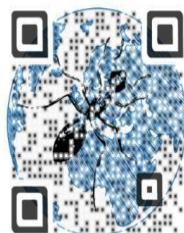


# A Survey of First Year Student's "Use of Medical Library" in Delta State University, Abraka

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## ABSTRACT

### Introduction:

The main objective of this study was to determine the extent to which the 2016/2017 first year students of the College of Health Science of the Delta State University, Abraka use the medical library.

### Materials and Methods:

The research design used for this study was the descriptive survey design. The study population was 718, consisting of all the first year students admitted into the six departments that make up the College of Health Sciences. Using the purposive sampling technique, the sample size for the study was 144.

### Results:

Results from the study revealed that participation of students in library instruction activity and the extent of use of library services and information resources by first year students of the College of Health Science was low.

### Key words:

First year students, Library use, Medical library

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## INTRODUCTION

As a service establishment, the academic library has been described to be an integral part of any tertiary institution whose level of efficiency was measured by the success with which she is able to satisfy her users' information needs. However, the academic library is nothing without her users. No matter how large the stock of a library, if the services and its resources are not fully used, such a library will be a white elephant.<sup>1</sup> Library instruction aims at transmitting knowledge and skills needed for extensive use of library resources and services. while most first year students tend to be very familiar and at ease with information and communication technologies, there are

assertions that this ability does not translate into a capability to effectively use the library.<sup>2, 3</sup>

The ability of students to effectively use the medical library depends to a large extent of how well they are taught how to make use of the library. Without library instruction there cannot be a connection between the users and the materials or facilities in the library.<sup>4</sup> He further explained that without proper library education been given to the user who may not have any prior knowledge or idea of the information resources available and the services offered by the particular library.

The library offers numerous information resources and services to her users to meet their in different information needs. Services provided by the libraries can be grouped into three main categories.<sup>5</sup> These are:

- The provisions of materials for use:- This includes selection of materials, acquisition, processing, organization of materials and the placements of these materials on the shelves for use. All the activities under this category is called "behind the scene services" in librarianship;
- Making materials available to users: This is usually carried out under the reader services where the library makes available all the processed materials to the intending users through the activities of the circulation units of the library.
- The reference services: Materials kept under the reference section of the library are consulted only when one wants a particular information. This section provides reference materials such as dictionaries, Encyclopedias, Directories, gazettes, Handbooks and some other bibliographic materials.

Effective information services such as lending, referral, microfilming, indexing and abstracting, current awareness, document delivery, photocopying, E-mail, facsimile, bindery, translation, consultancy, on-line database searching, user education, current contents listing, technical writing, selective dissemination of information and data processing has functional relation with the resources available at its disposal.<sup>9</sup>

According to the University of Minnesota<sup>5</sup> stressed that many freshmen usually assume that everything they need for their school work is just a Google search away, however they soon discover that they are unprepared to deal with the enormous amount of information they were expected to find and process for university research assignments. Hence, the need for library programmes for new intakes in universities. In the light of this, the need for this study becomes very imperative. The major concern of this study was to ascertain the extent of use of the library services and information resources, as well as to determine if library instruction has effects on the first year student's use of the College Library resources.

#### **Objectives of the Study**

- i. Find out the type of library instruction received by first year students of the College of Health Science;
- ii. Determine the extent of use of library services by first year students of the College of Health Science;
- iii. find out which of the library information resources first year students of the College of Health Science make use of the most;

- iv. find out the purpose for which first year students of the College of Health Science make use of the College Library,
- v. find out the frequency of first year students of the College of Health Science visit to the College Library;
- vi. investigate if library instruction has effects on the first year students use of the College Library.

#### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The research design used for this study was he descriptive survey design. The study population was 718, consisting of all the first year students admitted into the six departments that made up the College of Health Sciences of the Delta State University, Abraka. The sample size for the study was 20% of the entire population. This gave a sample size of 144. The study then used the purposive sampling technique to select 20% from each of the departments. The instrument for data collection was a self-developed questionnaire. In order to be adequately represented, the researcher distributed the instrument to the first year both in their classrooms and to the students that visited the library. Of 144 questionnaires that were distributed, 121 were found usable for the study. This produced a response rate of 84%. Percentage and Mean were used to analyse the data collected from the respondents, using a criterion Mean of 2.50 as the benchmark for decision making based on Strongly Agree = 4, Agree = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly disagree = 1

## RESULTS

**Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Department**

Department	Total Students Admitted	Number of Questionnaires Distributed	Number of Questionnaires Returned
Anatomy	141	28	26
Medical	160	32	21
Biochemistry			
Pharmacology and Therapeutics	156	31	29
Nursing	63	13	13
Medicine and Surgery	56	12	11
Physiology	142	28	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>718</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>121</b>

Research Question 1: As a first year student, did you take part in any library instruction activity?

