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INFORMATION SEARCH ANXIETY AMONG POSTGRADUATE REGISTERED LIBRARY USERS OF ELECTRONIC RESOURCES IN ABUBAKAR TAFAWA BALEWA UNIVERSITY, BAUCHI

SA'AD IBRAHIM
Library Department, Federal Polytechnic Bali, Taraba State

Abstract

This study investigates "Information search Anxiety among Postgraduate Registered Library Users of E-resources in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi". To achieve the objectives of the study, two research questions were answered and two hypotheses were formulated and tested. The paper examined among others; the type of e-resources used and types of anxiety exhibited among Postgraduate students. Quantitative research approach was adopted for the study using cross-sectional survey research design. The targeted population for the study comprised of 3,212 male and 2,502 female post graduate students of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi, in 2022/2023 academic session. Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. Stratified sampling technique was used to select respondents to accommodate the different strata of the subjects involved in the study. The data collected from the field was sorted, organized, presented and analyzed using descriptive statistics for the research questions displayed in tables. Also, inferential statistics using independent sample t-test was employed to test the two null hypotheses formulated at 0.05 level of significance. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 23.0 was used for the analysis. The study discovered that e-books, e-dissertation and e-journal were the most used e-resources by male and female post graduate students. It was equally revealed that there is significant difference in the type of anxiety exhibited between male and female postgraduate students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi. The study concluded that, both the male and female Postgraduate Students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa

Keywords: Anxiety, Information Search, E-resources, Post-graduate, User

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University, Bauchi have realized the fact that e-resources utilization is prerequisite for the successful conduct of their research, learning and other scholarly functions. Therefore, librarians need to reevaluate user preferences concerning e-resources /facilities consulted and purpose of utilizing them in order to save the time of users. It is recommended that users should make it a habit of first checking the library's webpage before any other site and more computer/Internet training for postgraduate students to be organized by the university.

Introduction

Information can be is defined as a meaningful communication symbols transferred between any two points in human communication or machine networks (Aina, 2008). It is the content of a message which if conveyed, and assimilated by the person to whom it was conveyed; usually result in some decision, action or behavioral change or addition to one's knowledge. Information occupies centre stage in all human endeavors. This may partly be due to the fact that almost everything which individuals do or which society engages in generates or is driven by information. Information is the basic ingredient for personal, social and national development. Access to it, in its entire ramification is therefore a basic human right whether the user of information is literate or non-literate. As pointed out by Ayoku (2008) information is wide spread and in some cases incomplete in a single source. Users would therefore, be required to collate information from various locations in pursuit of a goal. This suggests that users will require multiple distributed/disjoint bits of information to accomplish a single task.

Anxiety in information search has been recognized as a problem in every sector of the society, and is of concern to information specialist in all environment including academic, special and public libraries. Burdick (1995) assert that several disorders that cause nervousness, fear and apprehension or anticipation of negative outcomes when searching for information in an electronic environment. This feeling has been identified as one of the most important barriers in academic environments, which has caused different cognitive, affective, and behavioral effects in students, and affected their educational performance (Erfanmanesh, 2011). However, frustration associated with searching for information resources in libraries or information systems appear to be among the most prevalent anxieties, because most of students are required to conduct a research as part of completing their academic program which needs an extensive search and use of information resources (Aliyu, 2011). One of the main purposes of information technology is to free up users time or to make tasks simpler. Unfortunately the explosion of information and the number of different sources of information has shown that the opposite is true.

Information access is mainly concerns with ensuring that information users have opportunity to get to and use information. Libraries have always served as an access

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points for information. Services have evolved from the days of closed stacks, through shelf browsing and card catalogue to institutional repositories. This historical migration has tried to satisfy the changing needs of users, including ease of access, interaction richness, and cost. Lombardi (2000) assert that access to information is the paramount issue on users mind. The Internet as a new invented technology which holds the greatest promise to humanity for learning and universal access to information. It allows students to broaden their academic experience, access important information and communicate to others within academic community. It is a double-edge sword, as students can access any educational database, they can also be subjected to perverse and deviant topics.

