

PERCEPTION OF LIBRARY USERS ON THE SERVICES RENDERED BY LAGOS STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, OJO, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined users perception of LASU Library resources. It adopted a survey method and utilized a questionnaire, complemented with mostly none open-ended questions to generate data, which were analysed using (SPSS) Statistical Package for Social Sciences. Findings revealed that more users prefer to use print materials than e-resources because of the inadequacy of the e-resources. It was therefore recommended additional e-resources and adequate funding of the library to cater for the provision of essential library resources so as to effectively provide the range of services entrusted in it and satisfaction to the library users.

Keywords: *library users, perception, services, LASU*

INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of the University Libraries is to support teaching, learning and research in ways consistent with and supportive of the institution's mission and goals. In addition, library resources and services should be sufficient in quality, depth, diversity and currency to support the institution's curriculum. As a result of this, University Libraries are often considered the most important resource centre of an academic institution. According to Fadekemi and Samuel (2009), University education in Nigeria is facing a critical challenge in meeting new demands of the 21st century, with its ever increasing population growth, inadequate library facilities, resources and insufficient funding. Adequate library resources and services, at the appropriate level for degrees offered should be made available to support the intellectual, cultural and technical development of students enrolled into Universities.

In each society there are facilities other than classroom that can contribute in no small measure to the teaching and learning process. For learning to take place, learners must have access to necessary materials, information and resources. They have to interact with tangible and intangible resources and institutions to ensure some level of performance. (Obanewa, Adewale and Asokhia, 2002) Dewy (1983) posited that "Libraries are Schools and the Librarian in the highest sense a Teacher". Oyedeji (1980) describes a Library as having "a machinery" for the use of the collection. Chiemeke (2007) posits that in the modern world, a wide range of information is disseminated through the printed materials, yet it is impossible to have access to all forms of information and knowledge through wide reading alone. Other facilities and

agencies thus exist that emphasize audio-visual learning. They include electronic media such as radio, television, cable satellite, the internet. These media give wide publicity to events, objects, discoveries, scientific findings, new products and new services. Libraries are developed as a result of the need to preserve valuable record of events. These records might be in the form of written scrolls, papyrus kept in Jars written clay, tablets, manuscripts kept in monasteries and printed materials such as books, letters, statutes and laws. Only a few people such as kings, nobles, renowned scholars, and ecclesiastical orders had access to these libraries. Modern libraries have taken on additional new roles because of changing demands and new technology. They are currently regarded as agents for educational, social, economical and political change and their doors are open to all.

The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation UNESCO (1976) views the library as an organised collection of published books and periodicals and of other reading and audio-visual materials and the services of staff able to provide and interpret such materials as are required to meet the information, research, educational or recreational needs of users. "The UNESCO definition touches on every aspect of what a library in the modern sense stands for. Oyewusi (2009) submits that the University library is the academic heart of the University system and its basic purpose is to provide University Staff, Students and other researchers with materials, assistances and an enabling environment that would facilitate teaching, learning and research. It is important for library services to check the impact of the resources provided for their patrons. According to Whitmire (2002) academic library resources are considered a good measure of an institutions excellence and quality. Popoola (2008) affirms that the information resources and services available in institutional information systems must be capable of supporting research activities among the students and faculty members. Iyoro (2004) identifies accessibility as one of the pre-requisites of information usage. Ugah (2008) opines that the more accessible information sources are, the more likely they are to be used and readers tend to use information sources that require the least effort to access.

