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# LIBRARY INFORMATION SERVICES AND STUDENTS' SATISFACTION WITH THE USE OF DONALD EKONG LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT, NIGERIA

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## Abstract

This study examines the relationship between library information services and student satisfaction at the University of Port Harcourt's Donald Ekong Library. Guided by two research questions and two null hypotheses, the correlational research design investigated the relationships between internet services, current-awareness services, and student satisfaction. A sample of 181 Library and Information Science students was selected using stratified random sampling from a population of 258. Data collected via questionnaire were analyzed using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC). Findings revealed significant positive relationships between internet services and current-awareness services with student satisfaction. The study recommends effective internet service provision and periodic staff training for current-awareness services to enhance user satisfaction.

## Introduction

Library information services play a crucial role in meeting users' information needs and achieving Library information services remain the cornerstone of academic excellence in higher education institutions worldwide. In the knowledge driven 21st century, university libraries have evolved beyond mere repositories of books into dynamic information hubs that drive teaching, learning, and research. The effectiveness of these services directly determines the extent to which libraries fulfill their primary mandate of meeting users' information needs and achieving institutional goals. A library service can therefore be conceptualized as the totality of resources, facilities, expertise,

and support systems provided by a library to its users, with the overarching goal of facilitating unrestricted access to information, knowledge, and education for academic and personal development.

Contemporary university libraries offer a wide spectrum of services designed to cater to the diverse and evolving requirements of their user communities. These services include, but are not limited to, internet and digital services, current-awareness services (CAS), reference services, circulation services, opening hour services, reprographic services, selective dissemination of information (SDI), and user education or guide services. Each of these services plays a strategic role in shaping the information-seeking behavior and overall academic experience of library patrons. Library patrons themselves represent a heterogeneous group comprising undergraduate students, postgraduate students, academic staff, non-academic staff, and external researchers, all of whom seek to utilize library resources to satisfy specific information needs. In library and information science literature, the term "library users" is often used interchangeably with patrons, clients, information users, information seekers, consumers, and readers.

Among the array of services provided, internet services have become indispensable in modern academic libraries. The integration of internet facilities enables users to access electronic databases, e-journals, e-books, online public access catalogues (OPAC), institutional repositories, and other digital resources that transcend the physical limitations of traditional collections. When internet services are reliable, fast, and accessible, they significantly enhance research productivity, assignment completion, and general academic performance. Osinulu and Akintola (2022) confirmed that system quality, service quality and information quality of e-library services significantly predicted students' level of use and satisfaction. Conversely, slow connectivity, inadequate bandwidth, frequent downtime, or insufficient computer terminals can frustrate users and diminish their perception of library effectiveness. Nature Research Intelligence (2024) emphasized that the quality of library services is intrinsically linked to users' satisfaction, with factors such as responsiveness, reliability, and the physical environment playing pivotal roles.

Equally critical is the provision of current-awareness services (CAS), which involve the systematic dissemination of information about new acquisitions, recent publications, and developments in specific subject areas to keep users abreast of current trends. Tools such as library bulletins, new arrival displays, email alerts, social media updates, and selective dissemination of information help

users save time and remain updated in their fields of study. The University of North Carolina Libraries (2024) note that Current awareness tools, including email alerts, RSS feeds, and academic social networking sites, can help you stay up-to-date on new research. Effective CAS fosters a proactive information culture and increases the relevance of the library to its users. When CAS is inefficient, delayed, or non-existent, students may remain unaware of valuable resources already available, leading to underutilization of library holdings.

Other services such as opening hour services and guide services also influence user satisfaction. Opening hours determine the extent of physical access students have to the library space and its resources. Libraries with restrictive hours may not accommodate students with evening classes or those who prefer night study, thereby limiting access. Global practice reflects this need, as University College London (2023) provides 24 hour access in three library sites during the assessment period to support students. Guide services, including user education, library orientation, directional signage, and assistance from library staff, are essential for helping new and returning users navigate complex information systems and locate resources independently. Poor guide services often result in library anxiety, confusion, and reduced frequency of library use.

The ultimate measure of effectiveness for any of these services is user satisfaction. Onwuekwe (2022) defines user satisfaction as the fulfillment of users' wishes, expectations, and needs. In the context of academic libraries, it involves meeting the heart's desire of students using library resources for study, research, and leisure. User satisfaction is a multidimensional construct influenced by service quality, availability of resources, staff attitude, environmental factors, and technological infrastructure. Galagala (2024) concluded that student satisfaction is essential for developing an engaging and active library environment that promotes usage and shapes a favorable view of the institution. When internet services are well-provided and current-awareness services are efficiently delivered, there is a higher probability that library patrons' satisfaction levels will increase, leading to greater patronage, improved academic outcomes, and positive perception of the library's value.

