ASSESS USERS' SATISFACTION ON ACADEMIC LIBRARY PERFORMANCE: A STUDY

Ijiekhuamhen, Osaze Patrick[CLN]
Federal University of Petroleum Resources
(FUPRE) **NIGERIA**
&
Blessing Aghojare[CLN]
Federal University of Petroleum resources
(FUPRE) **NIGERIA**
&
Omosekejimi Ademola Ferdinand [CLN]
Federal University of Petroleum Resources
(FUPRE) **NIGERIA**

ABSTRACT

This study quantifies user's satisfaction on academic library performance by determine the clients satisfaction with library services, infrastructure/place/space and collection/information provided by an academic library in Federal University of Petroleum Resources, (FUPRE) Library. The study sample population comprised 381 students of the university. The instrument used for data collection in this study was questionnaire. Research questions were answered using frequency, bar charts, tables and percentages for easy interpretation. The major findings of the study revealed that the respondents were highly satisfied with the library services, infrastructure/place/space, and collection/information of the library as a whole. Also, the study reveals that, many of the respondents visit the library for more than one reason whereas the largest proportion of the respondents goes to library due to the availability of internet connectivity in the library. The respondents were suggests that, library should stay open longer, Increase internet bandwidth, library should publish a guide on information searching skills, library should provide the latest collection, some were of opinion that library should publish index and bibliographies, provision of guidance on consultation and research method, library should organize workshop on how to find information, staff should be more friendly and knowledgeable among other.

Keywords: Library performance; User satisfaction; Library services; infrastructure; Library collection.

INTRODUCTION

Assessment of library services should be regarded as a management tool, applied to determine how effectively and efficiently the library is serving the needs of its users, to identify the limitations and failures of service, and to recommend ways to improve such service. The extent to which the user's needs are satisfied depends on the size and collection of the library, the adequacy and accuracy of the organization of its materials, the usefulness of its catalogs and finding tools in providing access to its collection, the ability and cooperation of the library staff in bringing these materials (or information on these materials) to the attention of the users, and in maximizing the exposure of the users to these resources and to other library services.

Some aspects of library service are more easily evaluated than others. Usually, the more concrete or specific the user requirement is, the easier it is to measure user satisfaction in

absolute terms. The extent to which the library is used reflects the degree of user satisfaction, which may be measured by subjective procedures such as questionnaires or interviews, or by more objective, quantitative measures, such as percentage calculations and determination of capability indexes, etc.

Satisfying users' needs in the academic libraries has been the primary objective of libraries and librarians. Every year, new students come to the university with different needs and expectations. Besides, new technology, databases, and more innovative systems for accessing information, have made the library more complicated and challenging for librarians and users alike. The abundance of resources available and the difficulty in being able to determine these resources also create problems for users. The inability to easily identify the specific use of a library's services because of the new technologies, and the difficulty to access information sources can all contribute to user dissatisfaction among academic library users. Norliya, A.K & khasiah, Z (2006) asserted that university libraries today are faced with challenges on several elements such as mega book stores, online information providers, e-learning and multimedia products, document delivery services, and other competitive sources of information that seem to be threatening the role of academic libraries. (White and Abels 1995; Hernon and Altman 1996). As a result, university libraries may have to adopt a more strategic direction in which the creation and delivery of service satisfactions for their users play an important role. Hence, there is a need for university libraries to understand the user needs and satisfy their information and research needs, therefore support in an ongoing learning activities. However, the study provides literature on user satisfaction of library services. Each year new students enter the learning environment with different needs, expectations and information gathering skills. Millson-Martula and Menon (1995) state that one element of high quality service is "the incorporation of users' personal needs and expectations into the development of programs and service".

