# Users' Knowledge and Use of Library Services: A Case Study of Bowen University Library

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**ABSTRACT**

The need to understand users level of knowledge and use of various library services is very important; issues of library resources has been much researched compared to library services. The research employs descriptive survey research method and a self-developed questionnaire (UKAUS) was administered to 450 students of 200-500 level of Bowen University across three departments in different faculties. The data was analysed using descriptive analysis: mean, percentages, regression and spearman correlation. The findings showed that the students have a good knowledge of the library services and use of the services. Knowledge of library services mean value is greater than that of the use. The two hypotheses tested also shows significant relationship between knowledge and use of library services. It was recommended among other things that library should do more in area of creating/impacting knowledge of various library services and also to bridge the gap between the knowledge and the use.

**Keywords:** Library, Library Services, Users, Knowledge of library services and use of library services.

## I.    Introduction

Library is created and known as an information service provider. The crux of establishing library is to service users of various classes. Library resources are expected to be channeled by library personnel through various service outlets, designed to ensure maximum usage of the resources. There seems to have been more attention on the use of library resources, accessibility and availability of them with little work on the knowledge and use of various library services by users.

This research work intends to find out the extent of the knowledge of the users of various library services targeted at enabling them to maximally benefit from the resources in the library and also to assess their level of the usage of these services. Libraries are known to provide services ranging from borrowing/loaning of materials, reprography/photocopying, references, editing, abstracting and indexing, referral, selective dissemination of information, etc. These services are provided in the library with the aim of meeting the information needs of the users. They were also provided as a way to ensure that the investment in the library is justified through ease of accessibility and usage of its resources.

According to Ezeala and Yusuff (2011), library evaluation is carried out to understand the position of the library within the Research institutes' information environment. It is of little importance to have resources when users will not have knowledge of services that will make them to benefit maximally. Librarians have been known to measure the resources and services of their library as a way of ensuring that they are meeting the set objectives of the library Batigi and Garba (2014), Ezeala and Yusuff (2011). Also, Feather and Sturges (1997) emphasized the growing consensus that for libraries to be truly effective, they must be concerned with their performance, and that the most meaningful indicators of performance are user-oriented.

## II.    Statement of Problem

Universities are involved in teaching of information literacy with the purpose of helping users to use information resources and services well. Bowen University spends money on staff and infrastructure which are two major sources of service provision in a library. Being a relatively new university, there is the need

to assess students' level of knowledge and use of the various library services so as to be able to plan for another phase of the development of the library. Periodic evaluation of library services and resources knowledge and usage among users is also important in the library as this helps the library to know area to focus or improve upon.

## III.    Objectives of the Study

1. To determine the level of knowledge of library users about various library services.
2. To assess the level of use of various library services as used by the users.
3. To examine the level of satisfaction of users about the overall library services provided.
4. To identify challenges/constraints to the use of these library services.

Furthermore, two hypotheses were tested for in order to ascertain the significance of the result:

$H_01$ stated that the various level of knowledge of the different library services is not significantly related to use of the library services.

$H_02$ stated that the general level of knowledge of the various library services is not significantly related to the general use of the library services.

## IV.    Literature Review

The user is very important in the practice of librarianship because library processes revolve around the users. Users must be constantly asked to assess the services and resources provided, as this will help the library to improve upon its services (Ogunmodede, Adio, & Odunola, 2011).    Librarians need to carry out assessment of their resources and services from time to time to ensure continual relevance to their parent organizations (Ezeala &Yusuff, 2011).

The usage of library services and resources is what makes it relevant. This is when the financial resources committed to the library have value. Bitagi and Udoudou (2013), Omehia, Obi and Okon (2008) concluded that University library service should be designed to meet the range of information needs that arise in academic and disciplines and in all parts of the university. Popoola (2008) in his work identified the following library services: current awareness services (CAS), selective dissemination of information (SDI), statistical data analysis (SDA), word processing, internet/e-mail services, facsimile, translation, photocopying, referral, bindery, abstracting and Indexing, CD-Rom databases searching, document delivery/loan, and microfilming. These are the core of library services designed to help users derive maximum benefit from the library.

