

PATRON'S USE AND SATISFACTION WITH REFERENCE RESOURCES OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF NIGERIA

BY

AGU, E. OYIZA

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF NIGERIA

ABSTRACT

This study examines patrons' use and satisfaction with reference resources of the National Library of Nigeria. Four branches of the National Library of Nigeria were used i.e. Abuja, Kaduna, Bauchi and Niger State Branches respectively. The study aimed at finding out how frequent patrons use the reference resources of the National Library of Nigeria, how frequent patrons' use the reference resources for various purposes and to determine patrons level of satisfaction with the reference resources, find out challenges experienced by patrons in their use of reference resources of National Library of Nigeria. Descriptive survey method was adopted. Population of the study was 500 patrons, the sample size was 500 patrons, the purposive sampling technique was adopted. Questionnaire was used for data collection. Frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation (SD) were used to analyze the data collected. Five hundred copies of questionnaire were administered to the respondents while 434 copies were retrieved from the field. Finding from the study indicates that different types of patrons make use of the reference resources of the National Library of Nigeria with Civil Servants as the highest patrons. The analysis revealed that patrons make frequent use of dictionary, bibliographies and internet/e-resources. Purpose of using the reference resources of the National Library of Nigeria were to obtain information for implementation of government policies for solving assignments, news and for self-development.

Patrons' level of satisfaction with reference resources was low. Challenges experienced by patrons in their use of reference resources in the National Library of Nigeria include obsolescence of the resources, inadequacy of the resources, mutilated contents of the resources and poor state of ICT. Based on the findings, some of the recommendation includes: Acquisition of current and relevant reference resources, provision of ICT facilities and automation of the reference section of the National Library of Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

The National Library of Nigeria, was established in 1964 and charged with the responsibility of providing library services to the public, such being provided by national libraries of the highest standing in the world. National library of Nigeria is the apex library in the country it was established by Act No. 29 of 1970. Presently, it has twenty-six branches in the country. The objective of the National Library of Nigeria (NLN) are enshrined in the Act establishing it, and are encapsulated as follows:

- 1) To provide the necessary support for intellectual efforts directed towards progress and development, which means that they help in the overall development of the social being and provide information freely to its patrons.
- 2) Ensuring the availability of a comprehensive collection of recorded materials and guaranteeing full access to such treasury both within and outside the nation's boundaries; the national library provide materials which communicate experience and ideas from one person to another and make them easily and freely available to everybody.
- 3) To be responsible for the compilation of National Bibliography of Nigeria (NBN) and other National Bibliographical services. Generating free flow of information between this nation and others, thereby ensuring Nigerians' participation in the community of nations that depends on information for survival in a world of rapid development and competition of ideas. Access to relevant and up-to-date information is believed to be crucial to economic and social development as information is now a vital national resource. As a healthy and prosperous community cannot survive without an adequate supply of clean water, so, too modern economy and society cannot function without a reliable flow of quality information (Olanlokun & Salisu, 1993).
- 4) Hold and keep up-to-date a large and representative collection of foreign literature including book about the country. The national library of Nigeria plays this dominant role by keeping special reserved collection of rare books and authors' original manuscripts or works (The world book encyclopedia, 2010).

The functions of the National Library of Nigeria (NLN) as captured in the National Library of Nigeria Act No. 29 of 1970 are as follows:

- 1) To assemble, maintain and extend a collection of books, periodicals, pamphlets, newspapers, maps, musical score, films and recordings as appropriate for a library of the highest standing.
- 2) To establish and maintain a branch of the National Library of Nigeria in each state of the federation.
- 3) To make facilities of the National Library of Nigeria available to members of the public on proper terms.

- 4) To be responsible for the compilation and publication of National Bibliography of Nigeria (NBN).
- 5) To serve as the legal depository centre for all copies of publications emanating from this country. In pursuance of this, the National Library of Nigeria is empowered to collect specific number of copies of all published works in Nigeria – 25 copies for all Federal Government publications; 10 copies of State Government publications and 3 copies of private publications.
- 6) To serve as the international Standard Book Number (ISBN) and International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) agency.
- 7) To make recommendations and give advice on library development or organization to any department or agency of government of the federation or a state or to any local government authority. In addition, library resources and services should be sufficient in quality, depth diversity, and currency to support the nation's informational needs.

As a result of this, National Library is often considered the most important resource center or depository of a country. The National Library of Nigeria exists to satisfy patrons. In this context patrons use and satisfaction refers to how users judge the services of National Library.

