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ASSESSMENT OF LIBRARY CATALOGUE USE BY UNDERGRADUATES IN LADOKE AKINTOLA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, OGBOMOSO OYO STATE NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This underutilisation of library catalogue limits access to academic materials and also reduces the efficiency of library operations and negatively affects students' academic performance. This study examined the use of the library catalogue by undergraduate students of Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria. A descriptive survey design was adopted with structured questionnaires administered to a representative sample of undergraduates across faculties. The study investigated the level of awareness, frequency of use, purpose of catalogue use, search strategies adopted, and barriers encountered in using both traditional and online public access catalogues (OPAC). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentages, and mean scores). Findings indicated varied levels of catalogue usage, with a notable preference for shelf browsing and challenges in effective information retrieval ($\bar{x} = 1.65$, $SD = 0.990$). Major constraints included lack of adequate library orientation, lack of awareness of library catalogue and no internet access, waste of time and lack of interest. The study concludes that while students recognize the importance of catalogue use in academic work, usage effectiveness is hampered by skill gaps. Recommendations focus on structured user education programmes and improved ICT support to enhance catalogue utilization and continuous awareness campaign among undergraduates.

Keywords: Assessment, Library Catalogue, Undergraduates LAUTECH; Library Users; Information Retrieval.

1 INTRODUCTION

The experiences of a large number of students get admitted into undergraduate programs in Nigeria universities each year will vary depending on their educational background and interest. Most of the people entering academic institutions at the undergraduate level are quite young with many being fresh out of secondary schools. Therefore,

observations of these young people bring the world sophistication in mind and amazement of the level of their self-confidence; many grew up with computers in the home and school, surfing the internet and playing computer games. Undergraduates have interests that cover a multitude of subjects as well as wide spectrum of personal expectations and goals to be realised, but one thing they will have in common is the need to use the university library for research and learning. But do they have that in common, or are many able to bypass such an important part of the learning in institution? How often do undergraduates use the library? Do they know their way round it? Do they know how to use the library catalogue? Unfortunately, most undergraduates have no contact with libraries before arriving at the university. A majority of students go directly to the shelves to locate and retrieve books without using the library catalogues. A lot of energy is therefore dissipated in accessing library materials with the attendant waste of time. However, the long age role of university, Polytechnic and colleges of education libraries has been to support teaching and learning. These university libraries derived their mission from that of the parent institution and their focus was on the undergraduate's education where teaching and learning is prioritised. Academic libraries provide books and other funded materials and later electronic materials, space for students to study, libraries also provide services, such as compiling bibliographies, references services, and information literacy orientation for students and academic staff to help them find the materials they needed (Bbatunde, 2011)

The library catalogue is the primary gateway through which users discover and access a library's organised holdings. From traditional card catalogues to modern Web-OPACs and discovery layers, catalogues remain central to information discovery, resource location, and effective academic research (Ebiwolate, 2010). However, the mere presence of computerized catalogues does not guarantee effective use: awareness, ICT/information-search skills, system usability, and reliable network access strongly influence whether undergraduates actually use catalogues for academic tasks (Shokane & Bopape, 2023). Several recent studies report persistent gaps in awareness and optimal OPAC use among undergraduates students often underuse catalogue features, prefer shelf browsing or staff help, or are constrained by poor connectivity and limited search skills (Agboola, 2024; Awoyale et al., 2024; Doliente et al., 2023). Understanding how undergraduates use (or fail to use) the catalogue is therefore essential for designing effective user-education programmes, improving catalogue

Noteworthy, the library catalogue is a list of books, maps, sound recordings or materials in other medium that represents a collection arranged alphabetically by authors, titles, number or subjects. The main purpose is to record, describe, and index the holding of a collection. Catalogue is very vital tool in the library whenever its collection is growing too large. Its function is to remember the items available in a library. In contrast with a large library, a small or private will have less need for a formal catalogue. Its collection can be accessed through author, title. However, when the collection becomes a bit large, an informal arrangement for grouping those books and other information materials by subject categories may provide access to them. When a library becomes too large for simple approach, formal records are necessary. Any information represented in a record is called entry. In a library, each entry in the catalogue is the representation of a bibliographic record at a particular point in the catalogue. A bibliographic record is a transcription of the complete cataloguing information for any item and the purpose of a bibliographic record is to provide all the information to describe an item both physically and intellectually in order to distinguish it from other items and to provide its location in the collection.

