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EVALUATION OF THE USE OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARY RESOURCES AND SERVICES BY THE STUDENTS OF PAUL UNIVERSITY, AWKA, ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the use of library resources and services by students of Paul University, Awka in Anambra State, Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey research method and employed a structured questionnaire and observations as instruments for data collection. The entire population of 276 students of Paul University Awka was involved in the study. The study was guided by 6 research questions. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics which include percentages, frequencies and mean rating. Findings revealed that students fairly use the library for their studies. Observation shows that they use the library most during examination periods. It also revealed that resources currently available are fairly adequate and fairly accessible to the students. Furthermore, the study revealed that users are satisfied with the services and facilities provided by the library. Problems militating against effective use of the University Library by the students were identified and solutions were proffered. It was recommended among others that the habit of using the Library should be inculcated into students through avenues such as organizing library display, library exhibition, library orientation, and inclusion of use of library as a course in the University's curriculum so as to attract students to the Library.

INTRODUCTION

The objective of the university library is to support the academic programmes of the university by providing relevant information so as to respond to the ever-increasing information demands of the users who comprise the students and the academic staff of the university. The 21st Century poses radical challenges to the university libraries that the overall functions and services are influenced regularly. This is in line with the opinion of Opoku (2011) that many issues affect the way services are provided in the library on a regular basis. These challenges invariably demand that evaluation of university libraries services' remains worthwhile.

Constant evaluation of the university libraries use is the surest way of ensuring that information is obtained so as to ascertain whether the library is meeting its expected goals,so that adjustments should be made where necessary for effective information service delivery.In consonance with this, the purpose of evaluation, as declared by Knighty (as cited in Ogunrobi, 2012) is to gather information on how the library is accomplishing its objectives with a view to improving the delivery of library services.

In the light of this therefore, the need for this study becomes very imperative. It has become expedient to ascertain the extent to which the students of Paul University, Awka are utilizing the resources in their university library.

CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

University Library is an academic library. Academic libraries, according to Reitz (2004) is a library that is an integral part of a college, university or other institutions of postsecondary education, administered to meet the information and research needs of its students, faculty and staff. Academic library therefore is a type of library found in institutions of higher learning –

universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education. University library is defined as a library or library system established, administered and funded by a university to meet the information, research, and curriculum needs of its students, faculty and staff (Reitz, 2004). Ekere (2006) confirmed this when she declared that any library attached to a university is called a university library.

The definition of a university library by Reitz (2004) revealed that a university library has a function, and this is to "meet the information, research, and curriculum needs of its students, faculty and staff". This concurs with the idea of Aina (2004) which stated that the main purpose of a university library is to support the objectives of a university, which are in the areas of learning, teaching, research and service. Ekere (2006) also shared this view by making an assertion that the main purpose of the university library is to support the objectives of the university which is to promote teaching, learning and research. Thus, the university library is meant to serve the undergraduates, postgraduates, lecturers and other members of the university community. Bringing out further the idea behind the establishment of a university library, Kumar (2006) argued that:

> *A university library is a part of a university set-up. Therefore, it exists to serve the objectives of its parent organization. Every library programme must support university's total programme. In other words, a university library should aim to advance the functions of its university. It should reflect the character of the school (p. 47).*

Halsey (2009) similarly summarized when he stated that:

> *Research plays a central role in the academic work of students and faculty at colleges and universities. As a result, college and university libraries— also called academic libraries—are often considered the most important resource of an institution of higher education. Because students and faculty at colleges and universities may wish to conduct research within any conceivable academic discipline, the collections of academic libraries usually reflect a vast range of interests and formats.*

Oyewusi and Oyeboade (2009) in line with the ongoing discussion opined that 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. As a result, they continued, university libraries are often considered the most important resource centre of an academic institution. Roseroka (2004) also felt that University libraries derive their mission from that of the parent organization, the university… The vision, mission, and strategies which are selected by universities as guide for meeting the core functions of teaching, learning, research and providing community service form the foundation on which the role of the university library is based. University libraries play a prominent role in providing information services in various forms to students, lecturers and researchers. This is why Okunu, Akalumhe, and Monu (2011) concluded that the university library is the heart and blood of the university.

