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Users' Engagement Dynamics in the Academic Law Library

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Abstract: This study examines user engagement in the Faculty of Law Library at Redeemer's University in Nigeria by analyzing patterns of library usage, resource consultation, and students' perceptions of services and facilities. Using a descriptive survey design, data were drawn from library usage records for the 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 academic sessions and questionnaire responses from 227 law students. Attendance and book consultation trends revealed recurring engagement that aligned with the academic calendar, peak usage during examination and project periods, and declines during vacations. Although overall attendance increased slightly by 2.2 % in the 2023/2024 session, print book consultations declined by 7.2 % during the same period. This trend suggests changing patterns of resource use, possibly including greater reliance on electronic resources, which students rated highly ($M = 4.48$). Survey results showed high satisfaction with service quality and resource adequacy, with mean scores ranging from 4.13 to 4.50. Students particularly valued staff competence, up-to-date legal materials, and accessible electronic databases, though concerns were raised about the limited number of core textbooks. The study recommends strengthening print collections, expanding digital access, and improving resource management during peak periods.

Keywords: legal information services; user engagement; academic law libraries; library service quality; student information behavior

1 Introduction

Academic libraries remain at the heart of higher learning, teaching, and research, providing both physical and digital resources. Staff interactions with users, patron visits to print collections, patron use of electronic databases, and time spent on the library premises are commonly viewed as crucial measures of the library's effectiveness.¹ For law students, use of the faculty library is mandatory, as they heavily rely on statutes, case law reports, textbooks, and legal commentaries.² Past studies in Nigeria have shown that opportunities and challenges still persist in the use of law libraries. Even though students have shown some awareness of electronic tools such as LawPavilion and JSTOR, the problems of inaccessibility, inadequacy, and limited information and communications technology (ICT) knowledge continue to hinder optimal use.³ In addition, library usage trends vary by day and hour, depending on resource availability, staff attentiveness, and conditions.⁴

The above is indicated by anecdotal findings at the Faculty of Law Library at Redeemer's University (Ede, Osun State, Nigeria), where use of and visits to the library tend to increase during examination periods. However, there has been relatively little empirical research conducted on these trends. Academic libraries, though, are very significant in improving student performance. The Faculty of Law Library provides access to print media and law databases such as LawPavilion and the *Nigerian Weekly Law Reports*; however,

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1 Shylendra Kumar B., S. Kishore Kumar, and Ravish P.Y., "Exploring Library Users' Interaction with Digital Collections and E-Resources: Insights from User Experience Research," *South Indian Journal of Library and Information Science* 2, no. 3 (2025): 1–8.

2 Ifeanyi J. Ezema and Akpom Chinwendu Chizoba, "Electronic library support services and resources for law students in South East Nigerian university libraries," *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science* 28, no. 2 (2018): 169–82.

3 S.O. Akande, "Postgraduate law students' attitude towards the use of electronic information resources in two universities in Nigeria," *NAU Journal of Library and Information Science* 8 (2023): 54–70.

4 Raliat Alabi, I.O. Yahaya, and A.T.A. Bayero, "Availability and accessibility as correlates of electronic information resources utilisation among law undergraduates in South-West, Nigeria," *Library and Information Perspectives and Research* 7, no. 1 (2025): 56–71, <https://doi.org/10.47524/lipr.v7i1.57>.

it is not evident how law students are effectively utilizing the library. It has been documented that attendance and material use vary, but little is known about the relationships between these quantitative variables and students' perceptions of service quality, information accessibility, and the study environment. This gap could be a challenge for evidence-based library management, as administrators may lack sufficient data to make decisions on resource allocation, user satisfaction, and service improvement.

Thus, this study examines users' engagement dynamics in the Faculty of Law Library at Redeemer's University. The research questions that will guide the study are as follows: What are the trends in attendance and book consultations between two academic sessions? What are the students' perceptions of the quality of services, resources, and the library environment?

2 Methodology

The study employed a descriptive survey design to investigate law students' use of the Faculty of Law Library, and the total enumeration method was adopted. Two primary sources were used to draw data across the 2022/2023, 2023/2024, and 2025/2026 academic sessions. The first was the library statistical register, which records attendance hourly and on a daily basis across six time slots (10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., 2:00 p.m., 4:00 p.m., 6:00 p.m., and 8:00 p.m.). Attendance totals for the study were obtained by adding monthly records extracted from the library registers for the 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 academic sessions. Book consultation figures from these years were also computed by aggregating the daily usage logs recorded by library staff.

A structured questionnaire based on the LibQUAL+ framework was used as the second source of data. The study population included all 305 undergraduate law students enrolled in the 2025/2026 academic session. Mean scores for questionnaire responses were computed using weighted values assigned to Likert-scale responses, where Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Neutral = 3, Disagree = 2, and Strongly Disagree = 1. The calculated mean scores were then used to determine levels of agreement based on the established decision rule. These procedures ensured consistency across all tables and enabled meaningful comparison of responses across variables. The questionnaire was sampled between October and December 2025 among students who visited the law library and the faculty lecture rooms. Out of the distributed questionnaires, 227 were duly completed and returned, resulting in a high response rate.

The results from the library registers and questionnaire were triangulated to provide a holistic view of user

engagement, and the results are discussed with reference to students' academic needs and the library's effectiveness in addressing them. To ensure clarity and transparency in data analysis, all numerical values presented in the paper's tables were calculated using standardized procedures.

2.1 Academic Libraries and User Engagement

Academic libraries are an intrinsic feature of institutions of higher education, offering services and resources that support teaching, learning, and research. They are not bookstores but rather active learning environments that promote intellectual growth and knowledge acquisition.⁵ The interaction between academic libraries and users can be described as the level of user engagement with library resources, spaces, and services. The engagement can be assessed by counting attendance, measuring borrowing rates, monitoring the use of electronic resources, and counting consultations of reference materials.⁶

In modern academic settings, user interaction has gone beyond the physical visit to include digital interactions – e.g., accessing online databases and e-books. Nonetheless, in expertise-specific fields such as law, the physical use of libraries will continue to be important because of case law reports, statutes, and textbooks that are not necessarily available online.⁷ Therefore, users' interest in law libraries helps garner valuable information about the effectiveness of these libraries in addressing students' individual academic needs.

