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Investigating Library Anxiety among First Year Students of Crawford University, Nigeria.

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Investigating Library Anxiety among First Year Students of Crawford University, Nigeria.

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Abstract

How a Library is efficiently used is a pivotal factor in determining the quality of education of a University. Therefore, identifying the factors affecting library use among students is becoming more necessary. The purpose of this research was to investigate the causes of library anxiety among first year students of Crawford University, Igbesa, Ogun State. The study employed a cross-sectional survey design involving all first year students (368 in number), cutting across the seventeen departments of Crawford University, Igbesa, Ogun state, Nigeria. The questionnaire was peer reviewed for validity and all the items were subjected to SPSS analysis using descriptive statistical analysis, percentages and frequency counts. Findings revealed that disturbance and noise inside the library, lack of library awareness, poor arrangement of the library, lack of cleanliness, library staff irritability, inability to borrow books out of the library, slow internet service among others are the major barriers that cause Library Anxiety among first year students of Crawford University. Based on these findings, recommendations were made such as improvement on internet facility, beautification of the library and its environment, etc.

Keywords: Investigating, Library Anxiety, First Year Students, Crawford University, Nigeria.

Introduction

It is the responsibility of library professionals to continually identify problems that may be hindering maximum use of the library by library users. It is important for librarians to be aware of what it is that makes libraries daunting and unfriendly, just as it is important to understand which element can lead to students' successful use of the library. (Sullivan-Windle, 2013).

Over the years, various library researchers have been able to detect factors such as lack of understanding of the arrangement of the library (Simisaye, 2012); insufficient internet access points (Onifade, 2013); lack of awareness on the part of users (Osinulu, 1998); size of the library (Esch and Crawford, 2006); lack of awareness of all available library resources/services and inability to access electronic databases and materials from the shelves as problems inhibiting library use. (Ifijeh, 2011).

Fear of the library, commonly known as 'library anxiety' is another impediment to library use. It is common with university students, especially first year students. Freshly admitted students

entering the University will encounter many new situations among which are the necessity of independence in research and finding the necessary resources in the libraries. This necessity is so unfamiliar to the students that it feels like entering another country with completely different environment and culture and this sudden change can sometimes even cause nervous reactions. This along with other factors can have complex psychological effects on students using academic libraries and thus affect the quality of using library facilities. The result of these reactions is creating fear and anxiety in students. The term, 'library anxiety' was first used by Mellon in 1996, and it means the negative and uncomfortable feelings experienced by university students when using or contemplating using the library (Carlile, 2007).

Jiao and Onwuegbuzie (1997) also defined library anxiety as an unpleasant or uncomfortable emotion characterized by worry, confusion, tension, and helplessness which occur when a student is in the library setting. These emotions have cognitive, affective, psychological and behavioural ramification. Some of the students described their fears as 'phobia'. This phobia caused them to describe library use as 'nightmare'. Students face such feelings at the early stage of researching and writing their papers or research assignment (Abusin and Zainab, 2010).

Mellon (1986) discovered that for a large number of students, initial library research experiences induce anxiety, resulting in search-avoidance behaviours, which in turn prevent them from developing library skills. Some students become so anxious about having to get information from the library that they are unable to approach the task in a systematic manner (Jiao and Onwuegbuzie, 1995). Library anxiety can be so debilitating that a student is prevented from approaching an assignment in an effective manner or logical fashion (Mellon, 1995).

Library anxiety is a phenomenon which must be overcome by students in order for them to take full advantage of library instruction and library use (Kuhlthau, etal, 1990).

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, it has been discovered that library users, especially first year students feel lost, overwhelmed and unable to locate the information they need from the library. Therefore, this study investigated the causes of library anxiety among first year students in higher institutions in Nigeria using Crawford University as a case study.

