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## **EDITORIAL**

*Unizik Journal of Research in Library and Information Science is a research oriented journal. This is the first issue. Library and Information Science has come of age in Nigeria. There are twelve accredited Nigerian Universities that offer Library and Information Science. Majority of them offer courses up to doctoral levels.*

*The Department of Library and Information Science, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, started her Postgraduate programmes in 2007 / 2008 session. It is the intension of the Department to get involved in the research efforts in Library and Information Science in and outside the country.*

*In this maiden edition, four articles focused on major curriculum issues in Library and Information Science. Knowledge management, a current focus in the profession is left out. One article surveyed the intervention of Education Trust Fund (ETF) in Academic Libraries. Other articles that will stimulate your general interest also featured in this edition.*

*Editor-in-Chief*

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## **EVALUATING THE USE OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARY RESOURCES BY STUDENTS AND STAFF OF NNAMDI AZIKIWE UNIVERSITY, AWKA.**

**BY**

**Obiozor Roseline**  
*University Main Library*  
**Unizik, Awka.**

**Ogbonna Andrew U.**  
*Library & Information Science*  
**Unizik, Awka**

**Anyaegbu Mercy**  
*Law Library*  
**Unizik, Awka**

### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this study was to evaluate the use of University library resources by students and staff of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The study aimed at bridging the gap between the availability of library resources and the constant use expected of them, especially in this present information age. Eight hundred and twenty-six (826) students and staff of the university were used as respondents to the questionnaire, out of which 612 were used for analysis. Data were collected using questionnaire and interview and simple percentage was used in the analysis. The finding shows that student makes use of the library more than staff, and that even, those that uses the library are mainly academics. The study further revealed that students have several problems of lack of assistance from the library staff, and their inability to access the information. Recommendations were therefore proffered to take care of the findings.*

### **Introduction**

The major function of libraries, irrespective of type, is to provide the right and adequate materials to meet the information needs of their users. As a result, the University libraries are established to promote teaching and learning including research in the University setting. It is aimed at serving the students, the teaching and non-teaching staff of the University community. No wonder, hardly could any university exist without a well established library.

Apparently, almost all the university libraries acquire several types of materials in different format for the purpose of satisfying the user's demands. The librarians usually process these materials to be easily identified or accessed by the users. IFLA (1988) decreed that, "though information is widely recognized as a catalyst for both national and

personal development, many people, especially in the developing countries are still unaware of the need for information and so, failed to exploit it even when the information resources are available for free, as in libraries and information centres". The recent information explosion has made several library resources available for the clientele. Therefore, it has become expedient to know the extent to which the staff and students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University are using these resources.

### **Purpose Of The Study**

Butters, in Okiy (2000) states that the purpose of a user study in library is similar to that of market research in business. This is an attempt to discover use and non-use, patterns of use and the extent of awareness by users on the availability of library services. Specifically, the study would attempt to :

- i. Examine the extent of use
- ii. Ascertain the availability of library materials
- iii. Discover the accessibility of library materials
- iv. Find out the problems affecting the effective use of library materials.
- v. Proffer solutions for an efficient use of library

### **Review of Related Literature**

According to Edoa (2000), "the entire human and material resources in a library are put in place at considerable expense for the overall purpose of providing effective services to the library user". However, the library has a responsibility to ensure that its resources and services are used.

Crosby (2007) described librarians as "information experts in the information age". The works of Ogunsheye (1982), Adimorah (1983) and Aboiyade (1989) describes librarians as information-oriented experts whose duty it is to safe-guard information materials as well as ensuring that their used are adequately made by the different users that consult them. Adimorah and Ugoji (1997) expressed that no university can boast of academic excellence without an efficient and effective library services. Moreover, Kargbo (2002) established the functions and services of academic libraries in the emergent information age. And Ahiauzu (2003) highlighted among other things, the services designed and rendered by a University library to meet the needs of its peculiar environment and client.

Ologunleko (2001) opined that constant use of the library, no matter the type, enlarges the knowledge-base of an individual and so, makes him awareness conscious. However, continuous library use has positive multiplier effect on the academic performance and self development of any student. This summarizes the findings of Hayden (2003), Ahiauzu (2003) and Achebe (2004) in their respective researches.

Okiy (2000) assessed the students and Faculty use of academic libraries in Delta State University, Abraka. She found that both students and faculties uses library materials for both classroom work and research. In the same vein, Ajileye-Laogun (2002) also carried out a work on the reference librarian and the user's relationship at the Obafemi Awolowo University library, Ile-Ife. The study considered the link between the student's perception of the reference librarians and the extent at which they consult them for services at the University.