The use of the Internet around the world has been growing rapidly over the last decade, although the growth rate seems to have slowed somewhat after 2000. The phase of rapid growth is ending in industrialized countries, as usage becomes ubiquitous there, but the spread continues in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Middle East. Abels (2004) mentioned that the frequency of use of the Internet in 1998/2000 had greatly increased. Perhaps no other factor in the history of information and communication technology (ICT) has changed the face of information use and delivery as significantly as the swift emergence of the Internet and related web based applications in academic setting.

The Internet offers vast opportunities for users who are hungry for knowledge and information. A businessman can open a remote desktop session into his office computer using a secure Virtual Private Network (VPN) connection via Internet. He can access his normal files and data, e-mail, and other applications while he is in a business trip or on vacation. Internet users are responsible for the adjustment of security, authentication, and encryption technologies required in his remote access so that others will not be able to access his files and data.

Statement of Problem

Developments in computer applications during the past few decades have brought about radical changes in the way information is gathered, stored, organized, accessed, retrieved and consumed. The application of computers in information processing has brought several products and services to the scene. The Internet and the Web are constantly influencing the development of new modes of scholarly communication; their potential for delivering goods is quite vast, as they overcome successfully the geographical limitations associated with the print media. Moreover, the distribution time between product publication and its delivery has been extremely reduced. Thus the Internet can be used for efficient retrieval and meeting information needs. This is very important for university libraries since most of them call for more and more research work. This important fact is convincing many libraries to move towards digital e-resources, which are found to be less expensive and more useful for easy access. This is especially helpful to distant learners who have limited time to access the libraries from outside by dial-up access to commonly available electronic resources, mainly CD-ROM, OPACs and Internet,

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which are replacing the print media. Today the Internet is imbedded in our lives but still we are faced with lack of basic understanding of the systematic informational search and retrieval process coupled with information overload which is increasing our anxiety and frustration due to unsatisfactory results. Users of the electronic resources (e-resources) are overwhelmed by the quantity of information available to choose from. Some students even adjust their research thesis to match the information they have already found. Previous investigations about the information search and retrieval were mainly focused on the technical aspects and the human and users' side has been neglected in some ways. It is on these bases that this research was conceived to investigate the phenomenon of anxiety in information search as it affects postgraduate users of e-resources in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi (ATBU).

Research Questions

1. What types of anxiety do the Postgraduate Students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi exhibit when searching e-resources?
2. What kind of Electronic Resources are used by Postgraduate Students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi?

Hypothesis

H_o1 There is no significant difference between male and female Postgraduate Students of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi in the type of Anxiety they exhibit when searching e-resources.

H_o2 There is no significant difference in the type of e-resources used between male and female Postgraduate Students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi

Literature Review

The concept of Information search anxiety as coined by Wurman (2001) is usually taken to be a condition of stress caused by the inability to access, understand, or make use of necessary information. The cause of this may be either information overload or insufficient information. It may equally be due to poorly organized or presented information, or a variety of other causes including lack of understanding of the information environment in which one is working. The rather similar condition of library anxiety was recognized and named as far back as 1986, by Mellon (1986) in his work, Library Anxiety: A grounded theory and its developments, and has been analyzed further since. This is a type of anxiety which leads to a sense of powerlessness when starting an information search in a library, such as feelings of being lost, inability to find one's way round, and being afraid to approach library staff. Encarta (2005) described anxiety as emotional state in which people feel uneasy, apprehensive, or fearful. People usually experience anxiety about events they cannot control or predict, or about events that seem threatening or dangerous. For example, students taking an important test may feel

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anxious because they cannot predict the test questions or feel certain of a good grade. People often use the words fear and anxiety to describe the same thing. Fear also describes a reaction to immediate danger characterized by a strong desire to escape the situation. The physical symptoms of anxiety reflect a chronic 'readiness' to deal with some future threat. These symptoms may include fidgeting, muscle tension, sleeping problems, and headaches. Higher levels of anxiety may produce such symptoms as rapid heartbeat, sweating, increased blood pressure, nausea, and dizziness, Wurman (2001). All people experience anxiety to some degree. Most people feel anxious when faced with a new situation such as first date, or when trying to do something well such as giving a public speech. Ahmed (2004) pointed out that anxiety could be expressed in form of irritability, headache, nightmares, rejection to use computers etc. Other symptoms may include panicking or developing milder symptoms such as feeling of isolation and frustration, negative attitude toward computer based resources and systems, indifference to use computer related needs, self-depreciation thoughts and statement about one's ability to cope, apologetic attitudes towards users, and definition of self as someone who could not succeed. Gbaje (2006) is of the opinion that users of electronic resources are overwhelmed by the number of hits resulting from search query with limited ability to refine or make precise search. He added that it is as a result of development of web technology which made it possible for anyone with access to the technology and the 41 skills to publish on the web. This has led to an exponential increase in electronic documents with dynamic nature.

