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### Attitudes of Lecturers and Students as Predictors of Use of Library/ Media Resources for Distance Education in Nigerian Universities

#### Abstract

*This paper reports the findings of a study on the attitudes of lecturers and students as predictors of use of library resources for distance education in Nigerian universities. Four Federal Universities accredited by the Nigerian National Universities Commission (N.U.C) to run distance learning programmes were selected for the study. The specific objectives are to ascertain what types of library resources are available and accessible in Nigerian universities for distance learning, to find out the frequency of use of libraries by distance learning students, and to determine if there is a relationship between use of library resources by lecturers and attitude towards subjects taught. The sample was selected from among the lecturers teaching on the programmes and students in 200 - 500 levels. Also university librarians in these universities were sampled for the study. Total population of 24,875 students was stratified according to their departments within faculties. A random selection of 10% of students within a department according to the level of study (200L-500L) was taken. For the selection of lecturers, a sampling fraction of 50% was assigned to each department and a sample of 373 lecturers was drawn out of 748 lecturers. The analysis was done and the findings reveal that distance learning students' frequency of use of the library/media resources is very poor. Their reason for using the library is limited to reading books, newspapers and use of reference materials. Students' frequency of use of library materials is low and students' attitudes towards the continued use of the library in distance learning are poor. There is a significant positive relationship between students' use of library resources and their attitude towards use of library.*

**Keywords:** *Library Resources, Media Resources, Attitudes, Distance Education, Nigerian Universities*

**Ugochukwu D. Imeremba, Ph.D**  
[ugochukwuimeremba@gmail.com](mailto:ugochukwuimeremba@gmail.com)

Department of Library  
and Information Science  
Abia State University  
Utur, Abia State

**Iyabo Motolagbe Mabawonku (Prof.)**  
[imabawonku@gmail.com](mailto:imabawonku@gmail.com)

Department of Library,  
Archival and Information Studies,  
University of Ibadan,  
Ibadan, Oyo State

#### 1.1 Introduction

In both developed and developing countries, traditional educational institutions with their closed system of face to face teaching and learning have not been able to

satisfy the education and training needs of the growing number of people who cannot or will not attend the conventional institutions but who choose to learn on the job and/or from their homes. Distance education purports to

make available a paralleled provision of education to that of conventional institutions, and has opened access to study towards all levels of qualification to the working' adult-the student, who continues to contribute to the nation's Gross National Product through the length of his or her study programme. Today, distance education in its various forms has been embraced worldwide as a needed component of most national educational systems as in the case in Nigeria. These institutions as in the case in different parts of the country have networking among most of them, and they contribute immensely to the educational and manpower development of Nigeria through their certificate, pre-degree, diploma and undergraduate courses. But flexible, open and distance learning are recognized globally as educational approaches that are designed to be adaptable to the needs of a variety of learners. It relates specifically to the characteristics of allowing the learner to determine the time, location and pace of learning.

Lifelong learning has come to involve a variety of learning experiences or mode's (Knapper; 1988; Knapper and Cropley (2000), Cris Evans and Jing et al, (2004). These include formal university campus teaching; workplace open learning, modular flexible learning programmes; correspondence - based distance learning courses, and most recently Web or multimedia - based courseware (also known as "virtual learning"), central to all these concerns is learner access to library services; traditional or virtual; and learner access to ICT based resources. In Nigeria, learner access to library services became controversial of late. Most part time and distance education students never use their own or any other university library during the course of their study. Sometimes the problem arises from the fact that the opening hours of-their university libraries are not tailored to their needs. And at other times because there is a strong

competition for materials as part and full time students receive the same reading lists. And short loan collections of their own university libraries are often not utilized owing to their short' time return policies. But the biggest barriers to using the university libraries for all students involved in part time study are time and geographical constraints. It is against this backdrop that this study aims to investigate availability and use of library and media resources in Nigerian universities with particular reference to lecturers and students attitude towards distance learning.