The University of Port Harcourt, established in 1975 as a second-generation university in Nigeria, exemplifies the critical role of academic libraries in supporting higher education. At the heart of the university's academic structure is the Donald E. U. Ekong Library, which began operations in September 1976. Named after the university's first Vice-Chancellor, the library serves a diverse

population of over 40,000 students and staff across multiple faculties. The library's mandate includes supporting teaching, learning, and research through the provision of information resources and services. In a significant development, the University Senate in 2014 approved the establishment of the Department of Library and Information Science and allocated office space for the department on the ground floor of the Donald E.U. Ekong Library (University of Port Harcourt, 2023). This underscores the university's commitment to advancing library education and practice.

Despite these investments, empirical observations and preliminary reports suggest that many university libraries in Nigeria, including Donald Ekong Library, face challenges that affect students' satisfaction. Nature Research Intelligence (2024) reported statistically significant gaps between perceived and expected services across all dimensions, with expectations being substantially higher for digital and technology-based services, including e-books, digital lending and virtual reference platforms. Chief among these are ineffective internet services characterized by slow speed, unstable connectivity, and inadequate access points, as well as inefficient current-awareness services that fail to promptly notify users of new resources. Additional concerns relate to limited opening hours that do not favor all categories of students and inadequate guide services that leave many users unable to fully exploit available resources. These service gaps create a disconnect between library provisions and user expectations, potentially leading to low patronage, preference for alternative information sources, and diminished academic performance.

Given the strategic importance of the Donald E. U. Ekong Library to the academic community of the University of Port Harcourt, there is a pressing need to empirically examine the interplay between library information services and students' satisfaction. This study therefore aims to investigate the relationship between specific library information services: namely internet services, current-awareness services, and students' satisfaction with the use of Donald Ekong Library, University of Port Harcourt. The findings are expected to provide evidence-based insights that will help library management improve service delivery, allocate resources effectively, and ultimately promote higher levels of library users' satisfaction. Understanding these relationships is crucial not only for the Donald E. U. Ekong Library but also for other academic libraries seeking to remain relevant in the digital age.

## Statement of the Problem

The library remains the core of every institution of higher learning, focusing on meeting users' information needs. Effective internet services and current awareness services are crucial in enhancing students' satisfaction levels. Despite efforts to improve services, Nigerian universities face challenges in library information services. These challenges include ineffective internet services and inefficient current-awareness services, as observed through personal interactions with librarians and literature reviews. This study aims to investigate library information services and students' satisfaction with the use of Donald Ekong Library, University of Port Harcourt.

## Aims and Objectives

This study is to find out the relationship between the library information services and students satisfaction with the use of Donald Ekong library, university of Port Harcourt. The specific objectives are to:

1. Ascertain the relationship between internet services and students satisfaction with the use of Donald Ekong library, University of Port Harcourt.
2. Identify the relationship between the current-awareness services and students satisfaction with the use of Donald Ekong library, University of Port Harcourt.

## Research Questions

The following questions were provided to guide this study

1. What is the relationship between internet services and students satisfaction with the use of Donald Ekong library, University of Port Harcourt?
2. What is the relationship between the current-awareness services and students satisfaction with the use of Donald Ekong library, University of Port Harcourt?

## Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

1. There is no significant relationship between internet services and students satisfaction with the use of Donald Ekong library, University of Port Harcourt.

2. There is no significant relationship between the current-awareness services and students satisfaction with the use of Donald Ekong library, University of Port Harcourt.

**Review of Related Literature**

Tella (2021) maintain that library services are services provided by the library to the users. This includes instruction on how to access and use library materials. The Library services include: Internet services, Current Awareness Service, Inter Library Loan Service, Photocopying/Printing Service, Orientation and Information service, Selective Dissemination of Information service, Audio Visual Service and Multimedia service. All these services aimed toward meeting the users information needs. Internet Services means that part of the data and internet services which is accessible via the public internet. This includes internet access, email facilities, web-page facilities and any other related internet facility. In line with the above, Internet services in libraries refer to the use of internet technology to provide access to information resources and services, enhancing user experience and operational efficiency. Faga and Obaje (2024) maintained that the internet affords librarians many opportunities to enhance reference services, including online reference tools, specialized indexes, directories, dictionaries, and more.

Important aspects of Internet Services in Libraries include: Access to Digital Resources - Libraries offer e-books, academic journals, and databases, accessible remotely; Online Catalogs - Users can search and access library materials through Online Public Access Catalogs (OPACs); Virtual Reference Services - Librarians provide assistance through email, chat, or video conferencing; Digital Literacy - Libraries promote information literacy and digital skills training; Remote Access -Users can access resources and services from anywhere, anytime.