The primary purpose of university libraries as could be seen from the above discussion is to support the teaching, learning and research activities of their parent institutions. In consonance with the National Universities Commission (NUC) policy which encourages bringing library services closer to the students and staff, university libraries are considered as one of the fundamental necessities required for accreditation of academic programmes in Nigerian university libraries.

However, 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 (Oyewusi and Oyeboada, 2009). Opoku (2011) also perceived this when he stated that:

> *Academic library service is a complex and dynamic collaboration between*
> *the library staff and the user. Many issues affect the way services are*

provided in the library on regular basis. The increasing students intake into the university, coupled with advanced Information and Communication Technology (ICT) development each day has created a new kind of library users demanding more efficient library services. If checks and balances are put in place, and components of the library are managed in an efficient and effective manner, the library is likely to succeed in meeting user expectations in its services delivery. There is need therefore for academic libraries to promote and provide quality information services that meet the needs of students and faculty and motivate them to use the library services more. The library continually needs to optimize the interactions of all the components that make up the service to ensure that changing library objectives are met and to improve both the user interaction and relationship over time. (p. 198).

Considering these challenges therefore, evaluation of the students/ staffuse of libraries in the universities in Nigeria is therefore an important exercise that has to be undertaken from time to time because some factors influence the ways library services are being rendered and the students and staff use of the library.

Within the context of the library, opined Ogunrobi (2012), evaluation is the process whereby we systematically collect and analyze information about students' perceived use of libraries by using evidence (testing), numerical values to the evidence (measurement), and using the results to make decisions (assessment). The purpose of evaluation is to gather information on how the library is accomplishing its objectives with a view to improving the delivery of library services (Knightyas cited by Emokiniov and Ogunrobi, 2012).

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Paul University is an Anglican University established on30[th] November, 2009. The proprietor is The Joint Provincial Episcopal Synod (JPES) of the Ecclesiastical Provinces of the Niger, Niger-Delta, Owerri, Enugu, and Aba, then under the Chairmanship of His Grace, The Most Reverend Maxwell S. C. Anikwenwa, JP, OSM, OFR.

Based on the fact that no university can exist without a library, Paul University Library was established the same day, 30th November, 2009 to support and facilitate the teaching, learning, research programmes of the University. The Library inherited the collection of the former St. Paul's College, Awka and has now metamorphosed into Paul University Library, thereby balancing sciences with earlier emphasis on Arts, Management and Social Sciences.

The current size of the Library is one thousand, three hundred and twelve (1, 312) square meters. The ultimate seating capacity is five hundred (500). The population served is five hundred and eight-eight (588), (Paul University, Awka, 2010).Users comprising the students and academic staff of the University.

The collection of the Library is increasing at an exponential rate. The University Library from time to time receives materials in the form of gift and donations from charity organizations, philanthropists and donors like Sir Emeka Offor Foundation (SEOF), National Universities Commission (NUC), Feed the Minds, Society for the promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK), African Nebula, Alumni Association of National Defense College, the Diocese of Awka, Anglican Communion, the Rosmini Publications, Langham Literature and individuals like Hiss Grace, Most Revd M. S. C. Anikwenwa, the former Dean, Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), Dr. U. C. Nzewi, and others. The Library is in exchange programme with the Library of Congress. The Library renders its e-services through the EBSCO, DOAJ, Nigerian Virtual Library, JSTOR EMERALD, etc. The Library has staff strength of eighteen: 4 academic/professional librarians, 6 non-academic senior staff, and 8 non-academic junior staff bringing the total number of staff to 18.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study is to evaluate the use of library resources and services by students of Paul University, Awka in Anambra State, Nigeria

Specifically, the study is set out to:

- Ascertain the frequency of the use of library by the students of the university.