LITERATURE REVIEW

Academic libraries are an integral part of universities and have a critical role to play in supporting the core mission of the university that is teaching, learning and research. However, according to Tiefel (2004) most library users are unaware of the quality and variety of information available. Tiefel pointed out that students are often satisfied with materials that an experienced librarian would find inadequate and /or inappropriate. It was identified that discipline has a major influence on usage patterns and preferences, and that faculty members in science tend to use the library more intensively than their counterparts in the humanities or social sciences (Lazinger et al., 1997; Bar-llan et al., 2003). Age also plays an important role in usage; the younger the student and faculty members are, the more they use library materials (Bar-llan et al, 2003). It has also been reported that men are heavier users of the library and make most use of the more complicated services (Busselle et al., 1999; Teo, 2001; Chong, 2002). Bar-lla et al., (2003) also found that gender and academic rank have only a minor influence on the usage of library materials. The concept of user satisfaction in the library literature likewise has evolved to include a broader focus on the users' perspective of the library. Applegate (1997) defines user satisfaction as "a personal, emotional reaction to a library service or product". Bitner and Hubbert (1994) suggest that user satisfaction consists of service encounter satisfaction, "the consumer's dis/satisfaction with a discrete service encounter," and overall service satisfaction, "the consumer's overall dis/satisfaction with the organization based on all encounters and experiences with that particular organization". In addition, a characteristic of service delivery is the simultaneous nature of production and consumption (Zeithaml and Bitner 1996). Customers are usually involved in some (if not all)

of the production processes and therefore have an impact on the outcomes of the service delivery and their satisfaction with it. Bowen (1986), Mills and Morris (1986), and Kelley, Donnelly and Skinner (1990), have shown that participation, or the use of customers as "partial employees", can improve productivity for providers as well as improving service quality and customer satisfaction. Gronroos (1990) proposes that service quality can be divided into two dimensions, namely technical quality and functional quality. Technical quality represents the outcome of the service, and functional quality relates to the service process. This study focuses on aspects of functional quality. The functional quality has a clear direct impact on technical quality and both have an impact on customer satisfaction and library productivity. The library's environment can affect students' perceptions of the manner in which they believe they can use the library, and therefore modification of the environment, in some cases, should lead to an increased usage of library resources by students (Watson 2001). Other studies also revealed that, they are related; the concept of "service quality" is different from satisfaction and has offered an alternative direction to assess library performance. Satisfaction is often a short-term measure whereas service quality evolves over time and relates to the customer's developed attitude toward a service. Within the library science domain, reported research has accepted the concept from the gap theory of service quality, developed by the marketing research team of Parasuraman, Berry, and Zeithaml (1985). They define service quality in terms of reducing the gap between customers' expectations for excellent service and their perceptions of services
delivered.

In the studies conducted by Coleman, Yi, Blair, and Chollet (1997), Edwards andBrowne (1995), Hernon and Calvert Evaluating Users' Satisfaction on Academic Library Performance (1996), Nitecki (1996), and White and Abels (1995), the five-dimensional SERVQUAL model and the twenty-two-item scale proposed by Parasuraman, Berry, and Zeithaml (1991) are prominent. In a study by Norliya and Khasiah (2006), respondents were asked in what ways the libraries can serve users' learning and research needs. The researchers suggest that libraries must provide the latest collection and this appears to be the most common suggestion with about 40.0% of the respondents. This is followed by library should stay open longer (18.9%), there should be more PCs (16.1%), staff should be more friendly and knowledgeable (13.3%), the library should organize more workshops on how to find information (7.5%), it should provide guidance on consultation and research method (2.8%), and it should develop its own internet information (2.0%). Norliya, Khasiah and Haslinda (2008) reported that a study on customer satisfaction reveal many things that the library can do in term of activities that would benefit library users. The results of the study by Norliya and Khasiah (2006) found that the largest proportion (91.7%) of the respondents think that the library should publish a guide on information searching skills. A large proportion (89.6%) of the respondents also thinks the library should publish library and information related journals. The percentages of respondents who identify other activities are also very high, ranging from 89.4 per cent (for publishing index and bibliographies) to 75.2 per cent (for conducting lifelong Learning workshop). However, some of the suggested activities may not necessarily be under the responsibilities of the library. Examples of these are workshops on study methods, study skills, problem solving techniques, examination techniques, critical thinking and lifelong learning. If the survey on library users reflects the needs of the students in general, the library may take the initiative to organize activities with the collaborative effort of other relevant faculties or Departments. This paper attempts to describe the results of an appraisal quantitative study that examine the library's performance on services, infrastructure/place/space and collection/information by assessing the users' satisfaction level on the two colleges of the university library in FUPRE.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of this study is to appraise user's satisfaction regarding the services, infrastructure, place, space and collection/ information provided by the library. It is also aimed to evaluate user's satisfaction on academic library performance and possible solutions were suggested by library users for effective service delivery in the library.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study was guided by the following questions:
  i.   Identify the satisfaction level of the users regarding the services, infrastructure/place/space and collection/information provided by the libraries?
  ii.   Evaluate user's satisfaction on academic library performance?
  iii. Suggest possible solutions to enhance efficiency and effective service delivery in the library?

