

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

---

Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)

Libraries at University of Nebraska-Lincoln

---

February 2010

## Information Seeking Behaviour of Polytechnic Students: The Case of Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic, Unwana Nigeria

Kehinde Abayomi Owolabi

*Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic, yomiowolabi2000@yahoo.com*

Mutair Afolabi Jimoh

*follydena@yahoo.com*

Sylvester Chinedu Okpeh

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

---

Owolabi, Kehinde Abayomi; Jimoh, Mutair Afolabi; and Okpeh, Sylvester Chinedu, "Information Seeking Behaviour of Polytechnic Students: The Case of Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic, Unwana Nigeria" (2010). *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. 319.  
<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/319>

## **Information Seeking Behaviour of Polytechnic Students: The Case of Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic, Unwana Nigeria**

Kehinde Abayomi Owolabi

Library Division  
Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic,  
Unwana, Nigeria

Mutair Afolabi Jimoh

Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic  
Unwana, Nigeria

Sylvester Chinedu Okpeh  
Mootcourt Law Library  
University of Nigeria  
Nsukka

### **Introduction**

Polytechnics were established in Nigeria in the late 1970s as a way of providing Nigerians with another level of tertiary institutions besides the university system. Technical education helps produce middle-level human resources for the nation's economy (Tella, Owolabi, and Attama 2008). Attama (2005), supports that view and also states that polytechnics helps in the quest for technological and economic growth. These objectives may be hampered by the way some students seek and organize academic information. Ajiboye and Tella (2007) maintain that the way students organize their learning and search for information is crucial to their overall performance.

Information is vital to the development of human society. Uwem (1990) defines information as data that have been subjected to some processing functions and is capable of answering a user's query. Mabawonku (2005), highlights ways in which students can seek for information, which include colleagues, the Internet, library, friends, family members, recognized institutions, agencies, and private organizations. Eskola (1998) defines information as something which students need during their studies.

Having examined the meaning of information, it is necessary to define information-seeking behaviour. Uhegbu (2007) describes information -seeking behaviour as the way in which information users conduct themselves when searching for information. Ajiboye and Tella (2007) agree when they describe information-seeking behaviour as the way and manner people gather and sought for information for their personal use, knowledge updating and development. Uhegbu (2007) describes the factors affecting choice of information, particularly among students, which includes course of studies, level, age, and religion.

Specific investigation into information-seeking behaviour of students is of great importance to this study. The study by Barakutty and Salih (1999) cited by Owolabi (2007) at Calicut University, India, shows that the students used the Internet as the major source of information for their academic

development. Kakai, Ikoja-Odongo, and Kigongo–Bukonya (2004) conducted a study on the information-seeking behaviour of undergraduate students of Makerere University, Uganda, and discovered that the students seek the assistance of the library staff and rely on textbooks as their major source of information. Fidazani (1998) conducted a study at University of Botswana, Gaborone on the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of graduate students. Findings revealed that the students relied on library books, textbooks, and journals. Ajiboye and Tella (2007) conducted a research on university undergraduates' information-seeking behaviour: 12 percent of the students required information for their personal development, while 11.25 percent claimed that they sought information on health matter, and 64.1 percent sought for information for their academic development, 9.3 percent to secure employment.

## Objectives

- To discover the types of information needed by students
- To find the most preferred source of information
- To Identify various factors influencing choice of information.
- To discover the level of satisfaction students obtain when seeking for information.

## History

Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic was established in 1981 as the first Federal Polytechnic in Southeast Nigeria. It began on the present site of Federal Government College Okposi, Ebonyi State, Nigeria and moved to its permanent site in Unwana in 1987. The polytechnic operates five schools in eighteen departments and has programs leading to National Diploma (ND) and Higher National Diploma (HND) in sciences, engineering, and humanities. The library has 15,000 books and 250 serial titles.

## Methodology

- A survey research design was adopted for this work and a well structured questionnaire which identifies important variables was used for data collection.
- The target population was students of the polytechnic in which five hundred (500) of them were randomly selected using simple random sampling technique (SRST).
- One hundred (100) respondents were selected from each of the five schools.
- The schools included business studies, engineering, environmental, sciences (for which general studies is a service unit).
- In addition, five hundred copies of the questionnaires were distributed for which (480) four hundred and eighty respondents which represent 95.8 percent returned their fully completed questionnaires.

