Agriculture and Nation Building: Do Students Still Use the University Library? Case Study of University of Ibadan Agricultural Economics Graduate Students

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Abstract
The growing awareness of internet based information resources has made students to reduce their use of the physical library in which university has invested huge financial resources for nation building. Past research efforts on the use of library have mostly focused on the generality of students without localised study on a particular set of students. This paper therefore looked at whether graduate students of agricultural economics still use the physical library in the face of the growing efforts of promoting agricultural study and production in Nigeria. The factors that affect the length of time students spend in the library were also established. Simple random sampling was used to select 60 graduate students during the 2010/2011 academic session in Agricultural Economics Department, University of Ibadan. The students were administered with structured questionnaire and 57 were successful for analysis. Majority of the respondents were female while 47.37 per cent was single. Majority of the students visit the university, faculty department and outside library occasionally while 73.68 per cent are of full time mode of study. Almost all the students, 96.49 per cent use internet based library. The tobit regression revealed that full-time mode of study, increase in weekly financial allowance on study, membership of registered group off- and on-campus encourages students to spend more hours in the library. Full-time mode of study should be encouraged among the graduate students while the library should be equipped with adequate and reliable internet facilities and personal computers to encourage students' visit and use of the library towards the promotion of agricultural scholarship for food sufficiency which is a valid aim of agricultural development and nation building.
Keywords: Agricultural Economics, Graduate Students, Library Use

1.0 Introduction

Agriculture does not affect individuals only but also the society and even the nation's welfare, security and environmental sustainability. The search for information to meet particular needs cuts across every individual irrespective of social status. Young and old, deaf and dumb, students, workers, decision-makers and other stakeholders in the country have information needs and seeking behaviour which are often influenced by their socio-economic characteristics that are either external or internal to the person. Students in particular rely on their University, Faculty or Department library for resources and services for their academic pursuits and general knowledge acquisition, especially now that no student can afford to get all the recommended textbooks and other information materials because of their rising costs. Kumar (2010) posits that agricultural scientists are really the people who shoulder the responsibility of nation building by exercising their efforts in creating new information for improved productivity. In combating the problems of illiteracy, poverty, diseases and malnutrition, relevant information at all levels and in a format that can be assimilated must be regarded as absolute necessity (Srikantaiah, 1993; through Bredekamp, 1996)

Some of the activities carried out by the students in the library were identified by Kayongo and Helm (2010) which include the use of library for journal, index and abstract, finding dissertations and thesis which are information materials that gives current information. Ajala (1997) reports that graduate students use other libraries for materials not available in the University Library. For graduate students that live on campus, the use of the library may not be a problem so far it meets their needs but those that live off campus or on part-time study have to contend with research conduct from a distance. However, graduate students do face challenges in the use of library services and resources in their academic endeavours.

Based on the for-going, research efforts have been on to expose and explain the situations of students in the use of higher institutions' libraries. Some of such studies include Frascotti *et al* (2007), Kayong and Helm (2010), Sagar (2006), Nagata *et al* (2011), Ajayi and Ogunyemi (2011) and Ajala (1997). Nagata *et al* (2011) state that library use is beneficial and indispensable for students in achieving their educational outcomes. Sagar

(2006) focus on computer science students and digital library and established that gender, age, experience and voluntariness moderately affects performance expectancy while information quality, effort expectancy and social influence are part of the factors that influence student's behavioural use of the library. Also, Whitemire (2002) through Nagata *et al* (2011) identifies gender, age, race, class year, mode of study (enrolment status), library variables (resources, services) as factors that affect library use: usage as a place, use of indexes to journal articles, developing bibliography, use card catalogue or computer, find materials in browsing stacks, check citations in materials, read and reading a basic reference. Olanlokun through Omehia (2008) reveals that students use the library for class work, research, discussions, leisure and other purposes. Their finding reveals that, students with low socio-economic status made more use of library services than those with middle or high status. The problem of non use and under utilization of the library by the users especially the academic library is a general problem faced by libraries globally. Yusuf and Iwu (2010) report that students reading for examination and photocopying of materials accounted for most students visit to the library and many of the students that use the library can also access the book on the shelf using the catalogue. This negates the submission of George *et al* (2006) that students rely on the internet, online resources and hard copy materials in the library and they are usually faced with difficulty in locating information on the shelf. The basis for George *et al* (2006) submission may be because of the rapid growth in Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

