

Measuring Customer Satisfaction in Bowen University Library, Nigeria

Grace Omolara O. Olla, Bowen University, Iwo, Nigeria

Paul Adesola Adekunle, Bowen University, Iwo, Nigeria

Roseline Mitana Oshiname, Bowen University, Iwo, Nigeria

Ayoola Oluwaseun Ajayi, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This study examines user satisfaction with the library products and services, facilities and conduciveness of the library environment, and ease of obtaining materials, as they affect their decision in patronizing the library. The study population comprises Bowen University students from diverse disciplines, levels and ages. Data was collected with an adapted questionnaire administered to over 400 respondents using convenience sampling technique. Descriptive statistics were adopted in measuring user satisfaction. Findings revealed that Bowen University Library users were satisfied with the products, services, facilities and conduciveness of the library environment. Nevertheless, a majority of the respondents reported that they seldom obtain materials from the library promptly. It was therefore recommended that library management should work more on training users on how to access materials through available services (e.g. OPAC, Library Portal) provide stable internet services, functional reference service, regular shelf maintenance, provide current information resources.

KEYWORDS

Academic Libraries, Bowen University Library, Customer Satisfaction, Information Resources, Library Facilities, Library Services, Library User, Nigeria, User Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

The library as a service-oriented institution is user-centric. All activities ranging from resource acquisition, to processing, storage, dissemination and preservation are user-centered. The desire to satisfy users' needs has always been the driving force behind all library activities. It is therefore not surprising that libraries all over the world are interested in measuring their customers' satisfaction. Hence, Hernon and Altman (2010) realized that a library that adheres to all the professionally approved rules and procedures for acquiring, organizing, managing, and preserving material but has no customers cannot claim quality because a major element is missing - satisfying people's needs, requests, and desires for information.

From her humble beginning of an inherited building, Bowen University Library is presently a network of libraries comprising three libraries: the main library also known as "Timothy Olagbemi

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Library,” Bowen University Medical Library, and the Law Library. All offering cutting-edge services to their teeming customers. In line with this, in 2007 Bowen University Library automated its services, adopting Koha ILS for better service delivery. In order to remain relevant and keep customers satisfied therefore, Bowen University Library continues to provide good quality services to its customers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Presently, libraries the world over are increasingly reorganizing management and work practices and constantly updating resources and services in order to meet the needs of a wide range of customers. This demonstrates that libraries, like other service providers, are becoming more customer-oriented, customer-driven, and customer-focused. Cozin and Turrini (2008) opined that the focus of the renewal of libraries are the users, evidenced by their opinion about the services provided from the availability of information in various databases to the performance of the professional providing services there.

The urgent need for libraries to give good quality services to customers has led to the automation of some or all library activities. According to Choukhande (2003), “nowhere has the impact of computers been felt greater than in the field of library and information services... libraries are moving further and faster towards total automation and libraries that cannot adjust to these trends will not survive.” With automation, libraries are coming up with different ways to measure customer satisfaction as seen as customer’s perception that the service provider’s performance meets or exceeds the customer’s expectations.

Customer satisfaction is also referred to as user satisfaction or client satisfaction. Applegate (1997) defines it as whether users are satisfied or not with a service or resources in a library. Similarly, Salokun (2007) says it is the extent to which a firm fulfils a customer’s desires and expectations. Automation makes the library system, resources and services more attractive and interactive, while being less complex and tedious thereby helping libraries to meet the users’ expectations. Libraries, the world over serve various customers with varying needs. A successful library will therefore be seen as one that delivers goods and services that consistently satisfy the needs of its users, clients or customers. Thus, the onus lies on the staff of a library to recognize customers’ needs and rise to the occasion to satisfy these needs.

Various libraries periodically conduct customer satisfaction surveys to learn how to improve library services and products and keep customers satisfied. These libraries include Iowa State University Library (Public Services & Collections Division,), Victoria University Library (Parker, Maquignaz & Miller, 2001), Leeds University Library (2012), The Administrative Services Team (AST) of the College Center for Library Automation (CCLA) (Jewell, 2009), Association of Research Libraries (ARL, 2010), Loughborough University Library (Walton & Leahy, 2012) and Auckland University of Technology Library (AUT, 2006). A few libraries in Nigeria have also carried out customer satisfaction surveys, though not periodically, to determine the extent to which users are satisfied with products and service delivery (Ugah, 2007; Adeniran, 2011; Ezeala & Yusuff, 2011; Iwhiwhu, & Okorodudu, 2012; Uganneya, Ape & Ugbagir, 2012; Uganneya, Rematu, Abah & Ape, 2013; Onuoha, Omokoje, & Bamidele, 2013; Onuoha, Ikonne & Madukoma, 2013; Ijiekhuamhen, Patrick, & Omosekejimi, 2015; Adekunjo, Adepoju, & Adeola, 2015; Ekere, Omekwu, & Nwoha, 2016; Tiemo & Ateboh, 2016).

Customer satisfaction surveys help to provide vital information about how customer needs and expectations are being met by library services and resources. Satisfaction surveys also point to areas where the library needs to improve service quality in order to better meet customers’ needs. The areas focused on and the range of indicators in most surveys includes library facilities and equipment, staff, service delivery and quality. Customer satisfaction surveys also help to initiate changes in the provision of library services that affect library users and what they do. They also influence changes in tasks and work habits of library users which in turn will affect the provision of library services. Satisfaction

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