



## Perceived Impact of Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) on Effective Retrieval of Information Resources by Postgraduate Students in Benue State University, Makurdi

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### Abstract

*The study investigated the perceived impact of OPAC on effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was made up of 38 postgraduate students who are registered with Benue State University Library. The instrument for data collection was self-structured questionnaire titled "Perceived Impact of OPAC on Information Retrieval Questionnaire" (PIOPACIRQ) which was validated by experts and a reliability coefficient of 0.947 was obtained. Data was collected and analyzed using frequent count and means. Findings of the study revealed that, there is a high perceived impact of OPAC on effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi. Finding also revealed that, postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi utilize OPAC for various purposes such as to know the available resources in the university library, to locate books by author, title and subject, assists in obtaining books from the university library, among others. Finding also revealed the search strategies used by postgraduate students for effective retrieval of information resources in Benue State University Makurdi to include by author, title, subject and edition. The study further revealed the challenges hindering the use of OPAC for effective retrieval of information resources in Benue State University, Makurdi to include: lack of skilled library professionals to assists students, lack of orientation from library staff, lack of time to retrieve the vast information, slow internet connectivity speed, among others.*

### Introduction

University libraries in Nigeria and Benue State in particular were traditionally known to provide access to information resources through the traditional means of information retrieval like the card catalogue (or book catalogue) as the primary information locating devices. According to Obim (2017) the manual way of accessing information materials through the use of card catalogue is inadequate for effective and efficient library and information service delivery. According to the author, the reason for this is as a result of lack of knowledge of use of the card catalogue, improper filing of the cards, as well as too much time spent in search for a specific piece of information which leads to frustration among the library users since majority are unfamiliar with ways of accessing information in the library.

Considering the level of advancement in information service delivery today, especially with the incorporation of Information and Communication Technology (ICTs), the use of catalogue cards as a retrieval tool for effective search and retrieval of information resources for academic and research activities is ineffective. Hence, university libraries in Nigeria and across the world automate their manual catalogue to facilitate effective retrieval and use of information resources, and services in the library. This has led to the introduction of OPAC by some universities in Nigeria and Benue State is not an exception to this development.

With the advancement of ICT and subsequent development of Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), the traditional concept of access to information resources which many scholars identified to be prone to numerous challenges has changed. OPAC has brought a changing relationship between libraries and their information seekers in the changing ICT world (Ogbole & Morayo, 2017).

Concurring to Sridhar cited by Gana et al. (2019), the history of OPAC dates back to 1970s when the primary era of OPAC was created. Concurring to the creators, this demonstrate imitated the card catalogue approach and was characterized by different draw backs such as need of specialist control over title and subject headings, need of sorts of materials, parcel of books and data almost utility and accessible of books. From the source, the moment era of OPAC was created within the 2000s with made strides highlights such as inaccessible get to, assortments of look highlights, show and client interface, e-mail conveyance, property of other libraries, current mindfulness administrations, circulation data as well as requesting and preparing of records. The library OPAC as an mechanized catalogue framework was created as a apparatus to find those data assets that had been obtained and put away by the library itself (Ogbole & Morayo, 2017).

The Online Open Get to Catalogue (OPAC) is an data recovery instrument considered by brief bibliographic records, primarily of books, diaries, audio-visual and non-book materials accessible in a library (Narayanawamy, 2019). It is accommodating to college library clients to get to and find the library and data assets productively and successfully. Aina (2004) states that Online Open Get to Catalogue (OPAC) is the foremost present day shape of library catalogue, whereby bibliographic records of all the documents collection are put away within the computer memory or server. Concurring to Gohain & Saikia (2013), OPAC is one of these innovations that give get to to any of the data contained within the record for an thing within the library. The creators encourage characterized OPAC as a database of bibliographic records portraying the possessions of library. It permits clients to look a archive by authors, title, subject and watchwords from a terminal additionally permits printing, downloading, or sending out records through distinctive electronic implies. In this way, OPAC given clients a implies of looking and getting to data.

The college library is the mental powerhouse which houses library materials counting books and non-books materials. It is the central point of all scholastic exercises within the college for understudies and staff to resort to it for scholastic food. Gana et al. (2019) expressed that, the college library as the heart of the college framework gives reasonable materials valuable for instructing, learning and investigate hence supplement classroom educating work along side arrangement of information required to accomplish mental interests. In arrange to attain this objective, Msagati (2016) certifies that most libraries have put in put satisfactory assets to back educating and investigate; prepared qualified custodians competent of organizing the data substance within the most logical and supportive arrange for the perusers who come to use the library and its assets as well as a library catalogue which is utilized to encourage simple recovery of data assets within the library.

