



# **ILORIN JOURNAL OF EDUCATION**

**ISSN: 0189-6636**

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**VOLUME 35 JULY, 2016**

**PUBLISHED BY THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION,  
UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN, ILORIN, NIGERIA**



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## **STUDENTS' ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC LIBRARY SERVICES OF UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN, ILORIN, NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

This study examined Students' Assessment of Academic Library Services at the University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria. A survey method of case study approach was employed for this study. A sample of 568 respondents was used in this study which is 10% of the total population. A researcher – designed structured questionnaire titled “Students' Satisfaction with Library Services (SSLS)” was used for data collection. Mean score and standard deviation were used to analyse the data obtained where mean score statements 3.50 – 4.00 was classified as Highly Satisfied (HS), 2.50 – 3.49, indicated Satisfied (s) and 1.00 - 2.49 indicated Highly Dissatisfied (DS). The study revealed that students were: highly satisfied with the reading environment (grand mean value 3.69); satisfied with the available information resources (grand mean value 3.08); satisfied with the inter-library services offered in getting unavailable information resources (grand mean value 3.13); highly satisfied with the efficiency of library personnel (grand mean value 3.69); and satisfied with the general services and resources (grand mean value 3.39) at the University of Ilorin library. Based on the findings, the study recommended that effort should be made by the management of University of Ilorin library to acquire up-to-date or current textbooks, periodicals, scholarly journals, magazines among a host of other information resources unavailable in the library, which are central to library services as indicated by the students.

### **Introduction**

Universities are established with the aim of giving any student who enrolls a very sound and qualitative education in order to be able to function effectively in any environment in which he/she may find him/herself; so as to become more productive, self-fulfilling and attain self actualization (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2004). Consequently, a student is a member of a university undergoing a Bachelor's, Master's and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree programmes in a university. Hence university education is an education level taken in order to gain one's first, second and third degrees (Shields, 1995; Scott, 2006). This inadvertently means that the university education is a system designed to contribute to the development of the people it harbours. Therefore, students are one of the major groups that the university contributes to their all round-development. This lends credence to the observation of Ukachi (2013) that the development of students is one of the major objectives of university education and also that the achievements of the goals of the universities depend to a great extent on the provision and utilization of services and resources provided by the university library.



The University library are generally referred to as center of information primarily because they are established to generate knowledge, equip people with knowledge to serve the society and advance the well-being of mankind. Thus, a library is like a storehouse of knowledge and a whole world encompassed in one room (Adeyoyin, 2011; National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), 2015). NOUN (2015) stated further that a library is an organized collection of sources of information and similar resources, made accessible to a defined community for reference or borrowing. In a similar vein, Chowdhury (2001) opined that the academic library is essentially aimed at capturing and holding the interest of the academic community by producing intelligent users of all types of documents; and to cultivate in users an appreciation of libraries as academic institutions. Specifically, the objectives of an academic library, according to International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) (2003), Burke (2010) and NOUN (2015), are to: collect and preserve the most up-to-date materials for teaching, provide information for the library patrons and users; properly organize these materials so as to make them accessible to use; maintain inter-library co-operation with other libraries around the world; provide reading environments in a useful variety of locations; provide materials promptly to satisfy the information needs of the people; and to preserve for future generation all information materials stored in it.

From the above, it could be inferred that the effectiveness of an academic library as an instrument of learning is determined by the success with which it is able to provide the user with the information he/she seeks. The library can fulfill its functions best by pursuing a policy of constant self-evaluation in order to be alert to the changing needs of its users. A modern academic library should strive to play a leading role in the teaching, learning and research activities of its parent institution. It should be dynamic and aggressive in its provision of services (Burke, 2010). To this end, Larson and Owusu-Acheaw (2012) opined that since academic library users have varying needs, it is the responsibility of the library staff to know the needs and expectations and strive to meet them. The authors further stated that, meeting the information needs of users require the provision of the actual information resources and services that will satisfy their needs. Applegate (1997), Sivathaasan (2013), Ikenwe and Adegbilero-Iwari (2014) defined user-satisfaction as whether users are satisfied or not with a service or resources in a library. If users' needs and expectations are met, then naturally, they would be satisfied because their requests have been met (Larson & Owusu-Acheaw, 2012). Although academic libraries, like other libraries, are non-profitable organizations, they should be more concerned on how to bring satisfactory services users, particularly students and staff.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The problem of under-utilization of university libraries by students has become a point of discourse among library experts, scholars and researchers, and this has led to contentious debate both in the print and electronic media today. Also, existing literatures (Alegbeleye, 1999; Ukachi, 2013; NOUN, 2014) have shown that there is under-utilization of university libraries by students of tertiary institutions despite the fact that



