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**Effective Utilisation of University Library Resources by Undergraduate Students: a case study of Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Nigeria**

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## **Abstract**

*The study surveyed the utilization of resources of Federal University Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE) Library, Ekiti-State, Nigeria. The main purpose of the study is to find out the level of utilization of the library resources and its satisfaction by undergraduate students. The research design used for this study is the descriptive research design of the survey type and the instrument used was structured questionnaire administered to students in the university. The sample study is 400 targeted undergraduate students to whom four hundred copies of questionnaire were distributed across the four faculties of the university while three hundred and eighty four (384) copies of questionnaires were returned and found useable/fit for the analysis representing a response rate of 96%. It was revealed in the study that erratic power supply, functional resources, adequate reading space, lack of physical facilities ,like toilet, etc. are the major problems preventing students from effectively utilizing the resources in the library for their information needs. Recommendations such as construction of standard library building equipped with necessary physical facilities like toilet, spacious reading rooms, conference centres etc., and stand-by generator, Inverter or solar power were proffered as solutions to increased patronage and effective utilization of the library resources by the students.*

**Keywords: Utilisation, Library resources, undergraduate students, Federal University Oye-Ekiti**

## **Introduction**

The major aim of any university library is to support teaching, learning and research activities of its parent institution. University library must therefore, make sure that their resources are well utilized as this is essential for educational development of the students (Onifade, Ogbuiyi and Omeluzor, 2013). These libraries exist to enhance the acquisition of knowledge by their clientele through the provision of reading materials - book and non-book for the purposes of teaching, learning and research. A university library, according to Mallaiah, Kumbar and Mudhol (2008) occupies the central and primary place in teaching and research, therefore, it has to meet the diverse and growing needs of educational programme at the undergraduate, post-graduate and research levels. Since academic libraries, according to Adetimirin (2007), are to acquire and organised both printed and electronic information for accessibility and use by its clientele. It is therefore necessary to adopt information and communication technologies (ICTs) in Nigerian University Libraries in the process of lending and borrowing its collections.

The library today is a busy information centre, where information is packaged in various formats to the advantage of the users. The value of the library collection depends not only on the quantity of information sources but on the effective ways and means of providing and interpreting them to users. Some of the terms used in the library activities such as cataloguing, classification, charging and discharging, etc. are not common to the users; hence these should be interpreted in the easiest understandable ways (Mallaiah, Kumbar and Patil, 2008).

The primary purpose of university libraries, according to Oyewusi and Oyeboade (2009) is to support teaching, learning and research, in ways consistence with, and supportive of, the institution's mission and goals. In addition, library resources and services should be sufficient

in quality, depth, diversity, and currency to support the institution curriculum. As a result of this, university libraries are often considered as the most important resource centre of an academic institution.

However, university education in Nigeria is facing a critical challenge in meeting new demand of 21st Century with its ever increasing population growth, inadequate library facilities and resources. Adequate library resources and services at the appropriate level for degrees offered should be available to support intellectual, cultural, and technical development of students enrolled in Nigerian universities. The growth of research in all fields of human endeavors is becoming increasingly detailed and sophisticated, faculty members and students have realized that the library has great role to play in the provision of information necessary for their day to day research and their academic work.

According to Quadri, Adetimirin and Idowu (2014), the undergraduates of university need information to satisfy their social and psychological needs to promote and enhance their academic pursuit during their course of study in the university. The purpose of the university libraries is to provide adequate and relevant information resources both in print and non-print formats. The print information resources like journals, textbooks, magazines, newspapers and reference materials and non-print like CD-ROM, audio-visual materials, micro film, micro fiches, databases, and e-resources are to support assignments, projects work, term papers and seminar presentations by providing relevant information and services for effective and efficient achievement of academic excellent. However, one of the objectives of the study is to find out the perceptions of students on adequacy of the information resources in the library.

## **Literature Review**

The basic function of any university is to conserve the existing knowledge, to transmit knowledge through teaching, and to create new knowledge through research. The university library is the university's principal instrument in the conservation of knowledge through its rational, systematic and comprehensive acquisition of all type of human communications records, published and unpublished, written or oral in recorded form that embody the ideas of knowledge of the past since each new idea or invention grows out of accumulated and conserved knowledge(Daramola, 2016).

