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**ALITERACY AS A THREAT TO UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS PATRONAGE TO
UNIVERSITY LIBRARY SERVICES IN SOKOTO STATE, NIGERIA.**

BY

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Abstract

The aim of the study was to determine Aliteracy as a threat to undergraduate students' patronage to university library services in Sokoto state, Nigeria. Three research questions were formulated to guide the study. The researcher used descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study comprises Three thousand (3000) Undergraduate students of the two universities, three hundred and forty-one (341) were sampled using proportionate sampling technique. The questionnaire was titled (ATUSPQ). The instrument was face validated by three experts one from Measurement and Evaluation unit and two experts from department of Library and Information Science, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Data collected was analyzed using percentage score. The major finding of the study revealed causes of aliteracy: inappropriate guidance from the teachers, invention of new technologies and social media, mingling with illiterates. findings showed aliteracy led to low in-depth knowledge on various subject areas and impaired undergraduate intellectual abilities. It also revealed provision of relevant services, good human relation, hybridization of library services are the strategies to increase the level of patronage to university library services. In-conclusion some recommendations were made which includes: Libraries can also curtail aliteracy by providing staff and students with a full range of print and electronic resources to support teaching and learning and thereby enhancing students patronage to library services. Librarians should do their best within their abilities to promote reading among the students by organizing literacy activities such as book discussion, library orientation, library seminar and friendly demeanor of librarians, will go a long way.

Introduction

The relevance of reading to the development of any student cannot be over-emphasize especially in the retrieval of abundance information resources in academic or university libraries; as a result of this, there is need for adequate use of library or library patronage in order to accomplish educational task especially among undergraduate university students. Reading is the act of going through a written text, image or on screen with the aims of figuring out something from it, it can refer to a process of looking at a series of written symbols and getting meaning from them. Robert, (2009) define reading as the act, practice or art of reading, in any sense of the verb, public recital the act of reading formally to a legislative body. It's also a literary research, study and scholarship, it's also a process in which any passage or word appear in any copy of a work. reading is a receptive skill through it we receive information.

Aliterate is an individual who possessed the potentials or ability to read but refuse to do so due to some technological interference that distract him from doing so. According to Ilogho (2011) Describes three categories of people, the partially literate people, the aliterate people and the avid readers. The partially literate people have no formal education. However, the partially literate acquired knowledge and information orally from parents, family members and their interaction with their environment. The avid readers are highly motivated individuals who take delight in reading. They read with passion and for pleasure, they also love and enjoy reading naturally. The alliterate person's existence: "In their lives they read what they must but no more and write, if at all, using degraded forms such as text messaging. Aliterate readers choose not to read, their skills fail, and then their possibilities for successful future learning low dou to information explosion and technologies.

Despite the ability and abundance of printed and electronic information resources still many students are not interested in reading despite they are capable of doing so, this has to do with exposure of the abundance information and communication technologies which contributes to aliteracy among undergraduate students. Merriam Webster Dictionary (2014) describes aliteracy as having the ability to read yet lacking the interest to do so. Aliterates readers easily abandon whatever book they set out to read. They cannot boast of reading more than a book in one year without several breaks. Aliteracy exist and cut across every profession and strata of society.

Olufowobi and Makinde (2011) opined that aliteracy is a reading problem which occur when reading ability can no more be matched by reading desire. Aliteracy is a situation whereby people can read and write but refuse to do so due to the presence of information and communication technologies which take their attention from reading, it is the choice not to practice literacy skills. Therefore, there is decline in patronage of services being provided by the university libraries as a result of ICT which lead to aliteracy.

University Library is an academic library which is situated in an academic environment of higher institutions of learning university libraries included. According to Reitz (2004) University library is a library that is an integral part of a college, university or other institutions of postsecondary education, administered to meet the information and research needs of its students, faculty and staff. University library therefore is a type of library found in institutions of higher learning universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education that provide services to clientele in various format.

The library services are part of the library operations which involved the planned activities that are performed for the provision of the needed services to patrons. The patrons constitute the various categories of users of such services. The library operations are essentially administrative and technical process (Akintunde, 2006). The technical processes refer to the house-keeping functions, which Oni (2004) classified in to four sub-systems of acquisition, cataloguing, circulation and serial control. These sub-systems are the backbone of the services that are interface between the library and its users. The basic services that university libraries commonly offered have been enumerated as traditional and ICT based are what undergraduate ought to patronized effectively.