Thus, library catalogue is a vital bibliographic tool that provides access to a library's collection, allowing users to identify, locate, and retrieve needed materials efficiently (Agyen-Gyasi, 2018). Traditionally, library catalogues existed in manual card formats, but the evolution of information and communication technology (ICT) has transformed cataloguing systems into Online Public Access Catalogues (OPACs) and web-based discovery platforms. These systems are designed to enhance accessibility, reduce users' search time, and increase the visibility and usability of library resources (Ezeani & Igwesi, 2012).

For undergraduate students, the ability to use the library catalogue effectively is a crucial component of information literacy and academic success. Catalogues serve as an entry point to library resources books, journals, theses, and electronic databases enabling students to conduct research and complete coursework (Obinyan, Akande, & Adegun, 2011). However, despite the availability of OPACs in many academic libraries, studies have revealed that many undergraduates exhibit low levels of awareness, poor search skills, and limited use of catalogues in locating information resources (Ebiwolate, 2010; Igbinoia & Idiodi, 2020).

Effective catalogue use depends on factors such as user education, system usability, accessibility, and students' prior experience with information retrieval tools (Ojedokun, 2014). When these factors are lacking, students tend to rely on browsing shelves or seeking assistance from library staff rather than independently searching the catalogue (Adeleke & Olorunsola, 2010). Therefore, assessing the use of the library catalogue by undergraduates is necessary to identify patterns of use, challenges faced, and strategies that can enhance students' information-seeking competencies and promote effective use of library resources.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The situation in Nigerian university library that most of undergraduates do not know how to access library resources is an issue of particular concerns. Despite the growing availability of computerised library catalogues and online access systems, many undergraduate students are either unaware of these tools or unable to use them effectively (Igbinovia & Idiodi, 2020). Observations and previous research have indicated that students often experience difficulties with search techniques, keyword selection, and navigation of catalogue interfaces (Ojedokun, 2014). Some students bypass the catalogue altogether and rely on trial-and-error browsing or librarian assistance, which undermines the purpose of automated catalogues designed to provide independent access to resources. This underutilisation do not only limits access to academic materials but also reduces the efficiency of library operations and negatively affects students' academic performance. Furthermore, inadequate library orientation and insufficient training in catalogue use contribute to the problem (Agyen-Gyasi, 2018). Though factually all university libraries offers a "use of library" as a course to all undergraduate students, still students find it difficult to use the library effectively. Since students are still experiencing difficulties in using library catalogues, the researchers need to investigate in order to help ameliorate the situation. Based on the above assertion, this study burn out to assess the use of library catalogue by undergraduates in Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho Oyo State Nigeria.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is assessment of library catalogue use by undergraduates in Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho Oyo State Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

- Determine the level of awareness of library catalogues among undergraduate in Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho Oyo State Nigeria;
- Examine the frequency of catalogue use by undergraduates;
- Find out purpose of catalogue use by undergraduates;
- Assess what undergraduates use to search for information and
- Identify the challenges faced by students in using the library catalogue.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Awareness refers to the degree of knowledge, understanding, and recognition individuals have about particular issues, services, system or phenomenon. It also reflects how much people know, understand and perceive something that exists or happens around them, Awareness of the library catalogue the card catalogue, more recently the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) and discovery systems is commonly identified as a prerequisite for effective use of library collections and overall library resource utilisation by undergraduates (Katabalwa, 2020; Nna-Etuk, 2021). The range of awareness many students know that a catalogue exists, far fewer understand advanced search functions or routinely use the catalogue as a first step in information seeking (Shokane & Bopape, 2023; Katabalwa, 2020). Recent surveys report moderately high awareness (i.e., knowing that an OPAC/catalogue exists) but lower functional awareness (i.e., understanding search features, filters, subject headings, and retrieval functionalities). For example, studies from Nigerian universities found that a majority of undergraduates were aware of OPACs in their libraries but actual usage rates lagged behind awareness often due to limited skills or insufficient promotion by library staff (Nna-Etuk, 2021; SEAH, 2024). Similarly, Shokane and Bopape (2023) reported that students were aware of OPAC features but underutilised advanced search and retrieval functionalities. These empirical patterns suggest that awareness and meaningful use are distinct constructs: presence of awareness does not guarantee effective catalogue use.

