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Evaluation of User's Satisfaction with Reference Services in Selected Federal University Libraries in Southeastern Nigeria

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Abstract

The study evaluated users' satisfaction with the reference services of federal university libraries in southeastern Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey design, and questionnaire served as an instrument for data collection. Drawing from a population of 20,570, a questionnaire was administered to 394 undergraduate library users of which 351 were completed and found useful for data analysis. The findings revealed that users were satisfied with library reference services except those they are not familiar with and none of the categories of reference services was rated very high. Most library users are not familiar with translation service, internet service, and e-mail service along with library OPAC. Reference librarians have a good customer relationship with the users, even though they are yet to fortify their presence in an online environment. Sequential to the above unearthing, recommendations were given that reference librarians should adopt public relation technique in relating to users and other stakeholders of the library. More so, awareness of reference services should be created through library publicity and marketing of library services among the community of users. The recommendation was also given that the reference librarian should be ICT compliance to be able to perform excellently in an online environment.

Keywords: User's Satisfaction, Reference Service, Reference Librarian, Academic Library, Southeastern Nigeria.

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Introduction

Libraries of the world, irrespective of their kind, location, and the antecedent of their establishment, are saddled with the responsibility of serving as an intellectual hub, knowledge repertoire as well as a veritable mediator between information users and information system. Buttressing the important roles of libraries in servicing the information needs of clientele, was Greer (2018) whom in her quote described libraries as "reservoir of strength, grace and



wit, reminder of order, calm and continuity, lake of mental energy....." she claimed to be liberated, still and absorbed in any library of the world.

Library supposed to be the first port of call for information users. This is because the information services provided in the library are reliable, deep and long-lasting. Libraries deserve recognition of achievement because of their ability to meet the information need of user proactively and on request. The responsibility of meeting information need of users on request is not a fire brigade attempt or something done haphazardly. It requires a critical evaluation of both users need as well as the capacity of the library's information resources in meeting such needs. One of the many important functions of libraries from myriad and array of other functions is the use of reference and information sources for answering users' queries. These queries range from specific, general and even research question/information. Reference sources contain facts and universally accepted knowledge, specifically compiled to provide answers to any queries raised by library clienteles (Aina, 2004). The service of directly meeting the specific information need of users is the activities carried out in the reference desk or reference section of the library. The collections in the reference section (mostly serials as they come in volumes and series) were separate from other books meant for circulation. Therefore, documents in the reference section are not allowed to be borrowed out of the library; they were to be consulted for extraction of facts and figures and not to be read cover to cover.

According to Elmer E. Rasmuson Library (2018) libraries perform three major functions; they acquire information (through collection development), sort and organize information (organization of knowledge sometimes refers to as cataloging and classification) and lastly dissemination of information (through reader services). Reference services fall under the third function. Reference service constitutes the assistance users received in solving their queries and as well as aid their selection of relevant information resources. In consonance to the aforementioned, Ashikuzzaman (2013) expressed that reference service is the hub, supreme as well as an ultimate function of the library, where users connect with best available library and information resources. Ranasinghe (2012) buttressed the important role of reference service by associating it as the heart of library services. Concisely, reference services are the professional assistance reference librarian renders to library users searching for information. With reference services, reference librarian ensures information is available for users.

The main purpose of reference services was essentially to diagnose and treat users' information deficiencies. Reference librarians interrogate library users through a reference interview to clarify their information needs, this they do to identify which of the reference and information sources best meet their queries (Miles, 2014). Typically, reference services are traditionally being offered in person, where users need to be physically present in the library, but with advent of internet and web 4.0 (Reference 4.0) technologies, reference services are now being digitized in an online environment where users can communicate remotely with reference librarian without physically present in the library (Tella & Oyedokun, 2014). Little credence to medium or channel of communication, the objectives and approach are still the same.

Reference librarians mediate between the library, information sources, and users. This mediator role they performed when they interpret users' queries as well as sources of information that best meet such queries (Akor & Udensi, 2013). In corroboration to the aforementioned was Ademodi (2011) who asserted that reference services revolved around

assisting users with difficulty or understanding or articulating their information need with various reference and information sources, information search strategies, and techniques that best suit their information needs. This kind of professional assistance reference librarian rendered did not only resolved users' uncertainty but also empower users with information literacy skills they would need in the subsequent search for information. Although the general nature of reference services in any kinds of a library is much the same, the spectrum of information services in academic libraries are broad and elaborate. This is because apart from ready reference queries, there are myriad of inquiries, information needs and research questions from students and faculty members. Queries, inquiries and research question come from various disciplines in respect to the number of courses offered by the parent institutions.

