

Students' Coping Strategies for Limited Library Resources at Baguio Central University, Baguio City

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Abstract. This study examined the students' coping strategies for limited library resources at Baguio Central University, Baguio City; the level of utilization of library resources, the strategies employed, the challenges encountered, and the needed library resources of students that helped in their academic endeavors. Four specific objectives guided the study: to determine the level of utilization of the library resources, to find out the strategies of students on the limited resources, to determine the problems encountered by the students, and to identify the needed library resources of the students. The study made use of a descriptive design with a random sampling technique to choose the participants. Using a Likert scale questionnaire, data were collected from a sample of two hundred twelve (212) nursing and midwifery students. The reliability of the questionnaire was confirmed through Cronbach's Alpha, yielding a good reliability value and ensuring the consistency of the results. The researcher used statistical tools such as weighted mean and ranking to analyze and interpret the data. The study found that books, reference materials (dictionaries, encyclopedias), and research/ undergraduate theses are the most often used resources by the students in the library that augment their needed information. On the other hand, using online search, utilizing open educational resources, and depending on the information their teachers shared were the most effective tactics students used to deal with the limited library resources in satisfying their information needs. Also, students are challenged regarding digital resources (e.g., e-journal subscription), slow internet speed for accessing search engine information, and insufficient computer equipment for accessing search engine information. To address the gap that the students identify and to enhance the library resources, the students suggest increasing WI-FI bandwidth for searching, as well as increasing the number of computers and print books in the library that support the needed information of the students. With the following findings of the study, it was recommended that the school administration allot a budget for the library so that the library resources are up-to-date to subscribe to e-journals, and to strengthen the internet connections.

Keywords: Challenges encountered; Coping strategies; Information; Limited library resources; Library utilization.

1.0 Introduction

Academic libraries have been described as the institution's heart since they provide a space for students and professors to research and expand their knowledge. The academic library supports university research and growth, and students can access information resources that contribute significantly to providing high-quality education. Every university's library serves as the focal point of academic activity. The library gives an array of information to its users, which leads to knowledge (Mawia, 2021).

Lasig and Collantes (2022) emphasized that an academic library is important to every academic institution. Its purpose is to satisfy its users' information needs, particularly educational materials for students that will help them grow in their academic field. Libraries require buildings and equipment to provide greater services and accommodate a broader spectrum of activities. The library has three main functions: collecting, preserving, and making resources available to users. According to Amaechi et al. (2018), academic libraries today face significant problems such as poor funding, poor internet connectivity, and lack of technology, similar to the rise of higher education and scholarly publication. The global digital revolution is challenging traditional knowledge generation, organization, distribution, and tertiary education. Academic libraries must prioritize customer retention and user expectations to thrive in today's competitive market.

In the case of private institutions, libraries face a unique set of challenges that can undermine their ability to serve their academic communities effectively. Financial constraints are a significant barrier, as private institutions often rely on tuition fees and private donations, leading to budget limitations that affect acquiring new materials, technology updates, and maintaining subscriptions to crucial digital databases (Malabanan et al., 2021). African libraries in the 21st century face budgetary constraints, inadequate infrastructure, limited library access resources, and resistance to change. This issue has contributed significantly to the low status of education in Africa. Jain and Akakandelwa (2016) quoted that academic libraries in Africa are also facing challenges such as chronic financial constraints, inadequate basic infrastructure, insufficient ICT infrastructure, poor library and information science curricula, slow acceptance of open access resources, resistance to change, and difficulty in the importation of books and journals. In the article by Zotoo and Liu (2019), financial constraints in academic libraries, even in advanced countries, are emphasized. Like Universities in the United Kingdom experiencing budget issues, 36% of the United Kingdom Libraries are experiencing a stagnant budget (no increase or decrease), 35% have budget reductions, and 29% are experiencing minimal increases. The United States is also experiencing even worse, since 44% of American universities had budget cuts, 22% had increased, and 42% had a steady budget.