2.2 Law Libraries

Law libraries are special academic libraries that contain legal information sources such as statutes, case law reports, textbooks, and legal commentaries.⁸ They serve mainly to

5 D.A. Barclay, "The Use of Academic Libraries in the Digital Age: What the Numbers Say," *International Higher Education* 88 (2017): 11–13.

6 Karin de Jager, Mary Nassimbeni, William Daniels, and Alexander D'Angelo, "The use of academic libraries in turbulent times: Student library behaviour and academic performance at the University of Cape Town," *Performance Measurement and Metrics* 19, no. 1 (2018): 40–52.

7 S. Veerbhadra, "The Legal Professionals' Perception of Law Libraries in the Digital Age: A study on how legal professionals view the relevance of traditional law libraries today," *Library Progress International* 43, no. 2 (2023): 520–26, <https://bpasjournals.com/library-science/index.php/journal/article/view/1315/1878>.

8 Soumen Mallik and B.K. Sen, "Information sources in academic law libraries in India," *Annals of Library and Information Studies* 55, no. 8 (2008): 196–203.

provide authoritative sources of law that allow students, academics, and practitioners to conduct legal research.⁹ In contrast to general academic libraries, law libraries are required to have up-to-date collections due to the dynamism of legal systems. They also offer silent reading rooms that support intensive reading, analysis, and the understanding of legal documents.

The faculty library is one of the most important academic support systems for law students. Studies have also indicated that access to legal materials will determine the quality of student research and overall performance.¹⁰ In turn, tracking student access to law libraries' resources can provide useful data on how effectively a library's services perform and how the resources are organized to meet user demands.

2.3 Library Usage Statistics as a Tool for Assessment

The statistics of library usage are quantitative data that show the level of user interaction with library facilities. These can be hourly and daily attendance records, the number of books borrowed, and the number of books consulted. These statistics play a crucial role in understanding the nature of usage, areas of peak performance, and the efficiency of resource allocation planning.¹¹ Moreover, statistical records ensure the existence of empirical evidence that can be utilized to measure performance and substantiate budgetary allocations.¹² In law libraries, usage statistics can be used to identify the level of students' engagement with the principal legal literature. They also expose patterns of study behavior, such as how often students visit the library in the morning or the afternoon, or how many consultations they make during examination periods.

⁹ H. Umar and V. Sokari, "Challenges associated with utilization of legal information resources by postgraduate law students in federal universities of Northern Nigeria," *Information Impact: Journal of Information and Knowledge Management* 11, no. 1 (2020): 40–47.

¹⁰ C.C. Okeji and N.A. Agbanu, "Utilization of Law Library Resources by Undergraduate Law Students in Three Selected Universities in South-East Nigeria: Attitudes and Challenges," *Library and Information Science Digest* 13 (2020): 29–42.

¹¹ Peter Kraker, Christian Körner, Kris Jack, and Michael Granitzer, "Harnessing user library statistics for research evaluation and knowledge domain visualization," in *WWW'12 Companion: Proceedings of the 21st International Conference on World Wide Web* (Association for Computing Machinery, 2012), 1017–24.

¹² de Jager, Nassimbeni, Daniels, and D'Angelo, "The use of academic libraries," 40.

2.4 Relevance of Library Engagement Studies

The measurement of user engagement is critical since it guides decision-making regarding the best way to serve academic communities. It has been discovered and reported that law students at universities in Nigeria experience difficulties using electronic collections when they have heard about them, which argues in favor of the ongoing use of physical collections.¹³ On the same note, research has shown that postgraduate law students have a positive attitude towards e-resources but lack the digital literacy to use them.¹⁴ The results of the findings emphasize the importance of periodically evaluating the level of interaction between users and print and electronic sources.

This paper will be positioned in the wider discussion on the effectiveness of academic libraries by analyzing attendance and book consultation data from 2022/2023 to 2023/2024 and library questionnaire results from 2025/2026. It is a useful exercise to learn about the interactions of law students with the Faculty of Law Library, as they provide evidence that can be utilized to make strategic enhancements to the service delivery process.

3 Theoretical Framework

The patterns of usage of the Faculty of Law Library can be explained with the help of the following theories.

3.1 Wilson's Model of Information Behavior

Wilson's model is one of the most impactful frameworks in library and information science. It describes the process by which people identify information requirements, search for information, and utilize accessible resources. Wilson's model posits that information needs arising from academic tasks stimulate information-seeking behavior, which is influenced by enabling factors such as resource availability and access conditions. In academic law libraries, these needs motivate students to consult legal materials and utilize study facilities.¹⁵

¹³ Ezema and Chizoba, "Electronic library support services," 169.

¹⁴ Umar and Sokari, "Challenges associated with utilization of legal information resources," 40.

¹⁵ T.D. Wilson, "Models in information behaviour research," *Journal of Documentation* 55, no. 3 (1999): 249–70, <https://doi.org/10.1108/EUM0000000007145>.

3.2 User Engagement Theory

The User Engagement Theory assumes that the process of engagement with library services can be perceived as the expression of motivation, the value of resources, and satisfaction with the learning environment among users.¹⁶ The different types of engagement that may be realized are normally measured in terms of the frequency of visits, usage time, and level of consultation. The theory provides the avenue through which trends in attendance, data on the consultation of books, and empirical findings are presented as evidence of cognitive and behavioral engagement in the utilization of library facilities by the student population in the present research exercise.

Collectively, these theories provide a robust framework for understanding user engagement at the Faculty of Law Library. Wilson's model emphasizes information-seeking processes, and the User Engagement Theory identifies behavioral indicators that can be observed. By synthesizing these two views, the research can view library usage statistics not just as purely quantitative data but also as indicators of underlying academic needs, motivation, and patterns of engagement.

3.3 Patterns of Legal Research Behavior and Library Usage

Studies on academic law libraries consistently demonstrate that patterns of library usage are closely linked to academic demands and research activities. Research has shown that students' visits to academic libraries tend to increase during examination periods and assignment deadlines, indicating that library usage is primarily need-driven rather than routine.¹⁷ Similarly, studies focusing on academic library behavior have found that student engagement is influenced by academic workload structures, resulting in peak attendance during assessment periods and reduced usage during recess periods.¹⁸

Nevertheless, there are some differences between institutions. In some African universities, for instance, library attendance has been observed to be relatively stable, while in others it is extremely volatile, depending on the library's situation and the academic calendar.¹⁹ These disparities indicate that there is a role for context and institutional factors in influencing patterns of library engagement.²⁰ In spite of these insights, many previous studies have used short-term surveys rather than longitudinal attendance data, making it difficult to capture patterns of behavior over long periods of academic sessions.