Limited awareness or superficial familiarity with the catalogue has measurable consequences: underutilisation of physical and electronic collections, redundant resource acquisition by students, and missed opportunities for developing deeper research skills (Nna-Etuk, 2021; Odunola, 2024). Knowledge and skill in OPAC use explain a non-trivial share of variance in overall library resource utilisation. The practical implication is that improving catalogue literacy is a cost-effective way to increase resource use and academic outcomes.

Frequently, understanding how often undergraduates use the library catalogue (card catalogue, OPAC, or modern) is essential because frequency of use is closely tied to students' ability to locate relevant resources, their research behavior, and the overall return on investment for library discovery systems (Scoulas, 2020). Frequencies from regular weekly use by some cohorts to little or no catalogue use by many students who instead rely on search engines, shelves browsing, or peers. Undergraduates who use the OPAC do so on a weekly basis (for assignment work, locating textbooks, or checking availability). According to Atanda and Ekeh (2021) sizeable percentage of students use the catalogue only occasionally (monthly or less) or not at all often because they prefer Google, rely on faculty reading lists, or find the catalogue interface unfamiliar. Places and modes of access affect frequency, whereas if students can access the catalogue (library terminals, campus Wi-Fi, home internet, mobile devices) influences how often they use it (Odunola, 2024). Also, when remote/mobile OPAC access is available, usage frequency increases slightly though not enough to match the

frequency of general web searches. Infrequent catalogue usage has documented consequences: underutilization of library collections (especially print collections), longer time-to-find relevant materials, reduced discovery of subject-specialist resources, and missed opportunities for students to learn structured searching and subject headings. Hence, the increasing frequency is a pragmatic route to improving research outcomes and collection usage metrics (Galiyu et al, 2024)

Purposely, the library catalogue (card catalogue, OPAC, and modern discovery) remains a core discovery tool in academic libraries. Understanding why undergraduates use the catalogue the purposes or tasks for which students consult it helps libraries align services, design orientation and instruction, and improve discovery systems to meet student needs (Nwobu, 2024; Katabalwa, 2020). Across institutional surveys, the leading reason students consult the OPAC is to find whether a particular title or edition is held and how many copies are available (Katabalwa, 2020; BoldScholar institutional study, 2024). This is especially common when students need set texts for class or to verify availability before visiting the shelves. Students use the catalogue to obtain call numbers and location information so they can physically retrieve items; several studies report this as a core, practical purpose of catalogue searching. Libraries emphasise accurate location metadata and clear signage because catalogue-to-shelf retrieval remains a primary student workflow. Students frequently consult the catalogue when instructors provide reading lists or reserve lists; finding required readings and checking reserve status is a major catalogue purpose reported in many case studies. This purpose tends to spike at assignment and examination periods (Galiyu et al. 2024). Beyond locating known items, undergraduates use subject or keyword searches in the catalogue to discover books, theses, and multimedia relevant to project work. However, several studies note a gap: while students attempt topical searches, they often abandon catalogue subject-search features in favor of web (Lasig, 2024).

