EISSN 3141-6152
GLOBAL ACADEMIC INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE (GAIJLIS) VOL: 2.1 (2026) PP 47-54



Received: 30.05.2026| Accepted: 26.06.2026 |Published: 06.07.2026
Citations: Habila, L. Uganneya, A.S, & Idacheba, J. Gender Disparities in Academic Resource Usage: The Nasarawa State University Keffi (Nsuk) Library Case Study (2026) Gaijlis vol.2.1. Pp.47-54 https://globreshub.org/index.php/gaijlis/ DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21727266

GENDER DISPARITIES IN ACADEMIC RESOURCE USAGE: THE NASARAWA STATE UNIVERSITY KEFFI (NSUK) LIBRARY CASE STUDY

1Habila Ladi, 2Solomon A. Uganneya 3Joy Idacheba

1School of Graduate Studies,Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi, ladihabila67@gmail.com 2-3Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to look at how different genders use academic resources in the Nasarawa State University, Keffi Library. Over the course of six months in 2025, 600 randomly chosen respondents were asked questions using a standardised interview schedule. Results showed gender differences in age, marital status, internet access, and use of advisory services in the library. Men within the age of 30-50 years used library resources than women of the same age, higher percentage of married men used library facilities more than married women. Also young and mature men utilized internet facilities, e- books and reference books more than women. The utilisation of library loans and textbooks by the sexes is not significantly different. Compared to males, women used advising services more frequently. Tell and other fiction and nonfiction periodicals were more popular among women than males. To bridge the gap between men and women differences in the use of academic resources, the study recommended that women should be conversant with internet facilities to move with the current information and communication technology trend.

***Key words**: Academic library, men and women, library user, academic resources.*

*Corresponding author(s) Habila, L. Uganneya, A.S, & Idacheba, J. (2026) agree that this article remain permanently open access under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 International License

INTRODUCTION

In every aspect of life, including education, social, economic, political, health, governance, and religion, gender inequality has been at the forefront of passionate public discourse. In the context of education, gender disparities have been noted in areas such as professional development, classroom interaction, teaching practices, information literacy behaviour, skill acquisition, and reading habits.

Despite the scope of research on gender issues, significant change in terms of gender equality and access to resources is still very limited. In Nigeria, research findings on gender differences in library usage have been very limited, most especially in an academic library hence the need for this study. According to Moser (2011), gender refers to a socially constructed relation between men and women (gender) and should be central in development programmes. Boys and girls are

generally educated side-by-side in schools, yet their experiences are profoundly different.

A series of research studies during the 1970s and early 1980s reported that male protagonists dramatically outnumbered females in children's literature (Debbie, 1997). In Debbie's write up, it was stated that Ernst (1995) confirms that, although there has been a gradual decrease in gender imbalance in fiction, girls continue to be portrayed as passive and dependent, while boys are imaginative, diligent, clever, brave, creative, and resourceful. It was reported that girls read books about males or females, while boys choose such as transportation, sports, and war; while females' fiction about males or avoid fiction as a "feminine" genre. Although many interests are common, a large-scale gender analysis of reading preferences reports that males select graphic media such as comics, computers and newspapers (Hall and Coles, 1999) as well as topics show greater interest in horses, mystery fiction, romance fiction, and fine arts and crafts (Sturm, 2003). Girls read more than boys, but they choose narrative fiction to the neglect of other genres (Burdick, 1996).

Burdick (1996) discovers that girls are relatively more excited than boys in embarking on any project but lack the confidence to carry it to a successful end without any assistance. Boys interact independently and confidently with any electronic device while girls depend on pairs and family to build up confidence during their search. Boys perceive that the most important task in research is gathering information resources and completing the project, whereas girls prefer "to investigate and formu-late." According to Manda and Mulkangara (2007), gender is associated with the use of e- resources. Amkpa (2007) observed that male and female students differ significantly in their attitudes towards computer appli-cations which definitely have adverse effect on their job opportunities after graduation. Also Ford et al. (2001) also reported that women find it difficult to find information online more than men.