The question to be answered is whether patrons of National Library get the right information needed. Evaluating patrons' use and satisfaction with the reference resources has become a major concern in an integral part of library and information science practitioners (Ogunsola, 2004). This is because the ultimate aim of all libraries as service oriented organization is to satisfy the needs of their patrons. This patrons satisfaction with the information resources provided by libraries be it National, Public or Academic libraries has become necessary to present day librarianship and information science (Saliu, 2002).

Reference resources are materials which contain several entries arranged alphabetically or chronologically or in classified, regional or tabular order. The resources are usually in closed access (they are consulted within the library). There are thousands of reference resources available that cover practically every subject. Reference resources can be books, serials, on-line databases or the internet. Reference source include dictionaries, encyclopedias, biographies, guides, manuals geographical sources (maps, atlases, gazetters, etc.) (Adomi, 2008).

According to Whitmire (2002), library resources are considered a good measure of an institution's excellence and quality. Iyero (2004) in his study identified

accessibility as one of the pre-requisites of information use. Ugah (2007) opined that the more accessible information resource are, the more likely they are to be used and readers tend to use information sources that require the least effort to access. Satisfaction is generally defined as fulfillment of one's wish, expectation or needs (Oxford dictionary, 2010). Tessier, Cruch and Atherton (1977) stated that satisfaction is ultimately a state experienced inside the patrons head and therefore it is a response that may be both intellectual and emotional. Simmonds and Andaleeb (2001) stated several factors that can influence patrons' satisfaction. These factors include responsiveness, competence and assurance, tangible and resources.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

From the researcher's personal observation as staff of the National Library of Nigeria, many patrons visit the National Library of Nigeria to explore the reference resources. These patrons come to the library and leave without being satisfied. The problem is that it is hardly known by many people how the reference resources of the National Library of Nigeria meet the needs of patrons in terms of which reference resource the patrons use; whether they are satisfied with the resources; their purpose of using the reference resources as well as their challenges to the use of the resources. This problem has remained because there is hardly any empirical study on patron's use and satisfaction in the National Library of Nigeria. Therefore, this study was conducted to explore patrons' use and satisfaction with reference resources of the National Library of Nigeria.

The objective of this study is to:

- 1) Find out how frequently patrons use the reference resources of the library;
- 2) investigate how frequently patrons use the reference resource of the library for various purposes;
- 3) Find out the patrons level of satisfaction with reference resources of the library; and
- 4) Explore the challenges experienced by patrons with the use of reference resources.

Based on the objectives outlined above the following research questions have been formulated to guide this study.

- 1) How frequent do the patrons use the reference resources of the National Library of Nigeria?
- 2) How frequent do the patrons use the reference resources for various purposes?
- 3) What is the patron's level of satisfaction with the reference resources of the library?

- 4) What are the challenges experienced by patrons with the use of reference resources of the library?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reference resources such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, almanacs, atlases etc. are research tools that can help patrons with their project. Reference resources provide answers to specific questions, such as brief facts, statistics, and technical instructions; provide background information or direct patron to additional information resources.

In most libraries, reference resource does not circulate and are located in a separate reference collection. Collins, Diane and Bobbie (1994) added that this practice makes reference resources readily available and easily accessible. Reference resources are designed to be consulted rather than read through.

Two major categories of reference resources are general and subject. General resources include all subject overviews of topics. Reference resources focused on specific subjects can provide more in-depth coverage. There are reference resources that provide information on specific subjects as well as general sources that provide information on many subjects. If you need an overview of a subject, perhaps a general information source will suit your needs. If you need specialized information, a subject specific tool may be better suited. The following are some types of reference resources (Bolner & Gayle, 2001).

- 1) Dictionaries: Provide information about words.
 - a) General dictionaries (b) Historical dictionaries (c) Etymological dictionaries (d) Period or Scholarly specialized dictionaries (e) Foreign language dictionaries (f) Subject dictionaries (g) other dictionaries.
- 2) Encyclopedias: Provide general background information; they are a good place to start researching a topic that you know little about, it is classified under two types (a) general encyclopedias and (b) subject encyclopedias.
- 3) Directories: Provide name, addresses, affiliations, etc of people, organizations or institutions.

Directories are classified under two types (a) general directories and (b) Subject directories.

