

# Usage and Perception of Information Resources and Services among Academic Staff of Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe, Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

*This study adopts the survey design to examine the usage and perception of the information resources and services among academic staff of Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe. The aim is to establish whether the information resources and services provided by the polytechnic satisfy the need of the staff or not. Simple random sampling technique is used to select a sample size of 100 respondents. A total of 100 copies of questionnaire were administered to the academic staff in the three schools (school of business administration; school of engineering and school of applied sciences and technology) of the polytechnic and 95 were retrieved giving a 95% response rate. The data collected are presented in tables and analyzed using simple percentage and frequency count. The outcome of the study shows that academic staff do not make frequent use of the information resources and services of the Delta State Polytechnic Otefe library. It is also revealed that the Delta State Polytechnic Otefe library houses only print information resources. Moreover the academic staff are highly dissatisfied with the quality of information resources and services offered by the Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe library. The study therefore suggests that the Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe library be equipped with information resources and services that are expected of an academic library in the digital age to maintain her relevance in the polytechnic community.*

**Keywords:** Information resources, information services, academic staff, academic library, usage and perception

## INTRODUCTION

In every tertiary institution, the library is conceived as the knowledge base of the institution. The place of the library is so crucial in a tertiary institution such that a tertiary institution cannot take off without a library. The libraries in tertiary institutions also referred to as academic libraries occupy central positions in tertiary institutions in the world and principally perform their basic role of supporting higher education core missions of education and research (Adigun, Zakari, and

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Tamboge, 2010). The best way to judge an academic institution is to look at its library (Eyaufe, 2014). In recent years, the academic libraries have been transformed to provide 'technology and content ubiquity' as well as individualized support (Neal, 2009). Consequently, they are expected to be well equipped to engage students' curricular, extra-curricular and social experiences. The academic library in this digital era is expected to provide current and up to date information at the right time and formats in line with international best practices so as to create the enabling environment for students and tertiary institutions to compete effectively with counterparts at the international level. Academic libraries according to Deakin University (1997) (in Macauley and McKnight, n.d.) are simultaneously collections of books and other information resources for use by users and the generality of members of the academic community; the main research laboratory for majority of researchers in every field of study and a key locus of training for information literacy as the age of electronic information demands advanced skills in seeking, evaluating and use of information resources.

The advent of ICT and consequent global digitization also brought with it change in the method knowledge is generated, diffused and used. As a consequence, the perceptions and expectations of users of knowledge and information have changed. Dehigama and Dharmarathne (2015) aver that development in the digital technology and increasing development of electronic publishing have dramatically changed the perceptions and practices related to access of libraries resources and services. This change is inevitable as sticking to the old method will sooner or later make one obsolete and alienate one from the real world. Therefore, academic libraries all over the world are seen to have moved with the trend (Otubelu and Ume, 2015). Although studies suggest that academic libraries in Africa are found to be behind in this regard, some universities and polytechnics nonetheless have made commendable efforts in the development of digital libraries (Adekiya and Adyemo, 2006; Otubelu and Ume, 2015).

The Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe and its academic library were established in 1992 amid the euphoria of the importance of information communication technology and benefits of digital library. The Polytechnic library took off in a temporary site and later moved to her present site on February 1, 2008. The Otefe Polytechnic library houses mainly print information resources of about ten thousand books and journals and operate manual library system ([www.dspgportal.edu.ng](http://www.dspgportal.edu.ng)). The major development recorded by the library in the area of digitization is the contribution of 100 desktop computers donated to her by a nongovernmental Organization. There is an ongoing project to provide internet connection by the school administration. It is hoped that at the completion of the ongoing project users will be able to have access to the internet. However, it is not clear yet the extent of internet services that users will be able to get at the completion of the project.

It is evident that technological advancement and electronic publishing

have drastically altered the information landscape. It is also evident that the present phenomena in the world of information has compelled most academic libraries in the world to change their mode of information services and now provide information resources in diverse formats. Simply put, most academic libraries have adopted digital library system to complement the traditional manual system. There are also empirical evidences suggesting that the perceptions of users of academic libraries have also changed following the change in the world of information. The challenge, however, is that, it is not certain whether the perception the users of Delta State Polytechnic library have changed in the present digital era. Being a manual library operating in the present digital era, how do users perceive the information services provided to them? This study therefore examines the usage and perception of library information resources and services among academic staff of the Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe with the aim of establishing if the information resources and services provided by the library satisfy their needs in this digital era.