Research on undergraduate information-seeking consistently shows that students use a mix of tools and channels for academic information retrieval: general web search engines (especially Google), Google Scholar, library discovery systems (library search / OPAC / discovery layers), subject and publisher databases, social media, course reading lists, and peers/instructors (Scoulas, 2020; Ozor, 2022). Students' choice of tools is shaped by perceived convenience, habit, immediacy of need (assignment deadlines), and previous instruction in database/catalogue use (Scoulas, 2020). Studies identify general web search engines, Google as the default starting point for many undergraduates because of speed, usability, and familiarity. Students often use Google for quick fact-finding, locating accessible PDFs, and identifying keywords or authors before moving to scholarly sources (library research guides (Shokane, 2023).

However, reliance on Google can lead to bypassing subscription databases and the library's curated collections. Google Scholar sits between general Google and specialised databases: students use it for finding scholarly articles and for quick citation discovery (library how-to guides (Igere, 2023). It's especially popular when students want full text quickly or to harvest citations for a bibliography, though it provides a different index coverage and ranking logic than subject databases (Makinde, 2025). Where discovery layers are modern and integrated (single-search boxes, e-resource linking), students use library search tools to find books, e-books, e-journal articles, and course reserves (Shokane, 2023). However, catalogues/OPACs remain more commonly used for locating known items (call numbers) than for exploratory literature searches. Discipline-specific databases (e.g., PubMed, JSTOR, IEEE Xplore, ERIC) are used primarily by students in upper years or research projects. Therefore, many undergraduates have limited confidence using these databases unless given targeted instruction; consequently, database use increases with information-literacy training and year of study (Ozor, 2022; Amiri, 2022). A large share of catalogue and library-search activity is driven by reading lists and direct links from learning-management systems (LMS). When instructors provide specific citations or direct links, students are more likely to access the library or its discovery tools rather than general web searches (Igere, (2023). Informal channels WhatsApp groups, Telegram, Facebook pages, and classmates are frequent sources of quick document sharing (PDFs, summaries) and recommendations; in some contexts, these channels compete with formal library channels for discovery and access.

The related challenges that reduce undergraduate are effective use of the catalogue (OPAC/Web OPAC). Challenges include lack of awareness, poor user interface/usability, limited information literacy, infrastructural barriers, and competition from search engines (Agboola, 2024). Many students know the library exists, detailed awareness of OPAC features (advanced search, filters, subject headings, e-resource linking) is low unless actively promoted by the library (Agboola, 2024; Shokane, 2023). Low awareness constrains the catalogue to simple known-item tasks. Older OPACs with unpleasant interfaces, unfamiliar vocabulary (MARC fields, subject headings), and poor linking to e-resources discourage students used to Google's simple interface. Usability issues cause abandonment of catalog searches in favor of web search or direct PDF-sharing channels.

Undergraduates often lack the technical skills to construct effective subject or advanced searches (Boolean operators, truncation, fielded searching). This skill gap reduces catalogue effectiveness for discovery beyond known-item searching (Ozor, 2022; Makinde, 2025). Training improves outcomes but is unevenly delivered. When OPAC access is restricted to a few library terminals, or when campus Wi-Fi is slow and unreliable, students cannot experiment with or adopt catalogue search as a habitual strategy. Studies repeatedly link access problems to lower catalogue use (Agboola,

2024; institutional reports). Mobile-unfriendly catalogues likewise reduce uptake among students who primarily use smartphones. Students expect discovery systems to take them directly to full text. Where cataloguing records do not link to e-books, e-journals, or subscriptions, the catalogue is perceived as an inventory only useful for call numbers and availability but not for accessing content pushing students back to Google or Google Scholar (Shokane, 2023). Tight academic schedules and looming deadlines push students toward the fastest perceived route to materials (often Google or peer-shared PDFs), reducing their willingness to learn more complex catalogue features. Studies from African universities highlight time pressure as a practical barrier to catalogue exploration.