RESEARCH METHODS

The Survey research method was used to carry out this study because of its large population. Nworgu (2006) attested that a survey research is one in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be represented of the entire group. The target population was the registered library user in Federal University of Petroleum Resources, (FUPRE) Library. There were 1,300 registered library users' (Registration statistics. 2014/2015). A total of 409 respondents were selected out of the total population. The stratified random sampling technique was used to select respondents across the two colleges in the university. These are college of technology and college of science. The instrument used for data collection in this study was questionnaire. Questionnaire was used for collecting data for this research because Cohen and Morrision (2012) is of view that the questionnaire is widely used and it is a useful instrument for collecting survey information providing structured, often numerical data, being able to be administered without the presence of the researcher and often comparatively straight forward to analyze. The researcher administered and collected the questionnaire from the respondents. Thus there was 93% rate of return distributed.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Out of 409 copies of the questionnaire that were administered to the library users, 381(93%) were retrieved. The data collected in the study is presented below.

Fig 1: Distribution of Respondents by Sex

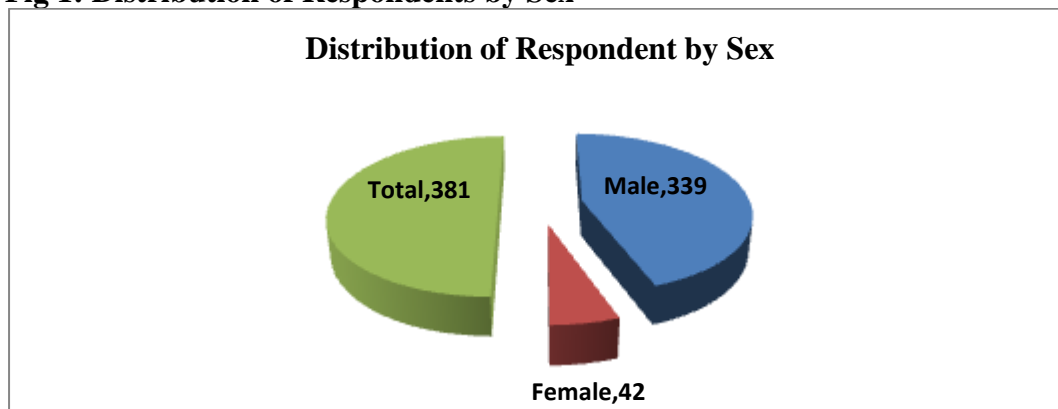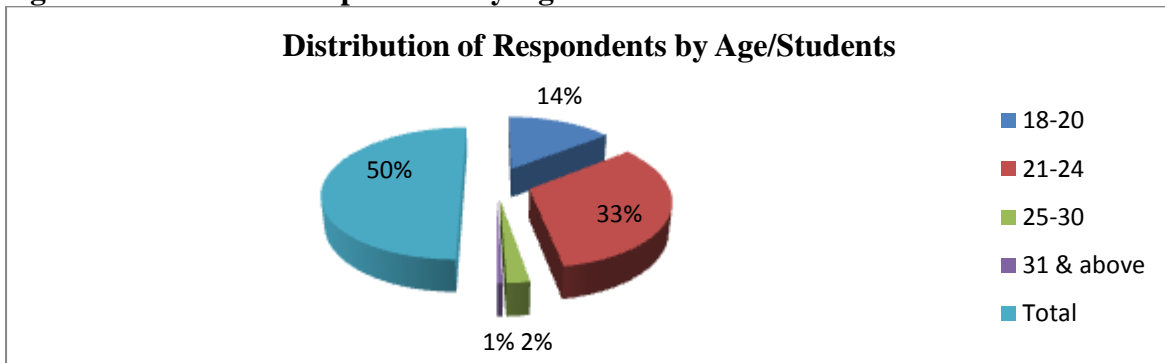**Distribution of Respondent by Sex**

Total,381   Male,339   Female,42

Fig: 1 Shows that (89%) of respondents are male while (42%) are female. This represents the gender distribution of students involved in the survey.

**Fig 2:Distribution of Respondents by Age/Students**

It is obvious from Fig 2, that majority (50%) of the respondents are within the age bracket of 21 – 24 years while, (14%) are 18-20 years; (2%) are 25-30 years and above 31 are (1%). This represents the age distribution of students who participated in the survey.

