

## Use of College/Faculty Libraries by Readers, Vis-à-vis the Main Library: The Case of the University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria

Isaac Oluwadare Busayo\*, Frederick Olatunji Ajegbomogun\*\*

### Abstract

Faculty or College libraries complements the services of the main library and helps to bring library services closer to the users in their respective Faculties/Colleges. This study appraised the Colleges of Engineering and Veterinary Medicine Libraries which started in the University of Agriculture, Abeokuta recently to deduce feed-back from the users, which could serve as reference point and guide to the take-off of other Colleges libraries within the University. The two College libraries can sit twenty-five (25) readers each at a time hence, a structured questionnaire was designed to elicit the desired information. Hence, fifty (50) copies of the questionnaire was administered on all the users with the cooperation and assistance of the Librarian in charge in both cases. All the fifty (50) questionnaires were well completed by the users, returned and used for this study, which represents one hundred percent (100%) response rate. The results revealed that the establishment of the two College Libraries were embraced by the users and maximally used by them because the libraries were sited within easy reach and the materials are quite accessible to them. However, the study also revealed that the users were dissatisfied with the closing time of the library, the book loan and photocopying services and demanded that internet services be extended to the library too. Recommendations were made to further boost the use of the Colleges Libraries.

**Keywords:** Veterinary Medicine Libraries; Book loan; Photocopying services.

### Introduction

University libraries are academic libraries and they are established primarily to support the teaching, learning and research activities of their parent universities. By extension, most university libraries also run Faculty (College) and Departmental Libraries, all with the aim of ensuring that the library services are brought closer to their respective users with minimum stress.

The University library otherwise referred to as the main library coupled with the existence of the Faculty (College) and the Departmental

libraries help in no small measure to fulfill accreditation requirements as these libraries have as their major function the provision of information resources and its dissemination within the university academic set-up, thus, complementing one another's role.

While the collections of the main library of the university are in divergent form, taking into cognisance the various courses being run in the university, that of the Faculty (College) and Departmental libraries are consciously built up, bearing in mind the various Departments that made up such Faculty (College), the courses offered by each Department and organized for maximum utilization of the respective clientele they are meant to serve. Faculty (College) and Departmental libraries are normally man by Librarians with related subject background for optimum performance and such Librarians are responsible to the University Librarian for the day to day running of the Faculty (College) and Departmental libraries.

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**Author's Affiliation:** \*Principal Librarian, \*\*Senior Librarian, Nimbe Adedipe Library, University of Agriculture, P.M.B.2240, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria.

**Reprint's Request:** Isaac Oluwadare Busayo, Principal Librarian, Nimbe Adedipe Library, University of Agriculture, P.M.B.2240, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria.

E-mail :iobusayo@yahoo.com

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### *Background to the Study*

The university of Agriculture, Abeokuta (UNAAB) was established in January, 1988. It is one of the three universities of Agriculture in the country, the others being in Makurdi (Benue State) and Umudike (Abia State). The establishment of the universities of Agriculture was an entirely new concept for promoting Agricultural education and services for Agricultural development and attainment of self-sufficiency in food and fibre-UNAAB undergraduate prospectus 2005/2006.[1]

The university was originally one of the five universities established by the Federal Government in 1983 when it was known as Federal University of Technology, Abeokuta (FUTAB). It was merged with the University of Lagos in 1984 and had its name changed to College of Science and Technology, Abeokuta (COSTAB). It became an autonomous university once more in 1988 with the establishment of UNAAB.

The distinguished feature of Universities of Agriculture is their tripodal mandate of teaching, research and extension, focused on Agriculture and related disciplines.[2]

### *The University Library (Nimbe Adedipe Library)*

The library was moved into in October 1995, but it became fully functional in December, 1997. The library was named Nimbe Adedipe Library after the first Vice-Chancellor of the university in appreciation of his contributions to the development of the permanent site, particularly the library building which was the first to be completed.

The library collection has been growing steadily over the years. The present collection of books and bound journals is over 41,506 volumes, while the library currently subscribes to about 150 foreign journals (electronic and print) as well as 35 local journal titles. The library has a seating capacity for 600 users at a time. It also has an area designed for use for twenty-four hours, with a seating capacity for 100 users. Users can stay there and read their own materials throughout the day without any

disturbance.