Data assets can be portrayed as counting any data in electronic, audio-visual or physical shape, or any equipment or program that creates conceivable the capacity and utilize of data (Tofi, 2019). Concurring to the creator, for a library to be utilitarian, it must meet its users' needs and guaranteeing that clients make most extreme utilize of the data assets accessible at their transfer. The adequacy of the library as a entire can be gathered from the administrations it rendered and the data assets accessible to its client. Adedibu (2008) expressed that efficiency in the scholarly community is connected to data lavishness. The lavishness, agreeing to the creator, goes past accessibility to utilization and absorption. The college library contribute gigantic sum each year on collection advancement, handling, capacity and dispersal of data assets to serve the postgraduate understudies. All these endeavors ended up futile, in the event that the data assets which are accessible in print and non-print groups stay un-used or fizzled to serve the reason of the clients. Concurring to Olajide & Otunla (2015), the data asset accessible in any organization data framework and presently the endless cluster of open get to assets must be gotten to for utilize to happen. The creator advance expressed that, utilize of data assets is indeed more imperative than their accessibility, since this is often when data will change into information. Agreeing to the source, suitable utilization and handling inside the intellect combined with the as of now accessible information of the client can lead to blend of modern information. The coming of OPAC has brought a part of changes in get to and recovery of data assets in college libraries.

The ICT age has put the Online Open Get to Catalogue at the heart of rendering viably administrations. In this way giving get to to imperative data assets. The affect of OPAC for viable recovery of data assets by clients in college libraries are various. Shorunke, Eluwole and Gbenu (n.d) declare that, the library OPAC can offer a more total inquire about picture for clients which may in turn increment clients support of library assets. Subsequently, it is key and imperative in giving get to to library property. The library OPAC was created as a instrument to find those data assets that had been procured and put away within the library itself. OPAC indicate to permit total recovery, indeed in spite of the fact that information structures and list definitions as not straightforward. They fundamentally force a system of recovery that conceals data at the same time because it display it, and so to an degree they weaken the exceptionally concept of information proficiency (Shorunke, Eluwole & Gbenu, n.d). In an internet environment catalogue have been able to effortlessly move past the scope of person library collections, and to consolidate an expanding extend of non-traditional sorts of data. Hence, the OPAC proceeds to be an basic instrument for giving get to to quality information (Well, 2017). Atanda & Ugwulebo (2017) confirms that OPAC show up to be the foremost broadly devices utilize for data look and recovery, since of its bibliographic points of interest and its dependence in fast get to to utilization.

Data recovery (or recovery of data) is the science of looking for data in reports, looking for records themselves, looking for information which portray archives or looking inside databases, whether social stand-alone databases or hypertext organized databases such as the web or World Wide Web or intranets, for content, sound, pictures or information (Agboola & Shaibu, 2019). It is the method of recovering records from a collection in reaction to a inquiry (or look ask). Recovery of data assets in this think about implies having get to and viably finding a given data assets within the college library.

The utilize of OPAC by understudies in higher institution has various benefits. Kumar (2017) uncovered that understudies employments OPAC for different purposes such as, accessibility of books on racks, to know what the library have on a given creator, title or subject, for simple look of distinctive sort of archives, to know most recent expansion list, to research/know the status of a archive, to provide proposal to the library to buy a books, as

well as to know the bibliographic detail of title/documents. So also, Siddagangaiah & Muthuraja (2017) uncovered that reason of utilize of OPAC to incorporate: to check report accessibility; to check archive issued or not; to check number of duplicates; as well as for finding bibliographical detail.

The look prepare in OPAC has more or less remained the same, as within the card catalogue but with expanded get to focuses, assortments of look highlights and increased complexity of the method, conclusion clients are not as it were anticipated to have specialized looking abilities but moreover conceptual and semantics information relating to the inquiry (Obim, 2017). Kumar (2017) detailed that understudy drawn nearer OPAC through creator, title, subject, International Standard Book Number (ISBN), distributor and increase number.

