

Full Length Research

Librarians Attitude towards Service Delivery to Users in Benue State University Library, Makurdi

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The study examined the Librarians' Attitude towards Service Delivery to users in Benue State University Library, Makurdi. A descriptive survey design was used and five research questions were formulated to guide the study. The population of the study comprised of users and librarians of the library. The instruments used for data collection were structured questionnaire and observation checklist. The data collected was analyzed using frequency and mean. The findings revealed that the major services provided to users of the library include loan services, readers advisory services and reference services but lack resources like CD-ROM, tapes, diaries and bulletins. Also the major information resources used by users in the library are projects/theses, research reports and journals. On the librarians attitudes, it was discovered that librarians are always willing to answer users questions, ready to provide current information resources and above all suspicious of users stealing their books. The major problems affecting librarians' attitude towards service delivery include lack of motivation, incentives and promotion. Strategies for enhancing librarians attitude towards service delivery in the library include proper funding, good staff and user relations and adequate staff training and retraining.

Key words: Librarians' Attitude, Service Delivery, good staff, user relations and adequate staff training

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INTRODUCTION

University libraries are those libraries established, owned and funded by universities of which they are part. Thus, as integral part of the institutions, which they serve, they design their collections and services to meet the instructional programme of the particular institution (Ode and Omokaro, 2007). The Librarians' Glossary also defined a university library as: "a library or a group of libraries established, maintained and administered by a university to meet the needs of its students, members of the academic staff and other members of the university community to effectively carry out their administrative and executive responsibilities"

University libraries form a group very similar throughout the world. They are the descendants of the most ancient libraries and are assembled for the benefit of a group of scholars and students who came together for the pursuit of learning. They cover a wide range of subjects in great detail to support the university's own teachers and research workers. Bature (2009) observed that the university library is an organ around which all academic activities revolve. It supports learning, teaching and research programmes in the institutions. Information and knowledge are regarded as resources which are necessary for the achievement of academic excellence, nation's well being and general development. The objective of any university library should be to assist the

“parent” institution to realize its planned goals through the role of selecting, collecting, organizing, preserving, disseminating and interpreting library resources to meet the needs of users.

University libraries contain a variety of resources to serve various interest groups. These interest groups include the students, staff, researchers and the general academic community. The effective use of these resources will enhance learning, teaching and research activities thereby resulting in institutional and national developments. Aina (2004) asserted that the main purpose of a university library is to support the objectives of the university, which are in the areas of learning, teaching, research and community service. That is, the university library is to support teaching, learning and research consistent with and supportive of the institution’s mission and goals. Also Anyanwu (2008) stated that a librarian is a professional who works in a library and is expected to take care of the library, get involved in selection, acquisition and organization of library materials and provision of services to users. The librarian also engages in the administration of the university library to ensure that the aim of establishing the library is achieved. The librarian helps people to obtain and use information for academic, recreational and research needs. The librarian has moved from traditional role of collecting, organizing storing and disseminating records and books to organizing and disseminating information in advance medium like CD-Rom, the internet, virtual libraries and remote access to resources. The librarian incorporates user services, technical services and administrative services in his work

The librarian analyses users need through user studies and helps users in searching for information on the web and work behind the scene to provide technical service and take care of day to day administration of the library. It also entails making available or ensuring that library provide information resources, published and non-published, printed and non printed ones, audiovisual materials or instructional aids in the University libraries for users’ use (Aguolu, 2002). Thus, Fabayo as quoted by Ugwuanyi (2007) revealed that availability of information resources and its adequacy in quantity and quality promote effective students learning activities, while their inadequacy affects their academic performance negatively. To these end, users’ perception as used in this context refers to library users ways of assessing university libraries in terms of rendering assistance or locating relevant information materials and books in the university libraries.