According to Omotundes, et al (2014), universities are to generate new knowledge and also encourage transferred and adopted of this new innovation. Since this requires an atmosphere of research, libraries are left with no options or choice than to provide access to relevant information resources by applying this to enable quick access, integrate and repackage information for the end user that will capacitate and enrich higher educational institutions means of conducting research. Basically, library resources are materials that users consult in making decisions and also for problem-solving.

The uses of electronic information resources in the University libraries is aimed at broadening the range of available information within the library and adding value to the content by making them accessible through digital means so that students, researchers, and the entire members of the university community can access them anytime and anywhere. One of the objectives of a university is to encourage acquisition of knowledge, that is, to encourage and promote scholarship and research in all fields of learning and human endeavour. Every tertiary institution library, including university library, is expected to meet the objectives of the institution that established and funds it. Libraries have been around for a very long time and are traditionally seen as collections of information and services. Libraries have always played a significant role, enabling people to engage with all kinds of information and knowledge resources (Curran, Murray, Norrby and Christian, 2006)

In a study conducted by Igun and Adogbeji (2007) among the postgraduate students, majority of the students claimed that their main purpose of using the library is to update their knowledge and skills. It is therefore essential to know the needs and desire of the users in order to satisfy them. However, literature has revealed that information availability does not

mean accessibility and utilization; therefore, university libraries have to market their resources and services to attract users.

In the same vein, Ugah (2008) opined that the more accessible information resources are, the more likely they would be used and the readers tend to use resources that require the minimum effort to access. Even though the world is experiencing the concept of information “explosion” or “overload”, the third world countries of which Nigeria is a part can be said to be experiencing information poverty. This is, according to Ochogwu (2007) due to the failure of our library professionals to provide complete access to those information resources due to poor indexing, abstracting and bibliographic work on their part.

Agbonlahor’s (2006) investigation on motivation for use of information technology in universities revealed that the number of information technology related courses that lecturers had attended, significantly influenced their level of use of computers. More recently, in a study on predictive effect of academic qualification on perceived use of computer based libraries by staff in Nigerian university libraries, Uwaifo (2009) found out that there is a strong relationship between perceive use and actual usage of computer based libraries by the library staff.

In a study of accessibility and use of library resources by undergraduates in Nigerian State University of Technology Oyewusi and Oyeboade (2009) observe that LAUTECH undergraduates appreciate the role of library to their studies. Therefore, university libraries, according to Olofinsawe and Oyenyi (2010) should build strong collection of information resources in physical and digital formats to cater for knowledge requirements of their users. It is therefore necessary to survey the utilization of library resources by undergraduate students. The study therefore aims to provide an insight in this regard.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite several efforts that are being made by the library management to proffer solution to the problems of ever rising costs of library resources, inelastic library budget and technological advancement which are leading to outmoded information within a very short time, it was still been observed by researchers that library users, most especially undergraduates, were complaining of inability of library to meet up their information needs. To develop need based collection that would always meet the information needs of users

therefore, a survey of students' utilization of library resources should be undertaken to measure the library resources in term of its value and utility by the clientele. Such survey will reveal the users' satisfaction with regard to the adequacy or otherwise of the resources. The study, therefore surveys undergraduate students' utilization of library resources of Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are to:

1. determine the level of utilization of the resources in the library.
2. find out the perceptions of students on adequacy of the information resources in the library.
3. determine the problems experienced by the students in utilizing the resources.
4. offer suggestion for improved library services, where necessary.

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

This research is of descriptive and survey methodology. The statistical population includes the students of faculties of Social Science, Humalities, Engineering, Agriculture and Science in Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Nigeria, who have spent at least an academic session. For the purpose of this study, random sampling technique was used in order to give each person in the sampling frame an equal chance of being selected for the study.

