

Evaluation of Public Services by its Users of an Academic Library, Lagos State University (LASU), Ojo, Nigeria

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Abstract - Academic libraries focus on meeting their users' expectations through the provision of resources and services necessary for their intensification and improvement. Academic libraries engage in evaluation of their services by users for service improvements. Evaluation in academic libraries refers to a set of methods, skills and tools employed to unearth how users perceive their products and services before, during and after users' interactions with them. This study investigates users' evaluation of public services of the library in Lagos State University (LASU), Ojo. The researchers adopted a survey research method and used a structured questionnaire for data collection. The study population consisted of registered library users who are students from various faculties in the institution. 450 copies of the questionnaires were distributed among the users in their respective faculties. 356 copies of the questionnaire were completed and returned. Simple percentage and frequency counts were used for data analysis. The findings of the study revealed types of public services rendered by the library as reference services, 96%, circulation services 100% and, digital reference services, 75.6%. On the level of user's satisfaction with the services rendered by the library, respondents indicated that they are satisfied with the circulation services and, lending services among others. The researchers recommend that the library should conduct regular users' evaluation to determine users' satisfaction with the library services. The management of the library should organise regular training for members of staff of the library on how to relate with users and accommodate their information needs.

Keyword: User's Evaluation-Academic Libraries, Academic Library-Public Services, Academic Library

I. INTRODUCTION

Library serves as sources of information to its patrons through the provision of diverse information resources and services that can meet the information needs of its users. This is part of the goals and objectives of libraries. Academic libraries are types of libraries established to provide for the teaching and research needs of its users and parent bodies. Academic libraries serve two complementary purposes, they support the academic curriculum of the institution and, provide support for researchers and students. Academic libraries provide various services for the growth of their users and focusing on meeting users' expectations. According to Okiy (2012), libraries are established in academic institutions and are seen as the heart of the institutions and no other single non-human factor is as

closely related to the quality of infrastructure for education as the library. Furthermore, Ogbuiyi and Okpe (2013) stated that a library in an academic institution is a place where academic information sources are acquired, organized, processed, stored and made available to meet the information needs of the students, teachers and the entire university community. A university library is set up to serve its parent institution and it is considered as an organ around which all academic activities revolve and therefore the library can aptly be described as the heart of the institution. Thus, for an academic library to frequently meet the needs of and satisfies her users, the library must be evaluated regularly by the users and other stakeholders.

Katsirikou & Skiadas (2010) revered to user evaluation as a gathering of methods, skills and tools utilized to uncover how a person perceives a system (product, service, non-commercial item, or a combination of them) before, during and after interacting with it. The evaluation focused on aspects such as programs, products and projects. A library provides various services to satisfy the patron's needs for information. The services offered by the library to the public are accessed through the public services section or division. Found in the public services section are readers and reference units. User satisfaction and optimum use of resources have become important areas for libraries to maintain awareness of. Many libraries especially the university libraries are focusing on the evaluation of the users' needs and their satisfaction with their services. This has made user surveys useful in determining the perceptions of service quality in libraries. Also, constant evaluation of the university libraries use is the surest way of ensuring that information is obtained to find out whether the library is meeting its anticipated goals so that adjustments should be made where necessary for effective information service delivery. In this regards, Emokiniov and Ogunrobi (2012) regarded the purpose of evaluation as to assemble information on how the library is meeting its objectives and to improve on service delivery. The library of Lagos State University was established with the University to serve the parent institution by providing information resources and services to meet its users' information needs. These purposes can be routed if its users are not contented with the resources and services provided in the Library. Consequent upon this, the need for this study becomes very essential. It

has become necessary to evaluate the users' satisfaction with the resources provided and services rendered by the Library of Lagos State University.

