	40.3	2.18

VHA=Very Highly Aware, HA=Highly Aware, MA= Moderately Aware, NA= Not Aware

Table 2 reveals that majority of the respondents (x = 3.09) were aware of text books followed by (x = 2.44) for computers and (x = 2.42) for hand books. However, the least of respondents (x= 2.18) were not aware of directories, (x = 2.19) and manuals and (x = 2.29). This implies that textbooks, computers and handbooks are the library resources the respondents were aware of.

Research question two: What is the ease of accessibility of library information resources among students of EKSPOLY?

Table 2: Ease of accessibility of library information resources among students of EKSPOLY

S/N	Items	VEA	%	EA	%	A	%	NA	%	Mean
1.	Textbooks	85	65.9	1	0.8	30	23.3	13	10.1	3.22
2.	Dictionaries	74	57.4	7	5.4	33	25.6	15	11.6	3.09
3.	Manuals	72	55.8	11	8.5	24	18.6	22	17.1	3.03
4.	Handbooks	71	55	5	3.9	38	29.5	15	11.6	3.02
5.	Journals	73	56.6	3	2.3	36	27.9	17	13.2	3.02
6.	Computers	73	56.6	1	0.8	37	28.7	18	14	3.00
7.	Newspaper/ Magazines	68	52.7	12	9.3	28	21.7	21	16.3	2.98
8.	Abstract	64	49.6	11	8.5	33	25.6	21	16.3	2.91
9.	Encyclopedia	64	49.6	6	4.7	41	31.8	18	14	2.90
10.	Directories	68	52.7	5	3.9	28	21.7	28	21.7	2.88
11.	Atlas/Maps	58	45	17	13.2	28	21.7	26	20.2	2.83
12.	Bibliographies	57	44.2	13	10.1	32	24.8	27	20.9	2.78
13.	Online/ Database	29	22.5	4	3.1	87	67.4	9	7	2.41

VEA= Very Easily Accessible, EA= Easily Accessible, A= Accessible, NA=Not Accessible

Table 2 reveals that the majority of the respondents found (x = 3.22) textbooks, dictionaries (x = 3.09) and manual (x = 3.03) very easily accessible. While the least accessible are online/databases (x = 2.41) and bibliographies (x = 2.78). This indicates that the most accessible library materials in EKSPOLY library are textbooks and dictionaries.

Research question three: What are the benefits of using library resources among EKSPOLY students?

Table 3: Benefits of using library resources among EKSPOLY students

S/N	Items	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%	Mean
1.	Improved lifelong learning opportunities	3	2.3	84	65.1	4	3.1	38	29.5	2.40
2.	Enhanced knowledge for personal growth	4	3.1	79	61.2	7	5.4	39	30.2	2.37
3.	Better academic performance and result	3	2.3	77	59.7	10	7.8	39	30.2	2.34
4.	Access to engaging and entertainment resources	3	2.3	73	56.6	15	11.6	38	29.5	2.32
5.	Development of competitive skills	8	6.2	69	53.5	7	5.4	45	34.9	2.31
6.	Conservation of knowledge	3	2.3	78	60.5	4	3.1	44	34.1	2.31
7.	For enhancing academic knowledge	1	0.8	81	62.8	4	3.1	43	33.3	2.31
8.	Access to information for recreational purpose	3	2.3	75	58.1	4	3.1	47	36.4	2.26
9.	Helps to enhance quality of research	7	5.4	67	51.9	7	5.4	48	37.2	2.26
10.	Personal enrichment and enjoyment	1	0.8	67	51.9	9	7	52	40.3	2.13

Table 3 above shows the benefits of library resources among student of EKSPOLY which affirmed that (x = 2.40) used library resources for improved lifelong learning, (x = 2.37) for enhanced knowledge and personal growth and (x = 2.34) for better academic performance and result. The least (x = 2.13) used library resources for personal enrichment and enjoyment.

Discussion of the findings

The findings revealed that the students of EKSPOLY are primarily aware of library resources such as textbooks, computers, and handbooks. This awareness underscores the foundational role these resources play in academic activities, likely due to their direct relevance to coursework and research needs. However, the limited range of resources identified suggests a potential gap in awareness or utilisation of other valuable library offerings, such as journals, databases, and audiovisual materials, which could enhance their academic experience. This is inconsonance with the findings of Aghadiuno, Egye and Adeyemi (2021) who discovered that the

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polytechnic students in Lafia were mostly aware of the existence of books and electronic information resources which include computers in the library.

The findings reveal that textbooks and dictionaries were the most accessible resources, with a significant majority of respondents 85 (65.9%) and 74 (57.4%), respectively reporting these as very easily accessible. In contrast, more specialised resources like atlases/maps were less accessible, with only 17 (13.2%) of respondents indicating ease of access. Encyclopedias had moderate accessibility, as reported by 41 (31.8%) of respondents. However, directories emerged as the least accessible resource, with 28 (21.7%) of respondents noting they were never accessible. These results highlight a disparity in the accessibility of various resource types, suggesting a potential need for targeted improvements in the availability of less accessible materials. This collaborates the study of Abubakar (2020) who found that the most accessible information resources were books among others.

The findings reveal that students of EKSPOLY perceive the library resources as essential tools for lifelong learning, updating their knowledge and learning skills, and helps in passing exam. These benefits highlight the library's role not only as a space for academic study but also as a key resource for personal and professional development. The students' recognition of the library's impact on exam performance underscores its importance in providing access to current and relevant materials that support their academic goals. This reflects the library's function as a vital educational resource, fostering continuous learning and academic achievement. The findings align with that of Aladeniyi and Owokole (2018) which revealed that the students of the University of Medical Science, Ondo use the library resources for obtaining general information and for examination

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study highlights that while students at EKSPOLY are aware of core library resources like textbooks, computers, and dictionaries, their awareness of other valuable materials such as journals, databases, and specialised resources remains limited. This suggests a gap in both the utilisation and accessibility of more diverse library resources, which are crucial for enhancing students' academic experiences. The disparity in the accessibility of various materials, coupled with challenges like unawareness, poor classification, and the unavailability of certain resources, further impedes the full utilisation of the library. The following recommendations are made based on these findings:

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1. Librarians at EKSPOLY library staff should regularly organise library user education and orientation programmes to enable the students have awareness of information resources in the polytechnic library.

2. Clear signage within the library and printed or digital guides should be provided by the management to assist students in navigating the resources, especially in areas where classification might not be immediately apparent.

3. The library should conduct regular assessments to ensure that critical materials are available and up-to-date. It should also establish an acquisition policy to address shortages of key resources, either through procurement or interlibrary loans

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