- 4) Biographical Dictionaries: Contain short articles about people's lives.
 - A) General Biographical dictionaries and (b) subject biographical dictionaries.
- 5) Atlases: They provide information on geographical/political changes.
 - (a) World Atlases (b) National atlases (c) Thematic Atlases.

- 6) Gazetteers: Are sometimes referred to as geographical dictionaries and provide descriptions of places, but no maps. (a) General gazetteers (b) Regional Gazetteers.
- 7) Almanacs (a) General almanacs (b) Subject almanacs.
- 8) Handbooks/manuals: Handbooks provide facts, terms, concepts, movement, etc of a topic, while manuals provide detailed instructions on a particular subject, such as how-to-do something or how something works.
- 9) Review & criticism source: These tools provide reviews or critiques of a person's work. There are (a) general and (b) subject review & criticism sources.
- 10) Historical tables, chronologies, Historical yearbooks.
 - (a) Historical tables provide facts chronologically in columns with each column representing another geographical area.
 - (b) Chronologies use narrative form to present facts.
 - (c) Historical yearbooks provide facts and statistics for a single year and may be published annually.
- (11) Indexes & Abstract: leads to additional sources of periodical articles. Indexes only provide author, title and subject information. Abstracts tend to be more descriptive. There are (a) general and (b) subject indexes & Abstract.
- 12) Bibliographies: leads to other information sources. They are lists of books and other materials that provide author, title and publication information.

Afebende and Ebaye (2008) noted that the effectiveness of a library does not depend on only its collection and other facilities parse, but also on the success of its exploitation and use. While the librarian is concerned with collection and organization of information materials, he also has the responsibility of creating awareness so that users can take full advantage of the acquired materials. The works of (Okiy, 2000) assessed use of the library's reference resources and found that users use the reference materials mainly for classroom and research works.

The findings of Israel (2011) revealed that very few users visit the library for general reading or leisure. On the kind of materials used in the library, the study revealed that most users make use of text books. The findings further revealed lack of awareness of library reference materials as the greatest problem militating against user's use of the library. This could be responsible for the non-daily use of

the library as Terma and Vakkan (2004) averred that knowledge and awareness of available reference resource in a library is a high prediction of a library's frequency, exploitation and use.

Libraries are service oriented organizations established for the provision of relevant information resources to meet their information needs (Adeniran, 2011). Stressing the importance of reference resources in the library, Ologbonsaiye (1994) stated that the criteria for measuring patrons satisfaction should include patrons satisfaction with services rendered, the quality of a library's collections and availability of materials and accessibility to users. Before a library could be adjudged to be effective, it must meet the information, research, recreational and educational needs of the patrons.

(Clarke, 1997). Selection of library materials must be a joint effort by the librarians and the patrons if a balanced collection must be achieved. Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) supporting this view noted that the librarians are expected to collaborate with the users in building up the library collections and is stimulating the patrons interest to effective library use. Uwem (2003) noted that the acquisition of information resources would be a waste of funds if the resources are not consulted by Patrons. From acquisition to processing and organization, the critical consideration is in meeting users' needs.

It is not necessary to argue with patrons at points of service provision in the library. Uwem noted that if the libraries exist to serve the information needs of patrons, the only logical starting point in addressing those needs, is proper diagnosis. A good understanding of patrons need is important to both the library and the actual potentials patrons. The following reasons were given why patrons need should be thoroughly understood (Uwem, 2003).

- a) To enable the library concentrate scarce funds in the acquisition of need based resources.
- b) To organize the resources according to the subject profile of the users.
- c) Prompt provision of what is needed for what is wanted.
- d) Right information delivery to the right person.
- e) Easy retrieval of information because the library system has been designed from the standpoint of the patrons.

A survey analyzed by Sivathaasan (2013) revealed that 11.1% of patron satisfaction

is determined by library collections such as reference collections, lending collections, periodicals and electronic resources. Edem, Ani and Odiebi (2009) examines patterns of use in libraries in Nigeria by analyzing user records and data, which show low use of the library due to lack of awareness. The author recommends library reference and instruction, publication of users' guides, and teaching library use in the general studies programme. Oyesiku and Oduwale (2004) focused on academic library use. The investigation reveals that the students used the library mostly during examinations and to do class assignments. The study further revealed that reference collections were inadequate to meet patron's demands. The study recommends acquisition of current reference materials and proper organization of such materials for effective information retrieval.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey design was used to collect the data for this study. This design enabled the researcher to explore the current status of patrons' use and satisfaction with reference resources of the National Library of Nigeria in four branches and did not involve manipulation of variable. The population of the study is five hundred (500) patrons, which consisted of all the patrons who came to make use of the library in the four state branches. The branches include Abuja, Kaduna, Bauchi and Niger. The sample size of the study is five hundred (500) patrons. The researcher adopted the purposive sampling technique which involved the researcher deciding to choose or use persons as research participants. This might be due to her experience in relation to the research nature (Mcmillan & Wergin, 2002). The use of the entire population conforms with the view of Egbule and Okobia (2001) which states that the entire population can be studied when the population is not large.