### **1.2 Objectives of the study**

The study aimed to determine the use of media and libraries resources in distance education in Nigerian universities. Specifically, the study aimed to investigate the following:

1. To determine the media used for distance learning education in Nigerian universities.
2. To find out students' frequency of use of library media resources for distance learning
3. To find out the teachers reasons for using instructional (media) resources for distance learning
4. To ascertain the significance relationship between students' use of library/media resources and their altitude towards distance learning

### **1.3 Research Questions of the study**

The study aimed to determine the use of media and libraries resources in distance education in Nigerian universities. Specifically, the study aimed to investigate the following:

1. What media are used for distance learning education in Nigerian universities?
2. What is the frequency of students' use of library/ media resources for distance

- learning?
3. What are the teachers' reasons for using instructional (media) resources for distance learning?

#### **1.4 Hypothesis of the Study**

Ho: There is no significance relationship between students' use of library resources and their altitude towards distance learning

#### **2.1 Review of Related Literature**

Library use and other arrangements such as ICT compliance are important for the effectiveness of instructional process in distance education. But time constraint is one of the obstacles to the distance students' use of library resources (Mkpa, 2004; Junaid, 2010). It has been confirmed by research and by empirical practice that individualized learning is a lonely

activity, and that most distance learners are faced with the challenge of family, work and other social demands some of which take precedence over their programme of study (Iwuji, 2004; Mabawonku, 2004; Adetimirin and Omogbhe, 2011). Thus, there are competing demands on their time resulting from crowded activities and commitments. Akintayo and Bunza (2000), opine that distance learners have characteristics which they listed as 'adults with professional' responsibilities (jobs), social responsibilities (families), study part time, limited formal education or are a long time away from formal education...' This points to high pressure on their time. Again the constraint of non availability and non accessibility of library resources in the university libraries make distance learners' consider library use as a waste of precious time (Iwuji, 2004; Oladokun, 2004).

#### **2.2 The Conventional System of Learning in the University**

In the conventional system, students

remain in easy contact with the institution, but in the distance education settings, students are often isolated and contact with their university is at best infrequent and more often takes place at a distance (Ojo and Olakulehin, 2006). Again this interferes with their time to use on campus learning facilities, including library services; and although more flexible, the fact remains that this educational approach demands a great deal of personal sacrifice on the part of learners. It requires students to have good study skills, discipline, and self-motivational attributes needed to attain higher autonomy.

Majority of the part time and distance learning students no doubt purchase their own core reading materials, but most lecturers and students recognize that in most institutions, university library staff would try to adapt to the special needs of part time and distance learning students, but this is not the case. Some of the Nigerian universities operate special distance learning units or study centres, which should provide library services, mail deliveries and an extended electronic information network, but this is not always the case. Apart from the controversy surrounding learner access to traditional information resources such as libraries, learner access to information technologies is also a controversial issue in Nigeria, It is very obvious that Nigerian university libraries often do not cater for the needs of part time and distance learners, which leaves one to wonder, how these learners meet their information needs and what type of library caters for their needs.

#### **2.3 The University Library and Media Resources**

According to Mabawonku (2004) the library is the nerve centre of any educational institution as it promotes the acquisition of reading, inquiry and independent thinking through the provision of resources to support teaching and learning activities. It normally

houses information, materials in various formats such as electronic information sources like CD-ROM, the university library is the centre of teaching, learning, and research in every university system and this is why it is often made to occupy a central position in the university campus. It provides materials for use by faculty members in the preparation of their courses of instruction and by staff in the performance of their administrative and executive responsibilities. Since the University offers a wide range of undergraduate programmes, graduate instruction beyond the masters level and advanced professional programmes in a number of fields, the university library stocks materials that inform on these fields for both staff and students of both the on-campus regular programmes and part-time or distance learning programmes.