Causes of Information Anxiety

Gos (2006) revealed that prior computer experience correlates with current computer anxiety. This may imply that the students with unpleasant prior computer experience tend to be computer phobias unlike their counterparts who do not, due to their pleasant prior computer experience. While the former shows negative attitude towards computer use, the later shows positive attitude. Also, in a study conducted in the United State of America, Rosen and Weil (1995) reported that, out of the 488 teachers that were surveyed in elementary and secondary schools, between one-third and two-thirds of them were not using computers, due to their lack of confidence or felt frightened by computers. While corroborating this view, Russell & Brandley (1997) stated that "teachers' lack of confidence in their ability to use computers effectively in classrooms can be understood as a form of computer anxiety or cyber phobia." Ganzel (1998) was of the view that several computer users feel anxious when they deal with computer system, especially at the initial stage of interaction. However, the users' initial anxious feelings will be overcome, replaced with favorable perceptions as they familiarize themselves with the system interface and functionality. There is no doubt that the bottom line of Ganzel's view is experience. On the issue of experience, Stephen (2008) stated that students with little or no computer experience have more computer anxiety, compared with their

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counterparts who have computer experience. The likely implication of this is that reduced computer anxiety further increases computer usage, thus enhancing a user's positive attitude to computer use.

The methods by which reduction of anxiety is done are often rather 'traditional', and not necessarily strongly associated with information management per se. They include time management, desk management, critical thinking, information organization (including good use of metadata), and cultivation of a rational personal information management style. Appropriate use of information technology by use of techniques of filtering, withdrawal and personalization, and the avoidance of over-much 'push' technology is also often presented as a solution, Gbaje (2007).

Electronic Information Resources in Academic Libraries

Accessibility is a term used to describe the degree to which resources, services, products are available by as many people as possible. Aina (2011) stated that availability determines the speed at which an information output in any formats is obtained. In Postgraduate studies, libraries play a fundamental role in providing researchers with current print and electronic resources. This facilitates support research activities. The advancing digital age characterized with applications, access and use of electronic resources in the research environments for teaching and research is transforming the nature of information use in libraries

Postgraduate researchers involved in research are in need of adequate access to modern electronic resources to support their research activities. Studies such as Aina (2014) on Awareness,

Availability and Use of Electronic Databases revealed that only 40 (47.1%) of respondents had fully access to academic journal, Ebscohost and JSTOR databases while Odunlade (2017) found out that there is high level of accessibility but no relationship with utilization. However, Sejane (2017) investigate the access to and use of Electronic Information Resources in the Academic Libraries of the Lesotho Library Consortium shows the e-resources which were mostly accessed to include e-mail, search engines, websites and OPAC, while e-journals, full-text databases, IRs and reference databases were least accessed. In the same vein, Musa, Sahabi, Lawal & Amishe (2017) studied Academic Librarians Research Productivity amidst Open Access Resources indicated that support for accessibility policy was considered very important as their main factor for using Open Access resources with 131 (75.3%) responses, accessibility to publications at no cost with 135 (77.6%) responses while visibility and speed, which exposes OA scholarly works to a large readership were the major factor influencing them to use OA publications with 141 (81%) responses.

Nevertheless, Song & Song (2017) study on the Availability and Utilization of electronic information resources for Research Development of postgraduate students revealed that the correlation showed that utilization of electronic information resources and

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enhancements of research development is positive and the study concludes that electronic information resources is necessary for postgraduate students' research activities. The descriptive analysis revealed that very few respondents rated they access Electronic Information Resources from the E-Library and the University e-library Network but there is a very high electronic literacy skill among the postgraduate students who can conveniently access needed information from electronic information resources. The study further showed that electronic information resources facilitate faster and convenient access to relevant information, increase richness of work thereby enhancing research productivity.