- Find out the availability/adequacy of the library resources.

- Determine the accessibility of the library resources.

- Determine user' level of satisfactionwith the services rendered.

- Determine the constraints to effective use of library resources by the students.

- Suggest practical ways to improve use of the library by the students of the University.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were posed to guide this study:

- How frequent do the students of Paul University use the University Library?

- To what extent are resources available or adequate in the University Library?

- To what extent are the resources in the University Library accessible?

- To what extent are the students satisfied with the services and facilities provided?

- What are the constraints to effective use of library resources by the students of the University?

- In what ways can the use of the library beimproved among the students of the University?

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey research method and used structured questionnaire and observation as instruments for data collection. The data obtained were analyzed using tables, simple percentages, frequencies and mean rating. The population studied includes 100 Level to 400 Level students of Paul University, Awka numbering 276 students. Since the population is small, there was no sampling; the entire population was studied. Therefore a total number of two hundred and seventy-six (276) questionnaires were distributed to the students across the four levels. All the students live and study within the University premises and as a result, efforts were made to ensure the entire questionnaireswere completed. Therefore all the 276 (100%) questionnaires were collected and analyzed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Students' response based on their gender

S/N	LEVEL	MALE		FEMALE	
		TOTAL	**%**	**TOTAL**	**%**
1.	100	33	22	22	17
2.	200	47	31	30	24
3.	300	33	22	39	31
4.	400	37	25	35	28

Table 1 shows that out of 55 first year students, 33(22%) are males while 22 (17%) are females. Also, out of 77 second year students, 47 (31%) are males while 30 (24%) are female. Of 72 third year students, 33 (22%) are male while 39 (31%) are females. Furthermore, out of 72 fourth year

students, 37 (25%) are males while 35 (28%) are females. The table revealed that there are more male students in 100 Level than females. Also, there are more male students in 200 Level than females. The 300 Level has more females than males, while the 400 Level has more males than females. In summary, there are more male students in the University than females.

Table 2: Student's response on the *Frequency of the Use of Library*

S/N	FREQUENCY OF USE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)
1.	Daily	18	6.5
2.	Five days in a week	21	7.6
3.	Four days in a week	23	8.3
4.	Three days in a week	63	22.8
5.	Two days in a week	54	19.6
6.	Once in a week	17	6.2
7.	Hardly visit the library	61	22.1
8.	I do not use the because I have all the books I need for my studies and also a laptop which provides me with all information I need	19	6.9

Table 2 revealed that only 18 (6.5%) of the total respondents use the library everyday while 21 (7.6%) patronize the library five times in a week. Out of the entire respondents, 23 (8.3%) use the library four times in a week. The greatest number of the respondents which is 63 (22.8%) patronize the Library three times in a week and 54 (19.6) of the entire population use the library two times in a week. Also, 17 (6.2%) use the Library once in a week. Those that hardly use the Library constituted 61 (22.1%) while those that claimed they have all the books they need for

their studies, and possess laptops which provide them with all information they need constituted 19 (6.9%).

Table 3: Student's response on the *Availability and Adequacy of Library Resources*

S/N	RESOURCES	MEAN ($\bar{x}$)	DECISION
1.	Reference Resources	2.86	FA
2.	Text Books	3.01	A
3.	Journals	2.76	FA
4.	Newspapers	2.85	FA
5.	Magazines	2.67	FA
6.	Special Collections/Government Publications	2.48	FA
7.	Students Long Essays (Projects)	2.67	FA
8.	Electronic Online Resources	2.45	FA
	Grand Mean	**2.73**	FA

Note: VA = Very Adequate, A = Adequate, FA = Fairly Adequate, NA = Not Adequate

Decision Rule: Very Adequate 3.50 - 4.0, Adequate 3.00 - 3.49, Fairly Adequate 2.00 - 2.99

Not Adequate 1.00 - 1.99.