Access to digital resources is another critical issue; the cost of comprehensive digital databases and journals can be prohibitive, limiting research capabilities and the ability to access the latest academic content (Anuradha, 2017). Additionally, physical space limitations can impede the library's ability to provide a conducive learning environment, accommodate growing collections, and offer adequate study spaces, affecting the overall user experience. These resource limitations have far-reaching implications, from hindering the research and learning process due to outdated or insufficient materials to affecting the quality of academic work due to limited access to current literature. The challenges also extend to the user experience, with space constraints making it difficult for students to find appropriate study areas or collaborate effectively within the library setting (Mahwasane & Mudzielwana, 2016).

Several reasons have been attributed to the scarcity of library resources. In the study conducted by Vera et al., 2018 on the challenges of utilizing library resources by students in the College of Education, several challenges were identified, such as the absence of internet access, inconsistent photocopying services in the library (92%), insufficient relevant materials (74%), inadequate functional ICT facilities/ low user education, unfavorable library conditions (68%), low awareness of library resources (63%), and an unfavorable reading environment (52%). According to Benard and Dulle (2014), a major cause of students' failure in accessing and using relevant informational resources is reported as a lack of standards in the provision of library services, reducing reading morale, and limiting students' innovations. These findings are consistent with each other. In the same way, Ugbagir (2016) noted that several difficulties, including inadequate ICT functionality, poor library conditions, lack of orientation, and unfavorable reading environments, were identified in their research. The findings indicated that most students have no textbook resources for their learning. Lewis and Mallaiah (2014) studied the usage of information resources by students, staff members, and research scholars at engineering college libraries in the Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts. According to the findings, respondents believed insufficient information resources exist in their college libraries. The study's findings revealed considerable variances in the degree of satisfaction with information resources across different types of users. The research advised that information resources, facilities, and services should be evaluated regularly to satisfy changing user demands.

To eliminate the issues of insufficient information resources, library users use tactics. Comendador et al. (2021) define coping as the mobilization of the mind and behavior to manipulate internal and external distressing

conditions. It is a period employed specifically for the conscious and intentional mobilization of acts, as opposed to 'protection mechanisms,' which can be unconscious or subconscious adaptive responses to reduce or tolerate stress. Coping strategies refer to dispositions that determine an individual's behavior in response to stressors. Coping strategies are methods of dealing with stress in difficult situations, and students must learn to handle stress. The author defines coping as the thoughts and actions taken to deal with stressful experiences, both internal and external. Guevarra and Cimanés (2017), also cited that if students cannot manage stress from all types of situations, this might influence students' capacity to perform.

Coping strategies were designed to provide insight into the emotional adjustment. Coping strategies have increased dramatically due to parental expectations and a competitive climate among students (Baloran, 2020). Among the characteristics that coping strategies could weaken, attention has been focused on self-efficacy expectations, which are regarded as one of the most important determinants for students' engagement, determination, and academic achievement. From a proactive standpoint, academic stress research has highlighted the relevance of coping strategies in avoiding adverse effects. In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in finding the extent to which individuals can mix different coping strategies, tactics, and adaptive consequences (Comendador et al., 2021).

It has been determined that coping is a key component in the process of removing, reducing, or tolerating stress and preventing psychological discomfort. Attempts to deal with the situation's demands, whether internal or external, can be defined as coping through cognitive and emotional means. It is not considered an attribute or a result, but rather a strategy. Some students adopt constructive stress management; others drop out of school because they find the work to be too challenging. Some people use approaches like seeking social reinforcement or partaking in leisure activities, while others choose unhealthy stress-reduction tactics like running away or avoiding situations (Nagle & Sharma, 2018). Research on distance learning students identified four coping strategies: planful issue solving, accountability, seeking social support, and confrontive coping. Coping strategies are ways to deal with traumatic and unpleasant experiences.