## Methodology

A survey research design was utilized in conducting the study. Data collection instruments were questionnaire and interview. A comprehensive and well structured questionnaire were designed to assist in raising useful questions relating to the use made of the library, the services they renders and the problems arising therefore, with the University librarian, staff and students of NAU.

The study population includes all the staff and students of the Nnamdi Azikiwe University. While the sample includes the 778 students and 48 staff (mainly academic) that was recorded in the library in two semesters as library users. The total sample was 826. The same number of questionnaire was prepared and sent out but only (612) were returned in usable form representing (74.09%) which is an appreciable return rate.

The data generated from the completed questionnaire items were analysed using simple percentages.

## Findings

Of the 612 respondents that returned their questionnaire, 564(92.2%) were students while the remaining 48(7.84%) were staff. This implies that there are more student-users of the library than staff. However, table 1 below shows the frequency of use of the library.

Table 1. Frequency of use of library Materials

S/No.	Statements	Staff	%	Students	%
a.	Daily	-	-	89	15.78
b.	Twice a Week	16	33.33	35	23.94
c.	During exams only	-	-	301	53.37
d.	Twice a month	32	66.67	39	6.91
	<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table one above shows how often the staff and students use the library. The table indicated that the largest number of staff, 32 and which represents 66.67% use the library twice in every month while 301 student respondents which accounts for 53.37% use the library basically during examination periods. As can be discovered from the table students use the library more regularly than the staff.

Table 2. Purpose for using the Library.

S/No.	Statements	Staff	%	Students	%
a.	For assignments	-	-	126	22.34
b.	For research	28	58.34	74	13.12
c.	For leisure	7	14.58	-	-
d.	To borrow library materials	13	27.08	364	64.54
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>100.00</b>

From table 2. it was discovered that University staff visits the library basically for the purpose of research. Evidently, 28 staff respondent which represents 53.34% corroborates the findings. The table further highlights that no student visits the library for leisure reading, rather they use the library for their assignments, research or to borrow the materials existing there. However, 64.54% responded that they visit the library for the purpose of borrowing the materials.

**Table 3. Kinds of Materials Used in the Library.**

S/No.	Statements	Staff	%	Students	%
a.	Textbooks	6	12.5	286	50.71
b.	Reference Materials	7	14.58	128	22.70
c.	Professional publications	30	62.5	64	11.35
d.	Magazines/Newspapers/ Govt. Publications	5	10.42	86	15.24
	TOTAL	48	100.001	564	100.00

Table 3 presents the kinds of materials that the responding staff and students, usually consults in the library. Among the staff, 30 respondents which is represented by 62.5% consults Professional Publication, while 14.58% uses reference materials and 12.5% uses textbooks. For the students, 286 respondents accounting for 50.71% consults textbooks. 22.70% consults reference materials while 15.24% consults magazines, newspapers and or government publications.

**Table 4. Degrees of success in Using the Library.**

S/No.	Statements	Staff	%	Students	%
a.	Always	14	29.17	158	28.01
b.	Not always	34	70.83	316	56.03
c.	Not at all	-	-	90	15.96
	TOTAL	48	100.00	564	100.00

Table 4 above shows the responses on the question, "do you always collect the material needed in the library?" About 34 staff respondents which account for 70.83% indicate that they do but not always while 14 respondents say that they always do. In the student side, 316 respondents, accounting for 56.03% also agrees that they do but not always. Another 15.96% affirms that they never collected what they needed in the library while 28.01% said that they always do.



**Table 5. Methods of Accessing Materials.**

S/No.	Statements	Staff	%	Students	%
a.	Through card catalogue	21	43.75	69	12.23
b.	Browsing through the shelves	5	10.42	318	56.38
c.	Asking the reference Librarian	18	37.5	146	25.89
d.	Through the circulation desk	4	8.33	31	5.50
	<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Findings made on methods of accessing or locating library materials as shown in table indicates that 43.75% of staff uses card catalogue, 37.5% asks the reference librarian for help, 10.42% browse through the shelves while 8.33% asks the personnel at the circulation desk. For students, 56.38% browse through the shelves, 25.89% the reference librarian for help, 12.23% uses card catalogue and 5.50% uses those in the circulation desk.

**Table 6. Sections of the library Usually Used.**

S/No.	Statements	Staff Freq	%	Student Freq	%
a.	Reference Section	14	29.17	151	26.77
b.	Serials Section	29	60.42	36	6.38
c.	Project Section	5	10.41	207	36.70
d.	Reading Hall	-	-	170	30.15
	<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 6 above shows the different sections that the respondents usually go to. Among the staff, 60.42% uses the serials section, 29.17% uses the reference section while 10.41% use the project section. In contrast, 36.70% of student respondents use the project section 30.15% use the reading hall for their private reading, 26.77% use the reference section and 6.38% uses the serial section.

