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Clement Udo
udoclement4@gmail.com

Kathryn Philip
kathwiz2@gmail.com

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User Satisfaction with Public Library Services in Abak Community, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Philip, Kathryn J.

Dept. of EduTech & Library Sc.,
University of Uyo, Nigeria
(E: *kathwiz2@gmail.com*)

and

Udo, Clement Samuel

St. Joseph Major Seminary, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
(E: *Udoclement4@gmail.com*)

ABSTRACT

The study examined library services in relation to users' satisfaction in the public library, Abak community in Akwa Ibom State. Abak is among the areas designated as Local Government Area (LGA) which make up Akwa Ibom State in Nigeria. It adopted survey research design with objectives and hypotheses formulated to guide the study. A structured questionnaire tagged "Questionnaire on Public Library Services and Users' Satisfaction (QPLSUS)" was used to elicit responses from respondents. The population of the study was 133 users who consult the public library monthly. Simple random sampling technique was used to select sample size of 110. Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (PPMC) analysis was used in testing the formulated hypotheses. From the findings, there was a significant relationship between internet service, user education and users' satisfaction in Abak public library. The study recommended that the public library should maintain the essence of its existence in the changing information-sharing environment by providing optimal information services such as internet services, user education services amongst others since these services significantly influence users' satisfaction.

Key Words: Library, community, internet, instruction service, fulfillment.

Background to the Study

The library is an archive of knowledge and a dynamic social institution, an indispensable resource centre for reliable information and meant to preserve the recorded knowledge of man for use. Ikenwe (2014) confirmed that a library is concerned with the collection, processing, storage and dissemination of information for

use. He further stated that for any library to attain this goal, many activities are performed that translate same to a library. Public libraries are considered as agents of social, political and cultural change in any society and provide a wider range of readership than any other type of library. Idowu (2014) described public libraries as libraries established and maintained by public funds; they are meant to provide the informational, educational and recreational needs of the people in the community regardless of nationality, age, sex, religion, language, status, political inclination and educational attainment. The general public is expected to make effective and efficient use of public libraries to satisfy their informational and research needs. Users' satisfaction of services rendered by public libraries relate to effective use of the services and resources provided by the library. Equally, the satisfaction derived by users can influence the utilisation of the services rendered by the library.

The Manifesto of International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) (2015), observed that public library is the local centre of information, making all kinds of knowledge and information readily available to its users. The services of the public library are provided on the basis of equality of access for all, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, nationality, language or social status. Collections and services have to include all types of appropriate media and modern technologies as well as traditional materials. These materials must reflect current trends and the evolution of society. Part of IFLA manifesto (2015) also states the following key missions which relate to information, literacy and education to be at the core of public library services:

- supporting both individual and self conducted education as well as formal education at all levels
- ensuring access for citizens to all sorts of community information
- providing adequate information services to local enterprises, associations and interest groups
- facilitating the development of information and computer literacy skills
- supporting and participating in literacy activities and programmes for all age groups, and initiating such activities if necessary.

Public libraries have been lauded as the 'people's library' and they are expected to provide services aimed at satisfying users through the provision of relevant services and resources, such as user education, reprographic services, internet facility among others.

It is one thing for a library to be established, it is another for its resources and services to be put to optimal use by information seekers, hence, the need for user education. User education involves creating awareness on how to get access to information resources. Corral (2004) outlined topics that could be covered by user education as accessing electronic databases and journals, finding high quality resources on the web, keeping up-to-date with new information, using bibliographic software and pages, carrying out citation and advance database searching for systematic reviews. User education could also be done through library instructions, workshops, seminars and computer aided instruction. The resources i.e. information, human and physical resources in each of the library divisions are highlighted and explained to the understanding of the users. By so doing library users become conversant with them thus library patronage is encouraged.

The internet is made up of various types of networks all over the world. It provides variety of resources and data that are shared by people all over the world. The internet as defined by Eyitayo (2008) is made up of millions of computers linked together around the world in such a way that information can be sent from one computer to another 24 hours a day. The internet is often described as a network of networks as it hosts several services. The two most popular services are the e-mail and world wide web (www). The e-mail is a system of transmitting messages between computers or related devices, while the world wide web (www) is a global system of linked web pages containing links to information or content (Anyokoha, 2005).

This study therefore examined how public libraries can fulfill the purpose of their existence by providing quality information services toward effective users' satisfaction.

Rational for the Study

Public libraries were established by the government to meet the information needs of the general public through the provision of relevant services and resources in tandem with the 21st century practices. However, it has been observed that the services of most libraries are hampered by lack of adequate facilities and inadequate information resources. A study by Ikenwe and Idowu (2014) on utilisation and user satisfaction of public library services in Southwest Nigeria, revealed same. In view of this, this study investigated public library services and users' satisfaction in Abak Local Government Area (LGA) of Akwa Ibom State.