With the presented challenges, this study investigates students' coping strategies with limited library resources. The study may help gain insight and assist librarians and administrators in addressing the scarcity of resources. Overall, the study's findings will serve as a road map in identifying lapses and improving the library. Lastly, it will serve as a source for additional researchers who aspire to do studies in a similar area.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The study utilized a descriptive survey research design. A descriptive survey research design is a systematic and structured approach to collecting data from a sample of individuals or entities within a larger population, with the primary aim of providing a detailed and accurate description of the characteristics, behaviors, opinions, or attitudes within the target group. This method involves using surveys, questionnaires, interviews, or observations to collect data, which is then analyzed and summarized to conclude the population of interest.

2.2 Research Participants

To determine the participants, Slovin's Formula was utilized to get the study's sample size. A total of 212 nursing and midwifery students participated in the study. The study made use of a random sampling technique to

2.3 Research Instrument

This study used a questionnaire checklist type to gather the needed participant data. The questionnaire was based on the researcher's accumulated knowledge, especially the data extracted from the review of related literature and other sources from previous studies. The questionnaire comprises four (4) parts: level of utilization, strategies used by the students, problems encountered, and the needed library resources. Cronbach's Alpha was used to ensure the questionnaire's quality and the study's reliability.

2.4 Data Gathering Procedure

This study used specific steps. The researchers secured an approval letter from the chief librarian to conduct the study in the College of Nursing and the School of Midwifery library. Then a permission to the College of Nursing

and the School of Midwifery Dean. Upon the college dean's approval, the researcher personally distributed the questionnaires to the participants, who were informed of the purpose of the study and how to answer the questions. The participants were assured anonymity and confidentiality.

2.5 Ethical Considerations

This paper respects the rights of others in all aspects and strictly abides by R.A. 10173 or the Data Privacy Act. The participants also signed and gave a letter indicating their willingness to participate in the study. It will be included in the consent and assent letters, as well as the possible risks, benefits, procedures of the study, and confidentiality. The researchers protected the privacy and confidentiality of the participants, and the data were used for educational purposes only. Adhering to these ethical considerations promotes responsible and respectful research practices, fostering trust between researchers and participants while upholding the credibility of the research findings.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Utilization of Existing Library Resources

Table 1 presents data on students' utilization level of the existing library resources.

Table 1. *Level of Utilization of the Existing Library Resources*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Books	3.30	Highly Utilized
Magazines	2.32	Slightly Utilized
Newspapers	2.24	Slightly Utilized
Journals	2.52	Utilized
Reference Materials (Dictionaries and Encyclopedias)	2.78	Utilized
Research/ Undergraduate Thesis	2.73	Utilized
Online Wordbook	2.61	Utilized
Overall	2.64	Utilized

Students generally use the existing library resources in their academic endeavors. Books are ranked as highly utilized by the students. Students often use these resources primarily for their academic requirements, which helps them enhance their comprehension and exploration. Most respondents answered that they utilized books in the library for their readings, assignments, classwork, and general study. Reference Materials, composed of dictionaries and encyclopedias, were interpreted by the respondents as utilized. This implies that students consult reference materials when they need specific types of information. Also, these materials contain information that is accurate and reliable. These materials are kept differently from other library resources for easy access and retrieval. Compared to other library materials, reference materials always provide relevant answers, authentic, correct, and trustworthy information that may be used to provide relevant answers to questions and various information demands of library users (Makinde et al., 2017). Also, the respondents interpreted a Research/ Undergraduate Thesis as utilized. It can be asserted that students use research or an undergraduate thesis to look for information more relevant to their study. Also, they believed that information retrieved from the research or an undergraduate thesis is more accurate and valid. The data shows that the College of Nursing and School of Midwifery utilized some of the library resources found in the library to deepen their knowledge and understanding of their subject matter and to augment or support the information discussed in their instructions.