Similarly, attitude refers to a general way to inclinations, presumed to be enduring, to react to certain kinds of situations, to see and interpret events according

to some predisposition and to organize opinions into coherent interrelated clusters. According to Adekunle (2007) quoting Taiwo attitudes are inclinations and feelings, prejudices or bias, preconceived notions, ideas, fears and convictions about any specific topic. In university libraries, it is evident that librarians attitude is the inner feelings that propel one to work effectively or ineffectively. That is, positive attitudes of librarians increase service effectiveness and in turn bring an increase in users information resources in university libraries. Also, poor attitude of librarians can affect users’ achievement in the university libraries.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The general purpose of this study is to examine the librarians’ attitudes towards service delivery to users in Benue State University Library, Makurdi. But, specifically to:

1. identify the information services and sources provided to users in the library.
2. identify the extent to which users make use of information resources provided in the library.
3. examine users’ perception of librarians’ attitudes towards service delivery in the library.
4. identify the problems affecting librarians towards service delivery to users in the library..
5. determine the strategies for enhancing librarians’ attitudes to service delivery to users in the library.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions have been formulated to guide the study:

1. What are the information services and resources provided to users in Benue State University Library, Makurdi?
2. To what extent do users makes use of information resources provided in Benue State University Library, Makurdi?
3. What are the users’ perceptions of librarians attitudes towards service delivery in Benue State University Library, Makurdi?
4. What are the problems affecting librarians’ towards service delivery to users in Benue State University Library, Makurdi?
5. What are the strategies for enhancing librarians attitude towards service delivery to users in Benue State University Library, Makurdi?

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey design was used for this research and made use of a questionnaire and observation checklist to collect data. The population of this study comprises of 1,620 library users and 20 librarians totaling 1,640 users of Benue State University Library, Makurdi from year 2011 to 2014. Therefore, eighty two (82) library users were sampled. This sample was obtained in line with Nwana as cited by Ifidon (2007) who stated that "if a population is many hundred, one needs a sample size of 20% and for a population of few thousand, one needs a sample of 5% or less". The convenience sampling technique was used by the researcher. The questionnaire distributed to both the library users and staff was all retrieved. The data were presented and analyzed using frequency tables and mean scores of four-scale rating. By this, any mean score that is 2.50 and above is considered as positive and accepted whereas any response below 2.50 is regarded as negative and rejected.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1a. Users Reponses on Services Provided in the Library

| S/No | Information services provided | Mean | Rank | Result |
|------|---|------|------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Loan services | 4.00 | 1 st | Very Much Provided |
| 2 | Reader Advisory Services | 3.77 | 2 nd | Very Much Provided |
| 3 | Reference Services | 3.52 | 3 rd | Very Much Provided |
| 4 | Information Services | 3.23 | 4 th | Much Provided |
| 5 | Binding Services | 2.64 | 8 th | Much Provided |
| 6 | Selective dissemination of information services | 2.92 | 5 th | Much Provided |
| 7 | Current awareness services | 2.66 | 9 th | Much Provided |
| 8 | ICT/Internet services | 2.53 | 10 th | Much Provided |
| 9 | Cataloguing services | 2.46 | 11 th | Less Provided |
| 10 | Reprography services | 2.81 | 6 th | Much Provided |
| 11 | Extension services | 2.73 | 7 th | Much Provided |
| 12 | Indexing services | 2.11 | 14 th | Less Provided |
| 13 | Document delivery services | 2.38 | 12 th | Less Provided |
| 14 | Collection development services | 1.93 | 17 th | Less Provided |
| 15 | Inter-library services | 2.00 | 15 th | Less Provided |
| 16 | Mobile library services | 1.95 | 16 th | Less Provided |
| 17 | Children's services | 1.87 | 18 th | Less Provided |
| 18 | Abstracting services | 2.23 | 13 th | Less Provided |

Table 1 above indicates that the major services provided to users in the university libraries include loan services, reader advisory services and reference services. These have responses mean weight of 4.00, 3.77 and 3.52 respectively which indicates very much provided.

Similarly, the university library offered less services to users on mobile library services, collection development services and children's services. These have mean weight of 1.95, 1.93 and 1.87 respectively which indicates less provided.