Fig 3: Distribution of Respondents by Colleges
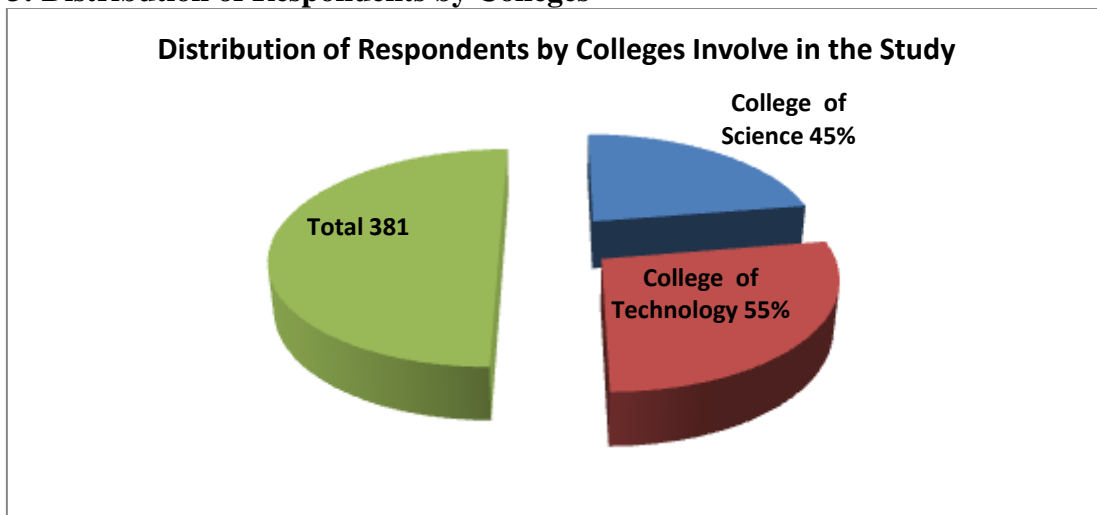
As observed from Fig 3, that (55%) of the respondents are in college of technology while (45%) are in college of science.

Fig 4: Level of Respondents/ Students
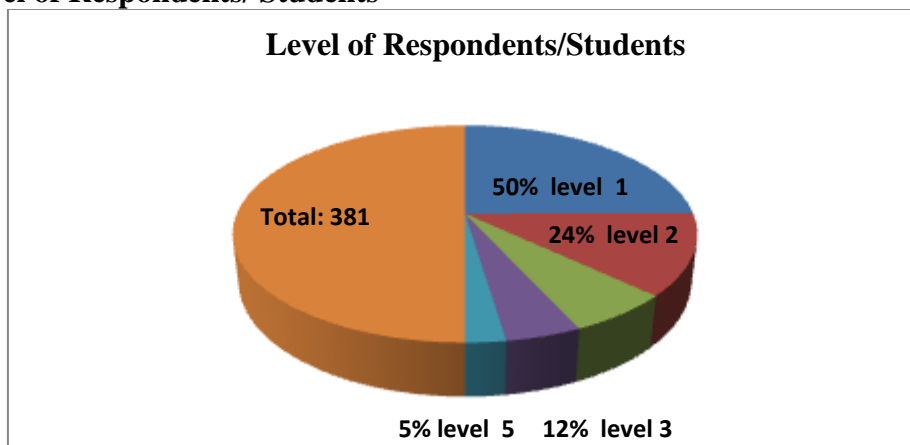
As observed from Fig 4, that (50%) of the respondents are level one students; (24%) are level two students while (12%) are level three students,whereas (9%) are level four students and (5%) are level five students. This represents the level of students involved in the survey.