The study will be beneficial to the government, users of the public library, librarians, researchers and so forth. It will aid librarians in public libraries on how they

can appropriately render service to users for maximum satisfaction. The outcome of this research will also help government to know the type of information service to financially support in public libraries. The public library users will benefit from the study in the sense that it will reveal services available and the need to patronise them. The study will provide researchers with a case study made available to their benefit and the society at large.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to examine public library services and users satisfaction in Abak LGA of Akwa Ibom State. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To examine the relationship between internet service and users' satisfaction in Public Library in Abak LGA.
2. To investigate the relationship between user education service and their satisfaction in Public Library in Abak LGA.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were postulated to guide the study.

1. There is no significant relationship between internet service and users' satisfaction in Public Library in Abak LGA.
2. There is no significant relationship between user education service and users' satisfaction in Public Library in Abak LGA.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is predicated on Orr's (1973) theory of library Goodness. The purpose was to test relationship between good library services and the level of utilization. Orr stated that the quality of library services, are the function of availability of resources and utilisation. This theory is further illustrated with a diagram below:

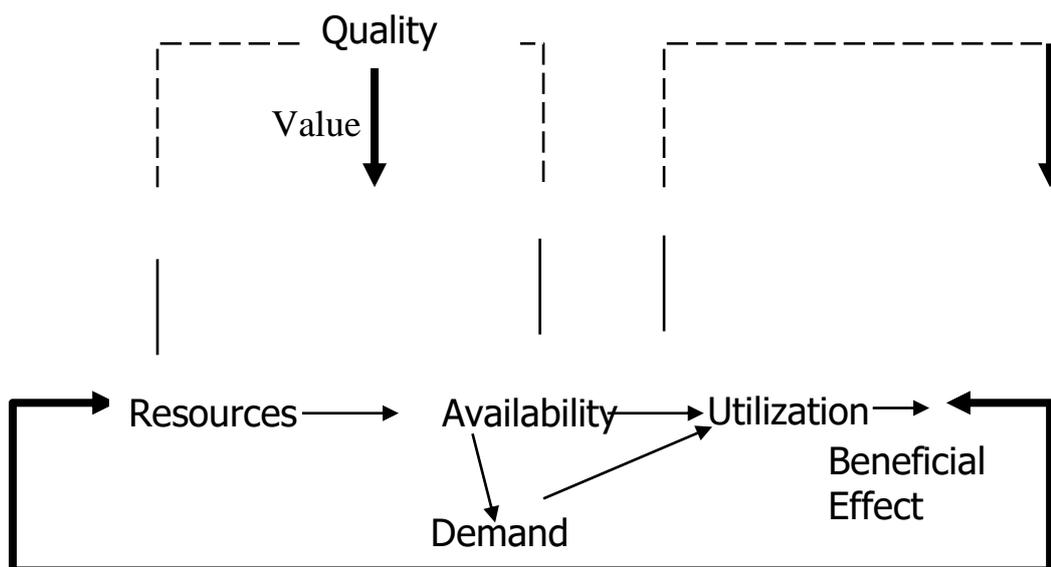


Fig. 1: Orr (1973) Theory of Library Goodness model

The above model gives the real picture of what happens to a library that relies on the quality of its resources for effective utilization and the beneficial effects. It is certain that there is a relationship between quality of library resources and services, availability and satisfaction. Orr's theory of library goodness explains that utilisation of resources lie in the quality and availability of library resources and services. The theory builds on two types of goodness; how good is it? A measure of quality, what good does it do? A measure of value, it offers that information resources are good in terms of quality because it meets users need. When library resources and services are not good it will not encourage user, good information resources will have the capacity to stimulate utilization and lead to well informed, educated and intellectual sound users.

The theory portends to this study as users might not on their own carry out research of any kind in the library satisfactorily except library services are provided to their satisfaction. As such, public library services must be provided to users to their satisfaction in order to help them make good use of the available resources.

Information services are those rendered by librarians to users to enable effective use of the available and accessible resources. Bamigboye (2007) observed that an individual would subscribe to a service depending on how good such a service is. Meanwhile, Inyang (2008) viewed library services as not being effective and efficient without information specialist and other library staff to bridge the gap and serve as intermediaries between the library resources and the users. The radical change in the library has transformed its services into user-oriented or user-centered due to technological advancement in the information world.