The areas where libraries can improve access and use of library resources to library users includes improved academic liaison in combining library and information technology support, open access IT area with personal support from IT Staff. Over the past decade, most libraries in Nigeria have been experiencing much difficulty providing materials to the users on account of the alarming rate of inflation of the prices of books and journals (Ehikamenor, 1993). Ugah (2008) quotes Osundina (1974), who studied the relationship between accessibility and library use by undergraduates in Nigeria and notes that the problem of Nigerian students is not the question of wanting to use the library, but whether or not the University library can provide for their needs, and whether there is access to what is provided. This assertion was agreed to in later studies by Iyoro (2004) and Popoola (2008) Seth and Parida (2006), Ugwu (2008), Nnadozie C. O. and Nnadozie C. D. (2008) in other studies cautioned that availability of information resources and services do not automatically

translate to information accessibility and use. With the availability of online searching and the ability of the users to process the information has remained fixed (Seth and Parida, 2006). Many University libraries in Nigeria have not been able to acquire collections comprehensively enough to meet the needs of their users due to inadequate funding of the Universities. The 10% allocations meant for the library as stipulated by the National Universities Commission (NUC) has not been adhered to in many Nigerian Universities.

Library resources as used in this context are collections of all text and bibliographic information sources; it also includes information technology such as those that support browsing, authoring and communication like computer and the internet. In order for libraries to have a great impact of their services on their users, it is necessary for each library management to aim at managing libraries accurately and by providing timely information for all library users. This can be achieved by acquiring both relevant library resources in electronic and book materials through donations from foreign and local organizations and philanthropists.

Background of Lagos State University Library

Lagos State University Library was established in 1984. The University has the following faculties: Management Sciences, Sciences, Arts, Education, Law, Social Sciences, School of Communication and Engineering. The main Library is situated at the Ojo Campus and it caters for all branch Libraries at Epe for Engineering Students, Teslim Olawale Library for Law Students and Adebola Adegunwa School of Communication Students. Currently the library has a monographic collection of about a million volumes and subscribes to about 78 foreign and local journals. The library has e-library facilities with 92 computers. The e-library is divided into 2 sections with 20 computers for Staff and 72 computers for the Students.

The objectives of this study are:

- i. To investigate the accessibility and use of library resources by library users.
- ii. To investigate perception of LASU library users to the library resources.
- iii. To examine the level of satisfaction of library patrons when using library resources.
- iv. To identify problems faced by library patrons from the services rendered by the library.

METHODOLOGY

The population of this survey included LASU full-time undergraduate students from 100-500 level, Postgraduate students, Academic and Non-Academic Staff. These categories of users make use of the library regularly according to the daily statistics compiled at the circulation unit. The instrument used for the study was a structured questionnaire which consisted of the biodata of the library users such as the sex, age, level, staff designation, department and faculty. The questionnaire also included items eliciting information on library resources. The questionnaire consisted of twenty

questions out of which nineteen items were close ended questions with one open ended question. These twenty questions were designed to be answered by the respondents. The sampling design used for the study was the simple random sampling technique where every library user has an equal chance of being selected as a member of the sample. A total of 500 respondents were chosen to represent the minimum number of patrons that visits the library regular. While distributing questionnaire it was ensured that none of the respondents was given a questionnaire twice. To achieve this, the questionnaire was randomly distributed to library users by using an identification number for each library user during the survey period.

The data were collected by distributing the questionnaire randomly to library users that used LASU library regularly. The data was collected over a period of 6 weeks. A total of 500 copies of the questionnaire were distributed and a total of 453 were returned but 387 copies were properly completed and could be analyzed. Descriptive statistics was employed to analyse the data using the (SPSS) Statistical package for Social Sciences. The analytical tools included the use of frequencies, table and percentages.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

<i>Sex of respondent</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Male</i>	<i>195</i>	<i>51.7</i>
<i>Female</i>	<i>192</i>	<i>48.3</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>387</i>	<i>100.0</i>
<i>Designation of respondent</i>		
<i>Staff</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9.2</i>
<i>Postgraduate</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2.3</i>
<i>Undergraduate</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>88.5</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>87</i>	<i>100.0</i>
<i>If Staff, designation</i>		
<i>Lecturer</i>	<i>319</i>	<i>90.8</i>
<i>Registry</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Staff</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>9.2</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>387</i>	<i>100.0</i>
<i>Type of Staff</i>		
<i>Academic</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>9.2</i>
<i>Non-academic</i>	<i>319</i>	<i>90.8</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>387</i>	<i>100.0</i>
<i>Age of respondent</i>		
<i>18-25</i>	<i>157</i>	<i>65.5</i>
<i>25-40</i>	<i>126</i>	<i>29.9</i>
<i>41-50</i>	<i>104</i>	<i>4.6</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>387</i>	<i>100.0</i>

