

## Library Resource Utilization and Its Influence on the Reading Habits of Postgraduate Students at the Redeemed Christian Bible College

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### Abstract

*This study investigates the relationship between library resource utilization and the reading habits of postgraduate students at the Redeemed Christian Bible College (RCBC). As postgraduate education demands advanced levels of academic inquiry, the library remains a central hub for accessing scholarly information, supporting research, and fostering consistent reading behaviour. However, the extent to which students use available library resources both print and digital plays a significant role in shaping their reading patterns, frequency, and preferences. The study adopts a descriptive survey design to examine how access, adequacy, relevance, and user-friendliness of library resources influence students' motivation to read, their engagement with academic materials, and their overall reading culture. Data were collected from postgraduate students across various programmes in the institution using a structured questionnaire. The analysis focuses on identifying levels of resource utilization, the types of resources most frequently accessed, and the challenges that hinder optimum library engagement. Findings reveal that students who actively utilize library resources demonstrate stronger reading habits, engage more with academic literature, and show higher levels of research productivity. Conversely, limited use of the library often due to inadequate digital access, outdated materials, or insufficient awareness correlates with weaker reading consistency and reduced academic engagement.*

*The study concludes that enhancing library resource availability and accessibility is vital for strengthening reading habits among postgraduate students. It recommends improved digital resource provision, regular information literacy training, and increased awareness of available library services to promote sustained academic reading culture in theological institutions like RCBC.*

**Keywords:** Library resource utilization, reading habits, postgraduate student, digital resources. The Redeemed Christian Bible College.

## **Introduction**

Academic libraries remain central to postgraduate education, serving as intellectual hubs that support advanced learning, research productivity, and the development of strong reading habits. Scholars consistently affirm that the library is a crucial driver of academic success, particularly at the postgraduate level, where students require extensive engagement with scholarly resources (Aina, 2019; Khan & Ullah, 2024). In theological institutions such as the Redeemed Christian Bible College (RCBC), libraries play an even more significant role: they provide access to doctrinal texts, spiritual literature, and academic materials that contribute to both intellectual and spiritual growth (Nkondo, 2019). For postgraduate students, the ability to access relevant, up-to-date, and user-friendly library resources is foundational to sustaining meaningful reading practices. Reading habits, defined by the frequency, motivation, and depth with which students read academic materials, are shaped by the extent to which library resources are properly utilized. According to Issa et al. (2012), consistent interaction with library collections enhances students' research competence, critical thinking, and academic engagement. Likewise, Adegboye and Ogunyemi (2022) argue that effective library resource utilization directly influences students' reading culture by exposing them to quality information sources and encouraging sustained academic inquiry.

The shift toward digital resources has further amplified the library's role. Postgraduate students now rely on electronic databases, digital repositories, and online journals to supplement traditional print materials. When such digital resources are readily available and easy to navigate, students demonstrate stronger reading commitment and improved research output (Ezema & Ugwu, 2020). However, challenges such as limited ICT infrastructure, outdated print collections, low awareness of available electronic resources, and insufficient information literacy skills often hinder optimal library engagement in many higher institutions (Olorunfemi & Mostert, 2018). Given these dynamics, understanding how library resource utilization influences the reading habits of postgraduate students within RCBC is essential. This study explores the extent of resource usage, the factors influencing students' reading behaviours, and the library-related challenges that shape their academic reading culture. By examining these patterns, the study provides evidence-based insights that can guide improvements in library service delivery, digital resource investment, and information literacy initiatives in theological higher education environments.

### **Research Objectives**

1. To examine the extent to which postgraduate students at the Redeemed Christian Bible College utilize available library resources, including print and digital materials.
2. To assess the influence of library resource utilization on the reading habits of postgraduate students at the Redeemed Christian Bible College.
3. To identify the challenges that hinder effective utilization of library resources among postgraduate students and determine how these challenges affect their reading habits.