3.4 Digital Versus Print Resource Use in Law Libraries

With the growing number of electronic databases, the way that law students use information has changed. A number of studies have found that electronic legal resources are increasingly used because of their convenience, accessibility, and support for remote research. Students in technologically advanced academic environments clearly like electronic resources such as scholarly repositories and legal research platforms.²¹

Despite this move towards digital resources, print continues to play a key role in legal education. The printed statutes, law reports, and textbooks have always been the main resources for law students, as they are authoritative and provide a structured approach to legal knowledge. Some research has indicated that the use of print resources has decreased over time, whereas others have stated that the need for print resources is still present, especially during periods of high academic activity, such as examinations.²²

The mixed results suggest that digital and print resources are not in competition but are instead used in tandem. A large number of current studies, however, focus on either the use of digital resources or print resources, and few studies compare the use of digital resources and print resources using the same institutional data. In addition, limited attention has been given to the quality of service experienced by patrons in the use of law library services, as

¹⁶ Heather O'Brien and Paul Cairns, "An empirical evaluation of the User Engagement Scale (UES) in online news environments," *Information Processing & Management* 51, no. 4 (2015): 413–27, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ipm.2015.10.006>.

¹⁷ L. Appleton, "Academic libraries and student engagement: A literature review," *New Review of Academic Librarianship* 26, no. 2–4 (2020): 189–213, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13614533.2020.1764479>.

¹⁸ Mercy I. Ani et al., "Utilization of library resources for academic activeness among undergraduate students in Nigerian tertiary institutions," *Library Philosophy and Practice* (2022): 1–14.

¹⁹ F.N.A. Baada, A.D. Ayoung, S. Bekoe, and F.B. Azindow, "Resource constraints and quality public library service delivery in Ghana," *International Information & Library Review* 52, no. 1 (2020): 10–31, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10572317.2019.158797>.

²⁰ Nigel Ford, *Introduction to Information Behaviour* (Facet Publishing, 2015).

²¹ Femy Francis, "Usage of E-Resources in Academic Libraries," *Journal of Online Engineering Education* 14, no. 2 (2024): 13–26.

²² Ani et al., "Utilization of library resources," 1.

well as the level of user satisfaction and involvement in law library services.

3.5 User Satisfaction and Engagement with Law Library Services

User satisfaction appears to be a major factor in the continued use of library services. Studies have shown that the use of library facilities is greatly influenced by the up-to-dateness of materials, the level of professional staff support, and the availability of a conducive learning environment.²³ Studies conducted in various universities in Nigeria have shown that students who have a positive attitude towards the services rendered in the library are more likely to patronize library services consistently over the time they are available.²⁴

However, infrastructural challenges continue to affect user satisfaction in many academic libraries. Issues such as insufficient copies of essential textbooks, inadequate seating capacity, and limited hours of operation have been reported as barriers to effective resource utilization.²⁵ On the other hand, institutions with accessible electronic resources and supportive study environments have higher levels of satisfaction and engagement.²⁶ Despite these findings, much of the existing literature relies heavily on perception-based survey data without linking users' subjective satisfaction to objective behavioral indicators such as attendance and book consultation records. The present study addresses this need by examining attendance trends, book consultation habits, and students' perceptions in one institutional law library.

3.6 Research Gap and Contribution of this Study

Although previous research has offered valuable insights into patterns of library usage, adoption of digital resources, and user satisfaction, several methodological limitations remain evident. Many studies rely on a single source of data, either focusing on the analysis of questionnaire responses or analyzing limited usage statistics. Also, few studies have

combined longitudinal attendance data with print consultation records and perception-based measures in the context of a single institutional law library. Additionally, there is limited empirical evidence investigating engagement across academic sessions using both behavioral and perceptual indicators. This study addresses these limitations by adopting a two-way analytical method, using attendance records, book consultation statistics, and responses to a structured questionnaire. By examining trends across two academic sessions alongside students' perceptions of services, resources, and learning environments, the study broadens the literature's scope and contributes to the understanding of the dynamics of user engagement in academic law libraries.

3.7 Conceptual Model for the Study

In this study, the concept of user engagement is defined as a multidimensional construct comprising observable behaviors and perceived service quality indicators. Library attendance and book consultation are symbols of the behavioral dimension of engagement. Library attendance refers to the number of students' physical visits to the library over specified periods, while book consultation represents the number of print resources accessed during the same timeframe. These variables provide objective measures of students' direct interaction with library resources and are the main outcome measures of engagement in this study. Structural and service-related parameters are shown in the model as Quality of Information Resources, Library Services, and Study Environment. Availability, relevance, and sufficiency of both print and electronic materials required for legal study are part of the Quality of Information Resources. Library Services refers to assistance provided by the library staff, reference services, and access to electronic databases, while the Study Environment refers to physical and technological conditions conducive to effective learning. These components affect students' frequency of use of library facilities and resources. The perceptual dimension of the model is manifested in User Perceptions, which includes the level of student satisfaction with the availability of materials, staff responsiveness, and the appropriateness of study facilities. These perceptions serve as mediators, affecting students' repeated library engagement.

These relationships were utilized to structure the data in the following analytical tables. Attendance records and consultation numbers are directly linked to behavioral indicators of engagement, and questionnaire responses provide students' perceptions of the quality of resources and effectiveness of services. By integrating behavioral data with perception-based measures, the LibQUAL+ framework

²³ Appleton, "Academic libraries," 189.

²⁴ M.O. Abubakar, F.O. Ajani, and U.O. Orire, "Undergraduate Students' Perceptions of and Satisfaction with Library Services and Environment: A Case Study of the University of Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria," *Communicate: Journal of Library and Information Science* 27, no. 2 (2025): 518–32.

²⁵ Baada, Ayoun, Bekoe, and Azindow, "Resource constraints," 10.

²⁶ Appleton, "Academic libraries," 189.