The result of the study revealed that half of the respondents were males while others were females. Out of these library users, Academic and Non-academic Staff, Postgraduate Students constituted approximately 12%. Undergraduates students

registered the higher percentage. The ages of the respondents ranges between 18 and 50. This indicates that respondent between ages 18-25 use the library more, this is due to the fact that more undergraduate students use the library so that they could work towards becoming a scholar (a scholarship given to best student in LASU). This corroborates Tsafe (2004) who studied students' use of Usman Danfodiyo University Library and found that the respondents also visited the library for more than one reason. Also according to Halsey (2006), young people may go to the library to study, to use computer workstations or to socialize with friends. Fadekemi and Samuel (2009) opines that from the responses noted in a study by Weber and Flatley (2008) it was obvious that the students saw the library as an important place for studying, meetings and group projects while most students did not use the library for personal research interests or leisure activities.

What do you come to do in the library			
	<i>Valid</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>General Reading</i>	<i>Yes</i>	220	80.5
	<i>No</i>	167	19.5
	<i>Total</i>	387	100.0
<i>Read Newspaper</i>	<i>Yes</i>	165	17.2
	<i>No</i>	222	82.8
	<i>Total</i>	387	100.0
<i>Research work</i>	<i>Yes</i>	168	20.7
	<i>No</i>	219	79.3
	<i>Total</i>	387	100.0
<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Yes</i>	170	23.0
	<i>No</i>	217	77.0
	<i>Total</i>	387	100.0
<i>Prepare lecture notes</i>	<i>Yes</i>	159	10.3
	<i>No</i>	228	89.7
	<i>Total</i>	387	100.0

The respondents were asked to indicate what they come to do in the library, a substantial proportion of the respondents indicated that they come to do general reading, which few indicate that they come to read newspapers, some come to do research work, few come to do their assignment while others come to prepare lecture notes.

Use of Library Resources: This study revealed that respondents come to the library to make use of the following resources: 11.5% make use of e-resources while 59.8% make use of books and journals, 31.0% make use of reference materials and 28.7% make use of all of the above. Although, the LASU library has standard e-library with 92 functional systems yet only 11.5% respondents make use of e-resources. This is due to the fact that only final year students are allowed to use the e-resources and staff too have access to the e-library.

Where do you get most information from?

<i>Valid</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
<i>E-library</i>	165	17.2
<i>Printed materials</i>	222	82.8
<i>Total</i>	387	100.0

Information Search: Respondents were asked to indicate where they got most of their information from in the library, an overwhelming fraction of the respondents said that they got most information from printed materials.

How often do you use the library?

<i>Valid</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
<i>Daily</i>	106	35.6
<i>Few times a week</i>	121	52.9
<i>Weekly</i>	81	6.9
<i>Monthly</i>	79	4.6
<i>Total</i>	387	100.0

Regularity at the Library: The respondents were asked to indicate how often they use the library. The findings revealed that some use the library daily, while others visit the library weekly and monthly. However, majority of the respondents indicate that they used the library few times in a week. This finding support the fact that majority of the library users visit the library daily and few times a week.

What is your view as regards the library holding on teaching materials?

<i>Valid</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
<i>Very good</i>	19	21.8
<i>Good</i>	104	33.3
<i>Average</i>	112	42.5
<i>Poor</i>	77	2.3
<i>Total</i>	387	100.0

Perception of Users as regards Library Holdings: The library holdings were divided into teaching, learning and research materials, and the respondents were asked to air their view as regards the library holdings. Except very few of the respondents who had a negative perception of the library holdings, other respondents held a positive view as regards the library holdings.

What is your view as regards the library holding on learning materials?