**Table 7. Problems Affecting the Use of Library Materials.**

S/No.	Statements	Staff Freq.	%	Student Freq.	%
a.	Lack of assistance - -	-	320	56.74	
b.	Poor organization of catalogue cards	21	43.75	17	3.01
c.	Inability to access Materials from the shelves	8	16.67	200	35.46
d.	Insufficient materials in the area of study	19	39.58	27	4.79
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Responses gathered from table 7 shows that the major problems affecting the use of library materials are lack of assistance by the librarians, poor organization of catalogue cards

inability to access materials on the shelves and inadequate materials in the area of study. Staff responses indicate that 43.75% laments of poor organization of catalogue cards and 39.58% decried of inadequate materials in the area of study. In the same vein, 56.74% and 35.46% of students laments of lack of assistance and inability to access materials on the shelves, respectively.

**Table 8. Ways for Improving the Use of Library Materials.**

S/No.	Statements	Staff Freq.	%	Students Freq.	%
a.	Librarians should be willing to assist users in locating materials	20	41.67	311	55.14
b.	Catalogue cards should be updated and properly arranged	7	14.58	50	8.876
c.	Faculties should participate in the selection and acquisition of materials	3	6.25	23	4.08
d.	Library processes should be computerized	18	37.5	180	31.91
	<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 8 above shows the suggested ways for improving the use of library materials. Staff responses shows that 41.67% agreed that librarians should be willing to assist users in locating materials and another 37.5% feels that library processes should be computerized. Student's responses also showed that 55.14% agreed that librarians should be willing to assist users in locating materials, while 31.91% states that library processes should be computerized.

**Discussion**

The findings of the study revealed that the category of staff that use the library are basically the teaching staff. The very few non-teaching staff that were recorded were either carrying out research or doing some pleasure reading. However, most of these staff use the library twice in a month as they are variously occupied by their work activities. As for the students, their peak period of use are mainly during the examination times when they are supposed to be doing their revisions. Only very few students utilizes the library on daily basis. Besides, despite the differences in the frequency of use between the staff and students, it was discovered that students use the library more than staff.

Regarding the purpose of use by both staff and students, the study revealed that most of the staff use the library for research and sometimes to borrow library materials. Very few staff visits the library for leisure. Pertaining to the students, 64.54% comes to the library only to borrow books and others, to carry out their classwork assignments. No wonder Ahiauzu (2003) states that library services have been designed to meet the needs of varying users.

The findings further revealed that students usually consult books and sometimes reference materials while staff consults periodicals or professional publications. Interview also discloses that the kind of material required by any user is dependent upon the nature of query brought by such user. When asked whether the users always collect the materials that they needed in the library, both staff and students agreed that they do collect

but not always. This results from the fact that most students go straight to the shelf where they would browse for hours without locating the material of their interest. On the other hand, some staff consult the catalogue cards, though complains that the cards are not always helpful. However, interview revealed that many a time a material may not be found at its proper place probably, when it is loaned out, in the bindery, misplaced on the shelf, or stolen by other users.

Almost all the staff were discovered to be using the serial section for the purpose of their research, while the students use the project section and the reading hall in pursuit of their project and for private study.

In determining the problems affecting the use of library materials, the students lamented over lack of assistance by the library staff and their inability to access materials from the shelf, while the staff said that the problems results from poor organization of catalogue cards and insufficient materials in the area of study. Interview also revealed that inadequate funding created the basic problem in which the rest are dependent upon. The study finally revealed that the best ways possible for improving the use of library materials are by making the librarians improve on the level of assistance given to users when location materials and by computerizing the whole library process.

### **Conclusion And Recommendations**

The result of this study has led to the conclusion that though students are utilizing the library more than the staff, the resources of the library has not been optimally used. The library is the hallmark of all education process, so, for an excellent academic performance of both the students and the school, the library materials should have to be exploited maximally. This is sequel to Ranganathan's five laws of librarianship which states thus:

1. Books are for use.
2. Every user his book.
3. Every book its user.
4. Save the time of the user
5. Library is a growing organism.

The findings show that part of the problems that have been hindering both staff and students from making better use of the library include lack of assistance by the library staff, poor organization of catalogue cards and inadequate materials in the area of study. These problems are sometimes passed on to some intending users during discussions and in effect, usually stops them from coming to the library. And in order to curb this ugly trend, the librarians should rise up to these challenges by considering the user as a customer who is regarded as a king. They should learn how best to assist the users, re-orientate the users, update the catalogue cards, learn to do shelf-reading and from time to time, they should supervise users as they go about the library. Many of them do have problems without knowing how and where to channel it to. This is very important. And finally, the school should do well to computerize the library processes, especially now that the vogue has been the Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Once this is done, few users will be complaining and all of them must be willing to patronize the library.

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