II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Periodic and regular evaluation of functions, resources and services of academic libraries make them to adjust with the current trends in information services delivery and to meet the information needs of their users. For the Library of the Lagos State University to remain relevant to her users, enjoy optimal utilization of her resources, and, to justify the huge statutory spending on it, the library has to be regularly evaluated by her users and other stakeholders in the University. There is no evidence in the literature that the Library has been evaluated in recent time hence, the need for this study. This study evaluated public services of the Library of the Lagos State University (LASU), Lagos, Nigeria from the perspectives of her registered users.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the types of public services rendered by the University Library.
2. To find out the extent of the users' awareness of services rendered in the public services section of the University Library.
3. To find out the level of the users' satisfaction with the services rendered in the University Library.
4. To establish the challenges faced by users in accessing services rendered in the public services section of the University Library.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the types of services rendered to members of the University public by the Library?
2. Are the users aware of services in the public services section of the Library of the University?
3. What are the levels of the users' satisfaction with the services rendered in the public services section of the University Library?
4. What are the challenges faced by users in accessing services rendered in the public services section of the University Library?

V. LITERATURE REVIEW

An academic library is established in tertiary institution to render information services that will enhance teaching and learning activities, meet the information needs of researchers, students, academic staff, and community. Academic library, therefore, is a type of library found in institutions of higher learning; universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education. Men & Israel (2017), opined that the primary purpose of the academic libraries is to support teaching, learning, and research in ways dependable and support the institution's goals. The libraries are often considered the most important resource centre of an

academic institution. Bello (2014) affirmed that the role of an academic library is to provide reference services and lending materials appropriate to the needs of the users, it also provides education. Bello also noted that the role of modern academic libraries ranges from conserving knowledge, teaching, researching and developing publication to promote academic visibility.

Afolabi (2014) opines that University libraries derive their mission from that of the parent organization, the university. The vision, mission, and strategies which are selected by universities as a guide for meeting the core functions of teaching, learning, research and providing community service form with the foundation on which the role of the university library is based. University libraries play a prominent role in providing information services in various forms to students, lecturers and researchers. Okunu, Akalumhe, and Monu (2011) supported that the university library is the heart and blood of the university; therefore it is imperative to satisfy users' information needs.

User satisfaction may lead users to always using the library and recommending it to other users. Boakye, (2013) opined that user satisfaction is considered as a reliable measure for determining library effectiveness. This is important for libraries to make users satisfaction their watchword to achieve the aim of establishing the library in the institution. In the same vein, Iwhihu&Okorodudu (2012) describes different factors which contribute to user satisfaction such as availability of up-to-date information, easy access to information needs, conducive learning environment and assistance by librarians. The users should find the environment user friendly and comfortable.

Adeniran (2011) stated that libraries are service-oriented organizations established for the provision of relevant information resources and quality services to meet their users' information needs. Therefore Adeniran described users as the reason for library existence. Meeting the information needs of users requires the provision of the actual information resources and services that will satisfy the needs of users. Several factors influence user's satisfaction such as responsiveness, competence, assurances, tangibles and resources (Sowole, 2007). Sowole further stated that librarians are to make maximum efforts to ensure that library users derived the best possible benefits from the services rendered. Afolabi (2014) opined that meeting information needs of users is an essential task at this technological era of information. The libraries need to re-orient their collections, services, and facilities to keep pace with these advancements. User feedback is considered as a more reliable factor in measuring the utility and effectiveness of any library. This is the reason that library user surveys have become widespread in academic libraries. Surveys have often been used as a tool to assess service quality and user satisfaction. By making user surveys a regular part of the library's functions, librarians can provide a comparative 'snapshot' of usage in various temporal contexts.

Udoaku & John (2013) affirms that the library provides materials to support and enrich the curriculum, expand the horizon of the students and stimulate their critical and inventive faculties. The Librarian needs to draw a correlation between the quality and quantity of intellectual resources available and the quantity of scholarship and research output in Universities, this is why the quality of the Nigerian university education is on the decline because the employer rating of Nigeria graduate is low (World Bank 2001).

Information and educational resources of a nation determine the qualities of its teachers. Therefore providing information services by the library enhances the achievement of educational objectives of a nation. The library can only measure its achievement by evaluating services rendered to its users.