On the contrary, Ozoemelem (2009) reported that both men and women postgraduate students have high frequency use of electronic information resources. Marylaine Block (2001) argued for a greater focus on male-oriented magazines and books. Block presented no data on male preferences within the library context, an area for which there is comparatively little information (Applegate, 2008). Several major studies of library users on the use of library resources conducted in the past on library use did not give significant report on gender differences. There is also no data on gender differences in the use of NSUK academic library. Hence, the main objective of the study is to assess gender dimension of information and reading preference in NSUK library.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Assess age differential in library usage by the respondents
2. Investigate the frequency of library use among male and female gender
3. Investigate the difference or otherwise library utilization between both genders

METHODOLOGY

Over the course of six months, the study was conducted in the NSUK academic library. During this time, a systematic interview schedule was employed to collect data from 300 respondents who were chosen at random for the study, and daily records of library users and services utilised were kept.

Areas considered are readers' advisory, references, internet facilities, e-books and loan section. Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULT INTERPRETATION

Socio- economic characteristics of the respondents:

Data in Table 1 show that 27.33% of the men's age were below 20 years of age, 18.33% were within the age range of 21-30 years, 33.67% were within 31-40 years of age, 15% were within 41-50 years, 4% were within 51-60 years while 1.67% were above 60 years of age. In terms of the women, a large percentage (51.67%) were twenty years or less, 28.67% were within 21-30 years of age, 11.67% were within 31-40 years, 6.33% were within 41-50 years while 1.67% were within 51-60 years of age. When comparing the age of men and women, 80.34% of women within 16-30 years patronize and use the library much more than (55.66%) men of the same age. This difference might result from their age difference during admission into the university. However, 48.67% of men visit the library more than 28.0% of women of the same age. So also, 5.67% of the elderly men do use the library more than 1.67% of women of same age. It could be said that the use of library services increases among the women as they advance in age till 40 – 50 years when it will start to dwindle. This might result from their determination to equip themselves with information required for career and professional advancement than when they were younger. Most of these people are either in their final year as undergraduates or Masters and PhD students working on their thesis. On the contrary, the frequency of visit and use of library resources by women increases at early stages of life and continue to decline after 30 years of age. This might result from the fact that majority of the women are married before or after 30 years of age, after which they take up other responsibilities as home makers and catering for the welfare of their children. This might eat into their time, thus reducing their preference for library activities. The study confirmed that women above 60 years of age hardly visit the library. The information seeking capacity of women reduces with age. This is in line with ALA (2013)'s report that the

use of public library declined drastically and significantly with age.

However, Goodson et al. (2001) and Odell et al. (2000) were of the opinion that the gender gap in internet use and information seeking has narrowed significantly in college age group. Also, a Norway Statistics survey (1998) uncovered large age and gender differences in the use of public libraries. The study revealed that 63 per cent of Norway's populations between the ages of 12 and 15 have visited a public library in the early three months of the survey, and 22 per cent of people aged 65 to 79. Forty per cent of all women visited a public library during the period, against only 26 per cent of the men. Christina and Hawkins (2011) indicated that female and male library users are nearly equal when it comes to how often they visit a library: 34 per cent of female library users and 32 per cent of male library users said that they had visited a public library 10 or more times over the past 12 months. The variation in findings is an indication that there is no consensus on gender age and library usage and that the environment in which the study takes place might be a cogent factor influencing gender age and use of academic resources

In terms of marital status, 46.67% of the men who visit the library were single, 45% were married while 3.33 and 2.33% were divorced and widower respectively. On the other hand, 72.33% of the women who visit the library were single, 26.67% were married while one percent widowed. It could be inferred that majority of the women who visit the library were single, while there is almost an equal distribution among the married and single men who visit the library. The lower visit of the married women might be as a result of additional burden of rearing and caring for offspring. Also in Nigeria, the men are usually referred to as bread winners who are expected to provide for the needs of the family; their ability to meet up with this obligation require extra effort in getting additional certificate which will eventually attract higher pay.

In terms of religion, there is no significant difference between the library patronage of male and female gender, be it Christianity or Islamic religion worshippers.

With reference to level of education, most men (64.0%) that use the library were undergraduate, 21.67% were masters' degree holders/ students while 14.33% were PhD holders/ students. On the other way round, 86.67% of women library users were undergraduates, 10.33% were Masters Holders/ students and 3.0% were PhD students/ holders. It could be inferred that a large percent of graduate and post graduate students that visit the library were men. This is contrary to the view of Abd Latif et al. (2011) that there is no significant difference between the usage of digital library among male and female Malaysian post graduate students.

