



LIBRARY ANXIETY AMID FRESH UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY OF FACULTY OF TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION, ABUBAKAR TAFAWA BALEWA UNIVERSITY, BAUCHI.

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Abstract

Purpose: The intention of this study is to scrutinize the effect of Library anxiety on the academic performance of fresh undergraduate students at the faculty of technology education, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi. A questionnaire was designed and distributed among 181 students of the faculty of technology education, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi. 171 questionnaires were collected with a response rate of 96%. based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table of sample size determination. The findings show that the students particularly fresh undergraduate students were more anxious about library staff than other factors. Therefore, it can be incidental that the attitude of library staff made a noteworthy influence to the degree of library anxiety among students, that led these students incapable to utilize library resources and services meritoriously. Such behaviour correspondingly made students' perceptions that librarians are unapproachable Hence, added to other areas of library anxiety-such as non-use or avoidance of the library by students and the host of others. The finding of this study is supportive for other faculties at the Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University (ATBU). The study is really exceptional as there is no other studies been conducted by someone earlier at this faculty. This study further offers a rounded literature on the same issue.

Keywords: *Library Anxiety, Fresh Undergraduate Students, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Librarian behaviour.*

Introduction

In contemporary humanity, learning especially at the university level can be education at all levels can be encouraged more with well-furnished libraries and

librarians' assistance. Students often are anxious about using the university library and asking for assistance. The need for libraries to move away from the traditional book centred approach and toward information centred libraries is felt. Today, libraries are regarded as the foundation of education, embodying intellectual competency, research, and development. Libraries are the primary sources of materials for students to prepare assignment, tests and other academic activities using different technological tools. With the increased use of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) use of library materials have grown significantly with high expectations being placed on students to make glowing make use of these library materials as there are massive collection of books and non-book material.

The term "library anxiety" first emerged in the literature in 1986, as a result of the observations and studies by Constance Mellon, then a professor of library science in North Carolina (Gremmels, 2015; McPherson, 2015). Mellon described library anxiety as a "situation-specific negative feeling or emotional disposition that occurs when a student is in a library setting" (Onwuegbuzie & Jiao, 2000). Jiao and Onwuegbuzie (1997) expanded on Mellon's definition by describing feelings of uncertainty, helplessness, fear, tension, and even mental confusion. The causes of library anxiety have been investigated since Mellon's (1986) initial work, in which she established the foundation of issues contributing to library anxiety in her research of undergraduate students. "Mellon studied students' written documents about libraries drawn from classes of twenty English composition instructors, over a two-year period". Her findings revealed three main causes for library anxiety: 1) students feel that their library skills are inadequate, yet believe those of their peers are adequate; 2) inadequacy is something to be ashamed of and hidden if possible, and 3) inadequacy likely would be revealed if one asked questions (McAfee, 2018; Vernon et al., 2016). Similarly, Onwuegbuzie & Jiao (1997), Asgharpour & Sajid (2013), Noori, Tareen & Mashwani (2017) and Anjaline (2020) describe library anxiety as a psychological barrier to the success of students in their academic career which could have serious adverse effects on students' educational performance and quantity and quality of their academic productions. Fraser and Bartlett (2018) argue that undergraduate students often experience discomfort or anxious feelings when interacting with the library and its resources and services and library staff. Such fear or discomfort while interacting with the library and its resources is termed library anxiety. According to Jiao & Onwuegbuzie (1999) and

Onwuegbuzie, Jiao & Bostick (2004), library anxiety occurs in some special circumstances or contexts; therefore, students experience library anxiety is not anxious outside of the library. Thus, their finding establishes a link between library anxiety and university success.