The utilize of OPAC as a major data recovery component in college libraries contains a part of mishaps. Variables such as lacking stores to procure the fundamental ICT contraptions to bolster OPAC extend, need of preparing of staff, destitute client instruction, and destitute support culture all have incredible negative impact on OPAC economical utilize. Ogbole & Morayo (2017) detailed that a few variables such as ICT framework, complex OPAC interface plan, destitute mindfulness on OPAC utilize, ICT abilities, insufficient library space, whimsical control supply, reserves to back mechanization ventures, need of talented ICT staff, clients request among others, all of which possesses OPAC utilize in Nigeria college libraries.

Data recovery proceeds to be an critical issue for libraries and data administrations considering the volume of data and different employments they have to be bargain with. It is in this manner not out of put for college libraries to ceaselessly evaluate OPAC to induce reasonable picture of its execution whereas moreover looking for measures for enhancement (Onuoha et al., 2013). Yusuf (2012) state a few methodologies for upgrading utilization of OPAC. A few suggestions he gave were given for superior utilization of OPAC administrations in libraries which incorporate: the library should overhaul passages in OPAC from time to time; library introduction ought to be prioritize within the schools, as well as OPAC ought to be put closer to the perusing regions rather than its show positions. Ogbole & Morayo (2017) moreover gives recommendations on progressing OPAC arrangement and feasible utilize to incorporate: consistent power control supply in libraries, prepare library staff and understudies; satisfactory financing of college libraries to support OPAC, increment number of computers in college library, OPAC ought to be planned like Google, keeping up and supporting advances in libraries, as well as conducting of ease of use testing on OPAC on persistent premise.

Library users are very vital in university library. The library is established because of them to satisfy their information needs and demands for academic and research purposes. This study will make use of only postgraduate students who are currently studying in Benue State University Makurdi and have been registered with the university library.

Postgraduate students in basic terms, is anybody who is examining a postgraduate course, counting a aces course, an Mphil and a PhD that requires an undergrad degree as portion of the section necessities. A postgraduate could be a understudy who has effectively completed an undergrad degree level course at a college or college and is undertaking encourage consider at a more progressed level. A postgraduate course is regularly one year length full time or it can take two or three a long time to total depending on the course or institution. A postgraduate confirmation, postgraduate degree, or master's degree or doctorate degree offers the understudy an progressed level of instruction in their chosen range of ponder. In this ponder postgraduate understudies are understudies who are current considering postgraduate

courses (i.e. postgraduate recognition, ace, or doctorate degree courses) in Benue State College Makurdi and are completely enlisted with the college library. The postgraduate understudies require data in different groups to fulfill their needs and improve their scholarly interest amid their postgraduate considers within the college. The command of the university library is hence to supply satisfactory and significant data assets both in print and online for postgraduate understudies to back course work, assignments, inquire about works, term papers, workshop introductions by giving important data and administrations arrangement for viable and effective accomplishment of scholarly interest (Ogbole & Morayo, 2017).

Online Public Access Catalogue can be used from far away location so that the library patrons and postgraduate students inclusive can access to the diverse information resources in the library holdings at their convenience. However, the researchers observed that in the postgraduate library, majority of the postgraduate students who always come to the library for research do not make effective use of OPAC for the retrieval of information resources in the library. Preliminary observation by the researcher revealed that almost all of the postgraduate students that do patronize the university library are found going (or moving) from shelf to shelf in order to search for information directly. This scenario has become the researchers worry. Despite many of the studies conducted by different researchers locally and internationally this problem still persists. Could it be that OPAC has no significant perceived impact on effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students? This has created a gap in knowledge that this present study intend to address. Hence, the need for this study which seeks to investigate perceived impact of OPAC on effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi.

Online Public Access Catalogue has brought enormous changes in library practice by complementing the traditional card catalogue system with computerized system. It has made the information resources in the library easily and quickly accessible to users by breaking physical boundaries of the library. It is the most flexible and effective information retrieval tool in any university library. OPAC may be a recovery gadget within the college library which not as it were consolidates online circulation and unused entries data of the library but indeed able of giving speedy, upgraded and simple get to from the work put of the client with a few extra look highlights compared to card catalogue and consequently significantly spares the time of the client. It has brought a parcel of changes in get to and recovery of data assets in college library. The resultant consequences of lack of effective utilization of OPAC in the university library may result to inadequate use of information resources in the library, time wastable by the library users which could have been used for other academic activities, ineffective search, as well as poor quality of research by the users.

