

Use of Library and Gender as Determinants of Students Attitudes Towards Learning: A Case Study of Faculty of Education, Imo State University, Owerri

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Abstract: The study investigated the use of library and gender as determinants of student's attitude towards learning in faculty of education, Imo State University, Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria. The aim was to determine the relationship between use of library, gender and students' attitude towards learning. Two hypotheses were formulated to serve as guide to the study. The (300 Imo State University students were randomly selected for the study. A questionnaire titled use of library scale and student's attitude towards learning questionnaire was administered and used for data collection. The hypotheses were tested using multiple regression tested at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that the criterion variable (student's attitude towards learning correlated positively and low towards use of library. Also, gender was not a determinant factor to both students' attitude towards learning and their use of library ability. The results also showed that only students that use the library with the regression coefficient (b) of 0.258 and a beta weight of 0.592 significantly have good attitude towards learning while gender was not a significant factor in predicting student's attitude towards learning. Based on these findings the following recommendations were made: that students should be encouraged to use library facilities irrespective of gender, the university should make the use of libraries more interesting, materials and resources available in the library should be relevant to available courses offered in the university, library services should be friendly, the university's library should be made more conducive and be available to users at all times, digitalization of the university's library should be priority. It is also important to note that use of library and gender have no influence on each other. All students irrespective of gender can use library facilities without restrictions or bias.

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INTRODUCTION

In a bid to put the writer(s) and the reader(s) on the same frame of mind and understanding, it has become expedient to discuss the major keywords and concepts that make up this write-up. Mezieobi *et al.*^[1] averred that “clarifying concepts is very important for the readers of every writing. This brings to the understanding of the readers the most essential concepts that make up a write-up”. Mezieobi and Nnadozie^[2] on their own part noted that “in academics, no scholar, author, writer, teacher, presenter and so on can do without the clarification of concepts in his or her write-ups, be it articles, books, monologues, epilogues and so on”. These are the main reasons for discussions on attitude, learning, gender and use of library. Attitude can be perceived as an individual’s feelings, opinion, ideologies and perception about particular thing, subject matter, experience, exposure and so on.

Agulanna and Onukogu^[3] stated that attitude is learned tendency to evaluate some object, person or issue in a particular way. For Petty *et al.*^[4], attitude means a relatively stable evaluation of persons, objects, situations or issues along a continuum ranging from positive to negative. On the same note, Cetin^[5] posited that attitude means a tendency attributed to individuals and creates ideas, feelings and behaviours about a psychological object in orderly manner. According to Kara^[6], attitude is perceived as that which can cause individuals to always behave in the same way to people, objects, events and foundations which are constant and unchangeable beliefs, feelings and tendencies. Attitude informs an individual’s behavior and disposition towards a particular thing, event, occasion, presentation, experience and so on. Agulanna and Onukogu^[7] pinpointed that attitudes are usually formed to serve a purpose for the person who holds them. For instance, attitudes guide people’s behavior towards set goals. They also help individuals to interpret whatever new information they get based on already formed attitudes. They further noted that “attitudes are formed through learning and experience. According to the learning theories, attitudes are learnt through classical conditioning, operant conditioning and modeling^[7]. All these are important information on attitude that needed to be mentioned.

Furthermore, learning as an important concept in this paper, needs emphasis. Learning for this paper will be perceived as the acquisition of knowledge for the development of the right attitude. According to Mezieobi and Anugom^[8], learning means “an activity, experience or exposure which an individual partakes in that can bring exposure to change in behavioral pattern learning can affect an individual’s character, value orientation, cultural and traditional beliefs and so on”. For Agulanna and Nwachukwu^[9], “a standard and universally

accepted definition of learning is that it is a relatively enduring change in behavior or knowledge which results from ones experiences. Learning can also be defined as the act, process or experience of gaining knowledge or skills”. They further averred that “from the above definition, it can be inferred that:

- Learning always brings about a new or different behavior
- Learned behavior is more or less enduring and long lasting
- To qualify as learning, the change must be brought about by experience. The learner must have consciously or unconsciously interacted with his or her environment”

Piaget^[10] noted that learning is a mental process that depends on perception and awareness, on how additional stimuli and new ideas get integrated into the old knowledge database (a process Piaget called assimilation and on how, through reasoning (a previously acquired mental mechanism), the entire database gets reorganized which results in alterations of the mental structures and the creation of new ones (a process called accommodation). Learning as a concept is excessively elusive. This is the reason why Agulanna and Nwachukwu^[9] stated that “learning is an elusive concept which is not directly observable. Sometimes, the learner may not even know that he or she has learnt something”. This is the most interesting part of learning.