**Table 2: Library Instruction Activities**

I participated in the following Library Instruction Activity		Yes	%	No	%
University library orientation	library	96	79.3	25	20.7
College of Health Sciences orientation	library	0	0	121	100
Departmental library tour	guided	30	24.7	91	75.2
Reading of Library guide		0	0	121	100
Asked a librarian		44	36.3	77	63.7
Library website		0	0	121	100
Text messaging		0	0	121	100
Social media		0	0	121	100

Data in Table 2 showed the participation of students in library instruction activity. It showed that 96 (79%) of the first year students attended the library instruction organized by the University library, none of them attested to attending any in the College of Health Sciences. A few of the 44 (36.3%) had to ask the librarians for private instructions, while 30 (24.7%) of the students responded that they had a departmental organized guided library tour.

Research Question 2: What is the extent of use of library services by first year students of the College of Health Science?

**Table 3: Use of Library Services by First Year Students**

Medical Services	Library	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN (x)
Reprography		21	23	43	34	<b>2.25</b>
Scanning of Documents		9	0	81	31	<b>1.89</b>
Reference information services	and	41	32	21	27	<b>2.71</b>
Newspaper/magazine services		12	17	46	46	<b>2.97</b>
Library consortium services		0	2	98	21	<b>1.85</b>
Circulation services		29	25	36	31	<b>2.42</b>
Internet services		23	11	24	63	<b>1.95</b>
Ebscohost, Medline / PubMed Searching		13	4	59	45	<b>1.87</b>
Current Awareness Services		26	34	41	20	<b>2.54</b>
Lending Services		21	15	66	19	<b>2.31</b>
User Education Services		17	23	40	41	<b>2.95</b>
Library Display/Exhibition Seats, Reading Carrels, and space		34	13	39	35	<b>2.38</b>
Indexes/abstracts services		31	51	12	27	<b>2.71</b>
Binding services		47	2	10	98	<b>1.38</b>
<b>Aggregate Mean</b>		11	8	12	101	<b>1.23</b>

A close look at Table 3 reveals that the extent of use of library services by first year students of the College of Health Science was low. This was because the aggregate mean score of ( $X = 2.22$ ) was lower than the criterion mean score of ( $X = 2.50$ ). The Table showed that the services that were highly used are user education services ( $X = 2.95$ ), reference services ( $X = 2.71$ ) and seats, reading carrels, and space ( $X = 2.71$ ).

Research Question 3: What is the extent of use of library information resources by first year students of the College of Health Science?

**Table 4: Use of Library Information Resources by First Year Students**

Medical Information Resources	Library	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN (x)
Textbooks		49	32	10	30	<b>2.82</b>
Reference Books		21	25	32	43	<b>2.19</b>
Newspapers/Magazines		30	28	42	21	<b>2.55</b>
Journals		28	24	9	60	<b>2.16</b>
Databases		13	4	71	33	<b>1.99</b>
Electronic Books		20	17	33	51	<b>2.04</b>
Internet Facilities		19	15	25	62	<b>1.92</b>
Students Seminar Presentations		4	0	56	61	<b>1.56</b>
Students Projects		8	1	72	40	<b>1.80</b>
						<b>2.11</b>
<b>Aggregate Mean</b>						

Findings from Table 4 indicates that with a mean score of (X = 2.82, 2.55), the first year students of the College of Health Science make use of textbooks and newspapers more. Furthermore, an aggregate mean of (X = 2.11) is an indication of low extent of use of the information resources in the library by the first year students of the College of Health Science.

Research Question 4: For which purpose do first year students of the College of Health Science make use of the College Library?

**Table 5: Purpose for which First Year Students Use Library**

Reasons for using Library	Yes	%	No	%
To make use of textbooks	89	73	32	27
To make use of journals (hard copies)	32	26.4	89	73.5
To write assignments	48	40	73	60.3
To read my lecture notes	60	49.5	61	50.4
To make use of electronic journals and books (online resources)	56	46.2	65	53.7
To make use of Internet facilities	41	34	80	66.1
To read for upcoming examination and tests	71	59	80	41.3
To consult reference materials	33	27.2	88	72.7
To photocopy materials	39	32.2	82	67.7
To read newspapers/magazines	44	36.3	77	63.6

On the purpose for which the first year students of the College of Health Science used the library, the Table reveals that 89 (73%) go to the library to make use of textbooks, 71 (59%) go to the library to read for their upcoming exams. This showed that minimal number of the respondents actually made use of the library information resources.

Research Question 5: Find out the frequency of first year students of the College of Health Science visit to the College Library

**Table 6: Frequency of Using the Library**

Frequency	Yes	%	No	%
Daily	19	15.7	102	84.2
Once a week	77	65.6	44	36.3
Twice a week	22	18.1	99	81.8
Once in two weeks	83	68.6	38	31.4
2-3 times a month	68	56.1	53	43.8
Rarely	67	55.3	54	44.6
Never	41	33.8	80	66.1

Analysis from Table 4 shows that 83 (68.6%) of the respondents use the library once in two weeks, while 77 (65.6%) use the library once in a week and 67 (55.3%). Only 19 (15.7%) of the respondents use the library daily. The implication of this is that more of the first year students visit the library just once in two weeks.

Research Question 6: What is the effect of library instruction on the library users?