Library patronage is regarded to be a physical and remote access to and consultation or use of libraries' collections by undergraduate students and or any clientele in the university. Schoenberger (2018) stated that patronage of the library by intended users is a vital measure of output services provided by libraries. One of the fundamental laws of library is that the information resources such as books and non-book materials must be well consulted by the intended users. Library users are very significant in the practice of librarianship. This is because library practice revolves around the users.

Statement of the problem

Aliteracy has become a great concern to the undergraduate student. Currently, many university students have become Aliterate, because they no longer see reading and writing as a pleasure, University students prefer to watch events on the screen rather than read about them on the pages of the paper. In actual fact, students of nowadays become reluctant readers due to increase interaction with social media activities and information technologies, the prospect of spending leisure time or even creating time to plough through books are being decline. University undergraduate students are not patronizing library services made available for them in different format.

This problem seems to be as a result of the embracement and interaction with new information technologies that undergraduate students may find it difficult to patronize the library services available for their consumption. This implies that, there is still gap which need to be filled and find solution to the problem that lead declining undergraduate to patronize university library services.

Purpose of the study

The general purpose of the study is to investigate the Aliteracy as a threat to undergraduate Student patronage to University libraries Sokoto State. The specific objectives are as follows: To

1. Determine the implication of aliteracy on Undergraduates patronage to library services.
2. Find out causes of aliteracy among Undergraduates.
3. To determine strategies to minimize aliteracy to undergraduate students' patronage to library services.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study would hopefully be significance to the librarians, Teachers and Parent, Students. This is because the result of the study will provide an insight and strategies of tackling the causes of aliteracy in learning activities. The findings of this study would help them to determine what often causes low patronage of the various services rendered in their libraries, the strength and weakness of their services as well as providing possible measures in order to satisfy the need of their patrons. To teachers and parents, the findings of this study will help them

to develop more confidence in teaching and learning process by provision of new technics that will meet up the current information needs and strategies for encouraging reading to the students. To the Students, the finding will help the student on how to develop habit of access to current, appealing to high interest and useful books and other reading materials in their classrooms, home, public and school libraries and other location within the community.

Review of Literature

Concept of Aliteracy

Aliteracy defined as lack of the reading habit and incapable readers who choose not to read. Aliterate individual is one who has acquired proficiency in reading and writing. Nowadays, literate and illiterate are used, an individual could be literate in one context and yet to be illiterate in another context. Olufowobi and Makinde (2011) revealed that the notions literacy and illiteracy imply respectively, the possession and lack of ability to read and write. One pertinent issue needs to be addressed and clarify here is, one may possess the ability to do a task and may not be willing to do it, having the ability to read and write does not in any way means having the desire to read and write. Aliteracy is the state of being able to read but being uninterested in doing so. This issue considered to be a problem that is happening separately from illiteracy which is common in the developing world while aliteracy is a problem in the developed world. However, Krashen, (1993) clearly relates the problem of aliteracy to a neglect of voluntary reading.

Nathanson, Pruslow and Levitt (2008) are of the opinion that a high percentage of university undergraduate student do not read regularly and should be considered alliterate. As frequent voluntary reading has been connected with high level of performance in other areas, it is expected that university student as professionals in training, should practice literacy beyond the functional level. They are expected not only to read what is required for their courses, but also read advanced text critically. The latest literacies not only enable the new way of generating and preserving knowledge.

Implication of Aliteracy on Undergraduate Student Patronage to Library Services

When students are being infected with an epidemic called “Aliteracy”, they may likely find library services irrelevant which often cripple their success and affect their academic performance. To know the world and its environment, a student’s makes a difference himself

through patronizing library, reading of books, daily papers, and different magazines in order to escape from the aliteracy. Provided students has been instructed to read and has built up the affection for books, he /she can investigate for himself the abundance of human encounters and information through reading. Students, who miss the chance of connecting with books in their initial stages of life, find it difficult to obtain good reading habit in their later years after being literate (Deavers, 2000). Aliteracy also implicate those that are often not bother to read instructions made by doctors, chemists and other materials that carries instructions, decision makers in commerce, industry and government are not making the time and effort to read the extensive amount of written materials that are available to them in the university libraries. First of all, the lack of reading or aliteracy could be a manifestation of, either, a gross negligence of duty, or, possibly worse, a basic lack of competence.