### *Opening Hours*

The main library is open to readers as follows:

- During Session  
Monday-Saturday, 8.00am-8.00pm
- During Vacation  
Monday-Saturday, 8.00am-6.00pm
- The 24 hours reading room is available for use throughout the day during session.

### *The College Libraries*

The University of Agriculture Abeokuta (UNAAB) operates the Collegiate system which is same as the Faculty system run by some other Universities, with the respective Departments under each. As at date, UNAAB has eight (8) Colleges namely:

- College of Engineering (COLENG)
- College of Veterinary Medicine (COLVET)
- College of Natural Sciences (COLNAS)
- College of Environmental Resources Management (COLERM)
- College of Plant Science and Crop Production (COLPLANT)
- College of Animal Science and Livestock Production (COLANIM)
- College of Food Science and Human Ecology (COLFHEC)
- College of Agricultural Management and Rural Development (COLAMRUD).

The College libraries took-off in 2009 with two Colleges namely:

1. The College of Veterinary Medicine (COLVET) &
2. The College of Engineering (COLENG).  
The third College, that is, the College of Natural Sciences (COLNAS) is almost ready for a take-off.

### *Justification for the Study*

The main and the college libraries were established to provide for the information needs of both the staff and students. It is therefore necessary as a way of feed-back, to find out the extent to which library users have availed themselves of the use of the available resources/services and to determine the areas of strengths and weaknesses in the services provided for the Library Management information and decision as appropriate.

The study therefore intends to achieve the following objectives:

- To ascertain the use of the library
- The need (import) for the library
- Determine the adequacy of the materials housed
- The efficiency of the services rendered
- The opening hours
- The conduciveness of the library to reading
- The location (siting) of the library
- The accessibility of the materials &
- Users suggestions for improvement.

### *Review of Literature*

Previous studies on the use of academic libraries by scholars as herewith reviewed, revealed varying results. Adelani (1998) noted with surprise that majority i.e. 75 (51.4%) of the samples surveyed, claimed that they visit (use) the library occasionally despite the benefits they claimed to have derived from the orientation programme while only 11 (7.5%) use the library daily, 35 respondents (24%) use the library once a week, 21 respondents (14.4%) use the library twice a week and 4 respondents (2.7%) never used the library.[3]

Osinubi (1998) in her own survey noted that in Ogun State University library, an average of 148 users per day was recorded during the 1990/91 session while the lowest patronage of an average of 36 users per day was recorded in the 1992/93 session. She recommends

library education and the need to promote awareness of the use of the library through talks/lectures to curb low patronage of the library.[4]

Amkpa (1999/2000) in a similar study on students' use of University of Maiduguru Libraries observed that students only made partial use of the libraries as only 94 (8.95%) respondents out of 1050 indicated that they used the libraries for more than 6 hours daily. Amkpa recommends the need for librarians to create an awareness on the part of the students of the need to make good use of the libraries so as to ensure success in their academic pursuit.[5]

Stressing the import of use of the library to effective learning for students in the universities, Oyesiku (1999/2000) cited Onatola (1997) as saying that the library serves as the bridge between the knowledge and instructions received by students in the classroom and the possible learning outcome by a particular student.[6] It is based on this importance that the library in tertiary institutions of learning become the focus of academic activities. Thus, library services are perhaps the first important facility that are made available to students at the point of entry.

Likewise, Tsafe (2004) in a survey of Students' Utilization of Medical Library, Usman Danfodio University, Sokoto observed that the medical students used the library heavily.[7] The results showed that out of the 240 respondents, 154 (64%) used the library most frequently. Also, 85 (35.4%) of all the respondents used the library for over six hours a day, 82 (34.2%) used it for between 5-6 hours daily, while only 21 (8.8%) used it for less than three hours a day.

Alokun (2003) in a related study found out that 224 (90%) of the sampled respondents were working in government establishments and the private sector.[8] Only 26 (10%) were not working, hence, due to lack of time and awareness of the use and services provided by the library, there was low patronage of the library by the part-time polytechnic students.

