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RESEARCH ARTICLE

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF USERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE UTILIZATION OF LIBRARY SERVICES IN CROSS RIVER UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR LIBRARIES, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

University libraries set up their services to enhance the teaching and research missions of the institutions, particularly for students. Students are increasingly expected to use library services while at university. Users attitude have an effect on their use of library services. This study sought to compare users' attitude towards various library services in Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries. Multistage non probability sampling technique involving purpose and accidental sampling was adopted for this study. A total sample of five hundred and thirty one (531) registered library users was drawn from a population of three thousand, two hundred and thirty six (3236). Five null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. A validated 30- item questionnaire was developed by the researcher to collect data for the study. Independent t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The summary of the findings showed that there is a significant difference in library services offered to users in between users' attitudes toward lending services in Cross River University of Technology library and University of Calabar library. It is concluded that academic universities can influence users' attitude towards utilization of library services. It was recommended among others that the use of attractive posters in each section of the library describing the services and user instruction workshops should be marketed using flyers and pamphlets, promoting library services.

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INTRODUCTION

Libraries have been termed "one of the pillars of civilization." The World Book Encyclopedia says that they are among the most important contributors to human culture and technology. The German poet Goethe called them the memory of mankind. Libraries are repositories of knowledge much respected and valued by elites of society. Jim, R. President, American Literary Association (ALA, 2009), describes, libraries as "the only providers of universally accessible lifelong learning opportunities". Universities are important agents in the development of human resources of any nation. The major role of universities in Nigeria as defined in the National Policy of Education (NPE) includes the provision of high-level manpower for national development and this role is achieved through its programmes of teaching, learning and research. These roles of the universities cannot be achieved without the presence of a vibrant university library (Aguolu, 2003). University libraries assist the universities in the discharge of their functions by acquiring all the relevant information resources necessary for sustaining the teaching, learning,

research and the public service functions of their universities. The extent to which university libraries are able to perform these functions will depend on a number of factors, which includes excellent *library services*. The library is regarded as the "heart" of any academic institution, particularly, the university (Aguolu, 2003). University libraries serve as centres of communication ensuring practical means of acquiring knowledge leading to understanding the minds of individuals and groups. University libraries set up their services to enhance the teaching and research missions of the institutions, particularly for users. Hence, to a large extent, the quality of a university is measured by the services provided by the library because of its unique contributions in the achievement of overall goals of the university. For a university to perform its myriad of functions, quality and efficient library services are a prerequisite. Library services are "a sum total of professional services or assistant given to library users in a bid to satisfy their information needs and that quality and efficient library services greatly enhance students' successful completion of their academic programmes. Justifying this position, the objectives of establishing any University, which are to encourage research and scholarship can only be realised through the provision of library services. That is why the National Universities Commission (NUC), the Council for Legal Education in Nigeria and some professional bodies

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always insist that one of the criteria for evaluating the accreditation of courses in our tertiary institutions is the provision of adequate library services with suitable and current books and journals, internet facilities, reprographic services, bindery services, good ventilation and adequate staff and student capacity. It was in recognition of this fact that the Nigerian National Policy on Education (2004) emphasized the importance of libraries in institutions and the role of libraries in the educational process in Nigeria. It urged the state government to provide funds to establish library in all educational institutions. This is because libraries hold the key to national development. Library services constitute one of the instruments needed for the improvement of educational standard. Library service is a privilege extended to those who recognize that the collections are resources to be shared with current and future users and who observe the regulations and procedures established to make materials accessible to all. These services can only be achieved through the availability of library collection. The services provided in the academic libraries are to help the institutions achieve its aims and objectives. These services include: lending, reservation, reference, current awareness, exhibition and display, user education/ library use instruction skills, on-line access to resources, inter-library loan and document delivery, co-operating in networking and standard and reading and study facilities.

The services provided to users of libraries depend on the objectives of the parent organization. The services provided in a library differ from one library to another but there are certain services that are common to all libraries. In the 21st century, library services have shifted from the traditional and routine activities to a livelier, dynamic, and challenging system to more practical and user-friendly services such as lending, photocopying, user education, shelving and reference services. Students are increasingly expected to use these services while at university, however, how students feel about various issues surrounding library services is dependent upon their attitudes. Attitudes are "inclinations and feelings, prejudices or bias, preconceived notions, ideas, fears and convictions about any specific topic" (Udofia, 2002). Attitudes represent the conceptual value of these services in the minds of the users, not the values of the services themselves. Positive attitudes are fundamental in utilization of services. Some users may perceive library services negatively whereas others may attach positive attributes to them. It is necessary to observe the users more closely to determine their attitude towards services offered by University libraries. However little is known about student attitudes towards library services and without a better understanding, it is difficult for service providers to know if they are meeting the needs of students effectively in the provision of library services to its users.