Research Objectives

1. To find out the causes of library anxiety among first year students in Crawford University.

2. To ascertain the contribution of library staff in causing and eliminating library anxiety among first year students.
3. To determine if services provided by academic library causes library anxiety.
4. To identify the prevalence of library anxiety among the first year students.
5. To ascertain the reaction of first year students about using the library.
6. To proffer solution to the problem of library anxiety among first year students.

Research Questions

1. What are the causes of library anxiety among first year students in Crawford University?
2. How has library staff contributed to and assisted in eliminating library anxiety among first year students?
3. Does the services provided by the academic library causes library anxiety?
4. What is the prevalence of library anxiety among the first year students?
5. How do the first year students react to use the library?
6. What are the solutions to the causes of library anxiety among first year students?

Literature Review

Library Anxiety has been the focus of researchers in a number of countries, especially the developed countries, but only a few studies have been done in Africa. In this study, a brief review of the most laudable researches on library anxiety among the students of higher institutions will be looked into.

Jiao and Onwegbuzie (1995) conducted a study on library Anxiety: Characteristics of At-Risk College students. Their findings revealed that students with the highest level of library anxiety tended to be male, undergraduate, those who did not speak English as their native language, who had high level of academic achievement, who were engaged in either part-time or full-time employment, and who infrequently visited the library.

Another study by Jiao and Onwegbuzie (1997) on Factors associated with Library Anxiety revealed that students with the highest level of anxiety are male, young, (18- 29 years), first year with a first language other than English language. In a study by Hariri and Nemati (2009) on Evaluation of Library Anxiety among Students: Collage Rehabilitation Science in Iran University of Medical Sciences, it was discovered that library anxiety due to staff barriers, affective barriers, library knowledge and mechanical barriers were around average. In the same study, it was discovered that male students experience more library anxiety.

In a study of Seyyed Hosseini, Khosravi and Jaromi (2014) on Investigating the Relationship between Library Anxiety and Emotional Intelligence, findings indicated that the level of library anxiety in Bushehr University of Medical Sciences students and Persian Gulf University students is lower than average. This shows that these students have experienced a little anxiety in library's

environment research also revealed that the mechanical factors has the highest rank among the five different library anxiety factors, while lack of library anxiety skills has the lowest rank.

Abusin and Zainab (2010) conducted a study on 'Exploring Library Anxiety among Sudanese University Students using diary entries as a means of data collection, it was discovered that 88.2% of the participants expressed feelings of fear and anxiety when they are using the academic library to write their first research paper. The diary analysis also revealed that 45% of the students expressed library avoidance behaviour when they are using the library.

Jokar and Taherian (2008), in a study titled "A. Comparative Study of Library Anxiety between Students of Educational Science and Psychology College in Shiraz University, based on the scale Bostick's library anxiety" discovered the library anxiety to be below average and that there was no meaningful difference between the library anxiety of male and female students and that of the students that had made use of libraries before entering the university compared to those who had not.

A study on library Anxiety among University Students: A Survey by McPherson (2015) indicated that limited exposure to sophisticated library environment seemed to have contributed to library anxiety of students. The unfamiliarity of students with the new library environment, coupled with a lack of the requisite skills to use the library was also responsible for a certain degree of library anxiety among students. The study also showed that students considered the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) and database difficult to maneuver. The survey provided clues about the factors that contribute mostly to library anxiety. Chief among them is the lack of information literacy skills such as their inability to locate resources, and use online catalogue and databases. There is also evidence that library anxiety impacted students negatively in a number of ways such as delaying the completion of assignments, and failure to turn in a good paper.

In a review carried out by Wildemuth .B (2017) on 'Library Anxiety: Characteristics of 'At Risk' College Students by Jiao, Q. G, Onwuegbuzie, A.J and Lihtensten, A.A (1996), the authors insisted that many students experience library anxiety, and recommend that libraries make every effort to be welcoming. In addition, they recommend that library instruction should be introduced at the high school level and, in college, incorporated into the classes that require library research. In this setting, library anxiety should be addressed during the instruction, and classroom teachers should plan to assist students in the early stages of their research.