On what constitutes library resources; library resources are information bearing media (documents) that may be print (book) or non-print (audio visual), resources that serve as primary, secondary and or tertiary sources of information on all subjects. They are acquired, processed, preserved, stored, organized and held as stock in the library. Formats of print materials include newspapers, theses and dissertations, report literature, patents, standard specifications; trade, literature, conference proceedings. Grey literature, official publications, books, bibliographies (national, trade, subject) pamphlets, archives and manuscripts etc, while audio-visuals include microforms, films, aperture cards and their projectors (overhead projectors, slide projectors) etc. There are also reference sources such as Encyclopedias, dictionaries, Yearbooks and directories and other biographical and geographical sources of information such as the Who is Whos, gazetteers, atlases, maps etc. (Fayose 2004).

From library stock and resources, services such as loans and inter library loans,

current awareness services, indexing, abstracting, selective dissemination of information (SDI) and many more are rendered to a community of users (Imeremba, 2005). Virtual library services are now available in Nigeria. That is, computerisation has eventually arrived in Nigeria, as can be seen from its wide-scale application in industry. There can be no doubt that full application of computer facilities in Nigerian libraries is a question of time. Moreover library users, especially academic library users, now know that it is technologically feasible to access bibliographic databases and full-text graphics. Ononogbo (1998) laments the Nigerian scholars' isolation from the collective heritage-of the world's knowledge and asserts that knowledge is now largely stored in electronic databases and databanks, etc. Indeed the African university teacher suffered the worst book (knowledge?) famine in the 1980s. Additional and unlimited educational resources can be obtained from the internet wherever there is a connectivity, either in a cyber-cafe or at home.

The internet is the epitome of information technology; its possibilities, both positive and negative, are ever widening. It is indeed the ultimate realisation of IFLA/UNESCO's dream of Universal Availability of Information (UAI) which in the late 1970s, predicted unlimited access to world literature as a final objective of Universal Bibliographic Control (UBC).

#### **2.4 The Role of Academic Institutions in Manpower Development**

Academic institutions as noted by Okiy (2003) play major roles in the manpower developments of any nation since they provide the high as well as middle level manpower, needed for the social, economic and political advancement of a nation. This is done through their programmes of teaching, learning, research and community services. The central place of academic libraries is

called into play because it is the duty of these libraries to provide the necessary information to the lecturers and students to achieve their teaching learning and research needs in the easiest, fastest, and most comprehensive way. This central place of the library in academics has resulted over the years in the necessity for academic libraries to continue to evolve and move with the times so that they can deliver on the requirements of academic libraries in meeting the academic needs of their clientele in the tertiary institutions (Okiy, 2003). This need has resulted, over the years, in the libraries of higher institutions in Nigeria; displaying different stages of development in the application of information and communication Technologies (ICTs) to library services. The current trend in many libraries' worldwide is the deployment of ICT facilities in rendering services of various kinds to their patrons thereby providing speedy and up-to-date information for their use. Furthermore, the ' globalization of the entire world in recent times has placed additional demands on academic libraries to conform in order to avoid the risk of obsolescence and irrelevance in the scheme of things. Teaching and research in tertiary institutions now demand the use of high caliber ICT infrastructure and facilities to keep abreast of current information in all fields. It has been observed over the years that information growth has been exponential and the concept of information explosion is no longer new to information professionals.

As Oladokun, (2002) rightly noted; if taking knowledge and training to the marginalised, isolated, underprivileged and the unreachable is the goal of distance education, then Nigeria (in particular) and Africa (in general) is qualified to be the home of distance education. In the main, it is the inadequacy of education inherited in the African continent at independence, and the yearning of the various governments in Africa to improve educationally the lot of the people,'

which gave birth to the obvious option of distance education (Oladokun 2002). Unfortunately, the economic downturn affected proper funding of education and provision of resources including provision of library facilities. The corollary of this is that except for a handful of university libraries, library support service to distance learners is almost **non-existent**.