Essentially, the major function of libraries was to utilize its rich and robust collection to provide information to patrons on request. Going by this mandate of the library, one need not wonder why the reference section of the library constitutes the image-maker of the library as they have direct contact with the users. Sequential to this, reference librarians needed to be versatile in the use of different reference sources as different queries call for different information sources. Aina (2004) emphatically stressed that general reference sources (such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, facts sources, bibliographical sources and geographical sources) would mostly provide answers to ready and specific reference queries, while literature search tools/access tools (such as indexes and abstracts, library catalog, bibliographies, etc.) would provide access to information needed for research queries.

Users' satisfaction is a cardinal part of library evaluation, which tends to examine the degree at which library users are satisfied with the service provided in the library. Users' satisfaction depends largely on the ability and capacity of the library to anticipate users need and subsequently integrate such needs to library collection development. User's satisfaction in a more broadly understanding is a measure of complacency clientele derived in using a product or service, but in a more technically restricted and confined to library services, is the fulfillment library users derived from using the library resources. In corroboration to the submission above, Iwhiwhu and Okorodudu (2012) explained the user's satisfaction as users' judgment as to how the information service rendered to them meet their expectation. Ikenwe and Adegbilero-Iwari (2014) claim that user's satisfaction delineates how library user felt after using library resources as well as their willingness to return to the library whenever they need information. In apposition, user's satisfaction can be influenced by the quality of staff, resource, and information infrastructure that is available in the library.

Evaluation of reference services denotes an assessment of reference sources, the service rendered (attitude of the librarians involved) as well as the impact the services have on library clienteles (level of users' satisfaction). Evaluation of reference services is a complex and critical process due to the intangible nature of reference services. It is a critical component of library management through which the resources in the library are assessed, in term of their usefulness in the provision of dynamic information services to library users (Tella & Oyedokun, 2014). Pomerantz (2008) stressed that the report of reference service evaluation shown the strength and weakness of the resources as well as the services rendered in the reference section of the library. In congruence to the preceding, Pinto and Manso (2012) associated reference service evaluation with an evaluation of the quality of information resources as well as users' satisfaction with the services provided. Resources evaluation would focus on the availability of relevant and up-to-date information resources while evaluation based on users' satisfaction would tend to observe users' perception of the services in general. Pomerantz, Luo, and MacClure (2005) pinpointed that evaluation of

library reference services would provide library administrators, the librarian involved an insight on how best the information services rendered fulfilled intended goals and objectives. In summary, reference service evaluation serves as management tools that investigate the extent to which information and reference sources in the library, as well as the quality of staff that oversee the activities in the reference section, were able to satisfy the need of the library clientele.

Evaluation of users satisfaction is of great importance, as a patron that is satisfied with the information provided in a library will not only keep patronizing the library but also recommend the library to other potential users. Reference services specifically designed to satisfy the information needs of users. Therefore, it is necessary that users' satisfaction with reference service be the subject to constant evaluation. The evaluation process would ascertain the degree of effectiveness of references services provided in the library and as well as pinpoint areas that need enhancement. Luos and Buer (2015) attested to the preceding when they attributed that evaluation of reference service helps to identify strength and deficiencies in service provision, and as well provide insight on the best way to improve on the services. Users' satisfaction plays a vital role in the evaluation of reference service, as it provides users feedback on their assessment of services provided in the reference section of the library (Sriram & Rajev, 2014).

National Universities Commission (NUC) accredited 165 Universities in Nigeria, expressly 43 federal universities, 47 state universities, and 75 private owned universities, with each having a library as appendages (NUC, 2018). The library serves as the heartbeat as well as the nerve center of the university intellectual capacity. University libraries are saddled with the responsibility of providing information services that support teaching, learning, and research of their parent institution. This responsibility of meeting the information needs of students, faculty members and host of community members were primarily accomplished through the provision of reference service. It is critical that university libraries develop unique products and services that can enhance research and satisfy the information needs of their teaming users. In Nigeria today, most university libraries are going digital, as users are becoming technology savvy, craving for anywhere anytime communication and access to knowledge repository. So catching up with the space of technology evolution, libraries are now shifting from traditional reference services to digital or virtual reference services (Tella, Adaraloye & Akanbi, 2014). Advent of information and communication technology (ICT) have made reference service easier in the library, a reference librarian can now communicate with users in time and space without the user being physically present in the library, and most importantly, most reference queries could be attended to by surfing through the internet and searching relevant database (Tella & Oyedokun, 2014).