Emokiniov and Ogunrobi (2012), stated that library evaluation as the process whereby we systematically collect and analyze information about students' perceived use of libraries by using evidence (testing), numerical values to the evidence which involve measurement and using the results to make decisions as an act of assessment. Also, Lakos (2012) asserts that library evaluation is a process undertaken by libraries to learn about the needs of users (and non-users) and to assess how well they support these needs, to improve library facilities, services and resources. The purpose of the evaluation is to gather information on how the library is accomplishing its objectives to improve the delivery of library services (Emokiniov and Ogunrobi, 2012). There are two main methods for the evaluation of a library's effectiveness or the measurement of its performance. These are subjective and objective methods.

The subjective method or approach primarily depends on users' opinions or attitudes to measure the effectiveness of a library. Normally, such opinions or attitudes are ascertained by methods used in marketing research, which are the use of questionnaire or interviews or both. As a result, the subjective approach takes the user as the unit of analysis. The assumption here is that these user evaluations are valid indicators of library performance.

According to Nwachukwu (2004) the phenomenon when observed that the changes in information and processes of access, storage, transmission, reproduction and libraries must acquire relevant skills and competence in the application of the skills to the use of ICT in providing reference services to users. In another vein, Shibanda (2001) also opines that information managers, especially academic who must build on positive aspects of the information era while alleviating the negative aspects of globalization.

Gruba (2007) is of the view that the changing role requires that librarians learn new ways of performing their duties and being computer literacy is paramount to library professionals in Nigeria and other developing countries.

VI. METHODOLOGY

This study investigated users' evaluation of the public services section of the Library of the Lagos State University in Lagos state, Nigeria. The researchers employed a survey research method and used a structured questionnaire as instruments for data collection. The population was students from various faculties in the institution that are registered as library users. Four hundred and fifty (450) copies of the questionnaire were randomly distributed to the respondents across all the faculties in the University out of which three hundred and fifty six (356) copies of the questionnaire were retrieved and found usable. Simple percentage and frequency count were used to analyses the data.

VII. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

TABLE I DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONDENTS

	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Faculty	Social Sciences	36	10.1
	Management	37	10.4
	Arts	35	9.8
	Sciences	38	10.7
	Law	54	9.6
	Engineering	31	8.7
	Education	37	10.4
	Communication	36	10.1
	Transportation	37	10.4
	Medicine	35	9.8
	Total	356	100
Gender	Male	159	44.7
	Female	197	55.3
	Total	356	100
Level of Study	200	92	25.8
	300	89	25.0
	400	93	26.1
	500	82	23.1
	Total	356	100
Age Distribution	Below 25 years	246	69.0
	26 – 30 years	82	23.0
	31 – 40 years	25	7.0
	Above 40 years	03	1.0
	Total	356	100

Table I presented the demographic analysis of the respondents. The table indicates that the respondents were evenly distributed among the faculties of the Universities. Faculty of Law has the highest number of respondents. This is followed by the faculties of Sciences, Education and, Transportation respectively. The Gender distribution table above shows that most of the respondents were female (55.3%). Distribution of respondents by their respective level of study indicated that Four hundred (400) levels students have the highest percentage of 26.0%, followed by 200 levels with 25.8% and 300 levels with 25.0%. Lastly, on the demographic information of the respondents, the Table indicates that the majority of the respondents, 69.0%, were below 25 years old. Only 3.0% of them were above 40 years.

TABLE II TYPES OF PUBLIC SERVICES RENDERED BY THE ACADEMIC LIBRARY

Services	Agree	Disagree	Mean	SD
Circulation	356 (100%)	-	2.00	.94
Loaning	356 (100%)	-	2.00	1.21
Electronic	356 (100%)	-	2.00	1.02
Photocopying	352 (98.9%)	4 (1.1%)	1.99	1.06
Library orientation	351 (98.6%)	5 (1.4%)	1.98	.83
Reference	345 (96.9%)	11 (3.1%)	1.97	1.09
Bindery	302(84.8%)	54 (15.2%)	1.84	1.31
Document delivery	288 (80.9%)	68 (19.1%)	1.81	.74
Library bulletin and newsletters	205 (57.6%)	151 (42.4%)	1.58	1.01
Notification of new arrival	105 (29.5%)	251(70.5%)	1.29	1.06
Renewal of library services	105 (29.5%)	251 (70.5%)	1.29	.95
Digital reference	87 (24.4%)	267 (75.6%)	1.24	.69
Inter-library loan	56 (16.6%)	297 (83.4%)	1.15	1.04
Computer literacy skills	55 (15.4%)	301 (84.6%)	1.15	1.03