#### **Data Collection**

To evaluate the utilization of resources by students, a survey instrument in the form of self-administered questionnaire was developed for the purpose of eliciting the main data for the study. Copies of questionnaire were administered on the respondents (students), who have spent at least a session in the university, in their respective classes in the different departments across the four faculties. Four hundred (400) students were randomly selected by

lottery which gave each person in the sampling frame an equal chance of being included in the sample. Some of the students were personally interviewed to complement the questionnaire used for data collection for this study.

### Data Analysis

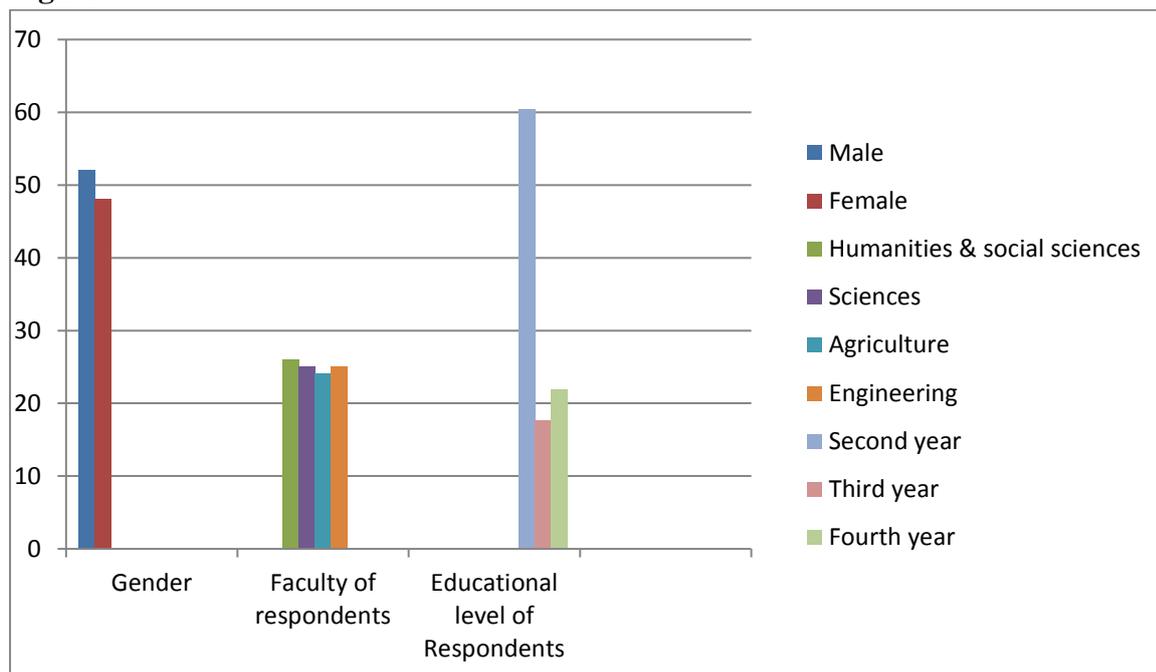
Three hundred and eighty four (384) copies of questionnaire were returned and found useable/fit for the analysis, representing a response rate of 96%. The descriptive statistics involving frequency counts, tables and percentages presented in charts were used for the data analysis. For effective understanding of the analysis, the data of ‘very satisfied’ and ‘satisfied’ were added together and that of ‘dissatisfied’ and ‘very dissatisfied’ were also added together. Also, ‘available and very satisfactory’ and ‘available and satisfactory’ were added together.

### Data Analysis and Interpretations

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

S/N	Specific Characteristics	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
2	Gender of Respondents		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Male</li> <li>• Female</li> </ul>	200 184	52.1 47.9
	Total	384	100
4	Faculty of Respondents		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Humanities &amp; Social Sciences</li> <li>• Sciences</li> <li>• Agriculture</li> <li>• Engineering</li> </ul>	100 96 92 96	26 25 24 25
	Total	384	100
	4	Educational Level of Respondents	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 200 (second year)</li> <li>• 300 (third year)</li> <li>• 400 (fourth year)</li> <li>• 500 (fifth year)</li> </ul>		232 68 84	60.4 17.7 21.9
Total		384	100