### **Theoretical framework**

This study is grounded in two theoretical perspectives: Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science and Information Foraging Theory. Ranganathan's laws, originally proposed in 1931, emphasize that library resources must be accessible, relevant, well-organized, and continuously updated to meet users' needs (Ranganathan, 1931). Contemporary scholars affirm that these principles remain critical for shaping effective library services in modern academic environments (Aina, 2019; Ekere & Omekwu, 2018). According to Olanlokun and Adekannbi (2020), when resources are easy to locate and systems save users' time, library utilization increases significantly. Similarly, Adegboye and Ogunyemi (2022) argue that postgraduate students depend heavily on the relevance and adequacy of library materials to support research and maintain strong reading habits. Thus, Ranganathan's theory offers a strong foundation for understanding how accessibility, relevance, and effective organization influence library resource utilization at the Redeemed Christian Bible College. Complementing this, Information Foraging Theory explains the reading habits of postgraduate students by describing how individuals seek information based on the balance between expected value and effort. Pirolli and Card (1999) argue that users gravitate toward "information patches" that appear rich and accessible, guided by "information scent," or cues such as titles, abstracts, and keywords. Research by Chi et al. (2001) and Kim (2020) shows that strong information scent enhances reading motivation and engagement, while high search effort reduces reading frequency. Fu and Pirolli (2017) also highlight that individuals prefer information environments that minimize cognitive cost and maximize informational reward, reinforcing the importance of organized, user-friendly library systems.

Taken together, these theories explain how library resource provision and the structure of information environments shape postgraduate students' reading behaviours. Ranganathan's laws clarify the conditions required for optimal library utilization, while Information Foraging Theory explains how these conditions influence reading motivation and engagement.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Library Resource Utilization in Academic Institutions**

Academic libraries play a central role in supporting postgraduate education by providing access to scholarly materials and research tools necessary for advanced learning (Aina, 2019). Studies affirm that postgraduate students depend heavily on print resources, electronic databases, digital repositories, and online journals for completing coursework, writing theses, and engaging in academic inquiry (Khan & Ullah, 2024; Olanlokun & Adekannbi, 2020). Effective utilization of library resources is strongly linked to accessibility, relevance, and adequacy of available materials. According to Ekere and Omekwu (2018), when resources are well-organized, current, and user-friendly, students are more likely to use them frequently. Digital resources have also become indispensable, especially for postgraduate students who require current and diverse scholarly materials. Ezema and Ugwu (2020) report that digital databases significantly enhance research productivity by offering wider access to peer-reviewed content. However, access challenges such as limited ICT infrastructure, slow internet connectivity, and lack of awareness can significantly hinder optimal use of digital resources in developing contexts (Nkanu & Okon, 2018). This aligns with the abstract's assertion that inadequate digital access and outdated materials reduce effective library engagement at RCBC.

#### **Reading Habits of Postgraduate Students**

Reading habits refer to the frequency, motivation, and depth with which students engage with academic materials. Scholars note that postgraduate students require strong reading habits to meet the intellectual demands of advanced research and academic writing (Issa et al., 2012; Egunjobi & Adebayo, 2021). Regular reading enhances critical thinking, supports scholarly productivity, and strengthens academic competence. Several studies have shown that reading habits are closely influenced by the availability of suitable reading materials and the learning environment in which students operate (Garuba & Okonkwo, 2020). When library collections are rich, current, and

relevant, students tend to engage more deeply with academic texts. Conversely, poor reading environments, outdated collections, and lack of digital access diminish students' reading frequency and overall academic engagement (Ogbuiyi & Okpe, 2013). This reflects the abstract's finding that limited library utilization correlates with weaker reading consistency among postgraduate students.

### **Relationship Between Library Resource Utilization and Reading Habits**

The connection between library resource utilization and reading habits has been widely documented. Adegboye and Ogunyemi (2022) argue that consistent use of library resources significantly improves students' reading culture by exposing them to high-quality information sources. Similarly, White (2016) notes that resource-rich information environments encourage sustained reading engagement and support research performance. Postgraduate students who frequently use library resources are more likely to develop strong academic reading habits because they have regular exposure to scholarly literature (Nwezeh & Shabi, 2011). This leads to increased research output, improved academic writing, and higher overall academic achievement. On the other hand, insufficient awareness of library services, outdated resources, and poor digital access negatively impact reading habits by limiting opportunities for information discovery (Olorunfemi & Mostert, 2018). This is consistent with the findings in the abstract, which indicate that inadequate resource utilization results in weaker reading engagement among RCBC students.