The interest of this study includes gender. As a variable in the study, gender needs to be discussed. In education, gender plays a vital role. An individual’s gender can influence his or her attitude towards learning. Gender according to Nzewi “is the social construction of female and male identity which is more than biological differences between men and women. It includes the way in which those differences have been valued, used and relied upon to classify women and men and to assign roles and expectations to them”.

For Aydon^[11], gender means the social phenomenon of distinguishing males and females based on a set of identity traits, it is social, not psychological or biological construction. On the same note, Ametefe and Ametefe^[12] referred to gender as a social construct that establishes and differentiates status and roles between men and women particularly in the way they contribute and participate in social political economic activities and are rewarded by the economy and most social institutions. It has been noted that gender is a contextual issue in research generally. Oluwagbohunmi has disclosed that male students 90% are better than their female counterparts and the results were statistically significant valued at 5% level. Also, Voyer and Voyer found out that females perform better in academics than their male

counterparts and results were statistically significant valued at 5% level. The two perceptions, contradict each other.

Use of library is another important variable that cannot be ignored in this paper. The utilization of institutional libraries is very essential for the growth and development of students, teachers and even the general public. Iwhiwhu and Akporhonor^[13] have stated that library is a social institution charged with the duty of providing perceptual self-education of individual in the society. For Aguolu and Aguolu^[7], library is a social institution created to conserve knowledge, preserve cultural heritage and provide information and also to serve as fountains of recreation. That means that the use of library will entail unraveling conserved knowledge and preserved cultural heritage. Use of library therefore will be the process or act for exploring preserved and conserved knowledge for the sake of getting adequate information. Furthermore, a library is seen as a centre that houses the collection of resources in a variety of patterns that are:

- Organized by information professionals or other experts who
- Provide convenient physical, digital, bibliographic or intellectual access
- Offer targeted services and programmes
- With the mission of educating, informing or entertaining a variety of audiences
- And the goal of stimulating individual learning and advancing society as a whole. The use of the library is an important variable in determining attitude of students towards learning

Also, there are several studies on different variables that serve as determinants of attitudes to learn among students of higher learning. Examples are:

Ludwig *et al.*^[14] examined the health of students in high schools stating that health of students are important in determining their attitudes towards learning. Sharma^[15] studies classroom environment, parental education, income and institution as predictor of students academic achievement. He stated that all these can determine students attitudes towards learning.

Mosteller^[16] investigated location of the institution (urban or rural) to be a significant factor that contributes to student's attitude towards learning. Gbore^[17] examined relative contributions of teacher's variables and student's attitudes towards teaching and learning. He pinpointed that teachers variable and student's attitude affect both teaching and learning.

Oloyede^[18] carried out a research on self-concept in senior secondary school chemistry. He noted that self-concept determines attitude of students towards the teaching and learning of chemistry in senior secondary

schools. Sharma and Jha^[19] investigated parent's educational achievement. They pinpointed that parent's educational achievement can affect student's attitude towards teaching and learning negatively or positively depending on the success or failure recorded by the parents in their educational pursuit. However, not many of these pieces of research combined use of library and gender as correlates of students' attitudes towards learning in higher institution. It is against this background that this study seeks to examine use of library and gender as determinants of student's attitudes towards learning in Imo State University, Owerri, Nigeria using the Faculty of Education as case study.

Purpose of the study: The objectives of the study were:

- To determine the coefficient correlation between use of library by students and their attitude towards learning
- To ascertain the coefficient correlation between gender of students and their attitude towards learning
- To obtain the multiple relationship between use of library, gender and students' attitude towards learning

The following hypothesis were raised to guide the study:

- Student's attitude towards learning is not significantly related to use of library by the students
- Student's attitude towards learning is not significantly related to the gender of the students

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research design: The research design used for the study was correlation. Correlation design was used in order to understand the relationship and differences existing between two variables. The sampling technique adopted in selection of the sample size is the simple random sampling technique by balloting. A total of three hundred students from the Faculty of Education, Imo State University, Owerri were used for the study.

Setting of the study: The setting of the study was in Imo State University (IMSU) Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria. The institution is the only state owned university in Imo State. Imo State University was established in 1992. Therefore, the total population for the study comprised the entire students of Imo State University (IMSU), Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria.