Thus, Alokun recommends as way out, orientation programme, teaching of the use of the library, provision of reading lists and regular assignments for this category of students.

In another study, Afolabi (2008) noted with concern that some students do not make adequate use of some basic library materials like the card catalogue, journals, newspapers and computer-based resources. He equally observed that some students rarely visit the library, while some never borrowed books and some love to hide, mark or mutilate books even when students were specifically warned during orientation programme that such offences carry one penalty or the other and could lead to outright suspension from from the institution.[9]

Mbashir and Adeoti (2008) in their study observed that faculty staff members of Kogi State University adequately use the library and the reading resources of the library presently meet up with their information needs. They also noted that not all the academic staff registered with the university library, hence, most of them only use the library for reference as only those who are registered can enjoy the loan or lending of books.[10]

Singh (2009) in a study on use of the libraries of Colleges of Education in Punjab gathered that students visit (use) libraries frequently for academic purposes and that books on their respective subjects of education were used more often than the reference and general collection. The study also revealed that most of the users were not aware about use of computers and availability of internet facility in libraries. Singh therefore recommends that the collection development of the libraries should be focussed on strengthening the curricular base and related collection and that orientation should be provided to users in a planned way to make them familiar with resources and services of libraries.[11]

## Methodology

A Structured questionnaire with twenty-six

(25) questions was designed to find out the opinion of users about the resources and services of the Colleges of Veterinary Medicine (COLVET) and Engineering (COLENG) Libraries that took-off in 2009. Each of the College library can sit twenty-five (25) readers at a time. Thus, fifty (50) questionnaires were administered on the users of the two libraries with the aid of the respective Librarian overseeing the libraries.

The questionnaire was drawn to ascertain the use of the library, the need (import) for the library, the relevance of the materials, the adequacy of the services rendered, opening hours, conduciveness of the library, the location (siting) of the library and the accessibility of the materials housed. The last question sought for the user's free comments/suggestions for improvement in their own opinion.

Interestingly, all the fifty (50) questionnaires were duly completed, returned and used for this study with the following findings.

## Data Analysis, Interpretation and Discussions

Table 1 above revealed that majority of the respondents from the two Colleges under survey, (COLVET & COLENG) attested to their use of the library more than the University main library with response rate of 22 or 88.0% and 21 or 84.0% respectively. This implies that users make use of the College libraries more than the University's main library.

Table 2 above revealed that the users from the two Libraries warmly embrace the establishment of the College Libraries. They equally see the Library as a necessity and a relief to their respective users.

Table 3 above revealed that majority of the users of COLVET library attested to the adequacy (14 or 56.0%) and relevance (24 or 96.0%) of COLVET library materials to their needs while majority of COLENG library users attested only to the currency and relevance

**Table 1: Use of Library by Respondents**

	COLVET			COLENG		
	Agree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
Use of college library more than the main library	22 (88.0%)	2 (8.0%)	1 (4.0%)	21 (84.0%)	4 (16.0%)	-
Preference for use of college library	-	23 (92.0%)	2 (8.0%)	1 (4.0%)	21 (84.0%)	3 (12.0%)
Use of both college and main library	14 (56.0%)	4 (16.0%)	7 (28.0%)	11 (44.0%)	7 (28.0%)	7 (28.0%)

**Table 2: Need for College Library**

	COLVET			COLENG		
	Agree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
Establishment of college library is a welcome development	25 (100.0%)	-	-	24 (96.0%)	1 (4.0%)	-
College library is unnecessary	-	24 (96.0%)	1 (4.0%)	-	23 (92.0%)	2 (8.0%)
College library is of necessity and relief to users	24 (96.0%)	1 (4.0%)	-	25 (100.0%)	-	-

**Table 3: Adequacy and Relevance of Library Materials**

	COLVET			COLENG		
	Agree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
Adequacy of library of library materials	14 (56.0%)	6 (24.0%)	5 (20.0%)	4 (16.0%)	11 (44.0%)	10 (40.0%)
Currency and relevance of library materials	24 (96.0%)	-	1 (12.0%)	17(68.0 %)	-	8 (32.0%)
Library materials are grossly inadequate	20 (80.0%)	1 (4.0%)	4 (16.0%)	11 (44.0%)	9 (36.0%)	5 (20.0%)