3.2 Strategies Employed to Cope with Limited Library Resources

Table 2 presents the strategies students employed to deal with the limited library resources. Since the library has limited resources, the students employed different kinds of strategies to meet their information needs and support their learning and research. Students use the internet search engine (e.g., Google, Google Scholar, etc.) to find the needed information. In today's generation, the first backup to search for information is to use Google, because most or all the information needed is there, and it is very easy to access. Students utilize the internet to obtain resources to enhance their reading assignments or research. Students utilize the internet search engine because of easy information retrieval, and can access it anytime and anywhere. Kurniasih et al. (2018) emphasized in their study that students use internet search engines to get the information they need daily, to solve issues, to learn more, to dispel doubts, to enjoy themselves, to satisfy their curiosity about other people, and so on. Another, students surf the internet search engine when things are unclear, to look for general information outside the lecture

materials, and to search for references to the assignment in publications or journals. Search engines, according to Onuh and Ekwueme (2020), are quick and easy to use and are practical instruments for getting data from the internet.

Table 2. *Strategies Students Employed to Deal /Cope with the Limited Library Resources*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
I use internet search engines (e.g., Google, Google Scholar, etc.) to supplement the needed information.	3.32	Strongly Agree
I borrow books from my friends	2.55	Agree
I visit other libraries to research	2.61	Agree
I rely on the information shared by my instructors	2.69	Agree
I use a personal subscription (you buy for your use only)	2.31	Somewhat Agree
Buy second-hand books	2.52	Agree
A Personal learning network (PLN)- listening or joining discussions in the social networks by professionals or scholars	2.60	Agree
I use open education resources (freely available resources from the internet, e.g., learning modules, articles, open-access journals, online tutorials, and other scholarly materials)	3.17	Agree
I joined a study group or peer group	2.53	Agree
Academic networking (learning from experienced individuals with in-depth knowledge in a student's area of interest)	2.67	Agree
Overall	2.70	Agree

Students also use Open education resources (freely available resources from the internet, e.g., learning modules, articles, open access journals, online tutorials, and other scholarly materials) to supplement the information not found in the library because of limited library resources. Estrada et al. (2023) emphasized that using open education resources directs users to a relevant web resource that can be retrieved easily and is user-friendly. Also, Arcebuche (2022) pointed out that students use academic publications, videos, and photographs as open instructional resources associated with freely available educational materials. Adil et al. (2024) also stressed that more availability of knowledge through open educational resources implies benefits that support lifelong learning, pedagogical benefits, and improvement in students' learning outcomes. Due to the scarcity of library resources, students nowadays are very resourceful in meeting their information demands that the library cannot provide. Findings show that students agreed that they use different tactics to explore other resources outside the library to satisfy or meet their information needs. There are other ways to get information when it is not found inside the library. Some students explore to get the information they need.

3.3 Challenges Encountered by Students

Table 3 presents the challenges encountered by the students with the library resources and facilities.

Table 3. *Level of Challenges Students Encountered with Library Resources*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Lack of awareness of the existing library resources	2.69	Approve
Lack of current and up-to-date reading materials	2.71	Approve
Limited copies of books	2.91	Approve
Inadequate information resources	2.65	Approve
Difficulty in finding/locating relevant information	2.43	Disapprove
Slow internet speed to access information from a search engine	3.29	Strongly Approve
An inadequate number of computers to use in accessing information from a search engine	3.02	Approve
Lack of signage for easier access to the needed library resources	2.48	Disapprove
Lack of digital resources (subscription to e-journals)	3.52	Strongly Approve
The short duration to book loans results in a lack of time to borrow the required resources from the library	2.78	Approve
Overall	2.85	Approve

Every library user faces a variety of challenges when using library resources. From the gathered data, the library lacks digital resources (subscription to e-journals) that meet the diverse information needs of the users. E-resources play a substantial and expanding role in academic libraries. Patel and Verma (2023) support the importance of digital library resources. E-resources are valuable because they offer unique capabilities for manipulation and searching, making information access readily available. Also, the participants were challenged by the slow internet

speed when accessing information from search engines. Manna and Sarkar (2024) stated that slow internet access reduces research productivity and educational access, and it increases the amount of time required to transfer data. Strong and stable internet connectivity has a significant impact on students' lives. An article by Sawahel (2024) pointed out that having high-quality internet in the library is fundamental since it allows students to access unlimited academic resources supporting their research and academic innovations.