Participants: The participants for the study comprised 300 students of the Faculty of Education, Imo State University, Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria. The 300 samples

(150 males and 150 females) were selected through simple random sampling technique from first degree/regular/full time students of the institution's Faculty of Education.

Instrument: The instrument used for this study was questionnaire titled "use of library scale and students' attitude towards learning inventory". The questionnaire comprised of section A and D. Section A comprised (15) drawn on use of library while section B comprised (15) items on students' attitude towards learning. The items were structured in a 4-likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The instrument was given face validity by two experts from the Faculties of Education, Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike, Ikwo, Ebonyi State and Imo State University, Owerri, Imo State. In order to test for internal consistency, of the instrument, test retest was adopted and using Pearson moment correlation coefficient, a coefficient of 0.72 was obtained. The scoring of the items was as follows: SA = 4 marks, A = 3 marks, D = 2 marks, SD = 1 mark for positive items while reversed scores were allocated to negative items.

Procedure: The researchers and two research assistants visited the Imo State University, Owerri campus. Two of the researchers are academic staff and doctoral student respectively of Imo State University Owerri. The (300) questionnaires administered were retrieved same day on the spot.

Data analysis: Data generated from the questionnaires administered were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression. The SPSS 15.0 statistical package was utilized in the computation.

RESULTS

The result presented in Table 1 shows that all items are positive. This is evident in the level o the respondent's agreement to the items statement shown in the details of Table 1. Meanwhile, the result reveals that students' attitude to learning is greatly influenced by the use of library in our tertiary institution of learning.

The regressional analysis results indicate that the only students use of library with the regressional coefficient (0) of 0.516 and a beta weight of 0.592 significantly

Table 1: Descriptive statistics on use of library on student's attitude to learning

Use of library	X	Std.	Rem	Students attitude to learning	X	Std.	Rem
Current textbooks available in my library	3.09	0.41	A	Building of reading culture due to library use	3.50	0.25	A
has improved my learning capacity				Ability to learn always via. e-library connectivity	2.11	0.32	D
Borrowing procedures in my school library discourage me to lend books from the library	1.67	0.27	D	Enhancing study duration	2.50	0.39	A
Operating hours of the library affects my studying rate	2.21	0.31	D	Cultivation of research skills	3.12	0.42	A
I hate reading in my school library because of its poor sitting arrangement	1.63	0.40	D	Appreciation of books and all about the library business	2.56	0.3.9	A
My school library is poorly equipped with adequate facilities to do my assignments	1.80	0.32	D	Lack of disposition to learning skills and knowledge building	1.50	0.21	D
Library orientation on learning skills is poorly organized	1.62	0.23	D	Inability to adapt any learning environment	2.01	0.36	D
Computer literacy skills has negatively affected my learning capacity	1.57	0.25	D	Exploring of reading group opportunities	2.00	0.29	D
Consulted books are prohibited from users to use in my school library	1.61	0.41	D	Unreceptive to other people learning ideas and contributions	1.61	0.26	D
I am being discouraged to research in my school library because staff are unfriendly	3.06	0.42	A	Phobia to make effective use of library recreation moment	1.84	0.21	D
Maintenance of silence in the library affects my duration of library use adversely	1.54	0.25	D	Unwillingness to make use of library database to do research	1.54	0.24	D
Poor information services in my school library discourages me accessing materials from the library	3.09	0.23	A	Unwilling to participate in literacy programme	1.52	0.21	D
I learn a lot in school without making use of library materials	1.42	0.21	SD	Lack of interest on computer skills programme	1.62	0.23	D
Learning activities are prohibited to take place in the library conference hall	1.56	0.40	D	Unwilling to borrow books from the library for studying	1.50	0.26	D
Increase in information material theft due to poor re-prographic services of the library	1.52	0.32	D	Inability to make reference/consultation to librarian in solving problems	1.50	0.21	D
High level of library crime in the library due to inadequate serial materials	1.82	0.32	D				
Overall mean	29.21	5.00			29.71	4.44	

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and correlation between use of library and gender on student's attitude towards learning

Variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t-values	Sig.
	1	2			
(Constant)	23	2.316	-	19.518	0.000
Use of library	0.516	0.138	0.592	7.518	0.000
Gender	-0.54	0.702	-0.0122	-1.542	0.884

Dependent variable: students attitude towards learning

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics and correlation matrix for the relationship between the predictor variables and criterion variable