Causes of Aliteracy among Undergraduate Students

Aliterates and reluctant readers have never given reading a chance. Quite a number of factors that cause aliteracy have been identified as responsible for the dying reading culture; while some factors that cause aliteracy are physical, while others are psychological. The psychological factors include: Lack of enthusiasm, urge, drive, desire, and motivation to read.

Lack of choice in what to read, due to the operational systems of schools, students are not in position to determine what books or materials the school board or authorities recommends. Mathew (1978) equally stated that negative attitude to reading is one of the causes of aliteracy among students. However, attitude is usually considered as one's mood or feelings towards a person, group, object, situation or value. Mathew made a clear difference between the attitude of boys to reading and the attitude of girls to reading. While few girls are categorized as aliterates, aliteracy is more prevalent among boys. This is because boys have been observed to engage less in recreational reading than girls. Boys were also identified as problem readers compared to girls, and as a group demonstrated a lower reading achievement (Kush and Watkins, 1996). This disturbing trend tended to correlate with evidence of higher high school dropout rate among male students, gradually it causes aliteracy.

Strategies to Minimize Aliteracy among University Undergraduate Student Patronage to Library Services

Aliteracy has become rampant phenomena which is escalating continuously among students in the information age, lack of reading habit may negatively change the attitude of an individual and fail to discover countless hidden secrets of life success and intellectual achievement. Thus, to minimize the decline in reading among students of the University is a significance subject of concern to Teachers, Librarians, Parents, educators, Government and other stakeholders.

The teachers have their own role to play in minimizing aliteracy among students. Medahunsi (2008) stated that, teachers should do the best within their abilities to promote reading among the students. They should form reading groups, allocate time for various reading activities and to students of various ability levels. To minimize aliteracy among students, teachers must do the following: Identify the aliterates in their classes and in the whole school; work one on one with the school librarians to connect the students with books; Subject teachers must be familiar with the good books on their subjects and recommend them to their students; and encourage the students to read books on their own. Reading is imperative to the success of the students; teachers must therefore take it as their teaching duties, promotion of reading among students. Teachers has to plan on how give an assignment and project to students which would make them to read and patronize library regularly.

The libraries have its own role to play in providing strategies to minimize aliteracy among students, libraries are the backbone of any institution and the cornerstone of the university community which is integral part of teaching and learning activities. By providing teachers and students with a full range of print and electronic resources to support learning, the library enhances students' achievement. A well-stocked and well-staffed university library has a positive impact on students' achievement regardless of the socio- economic or educational level of the community. University libraries provide teachers, students and community with a current collection of multi-perspective and multi-format resources aligned with the local curriculum and international academic standards. This collection forms the core of the university information infrastructure and serves as a gateway to the world beyond the classroom (Lance, 2006).

Research Methodology

Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The study covered two Universities in North West, Nigeria. Namely: Usmanu Danfodio University, Sokoto and Sokoto State University, Sokoto. The population of the study is Three thousand (3000) UG III Undergraduates from the two universities under study, proportionate sampling technique was used to sample Three hundred and forty-one (341) with the view of getting adequate information regarding the “Aliteracy as a threat to Undergraduate student patronage to university library services. 339 questionnaires were filled and return by the respondent. The questionnaire is a close ended structured based on four-point rating scale. Data was collected through the use of questionnaire with 21 items, the instrument was face validated by three expert one from measurement and evaluation unit and two experts from department of library and information science, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The data collected was analyzed using percentage frequency.

Data Analysis

Research Question 1. Causes of Aliteracy among undergraduate patronage to University library services.

KEYS: SA (strongly agree) A (agree) D (disagree) SD (strongly disagree)

s/n	Items statement	SA	A	D	SD
1	Inappropriate guidance from teachers	174(51.3%)	141(41.5%)	19(5.6%)	5(1.4%)
2	Mingling with illiterates	186(54.8%)	123(35.6%)	21(6.1%)	11(3.2%)
3	Inappropriate guidance from parents	138(40.7%)	122(35.9%)	58(13.5%)	21(5.6%)
4	Poor teaching instructions	167(49.2%)	142(41.8%)	16(4.7%)	14(4.1%)
5	Lack of understanding reading	170(50.1%)	144(42.4%)	16(4.7%)	9(2.6%)
6	Invention of new technologies	200(58.9%)	99(29.2%)	26(7.6%)	14(4.1%)
7	Indoor games	177(52.2%)	139(41.0%)	18(4.5%)	5(1.4%)
8	Peer group influence	202(59.5%)	115(33.9%)	16(4.7%)	6(1.7%)
9	Student over dependency in watching home videos	170(50.1%)	144(42.4%)	16(4.7%)	9(2.6%)
10	Student over engagement with sports activities	186(54.8%)	123(35.6%)	21(6.1%)	11(3.2%)
11	Outdoor games	139(41.0%)	142(41.8%)	31(9.1%)	27(7.9%)