Table II revealed the respondents' awareness of the various types of public services rendered by the library in LASU. All the respondents (100%) were aware of circulation services, lending and, electronic services. These were

followed by photocopying 98.6%, library orientation 98.6% and reference services 96.9%. Computer literacy skills training had the least awareness among the respondents with 15.4%

TABLE III LEVEL OF USER'S SATISFACTION ON THE SERVICE RENDERED BY THE ACADEMIC LIBRARY

Services	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Undecided	Mean	SD
Reference	295 (82.9%)	30 (8.4%)	31 (8.7%)		3.74	.234
Circulation	254 (71.3%)	102 (28.7%)	-	-	3.71	.272
Electronic	244 (68.5%)	112 (31.5%)	-	-	3.69	.745
Renewal of library books	152 (42.7%)	145 (40.7%)	30 (8.4%)	29 (8.2%)	3.18	.623
Photocopying	146 (41.0%)	210 (59.0%)	-	-	3.41	.478
Bindery	126 (35.4%)	176 (49.4%)	54 (15.2%)	-	3.20	.812
Computer literacy skills	112 (31.5%)	114 (32.0%)	111 (31.2%)	19 (5.3%)	2.89	.817
Loaning	99 (27.8%)	257 (72.2%)	-	-	2.88	.759
Library orientation	78 (21.9%)	259 (72.8%)	9 (2.5%)	10 (2.8%)	2.87	.821
Library bulletin and newsletters	25 (7.0%)	37 (10.4%)	105 (29.5%)	189 (53.1%)	1.71	.742
Document delivery	22 (6.2%)	102 (28.7%)	154 (43.3%)	78 (21.9%)	1.70	.689
Digital reference	21 (5.9%)	43 (12.1%)	220 (61.8%)	72 (20.2%)	1.69	.678
Inter-library loan	5 (1.4%)	8 (2.2%)	295 (82.9%)	48 (13.5%)	1.65	.825
Notification of new arrival	-	1 (0.3%)	112 (31.5%)	243 (68.2%)	1.31	.636

Table III above indicated the level of user satisfaction with the services rendered by the library in LASU. The result revealed that majority of the respondents 82.9% expressed their satisfaction with the library reference services. This was closely followed by circulation services 71.3% and

electronic services 68.5% respectively. The respondents, however, were not satisfied with the interlibrary loan services of the library 1.4% and notification of new arrival services.

TABLE IV CHALLENGES FACED BY USERS IN ACCESSING PUBLIC SERVICES

Challenges	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Mean	SD
Lack of current resources in the collection	189 (53.1%)	102(28.7%)	42(11.8%)	23(6.5%)	3.28	.923
Little/No assistance from the library staff	159 (44.7%)	102(28.7%)	47(13.2%)	48(13.5%)	3.04	.913
The library is deficient in electronic/online library services	115 (32.3%)	53(14.9%)	156(43.8%)	32 (9%)	2.70	.874
Poor organization of the library	112 (31.6%)	147(41.3%)	55(15.4%)	42(11.8%)	2.69	.842
Poor organization of the materials on the shelves	105 (29.5%)	47(13.2%)	179 (50.3%)	25(7.0%)	2.65	.657
The library staff are not friendly and therefore scare users away from the library	102 (28.7%)	111(31.2%)	79 (22.2%)	64(18.0%)	2.64	.831
Users are not educated on how to use the library.	97 (27.2%)	127(35.8%)	45(12.6%)	87(24.4%)	2.63	.826
Collections are not relevant	92 (25.9%)	179(50.3%)	85(23.9%)	-	2.63	.637
The library environment is not conducive/friendly for reading and learning.	56 (15.7%)	46(13.0%)	143(40.2%)	111(31.2%)	2.49	.635
The library has no guide to direct users to appropriate sections of the library.	28 (7.9%)	47(13.2%)	179(50.3%)	102(28.7%)	2.38	.561
The library has little or no resources in my course of study	17 (4.8%)	-	302(84.8%)	37 (10.4%)	2.19	.574
Ineffectiveness of the library catalogue	-	56(15.7%)	255(71.6%)	45(12.6%)	2.03	.610
The library is usually dark and this discourages reading	-	12(3.4%)	321(90.2%)	23(6.5%)	1.97	.603