The study is significant as the perceptions of the academic staff of the present state of the academic library will be revealed. Secondly, information relating to information needs of the academic staff in the digital age of the institution will be revealed; this will guide the library and polytechnic management in equipping the library. Finally there seems to be paucity in the studies that specifically investigate the perceptions of Polytechnic library users this study will fill this gap in literature as well as contributing to the ongoing discussion on the need to digitize academic libraries in developing countries.

To achieve the above, the study will address the following specific objectives:

1. To ascertain the perception of the academic staff of Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe towards the information resources and services provided by the library in this digital era.
2. To examine the level of satisfaction the academic staff of Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe derive from information resources and services provided by her academic library in this digital era.
3. To ascertain if the Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe library is able to maintain her relevance in the research and educational activities of the academic staff in this digital era.

Hence, the study seeks to address the following questions:

1. What is the academic staff perception of the Delta State Polytechnic Otefe library in this digital era?
2. Are the academic staff satisfied with information resources and services provided by the Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe library in this digital era?
3. Is the Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe library able to retain her relevance in the research and educational activities of academic staff of the Polytechnic in this digital era?

## **Academic Libraries and Information Resources**

Libraries all over the world are known to amass large collections of published and unpublished information materials for their users' communities and users in turn circulate materials among themselves through formal and informal networks (Womack, 2002). The academic library like every other library is established to provide information materials and services that a single individual may find difficult to provide for himself. The academic library is established primarily to satisfy the information needs of members of her institution. Therefore as Fuhr *et al* (2007) point out, the information needs of users are central to every library therefore efforts to stock and upgrade libraries should be done based on the information needs, characteristics and contexts of end users in order to ensure acceptance from the end users. The concept of academic library services values according to Namugera (2014) is hinged on the values for users in terms of information provision for support and contribution; value for parent institution in contribution to missions, visions and goals of the institution and value for effort made in financial investment. Cook and Fred (2001) point out that in an age of accountability, that it is more important now than ever before for library administrators all over the world, when libraries are experiencing budget cut; to assess the quality of the services they provide from the perspectives of users. In line with the above, Berling and Cudd (1967) make it clear that the library user is the most reliable source to determine whether the library is playing its role satisfactorily or not.

With the advent of digital library and electronic information resources the use of physical libraries especially in developed countries has been reported to be declining (Kelly and Orr, 2003). The fact that digital library and electronic information resources allow remote access to information outside the library (Troll, 2002) and absence of the use of shelf space, shelving and re-shelving of books further buttress this fact. Similarly, Jackson, Sung, Grays and Thornton (2005) reiterate that the progress in technology has made library users become even shrewder in information search and use, as such they no longer see the need to always visit the physical library. Thanuskodi (2011) states in clear terms that at present, academic library users find it more convenient to use electronic information resources than traditional print resources. Simisaye's (2012) research on the faculty use of university library resources at the Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, Ogun State, Nigeria also reveals a low use of the academic library. The study identifies nonavailability of relevant information resources, un-conducive reading environment, insufficient ICT application, unstable power supply as the most prominent reasons for avoiding the use of the library. The outcome of the study indicates the use of the physical library and her resources has declined giving way to online search and use of information.

Mustafa and Amuthan (2014) in their study of faculty insight on the ALHOSN university library services found that a significant number of (40%)

faculty members rarely visit the library while 39% visit the physical library once a month. The study finds that respondents' infrequent visit to physical library is as a result of the non-availability of needed electronic and print information resources and as such the library is not supportive of their research activity.

Olajide and Fabunmi (2011) in a study of lecturers' perception of the adequacy of resources and services of the University of Ado-Ekiti library discovered that majority of the lecturers studied perceived the library's resources as inadequate and not satisfied with most services offered at the library. The indices of the result shows that only 22%, 4%, 28% 24% and 22% of respondents found the library services (current awareness, indexing and abstracting, answering of users' queries, user education and library display and publicity services respectively) satisfactory. The authors conclude by advising library management to improve on the library automation to improve access to needed information sources and services. Only by so doing that lecturers satisfaction can be achieved. Similarly, Ikolo (2015) studied users' satisfaction with library services at the Delta State University Library, Abraka and discovers that participants who included academic staff perceived the services offered at the library to be inadequate and below standard. This is partly due to the fact that the library is yet to provide access to electronic information resources which is presently the most preferred form of information as indicated by literature and supported by information communication technology.

