

**AREAS OF COVERAGE OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PROJECTS IN
LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE AT ABUBAKAR TAFAWA BALEWA
UNIVERSITY, BAUCHI**

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Abstract:

This study investigated the areas of coverage of Undergraduate research from 2017 to 2021 in Library and Information Science in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi. The study objectives was to determine the total number of research projects carried out by LIS Undergraduate students, determine the Subject areas covered by the Undergraduate research projects and also to find out the Geographical areas covered by the Undergraduate research projects in Library and Information Science in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi. The study is a documentary research which adopts an embedded design. The instruments used for data collection were the physical copies of research projects in the Department of Library and Information Science, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi from the year 2017 and 2021. The data was analyzed using tabulation, frequency counts and percentages based on the research questions. The study found out that the total number of 211 research projects was carried out by LIS Undergraduate students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi from 2017 and 2021; majority of the subject areas covered are ICT in libraries, information centers, social media, information need, search and seeking behavior, leadership, motivation, job performance/satisfaction, virtual and electronic library resources and services. Others are offline, online, internet resources and services, problems, challenges and Prospects in Libraries and the majority of the geographical areas covered by the Undergraduate research projects in Library and Information Science in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi are Bauchi State, Plateau State, Gombe State and Kaduna State. Finally, the study recommended that all Departments and the University management should continue to ensure that research projects are carried out, the Department of LIS should encourage Undergraduate Students to explore new subject area of coverage for their research projects and the University management should also provide support to Undergraduate students in the process of expanding their geographical areas coverage during their research projects. In conclusion, the LIS Undergraduate Students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi can be more positive in the development of their research projects and continue to face the challenges encountered.

Keywords: Subject, Geographical coverage, Undergraduate research projects, Library and Information Science

Introduction

A University system has been designed to have different curriculums that form part of the requirements for graduating students in all Departments. The curriculums include courses offered, Industrial Training/Students Industrial Experience Scheme, Workshops/Practical programmes and research projects. All Departments in the University have their curriculums

for the available Undergraduate and Postgraduate studies. The National Universities Commission (NUC) in affiliation with the Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) and other related bodies have been able to accredit and recognize Library schools in Nigeria so that they can offer and coordinate programmes in the field of Librarianship.

In particular, the Department of Library and Information Science, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University (ATBU), Bauchi, offers the study of Bachelors Technology Degree (B. Tech.) in Library and Information Science (LIS). The Department is domiciled in the Faculty of Technology Education. The Department allows Undergraduate students research projects to cover various subject areas such as Information and Communication Technology (ICT), archival resources, records management, information seeking and Information seeking behaviors, information systems and other related areas of Librarianship. The LIS Undergraduate students in their final year are expected to write and submit to the research project based on an approved topic and shall be under the supervision of lecturers or academic Librarians in the University.

Generally, as a tradition of the Library schools in Nigeria, final year Undergraduate students must present themselves before Departmental lecturers and their supervisors for either Proposal/Internal defence and External examiner for assessment, scoring and moderation of the research works. The research projects consist of five (5) chapters namely:

1. Chapter One - Introduction
2. Chapter Two – Review of Related Literature
3. Chapter Three – Research Methodology
4. Chapter Four – Data Analysis and Interpretation
5. Chapter Five – Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

Statement of Problem:

Undergraduate research projects are important part of any University Academic curriculum in Nigeria. The research project is an academic work expected to focus on finding solutions to problems which can better improve individual and society challenges as a whole. The Authors observed that there are gaps in the subject and geographical coverage of Undergraduate research projects in the field of Librarianship done by many Nigerian Universities. There is need to periodically undertake researches to investigate the area coverage of LIS Undergraduate research so as to improve all aspects of the field. This study would further provide knowledge on the research output in LIS Undergraduate Students research projects so that it can also guide prospective researchers, students and the Academia in their decision making.

Objectives of the Study:

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To determine the total number of research projects carried out by LIS Undergraduate students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi within the period understudy.
2. To determine the Subject areas covered by the Undergraduate research projects in Library and Information Science in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi.
3. To also find out the Geographical areas covered by the Undergraduate research projects in Library and Information Science in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi.