Table IV reveals the challenges encountered by the respondents in accessing the public services rendered by the university library. Majority of the respondents (53.1%) considered inadequate collections as a major challenge to their usage of the library. This is followed by 44.7% of the respondents who indicated that the issue of little/no assistance from the library staff as a challenge and 32.3% of the respondents stated that deficient in electronic/online library services is a challenge faced by library users.

VIII. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The findings of this study exposed the various types of public services rendered by the university library in LASU. These services include circulation, lending, library bulletin and newsletters, reference services, photocopying and electronic services. This finding supported Hussaini, Vashistha, & Jima, (2018) who study awareness and utilization of library resources by library users of Nims University Central Library, Jaipur, India, the study revealed that users were aware of various types of services rendered in the library. The study revealed that the level of users' satisfaction on the service rendered by the university library in LASU. The findings indicate that users are satisfied with library orientation services, lending services and circulation services, provision of electronic resources. However, the findings suggested that the library needs to improve on services like inter-library loan service, digital services and, document delivery services to satisfy her users' information need. Users' satisfaction may lead users to frequently use the library and recommending it to other users. The result of this finding corroborated the findings of Tiemo&Ateboh

(2016) who investigated Users' Satisfaction with Library Information Resources and Services in a case study College of Health Sciences Library Niger Delta University, Amassoma, Nigeria. The authors revealed that users were satisfied with the services rendered in the library. In the same vein, Otonekwu, Saliu, & Oyedokun, (2019) in a study carried out on evaluation of user's satisfaction with reference services in selected Federal University Libraries in Southeastern Nigeria also affirmed that users were satisfied with reference services in the libraries. Also Boakye (2013), user satisfaction is considered as a reliable criterion for determining library effectiveness.

Thus, libraries need to make users satisfaction their watchword to achieve the aim of establishing the library in the institution. This finding also revealed that users are faced with some challenges while using the public services in Lagos State University Library such as inadequate collections, the problem of little/no assistance from the library staff while using the library services, deficient in electronic/online library services, the ineffectiveness of the library catalogue, poor user education among others. These findings are in conjunction with Mahwasane & Mudzielwana (2016) who investigated challenges of students in accessing information in the library. A brief review, the finding revealed that users faced challenges such as poor knowledge on how to use information retrieval skills, insufficient user education. Khan&Bhatti (2012) study also reported that library users are faced with various challenges while accessing library resources such as inadequate information resources, not conducive physical environment, and unfriendly library staff.

IX. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The major role of an academic library in a university is to satisfy the information needs of its users and provides all materials that will enable the parent institution to achieve the aims and goals of its establishment. Therefore, the library serves as the heartbeat of the institution. The analysis of data used for this study revealed that users were satisfied with most of the services provided by the library at Lagos State University (LASU). However, there is a need for the library to improve on some services identified by the users as poor.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. The library should make it a point of duty to frequently carry out the users' evaluation to determine their satisfaction with the library services.
2. The library should improve on the delivery of its services to users as this will portraint the good image of the library.
3. The library management should organize regular training for library staff on how to relate and accommodate various categories of users to satisfy their information needs.
4. The library management should focus more on Library instruction program to target undergraduate students who are most in need of assistance in the use of library resources and services.
5. The library management should encourage library staff to acquire more skills that will enable them to meet with the advent technology.
6. The library management should improve in public services render and library staff should be friendlier by assisting the users in search of information needs.

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