<i>Valid</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
<i>Very good</i>	88	14.9
<i>Good</i>	116	47.1
<i>Average</i>	103	32.2
<i>Poor</i>	80	5.7
<i>Total</i>	387	100.0

The general perception of the respondents regarding the library holdings with respect to learning materials was good.

What is your view as regards the library holding on research materials?

<i>Valid</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
<i>Very good</i>	90	17.2
<i>Good</i>	111	41.4
<i>Average</i>	108	37.9
<i>Poor</i>	78	3.4
<i>Total</i>	387	100.0

On research materials, similar response as that gotten in learning materials was observed. A greater proportion of the respondents view library holdings on research materials as good on a general note.

What material can you range the best in the library?

<i>Valid</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
<i>Book</i>	137	35.4
<i>E-resources</i>	100	25.8
<i>Journals</i>	85	21.9
<i>Reference</i>	65	16.8
<i>Total</i>	387	100.0

What materials can you range the poorest in the library?

<i>Valid</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
<i>Book</i>	84	10.3
<i>E-resources</i>	84	10.3
<i>Journals</i>	92	19.5
<i>Reference</i>	127	59.8
<i>Total</i>	387	100.0

Looking at the above responses, it can be inferred that respondents viewed the totality of the library holdings as between good and average. The respondents were also asked to tick the materials that they rate the best and the poorest among the library holdings. From the findings 35.4% respondents mentioned book as the best 25.8% mentioned e-resources, 21.9% mentioned journals and 16.8% respondents mentioned reference materials as the poorest. This might be due to the fact that current reference materials are yet to be acquired by the library.

How can you range the library in terms of locating and retrieving materials?

<i>Valid</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
<i>Very good</i>	86	12.6
<i>Good</i>	109	39.1
<i>Average</i>	114	44.8
<i>Poor</i>	78	3.4
<i>Total</i>	387	100.0

From the above table, the respondents revealed that locating and retrieving of materials in the library was good.

How best do you locate and retrieve materials in the library? Through...

<i>Valid</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
<i>Both A & B</i>	177	88.5
<i>Online Public Access Catalogue(OPAC)</i>	102	2.3
<i>Library catalogue</i>	108	9.2
<i>Total</i>	387	100.0

Accessibility to Library Materials: Findings revealed that 88.5% respondents retrieve materials from both library catalogue and Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC). The respondents especially undergraduate further revealed from the findings that they learnt how to retrieve materials with ease from the OPAC and library catalogue through the library user education course.

When you come to the library which material do you prefer to read?

<i>Valid</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
<i>Print books</i>	225	86.2
<i>E-resources</i>	162	13.8
<i>Total</i>	387	100.0

The respondents were asked to indicate which material source they prefer to read when they come to the library. Findings revealed that majority of the respondents prefer print books while few others prefer e-resources and they gave their reasons as follows:

Print Books

- i. E-resources are not available in the law library.
- ii. Books are easier to access
- iii. Books give vivid information
- iv. I just like reading books
- v. Inadequate e-resources
- vi. Books are always available
- vii. I am not computer literate
- viii. Books are easier to understand
- ix. Once the server is down, it becomes difficult to access information

E-resources

- i. I get more information from e-resources
- ii. I get current information from e-resources
- iii. It is always easier to access the internet

Do you always get what you want from the library?

<i>Valid</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
<i>Yes</i>	307	79.3
<i>No</i>	80	20.6
<i>Total</i>	387	100.0

The respondents were asked whether they always get what they want from the library how satisfied were they with the services rendered by the library. Judging from the data on the above table, it is obvious that majority of the respondents get what the want from the library, though few do not get what they want.

Are you satisfied with the services rendered by the library?

<i>Valid</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
<i>Yes</i>	294	75.9
<i>No</i>	93	24.0
<i>Total</i>	387	100.0

The above table revealed that though a few of the respondents were not satisfied by the services rendered by the library, yet majority of the respondents were actual fulfilled by the services the enjoy from the library. The last question on the questionnaire was open ended, the respondents were asked to list 5 things they would want the library to add to make its services satisfactory.