Scope of the Study:

This study assesses the Subject and Geographical Areas of coverage of Undergraduate research projects. It focuses only on the total number of Undergraduate research projects carried out from the year 2017 to 2021 in the Department of Library and Information Science in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi.

Related Literature:

According to Isreal (2020), research is the systematic investigation into materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions. Research is also creative and systematic work undertaken to increase the stock of knowledge. It is a systematic study of a problem using a deliberate chosen method, data collection, processing the data and interpretation.

There are different forms of research which Undergraduate students in Nigerian Universities undertake which include exploratory, descriptive, causal, experimental etc. Any forms of research carried out may include different models and theories to guide the study to a conclusion. Malumfashi (2021) opined that a reliable research models that is useful for graphical images of describing ideas is the behavioral model. Other relevant models that are used in the field of Library and Information Science are the descriptive models, Technology Acceptance Model, Socio Cognitive Model, Analytical model etc. In addition, some of the theories applied in studies include Shannon's theory of communication, Information theory, theories of Personal Learning Space, Advanced theory of information sharing etc. Both the models and theories are adopted in carrying out expansion on past research studies in various fields of knowledge.

Saka and Ahmed (2019) in their study on the coverage of areas of Undergraduate research in Library and Information Science at Federal University of Technology, Minna, Nigeria found out that a total of 106 (18.53%) and 64 (11.18%) of the total research areas investigated were from application of ICT in various Libraries and user studies respectively. In Library and Information Science, there are new paradigms for expansion of subject coverage from the basic Library routine, classification and catalogue to now also include automation, knowledge management, information system maintenance, digitization, online and offline resources management etc.

Diso (2010) has identified the need for improved policy issues in building and sustaining digital collection for research and development. These would assist Undergraduate students in accessing electronic information resources and boost both research subject and geographical coverage. Saka (2008) also conducted a documentary research to determine the higher degree theses output between 1992 and 2006 as submitted to the Department of Library and Information Science, Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria. The study found out that 62 theses and dissertations in Library and Information Science were produced between 1992 and 2006 indicating 61(98%) MLS and 1(2%) PhD. The coverage indicated that the highest was 31(50%) information science and lowest was communication science with 4(6%). Hence, there is gap in subject coverage in some other areas of research for both Undergraduate and Postgraduate study.

Methodology:

This study is a documentary research which adopts an embedded design for data presentation. Caracelli and Greene (1993) opined that embedded design is a mix method that embeds quantitative data within a qualitative study and vice versa. According to Creswell

(2014), the documentary research is a qualitative research conducted through the use of official or personal documents as the source of information. This study is conducted to assess various documents in the interest of social or historical value. The justification for using a documentary research is to have adequate data that can be used to draw conclusion for the study.

The instruments used for data collection were the physical copies of research projects in the Department of Library and Information Science, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi from the year 2017 and 2021. The researchers used the submitted copies of research projects by the Undergraduate students in the Department to identify the total number and topics/titles of the research projects as sources of information. The researchers analyzed the data collected using tabulation, frequency counts and percentages based on the research questions.

Result and Discussion:

Research Question 1:

What is the total number of research projects carried out by LIS Undergraduate students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi within the period understudy?

Table – 1: Total number of research projects:

SN	Academic Session	Frequency	Percentages %
1	2017/2018 Academic Session	51	24.2
2	2018/2019 Academic Session	58	27.5
3	2020/2021 Academic Session	102	48.3
	TOTAL	211	100

The Table-1 reveals the total number of research projects carried out by LIS Undergraduate students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi from 2017 to 2021. The results are 2020/2021 Academic Session 102 (48.3%), 2018/2019 Academic Session 58 (27.5%) and 2017/2018 Academic Session 51 (24.2%). The results as interpreted shows that majority of Undergraduate students who carry out their research project in the Department are in the 2020/2021 Academic session while lowest are in the 2017/2018 Academic session. The total number of 211 research projects was carried out by LIS Undergraduate students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi from 2017 and 2021.

Research Question 2:

What are the Subject areas covered by the Undergraduate research projects in Library and Information Science in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi?