The instrument used for data collection was the questionnaire. The questionnaire was tagged "Patrons use and satisfaction with reference resources questionnaire (PUSRRQ)" The questionnaire is divided into five main sections. Section A: contains items on demographic characteristics of the users; section B: focuses on reference resources used by the patrons of National Library of Nigeria; section C: centers on the purposes for using references resources; section D: determines patrons level of satisfaction with reference resources; section E: Examines challenges experienced with the use of reference resources of National Library of Nigeria. Items in section A contains open and closed ended questions; while section B – E are designed in the liker-type scale and are scored on a sale of 1-5.

The split half method was applied. A correlation coefficient of 0.82 was obtained

which shows very high internal consistency and reliability of the scale. This was done with the aid of statistical package for social science version 16.0. Being that the instrument was split into two, it was later stepped up using Spearman Brown Prophecy formula and it yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.90.

The data were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages for the demographic data of the respondents; frequency counts, percentages, means and standard deviation was used to analyzed data to answer the research questions. This was because of the descriptive nature of the data. Person product moment correlation was used to test the hypothesis because it helped to determine the extent to which two variables are related.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 Questionnaire Response Rate

National Library Branch	Number of Questionnaire Distributed	Number of Questionnaire Returned	% Returned
FCT Branch	200	166	83
Kaduna Branch	100	92	92
Bauchi Branch	100	85	85
Niger Branch	100	91	91
Total	500	434	87

Table 1 shows the total copies of the questionnaire distributed and retrieved with the associated rate. In FCT branch, a total of 200 copies of questionnaire were distributed of which 166 (83%) copies were retrieved. Also, 100 copies of the questionnaire were administered to respondents in Kaduna branch, out of which 92 (92%) copies were retrieved. In Bauchi branch, a total of 100 copies of questionnaire were administered 85 (85%) copies were retrieved. In Niger branch, a total of 100 copies of questionnaire were administered of which 91 (91%) were retrieved. In all, 500 copies of questionnaire were administered and 434

copies were retrieved. The overall responses rate of 87% is considered adequate for the study because the acceptable responses rate of most studies is 60% (Dulle, Minish-Majanja & Clode, 2010).

Analysis of Bio-data of Respondents.

Table 2 Gender of respondents.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	268	61.8
Female	166	38.2
Total	434	100

As shown in Table 2, a total of 268 (61.8%) respondents were males while 166 (38.2%) were females. This reveals that there are more males than their female counter parts who participated in this study.

Table 3: Age of the respondents

Age range (Years)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 20	34	7.8
21 – 25	71	16.4
26 – 30	98	22.6
31 – 35	98	22.6
36 – 40	47	10.8
Above 41	86	19.8
Total	434	100

Table 3 revealed that majority that is 98 (22.6%) of the respondents were between the ages of 26– 30 and 31– 35 years respectively.

Table 4: Qualification of the respondents

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
GCE/SSCE	55	12.7
'A' Level/NCE/ND	86	19.8
HND	88	20.3
B.A./B.Sc/B.Ed	112	25.8
PGD/MA/M.Sc	74	17.1
Ph.D	19	4.3
Total	434	100

As shown in Table 4 majority that is 112 (25.8%) of the respondents indicated BA/B.Sc/B.Ed.

Table 5: Occupation of the respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Students	105	24.4
Teachers	48	11.1
Trader-Business	71	16.4
Civil Servants	163	37.6
Others	46	10.5
Total	434	100

Table 5 showed that majority 163 (37.6%) of the respondents were civil servants and 105 (24.4%) were students.

Answering the Research Questions

Research Question One: How frequent do the patrons use the reference resources of the National Library of Nigeria by Patrons.