But Nagata *et al* (2011) mention that students use the library in various ways: a place to rest, chat with friends, kill time, use computers, a place for study, class assignments, pleasure, reading guided by personal whims and who never checked out library materials. For these uses, four classes of users were identified: learners, socialisers, place and personal computers (PCs) users and stroller group. These groups are influenced by environmental factors which are the internal and external socio-economic characteristics of the students. In this modern age of internet based information resources, students will visit the library with adequate PCs connected to the internet and use it often if access is free. Oyadonghan and Eke (2011) identify that the emergence of information technology has improved the efficiency of the performance of library task and routine. In their submission, it was opined that the use of these information technology in the library by Nigerian students varies, based on the availability of resources and materials, management and administration and the students attitude and disposition. Another reason why student do not use the library by Frascotti *et al* (2007) was reported as inadequate materials in the library. They also mentioned that, non-cooperative attitude of library staff and obsolete equipment was fast phasing out. Library staffs are now more users friendly and obsolete equipment were being replaced with modern ones in this era of modern technology.

It is worthy to note that all the literature cited, apart from Sagar (2006), focuses on the generality of students. With the current emphasis of developing countries like Nigeria to promote agriculture for food sufficiency, a study that target agricultural graduate students use of the library becomes expedient. Also in line with Pimentel (2009), the status of agricultural and natural resources information shows that there is a number of institutional programmes and initiatives that demands individual or collective collation, analysis, storage and dissemination of diverse data and information on the agricultural sector of the country. This corroborates Ajala (1997) that the use of the University of Ibadan Library by graduate students and other libraries for materials not available in the former; a time when the use of the internet was either non available or non-common in Nigeria as a whole and among students in particular. The rising knowledge of the internet among students, either part-time or full-time, as a sure source of information resources possibly gives rise to the question that is to be address in this study: are the graduate students still using the physical library of the university, faculty or the department? Apart from the foregoing, this paper is set to address the following additional questions: Which other libraries do graduate students use and what factors influence the time spend in the library? Consequently, the study will add to existing literature on students library use and will assist promoters of agriculture and food security in knowing if students of agricultural economics in a leading Nigerian University still use the physical library and how they can be encouraged to spend more time in the library for the purpose of enhancing agricultural scholarship towards food sufficiency in the country.

2. Methodology

The study purposively focused on the graduate students of agricultural economics, University of Ibadan in the 2010/2011 session comprising of M.Sc, M.Phil, and PhD students. Simple Random Sampling was used to select 60 students on which structured questionnaire were administered and of which 57 were returned successful. The data were analysed with Stata 10.1 using descriptive statistics: table, frequency, per centage and tobit regression. The regression was used to analyse the factors that affect the length of time in hours that students spend in the library and is described below:

According to Splett, et. al. (1994) through Olagunju and Ajiboye (2010) the standard Tobit model is as follows:

$Y_i^* = X_i\beta + \varepsilon_i$

$Y_i = Y_i^*$ if $Y_i > 0$

$Y_i = 0$ if $Y \leq 0$ 1

where,

i = 1, 2, …, n

Y = Highest Time spent in the Library (Hours)

X_i = Socioeconomic Variable, i

n = total number of independent variables

X_1 = Gender (Male Dummy: Male =1 and Female = 0)

X_2 = Age (Years)

X_3 = Marital Status (Single Dummy: Single = 1 and otherwise =0)

X_4 = University Education (Years)

X_5 = Study mode (Full Time = 1 and Otherwise = 0)