Table – 2: Subject area coverage by Undergraduate research project:

SN	Subject area coverage	Frequency	Percentages %
1	Application of ICT in Libraries, Information Centers and others	19	9
2	Security in Libraries and Information Centres	4	1.9
3	Problems, challenges and Prospects in Libraries	7	3.3
4	Training and retraining of personnel	6	2.8
5	Library software and application packages	6	2.8
6	Library automation	1	0.5
7	Archival management and others	2	0.9

8	Attitude and perceptions	2	0.9
9	Publishing, printing and Book Trade	2	0.9
10	Bibliography and Indexing	2	0.9
11	Cataloguing services	1	0.5
12	Classification services	1	0.5
13	Library and Education development	1	0.5
14	Personnel Management in Libraries	1	0.5
15	Leadership, motivation, job performance/satisfaction	11	5.2
16	Funding and Budget in Libraries	4	1.9
17	Information need, search and seeking behavior	15	7.1
18	Virtual and electronic Library resources and services	10	4.7
19	Attitude, Provision, Accessibility and Utilization of Information sources and resources	15	7.1
20	Records management in Libraries	1	0.5
21	Theft and Mutilation of Information Resources	2	0.9
22	Database management in Libraries and Information centers	1	0.5
23	Information Resources management	1	0.5
24	Public Library, School Library, Academic Library and National Library system and services	6	2.8
25	Digitization and Digital Libraries resources and services	2	0.9
26	Information literacy and literacy skills	4	1.9
27	Collection development	1	0.5
28	Preservation and Conservation of Information resources	3	1.4
29	Marketing of Library resources	3	1.4
30	Consultancy services	1	0.5
31	Reference resources and services	5	2.4
32	Computerized system and services	2	0.9
33	Audio Visual and Multimedia resources	5	2.4
34	Serial resources and services	3	1.4
35	Sources of Fund and Revenue generation	4	1.9
36	Library Cooperation and Networking	1	0.5
37	Reprographic services	2	0.9
38	Electronic learning	1	0.5
39	Circulation of Information resources	1	0.5
40	Institutional Digital Repository and retrieval system	3	1.4
41	Orientation and User Education	5	2.4
42	Knowledge management and learning	1	0.5
43	Information systems and services	1	0.5
44	Disaster management	5	2.4
45	Offline, Online, Internet resources and services	10	4.7
46	Use of Library	5	2.4
47	Social media	16	7.6
48	Mobile information services	2	0.9
49	Search engines	1	0.5
50	Policy development and implementation	1	0.5
51	Entrepreneurship and Job prospect	1	0.5
52	Research activities	1	0.5

	TOTAL	211	100
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The Table-2 reveals that the majority of the subject areas covered by the Undergraduate research projects in Library and Information Science in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi from 2017 to 2021 are ICT in libraries, information centers and others 19 (9%), social media 16 (7.6%), information need, search and seeking behavior 15 (7.1%), leadership, motivation, job performance/satisfaction 11 (5.2%), virtual and electronic library resources and services 10 (4.7%), offline, online, internet resources and services 10 (4.7%) and problems, challenges and Prospects in Libraries 7 (3.3%). The reason for the high number of subject coverage in these areas above might be because of the level of interest and understanding of many undergraduate students . This is in agreement with the study carried out by Saka and Ahmed (2019) who found out that application of ICT in various Libraries and user studies are the highest area coverage of LIS Undergraduate research projects in some parts of Nigeria.

The other subject areas of research projects are training and retraining of personnel 6 (2.8%), library software and application packages 6 (2.8%), Public library, School library, Academic Library and National Library system and services 6 (2.8%), Reference resources and services 5 (2.4%), Audio Visual and Multimedia resources 5 (2.4%), disaster management 5 (2.4%), use of library 5 (2.4%), orientation and user education 5 (2.4%), security in Libraries and information centers 4 (1.9%), funding and budget in libraries 4 (1.9%), information literacy and literacy skills 4 (1.9%), sources of fund and revenue generation 4 (1.9%), preservation and conservation of information resources 3 (1.4%), marketing of library resources 3(1.4%), serial resources and services 3 (1.4%), institutional digital repository and retrieval system 3 (1.4%), mobile information services 2 (0.9%), Reprographic services 2 (0.9%), computerized system and services 2 (0.9%), Theft and mutilation of information resources 2 (0.9%), Bibliography and Indexing 2 (0.9%), publishing, printing and book Trade 2 (0.9%), Attitude and perceptions 2 (0.9%), Digitization and Digital Libraries resources and services 2 (0.9%), Archival management and others 2 (0.9%).