Table 1b. Observation Checklist on the Information Sources Available in the Library

| S/No | Information Sources | Available | Not Available |
|------|---------------------|-----------|---------------|
| 1. | Books | √ | |
| 2. | Journal | √ | |
| 3. | Government Document | √ | |
| 4. | Seminar Paper | | √ |
| 5. | Project/ Theses | √ | |
| 6. | Indexes | √ | |
| 7. | Biographies | √ | |
| 8. | Newspapers | √ | |

Table 1b. Continues

| | | | |
|-----|-----------------------|-----------|----------|
| 9. | Magazine | √ | |
| 10. | Internet Service | √ | |
| 11. | CD-ROM | | √ |
| 12. | Encyclopedias | √ | |
| 13. | Dictionaries | √ | |
| 14. | Posters | | √ |
| 15. | Manual | | √ |
| 16. | Atlases, Maps, Globes | √ | |
| 17. | Letters | | √ |
| 18. | Diaries | | √ |
| | Total | 12 | 6 |

Table 2 above shows the researcher' observation checklist on information sources available in the library for services delivery to users. Out of 18 information sources, 12 were available in the university library. These include books, journals, government documents, project/theses, indexes, biographies, newspaper, magazines, internet services, encyclopedias, dictionaries, atlases, maps, and globes while others not available include, seminar papers, CD-ROM, Posters, Manuals, Letters and Diaries.

Table 2. Mean Responses on the Extent in which Users make use of Information Resources Provided

| S/No. | Information Resources Provided | Mean | Rank | Result |
|-------|--------------------------------|------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. | Textbooks | 3.40 | 6 th | Very Great Extent |
| 2. | Project/Theses | 3.77 | 1 st | Very Great Extent |
| 3. | Journal | 3.52 | 3 rd | Very Great Extent |
| 4. | Newspapers and Magazine | 3.00 | 7 th | Great Extent |
| 5. | Research Reports | 3.72 | 2 nd | Very Great Extent |
| 6. | Web Site | 3.50 | 4 th | Great Extent |
| 7. | Indexes | 3.00 | 7 th | Great Extent |
| 8. | Abstracts | 2.54 | 10 th | Great Extent |
| 9. | Biographies | 3.44 | 5 th | Great Extent |
| 10. | Government Document | 2.00 | 15 th | Less Extent |
| 11. | Seminar Papers | 2.23 | 14 th | Less Extent |
| 12. | Dissertations | 2.53 | 11 th | Great Extent |
| 13. | Photographs | 2.61 | 8 th | Great Extent |
| 14. | Pamphlets | 2.53 | 11 th | Great Extent |
| 15. | Diaries | 2.27 | 13 th | Less Extent |
| 16. | Letters | 2.58 | 9 th | Great Extent |
| 17. | Bulletins | 2.33 | 12 th | Less Extent |
| 18. | Maps | 1.87 | 16 th | Less Extent |
| 19. | Video Tape | 2.23 | 14 th | Less Extent |
| 20. | Compact Disc | 2.00 | 15 th | Less Extent |

Table 2 above shows the responses of librarians on the extent in which users make use of information resources in the university library. The major information resources used by users include project/theses, research reports and journals. These have mean weight of 3.77, 3.72 and 3.52 respectively which indicates Very Great Extent.

Also, the above table indicates that the less information resources users used include video tape, compact disc and maps. These have mean weight of 2.23, 2.00 and 1.87 respectively which indicates less extent.