Ogunmodede, Adio and Odunola (2011) stated that there are different services and facilities offered to clientele by libraries in order that the quest of the prospective users might be met. Since personal assistance to readers is the centre of these services, it can come in different forms. They further stated that major library services are lending, inter-library lending, referral, while other services include, current awareness, selective dissemination of information, reservation, translation,

photocopying and library instruction. The quality of services provided by the library will determine the level of its relevance. The design of these various services is very good but the issue of the knowledge of the users about it and accessing these services should be evaluated from time to time.

Intensive research and education at all levels and in all branches of knowledge makes the services of library inevitable (Tyagi, 2011). The issue of library resources usage has been much debated in literature compared to services (Agboola & Bamigboye, 2011; Ugah, 2007; Biradar, 2006; Whitmore, 2001). Library staff should provide these services as expected and with little or no constraint for the users to access them. Khan and Ahmed, (2013), Shan and Shaheen (2013) and Khan and Ahmed (2012) emphasise the need for provision of good library services as more important than the mere physical library building.

The advent of information technology with its attendant information explosion does not come without its own challenges of knowing where and how to get related quality information. The library should position its relevance in this area of digital services to enable users to benefit maximally from the information explosion. This has already affected library services. According to Jacobs (2013), Agboola and Bamigboye (2011), have identified ICT's application in libraries as facilitating quick, efficient access, integration and repackaging of information for the end-user. This has led to services like telephone reference, virtual reference (this is done through e-mail), social networking/social media, and various modules on some library software that allows users to communicate and get response or feed-back from the library. Library websites and blog addresses are other ways through which libraries serve their clients.

Tommy (2009) pointed out that libraries always have low patronage when they are not adequately equipped to effectively provide the range of services entrusted on them. The issue is one sided because the service may be provided without the users accessing them, and this is the crux of this research. King and Tenopir asserted (2013) that library management through their public services division should engage in a broad base user orientation programme so that users especially students will be acquainted with the needed knowledge on the use of the libraries, its tools and information therein.  Provision of adequate information, systematic planning time schedule for use of information as well as the provision of periodic training in technicality for the use of information resources are adequate strategies for improving the information use pattern of students (Musa, 2016).

Ezeala and Yusuff (2011) stated that if research libraries are to play their role they must possess adequate and appropriate information resources and services, give user-oriented services such as selective dissemination of information (SDI), current awareness services (CAS), indexing and abstracting services, interlibrary loans and so on. Saika and Gohain (2013) observed that borrowing of books is the main purpose of visiting the library followed by access to e-journals. It was also found that circulation services top the list of services, followed by reservation of books, online renewals of books, OPAC/Web OPAC, reprographic services, content page

alert services on current journals, training and demo on e-resource retrievals and reference and information services is the last while users were dissatisfied with the following services in descending order: mobile alert services, book bank facilities, e-news services, training and demo on e-resources retrieval services and current awareness services on newly acquired books.

Biradar, Kumah and Mahesh (2009) found that 88.12% visited the library to read journals and magazines, 87.12% to borrow books, 67.32% to read newspapers and 58.145 to prepare for assignment. Internet browsing and recreational services were the least used services. The study also found out that 54.79% of the respondents were satisfied with lending service while 57.50% were satisfied with reference services, however, services such as selective dissemination of information, interlibrary loan and CD-ROM search were hardly used. Hussain and Kumar (2013) on utilization of information resources and service of the postgraduate students, majority of the users frequently visit the library almost daily and it was further found that books, newspapers and periodicals are the most used by user. Onuoha (2010) findings revealed that circulation services, reference, photocopying and binding were considered by majority of the respondents to be effective. Compilation of bibliographies, indexing and interlibrary loan received the worst ratings.

Lasode, Yusuf and Koiki (2015) highlighted challenges faced by students of FUNAAB as major and minor, inadequate up-to-date books in the library, tight academic schedules of students as major and poor infrastructural facilities and insufficient space to accommodate users as minor. Khan, Bhartti, Khan and Ismail (2014), discovered some challenges faced by users of libraries to include: catalogue/OPAC 74.72%, collection arrangement, 72.52%, inadequate library hours 57.14% among others.

## V.    Methodology

This research is an output evaluation research in library to determine the process efficiency as users perceived the services provided by the library. The data for this study was collected using questionnaire for students from 200 - 400 levels in three (3) out of five (5) faculties and a college available in Bowen University. A self-developed questionnaire titled Users' Knowledge and Use of Library Services (UKAUS) was administered to the students through the assistant of some of the lecturers in the department.