Results in Table 3 shows that out of eight items that asked questions on the availability and adequacy of library resources, the students scored 2.86 and below in items 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. These reveal that the library resources are fairly adequate in those areas. The students also score 3.01 in item 2. This implies that resources are adequate in this area. Also, the grand mean rating of 2.73 shows that resources are generally fairly available and adequate in the library.

Table 4: Students' Response on *Accessibility of Library Resources*

S/N	RESOURCES	MEAN ($\bar{x}$)	DECISION
1.	Reference Resources	3.13	A
2.	Text Books	3.23	A
3.	Journals	2.84	FA
4.	Newspapers	2.85	FA
5.	Magazines	2.67	FA
6.	Special Collections/Government Publications	2.63	FA
7.	Students Long Essays (Projects)	2.68	FA
8.	Electronic Online Resources	2.48	FA
	Grand Mean	2.81	**FA**

Note: VA = Very Accessible, A = Accessible, FA = Fairly Accessible, NA = Not Accessible

Decision Rule: Very Accessible 3.50 - 4.0, Accessible 3.00 – 3.49, Fairly Accessible 2.00 – 2.99, Not Accessible 1.00 – 1.99.

The result in Table 4 represents the response of the students on the accessibility of library resources. As revealed in the analysis, the respondents scored 3.13 and 3.23 in items 1 and 2 respectively. This is an indication that the resources that fall in these areas are accessible. On the other hand, the respondents' scores in items 3 to 8 above fall within the range of 2.85 and 2.48. These also indicate that resources represented in these items are fairly accessible. Moreover, the grand mean of 2.81 indicates that resources in general are fairly accessible.

Table 5: Students' Response to *Users' Satisfaction with the Services and Facilities Provided*

S/N	LIBRARY SERVICES	MEAN (X̄)	DECISION
1.	Reprography	3.05	S
2.	Reference	3.1	S
3.	Referral	3.04	S
4.	Inter-library loan	3.18	S
5.	Electronic Library Services	3.03	S
6.	Current Awareness Services	3.1	S
7.	Lending Services	3.22	S
8.	User Education Services	3.18	S
9.	Library Display/Exhibition	3.1	S
10.	Seats, Reading Carrels, and space	3.36	S
11.	Organization/Arrangement of Library Services	3.1	S
12.	Attitudes/conducts of the Library Staff	3.03	S
13.	Selective Dissemination of Information	2.85	D
14.	Library Orientation Programme	2.96	D
	Grand Mean	**3.09**	**S**

Note: VS = Very Satisfied, S = Satisfied, D = Dissatisfied, VS = Very Dissatisfied

Decision Rule: Very Satisfied 3.50 - 4.0, Satisfied 3.00 – 3.49, Dissatisfied 2.00 – 2.99, Very Dissatisfied 1.00 – 1.99.

The results in Table 5 shows the students' response to the questions asked on users' satisfaction with the services and facilities provided. As presented above, the respondents' score on items 1 to 12 fall with the range of 3.00 and 3.49. This implies they are satisfied with these services and facilities. Also, the students scored 2.85 and 2.96 in items 13 and 14 respectively. This indicates that they are dissatisfied with these services and facilities.Furthermore, the grand mean of 3.09 is an indication that the respondents are satisfied with the services and facilities provided.