### **Challenges Affecting Library Use and Reading Habits**

Several empirical studies identify common barriers that hinder effective library resource utilization. These include limited digital infrastructure, inadequate funding for library development, outdated collections, and insufficient information literacy skills (Ngulube, 2016; Olanlokun & Adekannbi, 2020). In the Nigerian context, students often struggle with poor awareness of electronic resources and difficulty navigating digital platforms (Nkanu & Okon, 2018). Such challenges reduce motivation to read, limit exposure to scholarly works, and ultimately weaken academic engagement (Garuba & Okonkwo, 2020).

### **Strategies for Improving Library Utilization and Reading Culture**

Scholars advocate several strategies to improve postgraduate students' engagement with library resources. These include regular information literacy training to enhance students' ability to locate and evaluate scholarly materials (Nwalo, 2017), expansion of digital resource subscriptions (Khan

& Ullah, 2024), and increased publicity of available library services (Adegboye & Ogunyemi, 2022). Creating a supportive reading environment with updated collections and user-friendly search tools has also been shown to improve reading motivation (White, 2016).

### Methodology

The study employed a descriptive survey design to examine the library utilisation and its influence on the, reading habits of postgraduate students at the Redeemed Christian Bible College (RCBC). The entire postgraduate population was targeted to ensure comprehensive representation across academic levels and theological interests.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire with closed-ended Likert-scale items, focusing on students' information needs, reading habits, and library resource use. This approach ensured consistency, reliability, and ease of analysis. Collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations) to summarize trends and patterns, and regression analysis to assess the influence of library resource utilization on students' reading habits. This combination of methods provided both an overview of behaviours and insights into the relationships between key variables.

### Findings

**Table 4.1 Questionnaire Return Rate and use**

<b>The Redeemed Christian Bible College, Campuses</b>	<b>Questionnaire Distributed</b>	<b>Questionnaire Returned</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
RCBC Lagos campus	29	27	25%
RCBC Ogun campus	33	31	29%
RCBC Oyo campus	21	19	18%
RCBC Osun campus	17	15	14%
RCBC Ondo campus	14	13	12%

RCBC Ekiti campus	02	02	02%
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.1 shows the questionnaire distribution and return rate across six campuses of the Redeemed Christian Bible College (RCBC). Out of 116 questionnaires distributed, 107 were returned, giving a high overall response rate of 92%. The highest contributions came from Ogun campus (29%) and Lagos campus (25%), while the lowest came from Ekiti campus (2%) due to its small student population. Other campuses Oyo (18%), Osun (14%), and Ondo (12%) provided moderate response levels. Overall, the table demonstrates strong participation from postgraduate students across all campuses.

### Findings

**Table 4.2 The level of library resources utilization of postgraduate of the RCBC**

Books Are for Use	Strongly Disagree (SD) %	Disagree (D) %	Agree(A) %	Strongly Agree (SA) %	Mean
I feel that the primary purpose of books is to be actively used and referenced.	04 (3.8%)	07 (6.5%)	52 (48.6%)	44 (41.1%)	3.27
I am comfortable borrowing library books and utilizing them for my studies or projects.	34 (31.8%)	48 (44.8%)	14 (13.1%)	11 (10.3%)	2.02
Proper ventilation makes the library comfortable for me during long stays.	17 (16%)	18 (16.8%)	39 (36.4%)	33 (30.8%)	2.82
<b>Grand mean</b>					<b>2.70</b>
<b>Every Reader His or Her Books</b>					
I believe that every reader has specific books that are most relevant to their interests or needs.	12 (11.2%)	09 (8.4%)	49 (45.8%)	37 (34.6%)	3.04
I often find that the library has materials that specifically cater to my reading	20 (18.7%)	09 (8.4%)	43 (40.2%)	35 (32.7%)	2.87