**Table 4: Library Services**

	COLVET			COLENG		
	Agree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
Satisfaction with loan services	6 (24.0%)	14 (56.0%)	5 (20.0%)	4 (16.0%)	11 (44.0%)	10 (40.0%)
Photocopying services is commendable	10 (40.0%)	12 (48.0%)	3 (12.0%)	8 (32.0%)	9 (36.0%)	8 (32.0%)
Staff attitude to users is encouraging	20 (80.0%)	1 (4.0%)	4 (16.0%)	15 (20.0%)	5 (20.0%)	5 (20.0%)

**Table 5: Library Opening Hours**

	COLVET			COLENG		
	Agree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
College library opens till 8 pm, Monday to Friday	12 (48.0%)	13 (52.0%)	-	6 (24.0%)	18 (72.0%)	1 (4.0%)
College library opens at weekends	9 (36.0%)	15 (60.0%)	1 (4.0%)	4 (16.0%)	19 (76.0%)	2 (8.0%)
Suitability of opening hours	8 (32.0%)	16 (64.0%)	1 (4.0%)	11 (44.0%)	10 (40.0%)	4 (16.0%)

**Table 6: Respondents Opinion on Conduciveness of Library Facility**

	COLVET			COLENG		
	Agree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
Reading tables and chairs	25 (100.0%)	-	-	21 (84.0%)	3 (12.0%)	1 (4.0%)
College library is well lit and conditional	9 (36.0%)	14 (56.0%)	2 (8.0%)	22 (88.0%)	2 (8.0%)	1 (4.0%)
The college library has its own generator for steady power supply	1 (4.0%)	23 (92.0%)	1 (4.0%)	3 (12.0%)	20 (80.0%)	2 (8.0%)

**Table 7: Respondents Opinion on Location of the Library**

	COLVET			COLENG		
	Agree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
Sited within easy reach to users	22 (88.0%)	3 (12.0%)	-	24 (96.0%)	1 (4.0%)	-
College library not as far as main library	19 (76.0%)	3 (12.0%)	3 (12.0%)	21 (84.0%)	3 (12.0%)	1 (4.0%)
Location of library convenient for users	25 (100.0%)	-	-	24 (96.0%)	1 (4.0%)	-

**Table 8: Respondents Opinion on Accessibility of Library Materials to Users**

	COLVET			COLENG		
	Agree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
Materials are accessible to users	22 (88.0%)	1 (4.0%)	2 (8.0%)	20 (80.0%)	2 (8.0%)	3 (12.0%)
Materials are easily retrieved by users	16 (64.0%)	5 (20.0%)	4 (16.0%)	11 (44.0%)	4 (16.0%)	10 (40.0%)
Shelving of materials enhances use of the library	21 (84.0%)	2 (8.0%)	2 (8.0%)	19 (76.0%)	4 (16.0%)	2 (8.0%)

(17 or 68.0%) of the library materials to their needs. In addition, majority of COLENG library users also attested to gross inadequacy of library materials in the library with 44.0% response rate. It can be deduced therefore, that library materials in COLVET library are found to be adequate and relevant to the users needs while the library materials of COLENG library are found to be inadequate to the users of the library needs, even though the materials are relevant to the users needs.

Table 4 above presented data on the users' opinion about the College libraries services. It was revealed that majority of the respondents from COLVET library were dissatisfied with the loan services and photocopying services

of the library with response rates of 14 or 56.0% and 12 or 48.0% respectively while, the users were satisfied with the attitude of COLVET library staff with 20 or 80.0% response rate. The same goes for COLENG library, users that affirmed their dissatisfaction with the loan services are (11 or 44.0%) and photocopying services (9 or 36.0%) of COLENG library but, those satisfied with COLENG library staff attitude are 15 or 60.0% response rate. This implies that the users of COLVET and COLENG libraries were dissatisfied with the services of the libraries, though; they found the staff's attitude encouraging.