**Figure 1**

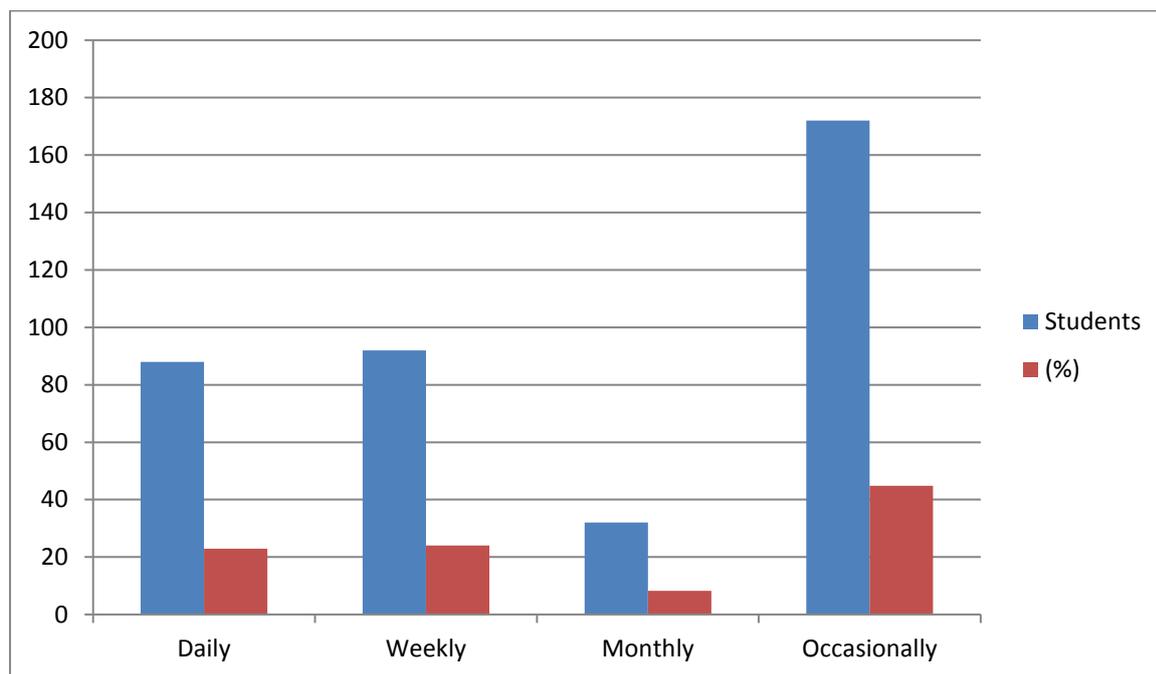


The table and figure above reveals that there were more male respondents 52.1% than female 47.9%. Majority of the students 26% were in the Faculty of Humanities and Social sciences followed by Faculties of Sciences and Engineering both 25% respectively while Faculty of Agriculture had the least number of students, 24%. Also, majority of the respondents 60.4% were in 200 level followed by 400 level 21.9% and 300 level 17.7%

**Table 2: Frequency of library use**

Frequency	Students	Percentage (%)
Daily	88	22.9
Weekly (at least once in a week)	92	24
Monthly (at least once in a month)	32	8.3
Occasionally (anytime they like)	172	44.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>100</b>