X_6 = Membership of registered group on campus (Yes =1 and otherwise = 0)

X_7 = Type of group on campus (Social group =1 and Academic group =

X_8 = Membership of registered group off campus (Yes =1 and otherwise = 0)

X_9 = Type of group off campus (Social group =1 and Academic group = 0)

X_{10} = Weekly allowance on study (Naira)

X_{11} = Use of Library with friend/colleague/pal (Yes = 1 and No = 0)

X_{12} = Library location discourages use of the library (Yes = 1 and No = 0)

X_{13} = Class workload discourages use of the library (Yes = 1 and No = 0)

X_{14} = Class workload reduces the time spend in the library (Yes = 1 and No = 0)

ε   = Error term

It is noted that Y_i^* is the latent dependent variable, Y_i is the observed dependent variable, X_i is the vector of the independent variables as defined, β is the vector of coefficients, and the ε_i is assumed to be independently normally distributed: $\varepsilon_i \sim N (0, \sigma2)$ (and therefore $Yi \sim N [X_i\beta , \sigma2]$). The observed 0's on the dependent variable could mean either a "true" 0 or censored data. At least some of the observations must be censored data, or y_i would always be equal to y_i^* and the true model would become linear regression.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Marital Status and frequency of library visit

As shown in Table 1, twenty seven (27) of the respondents are single while thirty (30) are either married or divorce representing 47.37 per cent and 52.63 per cent respectively. Among those that are married, 38.60 per cent is studying for MPhil and or PhD while 14.03 per cent is studying for Master's degree. For the single students, 26.32 per cents is for the former and 21.05 per cents for the later. Moreover, those that go to the library everyday is 5.26 per cent, occasional visit is 42.11 per cent, once a week 7.02 per cent and Not at all 29.83. This implies that most of the students occasionally visit the University library.

3.2 Gender, mode of study and frequency of visit to the library

Table 2 shows that 57.89 per cent of the respondents are female and 42.10 per cent (24 respondents) are male. Among the female respondents, 17.54 per cent and 40.35 per cent are on part-time and full time study mode but for the males, 8.77 per cent and 33.33 per cent are on the two study modes respectively. 12, 3, 6, 2 and 19 of full-time students do not visit the library, visit once a week, twice a week, everyday and occasionally respectively. Among part-time students, frequency of visit is 5, 1, 3, 1 and 5 respectively. This implies that majority of the students are female (40%); majority of who visits the library occasionally followed by those that do not go to the library. Similar observation is deductable among the minority male students. Also there is no clear cut distinction between the frequency of university library visit of part-time and full-time students. This supports the observation that most of the students either full-time or part-time visit the university library occasionally.

3.3 Study mode, gender and frequency of visit to faculty and department library

Table 3 shows that 56 per cent representing 32 respondents visit the department library while 43.86 per cent (25 respondents) do not visit the department library. Of the later, 5.26 per cent do go to the faculty library while from those that visit the department library, 33.33 per cent do visit the faculty library. Majority constituting 38.60 per cent do not go to either faculty or department library while 22.81 per cent visit the department library but not faculty library. This implies that majority of the graduate students do not visit the faculty library. However, more full-time students visit the department and faculty library more than the part-time students. Out of the 15 part-time students only 5 visit both the department and faculty libraries while 2 that visit department library do not visit the faculty library. Out of the 42 part-time students, 3 visit the faculty library but do not visit that of the department while 11 visit the department library but not the library while 14 visit both. This implies that the faculty and department libraries still serve the graduate students especially those on full-time mode of study.

3.4 Frequency of visit to department and faculty libraries

As shown in Table 4, 29.82, 7.02, 15.79, 5.26 and 42.11 per cents do not visit, go once a week, twice a week, everyday and occasionally to university library respectively. Of those that do not visit the university library, only 6 students do not visit the faculty and department library while 5 visit the department library but not faculty library and 6 respondents visit both. Of the 32 students that go to the department library, 7 visit the faculty library occasionally. The implication of this is that the students visit both the faculty and department libraries occasionally.