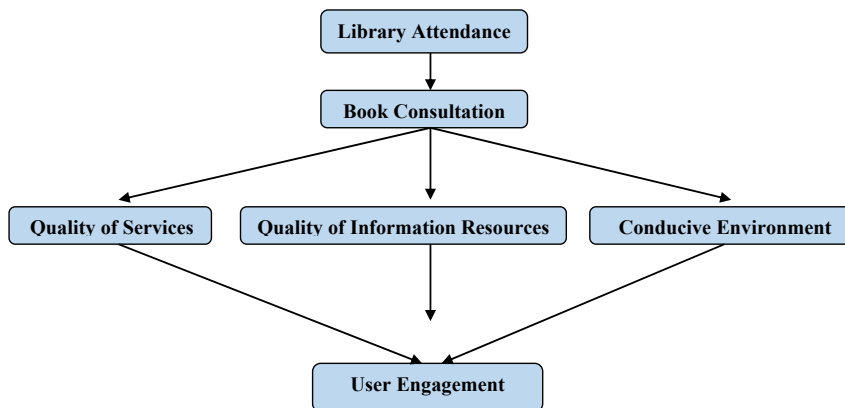


Figure 1: Conceptual model for user engagement dynamics adapted from the LibQUAL+ framework.

conceptual model, adapted and modified for the study, provides a structured framework for understanding the patterns of library use and how well students engage with the library as a whole (Figure 1).

4 Data Analysis and Presentation

The analysis of library usage statistics was conducted for two academic sessions, 2022/2023 and 2023/2024, at the Redeemer's University Faculty of Law Library. The university's academic year runs from September to August, with formal academic work and regular library use generally commencing towards the end of October. The results of this section are also presented in outline format, following the conceptual model presented above. Every dataset represents a particular aspect of user engagement identified in the model. The Library Attendance component comprises attendance records, and the Book Consultation patterns are essentially book usage statistics. Similarly, responses to the survey on satisfaction with resources, staff support, and study facilities provide students' Perceptions of Resource Quality, Library Services, and Library Environment. The structured alignment ensures that the results provide empirical support for the conceptual relationships presented in the model.

4.1 Daily Attendance by Time Slot

Attendance was further subdivided into six time blocks: 10 a.m., 12 p.m., 2 p.m., 4 p.m., 6 p.m., and 8 p.m. This enabled the determination of peak and off-peak periods (Table 1). Attendance frequencies and averages for each slot were calculated per session. Sessional changes in time-slot attendance are presented in a line graph (Figure 2).

The attendance data for the 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 sessions reveal a clear difference in library usage across six daily time slots (10 a.m., 12 p.m., 2 p.m., 4 p.m., 6 p.m., and 8 p.m.). The 2 p.m. slot had the highest attendance (1,384 and 1,273 users, respectively), showing high engagement during the afternoon, followed by the 12 p.m. slot, which shows high use during midday lectures. Attendance was lowest at 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. in 2022/2023, but in 2023/2024, there was more than a 250 % increase in evening use at 8 p.m. All-time attendance increased marginally by 2.2 % on a session-by-session basis, which is an indication of steady patronage. The library attendance record represents the behavioral dimension of user engagement and provides empirical evidence of the frequency and patterns of students' visits to the Faculty of Law Library across the 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 academic sessions. The trend indicates that there has been a gradual shift to evening study (Figure 2).

The line graph indicates that engagement is stable across most time slots, and the two sessions show a similar trend. However, the 8 p.m. slot registered an important positive direction of change in 2023/2024, indicating more evening patronage and a possible indication of users slowly moving away over time beyond the standard peak hours.

4.2 Monthly Attendance Totals

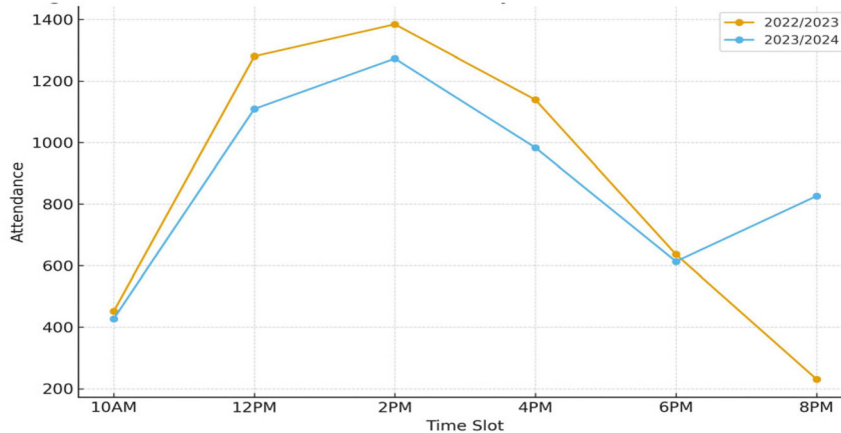
Daily attendance figures were aggregated to obtain monthly totals. Line graphs are used to demonstrate these variations, while percentages show each month's contribution to the overall sessional attendance.

Table 2 shows library attendance during the 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 sessions, and it reveals notable fluctuations. During the 2022/2023 session, students' attendance was relatively high in January (950) and then peaked in February (639) and July (886), which are usually the months of exams, project supervision, and final assessments. March (134) and

Table 1: Daily attendance by time slot (2022/2023–2023/2024).

Session	10 a.m.	12 p.m.	2 p.m.	4 p.m.	6 p.m.	8 p.m.	Total attendance
2022/2023	451	1,280	1,384	1,139	636	230	5,120
2023/2024	427	1,109	1,273	983	613	826	5,231

Daily attendance was computed from the Faculty of Law Library's daily attendance records.

**Figure 2:** Sessional trends in attendance by time slot (2022/2023–2023/2024). Source: Faculty of Law Library daily usage statistics.

April (110) saw a drop in attendance, suggesting a drop in library use during mid-semester breaks. Likewise, outside of September and October, attendance was at its lowest in August (54) and December (37), when students were mostly on vacation or away for the holiday season.