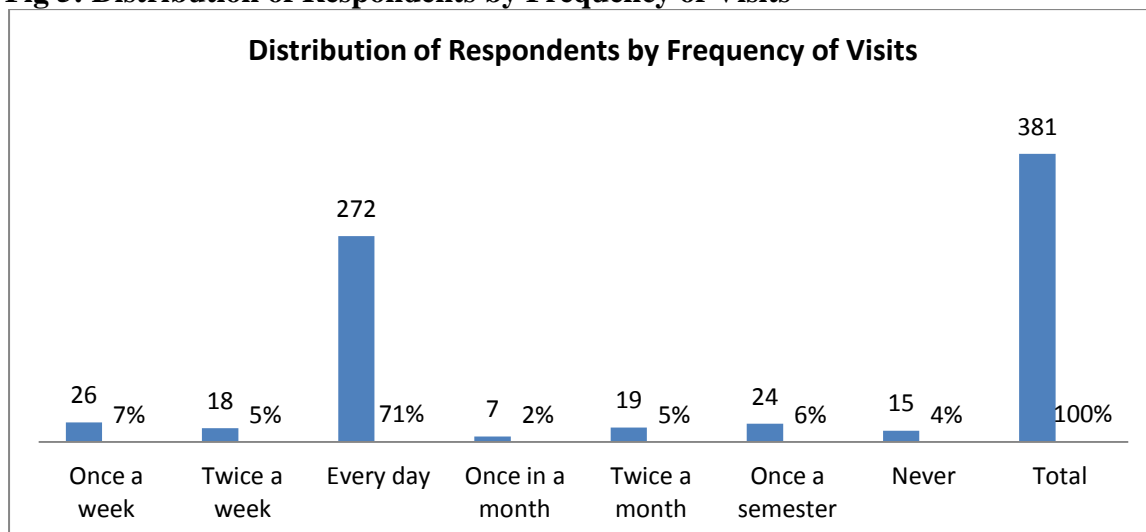**Fig 5: Distribution of Respondents by Frequency of Visits**

Figure 5: Shows that majority (71%) of the respondents visits library every day;(6%) visits library once a semester; (7%) visits library once a week while (5%) visitslibrary twice a week and twice a month; (4%) of the respondents had never visit library whereas (2%) visits library once in a month.

Fig 6: Distribution of Respondents by Reason for Library Visits
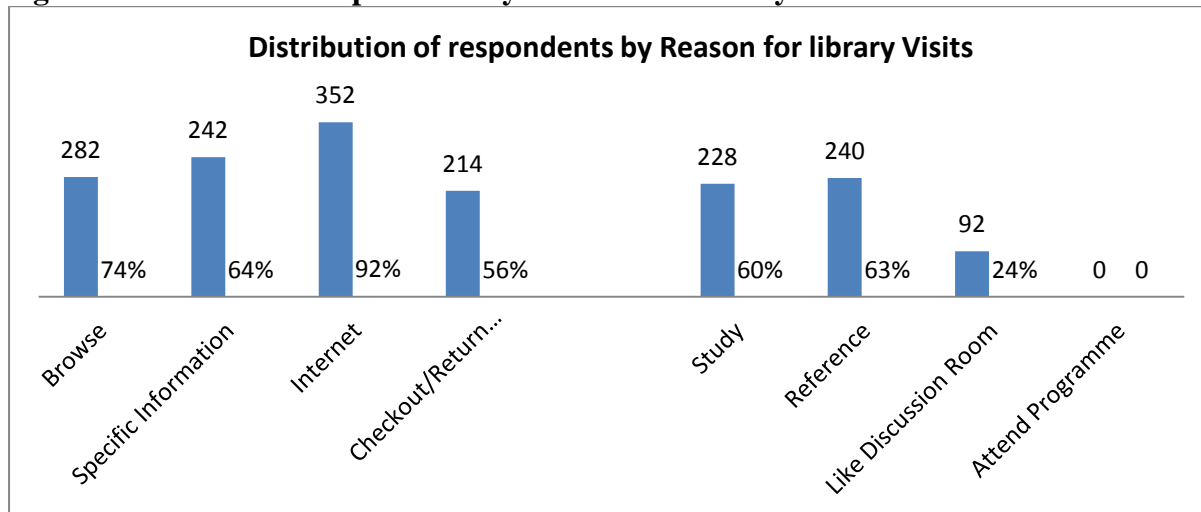

Figure 6: Shows that majority (92%) of the respondent's visits library due to the availability of internet; (74%) visits library because of browsing while (64%) visits library as a result of specific information whereas (63%) visit library in other to have access to reference materials while (60%) of the respondents visits library to study and (56%) visits library so as to checkout/return of the library materials.

Table 1: Satisfaction level of the users regarding the services, infrastructure/place/space and collection/information provided by the libraries?