The low intensity of library visit among women might be as a result of their perception of the library as well as the difficulty in combining academic work with home chores (Table 1).

Table 1. Socio economic characteristics of the respondents.

	MALE		FEMALE	
Variable	**Frequency (300)**	**%**	**Frequency (300)**	**%**
Age	82	27.33	155	51.67
18-20yrs	55	18.33	86	28.67
21-30yrs	101	33.67	35	11.67
31-40yrs	45	15.0	19	6.33
41-50yrs	12	4.0	05	1.67
51-60yrs	05	1.67	0	0.00

	MALE		FEMALE	
Variable	**Frequency (300)**	**%**	**Frequency (300)**	**%**
Marital Status				
Single	140	46.67	217	72.33
Married	135	45.0	80	26.67
Divorced	09	3.00	03	1.00
Widow/Widower	07	2.33	0	0.00
Religion				
Christian	183	61.0	206	68.67
Muslim	109	36.33	94	31.33
African traditional religion	08	2.67	0	0.00
Educational Status				
Undergraduates	192	64.0	260	86.67
Masters	65	21.67	31	10.33
PhD	43	14.33	09	3.00

Frequency of visit to NSUK library by gender

Figure 1 shows that 46% of the men visit the library more than once in a week; 33% visit the library weekly; 10%, every two weeks; 6%, every 3 weeks; 1.67%, monthly and 3.3%, occasionally. In relation to women, 14.33 and 15% visit the library more than once in a week; 26.67 and 21.67% visit the library ones in two and three weeks respectively; 3.33% visit monthly while 19% visit the library occasionally. It could be inferred that the men visit the library more frequently than the women. The frequent visit of the men to the library might result from their quest for more information for career development and the less work perform by them compared to women. Though women in Sub Sahara Africa equally strive for career advancement, their quests have been limited by certain factors. African men believe that home chores and children's welfare are women's responsibility; hence most women combine them with

their professional and academic career. These increase the burden of women and subsequently reduce their quest for knowledge. Except women are given helping hands in discharging most of these responsibilities, it might be difficult for married women to increase their frequency of visit to the library. One of the eight international development goals (usually referred to as the Millennium Development Goals, MDGs) officially established at the Millennium Summit of the United Nations in 2000 to be achieved by 2015 is promoting gender equality and empowering women. The implication of the gender difference in the visit to the library is that men will always be ahead of women in knowledge acquisition, while the issue of gender equality and empowerment will remain unabated.

Table 2. Purpose of visiting the library by gender.

Purpose of visiting the libı	Male		Female	
	Frequency (300)	%	Frequency (300)	%
Reading	265	88.33	255	85.0
Access textbooks	183	61.0	178	59.33
Internet facilities	195	65.0	115	38.33
e- books	168	56.0	45	15.0
Reference books	168	56.0	115	38.33
Advisory services	102	34.0	168	56.0
Book loans	230	76.67	216	72.0
Fictions	102	34.0	195	65.0
Non fictions	126	42.0	162	54.0
Magazines/ ovations	45	15.0	144	48.0

Purpose of visit to the library

Table 2 shows that majority 88.33 and 76.67% of the men visit library for reading and book loans; 65% visit library for internet facilities; 61%, to access books; 56%, for e- book and reference books respectively; 42%, for non-fictions; 34%, for advisory services while 15% visit to read magazines and comics. The situation is not same with the women as 85.0% visit the library to read, 72.0% to borrow or return books, 65 and 54% do so for fictions and non-fictions respectively, 59.33% do so to access textbooks, 38.33% for internet facilities and reference books respectively while 15% visit the library to access e- books. It could be inferred that most men visit the library mainly for reading, research, book loans, internet facilities, e- books and reference books accessibility while

most women visit the library for reading, book loans, research advisory services and non-fiction accessibilities. When comparing their visit, both genders have similar purposes in terms of reading, book loans, and research. However, there are differences in terms of internet usage, e- books and reference books which are mostly accessed by the men. So also most women had preference for advisory services, fiction and non- fiction as well as the reading of magazines than the males. The access to internet services, e- books is supported by the reports of Ford *et al* (2001) which affirmed that male students use e-resources than female students and that female students find it more difficult to find information online than females. The low usage of e-resources by the female gender could be attributed to their educational and social statuses of women as well as the limited time available to them. The time library opens normally coincides with periods for school runs, child care and need to attend to other house chores which most men do not engage in.

