

A Survey of Postgraduate Students Perception of University Library Resources in Selected Nigerian Universities

Lateef , E.B. Crawford University, Igbesa,ogun State, Nigeria.	Omotoso, A.O Federal university of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria.	Owolabi , K.A. Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria
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Introduction

University is essentially an academic community dedicated to the pursuit of higher learning and teaching .However, a university is populated mostly by students and staff. There are different categories of students in Nigerian universities environment which include the diploma, first degrees and higher degrees students respectively .The post graduate students belong to the higher degrees category that pursue post graduate diploma , masters, and doctoral degrees which entail more research works that require the services and resources of well equipped and functional libraries .The objectives of post graduate study in any university is for further development of graduate students the spirit of enquiring through training in research in an atmosphere of intellectual independence and individual creativity with a strong sense of group cooperation.

Globally, many kinds of libraries have been developed to meet the needs of specific group of users; these include school, public, special and academic libraries. However, the perception of the library by the post graduate students will determine the use of its resources and services .Oluwadare (2006) described perception as a state of mind. It is the total sum of what is formed in the mind and an idea about an object. Perception is a dynamic process which involves factors that eventually produce ones idea about something. Therefore, the paper examines the post graduate students perception of university libraries resources available in Nigerian universities.

Statement of The Problem

Close observations revealed that university libraries in the country may not adequately satisfy their users which include the post graduate students information needs. Outdated and irrelevant materials are part of the problems militating against the responsiveness of university libraries to students information needs. Dusty and disorganized shelves are not uncommon in university libraries in Nigeria .Furthermore, university libraries personnel are not effectively rendering the library services that can lead to good responsiveness of university libraries to post graduate students information needs.

Objectives of the Study

- To ascertain the level of satisfaction of Nigerian post graduate students with the services rendered by university libraries.
- To find out the relevance of university libraries resources to post graduate students information needs.
- To investigate post graduate students accessibility and availability of library resources
- To find out the perception of post graduate students about the present situation of university libraries in Nigeria.

Literature Review

The library is the heart of the intellectual system of the university. It is also established to support learning, teaching and research programmes in the universities. Over and above providing a conducive atmosphere for reading and consultation of relevant facts and data, the library also offer a variety of facilities and services to enable readers to make optimal use of the library resources. Aboyade(1979) cited by Tella,Owolabi and Attama (2008) summed up these services as follows:

- Answering readers questions
- Instruction on the use of library materials
- Readers advisory services
- Inter library loan services
- Photocopying facility

- Library publications and
- Exhibition and display

The quality of a university may be measured by the services provided by the library because of its unique position in the overall university system. Aina(2004) pointed out the iconographic power of a university library which collects, organize, preserve and make knowledge accessible. Raseroka(2008) maintained that library contributes to the cores functions of teaching, learning, research and providing community service from the foundation on which the role of the university library is based. Oni-Orisan (1987) observed that no system of education is complete without well –equipped library, with services operationalised either directly through contact with them (readers services) or indirectly through activities carried out “behind the scene”(technical services).Tella, Owolabi and Attama(2008) maintained that the main function of a university library is to function as auxiliary to the parent institution in carrying out their objectives. The library is an important intellectual resource center for post graduate students and it assist them in the area of self development and research (Budd1998).

Perceptions held by university stakeholders of the role of the university library as a contributor to these core functions influence the environment within which the university library craft its own mission and role. Edoka (2000) highlighted the role of university libraries to post graduates students which include:

Provision of information materials required for the academic programmes of the parent institutions.

Provide research information resources in consonance with the needs of faculty and research students .

Provide specialized information service to segments of a wider community.

Nwalo(2000) described library resources as materials consulted for aid or for information on a topic, theme, an event, a date, a place or even the world.

Fatoki (2004) opined that library resources are those materials made up of books, audio visual, software, realia , hardware, and pedagogical materials used in the teaching and learning processes .The entire information items in the library are acquired for the provision of general information as well as research service to the library users.Fatoki (2004) opined that materials usually consulted for research work are journal articles, books, conference reports, newspapers,

government corporate reports and theses or past project works. Others include electronic journals, electronic books CD- ROM data bases and internet browsing

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The importance of knowing the information needs and the way users go about seeking for such information from libraries arise from the necessity of libraries to satisfy such needs and to equally provide effectively assistance to the clients as regards information retrieval(Bello and Musa, 2003)

Studies have been conducted on the use of academic library particularly among the post graduate students around the world. Some of these studies will be mentioned here. Whitmaire (2002) examined the relationship between library resources and services and post graduates educational outcomes through multiple regression analysis utilizing the data collected by the CSEQ(College Student Experience Questionnaire) and the NCES(National Center for Education Statistics).Two assumptions underlie her study: (1) Postgraduates attending institutions with large amount of academic library resources would participate in more in academic library activities and (2)postgraduates attending institutions with large amount of academic library resources and services would report greater gains in critical thinking.