Libraries found in Universities are usually considered the main resources serving lecturers, students and the other institution concerned: Hussain, A (2021). University library users regardless of any difference depend largely on their libraries for lectures, assignments, research and other academic activities. Nevertheless, it has been perceived that many undergraduate students particularly the fresh ones firstly fear or sometimes avoid intermingling with the services and resources of these libraries (Black 2016). They got missing and felt lost, unable to detect their required resources while using the library hence got frustrated. Library anxiety affect students' academic performance and henceforth make their learning very grueling. It causes students to experience adverse reactions toward the library, preventing their intellectual latent and developing the required research skills. Persons related to Library and information science (LIS) have felt the need to examine and measure library anxiety quantitatively among different strata of library users. Therefore, developed some quantitative tools. Bostick happened to be the first person who develop a tool in 1992 called Bostick Library Anxiety Scale (LAS). In 2012, Anwar et al. (2012) developed the AQAK library anxiety scale based on LAS. Current study is based on the AQAK library scale. It studies the overall anxiety level and the differences in library anxiety levels based on gender and different disciplines among undergraduate students of the faculty of technology education Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi. Nigeria. The study further examines the contact of fresh undergraduate students with the library and offers an essential new perspective on students' success and discloses numerous ways the academic libraries can reduce to the minimum level the barriers to their activities.

Literature review

Library anxiety can negatively influence students' studies and make their coursework very arduous. In the extreme, students with library anxiety will actively avoid using the library for the duration of their studies (Cooke, 2010; McPherson, 2015; Still, 2015). This unnecessary anxiety is a concern if students are to succeed during and after their education and must be alleviated lest it limit students' achievements and overall experiences (Vernon et al., 2016). The work

of Swope and Katzer entitled "Why don't they ask questions" is considered the first-ever study on library anxiety in which they examined why college students were reluctant to use their college library and avoided asking questions to the librarian due to a lack of confidence or due to the fear that it might disturb the librarian (Onwuegbuzie & Jiao, 1997). It was Mellon (1986) who introduced the term "library anxiety" and later Bostick tested Mellon's findings by developing in her dissertation a Likert survey for college students called the Library Anxiety Scale (LAS), which consisted of 43 items designed to test library anxiety in undergraduates (Gremmels, 2015). Bostick identified five prominent factors leading to library anxiety: barriers with library staff, affective barriers, comfort with the library, knowledge of the library, and the presence of mechanical barriers (Lu & Adkins, 2012).

Now, there are series of authors who have written adequately about library anxiety. Karim & Ansari (2017) conducted a study to know the level of anxiety among Malaysian undergraduate students. The study's primary objective was to find out the factors that play a role in the level of library anxiety among students. The study reported that gender is a moderate factor, followed by nationality and library instructions that play a role in the level of library anxiety among undergraduate students. The study indicated a need to provide extensive library instructions to the students to train them to use the library correctly. Hussain, A (2018). This will not only change students' negative perceptions about the library but will also help in reducing the level of library anxiety. Similar findings have also been reported by Van (2003), Bown et al. (2004) and Bargmann (2007). They suggested that user instructions play a crucial role in lowering library anxiety among students and encouraging them to utilize the library resources and services more frequently.

Literature revealed that students felt library anxiety due to a lack of library awareness and motivation from their peers to utilize the library and explore its resources. The study found that the rude and unfriendly behaviour of librarians and other library staff was the main reason for library anxiety among students. Other reasons for non-usage of the library were found to be the lack of up-to-date library resources.

Other studies show a number of factors responsible for students' library anxiety. For example, a study conducted by Noori, Tareen & Mashwani (2017), citing Alicia, reported several contributed factors responsible for library anxiety among students. These factors include uncertainty, confusion, helplessness,

technological barriers and outdated books. The study recognized the lack of library knowledge barriers, the inability of the students to locate their required resources and the usage of online catalogues as the chief features among students resulting in library anxiety. In the extreme, students with library anxiety will actively avoid using the library for the duration of their studies (McPherson, 2015; Still, 2015).

Research objectives

The study has the following objectives:

- To determine the various levels of library anxiety among fresh undergraduate students of the Faculty of Technology Education, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University (ATBU) Bauchi, Nigeria.
- To find out if there exists any statistically significant difference among fresh undergraduate students based on their gender.
- To examine if there exists any statistically significant difference among undergraduate students based on their disciplines.