Rehman, Shafique, and Mahmood (2011) study of user perception and satisfaction with reference services in university libraries of Punjab reported that library users are satisfied with reference collection, staff, facilities, and services provided in their library's reference section, but none of the mentioned categories were ranked highly satisfied. In a similar vein, Tella and Oyedokun (2014) study of evaluation of online reference services through social networking sites in selected Nigerian university libraries proclaimed that most users are aware of the presence of their university libraries on social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Ask-A-Librarian, but they are not that familiar with reference services. This was because of deficiency in library user's education and library publicity, which subsequently affected users' level of satisfaction, as only a few above half of the participants are satisfied with the services provided. Ebijuwa, Salami, and Isamotu, (2016) evaluated users' perception and

from Federal University of Technology, Owerri, 3,770 from Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umedike, 4,345 from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka and 6,905 from University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The sample size for the study is 394 as determined by Isreal sample size table (Istreal, 2003) and the sampling technique adopted was simple random that give every respondents a chance of selection for the study. The instrument for data collection is a questionnaire, validated by three (3) research experts from the department of library and information science, University of Ilorin, Nigeria. The Cronbach-alpha calculation for determining the reliability of the instrument recorded 0.878, which implies the instrument is reliable. The researchers with the help of two trained research assistants carried out the administration of the instrument and it lasted for a period of one week. Three hundred and ninety-four (394) questionnaire were administered, three hundred and seventy-seven (377) were return and only three hundred and fifty one (351) are completed and found useful. The collected data was subject to statistical analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Results and Discussions

Table One: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

S/N	Specific Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Institution of Respondents		
	Federal University of Technology, Owerri	100	28.5%
	Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike	69	19.7%
	NnamdiAzikiwe University, Awka	64	18.2%
	University of Nigeria, Nsukka	118	33.6%
	Total	351	100%
2.	Gender of the Respondents		
	Male	229	65.2%
	Female	122	34.8%
	Total	351	100%
3.	Age of Respondents		
	15-19	61	17.4%
	20-24	196	55.8%
	25-29	75	21.4%
	30-34	14	4%
	35-40	2	0.6%
	41-45	2	0.6%
	46 and above	1	0.3%
	Total	351	100%
4.	Faculty of Respondents		
	Agriculture	42	12%
	Arts	16	4.65%
	Social Sciences	69	19.7%
	Education	12	3.4%
	Engineering and Technology	64	18.2%
	Health Sciences	48	13.7%
	General Sciences	100	28.5%
	Total	351	100%
5.	Level of Respondents		
	100	76	20.5%
	200	90	24.5%
	300	63	16.8%
	400	65	17.4%
	500	57	15.4%
	Total	351	100%

Source: Field survey

The table above analyzed demographical characteristics of the respondents; it is shown that the University of Nigeria has the highest number of participants 118 (33.6%); this is because they have the highest population of library users. Moreover, it is the first indigenous university in Nigeria. The implication the high population of users has on reference service is that multiple copies of reference materials are essential in the library. The study also revealed that the male respondents were more in number 229 (65.2%) than their female counterparts that pool mere 122 (34.8%) participants. This may be because of the kinds of courses offered in the institutions under study, which are science, technology, and agriculturally based and male students are naturally more interested in this area of studies than female students are. The users in the age bracket of 20-24 are the majority representing 196 (55.8%) participants while 46 years and above constitute the least group with just 1 (0.3%) participant. Connotation from this majority age bracket suggested that most users are very young. The implication for reference librarians is that they need to exercise a great deal of patience with library users because they are dealing with a younger generation that is prone to exhibiting some juvenile exorbitance. Majority of respondents were in faculty of general sciences with 100 (28%) number of respondents, while the least respondents come from faculty of education that only have 12 (3.4%) number of participants. This shows that universities under study admit more science students than art and education. This implies that science reference materials are more required than other disciplines reference materials. The number of undergraduate students are proportionately distributed, as the highest number of participants representing 90 (24.5%) are in 200 level, while the least representation comes from 500 level that constitute 57 (15.4%).