**Figure 2**



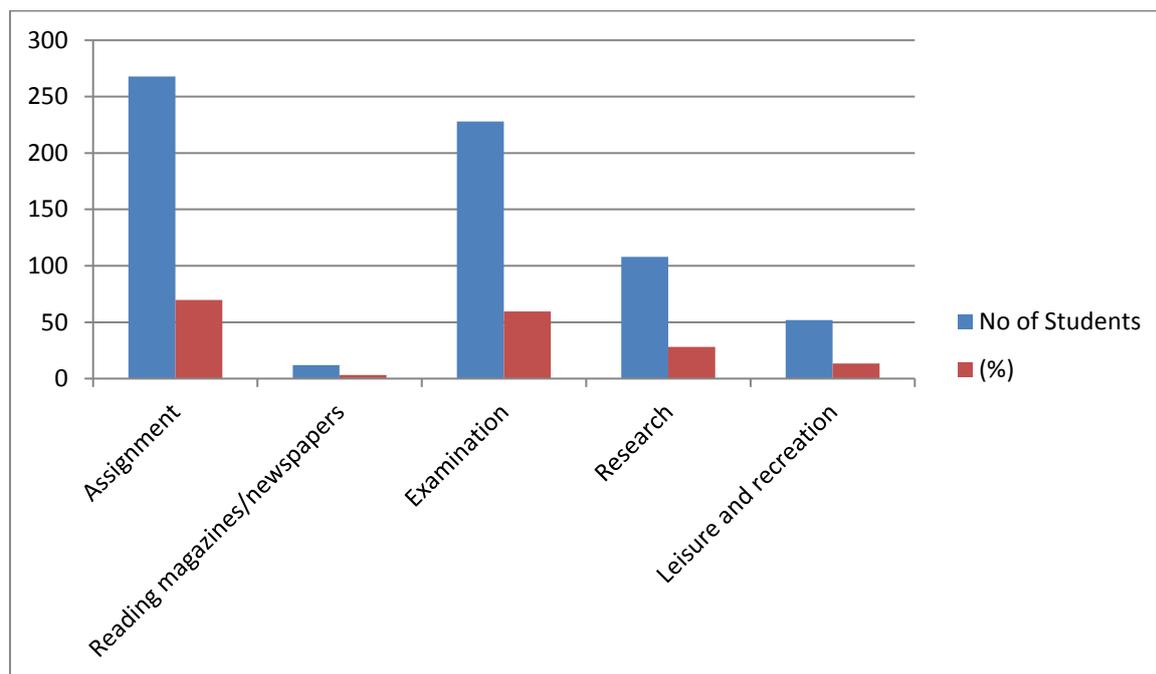
In reference to the frequency of library use, Table 2 and figure 2 reveals that majority of the respondents 172 (44.8%) visits the library occasionally followed by 92 (24%) who visits the library at least once in a week. Eighty eight 88 (22.9%) respondents visited the library daily. Only 32 (8.3%) comes on monthly basis to the library.

**Table 3: Purpose of Using the Library**

Purpose	No of Students	Percentage (%)
Assignment	268	69.8
Reading magazines/ newspapers	12	3.1
Examination	228	59.4
Research	108	28.1
Leisure and recreation i.e. reading magazines, newspapers, watching video , etc.	52	13.5