Source: questionnaire, 2021

The data gathered from table 1 above indicated that, 51.3% of the respondent strongly agree with inappropriate guidance from the teachers cause aliteracy among undergraduate, 54.8% strongly agree mingling with illiterate cause aliteracy among undergraduate student, 58.9% strongly agree with invention of new technology cause aliteracy to undergraduates 50.1% strongly agree with over dependency on watching television and other technological devices by undergraduate cause aliteracy and peer group influence also cause aliteracy respectively.

Research Question 2. Implication of Aliteracy on undergraduate patronage to university library services

KEYS: SA (strongly agree) A (agree) D (disagree) SD (strongly disagree)

s/n	Items state	SA	A	D	SD
1	Aliteracy leads students to low in-depth knowledge of various subjects' areas	210(61.9%)	100(29.4%)	17(5.0%)	12(3.5%)
2	Lack of reading habits leads student to deficiency in new vocabulary	192(56.6%)	99(29.2%)	41(12.0%)	7(2.0%)
3	Aliteracy defect in library patronage leads students to low quality decision	185(54.5%)	111(32.7%)	22(6.4%)	21(6.1%)
4	Aliteracy limits students on mental imagination and deliberate thinking	172(50.7%)	144(42.4%)	14(4.1%)	9(2.6%)
5	Aliteracy and irregular library patronage impaired students' intellectual abilities	195(57.5)	120(35.3%)	19(5.6%)	5(1.4%)
6	Deficiency in reading habit deprive student's quality to interpersonal relationship	202(59.5%)	115(33.9%)	16(4.7%)	6(1.7%)
7	Aliteracy denies students benefit of being abreast in their field	139(41.0%)	142(41.8%)	31(9.1%)	27(7.9%)
8	Lack of reading habit limits student from analytical abilities	197(57.5)	118(35.3%)	19(5.6%)	5(1.4%)
9	Aliteracy denies students to have access to resources relevant to their studies	183(50.7%)	136(42.4%)	13(4.1%)	7(2.6%)
10	Aliteracy deprives student's inspiration and opportunities	191(56.6%)	100(29.2%)	41(12.0%)	7(2.0%)
11	Aliteracy leads student to deficiency in new terminologies	169(49.2%)	140(41.8%)	17(5.0)	13(3.8%)
12	Aliteracy deprives students' opportunities	167(49.2%)	142(41.8%)	17(5.0)	13(3.8%)

Source: Questionnaire, 2021

The data gathered from table 2 above indicated that, 61.9% of the respondent strongly agree aliteracy led to undergraduate to low in-depth knowledge of various subject areas, 56.6% strongly agree with poor reading habit led student deficiency in new vocabulary 57.5% strongly agree with irregular library patronage impaired undergraduates intellectual abilities among society, 56.6% of the respondent also strongly agree Aliteracy deprives students inspiration and opportunities, that indicate aliteracy has an implication on undergraduate students.

Research Question 3. Strategies to minimize aliteracy on undergraduate student patronage to university library services.

KEYS: SA (strongly agree) A (agree) D (disagree) SD (strongly disagree)

s/n	Items statement	SA	A	D	SD
1	Provision of relevant services attract student to patronize university libraries.	210(61.9%)	100(29.4%)	17(5.0%)	12(3.5%)
2	Provision of effective human relation would enhance undergraduates' patronage	202(59.5%)	115(33.9%)	16(4.7%)	6(1.7%)
3	Teacher should inculcate reading habit by giving student assignment which make them to patronize library services	195(57.5)	120(35.3%)	19(5.6%)	5(1.4%)
4	Provision of relevant resources available in the library	192(56.6%)	99(29.2%)	41(12.0%)	7(2.0%)
5	Library beautification will attract student to patronize to library services	185(54.5%)	111(32.7%)	22(6.4%)	21(6.1%)
6	Hybridization of library services is a strategy to improve students' patronization to library services	172(50.7%)	144(42.4%)	14(4.1%)	9(2.6%)
7	Engage student with book discussion promote reading habit	139(41.0%)	142(41.8%)	31(9.1%)	27(7.9%)
8	Student participation in library orientation	196(57.5%)	121(35.3%)	17(5.6%)	5(1.4%)
9	Facial expression of librarians	175(50.7%)	142(42.4%)	13(4.1%)	9(2.6%)
10	Libraries seminar for Undergraduate student	141(41.0%)	139(41.8%)	33(9.1%)	26(7.9%)