## Data Presentation

Frequency and simple percentage tables were used to present the data as shown below.

Table 1: Information required by the student

Required information	Frequency	Percentage
Academic	285	59.4
Employment	15	3.13
Industrial attachment	25	5.21
Health	101	21
Current affairs	54	11.3

Total	480	100
-------	-----	-----

The first question sought to know the various types of information required by the students.

Table 2: Major sources of information

Sources of information	Frequency	Percentage
Textbooks	124	25.8
Internet	101	21.0
Newspaper	98	20.4
Lecture notes	55	11.5
Dictionary/Encyclopedia	43	9.0
Thesis	32	6.7
Journals	23	4.8
Government publications	4	.8
Total	480	100

Table 2 sought to identify various sources of obtaining information by the students.

Table 3: Factors influencing choice of information.

Choice of information	Frequency	Percentage
1. Course of study	198	41.3
2. Level of study	110	22.9
3. Religion	87	18.1
4. Gender	85	17.7
Total	480	100

Table 3 sought to various factors that influence choice of information.

Table 4: Level of satisfaction

Sources of information	Frequency	Percentage
Very satisfied	203	42.3
Partially satisfied	189	39.4
Not satisfied	88	18.3
Total	480	100

Table 4 sought to know the level of satisfaction of information obtained by students

## Findings

One of the important findings of this study is that respondents had specific uses for information, which supported the finding of Ajiboye and Tella (2007). The study shows that students use information primarily for academic purposes.. This finding agrees with Kakai, Ikoja-Odongo, and Kigongo-Bukenya

(2004), when they observed that students' information seeking behaviors promote academic excellence. Ajiboye and Tella (2007) also support this finding. Textbooks are the major source of Information for students, which corroborates the findings of Fidzani (1998).

It was also discovered that level of study has a great influence on students' choice of information, since the curriculum goes from simple to complex. Another finding revealed that students are satisfied with information obtained in the library which substantiates the claim of Obasuyi (2004).

## Conclusion and Recommendations

Certain conclusions can be drawn from the study: students at the Polytechnic know the importance of information, given the fact that a majority of them seek information to improve their academic performance.

In view of the foregoing, the following recommendations are made:

- Polytechnic administration should provide more books and journals to the library.
- The students should be educated on the importance and use of information in their academic pursuits.
- Training programmes should be organized for the library staff so they can be more effective in meeting students' information needs.
- Information sources should be well-organized, classified accurately, and entered in the catalogue.

## References

- Ajiboye, J.O., & Tella, A. (2007). University undergraduate students' information seeking behavior: Implications for quality in higher education in Africa. *The Turkish Online Journal of Education Technology* 6(1): 40-52.
- Attama R. O. (2005). Polytechnic education, library resources and technological development in Nigeria. *Global Review of Library Information Science* 1(1): 9- 18.
- Fidzani, B. T. C (1998). Information needs and information-seeking behavior of graduate students at the University of Botswana. *Library Review* 47(7): 329- 340.
- Kakai M., Ikoja-Odongo, R., & Kigongo-Bukeny I.M.N. (2004). A study of the information students of Makerere University, Uganda. *World Libraries* 14(1) 544-564.
- Mabawonku I. (2005). The information needs of artisans: Case study of Artisans in Ibadan, Nigeria. *Lagos Journal of Library and Information Science* 3(1): 61 – 76.
- Obasuyi. L (2008). Information seeking behaviour, strategies and sources by the Nigerian Institute for Oil Palm Research (NIFOR) Scientists. *Nigerian Library Link* 6(1) 1- 12
- Osiobe. S.A. (1998). Information-seeking behaviors. *International Library* 20 (3) 337-346.
- Owolabi. K. A (2007). Internet access and usage by the students of Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic. *Nigerian Library Link* 5 (1) 38-47
- Tella. A, Owolabi. K. A. & Attama R. O (2008). Students use of the library: The case of Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic, Unwana Nigeria. *PNLA Quarterly* 72 (4) Sumner:8-10; 19-20.

Uhegbu, A. H (2007). *The information user: Issues and themes*. Okigwe Whytem Publishers.

Uwem, E (1990). *Information needs and resources of management staff of Calabar Cement Company*. Unpublished M L S Project University of Ibadan.