Method

In conducting this research, survey research method was employed. The total population of the study consists of 340 fresh undergraduate students of the faculty of technology education Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi. A sample size of 181 was drawn based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table of sample size determination. A convenient sampling technique was used. The researcher administered the survey instrument (questionnaire) by face to face to all the sampled population, out of which 171 questionnaires, with a response rate of 96%, could be collected fully filled in, of which 170 questionnaires were found usable and hence valid for the analysis of this research.

The AQAK library anxiety scale of Anwar et al. (2012) was applied for this study. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS19) was used to calculate the Cronbach's Alpha (CA) value in checking the scale's reliability used for this study. The overall CA value for all five factors of the scale was .82, which is considered good, encouraging that the scale was trustworthy. This scale was mainly established and successfully authenticated on undergraduate students and had 82% reliability. The said scale has five significant factors and contains 40 statements. Factor-1 is associated to the 'library staff' containing of ten items, factor-2 is concerned with 'library resources' and has 25 items, factor-3 is 'linked

to the 'users' knowledge' and has 12 items, factor-4 is 'user education' which has 5 items while factor-5 is related to the library environment and has 7 items. Each statement measured library anxiety on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1-5 (1-agree strongly disagree to 5-strongly). The study used the criterion employed by Ahmed, Ameen and Ullah (2016) for measuring the level of library anxiety based on the mean scores. The 5 points Likert scale formula with the following labels was utilized to measure the overall library anxiety of fresh undergraduate students of the faculty of technology education, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi, Nigeria. based on a mean score where 1=no anxiety, 2 is low anxiety, 3=mild anxiety, 4=moderate anxiety and 5=sever anxiety. A demographic profile of all the study respondents was collected concerning gender, age and discipline of the students.

Table-1, population and sample size

S. No	Department/Institute	Population	Sample size
1	Vocational & Technical Education (VTE)	170	118
2	Science Education (SE)	95	76
3	Library Science in Information. Technology (LIS)	75	63
Total		340	170

Results

Table 2 below, presents the demographics data of the respondents which reveals that 59.1% were male, while 40.9% were female respondents. Regarding the discipline of the respondents it shows that 50.00% of the participants were from vocational and technical education, followed by 26.86% of respondents who were from science education and finally there were 23.14% of the study respondents from library and information science.

Table-2, Demographics n=170

Group	Number of respondents	Percent
Gender		
Male	102	59.1
Female	68	40.9
Discipline		

Vocation & Technical Education	85	50.00
Science Education	44	26.86
Library & Information Science	41	23.14

Table-3 below, it is the overall library anxiety of the study participants. The library anxiety means a score of the total respondents was found to be 2.99 with SD of 0.23, which is a neutral value as per the AQAK scale and falls in the level of mild anxiety. Consequently, the findings suggest that all the study participants possessed mild library anxiety.

This research similarly in Table-4 provides a descriptive statistical analysis of the sub-factors of library anxiety. These subfactors are library staff, user education, information resources, the environment of the library, and knowledge of users about the library. The study participants had a mean score of 3.22 and 3.16 had a little higher library anxiety for library staff and users' education. Results also indicated that the factor "users' knowledge" was the lower reason for library anxiety, with a mean score of 2.64. Though, overall results depicted that factor "library staff was the highest while "library environment" and "users' knowledge" were the lowest reasons for library anxiety for the said respondents.