Table 3. Mean Responses on Users Perception of Librarians Attitudes Towards Service Delivery in the Library

| S/No. | Librarians Attitudes | Mean | Rank | Result |
|-------|--|------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. | Librarians are always answering users questions | 4.00 | 1 st | Strongly Agree |
| 2. | Librarians are willing to provide current information resources | 3.56 | 2 nd | Strongly Agree |
| 3. | Librarians are suspicious of users stealing their books in the library | 3.36 | 3 rd | Strongly Agree |
| 4. | Librarians are humble when offering loan services to users | 2.44 | 4 th | Disagree |
| 5. | Librarians are kind and tolerant to users at all times | 1.72 | 7 th | Disagree |
| 6. | Librarians offer required services to users in the library | 2.10 | 5 th | Disagree |
| 7. | Librarians are friendly | 2.00 | 6 th | Disagree |
| 8. | Librarians do not attend to library users who need their services | 1.33 | 9 th | Disagree |
| 9. | Librarians are hostile to users | 1.72 | 7 th | Disagree |

Table 3 clearly shows librarians' attitudes towards service delivery to users in the library. These include librarians are always answering users questions, librarians are willing to provide current information resources and above all librarians are suspicious of users stealing their books in the library. These have mean weight of 4.00, 3.56 and 3.36 respectively which indicates Strongly Agree.

Similarly, the table shows disagree views of users on librarians attitude towards service delivery in university library. These include, librarians do not attend to library users who need their services, librarians are kind and tolerant to users at all times, and librarians are hostile. . These have mean weight of 1.33, 1.72 and 1.72 respectively which indicates Disagree.

Table 4. Mean Responses on the Problems Affecting Librarians Attitude Towards Service Delivery

| S/No. | Problems affecting librarians towards service delivery to users | Mean | Rank | Result |
|-------|---|------|------------------|----------------|
| 1. | Lack of motivation and incentives | 3.73 | 1 st | Strongly Agree |
| 2. | Shortage of manpower | 3.64 | 3 rd | Strongly Agree |
| 3. | Lack of electricity | 3.33 | 4 th | Strongly Agree |
| 4. | Lack of information materials | 3.00 | 5 th | Agree |
| 5. | Lack of promotion | 3.72 | 2 nd | Strongly Agree |
| 6. | Poor ventilation | 2.46 | 6 th | Disagree |
| 7. | Lack of reading facilities | 1.95 | 7 th | Disagree |
| 8. | Poor environments | 1.55 | 10 th | Disagree |
| 9. | Non payment of salaries | 1.76 | 8 th | Disagree |
| 10. | Lack of shifting working hours | 1.72 | 9 th | Disagree |

Table 4 above contains the response on the problems affecting librarians towards service delivery to users in the university library. Result shows that there are many problems affecting librarians. These include lack of motivation and incentives, lack of promotion and shortage of manpower. These have mean weight of 3.73, 3.72 and 3.64 respectively which indicates Strongly Agree.

Similarly, the table also indicates other problems not accepted to affect the librarians towards service delivery such as poor environment, lack of shifting working hours and non-payment of salaries. These have mean weight of 1.55, 1.72 and 1.76 respectively which indicates disagree.

Table 5. Users Responses on the Strategies for Enhancing Librarians Attitudes Towards Service Delivery

| S/No. | Strategies for Enhancing Users' Perception of Librarians to Service Delivery | Mean | Rank | Result |
|-------|--|------|------------------|----------------|
| 1. | Proper funding | 4.00 | 1 st | Strongly Agree |
| 2. | Regular training and retraining | 3.40 | 3 rd | Strongly Agree |
| 3. | Good staff/user relations | 3.76 | 2 nd | Strongly Agree |
| 4. | Conducive working environment | 2.81 | 4 th | Agree |
| 5. | Improved motivation | 2.49 | 6 th | Disagree |
| 6. | Improved user relationship | 2.33 | 7 th | Disagree |
| 7. | Improved communication | 2.95 | 5 th | Agree |
| 8. | Users orientation on good study habit | 1.92 | 9 th | Disagree |
| 9. | Enhanced working condition | 1.76 | 10 th | Disagree |
| 10. | Decentralized management | 2.00 | 8 th | Disagree |

Result from table 5 above shows the various strategies for enhancing libraries attitudes towards service delivery to users in the library. These include proper funding, good staff/user relations and regular training and retraining. These have mean weight of 4.00, 3.76 and 3.40 respectively which indicates Strongly Agree.