Okiki (2013) on the other hand, investigates the availability of information resources for research output in 12 academic libraries from the 6 geo-political zones in Nigeria. The study examines the perceptions of academic staff and finds that respondents from the 12 universities unanimously perceive the resources of their respective academic libraries to be adequate in terms of availability and access of information. The study result shows that in all universities included in the study the respondents on the basis of percentage are identical in terms of availability of major print and electronic information sources. The positive perception of the academic staff towards academic library resources is undoubtedly due to the ability of the libraries to meet their patrons print and electronic information needs. Walton, Frances, Matt, Liz and Helen (2012) carried out a survey at the Loughborough University Library to assess users' frequency of use of physical library, frequency of use of digital library and satisfaction levels with 15 other library services. Respondents included academic staff from all academic schools of the university. It was observed from the study that only 16% of respondents visit the physical library on a daily basis. 90% of academic staff agreed to use the library's online resources every week while 91% of respondents either strongly or slightly agreed that the library overall services was satisfactory. The indication is that as a result of the convenience associated with the access, retrieval and use of online resources, academic staff at the Loughborough University can now access library's online information resources without visiting

the physical structure. Reed and Tanner (2001) similarly finds that academics from the fine art faculty at the Texas Tech University are of the view that the physical visit to the library will sooner or later become obsolete. Kumar (2012) finds from a survey of users' satisfaction and service quality of the university libraries in Kerela that users are only moderately satisfied with the quality of services offered at the university libraries. It was recommended from the outcome of the study that the libraries improve on modernization, digitization of rare materials, building of digital building repository and apply information technology (IT) in rendering services. These will help place the library in a position to showcase her services.

Iwhiwhu and Okorodudu (2012) submit that the perception of a user towards a library is shaped by the quality of the information product(s) received, the quality of the information retrieval tools and library services provided to access required information. The point stressed is that academic staff needs also include the type, format and quality of information; as these factors ensure convenience and ease of use of an information source. Abagai (1993) submits that library use by patrons and indeed their satisfaction with library services and resources depend on the availability of educating and informative materials, conducive environment and competent library personnel. The success of a library can only be measured in terms of the satisfaction her users derive from using her resources. The needs and expectations of academic staff are essential in assessing the quality of the academic library as their (academic staff) role is crucial in the development and nurturing of students to becoming well groomed individuals.

## **METHOD**

This study employs survey method with the use of questionnaire as means of data collection. Simple random sampling technique is used to distribute copies of the questionnaire to 100 academic staff drawn from the three schools of the Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe. The three schools are School of Business Administration (50), School of Engineering (15) and School of Applied Sciences and Technology (35). School of business administration is the largest with the highest number of departments and academic staff. This is followed by School of Applied Science and Technology; hence the disparity in the number of participants. A total number of 95 copies of questionnaire were retrieved and found usable making a response rate of 95% percentage was achieved. Quantitative data collected were analyzed using simple percentage and organized in tables.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Table 1 shows the detail of the breakdown of the academic staff according to their schools. The table reveals that 50.5% academic staff responded from the

school of business studies, while 33.7% responded from the school of applied sciences and technology and from the school of engineering 15.8% response rate was recorded. Table 2 gives a detail of respondents visit to the library. From the table, 33.7% respondents indicate that they visit the library occasionally. Only 10.5% of the entire respondents visit the library daily. While those that visit the library 2-3 times a week and 2-3 times a month is 15.5% and 31.6% respectively. Some (8.4%) had never visited the library. It is obvious from the table that majority of the respondents do not visit the library frequently.

Table 3 shows the result of respondents' responses to the availability of information resources and services. All the respondents affirmed the availability of books, journals, serials and reference sources in the library as well as affirming the absence of internet connectivity and other electronic information resources. Regarding information services offered, all respondents affirmed the non-availability of the following services: online search service, electronic document delivery service, interlibrary service, audio/visual service, ICT training for users, current awareness and workshop service, customer care service, and selective dissemination of information. Reference service is affirmed by all the respondents to be available in the library. The result reveals that the Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe library stock mainly print information resources. The internet and other electronic information resources are not available at the Polytechnic library. The result also indicates the absence of important information services required by users for easy and effective use of library resources.