The situation was similar in 2023/2024, though there were a few discernible changes in student behavior. The highest attendance was in February with 1,161, followed by March with 951, both months when there is high academic activity, including coursework submissions, test preparation, and project writing. In April (221) and August (20), attendance dropped dramatically. The rise in November (720) indicated that the school year had begun and students had returned to their normal school schedules. The total number of attendees was also consistent across the two sessions, with 5,120 users in 2022/2023, and 5,231 in 2023/2024 – as aforementioned, a small increase of approximately 2.2 %. This consistency confirms that the Faculty of Law

Library remains a resource for students' academic needs despite attendance levels that fluctuate in response to the academic calendar.

Figure 3 demonstrates that the maximum attendance occurs in the January through March and June through July periods. The lowest attendance, outside of September and October, occurs in April, August, and December. The patterns of the two sessions are also similar (Figure 4).

The analysis by percentage indicates that January through February and mid-year months accounted for almost half of the annual attendance each year.

1. Books consulted

The number of books consulted was examined in each session and further disaggregated per month. Descriptive statistics were used to show the mean number of books consulted per day, and comparative charts were used to demonstrate improvements or decreases during the two sessions.

Table 2: Monthly attendance totals.

Session	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total attendance
2022/2023	950	639	134	110	539	876	886	54	0	0	895	37	5,120
2023/2024	663	1161	951	221	546	423	420	20	0	0	720	106	5,231

Monthly attendance figures represent the total number of students recorded in the Faculty of Law Library daily attendance registers. Although the university's academic session officially begins in September, the first several weeks are devoted primarily to convocation, orientation, and departmental and course registration. Consequently, formal academic work and regular library use generally commence towards the end of October, resulting in negligible or no recorded library attendance during September and October. The increase observed in November reflects the commencement of full academic activities.

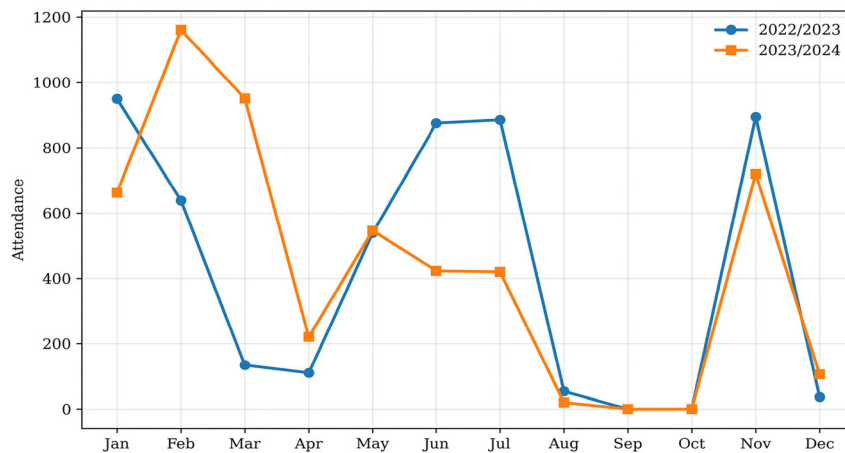


Figure 3: Monthly Attendance Trends (2022/2023–2023/2024). Source: Monthly user statistics computed from the Faculty of Law Library's daily records.

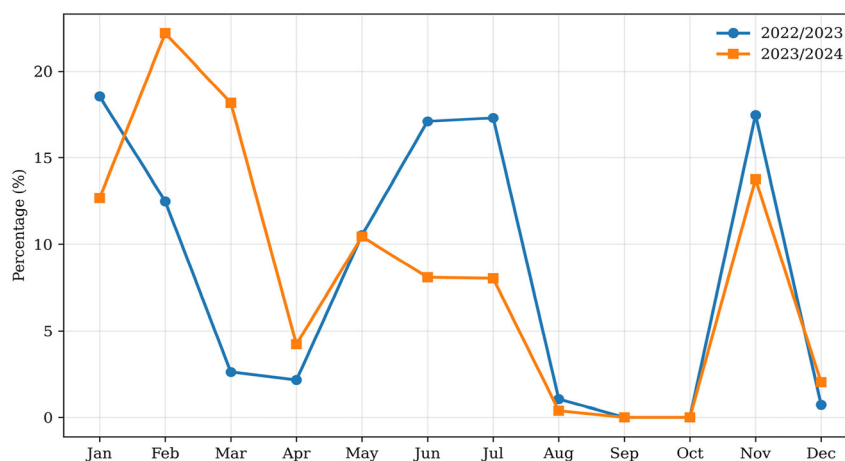


Figure 4: Monthly percentage contributions to annual attendance. Source: Faculty of Law Library daily usage statistics.

Table 3 indicates the number of books consulted during the 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 academic years and offers an idea of law students' use of the Faculty of Law Library's resources. A total of 3,784 books were consulted during the 2022/2023 session, with the peak numbers of books consulted in February (591), June (761), and November (859). These months fall during the academic season, when students are preparing for exams and submitting projects, indicating that students were using the library's print materials extensively for their academic work. Moderate consultation was observed in January (550) and July (413), while extremely low levels (outside of September and October) were exhibited in

March (54), April (87), and August (3), months that fall during semester breaks and transition periods. The trend shows that demand for library materials is more pronounced during the peak period of academic activities – that is, in the middle and final periods of each semester.

However, in the 2023/2024 session, the overall number of books consulted slightly decreased to 3,512, which is a 7.2 % decrease from the previous session. In particular, the highest number of consultations occurred in February (843) and November (702). In March (492) and May (316), moderate use was reported, and in April and June, significantly less, with 116 and 123, respectively. There are no recorded

Table 3: Books consulted by session.

Session	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total books consulted
2022/2023	550	591	54	87	407	761	413	3	0	0	859	59	3,784
2023/2024	464	843	492	116	316	123	211	0	0	0	702	245	3,512

The figures represent the number of books students consulted each month, computed from daily usage logs maintained by library staff; the absence of recorded book consultations for some months reflects the very beginning or end of the academic session. All monthly values represent cumulative totals for the specified reporting period.