Methodology

Quantitative research approach was adopted for the study using cross-sectional survey research design. This is because of its flexibility which permits the use of variety of data collection techniques such as questionnaire, interview and observation. It was also chosen because it deals with various aspects of human behavior and responses. The targeted population for the study comprised of 3,212 male and 2,502 female postgraduate registered library users in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi in 2022/2023 academic session. Neuman (2006) opine that for equal accuracy a researcher can select 10% of population above 1,000 and 30% of population below 1,000. Based on this sample specification, 10% sample size was used for both male anf female postgraduate students in the university because they are more than one thousand. Simple random sampling techniques were used to select 10% of postgraduate students relative to their population, totaling 571. The selection was 321 from 3,212 male and 250 from 2,502 female postgraduate students. The instrument used was a 4 point Likert-type scale User evaluation questionnaire divided into sections A and B. Section A sought demographic information while section B assessed the data related to the research questions of the study. The instrument was validated using Cronbach Alpha reliability test. SPSS Version 23.0 was used to test the reliability index of the research instrument. This yielded a coefficient value of 0.77 which signifies that the instrument is reliable to elicit the data required for the research. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. The null hypotheses was tested using independent sample t-test at 0.05 level of significance.

Presentation of Data, Results and Discussion

Table 1: showing the Type of Information Search Anxiety exhibited by Postgraduate registered library users in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi

Type of Anxiety	Post-graduate Registered Library Users	
	Mean	***Std Deviation***
Uneasiness	-	-

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Being apprehensive	3.20	.723
Fearfulness	-	-
Rapid heartbeat	-	-
Sweating	-	-
Headache	-	
Tension	2.26	.802
Panicking	-	-
Uncertainty	3.42	.675
Distressfulness	2.26	.802
Overwhelmed	4.18	.612

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The table reveals that all the respondents indicated that they did not suffer from uneasiness, fearfulness, rapid heartbeat, sweating, headache, and panicking, this is not surprising because they are all signs of generalized anxiety disorder and not necessarily anxiety that has to do with using technologies 'Anxious technophobe '. A majority of the Postgraduate Students 4.18 (SD=.612) indicated that they experienced much anxiety when they are overwhelmed by the amount of e-resources on the academic databases. However, 3.42 (SD=.675) of the Postgraduate Students have the feeling of uncertainty when they are searching on the Internet. Whereas, 3.20 (SD=.723) of the Postgraduate Students are apprehensive when they are searching for e-resources on the Internet. This finding is in line with that of Delaney (2007), who opined that there are some findings tasks for which users are confident of their outcome based on previous experience with similar tasks. However, many finding tasks do involve uncertainty both in terms of where the desired information will be found and how to go about searching for it. Also, the feeling of information overload is usually associated with a loss of control over the situation and sometimes with feelings of being overwhelmed. In the extreme, it can lead to damage to health. Various psychological conditions have been described to be associated with such situation, such as continuous partial attention. Appropriate use of information technology by use of techniques of filtering and personalization, and the avoidance of over-much 'push' technology is also often presented as a solution.

Table 2 Showing the Type of Electronic Resources used by Postgraduate Library Users in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi

Type of Electronic Resources	Post-graduate students	
	Mean	***Std Deviation***
E-dissertations, E-books and E-Journals	4.00	.643

Current Awareness Services (CAS) to enquire about status of newly subscribed EIR databases	3.42	.667
On-line databases and Scholarly Websites	3.56	.654
Offline Library Repository (such as D-Space)	2.81	.761
CD-ROM/DVD Searching Service	3.26	.682
Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) for online reference services on EIR	3.10	.796
Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) services to access databases	3.48	.692
Photocopy, Printing and Scanning Services	2.11	.782
Internet Resources	4.00	.643