Similarly, the above table indicates other less appropriate strategies of enhancing librarian's attitudes. Such as enhanced working condition, user's orientation on good study habit and decentralized management. These have mean weight of 1.76, 1.92 and 2.00 respectively which indicates Disagree.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The discussion is based on the findings of the data obtained in line with the research questions.

On information services provided in the library, result obtained through the questionnaire distributed to library users indicated that the information services provided to users are inadequate. Table 1 of users response reveal this. Also, I discovered that the library provided loan services, readers advisory services and reference services very much to library users than other services rendered. This, therefore confirms what Mabawonku (2002) said that resources in Nigerian Universities are inadequate for the needs of academic and research staff as well as the full time students.

Based on the findings on table 2, the extent in which users make use of information resources in the library revealed that users did not make use of information resources provided for them fully. Hence, table 2 clearly shows that the major information resources used by users to a very great extent include projects/ theses research reports and journals. This agrees with Ogbonna (2009) suggested that university libraries should provide direct services to users and provide information resources in the library.

Also, based on the analysis and findings derived from

the study on table 3, it shows that the always users questions, willing to provide current resources and suspicious of users stealing their books in the library. This agrees with Nwalo (2000) who pointed out that some of the services found in the university libraries include answering of reference queries, user education and current awareness services.

Furthermore, table 4 shows that the major problems affecting librarians towards service delivery in the library include lack of motivation and incentives, lack promotion and shortage of manpower. I actually discovered these in the course of this study.

Finally, with regards to strategies for enhancing users' perception of librarian to service delivery in the library, the users' responses on table 5 recommended proper funding, good staff and user relations and regular training and retraining.

In summary, it is pertinent to state that with proper funding, the library would overcome some of these problems discovered during this research work on librarians attitude towards service delivery to users in Benue State University Library, Makurdi.

CONCLUSION

With respect to the finding of the study, users of Benue State University Library, Makurdi have the opportunity of getting loan services, reader advisory services and reference services.

Also, it was established from the findings of the study that the library users used mostly information resources like project/theses, research reports and journals. Similarly, the researcher discovered that the library have the following information sources for service delivery to users. These include books, journals, project/theses, newspapers, magazine and host of others but lack some modern technologies like ICT internet and CD-ROM.

Furthermore, the study reveals that librarians are always willing to answer users questions, provide current

information resources and above all suspicious of user stealing their books. Therefore, with proper funding, librarians would provide the needed service delivery to users at all times in the library.

Moreso, the major problems affecting librarians towards service delivery to users in the library include lack of motivation and incentives, lack of promotion and shortage of manpower.

Finally, it was discovered that the major strategies for enhancing users' perception of librarians attitudes towards service delivery in the library include proper funding, good staff/user relations and regular staff training and retraining.

In summary, the findings on this study shows that the information resources available in Benue State University Library, Makurdi for librarians to provide effective and efficient service delivery to library users are gross inadequate and needed an improvement especially in the area of modern technologies and above all, to justify the users' perception of librarians as trained professionals who considered their needs and demands at all times.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from this work, the following recommendations were made:

1. There is need to increase the funding of university library to enable them purchase and maintain needed information resources and services to users especially current books, periodicals, journals and audiovisual resources like CD-ROM.
2. Effort should be made to update the skills of the librarians to enable them carry out their duties efficiently and effectively.
3. Governments at all levels, private sectors, individuals and organizations should support university libraries in Nigeria financially and morally to enable them meet major challenges in their respective libraries.
4. University authority and library management should give top priority to the provision of textbooks, journals and other relevant information materials to enhance effective learning, teaching and research purposes.
5. There is need for the extension of working hours in the university library and good staff/users relationships to enhance efficient and effective service delivery to users.
6. Publishers and authors should ensure more donation of books to university libraries in order to meet the high demand of the library users and parents body.
7. Finally, there is need to provide more tables and chairs to cater for the ever-growing and teaming library users of the university library.

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