List 5 things you want the library to add to make its services satisfactory

<i>The following are their responses</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Functional Air conditioner</i>	42	10.8
<i>More E-resources</i>	59	15.2
<i>Improved Staff/Students relationship</i>	38	9.8
<i>More recent journals and books</i>	50	12.9
<i>Library toilet</i>	32	8.2
<i>More space</i>	38	9.8
<i>Quiet environment</i>	13	3.3
<i>Security of users property</i>	23	5.9
<i>Proper arrangement of shelves to avoid</i>		
<i>Students hiding books for their own selfish end</i>	38	9.8
<i>Extension of opening hours</i>	19	4.9
<i>Flexing books borrowing policy</i>	36	9.3
<i>Total</i>	387	100.0

With the above mentioned problems faced by library users at Lagos State University, the following solutions are proffered:

- i There should be an extension or addition of the e-library. The Postgraduate Students and Lecturers should have their own e-library section and undergraduate have their own section. To enable more students have access to the e-library, the systems must have a timer, so that a student would not spend the whole day at the e-library; and also this will afford other users the opportunity to use the e-library.
- ii The IT staff at the e-library should ensure that all students using the e-library are not visiting social sites or sending e-mails rather, he should ensure that e-library users at any point in time are visiting academic sites.
- iii E-library should be provided at the Law library.
- iv Most respondents said that books are easier to access and are always available. This is due to the fact that there are no restrictions on consulting books as there is on e-resources for undergraduate students especially none final year student. If students prefer to consult books, then more current printed materials should be acquired for the library regularly.
- v Another respondent said that there is always the problem of server being down. This suggests that the library should have its own V-sat as against using the University's ICT centre internet.

- vi With respondents request for more furniture, space and library toilet facilities this problem can be eliminated once the library moves its operation and services to the new ultra modern library complex which is in the pipeline.
- vii Some respondents requested for quiet environment, security of users property, proper arrangement of shelves and better staff/student relationship. These could be addressed by providing regular training of library staff on how to perform better on their jobs.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Looking at the responses and the requests of the respondents from the findings and analysis of the questionnaire one would see that they point at the fact that Libraries in Nigeria should regularly evaluate the quality, adequacy and use of their library's information resources and services in order to meet up with the quality of library services stipulated by IFLA. The findings also indicated that most library users in Lagos State University prefer to use printed materials. This corroborates the view of Oyewusi (2009) that though the use of electronic resources like the internet is gaining wide recognition among Nigerians, printed library resources have an important position in the academic environment Ajayi and Adetayo (2005) rounded it up by concluding that "If Nigeria is to advance and the young people to grasp the opportunities open to them, they must be given access to books, periodicals, technical data and opinion, which will bring them into contact with Cultural, Scientific, Technical and Social ideals. Library resources when adequately provided and use will produce great critical thinkers and well taught graduates in the Nigerian Universities in particular and other tertiary institutions in general.

Lagos State Library and University management should use the result of the evaluation based on the use of the library resources to improve the effectiveness of these resources. This could be done by critically observing the problems faced by the institution's library in providing adequate services to its users and how best to proffer permanent solutions to the problems, so that both digital resources and printed library resources are adequately provided for the use of undergraduates, postgraduates and faculty members. Lagos State University Library should be upgraded to the level of changing totally from manual systems to digital. For example, the internet has no physical shape or boundaries like printed resources it is not static but constantly grows and the speed of these changes can be instantaneous.

This Facility should be adequately provided and made available in all faculties by providing standard faculty libraries with e-resources which will assist students and faculty members to know current researches going on in their fields and also users contributing by having their own websites which would enable them to post current researches and updates regularly. According to Seth and Parida (2006), electronic resources no matter how convenient cannot replace the function of the library in an academic environment. This explains why academic libraries should carry out this kind of research regularly to estimate their level of performance in providing

adequate services to their users. They should therefore try their best in making their libraries well equipped so that adequate and current materials would be provided for the academic community and the library would still be able to maintain the number of library patrons despite the advent of the internet.

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