Statement of the Problem

The library is the 'heart' of any institution upon which its academic activities beat. This is supported by the fact that the library is usually one of the departments to be visited to ascertain the quality of its services whenever an accreditation team visits the institution. Without a functional library, qualitative education is impossible. The worth of any library is

dependent on how well its services are utilized and to justify expenditure in the acquisition of these resources. University libraries are continuously used by a large number of different classes of users for varied academic pursuits. The libraries, within available funds are stocked and basic services and facilities are provided to users. One of the aspirations of the academic libraries is to satisfy the information needs of the users by offering quality services. The mission statement of any library should be the provision of excellent services to its users, therefore libraries should strive at all times to ensure that the users are satisfied with their services, hence a library can only be adjudged to have achieved its mandate when its users are satisfied with the services offered to them. However, in spite of these important functions of the libraries, it does appear that users do not make adequate use of the library services. It therefore becomes imperative to take a closer look at those attitudes, which have an effect on how users make use of the services and will in turn affect the overall success of the library's service programme. In Cross River State not much is known about the attitudes of users' in university libraries in Cross River State, Nigeria. Obviously, it is not very clear to what extent the users' attitude influences the use of library services so provided therein by the libraries. The study therefore, was designed to compare users' attitude towards library services in Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were raised to guide the study:

1. There is no significant difference between users' attitude towards utilization of lending services in Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries.
2. There is no significant difference between users' attitudes toward utilization of reference services in Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries.
3. There is no significant difference between users' attitudes toward utilization of photocopying services in Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries.
4. There is no significant difference between users' attitudes toward utilization of shelving services in Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries.
5. There is no significant difference between users' attitudes toward utilization of user education in Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The survey research design was adopted for this study. Survey research is most appropriate for this study because it is directed towards determining the nature of a situation as it exists at the time of investigation. It is an attempt to collect data from members of a population in order to determine the correct status of the population with regards to one or more variables. The study area for this research was Cross River

State, Nigeria. The population of this study comprises all the students who have registered in their tertiary institutional libraries in Cross River University of Technology, Calabar campus and University of Calabar as at 2011/2012 academic session. The population was 3236 library users. The numbers of users differ from one academic library to another. The Cross River University of Technology, Calabar campus library had about 879 registered library users; the University of Calabar had about 2357 registered library user. The sample of this study is made up of five hundred and thirty-one (531) students. The main instrument used for data collection was the questionnaire designed by the researchers. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A was designed to collect the respondents' personal data such as sex and age. Section B contains forty items with a Four-Point Likert scale designed to measure the variables under study – Lending services, Reference services, Photocopy services, Shelving services and Users education. The validity and reliability of the instrument were properly ascertained by three educational research experts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hypothesis one

There is no significant difference between users' attitudes toward utilization of lending services in the Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries. Independent t-test analysis was employed to test this hypothesis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 2. The result in Table 2 reveals that the calculated t-value of 9.84 is higher than the critical t-value of 1.96 at .05 level of significance with 529 degrees of freedom. With this result the null hypothesis was rejected. This result therefore means there is a significant difference in the users' attitude towards utilization of lending services in the Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries. This result implies that University of Calabar has a greater attitude with ($X = 22.66$).

Table 1. Description of research variables

Variables	\bar{X}	SD
Lending services	21.93	1.12
Reference services	21.06	1.89
Shelving services	20.47	2.20
Photocopy services	21.53	1.59
Users' education	19.99	2.26

Table 2. Independent t-test analysis of the difference in the users' attitude towards lending services in the Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries (N=531)

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	t-value
Cross River University of Technology	195	20.68	2.47	9.84*
University of Calabar	336	22.66	1.74	
Total	531	21.93	1.12	

*Significant at .05 level, critical $t = 1.96$, $df = 529$

Hypothesis two

There is no significant difference between users' attitudes toward utilization of reference services in the Cross River

University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries. Independent t-test analysis was employed to test this hypothesis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 3. The result in Table 3 reveals that the calculated t-value of 10.41 is higher than the critical t-value of 1.96 at .05 level of significance with 529 degrees of freedom. With this result the null hypothesis was rejected. This result therefore means there is a significant difference in the users' attitude towards utilization of reference services in the Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries. This result implies that University of Calabar has a greater attitude with ($X = 21.72$).