Table-3, Respondents' overall library anxiety level, n = 180

Statistics	Statistical value
Mean	2.99
SD	0.23
Maximum	2.72
Minimum	2.36

Sub factors	Mean value (SD.)	Min	Max
Library staff User	2.98 (.31)	2.17	3.68
User education	3.02 (.41)	2.02	3.16
Information resources	2.92 (.33)	1.98	3.41
Library environment	2.21 (.44)	2.01	3.44
User knowledge	2.32 (.32)	1.89	1.66

Table-4, descriptive stats of library anxiety, n = 170

Students' library anxiety by gender

Gender wise analysis of the study participants was also carried out, which is given in table5. Results showed that female participants had a high score (2.90)

compared to male participants, whose mean score was 2.88. A simple t-test was performed on mean scores of library anxiety for both male and female participants to measure the significant difference in their opinion about overall library anxiety. The criteria of .05 as a significant difference was set to measure the results. As depicted in table 5, results showed no significant difference based on the means of overall library anxiety for males (Mean: 2.88) and females (Mean: 2.90) having t-test value of .204 = (.188), (p=0.711).

Table-5, Students 'library' anxiety results by gender

Gender	Number of respondents	M	SD	Min	Max	Significance
Male	102	2.88	0.46	2	3	0.711
Female	68	2.90	0.34	2	3	

When the analysis of library anxiety of the respondents was conducted by gender, no significant difference was found for any factor between males and females. Details of the descriptive statistics and the t-test are given in table 6.

Table-6, library anxiety by gender

No.	Factor	Gender	M (SD)	Min	Max	Significance
1	Library staff	Male	3.18 (.38)	2	4	.152
		Female	3.20 (.34)			
2	Users' education	Male	3.21 (.45)	2	4	.129
		Female	3.19 (.55)			
3	Information sources	Male	2.98 (.35)	2	4	.868
		Female	2.92 (.42)			
4	Library environment	Male	2.64 (.32)	2	4	.766
		Female	2.54 (.44)			
5	Users' knowledge	Male	2.52 (.48)	2	4	.248
		Female	2.50 (.50)			

Library anxiety among undergraduate students based on their disciplines

The library anxiety of the fresh undergraduate students based on their discipline was also studied. In order to know about the overall library anxiety of the study participants, different levels of their library anxiety (LA) were compared on the

overall library anxiety scale. As shown in table-7, the overall mean scores of vocational and technical education students (VTE) were higher than the rest with a mean score of 3.44 and SD of 0.361, Whereas the overall LA of the library and information science (LIS) students was the lowest with a mean score of 2.86 and standard deviation of 0.38.

Thus our results indicated that VTE students were more anxious than those studying in Library science. The overall scores of the rest of the category of students were a bit closer to each other, reflecting the minimum difference in their overall LA level. ANOVA was also used to check the significant difference between the groups. As provided in table-8, the results show no significant difference between the mean scores of all the four departments for the overall LA, $F(3,220) = 2.29, p = .066$. Thus, it can be inferred that all the fresh undergraduate students of the faculty of technology education ATBU possess a mild level of library anxiety.

Table-7, Library anxiety among undergraduate students based on their year of study

Discipline	M	Minimum	Maximum
Vocation & Technical education	3.44 (.61)	2.42	3.54
Science education	3.21 (.58)	2.40	3.36
Library & Information science	2.86 (.38)	2.28	3.51

Table-8, Library anxiety among undergraduate students based on their year of study (One-way ANOVA)

	Sum of sq	DF	Mean sq .	F	Sig.
Between groups	3.36	3	2.12	2.29	.066
Within groups	221.1 224.72	220	.92		
Total		239			

Major Findings

1. Having 3.19 and 3.18, as our mean, the finding has indicated that study respondents scored a slight high anxiety for 'library staff' and 'user education, respectively. It also demonstrates that the sub=factor 'user knowledge' continued to be the minor source of library anxiety with a mean score of 2.53.
2. Therefore, it can be concluded that, on average, most of the fresh undergraduate students of FTE had minor library anxiety.

3. Statistically, our findings further displayed that female respondents scored higher on the AQAK scale than male respondents. The study found no significant difference based on the means of overall library anxiety for males ($M=2.88$, $SD=0.46$) and females ($M=2.90$, $SD=0.34$), with $t(226) = (.168)$, ($p=0.711$).
4. VTE students were more anxious than the LIS students regarding 'library staff', 'information resources', and 'user education. Consequently, all the fresh undergraduate students of the faculty of technology education, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa Bauchi possessed virtually the same level of library anxiety.