*NOTE: Some Respondents chose more than one option*

**Figure 3**



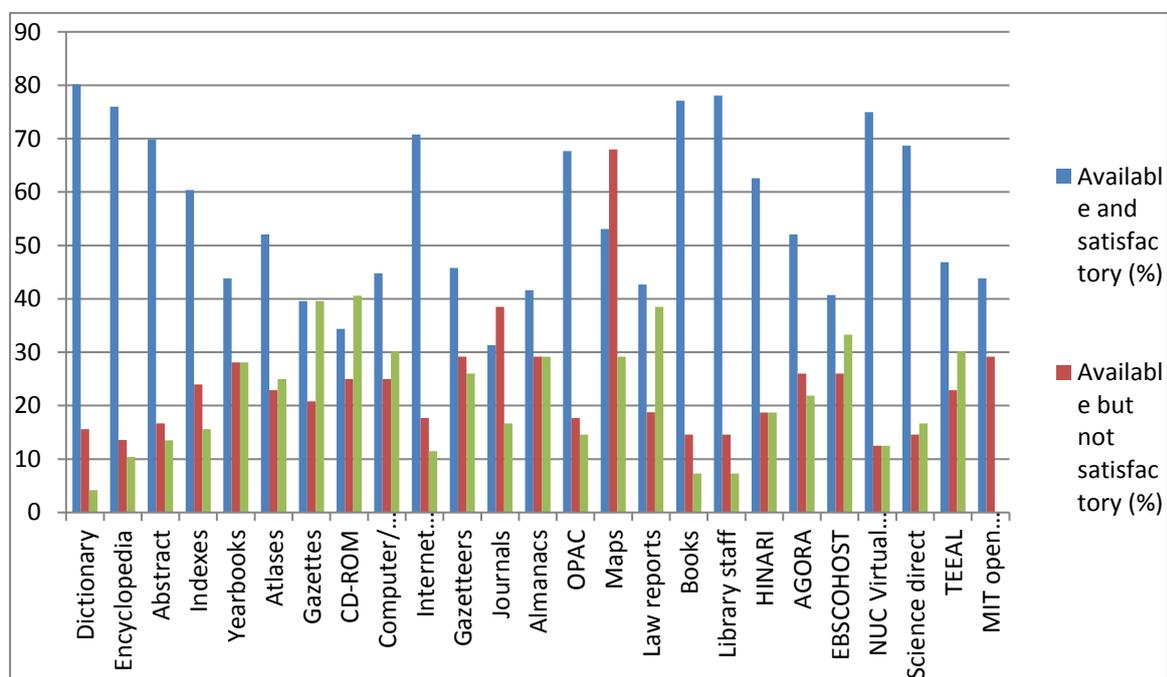
In relation to the purpose for which the respondents used the libraries, Table 3 and figure 3 reveals that majority of the respondents 268 (69.8%) use the library for assignment purpose followed by 228 (59.4%) who use the library for the purpose of examination. One hundred and eight 108 (28.1%) use the library for research, 52 (13.5%) use the library for leisure and recreation while only 12 (3.1%) ever use the library for reading newspapers/magazines.

**Table 4: Availability and Satisfaction with library resources**

Library resources	Available and Very satisfactory	Available and Satisfactory	Available but unsatisfactory	Not available	Total
Dictionary	36 (9.4)	272 (70.8)	60 (15.6)	16 (4.2)	384 (100)
Encyclopedia	12 (3.1)	280 (72.9)	52 (13.6)	40 (10.4)	384 (100)
Abstracts		268 (69.8)	64 (16.7)	52 (13.5)	384 (100)
Indexes		232 (60.4)	92 (24)	60 (15.6)	384 (100)
Yearbooks		168 (43.8)	108 (28.1)	108 (28.1)	384 (100)
Atlases		100 (26.1)	88 (22.9)	96 (25)	384 (100)
Gazettes		152 (39.6)	80 (20.8)	152 (39.6)	384 (100)
CD-ROM		132 (34.4)	96 (25)	156 (40.6)	384 (100)
Computer/printers		172 (44.8)	96 (25)	116 (30.2)	384 (100)
Internet facilities		272 (70.8)	68 (17.7)	44 (11.5)	384 (100)
Gazetteers		176 (45.8)	112 (29.2)	100 (26)	384 (100)

Journals	120 (31.3)	148 (38.5)	64 (16.7)	52 (13.5)	384 (100)
Almanacs		160 (41.6)	112 (29.2)	112 (29.2)	384 (100)
On line public access catalogue(OPAC)	144 (37.5)	116 (30.2)	68 (17.7)	56 (14.6)	384 (100)
Maps		204 (53.1)	68 (17.7)	112 (29.2)	384 (100)
Law reports		164 (42.7)	72 (18.8)	148 (38.5)	384 (100)
Books		296 (77.1)	52 (13.5)	36 (9.4)	384 (100)
Personnel (library staff)	100 (26)	200 (52.1)	56 (14.6)	28 (7.3)	384 (100)
HINARI	24 (6.3)	216 (56.3)	72 (18.7)	72 (18.7)	384 (100)
AGORA		200 (52.1)	100 (26)	804 (21.9)	384 (100)
OARE		152 (39.6)	72 (18.7)	160 (41.7)	384 (100)
EBSCOHOST		156 (40.7)	100 (26)	128 (33.3)	384 (100)
NUC Virtual Library	168 (43.7)	120 (31.3)	48 (12.5)	48 (12.5)	384 (100)
Science direct	68 (17.7)	196 (51)	56 (14.6)	64 (16.7)	384 (100)
TEEAL		180 (46.9)	88 (22.9)	116 (30.2)	384 (100)
MIT Open source ware		168 (43.8)	112 (29.2)	104 (27)	384 (100)