Table 3. Independent t-test analysis of the difference in the users' attitude towards reference services in the Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries (N=531)

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	t-value
Cross River University of Technology	195	19.92	2.06	10.41*
University of Calabar	336	21.72	1.66	
Total	531	21.06	1.89	

*Significant at .05 level, critical $t = 1.96$, $df = 529$

Hypothesis three

There is no significant difference between users' attitudes toward utilization of photocopying services in the Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries. Independent t-test analysis was employed to test this hypothesis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 4. The result in Table 4 reveals that the calculated t-value of 3.66 is higher than the critical t-value of 1.96 at .05 level of significance with 529 degrees of freedom. With this result the null hypothesis was rejected. This result therefore means there is a significant difference in the users' attitude towards utilization of photocopying services in the Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries. This result implies that University of Calabar has a greater attitude with ($X = 20.74$).

Table 4. Independent t-test analysis of the difference in the users' attitude towards photocopying services in the Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries (N=531)

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	t-value
Cross River University of Technology	195	20.01	2.11	3.66*
University of Calabar	336	20.74	2.37	
Total	531	20.47	2.20	

*Significant at .05 level, critical $t = 1.96$, $df = 529$

Hypothesis four

There is no significant difference between users' attitudes toward utilization of shelving services in the Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries. Independent t-test analysis was employed to test this hypothesis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 5. The result in Table 5 reveals that the calculated t-value of 6.75 is higher than the critical t-value of 1.96 at .05 level of significance with 529 degrees of freedom. With this result the

null hypothesis was rejected. This result therefore means there is a significant difference in the users' attitude towards utilization of shelving services in the Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries. This result implies that University of Calabar has a greater attitude with ($X = 21.99$).

Table 5. Independent t-test analysis of the difference in the users' attitude towards shelving services in the Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries (N=531)

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	t-value
Cross River University of Technology	195	20.73	2.35	6.75*
University of Calabar	336	21.99	1.51	
Total	531	21.53	1.59	

*Significant at .05 level, critical t = 1.96, df = 529

Hypothesis five

There is no significant difference between users' attitudes toward utilization of user education in Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries. Independent t-test analysis was employed to test this hypothesis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 6. The result in Table 6 reveals that the calculated t-value of 7.09 is higher than the critical t-value of 1.96 at .05 level of significance with 529 degrees of freedom. With this result the null hypothesis was rejected. This result therefore means there is a significant difference in the users' attitude towards utilization of user education in the Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries. This result implies that University of Calabar has a greater attitude with ($X = 20.52$).

Table 6. Independent t-test analysis of the difference in the users' attitude towards user education in the Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries (N=531)

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	t-value
Cross River University of Technology	195	19.07	2.58	7.09*
University of Calabar	336	20.52	1.63	
Total	531	19.99	2.26	

*Significant at .05 level, critical t = 1.96, df = 529

Conclusion

Based on the results and findings of the study, the following conclusions were reached.

1. There is a significant difference in library services offered to users in between users' attitudes toward lending services in Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries.
2. There is a significant difference between users' attitudes toward reference services in Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries.
3. There is a significant difference between users' attitudes toward photocopying services in Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries.
4. There is a significant difference between users' attitudes toward shelving services in Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries.

5. There is a significant difference between users' attitudes toward user education in Cross River University of Technology and University of Calabar libraries.

Finally, the researcher therefore conclude, that academic universities can influence users' attitude towards utilization of library services.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The library administrator should provide attractive posters in each section of the library describing the services and scope of collections;
2. The library administrator should issue out pamphlets about the library services and workshops;
3. The user instruction workshops should be marketed using flyers and pamphlets, promoting the collections, services and library regulations in general and provide current editions of video coverage that includes new developments in the library to be used to introduce fresh students to the library and its services;
4. The library administrator should be creative in producing posters and postcards depicting library topics. This could turn out to be a money-generating venture;
5. Library personnel should publish articles, news releases and short communications for the university news publications to increase on the sensitisation mechanisms or use the library Web page for publicity;
6. Students should also properly be initiated and guided into being good information resource users so that they do not depend mainly on lecturers notes to accomplish their knowledge goals;
7. Students and scholars' reading and research should be the dominating activity of which information literacy is the foundation; and,
8. Scholars should take the lead in initiating library use to their students, with the librarians left to ensure that the students are appropriately informed and guided.
9. Understanding the actual needs of information users and taking steps to satisfy them is the first step towards effective service provision. This can best be achieved through formal in-depth studies. Librarians, especially those involved in bibliographic instruction should be interested in ways individuals approach the library and the methods they use to search for needed information. Librarians could redesign strategies intended to improve the provision of library services especially towards information skills development and information resource awareness for two main reasons: to extend the hours that questions could be submitted to the reference desk, and to explore the potential of campus-wide networks, which at that time was a new technology.

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