Ampka (2006) in the study of the use of University of Maiduguri discovered that majority of students do not use the library effectively. Empey and Murphy (2003) in their survey carried out at Geoffery Weller Library at University of Northern British Columbia discovered that graduate students perception of access to information service quality is below the library minimum expected level of service quality.(Eason, 2000) Awojobi (2004) in her study of library use by post graduate students in Olabisi Onabanjo University Ago-Iwoye, Nigeria reported that low patronage of the university library which was blamed on paucity of current and relevant resources in the library. Ugah(2007) in a study on the use of Micheal Opara University , Umudike , Nigeria discovered that post graduate students used the library two to three time a week.

Methodology

The study used descriptive survey and questionnaires were used for the collection of the data and the target population of the study were the post graduate students in the three selected Nigerian universities the South West, Nigeria. The three universities are University of Ibadan which is the oldest university in the country, and the second university is the Obafemi Awolowo University, which is one of the first generation universities in the country and the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta which is one of the universities of agriculture in the country. Stratified random sampling was used in selecting the desired respondents from each selected university. Two faculties were randomly selected from the three universities .At Obafemi Awolowo University,Ile-Ife, the two faculty selected were Faculty of Agriculture and Faculty of Science, at University of Ibadan , the two faculties were faculty of Basic Medical Science and Social Science and at University of Agriculture , Abeokuta, the two faculties were College of Agriculture Management and Rural Development and College of Animal Science and Livestock Production. The data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social science (SPSS).

Analysis of Data

Table 3.1: Population of Respondents

Universities	Faculty/College Selected	Department Selected	Population of PG Students	Sample Size
U.I	Basic Medical Sciences	Biochemistry	58	38
		Physiology	14	10
		Anatomy	10	07
	Social Sciences	Economics	255	153
		Psychology	268	143
		Political Science	69	43
OAU	Science	Microbiology	16	10
		Botany	10	07
		Zoology	8	06
	Agriculture	Agric-Economics	7	05
		Agric-Extension	4	04

		Animal science	3	03
UNAAB	COLAMRUD	Agric-Economics and Farm Management	52	33
		Agric-Extension and Rural Development	31	24
		Food Science	39	27
		Technology		
	COLANIM	Animal Production and Health	8	07
		Animal Breeding and Genetics	6	05
		Animal Nutrition	13	09
		Total	871	534

Table 4.1 Distribution of Respondent according to Age, Sex and Marital Status

		UNIVERSITIES					
		OAU		U.I		UNAAB	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Age range	20 -30 years	11	61.1	94	65.3	24	63.2
	31 – 40 years	5	27.8	37	25.7	12	31.6
	41 – 50 years	1	5.6	2	1.4	-	-
	50 and above	1	5.6	11	7.7	2	5.3
	Total	18	100	144	100	38	100
	Sex	Male	7	38.9	96	66.7	19
Female		7	38.9	41	28.5	17	44.7
No response		4	22.2	7	4.9	2	5.3
Total		18	100	144	100	38	100
Marital status	Single	12	66.7	113	78.5	31	81.6
	Married	6	33.3	31	21.6	7	18.4
	Total	18	100	144	100	38	100

2: Distribution of Respondents and Type of Degree in View

Type of PG Programme	Universities					
	OAU		UI		UNAAB	
	RESP	%	RESP	%	RESP	%
Master	22	63	264	67.0	73	69
M.Phil	08	22	108	27.4	21	20
PhD	05	14	22	05.6	11	11
Total	35	100	394	100	105	100

Table 4.3 Availability of Library Resources in University Libraries

Library Resources	Universities											
	OAU				U.I				UNAAB			
	Available		Not Available		Available		Not Available		Available		Not Available	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Books	35	100	-	-	394	100	-	26.3	105	100	-	-
Journals	30	86	05	14	343	87	51	13	97	92	08	08
CDROM	31	88.6	04	11.4	378	96	04	04	90	86	15	14
Online Database	25	71	10	29	312	79	82	21	100	95	05	05

Table 4.5 Users Satisfaction about Library Services

Library Services	Universities											
	OAU				UI				UNAAB			
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied		Satisfied		Not Satisfied		Satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Reference Service	29	83	06	17	110	28	284	72	62	59	43	41
Current Awareness Service	05	14.	30	86	024	06	370	94	06	06	99	94
SDI	06	17	29	83	024	6.1	370	93.9	05	05	100	95
Book Loan (lending) Service	25	71	10	29	299	76	95	24	85	81	20	19
Retros. Literature Search												
Internet Service	26	74	09	26	288	73	106	27	83	79	22	21

Table 4.7: Accessibility of Library Resources to Respondents

Library Resources	Universities											
	OAU				UI				UNAAB			
	Accessible		Not Accessible		Accessible		Not Accessible		Accessible		Not Accessible	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Books	35	100	-	-	394	100	-	-	105	100	-	-
Periodicals	----	-----		27.3	78	69	35	31	23	100	-	-
Journals	29	83	06	17	362	92	32	08	99	94	06	06
CDROM	6	17	29	83	107	27	287	73	28	27	77	73
Online Database	05	14	30	86	109	28	284	72	39	37	66	63
OPAC	18	51	17	49	202	51	192	49	77	73	28	27

Frequency of Library Visit by Postgraduate Students

Frequency of Library Visit	Universities					
	OAU		UI		UNAAB	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Regularly	15	42.8	127	32	66	63
Once a while	17	48.6	159	40	22	21
Do not visit	03	8.6	32	08	17	16

Table 4.10 Respondents' purpose for visiting the Library.