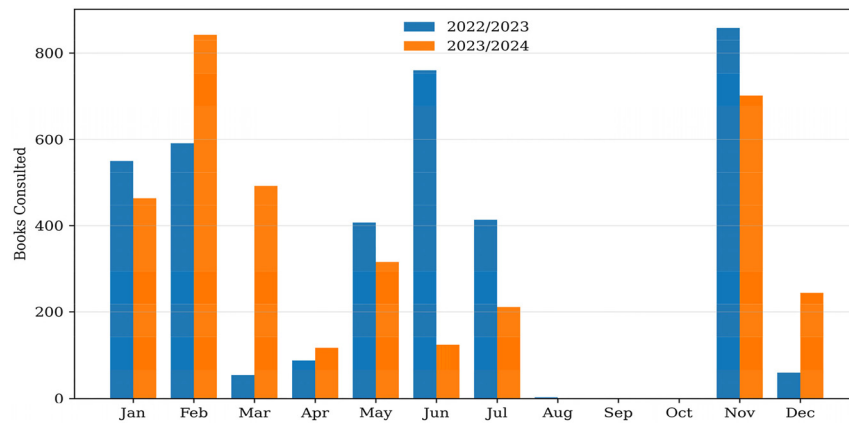


Figure 5: Monthly books consulted (2022/2023–2023/2024). Source: Faculty of Law Library daily usage statistics.

consultations between August and October, as this is the off-season. In general, these tables reflect the book consultation aspect of the conceptual model, which records the levels of interaction that students have with print information resources, giving measurable evidence of the use of information resources. The figures for the consultations are indicative of the extent to which the materials were consulted and illustrate the relationship between resource availability and usage behavior.

Figure 5 compares the number of books consulted each month across the two academic sessions. The bar chart shows clear peaks in February, June, and November, indicating that students utilize more library resources during these periods of the semester.

2. Comparative sessional statistics

Total attendance and books consulted were compared across the two sessions to establish trends in growth or decline. These comparative insights shed light on whether library usage has increased, decreased, or remained stable over time.

An analysis of Table 4 confirms that overall student attendance increased slightly (by about 2.2 %) from 5,120 in 2022/2023 to 5,231 in 2023/2024. The average daily attendance (23 versus 24 users per day) showed a positive trend, indicating consistent student usage of the Faculty of Law Library. But the total number of books consulted during the two sessions decreased, from 3,784 in 2022/2023 to 3,512 in 2023/2024, which is a reduction of 7.2 %. On the same note,

the mean number of books consulted per day decreased to 16, whereas books consulted per 100 students decreased to 67. These results indicate that the number of student visits did not change significantly, but the level of interaction with print materials decreased slightly.

3. Trends and peak usage periods

The trend analysis of attendance and book consultation during the 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 sessions shows evident periodic trends in student interactions with the Faculty of Law Library. As illustrated in Figure 3, attendance increased progressively at the beginning of every semester and reached its peak in February, June, and November when mid-semester tests and examinations were conducted. These peaks signify the times of increased academic life when students used the library extensively for study and research. The slight positive increase in 2023/2024 shows that there is a slight increase in overall attendance, which confirms the pivotal role of the library in academic support. But significant decreases in the March through April and August through October periods are associated with recess, administrative tasks, and the completion of examinations.

Figure 5 indicates that the trend in book consultations is close to that of attendance, with stiffer variation. These peaks occurred during the months of February, June, and November and prove that print material is still useful in law students' coursework and research. On the other hand, outside of September and October, there was low activity in April, August, and December, which were off-peak months.

Table 4: Comparative sessional statistics.

Session	Total attendance	Average daily attendance	Total books consulted	Avg. books/day	Books per 100 students
2022/2023	5,120	23	3,784	17	74
2023/2024	5,231	24	3,512	16	67

This table compares key indicators of library usage across the two academic sessions.

Such trends highlight the importance of responsive library planning, especially for staffing, space allocation, and resource provision in the peak times.

4.3 Analysis of Responses to the Research Questionnaire

Out of the 305 questionnaires distributed to law students, 227 were completed and returned, for a response rate of 74.4 %. This high response rate indicates adequate representation of the study population and supports the findings (Tables 5, 6, and 7).

From the demographic distribution, it is observed that the majority of students were female (86.5 %); male students

made up only 13.5 % of the population. The age distribution shows that the majority of respondents were between 18 and 22 years old (88.5 %), which represented a relatively young group of the undergraduate population. The proportion of people under 18 years old was 7.7 %, while the 23–27 age category was 3.8 %. Academically, the highest number of respondents were in the 300 Level (40.08 %), followed by those in the 400 Level (36.5 %). The 500-Level students comprised 19.2 %, and the 200-Level students comprised 3.8 % of the respondents. The overall demographic profile was young, largely female, and heavily concentrated in the middle and final years of study.

Findings show that a considerable number of law students visit the Faculty of Law Library on a monthly basis (34.8 %), while another 25.6 % visit weekly. A relatively smaller proportion use the library daily (14.1 %), while 25.6 % are rarely there. This distribution suggests that, although the library remains a relevant academic space, most students do not utilize it on a routine, daily basis. Instead, usage appears to be tied to specific academic needs such as assignments, examinations, or research periods. The moderate level of weekly and monthly attendance indicates steady engagement but also highlights opportunities for the library to boost everyday utilization through enhanced services, increased awareness, or improved study environments.

Table 8 presents the responses to the Perceived Quality of Information Resources, Library Services, and Study Environment components of the conceptual model. These perception-based variables represent the mediating factors that influence students' continued use of library resources. The mean scores among all indicators were in the range of 4.13–4.50, which were strong positive views of library services, resources, the environment, and staff interaction. The best ratings were registered under the adequacy of up-to-date legal materials ($M = 4.50$) and the library's contribution to academic success ($M = 4.50$), both at 90 % of the allowable mean. This shows that students not only recognize the relevance of what the library has to offer but also consider the library to be a very important academic tool. Access to electronic resources ($M = 4.48$) and courteous assistance from staff ($M = 4.44$) were also rated highly, which means that students like not only the access to digital resources but also the professionalism and friendliness of the library staff. Some of the other areas that obtained positive ratings were staff competence ($M = 4.35$), staff encouragement to use the library ($M = 4.38$), the comfort and safety of the library ($M = 4.34$), and the convenience of opening hours ($M = 4.28$). Table 9 shows the decision rules for 5-point Likert mean scores.

These results highlight the library's effectiveness, as the library offers a favorable learning environment and

Table 5: Questionnaire response rate and study population.

Category	Population (N)	Respondents (n)	Response rate (%)
Total student population	305	–	–
Questionnaires distributed	305	–	–
Questionnaires returned		227	74.4 %
No response		78	25.6 %
Total	305	227	100 %

Source: Field survey, 2025.