**Figure 4**



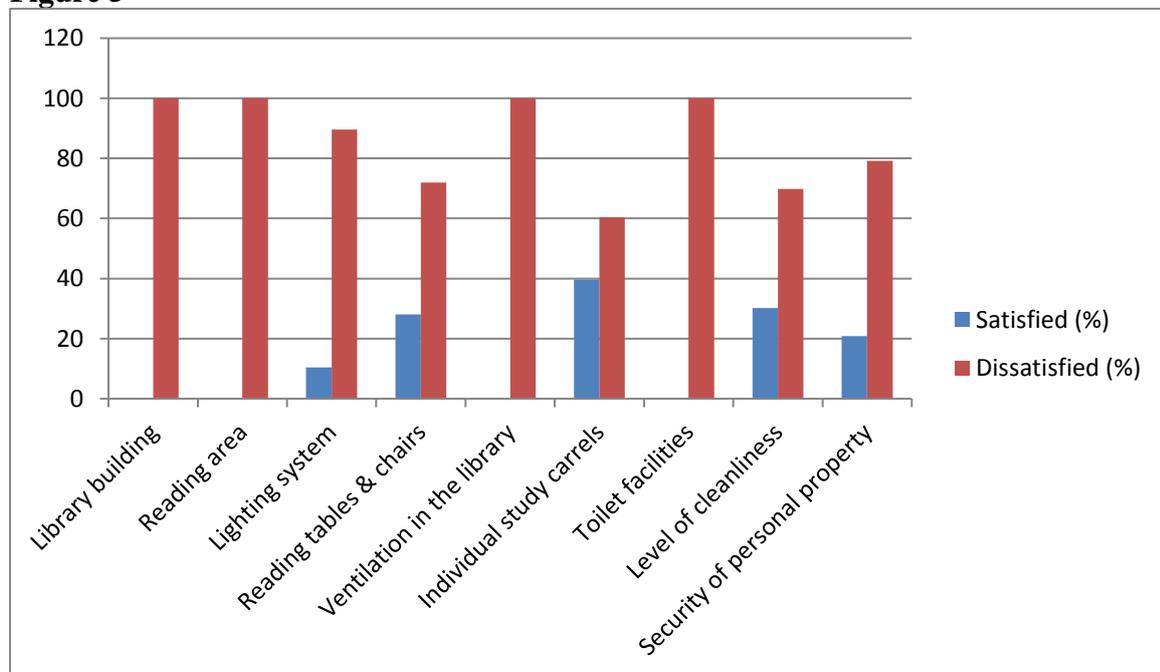
On the satisfaction with the library resources, responses from the students which are shown in in the above table and figure reveals that they were satisfied with the availability of dictionaries and encyclopedias, books and library staff, CD-ROM, online public access catalogue (OPAC), Internet facilities, TEEAL, HINARI, Science direct, NUC virtual library.

However, the study further reveals that library resources like abstracts, indexes, yearbooks, atlas, were neither satisfactory nor readily available for use.

**Table 5: Satisfaction with library facilities and its physical environment**

	<b>Library facilities and the physical environment</b>	<b>Very satisfied</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Very dissatisfied</b>	<b>Total</b>
(a)	Library building			100 (26)	284 (74)	384 (100)
(b)	Reading area			80 (21.9)	300 (78.1)	384 (100)
(c)	Lighting system		40 (10.4)	76 (19.8)	268 (69.8)	384 (100)
(d)	Reading tables and chairs		108 (28.1)	76 (19.8)	200 (52.1)	384 (100)
(e)	Ventilation in the library			88 (22.9)	296 (77.1)	384 (100)
(f)	Individual study carrels		152 (39.6)	84 (21.9)	148 (38.5)	384 (100)
(g)	Toilet facilities			64 (16.7)	320 (83.3)	384 (100)
(h)	Level of cleanliness		116 (30.2)	124 (32.3)	144 (37.5)	384 (100)
(i)	Security of personal property		80 (20.8)	120 (31.3)	184 (47.9)	384 (100)

**Figure 5**



On the satisfaction of the students with library facilities and its physical environment, the above table and figure reveals that majority of the students were not satisfied with library building, reading area, ventilation in the library, toilet facilities, security of personal property while only few students (28.1%) expressed satisfaction with reading tables and chairs.