### **2.3 Attitude as a factor to use of Library/ICT Resources**

Attitude is a difficult proposition to deal with. Its dimensions are hardly agreeable to many researchers in the field. Attitudes are normally considered as a predisposition to act or react in a particular way to a certain stimulus. In the field of attitudinal studies, the works of attitude theorists – Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) and Fishbein and Ajzen (1979) are dominant and seem to have influenced most discussions in the literature. According to those theorists, attitudes toward any object play an extremely important role in influencing subsequent behaviour toward it. Fishbein and Ajzen (1979) have described attitudes as learned predispositions to respond in a consistently favourable or unfavourable manner with respect to an object.

In a recent study by Adetimirin and Omogbhe (2011) on library habits of Distance learning students of the university of Ibadan, Ibadan Oyo state, Nigeria; Majority of the respondents in Education (80.7%) and social sciences (93.8%) agreed to the availability of library materials, while 78.2% of those from Education and 87% from social sciences attested to the accessibility of materials in the library. This implies that the library materials were available and accessible to the distance learning students. On how often they use the library, it was found that the respondents were not permitted to borrow library materials, but were given 'Special cards which enabled them to use materials within the library. They were not given any form of user education. Their

library use record is poor perhaps due to the fact that the distance learning program is run on a part time basis and students only used the library when they are in session. The students nevertheless derive a number of benefits from using the library e.g., access to photocopy facilities, conducive reading environment, serials facilities, internet facilities and library orientation. The factors affecting library use included inadequate reading materials, non currency of library materials, inadequate library use skills etc. The library use habits of the students were found to be varied. Majority rarely use unlike is the case with regular students whose habits are more pronounced, perhaps owing to the fact that they have unrestricted access to the library services, resources and facilities.

There seems yet to be studies on the attitudes of students and lecturers to the use of libraries and ICT in Distance learning in Nigeria that covers the four Federal universities which have received accreditation by the Nigerian Universities commission to run distance education programmes as at the time of commencement of study. Previous studies such as Mabawonku (2003). Mabawonku (2004) Junaid (2010) and Adetimrin and Omogbhe (2011) focused only on two of these universities namely university of Ibadan and university of Lagos. They did not cover University of Abuja and national Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). Neither is there any other known study in Nigeria or any in any of the sub-Saharan

faculty and students and the use of libraries and ICT in distance learning in Nigeria; nor is there known investigations carried out on the attitudinal variable as a correlate of the various instructional strategies employed and the provision of the various components of learner support to the distance learner and the use of ICTs among others.

### 3.1 Research Method

Descriptive survey method was adopted for this study. The distance learning students were sampled according to their levels of study, that is from 200 level (second year class) to the final year class of undergraduate study within each department offering distance learning programme. Thus, 200 level, 300 level, 400 level, and even 500 level (depending on the course of study) within the departments, were the basic units of selection. These levels of study were identified and treated as strata, or separate sub-populations within the stratified random sampling construct. Thereafter, simple random samples of not more than 10% of the sum total of each of the sub-populations were then drawn from each of the stratum. This resulted in a proportionate stratified sample, and a sample size of 2487.5 students was drawn. With reference to the selection of lecturers however, a proportion of 50% relating to the total number of lecturers in each group (department) was selected by a simple random sampling of the department (i.e. lecturers in each department).

#### A4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

##### Research Question 1: What media are used for distance learning in selected Nigerian universities?

**Table 1: Types of Media used for Distance Learning Education in Selected Universities**

S/N	Items	UNI-IBADAN		UNI-LAG		UNI-ABUJA		NOUN	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1.	Lecturers	2.98*	12	2.71	.37	2.68	.71	2.28	.38
2.	Seminars/dissension	1.72	34	1.85	42	1.89*	38	1.49	.41
3.	Laboratory practical	1.41	.38	1.51*	.19	1.30-	.41	1.25	38