**Table 7: Library Instruction and Library Use by First Year Students**

Library instruction helped me to	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN (x)
Use the library catalogue to search for information resources	24	26	58	13	<b>2.50</b>
Identify books on the shelves	35	56	20	10	<b>2.95</b>
Read newspapers more	30	43	26	22	<b>2.66</b>
Cite and reference information materials.	12	29	45	35	<b>2.14</b>
Study in the library always	41	25	36	19	<b>2.72</b>
Enhance my reading skills	36	48	24	13	<b>2.88</b>
Enhance my Internet search skills	15	19	39	48	<b>2.00</b>
Use electronic information resources better	26	16	36	43	<b>2.20</b>
					<b>2.50</b>

### Aggregate Mean

Result in table 7 reveal from the aggregate mean ( $X = 2.50$ ) that library instruction had an effect on the first year students library use. From the results it is clear that library instruction has an effect on how well students identify books on the shelves ( $X = 2.95$ ). Result also indicated that library instructional encouraged them to study in the library always ( $X = 2.72$ ), read newspapers more ( $X = 2.95$ ) and make use of the library catalogue to search for information resources. On the other hand, library instruction did not affect their Internet search skills ( $X = 2.00$ ) and their ability to cite and reference information materials ( $X = 2.14$ ).

## DISCUSSION

Findings revealed that the participation of students in library instruction activity was very low. Although, a good percentage agreed to have attended the library instruction organized by the University Library, none of them attested to have attended any library instruction activity organized for them by the College of Health Sciences. Some of the students had to ask the librarians for private instructions, while some others took part in their departmental organized guided library tour. It can be deduced from this result that a majority of the first year student did not have

any library instruction about Medical Library which is specifically for them and which is the closest library to them. This finding confirms the result presented by Omeluzor et al,<sup>6</sup> that most of the respondents confirmed that the library never used library guide to instruct its users.

Another important result from this survey revealed that the extent of use of library services and information resources by first year students of the College of Health Science was low and below the 2.50 criterion mean benchmark. Only few services were found to be sufficiently used by the first year students. These include user education services, reference services and seats, reading carrels, and space. This result was obtained in agreement with that of Nkamnebe; Udem, and Nkamnebe<sup>7</sup> where they found that library users were satisfied and made use of library services such as Seats, Reading Carrels, and space as well as Organization/Arrangement of Library Services. But in contrast, this result is at variance with a much older study by Lapidus,<sup>14</sup> who found that 80% of the respondents expressed satisfaction with library services and facilities.

Findings on the extent to which the use of information resources revealed that the first year students of the College of Health Science made use of textbooks and newspapers more. However, this finding was an indication of low extent of use of the other types of information resources in the medical library. In a similar study to determine the extent of use of library resources at the University of Ibadan, Agboola et al<sup>8</sup> found that only 49% said they made use of the information resources very often. Also, Ogunmodede et al<sup>5</sup> observed that while students use some resources, like books, newspaper, dictionaries etc., they don't use others which included bibliographies, gazettes, thesis and dissertations etc. The researcher believes that the reason why some materials were not consulted in the library might be related to lack of or limited library instruction given to the first year students of the College of Health Science.

The study also revealed the frequency with which first year students of the College of Health Science visit the medical library. This was also judged to be low in the present study, which is in line with the results presented by Nkamnebe et al<sup>9</sup> where they revealed that a low percentage of the total respondents use the library everyday while 7.6% patronize the library five times in a week. Results in table 5 revealed that library instruction has an effect on the first year students library use. From the results it was clear that library instruction had an effect on how well students identify books on the shelves. Result also indicated that library instructions encouraged them to study in the library always read newspapers more ( $X = 2.95$ ) and make use of the library catalogue to search for information resources. On the other hand, library

instruction did not affect their Internet search skills and their ability to cite and reference information materials. This finding affirmed the earlier findings by Omeluzor et al<sup>10</sup>, who found that library instruction have shown significant impact on library users and their effective use of the facility.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

It was observed that the reason only a small number of the first year students of the College of Health Science actually made use of the medical library services and information resources could be associated with their low level of awareness of the services and information resources that were available to them. This was closely related to their not being part of proper library instruction designed specifically for them by the College of Health Sciences. The researcher believes that it could also be as a result of students who absented themselves from the library orientation organised for new intakes by the main library and inability on the part of the first year students to seek the assistance from the library staff in their information search. It was believed that library use by first year students would be improved if they are conversant with the services and information services at their disposal.

The researcher was also of the opinion that for first year students it was very important that they understand the place of the library in their academic lives right from the beginning of their study at the university. Therefore, it is the sole responsibility of the management of the College of Health Sciences to without further delay include medical library instruction programmes in the annual orientation activities for first year students. There should also be guided library tours organized for the students to show them around the library and ensure that they are familiar with the library and its information resources. Furthermore, librarians in the medical library should do more to ensure that they first year's students interest in using the library be properly stimulated from the beginning. This can be done through regular awareness services, user education, library display/exhibition and organization of library week for the students of the College of Health Sciences. It is strongly believed that as soon as the students of the College of Health Sciences become aware of information services and source available to them in the medical library, they will use it.

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