preferences.					
I think libraries should enhance their collections to meet the diverse needs of all readers.	19 (17.7%)	15 (14%)	41 (38.3%)	32 (30%)	2.81
<b>Grandmean</b>					<b>8.72</b>
<b>Every Book Its Reader</b>					
I believe that every book has a unique audience that can benefit from its content.	23 (21.5%)	13 (12.1%)	37 (34.6%)	34 (31.8%)	2.77
I often help other readers find books that match their interests or information needs.	33 (30.8%)	39 (36.4%)	19 (17.8%)	16 (15%)	2.17
Different readers have unique interpretation of the same book	13 (12.1%)	16 (15%)	41 (38.3%)	37 (34.6%)	2.95
<b>Grandmean</b>					<b>7.89</b>
<b>Save the Time of Reader</b>					
I find that library resources help me save time when seeking information or materials.	18 (16.8%)	14 (13.1%)	34 (31.8%)	41 (38.3%)	2.92
I believe that organized library systems make it easier to find the resources I need quickly.	14 (13.1%)	19 (17.8%)	31 (28.9%)	43 (40.2%)	2.96
Online resources provided by the library effectively save my time compared to	21 (19.6%)	23 (21.6%)	27 (25.2%)	36 (33.6%)	2.73

traditional resources					
<b>Grandmean</b>					<b>8.61</b>
<b>The Library Is a Growing Organisms</b>					Mean
The library continuously adapts to meet the changing needs of its users.	22 (20.6%)	21 (19.6%)	29 (27.1%)	35 (32.7%)	2.72
The library regularly update its resources and technologies.	17 (15.9%)	06 (5.6%)	51 (47.7%)	33 (30.8%)	2.93
The library's growth positively impacts my academic performance	23 (21.5%)	16 (14.9%)	36 (33.6%)	32 (30%)	2.72
<b>Grand mean</b>					<b>8.37</b>

**Decision rule:** 1.00-1.44= very low, 1.45-2.44= low, 2.45-3.44= high and 3.45-4.00= very high

**Source: Field work 2024**

The table assesses postgraduate students' utilization of library resources across five dimensions. Overall, the findings indicate moderate utilization of library resources:

**Books Are for Use:** Students recognize that books are meant for active use (mean = 3.27), but comfort in borrowing is low (mean = 2.02), suggesting limited actual usage. **Every Reader His or Her Books:** Students moderately agree that the library caters to individual reading needs and should diversify collections (grand mean ≈ 2.91). **Every Book Its Reader:** Awareness exists that books have distinct audiences and interpretations (grand mean ≈ 2.63), but peer assistance in finding books is low. **Save the Time of Reader:** Library resources, organization, and online tools are moderately effective in saving time for academic work (grand mean ≈ 2.87). **The Library is a Growing Organism:** Students perceive the library as evolving and positively impacting academic performance, though adaptability and updates are only moderate (grand mean ≈ 2.79).

**Overall Interpretation:** Postgraduate students value library resources and recognize their importance, but actual utilization, borrowing behavior, and online resource efficiency are moderate, indicating areas for improvement in access, engagement, and user support.

**Table 4.4 The level of reading habits of postgraduates' students RCBC in southwest Nigeria**

<b>Information Scent</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree (SD) %</b>	<b>Disagree (D) %</b>	<b>Agree (A) %</b>	<b>Strongly Agree(SA) %</b>	<b>Mean</b>
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I rely on visual cues, such as book covers or headings, to guide my reading choices.	24 (22.4%)	19 (17.8%)	39 (36.4%)	25 (23.4%)	2.61
I can usually identify whether a text will be useful to me within a few paragraphs.	34 (31.8%)	39 (36.4%)	19 (17.8%)	15 (14%)	2.14
I often follow links or references within a text to find additional information related to my reading.	24 (22.4%)	16 (15%)	39 (36.4%)	28 (26.2%)	2.66
<b>Grand Mean Information Diet</b>					<b>7.41 Mean</b>
I consciously seek out a variety of genres and topics in my reading materials.	12 (11.2%)	13 (12.2%)	43 (40.2%)	39 (36.4%)	3.02
I prioritize reading materials that challenge my current knowledge and perspectives.	19 (17.8%)	16 (14.9%)	38 (35.5%)	34 (31.8%)	2.81
A balanced reading diet (various genres and authors) enhances an overall understanding of the word.	15 (14%)	18 (16.8%)	32 (30%)	42 (39.2%)	3.94
<b>Grandmean Foraging Cost</b>					<b>9.77 Mean</b>
I find it time-consuming to search for new reading materials that interest me.	35 (32.7%)	28 (26.1%)	22 (20.6%)	22 (20.6%)	2.29
I often weigh the effort of finding a new book against my desire to read it.	37 (34.6%)	29 (27%)	19 (17.8%)	22 (20.6%)	2.24
The accessibility of	07	09	49	42	3.18