Source: Questionnaire, 2021

The table 3 above reveals that 61.9% of the respondent strongly agree that provision of relevant services attract student to patronize library services, 59.5% of the respondent strongly agree that good human relation would enhance library patronage and curb aliteracy among undergraduate, 57.5% of the respondent strongly agree undergraduate participation in library orientation would minimize aliteracy and increase the level of patronage to library services 57.5% responses revealed that teachers should give their student assignment which make them to patronize library services, 50.7% of the respondent agree with hybridization of library service would improve patronage of library services by undergraduates.

Discussion of findings

The data collected from the respondents indicated the causes of aliteracy which includes: inappropriate guidance from the teachers, invention of new technology and social media, mingling with illiterate, peer group influence and over dependency on watching television and other technological devices are what causes aliteracy among undergraduates and denied them to patronize library services. This was supported Mathew (1978) stated that negative attitude to reading is one of the cause of aliteracy among students, new technologies, inappropriate guidance from teachers, and some undergraduate dedicated their time on watching films and games which may eventually denied them to patronize library services Mathew made a clear difference between the attitude of boys to reading and the attitude of girls to reading. While few girls are categorized as aliterates, aliteracy is more prevalent among boys. This is because boys have been observed to engage less in recreational reading than girls. Boys were also identified as problem readers compared to girls, and as a group demonstrated a lower reading achievement.

The findings of the study revealed how aliteracy implicate undergraduate student which includes: aliteracy led to undergraduate to low in-depth knowledge of various subject areas, poor reading habit led student deficiency in new vocabulary, irregular library patronage impaired undergraduates' intellectual abilities and aliteracy deprives student's inspiration and opportunities, This is line with idea of Deavers, (2000) who stated that, aliteracy led to undergraduate to low in-

depth knowledge of various subject areas. Aliteracy also implicate those that are often not bother to read instructions made by doctors, chemists and other materials that carries instructions, decision makers in commerce, industry and government are not making the time and effort to read the extensive amount of written materials that are available to them in the university libraries. First of all, the lack of reading or aliteracy could be a manifestation of, either, negligence and reluctancies.

The finding also made it clear that provision of relevant services attract student to patronize library services, good human relation would enhance library patronage and curb aliteracy among undergraduate, undergraduate participation in library orientation would minimize aliteracy and increase the level of patronage, and teachers should give their student assignment which make them to patronize library services. This was supported by Medahunsi (2008) stated that, teachers should do the best within their abilities to promote reading among the students. They should form reading groups, allocate time for various reading activities and to students of various ability levels. To minimize aliteracy among students, teachers must identify the aliterates in their classes and in the whole school; work one on one with the school librarians to connect the students with books; Subject teachers must be familiar with the good books on their subjects and recommend them to their students;

Recommendations

In view of the findings of the study, these recommendations were made:

1. The home is the first call of salvation, students need to see in their parents a high level of reliable engagement in reading in order to be encouraged to do the same

2. Libraries can also curtail aliteracy by providing staff and students with a full range of print and electronic resources to support teaching and learning activities and thereby enhances students' achievement.
3. Librarians should promote reading habit among undergraduates by organizing literacy activities such as book discussion, library orientation, library seminar and friendly demeanor of librarians will go a long way.
4. Undergraduates should pursue an excellent academic performance, frequent library patronage and gain adequate knowledge that will help them in the future.

Conclusion

This study investigated Aliteracy as a threat on Undergraduate patronage of university library services in Sokoto state, Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was used, the respondents comprises undergraduate students of two Universities in Sokoto state, Nigeria. The study made use of questionnaire as instrument of data collection. The findings disclose that undergraduate students have become Aliterate in the sense that, they see reading as a task not pleasure, too much interaction with technological devices and social media which led to low level of patronage to university library services.

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