S/N	Purpose for visiting the library	Universities					
		O.A.U		U.I		UNAAB	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
1.	To borrow books	05	14	32	08	05	05
2.	To search for materials (literature)	06	17	121	31	22	21
3.	For research	12	34	97	25	40	38
4.	To read/study	03	09	65	16	24	23
5.	To browse (access information)	04	11	50	13	07	07
6.	To do assignment	03	09	23	06	04	04
7.	No response	02	06	06	01	03	2

Table 4.11: Postgraduate Students' Perception about Nigerian University Libraries

PG Student's Perception	UNIVERSITIES																	
	O.A.U						U.I						UNAAB					
	A		D		U		A		D		U		A		D		U	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
The books in my library are up-to-date and relevant	07	20	20	57.1	8	22.9	104	26.4	214	54.3	76	19.3	50	47.6	33	31.4	22	21.0
I am familiar with the electronic resources available in my library	14	40	12	34.3	9	25.7	217	55.1	112	28.4	65	16.5	57	54.3	39	37.1	9	8.6
The reference services provided by my library are satisfying.	10	28.6	21	60	4	11.4	124	31.5	242	61.4	28	7.1	62	59.0	32	30.5	11	10.5
My library provides enough information resources.	07	20	23	65.7	5	14.3	99	25.1	264	67	31	7.9	44	41.9	34	32.4	27	25.7
My library environment is appealing and conducive	18	51.4	10	28.6	7	20	199	50.5	101	25.6	94	23.9	74	70.5	18	17.1	13	12.4
I prefer print resources to on line resources	11	31.4	21	60	3	8.6	107	27.2	208	52.8	79	20.0	40	38.1	54	51.4	11	10.5
The staffs in my library are very efficient.	15	42.8	10	28.6	10	28.6	201	51.0	93	23.6	100	25.4	43	41.0	42	40.0	20	19.0
I prefer internet resources to library resources.	25	71.4	9	25.7	1	2.9	283	71.8	59	15.0	52	13.2	67	63.8	33	31.4	5	4.8
The library needs to improve on her quality of service	30	85.7	4	11.4	1	2.9	335	85.0	44	11.2	15	3.8	45	42.9	33	31.4	27	25.7

Discussion of the Findings

All the three universities used for the study agreed that they have library resources such as books , journals , CD-ROMS and On-line database readily available and accessible. This supported the view of Fatoki (2004) that library needs to have relevant materials that will encourage users to have interest in visiting the library. In the same vein, Raseroka (2008) and Tella , Owolabi , and Attama (2007) that the main function of a university library is to provide and assist the parent institution in achieving the objectives by providing relevant materials to the users.

Another finding revealed that majority of the students at Obafemi Awolowo University admitted that they visit the library once in a while which was represented by 17 (48.6%), from University of Ibadan 159(40%) agreed that they visit the library once in while however, the majority of the respondents at University of Agriculture, claimed that they use the library regularly with 66(43%).

It was also revealed that the respondents at Obafemi Awolowo University were satisfied with reference services being rendered in their university libraries with 29 (83%).However, University of Ibadan and University of Agriculture claimed that they were satisfied with the book loaning system of their respectively libraries which are represented by 299(76%) and 85(81%) respectively.

In addition ,Obafemi Awolowo University and University of Ibadan admitted that books in their libraries are not up-to-date and relevant with 20(54.1%) and 214(54.3%) respectively while University of Agriculture agreed that the books in their library are up-to- date and relevant .However ,all the respondents under the study maintained that there is need for service improvement from all the libraries.

Recommendation

1. The university authorities should earn mark enough fund for the libraries in order to purchase up to date and relevant library materials.
2. There is need for adequate training for all category of library staff on service improvement.
3. Information and Communication technology should be made readily available in all the libraries.
4. There is need for libraries to create special units for research students.

Conclusion

The study revealed that all the University libraries have books, journals, CD ROMS which are made available to the post graduate students aimed at enhancing effective teaching, learning and research. The knowledge of users education among the post graduate students is however not encouraging. This showed when the respondents claimed they do not visit the library regularly, on availability of current and relevant materials were identified as the major hindrances facing the use of libraries by post graduate students.

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