Methodology

This study investigated causes of library anxiety among first year students in institutions of higher learning in Nigeria, a case study of Crawford University, Ogun state. It employed a cross sectional survey design involving all 100 level (first year) students, cutting across the seventeen departments of Crawford University. These students were chosen because they are newcomers to

the University system and are most likely to exhibit anxious behaviour towards the library for one reason or the other. According to Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun (2016), in a survey method, the researcher collects information from a large group of participants through their responses to the questionnaire items. They add that quantitative study essentially tries to explain the problem using numbers and attempts to generalize the results of the study to a larger population.

Sample and Data Collection Procedure

The total number of participants in this study was 368 which comprises of all 100 level (fresh) students of Crawford University, Ogun State, Nigeria that enrolled in 2017/2018 academic session. The enrolment list generated from the registry section of the University was used as the sample frame.

The data collection was done during the first semester of 2017/2018 (may/June) session when all students were on campus. Out of the entire population of 368 students that were given the questionnaire, 366 copies were filled and returned and that represents the response rate of the study. The questionnaire was peer-reviewed for validity and all the items were subjected to SPSS analysis, using descriptive statistical analysis, percentage and frequency counts.

Research Instrument

The main instrument used in this survey research is questionnaire. The questionnaire has two main sections. Section A elicits participants' demographic information. Section B is an adoption of Bostick's (1992) Library Anxiety Survey questionnaire consisting of 50 simple statements. This section is further sub-divided into 6 parts which consists of the following sections: (1) Affective Barriers: this deal with users' anxiety within the library environment and their inadequacy of library knowledge. (2) Barriers with library staff: denotes the perceptions of students about librarians and library staff as being too busy or unapproachable to assist students in using the library. (3) Barriers associated with library services: refers to students' perception about the services being rendered in the library. (4) Technical Barrier: refers to the feelings of students of not being able to operate technological equipment of the library, for example, the internet, the computer, OPAC, databases, etc. (5) Barriers associated with searching for information: refers to frustrations students face while searching for information in the library. (6) Solutions to the causes of library anxiety: contains statements that represent solutions to the challenges of library anxiety.

Presentation of Findings

Table 1. College

College	Frequency	Percent
CBSS	249	68.0
CONAS	117	32.0
Total	366	100.0

The above table shows that the CBSS has the highest number of respondents with 249 (68.0%) while CONAS had 117 (32.0%).

Table 2. Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	211	57.7
Female	155	42.3
Total	366	100.0

The above table shows that the male students were more than the female students in 100 level, that is, male 211(55.7%) while the female respondents were 155 (42.3%).

Table 3. Departments

Departments	Frequency	Percent
Accounting	55	15.0
Banking & Finance	1	.3
IRPM	10	2.7
Marketing	5	1.4
Business Administration & Management	21	5.7
Economics	21	5.7
Political Sci. & Int. Rel.	56	15.3

Sociology	12	3.3
Public Administration	5	1.4
Mass Communication	43	11.7
Microbiology	31	8.5
Biochemistry	23	6.3
Industrial Chemistry	3	.8
Physics with Electronics	3	.8
Geology and Mineral Sciences	5	1.4
Computer Science	59	16.1
ICT	13	3.6
Total	366	100.0

The above table reveals that Computer Science, Political Science and Accounting departments have the highest number of respondents with 59 (16.1%), 56(15.3%) and 55(15.0%) respectively. While Banking and Finance 1(0.8%), Physics with Electronics 3(0.8%) and Industrial Chemistry 3(0.8%) has the lowest respondents.