Table Two: Available References Services

S/N	Reference Services	Available Frequency (%)	Not Available Frequency (%)	Total Frequency (%)
1.	Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)	258 (73.50%)	93 (26.50%)	351 (100%)
2.	Inter library loan service	161 (45.87%)	190 (54.13%)	351 (100%)
3.	Indexing and Abstracting	291 (82.91%)	60 (17.09%)	351 (100%)
4.	Answering users queries	271 (77.21%)	80 (22.79%)	351 (100%)
5.	Translation services	144 (41.03%)	207 (58.97%)	351 (100%)
6.	Users education/library orientation	268 (76.2%)	83 (23.8%)	351 (100%)
7.	Library display and publicity	256 (72.93%)	95 (27.07%)	351 (100%)
8.	Internet service	143 (40.6%)	208 (59.40%)	351 (100%)
9.	E-mail service	143 (40.6%)	208 (59.40%)	351 (100%)
10.	Telephone service	72 (20.4%)	279 (79.6%)	351 (100%)
11.	Online Public Catalogue (OPAC)	122 (34.7%)	229 (65.3%)	351 (100%)
12.	Reserved book services	187 (53.3%)	164 (46.7%)	351 (100%)

Source: Field survey

Response from the users showed that the libraries understudied offered most of the listed reference services in Table one above, such as selective dissemination of information, answering of users' queries, carrying out library display and publicity, user education among others. This implies that most of the reference services listed were available in most of the federal libraries in South-East Nigeria. However, the study further revealed that most participants indicated the following reference services, such as Translation services, Internet services; E-mail service and Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) were not available in their libraries as they are not aware of such services in the libraries under study.

Table Three: Users' satisfaction with reference services

Reference Services	V-Satisfied F (%)	Satisfied F (%)	Dissatisfied F (%)	V-Dissatisfied F (%)	Total F (%)
Selective Dissemination of Information	79 (22.4%)	187 (53.4%)	61 (17.4%)	24 (6.8%)	351 (100%)
Inter library loan service	59 (16.7%)	104 (29.6%)	105 (30%)	83 (23.7%)	351 (100%)
Indexing and Abstracting	105 (29.9%)	185 (52.6%)	45 (12.7%)	16 (4.8%)	351 (100%)
Answering users queries	85 (24.2%)	169 (48.1%)	71 (20.1%)	26 (7.6%)	351 (100%)
Translation services	43 (12.1%)	114 (32.6%)	130 (37.0%)	64 (17.9%)	351 (100%)
Users education/library orientation	112 (31.9%)	134 (38.1%)	85 (24.2%)	20 (5.8%)	351 (100%)
Library display and publicity	101 (28.9%)	147 (41.9%)	77 (21.8%)	26 (7.5%)	351 (100%)
Internet service	31 (8.9%)	73 (20.7%)	96 (27.4%)	151 (43.0%)	351 (100%)
E-mail service	27 (7.6%)	66 (18.9%)	99 (28.2%)	159 (45.2%)	351 (100%)
Telephone service	22 (6.4%)	54 (15.4%)	104 (29.5%)	171 (48.7%)	351 (100%)
Online Public Catalogue (OPAC)	38 (10.8%)	64 (18.2%)	90 (25.7%)	159 (45.3%)	351 (100%)