Table 5 above presented data on the

**Hypothesis 1: Location will Significantly Influence Use of Library**

Use of library	N	Mean	Std. D	Std. E	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Agree	45	1.27	0.447	0.067	1.280	1	1.280	6.400	0.015
Disagree	5	1.80	0.447	0.200	9.600	48	0.200		
Total	50	1.32	0.471	0.067	10.880	49			

**Hypothesis 2: Users’ Needs and Library Materials will Positively Influence Library Services**

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F value	R <sup>2</sup>	Prob
Regression	0.336	2	0.168	0.959	0.039	0.391
Residual	8.244	47	0.175			
Total	8.580	49				

respondents opinion on library opening hours and it revealed that majority of the respondents from COLVET (16 or 64.0%) disagreed with the suitability of the library’s opening hours while majority of respondents from COLENG (11 or 44.0%) agreed with the suitability of their library opening hours. However, users from both colleges disagreed with the fact that the College libraries operate the same opening hours as the University’s main library. Thus, it can be concluded that the library’s opening hours is not suitable for the users.

On the conduciveness of library facilities from table 6 above, the users from both libraries attested to the adequate availability of reading chairs and tables with 25 or 100.0% and 21 or 84.0% response rate for COLVET and COLENG libraries respectively. However, the users of both COLVET and COLENG libraries were unanimous in their opinion that there is no steady power supply in the College libraries. Thus, it can be concluded that the College libraries are not conducive enough for users use.

Table 7 above revealed that respondents from both COLVET and COLENG libraries attested to the suitability of the location of the libraries. Thus, it can be concluded that the College libraries are well sited and located.

Table 8 revealed that users from both College libraries attested to the fact that accessibility and retrieval of library materials by users are easy.

The table above presented the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of library location

positively influencing use of library. Preference to the study (F = 6.400, df=1, P=0.015<0.05 level of significance). Therefore, F ratio is greater than the approximate table value that is the difference that reflects is statistically significant, thus, the hypothesis is accepted. Hence, it can be concluded that location will positively influence use of library by users

The table above presented the regression analysis of the contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable of the respective factors. The result revealed that the regression model for the two variables is not significant, that is there is no significant influence between users needs and library materials (F value= 0.959, Prob 0.391>0.05). Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected. That is users’ needs and library materials will not positively influence library services.

The last question (no. 25) which sought for the users’ comments/suggestions for improvement in the Library services revealed the following request:

- o Extension of closing time of the library to 6 pm daily and Saturday opening.
- o Provision of a more spacious reading space, tables and chairs for more users.
- o Provision of On-line (Internet) connectivity to enhance access to information.
- o Procurement of more books to cover the various Departments in each College Library.
- o More split air-conditioners and ceiling

fans for comfort.

- o Book Loan services and additional photocopying machines to cater for the users' needs.

#### *Recommendations*

The College Library users, through their suggestions for improvement in question 25 have spoken their mind. For the College libraries to be able to compete favourably with the main library, some of the services available in the main library should also be extended to the College Libraries as here under recommended :

- Book loans services must be made available to willing and registered users.
- To guard against book theft and mutilation, there should be functional photocopying facilities and at subsidized rate.
- Most users are normally busy between 8 am and 4 pm attending lectures hence, the closing time should extend beyond 4 pm and Saturday opening inclusive.
- Internet facilities are necessary and should be put in place to further enhance and boost the use of the library.
- More users make use of the College Libraries than can be imagined, hence, there is need for a more spacious reading area, more tables and chairs and additional air-conditioners and ceiling fans to make the libraries conducive to reading, with a stand-by generator as back-up in case of power failure.
- There is need for more relevant and current books and journals to evenly cover the various Departments under each College Library.

#### **Conclusion**

The College Library is never a duplication of effort, but it complements the services of the main library. Users see the establishment as a welcome development. It must therefore

be sustained by ensuring that the remaining Colleges have their own libraries. This will no doubt serve as a prelude to meeting accreditation requirements by the National University Commission (NUC) in the nearest future, in addition to bringing library services to the 'door step' of the users in their respective Faculties, for better preparation and better performance in their various examinations.

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