Table 6: Students' Response on *Problems Affecting Effective Use of the Library and Library Resources*

S/N	PROBLEMS	MEAN ($\bar{X}$)	DECISION
1.	Little/No assistance from the library staff	2.44	D
2.	Poor organization of the materials on the shelves	2.58	D
3.	Ineffectiveness of the library catalogue	2.65	D
4.	Lack of organization in the library	2.46	D
5.	Collections are inadequate	2.67	D
6.	Collections are not relevant	2.32	D
7.	The library has little or no resources in my course of study	3.06	A
8.	The library is usually dark and this discourages reading	2.30	D
9.	The library is deficient in electronic/online library services	3.08	A
10.	Users are not educated on how to use the library.	2.43	D
11.	The library has no guide to direct users to appropriate sections of the library.	2.32	D

12.	The library environment is not conducive/friendly for reading and learning.	2.36	D
13.	The library staff are not friendly and therefore scare users away from the library	2.67	D
	Grand mean	**2.56**	**D**

Note: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Agree

Decision Rule:Strongly Agree 3.50 - 4.0, Agree3.00 – 3.49, Disagree 2.00 – 2.99, Strongly Agree 1.00 – 1.99.

From the result in Table 6, the respondents scored below 3.00 in item 1 to 6, 8, 10 to 13. This shows that they disagreed with these negative statements posed as problems affecting effective use of the Library and its resources**.** However, they scored 3.00 and above in items 7 and 9 above and this is an indication that the respondents agreed with these two statements which said that *the library has little or no resources in their courses of study*, and the*library is deficient in electronic/online library services*. The grand mean of 2.56 shows that the students almost disagreed with all the negative statements posed as problems affecting effective use of the library and its resources.

Table 7: Students' Response to *Ways to Improve Use of the Library and Library Resources*

S/N	SOLUTIONS	MEAN ($\bar{X}$)	DECISION
1.	The staff should be well-trained in handling diverse users' problems	3.58	SA
2.	Materials on the shelves should be well-organized to save the time of users	3.40	A
3.	There should be effective library guide to direct users to sections of the library.	3.52	SA
4.	The library catalogue should be harnessed and be made functional	3.54	SA
5.	The library should be well-organized	3.59	SA
6.	Generally, the Library should collect more resources in all subject	3.92	SA
7.	There should be a standby generator to power the library when there is power outage	3.86	SA
8.	The library should enhance provision of online/electronic library services	3.93	SA
9.	The library should be automated to improve services.	3.77	SA
10.	User education should be strengthened/encouraged in the library.	3.57	SA

11.	The library should be conducive and friendly for reading all the time.	3.95	SA
	Grand mean	**3.69**	**SA**

Note: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Agree

Decision Rule:Strongly Agree 3.50 - 4.0, Agree3.00 – 3.49, Disagree 2.00 – 2.99, Strongly Agree 1.00 – 1.99

As shown in Table 7, the students scored 3.50 and above in items 1, then 3 to 11. This implies that they strongly agreed with these statements posed as ways to improve use of the Library and its resources. On the other hand, the students scored 3.40 in item 2 and this shows that the respondents agreed with that statement which says that *materials on the shelves should be well-organized to save the time of users.* The grand mean of 3.69 is a clear indication that the respondents strongly agreed with the statements posed as ways of improving use of the Library and its resources by the students.

Discussion of Findings

This study evaluated the use of library resources by the students of Paul University, Awka, Anambra State. The findings revealed that utilization of the Library by students on daily basis is low for only 18 (6.5%) of them use the Library on daily basis. The highest number 63 (22.8%) use the Library 3 times in a week, followed by 54 (19.6%) that use the Library once in a week. On the other hand, a significant number 61 (22.1%) hardly use the library, while 19 (6.9%) do not use the Library because they have all the books they need for their studies and laptops that provide them with all information they need for their studies. In the light of this, librarians

should strive to educate the students on the need to use the Library regularly so as to benefit from the teaching, learning and research objectives of the University Library.

On the availability/adequacy of library/information resources, the respondents mean score is above 3.00 and this is an indication that the Library has adequate number of textbooks. However, other resources are fairly adequate because the respondents' score in all other items fall within 2.00 and 2.99 in item. The grand mean of all the respondents' cores in this aspect is 2.73 shows that resources are generally fairly available or adequate. The Library should therefore acquire more journals, magazines, electronic resources etc for the use of students.