Source: Field survey

In table two, users are catechized to ranked their level of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with reference services in their university libraries, participants constituting 79 (22.4%) in number are very satisfied and 187 (53.4%) are satisfied with the library SDI- selective dissemination of information, while 85 (24.2%) when dissatisfied and very dissatisfied are combine are bothered. This implies users are satisfied with SDI services of their library. On inter libraries loan service, participants with aggregate of 59 (16.7%) are very satisfied and 104 (29.6%) are satisfied while 105 (30%) are dissatisfied and 83 (23.7%) are very dissatisfied. This connote users are dissatisfied with interlibrary loan services of their libraries. On indexing and abstracting services, participants representing 105 (29.9%) are very satisfied and 185 (52.6%) are satisfied while 45 (12.7%) are dissatisfied and 16 (4.8%) very dissatisfied. Implication for this is that library users are satisfied with library indexing and abstracting services. On librarians answering users queries, participants constituting 85 (24.2%) are very satisfied and 169 (48.1%) satisfied while 71 (20.1%) are dissatisfied and 26 (7.6%) very dissatisfied. This implies users are satisfied with how reference librarians provide answers to their queries. On translation services, 43 (12.1%) of the respondents are very satisfied and 114 (32.6%) are satisfied while 130 (37%) are dissatisfied and 64 (17.9%) are very dissatisfied. This signified that most library users are not satisfied with their library translation services. On users education, 112 (31.9%) of the participants are very satisfied and 134 (38.1%) are satisfied while 85 (24.2%) are dissatisfied and 20 (5.8%) very dissatisfied. This insinuated that participants are satisfied with users' education. On library display and publicity, 101 (28.9%) are very satisfied and 147 (41.9%) are satisfied while 77 (21.8%) are dissatisfied and 26 (7.5%) very dissatisfied. This connote users are pleased with library publicity. On internet services, 31 (8.9%) of the respondents are very satisfied and 73 (20.7%) are satisfied while 96 (27.4%) are dissatisfied and 151 (43%) are very dissatisfied. This implies library users are highly dissatisfied with the internet services in the library. On responsiveness of reference librarians with e-mail service, participants representing 27 (7.6%) are very satisfied and 66 (18.9%) are satisfied while 99 (28.2%) are dissatisfied and 159 (45.2%) are very dissatisfied. Adjudication from this indicated that reference librarians in libraries under study are not so active in responding to users mails. On telephone services, 22 (6.4%) of the respondents are highly satisfied and 54 (15.4%) are satisfied while 104 (29.5%) are not satisfied and 171 (48.7%) are very dissatisfied. This implies users did not experience effortless communication with reference librarian via the telephone. On library OPAC, 38 (10.8%) of the respondents are very satisfied and 64 (18.2%) are satisfied while 90 (25.7%) are dissatisfied and 159 (45.3%) are very dissatisfied. This implies that users are not actually satisfied with library OPAC.

Table Four: Relationship between library users and reference librarians.

Qualities of Reference Librarian	S-Agree F (%)	Agree F (%)	Neutral F (%)	Disagree F (%)	S-Disagree F (%)	Total F (%)
The reference librarians possessed the skill for Provision of good customer (clientele) relationship.	95(27%)	168(48%)	52(15%)	19(5%)	17(5%)	351(100%)
They guide against misinformation by providing personalized assistance to user.	89(25%)	155(44%)	78(22%)	13(4%)	16(5%)	351(100%)
They are willing to listen to users' queries.	79(23%)	164(47%)	70(20%)	70(20%)	32(10%)	351(100%)
They display positive attitude when discharging their duties.	73(21%)	163(46%)	82(23%)	15(4%)	18(6%)	351(100%)
They always ensure users' information need are met satisfactorily.	52(15%)	151(43%)	110(31%)	21(6%)	17(5%)	351(100%)
They are excellent teacher in the training of users for information literacy skill for library search.	41(12%)	171(49%)	76(22%)	48(14%)	15(3%)	351(100%)
They are very responsive in an online environment.	29(8%)	85(24%)	120(34%)	74(21%)	43(13%)	351(100%)

Source: Field survey

The table above shows users rating of reference librarians' qualities as regards to the kind of relationship they maintained with library clientele. The highest number of participants, 263 (75%) strongly agree and agree to combine together attested that reference librarians possessed good customer relation with users, 52 (15%) give no option by remaining neutral while 36 (10%) strongly disagree and disagree combine together disproof the submission. This implies that reference librarians from the libraries under study maintained a good customer relationship with library users. Participants are asked to state their level of agreement and disagreement with how reference librarians guide against misinformation through personalized assistance services they rendered, 244 (69%) when strongly agree and agree are combine concurred to the proclamation, 78 (22%) give no option and 29 (9%) diverged. On their wiliness to listen to users' queries, participants constituting 243 (70%) confirmed their willingness, 70 (20%) aloof while 102 (30%) deviated. On account of their attitude when discharging their duties, 236 (67%) of the participants agreed they have a positive attitude, 82 (23%) nonaligned and 33 (10%) disagreed. On satisfaction of information needs of users, 203 (58%) of participants conceded that reference librarians ensure users' information need are met, satisfactorily, 110 (31%) of respondents noncommittal and 38 (11%) of respondents' opinion differs. Participants are asked whether reference librarians influenced users' information literacy skills, 112 (61%) of respondents attested to the fact that they are an excellent teacher that affect greatly information literacy skills on users, 76 (22%) give no option while 61 (17%) disagree. On the present of reference librarians in an online environment, 114 (32%) of the respondents authenticated that they are very responsive, 120 (34%) give no option, while 117 (34%) of the respondent's denial their presence. This indicated that online reference service is not common among users of the library. Exculpation for this is not far fetching since users are not satisfied with the internet, telephone and E-mail (web 2.0) services of the library, apparently buttressed their off-form performance in an online environment.