Despite the tremendous benefits of use of OPAC in university library, it has been observed that, postgraduate students who patronize the university library do not make effective use of OPAC for the retrieval of information. It has also observed that most of the postgraduate students prefer to use the manual catalogue card for search. Hence, most of them are found moving from shelve to shelve in search of information resources. This scenario has become worrisome to the researchers hence, the need for this investigation. The key issues in this study are: do postgraduate student in Benue State University has any search approach to OPAC for effective retrieval of information resources? Or do the postgraduate student actually have specific purpose of utilizing OPAC in the university library? Or does OPAC has any significant impact on effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in the university library? Or could it be that students have been faced with challenges hindering their effective use of OPAC for information retrieval in the university library? And what strategies could be adopted by the university library to address the

challenges for effective use of OPAC by students for the retrieval of information resources? Hence the need for this study which seeks to ascertain the perceived impact of OPAC on effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi.

## Methods

The descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The study was conducted in Makurdi – Benue State, Nigeria. The study population comprised of 38 postgraduate students that are currently undertaking postgraduate degree programmes in Benue State University, Makurdi and are registered with the University Library. The research study carryout a census of all the registered postgraduate students in the University library. Since the population is small and can conveniently be handled by the researcher. Questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection for the study. The questionnaire comprised of five (5) sections (Section A-E) with section A containing ten (10) items designed to solicit information on perceived impact of OPAC on effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi; section B contains ten (10) items soliciting information on purpose of utilizing OPAC by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi, Section C contains eight (8) items soliciting information on search strategies of library OPAC used by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi; Section D also contains ten (10) items seeking information on the challenges hindering the use of OPAC for effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi; while Section E contains ten (10) items soliciting information on the strategies that can be adopted to enhance the use of OPAC for effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi. To ensure high percentage return, the questionnaire was administered by the researchers in the Benue State University Library and retrieved back immediately, hence 38 copies of the questionnaire was distributed and 38 copies were retrieved back given a percentage return of 100%. Data for the study was analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency count and mean scores. The choice of mean score to answer the research questions was because data collected was on interval. The instrument took the form of a continuum of Strong Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. The mean benchmark was calculated thus;

$$\frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = 2.50$$

Therefore, any item with a mean vale of 2.50 and above was considered ‘Agreed and perceived impact’ respectively. While those below 2.50 were considered ‘Disagree, rejected and no perceived impact’ respectively.

## Results and Discussion

Table 1. Mean responses on perceived impact of OPAC on effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi.

S/N	Perceived Impact of OPAC	N	Mean (X)	Decision
1	OPAC allows users to use search strategies that exceed those that can be used with card catalogue.	38	3.21	Perceived impact
2	OPAC provides users with timely access to library materials.	38	2.90	Perceived impact
3		38	3.10	Perceived impact

4	OPAC allow for hyperlink searching.	38	3.22	Perceived impact
5	OPAC encourages cooperative collection development and resource sharing.	38	2.78	Perceived impact
6	OPAC allows users to search the library's collection from locations outside the library walls.	38	3.23	Perceived impact
7	It supports new means of information retrieval by introducing users to global information.	38	2.99	Perceived impact
8	It motivates users and equips them with problem solving and retrieval skills.	38	2.53	Perceived impact
9	It assists in the discovery of same work by same author.	38	2.87	Perceived impact
10	It brings speed access to information resources. Details of the status of the books can be accessed while browsing and searching for information through OPAC	38	3.11	Perceived impact

Source: Field work, (2020)

N = Number of respondents

Table 1 shows the perceived impact of OPAC on effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi. Results in table 1 shows that there is a high perceived impact of OPAC on effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi. This is indicated by mean scores of item 1 (3.21), item 2 (2.90), item 3 (3.10), item 4 (3.22), item 5 (2.78), item 6 (3.23), item 7 (2.99), item 8 (2.53), item 9 (2.87) and item 10 (3.11) respectively which are above the benchmark of 2.50, indicating high perceived impact of OPAC on effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students.

Table 2. Mean responses on the purpose of utilizing OPAC by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi.