**Table 6: Problems inhibiting effective utilization of e-library resources**

S/N	Problems	No of Students	Percentage (%)
1	Poor library staff/user relationship	32	8.3
2	Inadequate reference sources	48	12.5
3	Lack of adequate ICT services, e.g. (Internet, e-mail services, etc.	40	10.4
4	Erratic power supply	60	15.6
5	Lack of current and relevant materials	136	35.4
6	Inadequate reading space	44	11.5
7	Inadequate staff strength	24	6.3
<b>Total</b>		<b>384</b>	<b>100</b>

In relation to the problems inhibiting the effective utilization of library resources, the respondents were asked to rate the problems 1-7 as it affects them, 1 being the most serious problems and 7 being the least serious problem. According to table 6, lack of current and relevant materials (35.4%) ranked highest followed by erratic power supply (15.6%), inadequate reference sources (12.5%), inadequate reading space (11.5%), inadequate ICT resources like (Internet, e-mail services) (10.4%), Poor library staff/user relationship (8.3%) and inadequate staff strength (6.3%) as the most serious problems hindering effective utilization of the e-library resources respectively.

**Table 7: Suggestions for the improvement of library resources**

S/n	Solutions	No of Students	Percentage (%)
1	Cordial library staff/user relationship	28	7.3
2	Adequate reference sources	32	8.3
3	Regular power supply	52	13.5

4	Availability of current and relevant materials	44	11.5
5	Adequate reading space	144	37.5
6	Availability of ICT services e.g. Internet, e-mail	48	12.5
7	Adequate staff strength	36	9.4
<b>Total</b>		<b>384</b>	<b>100</b>

The above table reveals the suggestions from respondents on how to improve resources of the library. One hundred and forty four 144 (37.5%) suggested adequate reading space, followed by regular power supply 52 (13.5%), availability of ICT resources like Internet, e-mail services 48 (12.5%), availability of current and relevant materials 44 (11.5%), Adequate staff strength 36 (9.4%) and cordial library staff/user relationship 28 (7.3%) as a way of improving library resources.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Some known factors, based on the findings, hinder effective utilization of library resources. Consequently, respondents were not satisfied with most of the library facilities and resources in the institution. For instance, erratic power supply, access to e- resources, inadequate reading space, lack of current and relevant materials, according to the respondents, affect effective utilization of resources in FUYOYE Library. Only few resources like online public access catalogue (OPAC), Internet facilities, TEEAL, HINARI, Science direct, NUC virtual library were seen as satisfactory by the respondents. The study also provides far reaching recommendations that could ameliorate the identified problems. The list are itemized below:

1. A standard main library equipped with necessary physical facilities like toilet and spacious reading space etc. that could encourage effective utilization of resources should be built in the university.
2. Students should be allowed to make input into selection of resources for the library as this will ensure and improve the level of currency and relevance of library collections.

3. The university management should, as a matter of priority, provide alternative power supply to the library, as that would aid easy accessibility to both physical and e-resources in the library. As a result, students will be satisfied with physical and e-resources as well as lighting system in the library.
4. Reference sources are the bedrock of any research. Therefore, the reference section of the library should be adequately stocked with relevant and current reference sources.
5. The library materials (books and non-books) are not adequate in numbers, there should be aggressive acquisition of books on various programmes available/propose in the university.
6. Fund should be provided for the library to be able to maintain the available facilities like computers, printers, photocopiers, water supply for the toilets/cleaning, etc.

#### **Implication of this paper to library managers and workers**

The study will encourage librarians in Nigeria to evaluate their resources and services periodically so as to meet the information needs of users.

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