In recent times, with the introduction of Artificial Intelligence (AI), internet services have played a very important role in promoting discovery for easy accessibility of information by users. As noted by Hussain (2023), the integration of AI in libraries has the potential to transform the way libraries operate and provide services to users. AI internet service in libraries refers to the use of artificial intelligence technologies to enhance and automate library services, improving user experience and operational efficiency. According to Cox and Mazumdar (2023), AI in libraries involves the application of AI techniques, such as natural language processing, machine learning, and data analytics, to support library operations. Okai-Akchien and Ode (2023) maintained that academic libraries are now providing services tailored to meet the needs of distance learners,

including online access to library resources, virtual reference services, and document delivery. This provision has made it easy for library users to access information resources through online and internet services. This means that internet services help to provide timely and up-to-date information to users. Internet service in libraries is plagued by several issues. According to Ledwaba et al., (2020), some of the major problems include: Insufficient Bandwidth Capacity - Many libraries, especially those in rural areas, struggle with inadequate bandwidth, making it difficult for users to access the internet; High Costs - Internet access is often expensive, and libraries may not have the budget to provide reliable and fast connections; Lack of Technical Expertise - Libraries often lack the technical staff needed to maintain and repair internet infrastructure; Inadequate Infrastructure - Outdated or insufficient infrastructure can hinder internet access and speed; Power Outages - Unreliable power supply can disrupt internet services.

In line with the above, Aghauchem et al., (2018) study revealed that challenges such as lack of awareness of available web-based services, lack of fund and high cost of Internet services among others were confronting the use of web-based services in the library. These problems go a long way in affecting the internet services provided by the library to its users, thereby reducing user satisfaction.

Current awareness service according to Resource Centre Manual (2023) is a way of letting users know about materials that have been newly received in the resource centre. Current awareness services include: A current awareness bulletins; selective dissemination of information; circulating documents; displaying newly acquired materials and using noticeboards. According to the Library and Information Academy (2025), Current Awareness Service (CAS) in libraries refers to a specialized service designed to keep patrons informed about the latest developments, publications, and resources within specific areas of interest. As noted by Hamilton (2025), Current Awareness Service is a service that provides recipients with information on the latest developments within their subject areas of interest or need to know. The important characteristics of Current Awareness Services include: Speed ensures users receive the latest information promptly; Currency - Focuses on up-to-date materials; Broad Coverage - Includes academic papers, books, journals, news articles, and more. According to Tanzin and Atikuzzaman (2024), Current Awareness Services (CAS) are essential for supporting academic and professional needs, facilitating research, and promoting quality learning.

In recent times, current awareness services have been improved with the introduction of artificial intelligence (AI). According to Lankes, Orr, and Cao (2025), AI's power lies in its ability to analyze vast amounts of data, learn from experience, and perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, often with greater accuracy, speed, and efficiency. Cabonero, et al., (2019) Stated in their study that problems of Current Awareness Service in terms of materials posted in the bulletin board, that the texts of the items posted were not readable, lack of information posted, late in posting updates, and the attractiveness and neatness of the bulletin board, and for the library publications.

They mentioned that there were no flyers and handbooks distributed, sometimes the list of the new materials in the library are not disseminated on time, lack of materials in the library, publications were available but not in their proper location, and lastly, the users were not aware of the said service. Kpakiko et al., (2018) findings reveals that, list of new arrivals, shelve display, library bulletin, newspaper and email and bulletin board services were the most available current awareness services in the library and mostly used. They maintain that, Awareness Service needs more publicity and awareness therefore email and mobile SMS services should be introduced that will distribute current information to library users timely. For current awareness services to be effective, there must be prompt dissemination of information, and information supply must be clear and readable.

Tiemo and Ateboh (2016 in Leal and Magdaluyo, 2024) ) maintain that users' satisfaction could be considered as the satisfaction users derive from the library by using the various types of information resources and services to fulfil their information needs for their various daily activities. Ikenwe and Adegbilero-Iwari (2014) view library user satisfaction as how users feel after using the information resources and services and their willingness to return to the library when next they need information. Ijiekhuamhen et al., (2015) Opines that, the level of using the library depends on users' satisfaction with the available information resources and services rendered to them. User satisfaction occur when they meet their expected needs.

**Methodology**

The study adopted the correlational research design. The population of the study comprises 258 students of department of library and Information Science University of Port Harcourt. Sample size of 181 students was selected using stratified random sample techniques.160 out of 181

questionnaires administered were successfully filled by the respondents and returned. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Data collected were analysed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlations (PPMC) whereas the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The statistical package for social science (SSPSS) was used to determine the accuracy of the analysis. A decision rule was taken for Pearson Product Moment Correlation as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| ± 0.00-0.20. | Weak relationship |
| ± 0.21-0.40. | Moderate relationship |
| ± 0.41-0.60. | Strong relationship |
| ± 0.61-0.80. | Very strong relationship |
| ± 0.81-1.00 | Perfect relationship |

**Demographic Characteristics of Respondents:**

**Analysis of Demography**

**Table 1: Gender of the Respondents**

| Items | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Male | 104 | 65 |
| Female | 56 | 35 |
| Cumulated | 160 | 100 |

Table 1 revealed that 104(65%) of the respondents are male while 56(35%) are female. This means that majority of the students under study were male.