Another issue was the inadequate number of computers to access information. The number of computers in the library is not adequate for students' use when surfing the internet. Most educational content is available for users to peruse various subjects and topics at their discretion. This allows the development of libraries in building interactive learning programs and activities that foster user involvement. Users may also participate in virtual simulations, educational games, and web discussions. They are avenues to achieving a better comprehension of ideas. The study of Tripathi (2023) highlights that computer is increasingly utilized in libraries to enhance internal operations and facilitate access to information. These computer applications reduce task duplication and help save time for everyone involved.

3.4 Library Resources Needed by Students

Table 4 presents the library resources needed by the students.

Table 4. *Library Resources Needed by the Students*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Print Books	3.46	Much Needed
Print Journals	3.13	Needed
Print Magazines	2.87	Needed
Reference Materials (Encyclopedia & Dictionaries)	3.32	Much Needed
Electronic Journals	2.95	Needed
Electronic Books	3.08	Needed
Electronic Newspapers	2.79	Needed
Electronic Magazines	2.81	Needed
Increase the Number of computers used for searching	3.54	Much Needed
Increase Wi-Fi bandwidth use for searching	3.68	Much Needed
Overall	3.16	Needed

The respondents believe that the identified indicators are the top needed resources in the library. These resource tools are crucial for supporting academic and research activities. Increase Wi-Fi bandwidth use for searching, as the library's highest library resources are needed. The required information in the library is an alternative way for the students to supplement the needed information for their perusal. Students have difficulty connecting to Wi-Fi in the library due to low bandwidth or slow connection. According to Novak and Day (2015), Wi-Fi in libraries is an avenue to bring information to the students through electronic resources. The study of Moate et al. (2017) on the use of Wi-Fi, study revealed that many participants agree that the presence of Wi-Fi improves their performance because it enables them to submit their work on time and even to access information for assignment, they further added that this also enhances communication with classmates and lecturers. Add Computer Units with an internet connection to use for searching. The presence of computers with internet connections empowers users to access information in different open educational resources, develop skills in ICT to navigate information, and connect with the recently published research, which helps users to achieve academic success. It further provides an interface that enables users to engage in interactive learning opportunities. Through different resources, users can learn various subjects with the flexibility of time (Ali & Ullah, 2023). As Tripathi (2023) highlighted, computers are increasingly utilized in libraries to enhance information retrieval and facilitate access to information. Also, the library should purchase more print books. Catequista (2021) highlights the importance of using print materials. Print resources remained the best reference for students to acquire knowledge and wisdom. The use of print sources has contributed to fulfilling their research requirements and meeting the demands of their assignment or research work, as well as stability, durability, ease, and comfort of use. Shaambeni (2019), in her study, also supports the importance of print materials, wherein it is easy to access graphics, tables, and photos in high quality and can make notes from them.

4.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, the study's findings indicate that students utilized the library resources for their research and everyday learning. Through the library resources available, students can acquire more knowledge and wisdom, especially in their field of specialization. However, not all the information the students need is in the library, which leads them to explore other resources to satisfy their information needs. There are many ways to get relevant information. However, the most popular is the use of search engines, which is accessible 24/7, anytime and anywhere, as long as you have internet access. On the other hand, the participants identified challenges in using library resources, such as a lack of digital resources, slow internet, and an inadequate number of computers. From the observation of the participants, they suggest increasing WIFI bandwidth, adding computer units, and adding more print books that will augment their needed information, giving accurate information so they do not have to rely on search engines. Recommendations were made for the improvement and enhancement of the library resources. The school administration may allocate a budget for the procurement of current and up-to-date library resources, subscribing to e-journals (local and international), fast internet, and upgraded computers in the library used for searching information from the search engines.

5.0 Contributions of Authors

The author affirms sole authorship and responsibility for this research's conception, design, analysis, and interpretation.

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7.0 Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflicts of interest

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