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4.	Game	1.23	.41	1.35*	.21	1.18	52	1.14	.42
5.	Audio media (radio, audio tape)	1.62	.72	1.43	.38	1.33	.61	1.78*	.19
6.	Audio/visual media (film, TV)	1.58	.91	1.41	.71	1.31	71	1.81*	.21
7.	Slide show with tape recording	1.37	.89	1.25	.42	1.19	89	1.48*	.28
8.	Computer assisted instruction	1.61	.53	1.50	-.56	1.31	.41	1.72*	.31
9.	Demonstrations and use of computer	1.60	.42	1.48	.71	1.38	.42	1.71*	.21
10.	Multimedia projection	1.41	.61	1.37	.29	1.21	.71	1.52*	.18
	Weighted Average	1.65*		1.59		1.48		1.62	

\* *Highest mean Scores*

Table 1 shows types of Media used for distance learning in selected universities are. Only the highest mean scores are presentation in this analysis. Lectures: Uni -Abuja (2.98); Seminars/discussion: Uni -Abuja (1.89); Laboratory practical: Uni -Lag (1.51); Game: Uni -Lag (1.35); Audio media (radio, audio tape): NOUN (1.78); Audio/visual media (film, TV): NOUN (1.81); Slide show with tape recording: UNOUN (1.48); Computer assisted instruction: NOUN (1.72); Demonstrations and use of computer: NOUN (1.71); Multimedia projection: NOUN (1.52). The weighted averages are: Uni -Ibadan = 1.65; Uni -Lag = 1.59; Uni -Abuja = 1.48 and NOUN = 1.62. This shows that University of Ibadan weighted the highest on the average, followed the National Open University of Nigeria.

**Research Question 2: What is the frequency of students' use of media resources for distance learning?**

**Table 2: Students' Frequency use of Media Resources for Distance Learning**

S/N	Media	Daily (5)	Twice a week (4)	Once a week (3)	Occasionally (2)	Never (1)	Mean	St. De
1	Lectures	866(34.8)	554(23.9)	454(18.2)	368(14.8)	206(8.3)	3.62	1.31
2	Seminars/ Discussion	74(3.0)	179(7.2)	82(3.3)	632(25.4)	1521(61.1)	1.65	1.03
3	Laboratory practical	52(2.1)	108(4.3)	17(0.7)	232(9.3)	2079(83.6)	1.32	.86
4	Game	44(1.8)	52(2.1)	34(1.4)	428(5.1)	2230(89.6)	1.21	.72
5	Audio ( audio tape, recording, discs)	103(4.1)	176(7.1)	49(2.0)	426(17.1)	1734(69.7)	1.58	1.09
6	Audio/visual media (film, TV, video)	185(7.4)	50(2.0)	53(2.1)	227(9.1)	1973(79.3)	1.43	.99
7	Slide show with tape, recording	63(2.5)	25(1.0)	102(4.1)	142(5.7)	2156(86.7)	1.31	.93
8	Computer assisted Instruction	146(5.9)	82(3.3)	86(3.5)	282(11.3)	1892(76.0)	1.49	1.04
9	Demonstrations & use of computer	173(7.0)	66(2.7)	69(2.8)	425(17.1)	1755(70.5)	1.54	1.02
10	Multimedia projection	161(6.5)	34(1.4)	25(1.0)	270(10.9)	1998(80.3)	1.37	.87

Data in Table 2 shows that the students' frequency use of media resources for distance learning on daily basis (5), twice a week (4), once a week (3), occasionally (2) and Never (1). The mean ratings of the responses of the respondents are stated as follows: daily = 3.62; seminars/discussion 1.65; laboratory practical 1.32; game = 1.21; audio media (radio, audio tape recording, discs) = 1.58; audio/visual media (film television video) = 1.43; slide show with tape, recording = 1.31; computer assisted instruction = 1.49; demonstrations and use of computer = 1.54; multimedia projection = 1.37. This result implies that the common media of learning is through lectures with the total mean rating of 3.62 and standard deviation of 1.31. Following this is seminars/discussion with the mean rating of 1.65 and standard deviation of 1.03.