**Test of hypotheses**

**Hypothesis one:** There is no significant relationship between the internet services and students satisfaction with the use of Donald Ekong library, University of Port Harcourt.

**Table 2:** Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation between the internet services and students satisfaction with the use of Donald Ekong library, University of Port Harcourt.

**Correlations**

| Items | | Internet Services | Students Satisfaction |
|---|---|---|---|
| Internet Services | Pearson Correlation | 1 | 0.984 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .00001 |
| | N | 160 | 160 |
| Students Satisfaction | Pearson Correlation | 0.984 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .00001 | |
| | N | 160 | 160 |

**. The result is significant at P< .05 (2-tailed).

The results from table 2 above indicates the summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation between the internet services and student satisfaction. It indicates that joint relationship between the internet service and student satisfaction has a correlation coefficient of r = 0.984 which indicates a high positive relationship, and it is statistically significant at 0.05 alpha level (r = 0.984, p = 0.0001 < 0.05). Thus, the null hypothesis which was earlier stated that there is no significant relationship between the circulation service and student satisfaction was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between the internet service and students satisfaction with the use of Donald Ekong library, University of Port Harcourt.

**Hypothesis two:** There is no significant relationship between the current-awareness services and students satisfaction with the use of Donald Ekong library, University of Port Harcourt.

**Table 3:** Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation between the current-awareness services and students satisfaction with the use of Donald Ekong library, University of Port Harcourt.

**Correlations**

| Items | | Current-awareness Services | Students Satisfaction |
|---|---|---|---|
| Current-awareness services | Pearson Correlation | 1 | 0.9473 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .00001 |
| | N | 160 | 160 |
| Students Satisfaction | Pearson Correlation | 0.9473 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .00001 | |
| | N | 160 | 160 |

**. The result is significant at P< .05 (2-tailed).

The results from table 3 above indicates the summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation between the current-awareness services and student satisfaction. It indicates that joint relationship between the current-awareness services and student satisfaction has a correlation coefficient of r

= 0.9473 which indicates a high positive relationship, and it is statistically significant at 0.05 alpha level ($r = 0.9473$, $p = 0.0001 < 0.05$). Thus, the null hypothesis which was earlier stated that there is no significant relationship between the circulation service and student satisfaction was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between the current-awareness service and students satisfaction with the use of Donald Ekong library, University of Port Harcourt.

**Discussion of Findings**

The result of hypothesis one indicates that there is a significant relationship between internet service and student satisfaction. In line with this study, the work of Okai-Akchien and Ode (2023) pointed out that services provided by the library to online students include online access to library resources, virtual reference services, and document delivery. These services are geared towards satisfying the information needs of the users. Provision of internet service is very essential for the survival of libraries in this modern era. Libraries with effective delivery of internet services will attract massive user attention and patronage.

The result of hypothesis two indicates that there is a significant relationship between the current-awareness service and students' satisfaction. In line with this study, the work of Kpakiko, Suleiman and Abubakar (2018) reveals that, list of new arrivals, shelve display, library bulletin, newspaper, email and bulletin board services were the most available current awareness services in the library and mostly used. Current awareness service according to Resource Centre Manual (2023) is a way of letting users know about materials that have been newly received in the resource Centre. Current awareness services play an important role in informing the users about materials that have been newly received in the library. The services of informing the users of new arrival of information resources in the library enhances their satisfaction.

**Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study the following conclusions were reached. There is significant relationship between the internet services and students' satisfaction with the use of Donald Ekong library, university of Port Harcourt, therefore adequate computer system and functioning internet service is needed, if the users' satisfaction is aimed at. There is significant relationship between the current-awareness services and students' satisfaction with the use of Donald Ekong library, university of Port Harcourt, therefore, more attention is needed to satisfy the users through current-

awareness. Therefore, internet services and current-awareness services had relationship with students' satisfaction with use of academic library.

**Recommendations**

The following recommendations were proffered based on the findings;

1. Since the study revealed that there is significant relationship between the internet services and students satisfaction, it is therefore recommended that university management ensure effective internet service provision to enhance user satisfaction.
2. Since the study revealed that there is significant relationship between the current-awareness services and students' satisfaction, it is therefore recommended that library management provide periodic staff training for efficient current-awareness services, promoting sustainable user satisfaction.

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