Indeed, different types of libraries according to Enang (2005), serve different information needs depending on its location and purpose. Hence, Akinbode (2002) notes that it is the responsibility of the library to render certain services to users in order to ensure maximum use of library materials such as internet service, user education, issuance of library guides, assistance in the location of document, literature search, reader's advisory service, inter-library loan, reprographic services among others.

Internet Service and Users' Satisfaction of Public Libraries

Internet refers to network of networks linking various users through computers and internet service providers. It is the service that allows users to search information

online through different platforms like database, search engines, blogs, websites among others. The internet can be used for research by browsing the web to access databases provided electronically by some information providers. e-mails can be sent and received; chats and discussion groups can be conducted using the internet. Furthermore, the internet has many benefits in the academic cycle; these include provision of round-the-clock access to a wide variety of information sources globally and the ability to discuss and share experience with colleagues. To be able to derive maximum benefit from these attributes of information and communication technology (ICT), Ozioko (2005) and Nwachukwu (2005) advised that end users must possess some skills. In addition, Daniel (2000) opined that internet makes possible worldwide accessibility to a wide range of information resources, databases, library catalogues, publishers' catalogue, encyclopedias, dictionaries, public information and listings, maps, travel time-tables and many other reference sources. The author further stated that the internet has become the tool in the hand of reference librarian to promptly resolve users' puzzles and queries. In confirmation, Audu (2006) in assessing internet service on grounds of its capabilities posits that it gives researchers the ability to discuss and share experiences with colleagues. Kamjar (2008) also asserts that the internet has a profound impact on research processes and dissemination of information based on the fact that the best way to acquire knowledge and share information is enhanced by its capabilities. Kumar & Kaur (2006) suggested that internet service should be provided round the clock for its maximum use, more computers should be provided along with more efficient staff, bandwidth for fast internet connectivity, printing facility and training programs should also be provided for all users. The internet is used in the library for providing web access, printing, downloading, filtering, guiding and signposting, assistance and training, creating library web site, and additional services. Providing web access to the internet is to give users access to another information resource. Provision of the opportunity to "surf the net" is, the baseline networked service.

User Education and Users' Satisfaction of Public Libraries

User education refers to the process of making library users acquire the skills needed to optimally use the library resources and services. According to Uhegbu (2007) user education can create the necessary awareness for information use, acquaint users with ideas of how knowledge is arranged in the library to facilitate location and to eliminate inferiority complex among first time users. He further elaborated that library use instruction enables a user to have a perfect understanding of the usefulness of the library in the provision of their information needs. User education according to the author is an essential mechanism for ensuring effective library and information use. The author highlighted methods of implementing user education which are through lecture approach and demonstration approach. Philip (2015) that user education can take the form of orientation, tour, bibliographic instruction, during user-staff interaction and creation of awareness generally. Library user education enhance library usage, thus serving as a key to effective use of information resources. In addition, Corral (2004) outlined topics that could be covered by user education as accessing electronic databases and journals, finding high quality resources on the web, keeping up to date with new information, using bibliographic software pages, carrying out citation and advanced database searching for systematic reviews. Consequently, library orientation programme can be made available to library patrons through e-mail, discussion groups, bulletin boards, e-lectures, e-seminars, e-workshops and so forth. The information content of these channels may include use of the different divisions of the library such as collection development, technical services division and readers' services division. Moreover, Nkiko and Ilo (2006) advised that heads of academic libraries should show a high level of assertiveness and dynamism, persuading other policy-makers to give prominence to the teaching of use of library, they further stressed that user education should be more practical oriented where students and staff are taught library skills, internet surfing techniques, information literacy skills, referencing styles, computer appreciation and general use of audio-visual equipment. Nkanu (2007) viewed user education as exposing users, especially fresh users to the methods of catalogue use, reference materials, indexes and abstracts and other bibliographic tools, including computer internet searches.

It is a general opinion as observed from the studies and literatures reviewed that user's satisfaction of library services depend to a greater extent on the quality and appropriateness of the services rendered. Though works have been done on public library services, more researches on the issue are needed to upgrade data and add to literature. Hence this study intends to fill the gap in relation to user's satisfaction of public library service in terms of user education service and internet services.

Method

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. Uhegbu (2009) observes that survey research design involves a systematic and comprehensive collection of information about the opinions, attitudes, feelings, beliefs and behaviour of people. This collection is often accomplished through the use of questionnaire, interview and other data collecting instruments.