Table4. Causes of Library Anxiety (Affective Barriers)

Items	Variables	S A		A		U		D		S D	
		freq	%	freq	%	freq	%	Freq	%	freq	%
1.	Disturbances and noise inside the library	216	59.0	127	34.7	12	3.3	5	1.4	6	1.6
2.	Size and space constraints inside the library	148	40.4	153	41.8	18	4.9	29	7.9	18	4.9
3.	Crowding in the library	165	45.1	161	44.0	21	5.7	12	3.3	7	1.9
4.	Lack of library awareness	183	50.0	134	30.6	22	6.0	19	5.2	8	2.2
5.	Poor arrangement and lack of cleanliness	178	48.6	177	32.0	24	6.6	35	9.6	12	3.3
6.	The library opening hour is not conducive for me.	48	13.1	49	13.4	35	9.6	121	33.1	113	30.9
7.	Lack of security for users belonging inside the library.	130	35.5	137	37.4	22	6.0	59	16.1	18	4.9

8.	Poor ventilation triggers anxious and uneasiness	113	30.9	111	30.0	13	3.6	44	12.0	85	23.2
9	Library layout is unattractive and causes discomfort.	66	18.0	37	10.1	23	6.3	136	37.2	104	28.4
10	Offensive smell inside the library	101	27.6	91	24.9	20	5.5	89	24.3	65	17.8
11	The lighting system in the library is very poor	4	1.1	3	0.8	9	2.5	201	54.9	149	40.7

From the above table, 216 (59.0%) strongly agreed and 127 (34.7%) agreed that disturbances and noise inside the library are the major causes of library anxiety. Also 183 (50.0%) strongly agreed and 134(30.6%) agreed to lack of library awareness, while 178 (48.6%) and 177 (32.0%) are in agreement that poor arrangement and lack of cleanliness within the library constitute barriers to library anxiety among library users. Other factors that causes library anxiety as indicated in the above table are crowding in the library 165 (45.1%) and 161 (40.0%), size and space constraints inside the library 148 (40.4%) and 153(41.8%) and lack of security for users belongings inside the library 130 (35.5% and 137 (37.4%) etc.

Table 5. Staff Attitudes

Items	Variables	SA		A		U		D		SD	
		freq	%	freq	%	Freq	%	freq	%	freq	%
1	Library staff are not welcoming	50	16.1	39	10.7	25	6.8	127	34.7	116	31.7
2	Library staff not being able to re-shelf consulted books as quickly as possible.	63	17.2	36	9.8	27	7.4	113	30.9	127	34.7
3.	Library staff are not helpful and do not guide users to locate information resources.	35	9.6	36	9.8	28	7.7	133	36.3	134	36.6
4.	Library staff are not exercising their power to maintain order in the library	26	7.1	39	10.7	38	10.4	174	47.5	89	24.3
5.	Library staff are irritable and this prevents students from asking for help and makes them feel tensed.	58	15.8	62	16.9	33	9.0	88	24.0	125	34.2
6.	Library staff are not professionals and some are not aware of the	46	12.6	60	16.4	42	11.5	101	27.6	117	32.0

	location of the books										
7.	Staff discriminative behaviour and biased towards their relatives or some creates feelings of dislike, frustration and anger among some students	69	18.9	47	12.8	42	11.5	102	27.9	106	29.0

Table 5 indicates that 69 (18.9%) and 47(12.8%) agreed that staff discriminative behaviour and biased towards their relatives are the reason for library anxiety, 42(11.5%) were undecided while 102 (27.9%) and 106 29%) were in total disagreement to that. 63 (17.2%) and 36(9.8%) were of the view that library staff not being able to re-shelf consulted books as quickly as possible generates feeling of anxiety, 27 (7.4%) were undecided while 113 (30.9%) and 127 (34.7%) were in total disagreement to that. 58(15.8%) and 62(16.9%) claims that library staff irritableness generates anxious behaviour among library users, 33 (9.0%) were undecided while 88 (24.0%) and 125 (34.2%) were not in support of that. The result further shows that library staff has been helpful in guiding users to locate information resources in the library with 133 (36.3%) and 134 (36.6%) in support of that as against 35 (9.6%) and 36 (9.8%).