3 RESEARCH METHOD

The study adopted quantitative research method by the descriptive survey design to gather responses of the students in the study area. The population of the study was entire registered undergraduate students (3,074) of Olusegun Oke Library, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH), Ogbomoso, students that are not registered users were excluded from the study. Therefore, as at November 2024/2025 academic session there are 3,074 registered undergraduates' library users at Olusegun Oke Library, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH), Ogbomoso. Since the population of the study was too large for the researchers to cover, a purposive sampling technique was adopted to select 307 registered undergraduates' library users which were (10%). The above position that a sample of (10%) is representative of a population was supported by Afolabi (2024). Therefore, the sample size from Olusegun Oke Library, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH), Ogbomoso was 307 (10%) registered undergraduates library users. Questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection and arranged into six major sections A to F, while section A contained demographics information of the respondents, the other sections tailored towards providing answers to the objectives of this study. Before administering the questionnaire, respondents were asked to give their consent to participate in the study in conformity with ethical standards. The questionnaire was administered to the respondents after obtaining their consents. The Statistical Package for Service Solution SPSS (IBM version). 20.0 were used for data analysis and storage, while the results were presented in tabular form, pie chart and histogram.

4 PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Three hundred and seven (307) copies of questionnaire administer to the participants of the study were dully returned and find useful for data analysis the result were presented in the below

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographic		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	139	45.3
	Female	168	54.7
Age bracket	18 years and below	-	-
	19 – 21 years	155	50.5
	22 – 24 years	152	49.5
	25 years and above	-	-
Level of study	200 level	49	16.0
	300 level	63	20.5
	400 level	97	31.6
	500 level	98	31.9
Total		307	100

Source: Authors' work, 2026.

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents. 54.7% are females while 45.3% are males. Also, 50.5% are between 19-21 years while 49.5% are between 22-24 years. Majority of them are in 500 levels as accounted for by 31.9%. This was closely followed by the respondents in 400 levels (31.6%). The respondents in 300 levels and 200 levels accounted for 20.5% and 16.0% respectively.

4.1 Research Q1: What is your level of awareness of library catalogue in Olusegun Oke library?

Table 2: Awareness of Library Catalogues among Undergraduate

S/N	Awareness of library catalogue	HAF/%	MA F/%	A F/%	NA F/%	$\bar{x}$	SD
1	Are you aware that library catalogues exists in Olusegun Oke library.	131(42.7)	50(16.3)	57(16)	69(22.5)	2.95	1.29
2	Are you aware that Olusegun Oke library provides card catalogues for students use?	29(9.4)	56(18.2)	29(9.4)	193(62.9)	1.74	1.07
3	Are you aware that Olusegun Oke library provides access to (OPAC) Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) for student use	57(18.6)	28/(9.1)	-	222(72.3)	1.74	1.23
4	Do you aware that card catalogue is a tool to locate books on the shelves in the library.	56(18.2)	57(18.6)	29(9.4)	165(53.7)	2.01	1.28
5	Are you aware that (OPAC) is use for advanced search functions?	57(18.6)	28(9.1)	57(18.6)	165(53.7)	1.93	1.172
6	Do you aware that card catalogue is for information retrieval.	28(9.1)	113(36.8)	57(18.6)	109(35.5)	2.20	1.027

Source: Authors' work, 2026.

The awareness of library catalogues among undergraduate students shown in table 2. Majority of the students are highly aware (42. %) that library catalogues exists in Olusegun Oke library. This also has the highest level of awareness among the undergraduate students ($\bar{x}$ = 2.95, SD = 1.295). Majority of the undergraduate students also demonstrated a level of awareness that card catalogue is for information retrieval ($\bar{x}$ = 2.20, SD = 1.026). Majority of the undergraduate students demonstrated no awareness on other library information catalogues. This includes: card catalogue is a tool to locate books on the shelves in the library ($\bar{x}$ = 2.01, SD = 1.207), the use of OPAC for advanced search functions ($\bar{x}$ = 1.93, SD = 1.171), awareness that Olusegun Oke library provides access to OPAC for student use ($\bar{x}$ = 1.74, SD = 1.222) and awareness that Olusegun Oke library provides card catalogues for students' use ($\bar{x}$ = 1.74, SD = 1.061).