Discussion

Our respondents with a mean score of 3.22 and 3.16 recorded a little high anxiety for 'library staff' and 'user education. So, they were not contented with the sub-factors 'library staff' and 'user education. They had equally had difficulty interacting with the library staff and had a common feeling of being worried and astounded when using the library. Scholars like Frazer and Barter also found that students have highest level of library anxiety when relating with the library staff. Unfriendly behaviour normally exhibited by library staff led students to evade them for getting necessary library support. Quite a lot of studies have revealed that students evade interacting with the library staff since they consider them unapproachable, rude and unpromising (Ross 2003, Black 2016 and Gogoi, Singson & thiyagarajan 2021). These findings recommend that librarians who actual like students to patronize their library and also exploit their information resources copiously should whatsoever create upright rapport with the students. Gardijan (2021) observed that a friendly, communicative, and skilled librarian is a critical factor in preventing and alleviating library anxiety. With the advent of ICT, the librarians have worthy chances of enhancing students' information literacy by establishing several educative programs aim at alleviating library anxiety among students

Findings further showed that female undergraduate students scored a little higher than male students. Though, no significant difference was found in the level of anxiety when the mean scores of both genders were compared using a t-test. This finding is in agreement with the finding of earlier researches piloted by Anwar, Alkandari & Alqallaf (2004), Khosravi, Jahromi and Hosseini (2014), Noori, Tareen & Mashwani (2017), Rehman, Soroya and Anwar (2016), Khan, Anwar & Naveed (2021) and Chutia & Nath (2021) who found a moderately low level of library anxiety among students where the students' demographic profile

didn't show any significant effect on their level of library anxiety. Conversely, Erfanmanesh (2012) study on library anxiety among students at Malaya University reported a high level of library anxiety among male students than female students.

Outcome for this study described that vocational and technical education students were more concerned than the library and information science students as the mean score of overall library anxiety for the VTE students was a little higher than the science education and library information science students. In furtherance, One-way ANOVA test was also used on the mean scores of the library anxiety factors of the VTE to LIS students in order to obtain the significant difference in the anxiety level of the research participants. At the end, no statistically significant difference was found in the mean scores regarding library anxiety. These findings support the findings Ansari (2017) who reported that gender is a moderate factor concerning library anxiety. However, our outcomes findings disagreed with (McPherson, 2015; Still, 2015) that said students with library anxiety will actively avoid using the library for the duration of their studies.

Conclusion and recommendations

From the findings of this study, it's clear that literature on library anxiety are not adequate regarding the Nigerians undergraduate students. Very few studies were able to write on library anxiety such as those conducted by (Adeeko, & Adetimirin 2022 and Popoola, & Olajide). However, most of these studies have examined the influence of library anxiety among Nigerian students or research scholars in general. It is essential to examine how to overcome library anxiety among students. The current research and other previous studies piloted elsewhere provide convincing evidence to suggest that many student populations experience library anxiety. Most of them lack the confidence and communication skills to interact with the library staff and seek their help for effectively using the library. Although our study found that the overall library anxiety score among the students was moderate, the results indicated that the students were more anxious about the library staff than other factors. Thus it can be inferred that the un-friendly behaviour of the library staff made a significant contribution to the degree of library anxiety among students, which made them unable to utilize library resources and services effectively. This unnecessary anxiety is a concern if students are to succeed during and after their education and must be alleviated

lest it limit students' achievements and overall experiences (Vernon et al., 2016). Therefore, it is essential to provide library instructions and routinely organize user education programs for newly enrolled students. This will help educate the students to be self-reliant in using the library and become life learners.

Limitations of the Study

The study is narrowed only to the fresh undergraduate students of the faculty of technology education, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi. Consequently, the study's findings cannot be generalized to the students studying in other faculties or the entire universities.

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