S/N	Purposes of utilizing OPAC by postgraduates	N	Mean (X)	Decision
1	To know the available resources in the university library.	38	3.86	Agreed
2	To locate books by author, title, and subject.	38	3.01	Agreed
3	Assist in obtaining books from other university libraries.	38	3.14	Agreed
4	Checking of new additions to library collections.	38	3.75	Agreed
5	To reserve the book which is borrowed by someone.		2.96	Agreed
6	To help access information from remote areas.	38	2.84	Agreed
7	To find non-print materials.	38	3.00	Agreed
8	To compile a bibliography of books on a particular subject.	38	2.85	Agreed
9	To read news on institutional repositories.	38	3.04	Agreed
10	To save time, energy and money.	38	2.65	Agreed

Source: Field work, (2020)

N = Number of respondents

Table 2 above showed the mean responses on the purposes of utilizing by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi. The findings shows that, all the items were indicated by the respondents as purposes of utilizing OPAC in Benue State University,

Makurdi. The mean scores ranged from item 1 (3.86), item 2 (3.01), item 3 (3.14), item 4 (3.75), item 5 (2.96), item 6 (2.84), item 7 (3.00), item 8 (2.85), item 9 (3.04), and item 10 (2.65) respectively. This is a clear indication that, OPAC is used by postgraduate students in Benue State University Makurdi for various purposes such as: to know the availability of resources in the university library; to locate books by author, title and subject; to assists in obtaining books from other universities; checking of new additions to library collections; to reserve the book which is borrowed by someone; to help access information from remote areas; to find non-print materials; to compile a bibliography of books on a particular subject; to read news on institutional repositories, as well as to save time, energy and money.

Table 3. Mean responses on the search strategies of library OPAC used by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi?

S/N	Search Strategies of Library OPAC	N	Mean (X)	Decision
1	By author	38	3.94	Agree
2	By title	38	3.44	Agree
3	By subject	38	3.11	Agree
4	By classification number	38	2.14	Disagree
5	By accession number	38	2.20	Disagree
6	By International Standard Book number (ISBN)	38	2.00	Disagree
7	By publisher	38	2.48	Disagree
8	By edition	38	2.97	Agree

Source: Field work, (2020)

N = Number of respondents

Table 3 above showed the strategies of library OPAC used by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi. As shown in this table, respondents ranked author, title, subject, and edition as the search strategies of library OPAC. This is evident in the mean responses of 3.94, 3.44, 3.11 and 2.97 which are above the cut off mark of 2.50. While item 4, 5, 6 and 7 having mean responses of 2.14, 2.20, 2.00 and 2.48 all below the benchmark of 2.50 were rejected/disagreed.

Table 4. Mean responses on challenges hindering the use of OPAC for effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi.

S/N	Challenges hindering the use of OPAC	N	Mean (X)	Decision
1	Lack of computers in the library.	38	1.88	Rejected
2	Lack of skilled professionals to assists students.	38	3.14	Accepted
3	Lack of orientation from library staff.	38	4.00	Accepted
3	Lack of time to retrieve the vast information.	38	3.19	Accepted
5	Slow internet connectivity speed.	38	3.98	Accepted
6	Books are not in the proper place as indicated in the OPAC.	38	3.14	Accepted
7	Lack of awareness about OPAC facilities.	38	3.64	Accepted
8	Lack of knowledge and expertise in search and retrieval.	38	3.79	Accepted
9	Lack of cooperation from library staff.	38	2.11	Rejected
10	Erratic power supply.	38	2.00	Rejected

Source: Field work, (2020)

N = Number of respondents

Table 4 showed the challenges hindering the use of OPAC for effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi in means. The result indicates that all items with mean scores ranges between 3.14 to 4.00 which are above the benchmark of 2.50 are accepted as the challenges hindering the use of OPAC for effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi. While items 1, 9 and 10 with mean scores of 1.88, 2.11 and 2.00 below the benchmark of 2.50 are rejected.

Table 5. Mean responses on strategies that can be adopted to enhance the use of OPAC for effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi.