4.2 Research Q2: How often do you use catalogues in Olusegun Oke library?

Table 3: Frequency of Catalogue Use by Undergraduates

S/N	Frequency use of catalogue	Very Often F/%	Often F/%	Rarely F/%	Never F/%	$\bar{x}$	SD
1	Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC)	-	28(9.1)	86(28.0)	193(62.9)	1.46	0.66
2	Card Catalogue	29(9.4)	28(9.1)	57(18.6)	193(62.9)	1.65	0.99

Source: Authors' work, 2026.

The frequency of catalogues use by undergraduates is given in table 3. Majority of the students have never used OPAC ($\bar{x}$ = 1.46, SD = 0.658) nor used card catalogue ($\bar{x}$ = 1.65, SD = 0.990). This was accounted for by 62.9% in both cases.

4.3 Research Q3: what are purposes of use of catalogues in Olusegun Oke library?

Table 4: Purpose of Catalogue use by undergraduates

S/N	Purpose of using catalogue	SA F/%	A F/%	D F/%	SD F/%	$\bar{x}$	SD
1	Check availability of books	85(27.7)	193(62.9)	29(9.4)	-	3.18	0.59
2	Get call number and location on shelves	85/27.7	194/63.2	28(9.1)	-	3.19	0.58
3	Access e-books and e-journals	170(55.4)	97(31.6)	40(13.0)	-	3.42	0.73
4	Course readings	152/49.5	155(50.5)	-	-	3.50	0.52

5	Locate theses/dissertations	85(27.7)	182(59.3)	40(13.0)	-	3.15	0.63
6	Get bibliographic information/citation	170(55.4)	97(31.6)	40(13.0)	-	3.42	0.73

Source: Authors' work, 2026.

The purpose of catalogue use by undergraduates is shown in table 4. From the highest to the lowest, the purposes are course readings ($\bar{x}$ = 3.50, SD = 0.501), access e-books and e-journals ($\bar{x}$ = 3.42, SD = 0.712) and get bibliographic information/citation ($\bar{x}$ = 3.42, SD = 0.712). Others include get call number and location on shelves ($\bar{x}$ = 3.19, SD = 0.579), check availability of books ($\bar{x}$ = 3.18, SD = 0.582) and locate theses/dissertations ($\bar{x}$ = 3.15, SD = 0.622).

4.4 Research Q4: How do you search for information in Olusegun Oke library?

Table 5: Information Search

S/N	Search for information	SA F/%	A F/%	D F/%	SD F/%	$\bar{x}$	SD
1	Through library staff	142(46.3)	165(53.7)	-	-	3.46	0.49
2	Card catalogue	29(9.4)	222(72.3)	28(9.1)	28(9.1)	2.82	0.73
3	Through Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC)	-	183(59.6)	28(9.1)	96(31.3)	2.82	0.92
4	Through friends	28(9.1)	97(31.6)	126(41.0)	56(8.2)	2.32	0.87
5	Through Google search	57(18.6)	96(1.3)	126(41.0)	28(9.1)	2.59	0.89
6	Through Artificial Intelligence (AI)	85(27.7)	28(9.1)	166(54.1)	28(9.1)	2.55	0.99

Source: Authors' work, 2026.

The information search is given in table 5. Their search for information is majorly through library staff ($\bar{x}$ = 3.46, SD = 0.499). Others include card catalogue ($\bar{x}$ = 2.82, SD = 0.721), through OPAC ($\bar{x}$ = 2.82, SD = 0.912), through Google search ($\bar{x}$ = 2.59, SD = 0.893), through Artificial Intelligence (AI) ($\bar{x}$ = 3.15, SD = 0.622) and through friends ($\bar{x}$ = 2.32, SD = 0.875).