**Research Question 3: What are the teachers' reasons for using instructional (media) resources for distance learning?**

**Table 3: Reasons for Teachers' use of Instructional (Media) Resources for Distance Learning**

S/N	Resources	Used during university course (3)	Used personally outside university (2)	Never used (1)	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	Computer	430(17.3)	1534(61.7)	524(21.1)	1.96	.61
2	Slides	230(9.2)	532(21.5)	1723(69.3)	1.39	.65
3	Audio cassette recordings	261(10.5)	887(35.7)	1340(53.9)	1.56	.67
4	Video recordings	186(7.5)	668(26.8)	1634(65.7)	1.41	.62
5	Motion picture films	220(8.8)	497(20.0)	1771(71.2)	1.37	.64
6	Charts/and other graphics	481(19.3)	696(28.0)	1311(52.7)	1.66	.78
7	Internet search/down Loading	416(16.7)	1227(49.0)	845(34.0)	1.82	.69
8	E-mail	252(10.1)	1244(50.0)	992(39.9)	1.70	.64
9	CD-Rom	237(9.5)	858(34.5)	1393(56.0)	1.53	.66
10	Others	116(4.7)	215(8.6)	2157(86.7)	1.18	.52

From data in Table 3, those who Used the media resources during university course = 430 (17.3%); those who used personally outside university (1534 (61.7)); those who never used the media resources 524 (21.1%). The mean ratings and standard deviations respectively of lecturers who used instructional resources for teaching include computer mean =1.96, SD=.61); internet search (mean =1.82, SD=.69); e -mail (mean = 1.70, SD=.64) and charts (mean=1.66, SD=.78); but they were being used outside the university. The others are those who never used the media resources at all.

#### 4.4 Testing and Result of Hypothesis

The null hypothesis which stated thus: ‘There is no significance relationship between students’ use of library/ICT resources and their altitude towards distance learning’ was tested and the result is presented in table 4 and interpreted as follows:

**Table 4: Relationship between Types of Library/ICT resources Used and Student's Attitudes Towards Distance Learning**

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mark	Df	Sig	Remarks
Students’ Use of Library/ICT Resources	20.2611	7.0776	2488	.291	2487	.05*	Significant
Attitudes Towards Distance Learning	42.3645	15.0019	2488				

\* Significant at  $p < .05$

Table 4 shows that there is a positive relationship between students' use library resources and the attitude towards distance learning ( $r = .293$ ,  $df = 2487$ ,  $p < .05$ ). This relationship is also weak but significant. It implies that the more the student use library resources, the better their attitude to the use of library. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. What this means is that there is a significant relationship between use of library resources and students attitudes toward courses taken in distance learning. Use of library/ICT resources enhances students' positive attitude and improved their learning of the courses taken in distance learning.

#### Research Findings of the study

The study found as follows; that

1. The Distance learning institutes/centres of these universities coordinate the production and distribution of course materials. However, this is in contrast to what pertains in other countries where the part-time or distance learning students have access to audio-visual and ICT resources for learning and there

2. Students' attitude towards the continuous use of the library in distance learning is poor.
3. There is a significant positive relationship between students' use of library/ICT resources and their *altitude towards Distance learning*.

#### Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers recommend as follows:

Use of library resource in distance learning in Nigerian universities depends on the attitudes of the lecturers (negative) and students (positive). University management should encourage positive attitude towards the use of library resources in distance learning through library orientation and periodic interactive programme among library staff, distance learning students and lecturers.

The university libraries of accredited universities should be factored into the distance learning programmes of their

institutions so that they should have their present in the tutorial study centers of their own universities or liaise with other libraries in a cooperative arrangement be they, public, national or special libraries in the vicinity of the tutorial; study centers to serve the distance learning student community.

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