Level of Satisfaction	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Average	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied
Services	289(76%)	89(23%)	3(1%)	0	0
Infrastructures/space/Place	269(71%)	112(29%)	0	0	0
Collection/Information	294(77%)	80(21%)	7(2%)	0	0

Table 1 reveals that, (76%); (71%) and (77%) were highly satisfied regarding the services, infrastructure/place/space as well as collection /information dissemination in the library while (23%); (29%) and (21%) are satisfied. (1%) and (2%) are average satisfiedregarding the services, infrastructure/place/space as well as collection /information dissemination in the library.

Table 2: Evaluating user's satisfaction on academic library performance?

User satisfaction on academic library performance	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Average	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied
Opening hours are suitable	353(93%)	28(7%)	0	0	0
Readiness to respond to user	302(79%)	65(17%)	14(4%)	0	0
Deal with users in caring manner	342(90%)	29(8%)	10(3%)	0	0
Provides photocopy and scanning services	372(98%)	9(2%)	0	0	0
Reference staff are friendly	299(78%)	73(10%)	9(2%)	0	0
Provides longer hours for internet access	235(62%)	146(38%)	0	0	0
Books are available on the shelves	358(94%)	23(6%)	0	0	0
Give access to E-books and E-journal	323(85%)	47(12%)	11(3%)	0	0
Complete relevant journals	353(93%)	28(7%)	0	0	0
Resources added to collection regularly	372(98%)	9(2%)	0	0	0
User-friendly catalogue	299(78%)	75(20%)	7(2%)	0	0

Table 2: Shows that majority (98%) were highly satisfied with resources added to collection regularly and photocopy/scanning machine provided in the library; whereas (2%) are satisfied; (94%) are highly satisfied with books on the shelves while (6%) are satisfied with books on the shelves;(93%) are highly satisfied with available journals and opening hours of the library; while (7%) are satisfied; (90%)are highly satisfied with staff attitude,(85%) of respondents claimed to have access to E-books and E-journals in the library,(79%) are highly satisfied with willingness to serve users, whereas (78%) of respondents are highly satisfied with service provide at the reference section of the library and (62%) were highly satisfied with period provided for internet service.

Fig7: Suggest possible solutions to enhance efficiency and effective service delivery in the library?

Ways to enhance efficiency and effective services delivery in the library.
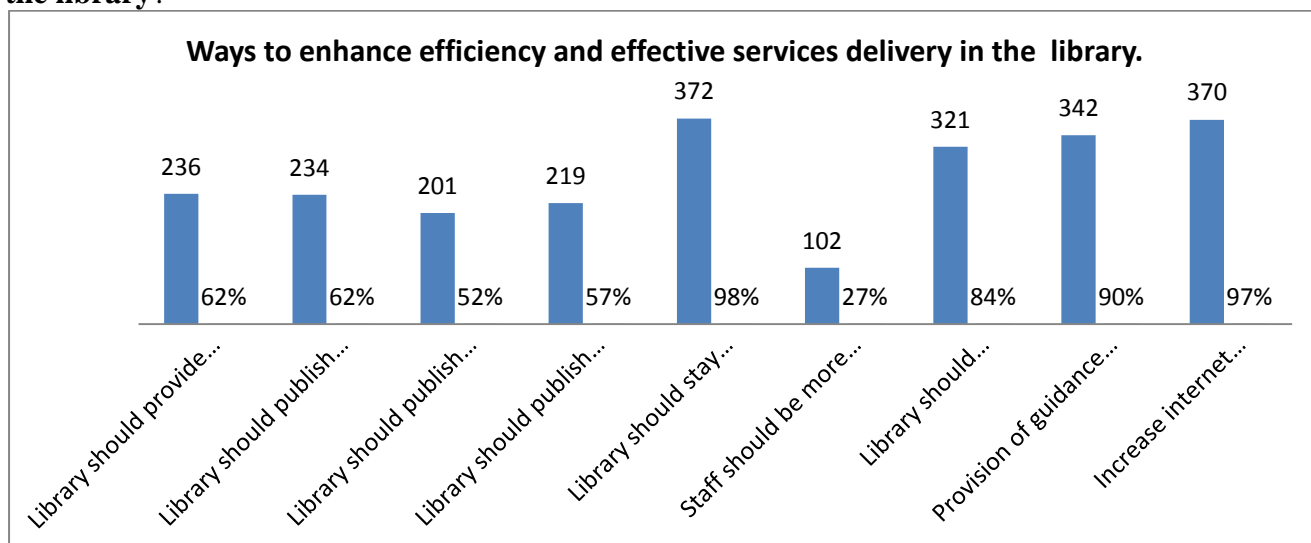
A numbers of suggestion were identified, these includes library should stay open longer(98%); increase internet bandwidths (97%); provision of guidance on consultation and research method (90%);library should organize workshop on how to find information (84%);library should publish a guide on information searching skills and library should provide the latest collection(62%);whereas (57%) are of opinion that library should publish index and bibliographies while (27%) are emphasized that staff should be more friendly and knowledgeable.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings reveal that (89%) of respondents are male while (42%) are female. The study agreed with (Busselle et al., 1999; Teo, 2001; Chong, 2002; Bar-lla et al., 2003) that men are heavier users of the library and make most use of the more complicated services. The finding shows that majority (50%) of the respondents are within the age bracket of 21 – 24 years were more library usage, with is in line with (Lazinger et al., 1997; Bar-llan et al., 2003), that age also plays an important role in usage; the younger the student and faculty members are, the more they use library materials. The findings indicate that,(71%) of the respondents visits the libraries every day, while those who visits library once a semester(6%) whereas(7%) visits library once a week while (5%) visits library twice a week and twice a month, while (2%) visits library once in a month and (4%) of the respondents had never visit library at all. The study reveals that, many of the respondents visit the library for more than one reason. The largest proportion (92%) of the respondents goes to library due to the availability of internet connectivity in the library while the smallest proportion (56%) of the respondents visits the library so as to checkout/return of the library materials.