reading materials (e.g., digital formats, libraries) significantly affects my reading choices.	(6.5%)	(8.4%)	(45.8%)	(39.3%)	
<b>Grandmean</b>					<b>7.71</b>
<b>Adaptive Strategies</b>					
I adapt my reading habits based on my current interests and informational needs.	15 (14%)	11 (10.3%)	42 (39.3%)	39 (36.4%)	3.08
When faced with challenging texts, I seek summaries or discussions to aid my understanding.	19 (17.8%)	17 (15.9%)	38 (35.5%)	33 (30.8%)	3.79
use various formats (e.g., audiobooks, articles, e-books) to enhance my reading experience based on my context and availability.	24 (22.4%)	23 (21.5%)	29 (27.1%)	31 (29%)	2.63
<b>Grandmean</b>					<b>9.50</b>

**Decision rule:** 1.00-1.44= very low, 1.45-2.44= low, 2.45-3.44= high and 3.45-4.00= very high

**Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2024.**

The table assesses postgraduate students' reading habits across four dimensions: Information Scent, Information Diet, Foraging Cost, and Adaptive Strategies. Overall, the findings indicate moderately high reading habits., Information Scent: Students moderately use visual cues and references to guide their reading (grand mean = 7.41), but quickly identifying useful texts is low (mean = 2.14)., Information Diet: Students actively maintain a diverse and challenging reading diet, with balanced reading considered very important (grand mean = 9.77, item mean up to 3.94)., Foraging Cost: Accessibility to reading materials positively influences choices (mean = 3.18), but searching for new materials is perceived as time-consuming (means = 2.29 and 2.24); overall grand mean = 7.71., Adaptive Strategies: Students adapt reading habits to their interests and needs, especially using summaries for difficult texts (mean = 3.79), though use of multiple formats is moderate (mean = 2.63); grand mean = 9.50.

Overall, Postgraduates demonstrate strong engagement with reading materials, maintain diverse and adaptive reading habits, but face challenges in efficiently selecting and accessing resources.

### **Conclusion**

The study recorded a high response rate of 92%, showing strong involvement from postgraduate students across the six RCBC campuses, with Ogun and Lagos providing the largest share of participants. Findings indicate that students value the library and rely on it for access to books and organized information systems, but overall library utilization remains moderate. This is mainly due to low comfort with borrowing books, limited peer support in finding resources, and only moderately effective online services. Although some individual information needs are met, students expressed the need for greater resource diversification, improved digital access, and more flexible borrowing policies. In terms of reading habits, postgraduate students show strong, diverse, and adaptable reading behaviours, using multiple strategies to understand complex materials and maintain a consistent reading routine. However, challenges persist in quickly identifying relevant texts and managing the time required to locate new materials.

Overall, the study concludes that while reading habits among students are strong, gaps in library access, borrowing processes, and online resource effectiveness reduce their ability to fully utilize available resources. Improving library infrastructure and user-support systems would greatly enhance both library use and academic reading performance.

### **Recommendations**

#### **1. Improve Borrowing Policies and Book Accessibility**

Simplify borrowing procedures, Extend loan periods for postgraduate students., Provide more copies of high-demand books.

#### **2. Expand and Diversify Library Collections**

Increase subject-specific materials, Conduct regular user-needs assessments, Strengthen e-book and digital journal collections.

#### **3. Enhance Online Resource Efficiency**

Improve access to digital databases and online catalogs, Ensure reliable internet connectivity in the library, Offer training on digital tools and academic search engines.

#### **4. Strengthen Information Literacy and Research Skills Training**

Organize regular workshops on effective information use, Integrate information literacy into postgraduate coursework.

#### **5. Improve the Library Environment and Support Systems**

Enhance seating, lighting, ventilation, and study areas, Create peer-support or reader-advisory systems.

#### **6. Reduce Foraging Cost Through Better Resource Organization**

Ensure proper shelving and cataloguing of materials, Provide reading guides, new arrival lists, and bibliographies.

#### **7. Encourage Multiformat Reading Practices**

Promote audiobooks, e-books, and alternative reading formats, Provide orientation on digital reading tools.

#### **8. Strengthen the Library's Growth Strategy**

Continuously update library resources, technologies, and services.

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