As regards the quality of information resources and services provided by the polytechnic library the result presented in table 4 reveals that about 47% feel that the library does not provide up to date and current information resources in recent research areas. Only 21% agreed to this assertion. However, 54.7%, 73.7% and 52.7% disagree to the assertion that the library provides up to date and current print books and journals and reference sources respectively. The result also reveals that majority of the respondents (87.4%) do not agree that library environment is conducive for reading. Important information services such as current awareness service and workshop 68.4%; customer care service 57.9%; are viewed to be below standard. The overall result presented in this table implies that while most needed information resources and services are not available in the Delta State Polytechnic library, Otefe the few ones available are either inadequate, low quality or below standard. Table 5 above reveals that 33.7% is satisfied with the library's book collection while 18.9% and 47.4% are dissatisfied and neither satisfied or dissatisfied respectively. Regarding journals collection, electronic sources and general information services and products of the library 52.6%; 73.7%; 65.2% are highly dissatisfied. 52.6% and 42.1% are highly satisfied with library's staff behaviour towards users and library's lighting and ventilation respectively while 94.7% and 84.2% are dissatisfied with the functional organization of the library and user/marketing orientation of the library respectively. The result reveals further

that 84.2% and 73.7% of the respondents expressed high dissatisfaction with computer/networking facilities and sitting arrangement of the library. The overall result indicates that academic staff express high dissatisfaction with the state of information resources and services at the Delta State Polytechnic library, Otefe.

Respondents were given the opportunity to state their expectations of a library that will cater for the educational and research needs of academic staff in the present digital age. Respondents identified the provision of access to internet and other electronic information resources 97.9% followed by provision of modern ICT and library equipment-96.8% as priority on their most needed items listed. Other items identified in order priority include expansion of library space and creation of conducive reading environment 94.7%; users'/marketing orientation 84.2%; provision of interlibrary services 82.1%; provision of up to date and current books and journals 77.9%; academic staff involvement in collection development 73.7%; improvement on general service delivery 73.7% and improvement on current awareness services and workshop.

The findings of the study reveal that more than half of the entire study population 50.5% is from the school of business studies. The reason is not farfetched. Business studies is the most populated school both student and staff wise followed by Applied sciences and Technology and Engineering schools. It was found out that the general library visit by academic staff is low. Only 10.5% respondents visit the library daily. While the majority 33.7% make occasional visit to the library. It can be inferred that the academic staff of the Polytechnic view the library as not capable of satisfying their information and research needs thus may be satisfying their needs through other means hence their infrequent visit to the Polytechnic library.

On the availability of information resources, respondents unanimously confirmed that the Polytechnic library, Otefe stocks only printed information resources. The internet and other electronic information resources and service are noticeably nonexistent at the polytechnic library, Otefe. Also the result of the study reveals that majority 47.3% of the academic staff rate the quality of information resources and services at the Polytechnic library, Otefe as low, as only an insignificant number 21% of the population agreed that the library provides current and up to date information resources in recent research areas; while 31.6% are not sure. 87.4% perceive the library environment as not conducive for reading and learning. Majority of the academic staff perceive the library's current awareness services/workshop and customer care services to be of low quality. Simisaye (2012) finds that non availability of quality information resources and services is an impediment to faculty use of academic library.

The study findings also reveal that majority of the academic staff are generally highly dissatisfied with the quality of resources and services offered at the Polytechnic library, Otefe. The indication is that academic staff will avoid the library as visiting the library will be considered a waste of time. This again explains



the reason for the infrequent visit of the library by academic staff. Adeniran (2011) observes that users' satisfaction is a function of the quality of library's information resources and services.

From the findings of this study, it is evident that respondents have high expectations of an academic library in the present digital age. Clearly, academic staff dream of a modern library equipped with computers and other ICT gadgets where the internet and other electronic information resources can be accessed. It can be inferred from the findings of the study that the academic staff feel the upgrade of the library will encourage their visit and use of the library thereby making the academic library relevant to them. The findings of Ijirigho (2009), Okiki (2013), Nkamnebe, Udem and Nkamnebe(2014) support the view that provision of ICTs, internet connection and electronic resources encourage the use of the academic library either from a distance or visiting of the permanent physical structure.

**Table1:** Breakdown of academic staff by schools

Schools	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Business studies	48	50.5
Applied sciences and tech.	32	33.7
Engineering	15	15.8
Total	95	100

*Source:* Survey, 2016

**Table2:** Frequency of academic staff visit of the academic library

Schools	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Everyday	10	10.52
-3 times a week	15	15.82
-3 time a month	30	31.6
Occasionally	32	33.7
Never	8	8.4
Total	95	100

*Source:* Survey, 2016

**Table 3:** Availability of information resources and services

Information Resources/services	Available		Not available		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
CD-ROMS	5	5.3	90	94.7	95	100
Internet connection	6	6.3	89	93.7	95	100
Online databases	-	-	95	100	95	100
OPAC	-	-	95	100	95	100
Online indexes and abstracts	-	-	95	100	95	100
E-books	-	-	95	100	95	100
E-journals	-	-	95	100	95	100
Portals (pre-packaged research information particular in discipline)	-	-	95	100	95	100
Print books	95	100	-	-	95	100
Print journals	95	100	-	-	95	100
Serials	95	100	-	-	95	100