S/N	Strategies to Enhance Use of OPAC	N	Mean (X)	Decision
1	Provision of adequate computer systems in the university library.	38	2.11	Rejected
3	Employment of skilled/competent library staff to assist users.	38	2.78	Accepted
3	Adequately training of students to make maximum use of OPAC.	38	3.22	Accepted
4	Provision of alternative sources of power supply.	38	2.14	Rejected
5	Organizing user education programme to orientate the students on OPAC.	38	3.01	Accepted
6	Need to design user-friendly OPAC template.	38	2.80	Accepted
7	Improvement of internet connectivity speed.	38	3.44	Accepted
8	Library should focus on wide publicity on OPAC to create awareness for students use.	38	3.12	Accepted
9	There is need for optimum funding of the library.	38	3.04	Accepted
10	University library should provide printed instructions/guides on OPAC use.	38	3.84	Accepted

Source: Field work, (2020)

N = Number of respondents

Table 5 showed the strategies that can be adopted to enhance the use of OPAC for effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi in mean scores. Result in table 5 shows that, item 2,3,5,6,7,8,9 and 10 with mean scores of ranging from 2.14 to 3.84 were indicated as strategies to enhance the use of OPAC for effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi. This is based on the fact that, the mean scores were above the cut off mark while item 1 (2.11), and item 4 (2.14) were below the cut off mark of 2.50 indicating rejected.

There is a high perceived impact of OPAC on effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi. The findings of this study is in agreement with Hancock-Beaulieu (1989) who attested that, online public access catalogue has a significant impact on hybrid subject searches initiated at a bibliographic tool and at the shelves in the library. Hence, OPAC allows users to use search strategies that exceeds those that can be used with card catalogue. This is also in corroboration with that of Atanda & Ugwulebo (2017) who revealed; enhance information search to be very easy, assists in the discovery of same work by author; it brings speed access to information, it saves time of the library user and helps to narrow the user search as impact public access catalogue in libraries.

Postgraduate students in Benue State University utilize OPAC for various purposes such as: to know the available resources in the university library; to locate books by author, title or subject; assists in obtaining books from the university library; checking of new additions to library collections; to reserve the book which is borrowed by someone; to help access information from remote areas; to find non-print materials, compilation of bibliography of books on a particular subject; to read news on institutional repositories, and also; to save time, energy and money. This agrees with Obim (2017) who attested that the students used OPAC to a high extent for various purposes such as to locate a book in the library, to find book titles, to check whether the required book is available in the library or not, to find other materials, to find article(s) titles, to find journal titles and to search other databases.

The search strategies used by postgraduate students for effective retrieval of information resources in Benue State University, Makurdi to include: by author, title, subject and edition. This corroborates with Sankari et al. (2013) who attested that, the students approached the OPAC by author, title, subject, series, classification number and call number. Findings of the study is also in agreement with that of Kumar (2017) who reported that, the most popular search approaches of OPAC by students is by title, author, and subject.

Lack of skilled library professionals to assist students, lack of orientation from library staff, lack of time to retrieve the vast information, slow internet connectivity speed, books are not in proper place as indicated in the OPAC, lack of awareness about OPAC facilities, as well as lack of knowledge/expertise in search and retrieval as challenges hindering the use of OPAC for effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students Benue State University, Makurdi. Findings of the study is in conformity with Narayanaswamy (2019) who revealed some of the problems of using web OPAC such as lack of knowledge and expertise in search and retrieval, lack of skilled library professionals to assists, books are not in the proper place as indicate in the OPAC, it is difficult to use OPAC, lack of orientation from library staff, lack of time to retrieve the vast information and also the OPAC user manual not available.

Employment of skilled/competent library staff to assists students (users), adequately training of students to make maximum use of OPAC; organizing user education programme to orientate the students on OPAC use; need to design user friendly OPAC template; improvement of internet connectivity speed; library should focus on wide publicity on OPAC to create awareness for students use; there is need for optimum funding of the university library and also, university library should provide printed instructions/guides on OPAC use; as strategies that can be adopted to enhance the use of OPAC for effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi. This is in line with Ogbole & Morayo (2017) who suggested ways of improving OPAC provision and sustainable use which include constant electricity power supply in libraries, train library staff and undergraduates and conduct usability testing of OPAC on continuous basis, OPAC should be designed like Google, increase number of computers in university library, maintenance issues, adequate training of university staff and undergraduates, as well as adequate funding of university libraries to sustain OPAC.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the results of the findings, it is pertinent to conclude that, Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) has a high perceived impact on effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University, Makurdi. Hence, postgraduate students used OPAC for various purposes. It was also revealed that postgraduate students used search strategies such as author, title, subject and edition for effective retrieval of

information resources in the university library. Although they are a myriad of challenges hindering the use of OPAC for effective retrieval of information resources by postgraduate students in Benue State University library, Makurdi. However, the study revealed some key strategies that could be adopted to address the challenges for better use of OPAC by the students for effective retrieval of information resources.

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