Table Five: Challenges Inhibiting the Performance of Reference Service in the Federal University Libraries in Southeastern Nigeria

Qualities of Reference Librarian	S-Agree F (%)	Agree F (%)	Neutral F (%)	Disagree F (%)	S-Disagree F (%)	Total F (%)
Inadequate library staff.	65(19%)	73(21%)	50(14%)	101(29%)	62(17%)	351(100%)
Poor library staff/user relationship.	69(20%)	81(23%)	58(17%)	75(21%)	68(19%)	351(100%)
Erratic power supply.	95(27%)	73(21%)	15(4%)	87(25%)	81(23%)	351(100%)
Lack of current and relevant reference sources.	12(3%)	25(7%)	62(18%)	148(42%)	104(30%)	351(100%)
Inadequate reference sources.	45(13%)	67(19%)	52(15%)	102(29%)	85(24%)	351(100%)
Lack of adequate ICT resources and Infrastructures	87(25%)	99(28%)	64(18%)	53(15%)	48(14%)	351(100%)

Source: Field survey.

In table five, challenges militating against effectiveness of reference services in the library are illustrated, 138 (40%) of the respondents when strongly agree and agree are combine together attested that inadequate library staff constitute complication for effective reference services, 50 (14%) give no option while 163 (46%) of respondents disagreed. This implies that the number of staff in the reference section of the library might seem adequate but there is still need for more staff most especially those that will be readily available in an online environment to increase online presence of the reference desk. Poor library staff and user relationship were confirmed by 150 (43%) of the participants as one of the challenges, 58 (17%) remain indecisive while 143 (40%) disagree. Participants were asked whether erratic power supply posed a challenge to reference service, 168 (48%) of the respondents said yes in affirmation, 15 (4%) remain neutral while 168 (48%) disagree. The equal number of those that agreed and those that disagree with erratic power supply as a problem inhibiting the effectiveness of reference services indicated that the menace of power supply as a problem is gradually diminishing as there is a more and more alternative source of power supply. On whether lack of current and relevant reference materials posed a problem, only 37 (10%) of the respondents agreed it is a problem, 62 (18%) give no option while 252 (72%) disagreed. Sequential to this might be a result of the availability of interlibrary loan service were libraries in network or consortium share resources, and more so, most reference sources are readily available on the internet. Participants were asked if inadequate reference sources constitute challenges to reference services, 112 (32%) of the respondents professed it posed some degree of repugnancy to reference services, 52 (15%) are neutral while 187 (53%) of the respondents disproved. The implication for this is that the reference source is not an issue as there are many sources of information at users' disposal. Lack of adequate ICT infrastructure constitutes a challenge militating against effective reference service as confirmed by 186 (53%) of the respondents, with just 101 (29%) of them dissenting from acknowledging the threat while 64 (18%) give no option.

Discussion of Findings

The verdict from this current study pinpointed that reference services such as Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), interlibrary loan, indexing and abstracting, users' education, library publicity are readily available; nevertheless, most library users are not familiar with translation service, internet service, and e-mail service along with library OPAC. Raison d'être for this might be because awareness among library users of such services are low hanging.

The hallmark of this study at its core was essentially to guesstimate users' satisfaction with reference services. Correspondingly, users said they are satisfied with library SDI, indexing and abstracting, answers provided to their queries, users; education, library publicity display, but none was remarkably rated highly satisfied. This result of findings is in consonance with Rehman, Shafique and Mahmood (2011) study of users' perception and satisfaction with reference services in University Libraries in Punjab. It is also in conformity with Ebijuwa, Salami and Isamotu (2016) study of users' perception and satisfaction with reference services in OlusegunOke Library, LAUTECH, Ogbomosho, Nigeria, wherein analogy with current study proclaimed that users did not rank highly satisfied with any of the categories of reference services listed. This current study also reported that library clienteles in libraries under study are not satisfied with interlibrary loan service, translation service, internet service, E-mail services, telephone services as well as library OPACs.