Access to information and information resources is one of the tenets of librarianship which librarians should endeavour to uphold all the time practically. Reference resources and text books are accessible to the respondents than other information resources in the Library like journals, magazines, newspapers etc. and these accounts for mean scores of 3.13 and 3.23 respectively when asked to indicate how accessible the resources in the Library are. These scores fall within 3.00 and 3.49 indicating that reference sources and textbooks are accessible to students while their scores in other resources fall within 2.00 and 2.99 show that these resources are fairly accessible. Also, the grand mean of 2.81 gives an impression that resources are fairly accessible. This implies that the resources are either not made available to users or are not well-organized in the shelves. Moreover, it could mean that the library catalogue is deficient. The Library should therefore ensure that the resources are will organized through effective cataloguing and classification.

On users' satisfaction with the services and facilities provided, the respondents agreed they are satisfied with almost all the services provides by the Library, hence their scores on users'

satisfaction fall within 3.00 and 3.49. However, in *Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) and Library Orientation Programme,* their scores fall within 2.00 and 2.99 indicating that they are dissatisfied with these services. Moreover, grand mean of 3.09 obtained is and indication that users are satisfied with the services rendered in the Library. Therefore, while the Library should strive to sustain users' satisfaction in these areas, efforts should be made to strengthen Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) and Library Orientation Programme so as to attract users to the Library.

Statements were posed on possible problem militating against effective use of the Library by students. Respondent's scores fall within 2.00 and 2.99 in almost all the questions showing that they do not agree with those statements as problems militating against effective use of the Library. However, their scores fall within 3.00 and 3.49 in 2 questions (items 7 and 9 of Table 6) which stated that *the Library has little or no resources in my course of study, and that the Library is deficient in electronic/online Library services* respectively. This implies that they agree with those statements as problems militating against effective use of the Library by the students. Also, the grand mean of 2.56 is an indication that the respondents do not agree almost all the statements posed as problems. However, the Library should endeavour to enhance collections in every subject so as to ensure a balanced collection. Also, the Library should provide electronic/online library services and encourage students to use them.

Responding to the statements posed on ways of improving use of library, the students strongly agreed with almost all the statements posed as ways of improving use of the Library as their mean scores fall within 3.50 and 4.00. However, the respondents agreed with only one statement (item 2, Table 7) which states that *materials on the shelves should be well-organized to save the time of users.* Also, the grand mean of 3.69 indicates that the respondents strongly agree with

almost all the statements stated on ways of improving use of library by students. Therefore, the library staff should strive to revive all the services in the Library so as satisfy user's information needs for learning and research.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this empirical study, the authors were bent on evaluating the use of library by the students of Paul University, Awka, Anambra State in Nigeria. Information was elicited from them on various aspects of areas of use of library. Examined were the frequency of the use of the library, the extent to which resources are available and adequate in the library, the extent to which the resources are accessible in the library, users' satisfaction with the services and facilities provided, problems affecting effective use of the library by the students, and ways of improving the use of the library by students.

In the light of the findings of the investigations, the researchers make the following recommendations:

1. The habit of using the Library should be inculcated into students through avenues such as organizing library display, library exhibition, library orientation, and inclusion of use of library as a course in the University's curriculum so as to attract students to the Library.

2. The library collection has to be enhanced to ensure that there is enough and balanced collection reflecting the interest of all the departments.

3. Organization and arrangement of the library collection through cataloguing, classification and indexing should be taken seriously in order to facilitate access and retrieval to the resources.

4. The Library Management should embark on activities that would enhance users' satisfaction because if users are satisfied, their patronage will be secured and the frequency of patronage will also be increased.

5. Electronic/online library services have to be enhanced and users should be encouraged to use them.

6. The Library should be provided with alternative means of power supply in case to anticipate power failure; standby power-generating sets should be made available to the Library to take care of this.

7. Services in the Library have to be automated so that users' information needs could be responded to promptly and without delay.

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