Summary and Conclusion

The study was carried out to investigate gender differences in the use of academic library resources in Nasarawa State University, Keffi. A total of 600 respondents of female and male genders were randomly interviewed over a period of six months. A structured interview schedule was used in data collection. Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages while a histogram was employed in data presentation. Result shows that young women visit the library more than young men; single women visit the library more than married women. There were no differences between library visit by both single and married men. Male graduates patronize the library more than female graduates. There is no significant difference between the men and women library patronage and their religion. Men visit the library more frequently than women; married men visit the library more frequently than married women. Aged men patronize the library more than aged women. Both genders have similar purposes of visiting library in terms of reading, book loans, and research. However, they are different in terms of internet usage, e- books and reference books which are mostly accessed by the men. So also the women had preference for advisory services, fiction and non- fiction as well as the reading of magazines than the males.

Recommendations

The study recommends that married women should be encouraged to develop greater interest in library patronage. Women should note as well that their regular and constant access to information is power. Men should give helping hands to the women in caring for the homes, doing school runs and other domestic shores. The women are also encouraged to

avail themselves of internet usage in order to meet up with the global advancement in education. More women are encouraged to embark on post graduate studies as higher knowledge is synonymous with higher education. All these will have a greater effect on income, social status, governance, power and political positions as well as gender equality and empowerment.

REFERENCES

Abd Latif Abdul R, Zamlia M, Adnan J (2011): *Age, Gender and Race differences in the Usage of Digital Library among Malaysian Post Graduate Students.* www.academia.edu/.../Age_Gender_Race_ Differences _in _the Usage.

Applegate R (2008). *Gender differences in the use of library.* https;//scholarworks.iupui.edu./handle/1805/2244.

Amkpa SA (2007). *Gender and age difference in computer use and attitude among students of University of Maiduguri.* Inform. Technol. 4(1):60-67

Burdick TA (1996). *Success and diversity in information seeking; Gender and the information search styles model*." School Library Media Quarterly. Fall, 1996.

Christina C, Hawkins L (2011*). Public Libraries and Literacy. Young people's reading habits and attitudes to public libraries, and an exploration of the relationship between public library use and school attainment National Literacy Trust* www.literacytrust.org.uk/ assets/0000/.../Public_libraries_literacy_2011.

Debbie A (1997). Engendering Equity. Apply the research on gender to your school library.

Ernst SB (1995). *Gender issues in books for children and young adults, in Battling dragons; Issues and controversy in children's literature, ed.* by Susan Lehr. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Goodson P, McCormick D, Evans A (2001). Searching for sexually explicit materials on the internet: An exploratory study of college students, Arch. Sexual Behav. 30(2):101-118.

Hall C, Coles M (1999). Children's reading choices. New York: Routledge. [Adobe e-book]

Ford N, Miller D, Moss N (2001). The role of individual difference in Internet searching: An empirical study. J. Am. Soc. Inform. Sci. Technol. 52(12):1049.

Marylaine B (2001). Serving Men Better. Library Journal. p.60.

Manda PA, Mulkangara F (2007). *Gender analysis of electronic information resources use: A case of the university of Dares Salaam Tanzania.* University of Dares Salaam Library J. 9(1):31-52

Moser ME (2011). *Gender and Development: Concept and definitions* www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/re55.pdf.

Norway statistics (1998). *Large age and gender differences in use of public libraries* www.ssb.no/en/weekly_ bulletin/editions/9844/1.shtml.

Odell PM, Korgen KO, Schumacher P, Delucchi M (2000): *Internet use among male and female college students, Cyber Psychol. Behav.* 3(5):855-862.

Ozoemelem OA (2009): *Use of electronic resources by postgraduate students of the department of library and information science of Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria*. Library Philosophy and Practice. http://unlib.unl.edu/lpp/lpp2009.htm.

Sturm BW (2003). *The information and reading preferences of North Carolina children. School Library Media Research*, (6). Retrieved on Apr.4, 2004.