management of academic libraries in Nigeria has put in place several resources to make their services available for students' use. It is however not clear whether users, that is, students who patronise the University of Ilorin academic library are satisfied with the services and resources provided in the library. Only users of the library can determine how satisfied they are with the services provided there. Buttressing this view, Basha and Zubi-Al (2010), Larson & Owusu-Acheaw (2012), Mostofa & Hossain (2014) and Khaola and Mabilikoane (2015) noted that only the users of a library are the best judge to assess its services. Based on this perspective, the researcher was motivated to conduct this study to provide further insight on users' satisfaction with the services provided at the University of Ilorin library in Kwara State, Nigeria, to bridge the identified knowledge gap and contribute to empirical knowledge in library users' satisfaction research.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- i. explore students' satisfaction with the reading environments of the library;
- ii. ascertain students' satisfaction with the available information resources of the library;
- iii. find out students satisfaction with the inter-library services offered by the library;
- iv. seek student's opinion on the efficiency of library personnel;
- v. examine the extent of students' satisfaction with the general services offered by the library; and
- vi. Proffer solution for improvement of library services

### **Research Questions**

This study addressed the fundamental problems of this research with the following questions:

1. How satisfied are students with the reading environment in the University of Ilorin library?
2. How satisfied are students with the available information resources of the University of Ilorin library?
3. How satisfied are students with the inter-library services offered in getting unavailable information resources in the University of Ilorin library?
4. How satisfactory are students with the efficiency of library personnel in the University of Ilorin library?
5. How satisfied are students with the general library services in the University of Ilorin library?

### **Research Methodology**

A descriptive research design of survey method was adopted for the study. This design was adopted because the researcher systematically collected data from a targeted population through the use of questionnaire. The target population for this study



## *Students' Assessment of Academic Library Services of University of Ilorin*

comprised all 5, 678 users of University of Ilorin academic library (Registration unit, University of Ilorin Library, 2015). A sample of 568 respondents was selected through the multi-stage sampling technique. The selected sample represents 10% of the total population. The rationale for the selection was in line with Ali (2006) and Atunde (2011)'s contention which stated that if a population is large (between 5000 - 7000), only a small size about 10% of its which the researcher can manage well ought to be sampled. The researcher employed a researcher-designed structured questionnaire titled "Students' Satisfaction with Library Services (SSLS)" for gathering relevant data from the respondents. SSLS was divided into two parts, 1 and 2. Part 1 consists of bio-data of the respondents, while part 2 comprises of 26 items that were used to determine students' satisfaction with library services in areas of reading environments, available information resources, inter-library services offered, efficiency of library personnel and general library services. The questionnaire was a close-ended form of questionnaire based on a four (4) point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 points, Agree (A) = 3 points, Disagree (D) = 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point.

Furthermore, SSLS was subjected to both content and face validation by three experts, that is, two experts in Library and Information Science and an expert in Measurement and Evaluation. Its reliability coefficient obtained using Cronbach alpha was 0.86. Also, the researcher, with the help of three trained research assistants, administered 568 copies of SSLS to the respondents to get or gather information with the use of direct delivery technique. The questionnaires were retrieved on the spot. In addition, data collected were analyzed using relevant descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics such as simple percentages, mean and standard deviation was used to analyze each item on the questionnaire for the purpose of answering the research objectives. A cut-off point of 2.50 was considered for the study because it represented the mean of the continuum of the scale i.e. 4, 3, 2, 1. The satisfaction mean ratings were interpreted using real limit of numbers as follows: 3.50 – 4.00 = Highly Satisfied (HS), 2.50-3.49 = Satisfied (S) and 1.00-2.49 = Dissatisfied (DS)

### **Results and Discussion of Findings**

**Research Question 1:** How satisfied are students with the reading environment of the University of Ilorin library?



**Table 1: Satisfaction of student with the reading environment of the library**

S/N	Items	N	X	SD	Decision
1	The furniture are comfortable for usage	568	3.85	0.51	Highly satisfied
2	The lighting system are suitable for reading	568	3.52	0.71	Highly satisfied
3	The windows in the library are large enough for good ventilation and heat eradication	568	3.60	0.65	Highly satisfied
4	There is noise control in the library environment	568	3.91	0.30	Highly satisfied
5	The library environment is always neat and tidy.	568	3.65	0.48	Highly satisfied
6	There are conveniences (toilet facilities) for use in the library	568	3.59	0.50	Highly satisfied
	GRAND MEAN		3.69	0.53	Highly satisfied

**Key:** N = Numbers of respondents, X = Mean, S.D = Standard deviation.

Regarding students' satisfaction with the reading environment as indicated in Table 1, the mean values 3.91, 3.85, 3.65, 3.60, 3.59, and 3.52 with grand mean value of 3.69 of the respondents' response revealed that students are highly satisfied with the reading environment of the University of Ilorin library.