The scope of the study was limited to the public library in Abak Local Government Area (LGA) of Akwa Ibom State in Southern Nigeria. Based on geographic details, states are made up of Local Government Areas (LGAs), while LGAs comprise clans and villages in that order. It is also limited to main variables of the study being internet service, user education and user satisfaction. Consequently, the research was conducted in Abak LGA, being one of the oldest LGAs the state. Local Government area is a located on the South-Western part of Uyo, the capital of the state. It has common boundaries with other Local Government Areas namely Essien Udim, Ukanafun, Oruk Anam, Etim Ekpo, Uyo and Ikono. Abak LGA has an area of 251.832km² with a population of 39,090 (*Source: National Population Commission, 2006*). Abak is generally flat with undulating hills at Ibagwa where a national military barrack is located. The people take advantage of dominant green foliage and secondary forest with amount of rain. The citizens take to agro-economic activities as their main occupation, mainly in the rural area (Inyang, 2000). Commercial activities are on the increase in the urban centres by reason of close proximity to the state capital.

A structured questionnaire was designed for the study. Estimated monthly users of the library were 133. This number was based on the public library's head-count register. Hence, questionnaire designed and administered to elicit data was of the same number. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed through the help of the library staff for a period of one month to respondents who were willing to participate. 110 copies of the questionnaire were correctly filled and used as sample for the study. The data collected from the questionnaire were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 significant level.

RESULT

Responses gathered are analysed based on purpose of the study and presented below.

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between internet service and users' satisfaction in Public Library in Abak LGA.

Table 1: Internet services and users' satisfaction of public library, Abak area.

| Variables | N | \bar{X} | SD | r-cal | r-crit | Df |
|---------------------|-----|-----------|-------|-------|--------|-----|
| Internet Services | 110 | 3.44 | 11.76 | | | |
| Users' satisfaction | 110 | 1.55 | 5.44 | 3.70 | 1.95 | 108 |

*** Significant at 0.05, r-cal = 3.70, r-crit = .195, df = 108**

From table1, the calculated r value of 3.70 which is greater than the table value of .195 is significant at 0.05 levels, i.e. $3.70 > .195$, hence the result is significant and the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis which holds that there is a significant relationship between internet services and users' satisfaction of Abak Local Government Area public library was upheld.

HO₂ There is no significant relationship between user education service and users' satisfaction in Public Library in Abak Local Government Area.

Table 2: User education services and users' satisfaction of public library Abak local government area

| Variables | N | \bar{X} | SD | r-cal | r-crit | Df |
|---------------------|-----|-----------|-------|-------|--------|-----|
| User Education | 110 | 3.62 | 12.47 | | | |
| Users' satisfaction | 110 | 1.37 | 5.12 | 4.41 | .195 | 108 |

*** Significant at 0.05, r-cal = 4.41, r-crit = .195, df = 108**

Table 2 revealed that the calculated value of 4.41 is greater than the critical value of .195 which is significant at 0.05 level i.e. $4.41 > .195$, hence the result is significant and the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis which holds that there is a significant relationship between user education and user's satisfaction of Abak LGA public library was upheld.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Internet Services Provision and User's satisfaction

The result of the data analysis in table 1 was significant due to the fact that the obtained r-value (3.70) was greater than the critical r-value (.195) at 0.05 level with 108 degree of freedom. This shows that internet services provision significantly relates with users' satisfaction in Abak LGA area public library. The finding is in line with a study

by Audu (2006) on internet availability and use by users of University of Nigeria Nsukka library who recommended that more internet facilities be made available to the students and that students be taught internet skills since it significantly relates with users' satisfaction. Study by Oje Dokun (2001) also confirmed this as he revealed that the internet has many benefits in the academic cycle; these include provision of round-the-clock access to a wide variety of information sources globally and the ability to discuss and share experience with colleagues.

User Education Services and Users' Satisfaction

The result of the data analysis in table 2 was significant due to the fact that the obtained r-value (4.41) was greater than the critical r-value (.195) at 0.05 level with 108 degree of freedom. This further discovered that user education services provision significantly relates with users' satisfaction. This is because, user education is an essential mechanism for ensuring effective library and information services through orientation, tour, bibliographic tour and use awareness. This is in consonance with an observation by Agun (2001) that the important of library education is to enhance library usage and utilization thus serving as a key to effective use of information. Nkanu (2007) supported this fact as he viewed user education as exposing users especially fresh students to the methods of catalogue use, reference materials, indexes and abstracts and other bibliographic tools including computer internet searches.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded generally that there was a significant relationship between internet service provisions, user education and users' satisfaction with public library services in Abak LGA. Consequent upon the result of this study, the value and demand for information requires for public libraries to continually offer effective information services to users. It also implies that, for the public library to justify and maintain their existence in the changing information sharing environment there is a dire need for the provision of optimal information services such as internet services, user education services amongst others since these services significantly influence users' satisfaction.

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