4.5 Research Q5: What are the challenges faced in using library catalogue in Olusegun Oke library?

Table 6: Challenges faced by students in using the library catalogue

S/N	Challenges	SA F/%	A F/%	D F/%	SD F/%	$\bar{x}$	SD
1	Lack of awareness of library catalogue	154(50.2)	68(22.1)	29(9.4)	56(18.2)	3.04	1.15
2	Inadequate orientation about library catalogues	153(49.8)	97(31.6)	57(18.6)	-	3.31	0.77
3	Unfriendly library staff	-	29(9.4)	209(68.1)	69(22.5)	1.87	0.56
4	No internet access	143(46.6)	68(22.1)	56(18.2)	40(13.0)	3.02	1.09
5	Waste of time	29(9.4)	68(22.1)	181(59.0)	29(9.4)	2.32	0.78
6	Lack of interest.	29(9.4)	68(22.1)	181(59.0)	29(9.4)	2.32	0.78
7	I don't know how to use it.	57(18.6)	40(3.0)	68(22.1)	142(46.3)	2.04	1.18

Source: Authors' work, 2026.

Table 6 revealed challenges faced by undergraduates in using library catalogue is lack of adequate library orientation ($\bar{x}$ = 3.31, SD = 0.77) lack of awareness of library catalogue ($\bar{x}$ = 3.04, SD 1.15) and no internet access ($\bar{x}$ = 3.02; 1.09) waste of time and lack of interest ($\bar{x}$ = 2.32; 0.78) respectively.

5 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Based on the level of awareness, the findings revealed that the majority of the Ladoke Akintola University of technology students is highly aware but they lack skill in catalogue search techniques, especially advanced search and subject browsing. This support the Ozor, (2022) suggesting that undergraduates possess basic ICT skills but lack the depth needed for efficient catalogue navigation.

Moreover, the positive relationship between knowledge of OPAC and overall library resource utilization has been observed that the card catalogue is not properly used. This supports the Scoulas, (2020) finding that students with prior exposure to user education or library orientation exhibited better engagement with catalogue systems.

Another important finding relates to purpose of use toward the catalogue. Like in other contexts, some students view catalogue use as time-consuming or technically and use it to access e-books and e-journals and get bibliographic information/citation finding required readings and checking reserve status is a major catalogue purpose reported in many case studies. This purpose tends to spike at assignment and examination periods as supported by (Galiyuet al.2024).

The challenges revealed by the study is lack of adequate library orientation, lack of awareness of library catalogue, and no internet access, waste of time and lack of interest. This in agreement with Agboola, (2024) challenges include lack of awareness, poor user interface/usability, limited information literacy, infrastructural barriers, and detailed awareness of OPAC features.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends the followings:

- Introduce compulsory library orientation sessions early in the undergraduate programme that emphasize catalogue navigation, search strategies (basic and advanced), and practical exercises using both OPAC and traditional catalogue tools.
- Integrate ICT training specifically focused on library information retrieval systems, including OPAC search functions, Boolean logic, and subject indexing to equip students with competencies needed for efficient information seeking.
- The library should ensure that the OPAC system is user-friendly, regularly updated, and supported by on-site help desks or quick guides that assist students during peak periods of academic work.
- Regular sensitization through posters, digital screens, workshops, and faculty announcements to maintain awareness of catalogue features and the benefits of its use for academic success.
- Establish regular feedback systems (e.g., suggestion boxes, online forms) where learners can report challenges encountered in catalogue use so that continuous improvements may be informed by user experience.

6 CONCLUSION

Undergraduates' engagement with the library catalogue at LAUTECH reveals a critical gap between catalogue availability and effective usage. While students acknowledge the importance of catalogue systems, actual usage patterns are influenced by awareness levels, search skills, and perceptions of usability. Without targeted interventions to improve information literacy and catalogue competency, the catalogue will remain underutilized relative to its potential in supporting academic research and learning. Enhancing user education, improving ICT support, and promoting positive attitudes towards catalogue use will contribute to a more effective library environment that better serves student needs. All together, the study concludes that despite the presence of a library catalogue at LAUTECH, effective use is constrained by a mix of informational, technical, and educational barriers. Improving catalogue use therefore requires targeted interventions on both the system and user skill fronts.

STATEMENTS ON COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding this manuscript.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study

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