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 2: showing the respondents view on the electronic resources available in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University library, postgraduate respondents attest to the availability and readiness of E-dissertations, E-books and E-Journals with the mean score of 4.00(SD=.634) and Internet Resources 4.00(SD=634), followed by On-line databases and Scholarly Websites with the mean score of 3.56(.645). However, 3.48(SD=.710) and 3.42(SD=.658) of postgraduate students attest to Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) services to access databases and Current Awareness Services (CAS) respectively. The popularity of E-dissertations, E-books, E-Journals and internet resources among the respondents may have been influenced by the engagements in postgraduate activities which is dominated by research. With the presence of Internet and WIFI within and around the campuses postgraduate users had access to e-resources without entering the Electronic Library complex. More so, users find it more convenient using search engines which gave them access to e-resources. It is possible that the convenience of access to e-resources through search engines increased the utilization by postgraduate library users in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University. The higher awareness of e-resources databases is an indication that postgraduate students are well familiar with the databases in the library. This is in agreement with the findings of Dahiru & Mohammed (2020) who discovered that research scientist regularly access the online subscribed databases like HINARI, EBSCOHOST, JSTORE, QUESTIA and HIGH BEAM. On-site visit to the Library record revealed that, the Library had access to the following databases: Ebscohost, Science Direct, Nigerian Virtual Library, Nexis Lexis, Dialog Database, Datastar Database,

HINARI, AGORA, TEEAL, OARE, ACM, OAPEN, OAJSE, AJOL, SAGEOPEN, Springer Open and ARDI.

Hypothesis one

H_o1 There is no significant difference between male and female Postgraduate Students of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi in the type of Anxiety they exhibit when searching e-resources.

Table 3: Two-tailed Test on type of Anxiety exhibited

Groups	N	Mean	SD	SE		t-cal	t-cri	P	Df	Decision
MALE	321	14.5781	6.49036	0.48005		-0.955	1.978	0.311	337	Not Significant
FEMALE	250	12.3409	6.71050	0.49321						

Significant at 0.05 level

Table 3 showed that the t-calculated value of -0.955 is less than the t-tabulated value of 1.978. This indicated that the statistical test is not significant as the observed significant level is 0.311 which is greater than 0.05 (P>0.05). The null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference between male and female postgraduate students of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi in the type of Anxiety exhibited is therefore retained. This implies that there is no significant difference in the type of anxiety exhibited by the male and female postgraduate students in the university when searching e-resources on the internet. The analysis revealed that the male female Postgraduate Students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi exhibit same type of Anxiety. In consonance to this finding, Ganzel (1998) in his study found that several Internet users feel anxious when they deal with computer system, especially at the initial stage of interaction.

Hypothesis Two

H_o2 There is no significant difference in the type of e-resources used between male and female Postgraduate Students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi

Table 4: Two-tailed Test on the type of e-resources Used

	N	Mean	SD	SE	t-cal	t-cri	P	Df	Decision
MALE	321	28.2083	13.47475	0.97246	-0.964	1.978	0.336	337	Not Significant
FEMALE	250	29.5568	13.33812	1.00540					

Significant at 0.05 level

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Table 4 showed that the t-calculated value of -0.964 is less than the t-tabulated value of 1.978. This showed that the statistical test is not significant as the observed significant level is 0.336 which is greater than 0.05 (P>0.05). The null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the type of e-resources used between male and female postgraduate students of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi is therefore retained. This means that there is no significant difference between the male and female postgraduate students of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi in the type of e-resources used. The analysis showed that both the male and female postgraduate students use similar e-resources. From this finding it was noted that the male and female postgraduate students use e-books, e-journals and e-dissertations which attributed to their nature of work.

Conclusion

In spite of the fact that both the male and female Postgraduate Students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi exhibit all kinds of anxiety over the use of e-resources, it could be concluded that both the male and female Postgraduate Students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi have realized the fact that e-resources utilization is prerequisite for the successful conduct of their research, learning and other scholarly functions. However, because both the male and female Postgraduate Students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi do not regularly up-date their Information search skills, this has to a large extend resulted in the ever growing anxiety among them. Therefore, Librarians are challenged to reevaluate user preferences concerning e-resources consulted, purpose of utilization, search and retrieval devices and provision of Internet training in order to save their time, thereby remedying the anxiety.

Recommendations

1. In order to reduce anxiety, the use of techniques of filtering and personalization and avoidance of over-much 'push' technology is also recommended. Employ the use of Web 2.0 which is a tool for information management essentially for finding what users need and can judge the quality of their result should assist in this.
2. Internet connectivity should be provided as a matter of urgency in both Staff and Students common rooms as well as greater publicity should be conducted on the type of academic databases available on the library's homepage and other metadata search options. Both the male and female Postgraduate Students should make it a habit to visit the library's homepage before any other site.

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