Reference sources	95	100	-	-	95	100
Online internet search services	-	-	95	100	95	100
Electronic document delivery services	-	-	95	100	95	100
Interlibrary services	-	-	95	100	95	100
Audio/visual communication services	-	-	95	100	95	100
ICT training for users	-	-	95	100	95	100
Current awareness and workshop services	-	-	95	100	95	100
Customer care services	-	-	95	100	95	100
Selective dissemination of information	-	-	95	100	95	100
Reference service	95	100	-	-	95	100

**Source:** Survey, 2016

**Table4:** Respondents rating of quality of information resources and services

Information Resources/Services	Strongly Agreed		Agreed		Not sure		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	No.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	No.	%
Library provides up to date and current information resources in recent research areas	10	(10.5)	10	(10.5)	30	(31.6)	30	(31.6)	15	(15.5)
Library creates access to internet and other electronic information resources	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	(42.1)	55	(57.9)
Library provides up to date and current print text books	10	(10.5)	33	(34.7)	12	(12.6)	40	(42.1)	-	-
Library provides up to date and current print journals	-	-	-	-	25	(26.3)	30	(31.6)	40	(42.1)
Library provides portals (pre-packaged research information particular in discipline)	-	-	-	-	8	(8.4)	40	(42.1)	47	(49.5)
Library provides up to date and current reference sources	-	-	-	-	45	(47.4)	45	(47.4)	5	(5.3)
Library's environment is conducive for reading and learning	-	-	12	(12.6)	-	-	83	(87.4)	-	-
Library provides quality reference services	-	-	52	(54.7)	30	(31.6)	-	-	13	(13.7)
Library provides quality current awareness service and workshop	-	-	-	-	30	(31.6)	53	(55.8)	12	(12.6)
Library provides quality customer care services	-	-	14	(14.7)	31	(32.6)	33	(34.7)	22	(23.2)
Library provides her information services at the right time and in the right form	-	-	-	-	15	(15.8)	50	(52.6)	30	(31.6)

**Source:** Survey, 2016

**Table 5:** Rating of academic staff level of satisfaction with information resources and services

Library resources/services	Satisfied	Highly satisfied	Dissatisfied	Highly dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
Library's collection of books	32(33.7)	-	18(18.9)	-	45(47.4)
Library's collection of journals	-	-	35(36.8)	50 (52.6)	10(10.5)
Library's provision of electronic resources	-	-	25(26.3)	70(73.7)	-
General information services and products of the library	-	-	13(13.7)	60 (65.2)	22(23.2)
Computer and networking facilities of the library	-	-	15(15.8)	80(84.2)	-
Functional organization of the library	5(5.3)	-	90(94.7)	-	-
Library staff's behaviour towards users	50(52.6)	-	5(5.3)	-40(42.1)	-
User and marketing orientation of the library	-	-	80(84.2)	15(15.8)	-
Library cleanliness	13(13.7)	-	42(44.2)	-	40(42.1)
Lighting and ventilation of the library	40(42.1)	-	-	45(47.4)	10(10.5)
Sitting arrangement of the library	-	-	22(23.2)	73(73.7)	-

**Source:** Survey, 2016

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The significant role that the library plays in any academic institution throws no doubt to its regular evaluation and monitoring. This study was carried out with the primary aim of assessing whether or not the academic staff of Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe are satisfied with the information resources provided in their institution's library. Based on the outcome of the study it can therefore be concluded that the academic staff of the Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe are not satisfied with the quality of resources and services offered at the Delta State Polytechnic library, Otefe. Academic staff are particularly highly dissatisfied with noticeable absence of electronic information resources and services at the library. This dissatisfaction has led to a negative perception of the Polytechnic library. It is the responsibility of every academic library to provide information resources and services to cater for the information needs of every user group within the users' community. The study has provided useful information on academic users' perception and usage of the library's resources and services. It is expected that this information will assist and guide the Delta State Polytechnic library, Otefe and the Polytechnic management in equipping the library with information resources and services that are expected of an academic library in this digital age; thereby restoring users' confidence in the library's capability to support academic and research, the purpose it was meant for originally. The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study:

- i The library management of Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe should as a matter of urgency liaise with the institutions management and come up with a plan to provide access to the internet and other electronic information resources.
- ii The management of Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe library should equip the library with modern ICT infrastructure and upgrade the library to make it conducive for reading and research.
- iii The management of the library should involve academic staff in their collection development process.
- iv The management should also introduce current awareness/workshop services to sensitize users on library use.

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