The lowest area of subject coverage in the LIS research projects in ATBU, Bauchi during this period understudy are Library automation 1 (0.5%), cataloguing services 1 (0.5%), classification services 1 (0.5%), library and education development 1 (0.5%), personnel Management in libraries 1 (0.5%), records management in Libraries 1 (0.5%), database management 1 (0.5%), information resources management 1 (0.5%), collection development 1 (0.5%), consultancy services 1 (0.5%), electronic learning 1 (0.5%), library cooperation and networking 1 (0.5%), circulation of information resources 1 (0.5%), Knowledge management and learning 1 (0.5%), information systems and services 1 (0.5%), Search engines 1 (0.5%), policy development and implementation 1 (0.5%), entrepreneurship and job prospect 1 (0.5%) and research activities 1 (0.5%).

Research Question 3:

What are the Geographical areas covered by the Undergraduate research projects in Library and Information Science in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi?

Table – 3: Geographical area coverage by Undergraduate research project:

SN	Geographical area coverage	Frequency	Percentages %
1	Bauchi State	152	72.0
2	Gombe State	8	3.8

3	Kaduna State	8	3.8
4	Niger State	4	1.9
5	Abuja FCT	3	1.4
6	Plateau State	19	9.0
7	Kano State	5	2.4
8	Nasarawa State	4	1.9
9	Taraba State	3	1.4
10	Yobe State	5	2.4
	TOTAL	211	100

The Table-3 reveals that the majority of the geographical areas covered by the Undergraduate research projects in Library and Information Science in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi are Bauchi State 152 (72.0%), Plateau State 19 (9.0%), Gombe State 8 (3.8%) and Kaduna State 8 (3.8%). The reason for the high number of LIS Undergraduate research in these geographical areas might be because of the University location and proximity to its nearby States. Other geographical areas are Kano State 5 (2.4%), Yobe State 5 (2.4%), Niger State 4 (1.9%) and Nasarawa State 4 (1.9%).

The lowest Geographical areas covered by the Undergraduate research projects in Library and Information Science in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi are Abuja FCT 3 (1.4%) and Taraba State 3 (1.4%).

Summary of the Findings:

This study is on the Subject and Geographical areas of coverage of Undergraduate Research projects from 2017 to 2021 in the field of Library and Information Science in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi. The Objectives of the study are to determine the total number of research projects carried out, determine the Subject areas covered and also to find out the Geographical areas covered.

The findings of the study are:

1. That the total number of 211 research projects was carried out by LIS Undergraduate students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi from 2017 and 2021.
2. That the majority of the subject areas covered by the Undergraduate research projects in Library and Information Science in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi from 2017 to 2021 are ICT in libraries, information centers, social media, information need, search and seeking behavior, leadership, motivation, job performance/satisfaction, virtual and electronic library resources and services. Others are offline, online, internet resources and services, problems, challenges and Prospects in Libraries,
3. That the majority of the geographical areas covered by the Undergraduate research projects in Library and Information Science in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi are Bauchi State, Plateau State, Gombe State and Kaduna State.

Conclusion:

The need to carry out Undergraduate research projects in various subjects and geographical areas cannot be overemphasized. The implication is that research projects provide contribution to knowledge of findings to the University and its communities. This study is important as it provides information about the total number, subject and Geographical coverage on various aspects of Librarianship as researched by the Undergraduate students in the Department of Library and Information Science, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are made:

1. All Departments and the University management should continue to ensure that research projects are carried out and managed effectively and efficiently so as to ensure steady increase in the number of research projects.
2. The Department of LIS should encourage other in-coming Undergraduate Students to explore new subject areas of coverage for their research projects.
3. The University management should also provide support to Undergraduate students in the process of expanding their geographical areas of coverage during their research projects. This would aid in the increase in coverage of more States, zones and location.

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