Table 6: Demographic details of respondents.

Demographic variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	196	86.5 %
	Male	31	13.5 %
Age range	Below 18	17	7.7 %
	18–22	201	88.5 %
	23–27	9	3.8 %
Level of study	200 level	9	3.8 %
	300 level	91	40.08 %
	400 level	83	36.5 %
	500 level	44	19.3 %
Total		227	100 %

Source: Field survey, 2025.

Table 7: Frequency of visits to the Faculty of Law library.

Frequency of visits	(n)	Percentage (%)
Daily	32	14.1 %
Weekly	58	25.6 %
Monthly	79	34.8 %
Rarely	58	25.6 %
Total	227	100 %

Source: Field survey, 2025.

Table 8: Analysis of users' perceptions of the quality of services, resources, and the library environment.

Item no.	Engagement indicator	Mean	SD	% of maximum mean score	Decision
5	Courteous assistance	4.44	0.67	88.8 %	Strongly agree
6	Staff are knowledgeable and competent	4.35	0.72	87.0 %	Agree
7	Staff assistance encourages use	4.38	0.70	87.6 %	Agree
8	Adequate and up-to-date legal materials	4.50	0.65	90.0 %	Strongly agree
9	Electronic resources are accessible	4.48	0.69	89.6 %	Strongly agree
10	Helps to find information for assignments/projects/exams	4.31	0.73	86.2 %	Agree
11	Copies of essential law texts are sufficient	4.13	0.80	82.6 %	Agree
12	Library environment is conducive	4.40	0.68	88.0 %	Strongly agree
13	Sufficient seating and space during peak periods	4.25	0.74	85.0 %	Agree
14	Opening hours meet academic needs	4.28	0.71	85.6 %	Agree
15	Library is a comfortable and safe study space	4.34	0.69	86.8 %	Agree
16	Library plays an important role in academic success	4.50	0.66	90.0 %	Strongly agree

Source: Field survey, 2025.

Table 9: Decision rule for 5-point Likert mean scores.

Mean range	Decision	Interpretation
4.50–5.00	Strongly agree	Very high level of satisfaction
3.50–4.49	Agree	Generally positive perception
2.50–3.49	Neutral	Indifferent or uncertain
1.50–2.49	Disagree	Dissatisfaction
1.00–1.49	Strongly disagree	Very strong dissatisfaction

promotes user motivation. The lowest average score ($M = 4.13$; 82.6 %) was tagged to the adequacy of necessary law texts. Despite the Agree category, this result implies that students encounter certain limitations in accessing essential textbooks, especially during peak academic periods. Within the conceptual model, students' perceptions of resource adequacy, staff support, and environmental conditions positively influence their willingness to revisit the library and engage with its services. Therefore, the perception table provides empirical support for the mediating role of satisfaction and service quality in sustaining user engagement. In general, increasing access to the core textbooks can also promote satisfaction and facilitate academic engagement.

5 Discussion of Findings

The results of the research provide an overall perspective of user engagement with the Faculty of Law Library at Redeemer's University by combining usage data with student satisfaction with library services, library resources, and the study environment. Overall, the findings are very consistent with the current literature in academic and law library

engagement, reinforcing both global and Nigerian research trends. The analysis of attendance patterns and book consultations revealed clear, repeated trends driven by the academic calendar, with peak usage occurring during examination and project-intensive months such as February, June, and November. This finding agrees with an earlier study that observed that undergraduates predominantly use information resources in response to academic deadlines.²⁷ Similarly, the increase in evening attendance in 2023/2024 aligns with the argument that library usage patterns often shift in response to students' evolving study schedules and institutional timetables.²⁸

Although total attendance increased slightly between sessions, book consultations decreased by 7.2 %. This pattern may suggest evolving information access preferences among law students, as the survey findings show high ratings for access to electronic resources ($M = 4.48$). Further research incorporating direct measures of electronic resource use is required to confirm such trends. The consistent patterns observed in library attendance records reflect the behavioral dimension of engagement identified in the conceptual model. Similarly, the volume of book consultations provides evidence of students' direct interaction with available resources, confirming the role of resource availability in shaping engagement behavior.

27 Esoswo F. Ogbomo, "Library Use Instruction on Undergraduates' Utilization of Library Resources," *Record and Library Journal* 9, no. 1 (2023): 25–34, <https://doi.org/10.20473/rj.v9-i1.2023.25-34>.

28 Milan Acharya and Kamal Prasad Acharya, "University Students' Reading Habits Through Their Use of Libraries: A Qualitative Study," *Access: An International Journal of Nepal Library Association* 4 (2025): 145–58.

According to Wilson's model, users initiate information-seeking actions when faced with academic or task-related information needs. The recurring peaks in attendance recorded in February, June, and November correspond to intensive examination and coursework periods, suggesting that students' visits to the library were driven by immediate academic information needs. Similarly, the drop in attendance during vacation months is due to decreased academic activity and pressure, further substantiating Wilson's claim that contextual and situational factors have a very strong impact on information-seeking behavior. The slight decline in print book consultation, along with continued high attendance, may also suggest a change in preferred information channels rather than a decrease in information needs, which is in line with Wilson's assertion that users adjust their search strategies according to the resources and conditions available. The results of the survey also show a strong positive perception of library services and resources, with mean scores ranging from 4.13 to 4.50 on a 5-point Likert scale. The high ratings for courteous and knowledgeable staff stress the importance of library staff in creating an environment that fosters learning. The high level of user satisfaction and agreement on the availability of up-to-date legal resources and the importance of the library in academic success also reveal that access to authoritative legal texts has a direct impact on the academic performance of law students.²⁹

Electronic resource accessibility was also highly rated and consistent, which accords with a recent article on the increasing awareness and use of digital legal databases among Nigerian law students.³⁰ However, the relatively lower mean score for sufficiency of essential law textbooks suggests lingering challenges in print collection adequacy, a problem highlighted earlier. Furthermore, the high mean scores recorded for satisfaction with staff assistance, accessibility of electronic resources, and adequacy of study facilities support the perceptual dimension of the model. These positive perceptions indicate that quality resources and supportive services function as enabling factors that sustain repeated library use among law students. The integration of behavioral indicators and perception-based responses therefore validates the multidimensional nature of user engagement as proposed in the conceptual framework.