3.5 Marital status, use of internet source, university library and library outside the university

According to Table 5, virtually all the students use internet source as 3.51 per cent reported non-use of electronic library, the balance of 96.49 per cent use internet source. Also, thirty (30) respondents (52.63 per cent) do not use library outside the university. This clearly implies that most of the graduate students depend on internet based information sources for their academic pursuit. This perhaps is contrary to the findings of Ajala (1997) that graduate students use the University of Ibadan Library and other libraries for materials not available in the former which is no more tenable in the present day reality of internet surfing.

3.6 Factors that affect hours spent in the library

The regression result as shown table 6 reveals that all the fifty seven (57) observations were used in the analysis with only four (4) representing students that spent less than 1 hour censored out. The pseudo R-square shows that 4.61 per cent of the variability in the dependent variable, highest hour spent in the library, is explained by the independent variables X_1 to X_{14}. Also, the Probability of chi square 0.5614 shows that the model is not a good fit. This perhaps explains why none of the explanatory variables is significant even at 10 per cent level. This somehow implies that main factors must have been omitted in the model and captured by the error term. Despite this, the signs of the coefficients show some relationships. Male graduate students spend more average hour in the library than the female at least by 0.92 hours on the average. This means that as one moves from male to female students, average hour spent in the library decreases. With age increase among the students, time spend in the library increases same for years of education. The average hour spend in the library is higher among single, full-time, those that visit library with friends, and those that opined that class workload reduces time spent in the library than their opposite categories that received zero value. Also more weekly financial allowance on study reduces time spent in the library. Whereas, membership of registered social group on campus and off campus, those that are of opinion that library location and class workload discourage time spent in the library spend lower time in the library compared with their base categories that received zero value. Of particular note is the high coefficient of group membership which implies that the variable has highest magnitude in explaining length of time spent in the library.

4. Conclusion

The study has shown that graduate students of agricultural economics are moving away from the use of the university library as they occasionally visit the library and department and faculty libraries. Graduate students, both part-time and full-time, use electronic library mostly which is convenient at the comfort of their tables and rooms. Full-time status and membership of registered group on campus and off campus encourage hours spent in the library while the more the money available for study, that is, as students' weekly allowance increases, hours spent in the library decreases. At least with more money, students could have more access to internet connection. To encourage the graduate students to spend more time in the library, full-time mode of study should be encouraged while internet wireless facilities with adequate personal computers would also encourage the graduate students of agricultural economics to spend more hours in the library as the students now rely on electronic library which is internet based. The library should devise means of communication to all students especially when new electronic based information material is purchased in the library to encourage the use of such and students visit to the library. This is line with Kumar (2010) that orientation programmes should be organised so that variety of library resources could have optimal use. The library management should also make necessary and adequate plan in ensuring that the use of information technology is encouraged. Training should be organized for both the staff and the students on how to use the internet. By so doing, efforts would be seen towards satisfying the information needs of agricultural students for scholarship that aims at food sufficiency.

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Table 1: Marital Status, Degree in view and frequency of library visit

| Marital Status | Degree In-View | Frequency of Library Visit | | | | | | |
		Not at All	Once a Week	Twice a Week	Everyday	Occasional	Total	Per cent
Married and Divorce	M.Sc	03	-	01	-	04	08	14.03
	MPhil/PhD	05	02	04	-	11	22	38.60
Single	M.Sc	03	01	01	03	04	12	21.05
	MPhil/PhD	06	01	03	-	05	15	26.32
	Total	17	04	09	03	24	57	100.00
	Per cent	29.83	07.02	15.79	05.26	42.11	100.00	