The result shows that,(76%) were highly satisfied with service render by the library while (23%) were satisfied and (1%) were averagely satisfied. Whereas (71%) were highly satisfied with space, place and infrastructure facility of the library. The result indicates that, (98%) found that the largest proportion of the respondents appreciate resources that added to library collection regularly and available photocopy and scanning machine, while (94%) of the respondents also agreed that, books are available on the shelves.

The results of the study by Norliya and Khasiah (2006) found that the largest proportion (91.7%) of the respondents suggest that the library should publish a guide on information searching skills. A large proportion (98%) of the respondents suggests that library should stay open longer. The percentages of respondents who identify other activities are also very high, ranging from (90%) provision of guidance on consultation and research method while (97%) of the respondents emphasized on increase internet bandwidths also(84%) agree that library should organize workshop on how to find information for effective service delivery while (62%) assuming that library should provide the latest collection and published a guide on information related journals whereas (57%) of respondents were of opinion that library should published index and bibliographies.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has presented information on the users' satisfaction towards the libraries 'services, infrastructure/ place/ space and collection/ information. The study found that, library users were highly satisfied regarding the services, infrastructure/place/space as well as collection /information dissemination in the library.

The findings suggest that libraries should improve their service, infrastructure and collections so as to serve users' learning and research needs. The findings also suggest that library should stay open longer so as to enhance efficiency and effective services delivery. To encourage a positive learning environment in the library, the management should encourage the librarians and staff to participate in a range of educational activities apart from their routine tasks, facilitate learning and encourage staff to share and give ideas as these attempts will help the libraries attain the best out of their staff. Most importantly, to merit the trademark of a quality library, more effort on the part of the Management is required in granting encouraging incentives for staff who take the initiative to enhance their skills. Staff has to be involved in research activities so that they understand the needs of the library users when doing research. The role of the library as a place of learning and of access to information is as valid as ever. The facilities, infrastructure, collections, activities and services of the library can be upgraded and improved from time to time if research is being done continuously. The findings of the study can be an important input to the management of the library as decisions can be made based on research. The statistical Information and analysis can be used to plan for improvement or for policy planning and development. It is important that the library do benchmarking to compare the library's performance with that of other libraries, with the aim of improving the library's performance by adopting the best practices of its "benchmarking partners". Apart from that is having customer service plan. The implementation of the plan helps create a customer service focused library and includes mechanisms for customer input, such as surveys and focus groups. The goal is continuous improvement. Library staff has to be involved in the process of turning libraries into service organizations with the focus on users as customers, and programs and services that meet or exceed customer expectations. Services and activities provided by university libraries must be oriented to become better patron supporter and address their problem solving needs. This study has presented information on the users' satisfaction towards the libraries 'services, infrastructure/ place/ space and collection/ information. It is hoped that the information produced through this study will be of use to the improvement of library services and betterment of the library profession, and serve as a contribution to the body of knowledge in the area of user satisfaction on libraries' contribution and their services to users.

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