On the relationship between reference librarians and library users, findings show that librarians have a good customer relationship with the users. In addition to previous, it was revealed that the reference librarian provides personalized information service since every user has a peculiar information need that may differ from one another. Furthermore, attestation from users also demonstrated the willingness of reference librarian listening to users' queries. Findings also reported reference librarians to exhibit a positive attitude when discharging their duties. They are time after time walking toward satisfying user information needs. They are an accomplished teacher for the training of users for information literacy. The area of their relationship with users where they are bereft is their responsiveness in online reference services. Exculpation for this is not far fetching since users are not satisfied with the internet, telephone and E-mail (web 2.0) services of the library, apparently buttressed their off-form performance in an online environment.

On the challenges militating against effective reference services, users observed an inadequate number of library staff did not have, a colossal impact as libraries under study seems to be fairly staff. Little above half of the users established that poor librarian and users relationship posed objection for effective reference services. On the issue of erratic power supply, users bisect with each equal side of the divide held a contrary opinion. Juxtaposition for this is that eccentric power supply is gradually abating as alternative electric power supply keep emanating such as an inverter, solar energy, coal, generator and so on. Most library users disagree with a paucity of current and relevant reference sources as well as an inadequate reference source as an impediment to reference services since most reference sources are readily available on the internet. Library users subscribed to inadequate ICT infrastructure as a hindrance to dynamic information and reference services, this is because today patrons are technology perceptive, very zealous in communicating with reference librarian remotely without physically coming to the library.

Conclusion

The study evaluated users' satisfaction with reference services in the federal university libraries in Southeastern Nigeria. It gives an insight into what academic libraries need to do to remain relevant to the community of users they are serving. The findings of the study sensitize the library management on the need to pay more attention to reference services development when viewed from the point that the effectiveness of reference services is greatly associated with users' satisfaction.

Ratiocination from the study shown that reference services in the university libraries under study were still mostly offered manually. As a result, the users were not ultimately satisfied with the reference services in the libraries. Usually, the users would want to retrieve the needed information very fast and most conveniently. This quick and convenient way of retrieving information could only be possible through the use of ICT tools and infrastructures. But since this service is not readily available or where it is available, awareness among users is still very scanty. The implication is that users must physically visit the library before they can make reference inquiry or have access to library reference and information resources. The qualities of reference librarians are measured by the kind of relationship they established with library users as every other measure of qualities such as qualification, hours of service, communication skill and so on are still subject of users' perception and satisfaction with such services. One encompassing reference service predicament that militates against dynamic information services, which embraced others, is the low present and responsiveness of reference librarian on stream (digital environment). In the process of library improving

they're presently online, the issue of erratic power supply ought to have been resolved. The library needed internet connectivity to be on the web, so the issue of availability of internet connectivity is no more a predicament. The problem of availability of current and relevant reference sources is also half solved, as most reference sources are available on the internet even earlier before the prints version.

Reference librarians should endeavor to deploy public relation techniques to established mutually beneficiary relationship not only with the users but also with other stakeholders of the library such as the government, administrators of the parent body, the library management, relevant local and international organization and host of others. The effort needs to be gear toward creating awareness of reference services among users through library publicity as well as the marketing of library activities, as most users are not familiar with some reference services. The library is far away from the users. So bringing library service to the doorstep of the users will please them and positively influence their perception towards the library. Academic libraries should adopt Web 4.0/Reference 4.0. Tools that would activate communication, collaboration, web-based learning environment and as well cultivate a mutual relationship between reference librarian and library users. The reference librarians should be adequately trained for ICT skills and competencies to gain a sound knowledge of how to apply various information technologies to reference procedures and services. Every library should make provision for an alternative source of electric power supply, as this will solve the problem of electricity failure.

The scope of the current study was limited to selected university libraries in Southeastern Nigeria. Therefore, a study of this nature in other senatorial zone or one with a national view is highly recommended. Current study dwells heavily on traditional reference services, therefore, a study on evaluation of digital reference services in academic libraries would constitute a good area of study. Investigation into virtual reference service 4.0 would explicate the current state of reference services in the library. More so, an assessment of ICT competencies of reference librarians in the handling of online reference services is a good research area for further study.

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