	X (Mean)	SD
Dictionaries	3.24	1.16
Encyclopedias	2.59	1.21
Directories	2.44	1.32
Bibliographies	2.12	1.17
Almanacs	2.23	1.12
Gazetteers	2.30	1.09
Atlases	2.14	1.06
Biographies	2.13	1.05
Maps and Charts	2.48	1.10
Internet/e-resource	3.54	1.19
TOTAL	2.62	1.15

Criteria mean= 3.00

Table 6 shows that patrons sometimes make use of the reference resources of the National Library of Nigeria. This is because the calculated mean of 2.62 is less than the criterion mean of 3.00; this implies that patrons of National Library of Nigeria sometimes make use of the reference resources. However, they often use internet/e-resources ($X=3.54$), dictionaries ($X=3.24$) and internet/e-resources ($X=3.12$). This finding is in line with the findings of Belner and Gayle (2001) who found that most of the library users makes use of dictionaries than any other resources especially as it is used to check meaning of difficult words patrons come across. Nasji, Baharudon Romsil and Fadzil (2011), found that internet resources and bibliographies are the most widely used reference resources by patrons.

Research Question Two: How frequent do the patrons use the reference resources for various purposes in the National Library of Nigeria?

Table 7: Frequency of using reference resources of the National Library of Nigeria for various purposes.

Purpose	X(mean)	Standard deviation (SD)
Obtain information for implementation of government policies	3.22	1.17
Research	2.86	1.09
Prepare for examination	2.68	1.16
Solving assignments	3.25	1.21
Self development	3.25	1.19
Complementing my lecture notes	2.67	1.08
News	3.56	1.12
Updating myself	2.83	1.09
Entertainment	2.76	1.13
Confirming facts	2.38	1.01
TOTAL	2.94	1.13

Table 7: shows the calculated mean of 2.94 was obtained which is less than the criterion mean of 3.00, this implies that the patrons of National Library of Nigeria sometimes make use of the reference resources for various purposes. However, they often make use of the reference resources for news ($X=3.56$), for solving assignments ($X=3.25$), for self development ($X=3.25$) and to obtain information for implementation of government policies ($X=3.22$). Since the mean score is 3.56 and above is higher than the finding conform to the finding of Nwosu (2007) found that most of the users of the National Library are satisfied with the reference resources they use.

Research Question Four: What are the challenges experienced by patrons with the use of reference resources of the National Library of Nigeria?

This research question is answered by the analyzed data in Table 9.

Table 9: Challenges experienced by patrons with the use of reference resources of the National Library of Nigeria.

Resources	X(Mean)	SD
Inability to locate needed resources	2.67	1.12
Obsolescence of the resources	3.11	1.22
Inadequacy of the resources	3.21	1.18
Mutilated contents of the resources	3.30	1.18
Electricity power failure	2.38	1.07
Poor state of information and communication	3.17	1.18
Unorganized resources on the shelves	2.54	1.13
TOTAL	2.91	1.15

As Table 9 has shown, the calculated mean of 2.91 was obtained which is less than the criterion mean of 3.00; this implies that patrons of National Library of Nigeria experienced various challenges, which varies from mutilated contents of the resources ($x=3.30$), inadequacy of the resources ($X=3.21$), poor state of information and communication technology in the library ($x=3.17$) and obsolescence of the resources ($x=3.11$). This finding matches with the opinions of Adoni (2008) and Halsey (2005) who pointed out that poor state of ICTs in the library, obsolescence of reference resources and inadequacy of the resources

amongst others are the challenges hampering effective use of reference resources in National Library.

CONCLUSION

The study indicated that the patrons of the National Library of Nigeria frequently use dictionaries, bibliographies and internet/e-resources as reference resources. The purposes of patrons using reference resources of the National Library of Nigeria were to obtain information for implementation of government policies, solving assignment, self development and for news.

Patrons were satisfied with reference resources like dictionaries, encyclopedias, almanacs and atlases. The challenges experienced by patrons in their use of reference resources include obsolescence of the resources, poor state of information and communication technology in the library and inadequacy of the resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the findings of this study the following recommendation are made:

- 1) The management of the National Library of Nigeria should provide relevant reference resources to boost its services to patrons of the National Library of Nigeria.
- 2) Adequate library resources should be made available to support the intellectual cultural and technical development of the nation.
- 3) Providing up to date reference resources in the National Library of Nigeria to meet information need of patrons.
- 4) Information and communication technology facilities should be up-graded (for effective and efficient service delivery).

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