Table6. Services Provided by the Library

Items	Variables	SA		A		U		D		SD	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
1	The library does not provide adequate books.	33	9.0	35	9.6	18	4.9	118	51.4	92	25.1
2.	Lack of photocopier makes me feel frustrated and compelled me not to makes photocopies	54	14.8	63	17.2	29	7.9	88	24.0	132	36.1
3.	Lack of internet and on-line databases	111	30.3	70	19.1	21	5.7	95	26.0	69	18.9
4.	Books and other information resources are not up dated	55	15.0	64	17.5	34	9.3	122	33.3	91	24.9
5	The library does not provide sufficient copies of heavily used books.	50	13.7	47	12.8	30	8.2	130	35.5	109	29.8
6	Inability to borrow books out of the library makes me angry and dissatisfied.	97	26.5	101	27.6	31	8.5	68	18.6	69	18.9
7	Lack of adequate sign post and shelf list	54	14.8	37	10.1	43	11.7	99	27.0	133	36.3

The above table shows that lack of internet facilities and on-line databases constitute library anxiety 111 (30.3%) and 70(19.1), 21 (5.7%) were undecided and 95 (26.0%) and 69 (18.9%) were in total disagreement. Inability to borrow books out of the library 97 (26.5%) and 101

(27.6%) agreed, 31 (8.5) were undecided and 68 (18.6%) and 69 (18.9%) disagreed. The table further showed other responses in favour of library services.

Table7. Prevalent is Library anxiety (Technical Barriers)

Items	variables	SA		A		U		D		SD	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
1	Inability to use the OPAC	98	24.3	81	22.1	32	8.5	110	30.1	55	15.0
2	Always afraid of damaging the computers	79	21.6	63	17.2	46	12.6	93	25.4	85	23.2
3	The library rapid change from one database to the other coy from ebscohost to ebrary.	77	21.0	70	19.1	44	12.0	114	31.1	61	16.7
4	Lack of computer literate	86	23.5	65	17.8	27	7.4	62	16.9	126	34.4
5	Slowness of internet service in the e-library	137	37.4	37	10.1	35	9.6	92	25.1	65	17.8

The above tables shows that the slowness of the internet services in the library 137 (37.4%), inability to use the OPAC 89 (24.3%) and lack of computer literate 86 (23.5%) were the major causes of library anxiety among first year students in Crawford University.

Table 8. Students reactions about the library (Barriers associated with searching for information)

Items	Variables	SA		A		U		D		SD	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
1	Negative feelings about the library	62	16.9	51	13.9	72	7.4	106	29.0	120	32.8
2	I feel embarrass that I don't know how to search for books on the shelf	72	19.7	69	18.9	19	5.2	108	29.5	98	26.8
3	I am worried about not been able to find the necessary information that I need from the library.	67	18.3	65	17.8	20	5.5	131	35.8	83	22.7
4	I feel anxious when I need information related to my assignment and research work	56	15.3	64	17.5	33	9.0	139	38.0	74	20.2
5	I feel satisfied with the information I find during my information seeking process in the library	175	47.8	108	29.5	26	7.1	37	10.1	20	5.5
6	I feel anxious and fearful from the I	35	9.6	26	7.1	23	6.3	160	43.7	122	33.3

entered the library to search for information till I leave the library										
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The table above indicates that the library users feels satisfied with the information they find during their information seeking process in Crawford University library with 175 (47.8%) and 108 (29.5%) in agreement. It further reveals that the users feels embarrassed that they don't know how to search for information on the shelves with 72 (19.7%) and 69 (18.9%). Also users get worried about not been able to find the necessary information they need from the library is another factor that constitute library anxiety with 67 (18.3%) and 65 (17.8%).