**Research Question 2:** How satisfied are students' with the available information resources of the University of Ilorin library?



**Table 2: Students' satisfaction with the available information resources of the library**

S/N	Items	N	X	SD	Decision
7	<b>How satisfied are you with the following available information resources in the library:</b> Provision of up to date textbooks on different subjects/courses	568	2.17	0.89	Dissatisfied
8	Provision of up to date newspapers	568	3.97	0.72	Highly satisfied
9	Provision of up to date magazines	568	2.45	0.94	Dissatisfied
10	Provision of up to date reports	568	2.26	0.74	Dissatisfied
11	Provision of up to date publications	568	2.65	0.99	Satisfied
12	CD-ROM databases	568	3.77	0.88	Highly satisfied
13	Internet/E-mail,	568	3.80	0.95	Highly satisfied
14	Provision of adequate computers	568	3.35	0.68	Satisfied
15	Electronic resources like (E-journals, E-books, E-audio/visual resources etc)	568	3.34	0.73	Satisfied
	<b>GRAND MEAN</b>		<b>3.08</b>	<b>0.84</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>

**Key: N = Numbers of respondents, X = Mean, S.D = Standard deviation.**

Table 2 reveals that, library users (students) at the University of Ilorin library were highly satisfied with the availability of newspapers, CD-ROM databases and Internet/E-mail with mean values 3.97, 3.80 and 3.77 respectively. Also, it was revealed that students were just satisfied with some of the available information resources like computers, electronic resources like (E-journals, E-books, E-audio/visual resources etc) and publications with means values 3.35, 3.34 and 2.65 respectively. In addition, the respondents were dissatisfied with the available, magazines, reports and textbooks on different subjects/courses with mean values 2.45, 2.26 and 2.17 respectively. However, the grand mean value of 3.08 as found in Table 5 indicates that students' are satisfied with the available information resources at the University of Ilorin library.

**Research Question 3:** How satisfied are students with the inter-library services offered in getting unavailable information resources in the University of Ilorin?



**Table 3: Students satisfaction with the inter-library services offered in getting unavailable information resources**

S/N	Items	N	X	SD	Decision
16	Referral letter are issued to student to other libraries to get unavailable resources	568	2.43	0.93	Dissatisfied
17	Prompt attention of staff in charge	568	3.61	0.95	Highly satisfied
18	Approachability of Reference Librarian	568	3.64	1.08	Highly satisfied
19	Pursuance of request from other libraries	568	3.74	0.85	Highly satisfied
20	Availability of information resources from other libraries.	568	2.22	0.98	Dissatisfied
	<b>GRAND MEAN</b>		<b>3.13</b>	<b>0.96</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>

**Key:** N = Numbers of respondents, X = Mean, S. D = Standard deviation, HS = Highly Satisfied, S = Satisfied and DS = Dissatisfied

Data presented in table 3 revealed that students were highly satisfied with some of the inter-library services offered in getting unavailable information resources. Services with which they are highly satisfied with are pursuance of request from other libraries, approachability of reference librarian and prompt attention of staff in charge with the mean values of 3.74, 3.64 and 3.61 respectively.

**Research Question 4:** How satisfied are students with the efficiency of library personnel in the University of Ilorin?



**Table 4: Library personnel efficiency as perceived by students**

S/N	Items	N	X	SD	Decision
21	Library catalogue-author/title and subject-undertaken by library staff is explicit	568	3.61	0.95	Highly satisfied
22	Books are properly arranged by staff on the shelves so that it corresponds with what is in the catalogue	568	3.55	0.49	Highly satisfied
23	Lending of books for library users are with ease	568	3.74	0.85	Highly satisfied
24	Efforts are made by library staff to assist students when they are confused	568	3.59	0.50	Highly satisfied
25	Library staff ensures that students are assisted and guided in the use of library resources.	568	3.96	0.70	Highly satisfied
	<b>GRAND MEAN</b>		<b>3.69</b>	<b>0.70</b>	<b>Highly satisfied</b>

**Key: N = Numbers of respondents, X = Mean, S. D = Standard deviation.**

Table 4 captured data on students' satisfaction with the efficiency of library personnel in providing services to them. It was revealed that a significant number of respondents agreed that library staff offers appreciable services to them by ensuring that they are assisted and guided in the use of library resources, lend books from the library with ease, library catalogue are made explicit, library staff help them out when they are confused and books are properly arranged by staff on the shelves with mean values of 3.96, 3.74, 3.61, 3.59 and 3.55 respectively.