Table 2: Gender, study mode and frequency of visit to university library

| Gender | Study Mode | Frequency of visit to University Library | | | | | Total | Per cent |
		Not at All	Once a Week	Twice a Week	Everyday	Occasional		
Female	Part-Time	02	01	02	01	04	10	17.54
	Full-Time	06	01	03	02	11	23	40.35
Male	Part-Time	03	-	01	-	01	05	08.77
	Full-Time	06	02	03	-	08	19	33.33
	Total	17	04	09	03	24	57	100.00
	Per cent	29.83	07.02	15.79	05.26	42.11	100.00	

Table 3: Mode of study, gender and frequency of visit to Faculty and Department libraries

| Study Mode | Gender | Non-Visit Department Library | | Visit Department Library | | Total | Per cent |
		Non Visit to Faculty Library	Visit to Faculty Library	Non Visit Faculty Library	Visit of Faculty Library		
Part-Time	Female	06	-	01	03	10	17.54
	Male	02	-	01	02	05	08.77
Full-Time	Female	08	02	06	07	23	40.35
	Male	06	01	05	07	19	33.33
	Total	22	03	13	19	57	100.00
	Per cent	38.60	05.26	22.81	33.33	100.00	

Table 4: Frequency of visit to Faculty and Department libraries

| Visit of University Library | Non-Visit Department Library | | Visit Department Library | | Total | Per cent |
	Non-Visit Faculty Library	Visit of Faculty Library	Non-Visit Faculty Library	Visit of Faculty Library		
Not at all	06	-	05	06	17	29.82
Once a week	01	-	01	02	04	07.02
Twice a week	04	-	02	03	09	15.79
Everyday	01	01	-	01	03	05.26
Occasional	10	02	05	07	24	42.11
Total	22	03	13	19	57	100.00
Per cent	38.60	05.26	22.81	33.33	100.00	

Table 5: Marital status, use of e-library (internet source), university library and library outside the university

| Visit to University Library | Library outside University | Married and Divorce | | Single | | Total | Per cent |
		Non-Use of E-library	Use of E-Library	Non Use of E-library	Use of E-Library		
Not at all	Non Use	-	06	-	05	11	19.30
	Use	-	02	01	03	06	10.53
Once a week	Non Use	-	-	-	02	02	03.51
	Use	-	01	01	-	02	03.51
Twice a week	Non Use	-	02	-	04	06	10.53
	Use	-	02	-	01	03	5.26
Everyday	Non Use	-	-	-	01	01	01.75
	Use	-	01	-	01	02	03.51
Occasional	Non Use	-	05	-	05	10	17.54
	Use	-	11	-	03	14	24.56
	Total	-	30	02	25	57	100.00
	Per centage	-	52.63	3.51	43.86	100	

Table 6: Tobit regression

Hours Spent in Library	Coef	Std. Err	T	P>/t/
X1Gender	0.917	0.864	1.06	0.295
X2Age	0.043	0.074	0.58	0.564
X3Marital Status	0.287	0.331	0.87	0.391
X4Years of Education	0.053	0.127	0.42	0.678
X5Study Mode	0.230	1.117	0.21	0.838
X6Group Membership on Campus	-23.774	17.556	-1.35	0.183
X7Type of group on campus	-2.832	2.050	-1.38	0.174
X8Group Membership off Campus	-2.873	2.568	-1.12	0.269
X9 Group Type off Campus	-0.206	0.302	-0.68	0.497
X10 Weekly Allowance on Study	-0.000	0.000	-1.06	0.295
X11Visit Library with friends	1.031	0.852	-1.21	0.233
X12 Library location Discourage	-0.012	1.701	-0.01	0.994
X13 Work load Discourage	-1.403	0.997	-1.41	0.167
X14Work load reduces Time	1.066	0.875	1.22	0.230
Constant	31.179	19.743	1.58	0.122
/Sigma	2.548	0.253		

Log likelihood = - 129.97   Number of observation = 57   LR chi2 (14) = 12.56
Prob > chi2 = 0.5614   Pseudo R2 = 0.0461   4 left-censored observations at highest<=1
53 uncensored observations   0 right-censored observations

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