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Student's attitude towards learning	Use of library	Gender
Student's attitude towards learning	300	29.7466	4.44684	2.000	0.598	-0.152
Use of library	300	29.2134	5.10242	0.598	2.000	-0.102
Gender	300	2.9	0.998	-0.152	-0.102	2.000

Table 4: Summary of multiple regression analysis between the predictor variable and criterion variable

Mode	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F-value	Sig.
Regression	136.922	4	64.462	15.062	0.736 ^b
Resident	1336.264	294	9.09		
Total	1473.186	298			

Multiple R (adjusted) = 0.61^a, multiple R² (Adjusted) = 0.186; Adjusted R² = 0.162, SE of the estimate = 4.26386; (a) Dependent variable: students Attitude towards; (b) Predictors: (constant), gender, use of library

contributed to student's attitude towards learning while the contribution of gender was not significant (Table 2). The prediction equation is therefore as follows:

$$\text{Students attitude towards learning} = 23 + 0.516 (\text{vL}) - 0.54G$$

On the basis of the result the null hypothesis which proposed a no significant contribution of the individual variable to the prediction of student's attitude towards learning was accepted for use of library and rejected for gender.

The result from Table 3 shows the mean and standard deviation of the respondents. The participant's value for students attitudes was M = 29.7466, SD = 4.4684, use of library was M = 29.2134, SD = 0.998. Meanwhile, the matrix correlation between the two variables (use of library and gender) and the criterion variable (student's attitude towards learning) showed that student's attitude towards learning correlate positively and low towards use of library. Also, gender was not a determinant of both students attitude towards learning and their use of library. From Table 4, it was observed that the independent variables gave a co-efficient of multiple regression R^2 of 0.61, multiple $R^2 = (0.186)$ and adjusted $R^3 = (0.162)$ which indicate that 93% of the two variables accounted for the students attitude towards learning. This therefore shows that the analysis of the independent variables as a block did not contribute to the students' attitude towards learning. Table 4 from the analysis of variable is also indicated, it produced an F-ratio 15.062 and was found to be insignificant at 0.05 levels.

DISCUSSION

Table 1 states that there is no significant correlation between use of library and gender on student's attitude towards learning. The result from the study indicates that

the matrix correlation between the two variables (use of library and gender) and the criterion variable (student's attitude towards learning) shows that student's attitude towards learning correlate positively and low towards use of library.

Also, gender was not a determinant of both student's attitude towards learning and their use of library. This result is in agreement with Almamun, Rahman, Rahman and Hossaim when they found out that respondents have positive attitudes towards learning irrespective of their gender.

Table 2 states that there is no significant multiple relationship between students' use of library, gender and their attitude towards learning. Results of the regression analysis showed that only student's use of library with the regression coefficient (b) of 0.516 and a beta weight of 0.592 significantly contributed to student's attitude towards learning while the contribution of gender was not significant in predicting students' attitude towards learning. Therefore, the result of the null hypothesis which proposed a no significant contribution of the individual variable to the prediction of students' attitudes towards learning as accepted for use of library and rejected for gender. This is in correlation with the study carried out by Aryana^[20] who found a positive correlation between students' self-esteem and attitude towards learning. Furthermore, Roman *et al.*^[21] revealed that use of library has the strongest impact on learning and that improving use of library as important. It also ranks as high as self-esteem on influence on student's attitude towards learning.

Gender implications of finding: Gender does not influence students' attitude towards learning, therefore, students can learn effectively in any condition irrespective of their gender. According to the finding, gender was not a determinant of both students' attitude towards learning

and their use of library. This implies that the library is duty bound to provide varieties of information materials to satisfy the information needs of students irrespective of their gender. Both the male and female genders can use the library simultaneously and freely without any gender bias.

CONCLUSION

There are several literatures that have in a subtle way related use of library, gender and student's attitude towards learning. This study showed that use of library is a very important act in student's learning and can influence their attitudes towards learning. It is also important to state that gender according to this research did not affect student's attitude towards learning. Nigerian schools are therefore encouraged to reposition school's libraries and promote the use of library amongst their students irrespective of educational level even starting from lower basic education level schools (primary 1-3) through tertiary institutions (Universities, Colleges of Education and Polytechnics).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- Teachers should encourage their students to utilize school's libraries at all times
- Resources/teaching materials in the library should be recommended for student's use
- Improved rapport between teachers and students should be promoted by the school's leadership
- The school's library should be students friendly
- Teaching and learning in contemporary times should be student-centred
- Triangulation of teaching methods should be encouraged

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