**Research Question 5:** How satisfied are students' with the general library services in the University of Ilorin?

**Table 5: Students satisfaction with the general library services**

S/N	Items	N	X	SD	Decision
26	The services provided by our university library is very satisfactory	568	3.39	0.76	Satisfied

**Key: N = Numbers of respondents, X = Mean, S. D = Standard deviation.**

Data in Table 5 were to determine whether students were satisfied with general services provided at the Library. The results in the table show that significant numbers of respondents were satisfied with the general services and resources at the University of Ilorin library with mean value 3.39.



## **Discussion**

The findings of the study revealed that students are highly satisfied with the reading environment of the University of Ilorin library. One of the desirable qualities of any library building is comfort in terms of furniture, lightings and ventilation because it equates to conducive academic environment. This is in line with what IFLA (2003), Burke (2010) and NOUN (2015) noted as the objective of an academic library which is to provide a reading environment in a useful variety of locations. This findings supports that of Oludipe (2004) in her study in some selected academic libraries in Kwara state who found that 73.8% of respondent were strongly satisfied with the type of furniture provided and lighting system available. Also, the study reveals that, library users (students) at the University of Ilorin library were highly satisfied with the availability of up to date newspapers, CD-ROM databases and Internet/E-mail with mean values 3.97, 3.80 and 3.77 respectively. The findings is in line with Babalola & Babalola (2014) and Larson & Owusu-Acheaw (2012) who found that users were satisfied with the availability of internet facilities in the library

Findings from table 4 revealed that students are satisfied with the inter-library services offered in getting unavailable resources of the University of Ilorin library. This findings negate that of Onohwakpor (2009) who found that students are highly dissatisfied with the approachability of reference librarian at the Delta State public library.

Findings from table 5 revealed that students are highly satisfied with the efficiency of library personnel at the University of Ilorin library. This finding collaborate the assertions of Larson and Owusu-Acheaw (2012) who found that 66.3 percent of library users agreed that library staff offer appreciable services to users at the library, University of Education, Winneba, Ghana. However, this finding is at variance with the report of Okorodudu and Iwhiwhu (2012) who found that staff attitude to work was poor, so users were not satisfied with the efficiency of staff.

Findings from table 5 revealed that students are satisfied with the general library services at the University of Ilorin library. This findings agree with that of Oludipe (2004), Kumar (2008) and Larson and Owusu-Acheaw (2012) who reported that majority (59.3%, 63.4% and 61.0%) of library users were satisfied with the services given to them. However, this finding negate that of Ikenwe and Adegbilero-Iwari (2014) who found that many of the library users (57.2%) in public libraries in South-West, Nigeria, are not satisfied with the library services. It is on this basis, that Onohwakpor (2009), Ukachi (2013) and Khaola and Mabilikoane (2015), noted that public libraries in Nigeria are yearning for improvement as their services suffer one form of neglect or the other due to lack of fund, inadequate infrastructure, poor workers attitude and unqualified manpower.

## **Conclusion**

The study has revealed that students are highly satisfied with the reading environment of the University of Ilorin library; a large proportion of them were highly satisfied with some of inter-library services offered in getting unavailable information



resources. These include pursuance of request from other libraries, approachability of reference librarian and prompt attention of staff in charge; students are highly satisfied with the efficiency of library personnel at the University of Ilorin library; and significant numbers of respondents were satisfied with the general services and resources at the University of Ilorin library. However, one of the major findings that occurred from the study was that students were satisfied with the general library services offered to them. This implies that the Library is playing its role as the nerve centre of the university primarily set up for the achievement of the university's set goals and objectives by providing information materials and services which satisfy the information needs of the entire university community. To this end, some aspects of library services like adequate provision of information resources (up to date materials, reports, textbooks, electronic resources, adequate computers) among a host of other services need to be addressed adequately to enhance learning and other academic activities by students (library users).

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings as revealed in this study, the researcher therefore recommends that, the management of the University of Ilorin library should as a matter of urgency ensure that the library has an annual budgetary provision for its services to enhance operations. Every effort should be made to acquire up-to-date or current textbooks, periodicals, scholarly journals, magazines, among a host of other information resources lacking in the Library which are central to library services as indicated by the students. Library management should conduct user – studies annually in order to have feedback from users on how well the library is meeting their information needs. The management of the University of Ilorin library should allocate sufficient and regular library budget to enable the library acquire working tools like photocopier, printers, among others. Conclusively, they should provide more computers in addition to the existing ones to enhance the scholarly requirement of users.



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