Table9. Solution to Causes of Library Anxiety

Items	Variables	Yes		No	
		Freq	%	Freq	%
1	Use beautiful colour to design the library background	219	59.8	147	40.2
2	Provide way find signs around reading areas	318	86.9	48	12.9
3	Regular repair and replace of wormed out and damaged equipments	339	92.6	27	7.4
4	Adequate ventilation to ensure natural lighten and free flow of air	324	88.5	42	11.5
5	The use potted plants and flowers for interior decoration	322	88.0	44	12.0
6	Display artistic work within the library	320	87.4	46	12.6
7	Installation of security camera everywhere in the library	321	87.7	45	12.3
8	The internet wi-fi and electricity should be made available all the time	341	93.2	25	6.8
9	Library orientation programmes and users education for all first year students.	335	91.5	31	8.6

From the above table, the respondents agreed that internet wi-fi and electricity supply should be made available at all times 341 (93.2) against 25(6.8 %), regular repair and replace of damage and wormed equipments 339 (92.6%) against 27 (7.4), library orientation programmes and users education for all first year students. 335 (91.5%) against 31 (8.6%), Adequate ventilation to ensure natural lighten and free flow of air 324 (85.5%) among others revealed in the above table as the major solution library anxiety.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the findings indicates that altogether, first year students in Crawford University have the feeling of library anxiety one way or the other. It shows that this feeling hinder them from make the most of the information resources provided for them. It was gathered that the respondents from College of Business and Social Sciences (CBSS) were more 249 (68.0%)

against College of Natural and Applied Sciences (CNAS) 117(32.0%). Also the male students were more than the female students (table2). The entire students of the seventeen departments of the two colleges were used for the study and the results of the findings were presented in table3.

RQ1 reveals that the causes of library anxiety were disturbances and noise inside the library, lack of library awareness, poor arrangement and lack of cleanliness within the library, crowding and space and size constraints. This result was in agreement with the finding of Simisaye (2012), Esch and Crawford (2006) and Osinulu (1998) who mentioned lack of understanding of library arrangement, size of the library, and lack of awareness as the causes of library anxiety.

RQ2 shows that though library staff contribute to library anxiety but larger number of the respondents 133 (36.3%) and 134 (36.6%) indicated that library staff has been helpful in assisting them to locate information resources in the library.

RQ3 & RQ4 Lack of internet wi-fi and lack of knowledge of on-line databases, inability to borrow books from the library, inability to use the OPAC, lack of computer literacy, slowness of the internet etc were discovered to be the major reasons for library anxiety among first year students. The findings however were in total agreement with the findings of McPherson (2015) in his research on library anxiety among university students, he reported that lack of information literacy skills such as their inability to locate resources and use of catalogue and database are the chief causes of library anxiety among others.

RQ5 reveals that library users feels satisfied when they are able to find their information needs, it further reveals that they feel embarrassed that they don't know how to search for books on the shelf. Also, they get worried if they are not able to find the information resources they are looking for in the library and this make them tensed up, depressed and anxious.

Lastly, in RQ6, in all the nine strategies suggested for eradicating library anxiety, the respondents reported that each of them are significant.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of this study are quite revealing. The authors have pointed out that several barriers causes library anxiety among first year students in Crawford University. In the light of the above, the following recommendations were made based on the result of the findings of the study:

1. Crawford University Library Management and staff should discourage disturbance and noise making in the library which was the major cause of library anxiety among the first year students of the University.
2. Library awareness programmes such as library orientation and user education should be created. During this exercise, users should be thoroughly taught how to search for resource on the shelf. The shelves also should be properly labelled stating the classification number and the

subject areas represented, the library resource also should be well arranged on the shelves and regular cleanliness ensured.

3. Internet Wi-Fi with high speed transmission should be provided for the library; users should be educated on the availability of online databases and how to access and use them. They should also be taught how to use the OPAC software, those who are not computer literate should be encourage to go for computer training. This will go a long way in helping them to access the digital resources in the library.

4. Lastly, efforts should be made to beautify the library, using potted flowers, beautiful picture frames and display of artistic works. The library should be beautifully painted, and all damaged equipment such as fans, air conditioners, reading table and chairs etc should be repaired or replaced as quickly as possible to ensure good ventilation and conducive reading environment.

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