The strong positive ratings for the physical environment, including comfort, safety, and seating, affirm the role of library ambiance in promoting user engagement.³¹ These results also reflect the principles of the User Engagement Theory, which emphasizes that motivation and satisfaction are shaped by the perceived quality of both resources and the learning environment. The findings indicate that the Faculty of Law Library at Redeemer's University performs exceptionally well in supporting student learning, offering quality services, and providing a conducive study space. Nonetheless, the study highlights the need to expand essential law textbook holdings and to continue strengthening digital resource access. These improvements would enhance users' academic experiences and ensure that the library continues to meet the growing and evolving information needs of law students.

5.1 Practical Implications for Law Librarians

Beyond confirming existing usage trends, the findings of this study also have implications for the practical use of law librarians in the management of legal information services. The consistent patterns of library usage indicate that students still use the traditional library space extensively, particularly during exams. This demonstrates the continued importance of good study facility maintenance, good seating management and planning, the extension of staff working hours during peak times, and the provision of access to essential resources at all times. Such proactive planning can increase user satisfaction and aid academic productivity. Records from book consultations are also valuable for decision-making regarding the development and maintenance of legal collections.

Although print sources are actively used, it is evident that users increasingly rely on electronic resources. In fact, although overall library usage increased by 2.2 % over the two studied academic sessions, consultations of print books decreased by 7.2 %. Students also gave high ratings to access to electronic resources ($M = 4.48$), and there is evidence that they are becoming more dependent on electronic legal databases. Librarians should thus take into account a mix of acquisition policies that will ensure adequate print collections and increase the use of authoritative legal databases and electronic texts. This also involves prioritizing high-use materials while tracking usage statistics and redirecting budgets for high-demand materials.

²⁹ Phayung Meesad and Anirach Mingkhwan, "User experience and engagement in smart digital libraries," in *Libraries in Transformation: Navigating to AI-Powered Libraries* (Springer Nature Switzerland, 2024), 273–326.

³⁰ Ezema and Chizoba, "Electronic library support services," 169.

³¹ Appleton, "Academic libraries," 189.

Lastly, the positive perceptions of staff support and service quality highlight the need for professional user-support services. It is important to note that, in addition to collecting materials and using them, librarians have other roles. Especially, they need to equip students with the requisite knowledge and skills to undertake legal research in a context that ensures their academic success. Thus, the study's results indicate that a continued investment in staff training, especially in the areas of electronic legal research competencies and user education programs, will benefit students' research abilities and library services in general.

5.2 Implications for International Law Library Practice

Even though this study was conducted in one institutional setting, the results can be useful to law libraries in other parts of the world. Law libraries, regardless of location, share similar responsibilities; hence, the engagement patterns found in this study can be applied to practice outside of the immediate context. One significant finding is the recurrent nature of library usage, with attendance and book consultations increasing during exam and project periods. This reflects the typical academic routines of law students and shows the importance of careful planning during busy times. Law libraries in other environments can use this information to anticipate and prepare adequately, possibly by increasing the number of employees and adjusting service hours, as well as providing easy access to frequently utilized materials (e.g., by ensuring closed user access to high-demand materials). The progressive shift to electronic resources and continued reliance on critical print legal resources imply that libraries should build both their online and print resources so they are available to users with different learning styles and research requirements. Last, but not least, the positive images of staff support and the physical learning environment reinforce the uniqueness of professional, user-centered services. User engagement in law libraries in a variety of institutional settings can be improved through investments in staff development, comfortable study spaces, and responsive services.

6 Conclusions

The paper explored the level of engagement of students at the Redeemer's University Faculty of Law Library by

investigating students' usage patterns and how they perceive library services, resources, and the study environment. The results indicate that the library makes a positive and significant contribution to assisting law students in their academic activities. Attendance was regular in all sessions, with the highest use occurring when law students were studying for exams or writing final-year projects. Although the number of books consulted slightly decreased during the second session studied, electronic resource accessibility was still high, suggesting a gradual shift in law students' research habits, with movement towards more digital-based methods.

The results of the survey generally showed a high level of satisfaction with the law library, including the library staff's courtesy and competence, the overall adequacy of law materials, the accessibility of electronic resources, and the availability of a conducive study environment. The results are consistent with previous research that highlighted the importance of a supportive staff, quality collections, and pleasant learning environments to promote library use and student achievement. Although the study findings were generally positive, participants indicated that there was still a need to improve the availability of core law textbooks, particularly during the peak academic periods. The consideration of such gaps will help make the learning process more efficient and the library an even more important academic support facility at Redeemer's University.

6.1 Recommendations

- Expand Core Print Law Textbooks: Add more of the commonly used and needed law textbooks, particularly in high-demand courses and during the year's peak academic periods.
- Enhance Electronic Resource Access: The library should continue adding subscriptions to high-quality online legal databases and offer training on how to use them to their fullest extent.
- Sustain Staff Development: The library management should engage in continuous professional training to keep staff members courteous, knowledgeable, and student-oriented.
- Enhance Peak-Period Resource Management: Management can reduce temporary overcrowding by introducing reservation systems, extending hours, or adding seating during exam periods.
- Encourage User Awareness and Orientation: The library should hold frequent library orientation and information literacy workshops to facilitate resource use.

- **Keep Track of Usage Trends:** Regularly check attendance and book consultations each semester to determine upcoming needs and enhance service planning.

6.2 A Word on the Study's Limitations

This study has some limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the analysis relied mainly on descriptive statistics to summarize patterns in library attendance, book consultations, and user perceptions. While this approach was useful for identifying observable trends, the absence of inferential statistical analysis limits the ability to determine the differences between variables and their relationships. In addition, two types of data were used in the analysis, and both were related to different timeframes. In particular, the questionnaire was administered between October and December 2025, while for assessing the frequency of library visits, statistics were drawn from two academic sessions: 2022/2023 and 2023/2024. Although this combination provided complementary insights into user behavior and library use, the

difference in time coverage should be considered when interpreting direct comparisons between perception-based responses and yearly usage data. Finally, as the study was conducted within one institutional setting, the findings should be interpreted cautiously when applying them to other contexts. At the same time, the findings may still provide useful guidance for similar academic law libraries.

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