One department each was selected from each of the faculties and 50 samples was taken from each level making 150 samples per department. 100 level students were exempted because they are still new in the university and may not be well aware of the various services available. A total of 450 questionnaires were administered with usable respondents as 360. The faculty selected were Humanities (Department of History and International Relations), Science and Science Education (Department of Biological Sciences), and Social and Management Science (Department of Accountancy).

## VI.    Results and Discussion

The data obtained in the course of the research was analysed and the result is presented here answering the research questions set out to provide answers to our objectives.

**Research question 1:** What is the level of library users' knowledge of various library services?

The results are listed in Table 1. From the mean value of the various library services to show the mean knowledge of the students, it shows that sit, read and study has the highest value of 3.33, followed by borrowing/loaning of information materials with 3.04, reprographic services and e-news services have the same value of 2.92. The least service has a mean of 2.22 which is indexing and abstracting, followed by 2.26 which is e-resources retrieval training or demo, and 2.29 which is referral/inter-library loan. The table also shows that nine (9) library service items have mean value greater than the average for the entire knowledge of the library services among the students.

**Research question 2:** What is the level of use of library services by library users?

The results are listed in Table 2. From the mean value of the various library services to show the mean sage by the students, it shows that sit read and study has the highest usage mean of 3.17, followed by reprographic services e.g. photocopy with a mean value of 2.74 and borrowing/loaning of information materials 2.73. From the bottom of the table, e-resources retrieval training or demo has the least mean usage among the students with a value of 2.09, next to it is referral/Inter-library loan with a value of 2.14 and telephone/Virtual referencing with a value of 2.18. The table shows that 7 library services have mean value that is greater than the grand average mean for usage of library services among the students.

**Research question 3:** What is the level of satisfaction of the users with the general library services?

Table 3 shows the users' level of satisfaction with very high degree percentage of 11.39, high degree percentage of 55.28, while low was 26.67% and very low was 6.67%.

**Research question 4:** What are the various challenges to knowledge and use of library services among the users?

From Table 4, the various challenges identified by the users with the percentage of respondents to each of them are as follows: the inability to locate where the services are located top the least with 42.5%, followed by library staff attitude (40.83%) and lack of knowledge of its availability (35.83%). Least among the challenges are poor maintenance and lack of flexibility of service with 0.28% respectively, followed by incompetent staff with 1.39%, lack of freedom as 2.22% (Not in the table) while outdated books and poor ventilation has 13.88%.

Hypothesis one H01 stated that the various level of knowledge of the different library services is not significantly related to use of the library services. Testing for hypothesis one (H01), regression analysis was used to determine the significance.

TABLE I
THE LEVEL OF USERS' KNOWLEDGE OF VARIOUS LIBRARY SERVICES

| Variables | Very High | High | Low | Very Low | X | S.D |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Sit, read and study* | 182 | 129 | 35 | 14 | 3.33 | 0.81 |
| *Borrowing/loaning of information materials* | 123 | 155 | 57 | 25 | 3.04 | 0.88 |
| *Reprographic services* | 101 | 152 | 85 | 22 | 2.92 | 0.87 |
| *E-news services* | 40 | 98 | 177 | 45 | 2.92 | 0.87 |
| *Reservation of book service* | 60 | 178 | 93 | 29 | 2.75 | 0.83 |
| *Reference/Information services* | 55 | 168 | 108 | 29 | 2.70 | 0.83 |
| *Library Social Media address/weblog/website* | 66 | 150 | 109 | 35 | 2.69 | 0.88 |
| *Circulation service* | 47 | 154 | 129 | 30 | 2.61 | 0.82 |
| *OPAC/web OPAC service* | 55 | 137 | 131 | 37 | 2.58 | 0.87 |
| *E-resources Retrieval Facility (Internet, server-hosted databases, etc)* | 50 | 119 | 152 | 39 | 2.50 | 0.86 |
| *Telephone/Virtual referencing* | 35 | 98 | 165 | 62 | 2.50 | 0.89 |
| *Current Awareness Services* | 39 | 120 | 166 | 35 | 2.45 | 0. 81 |
| *Use of multimedia facilities (e.g. CD, Tape, film video etc.)* | 53 | 116 | 118 | 73 | 2.41 | 0.97 |
| *Document delivery* | 26 | 102 | 181 | 51 | 2.39 | 0.82 |
| *Selective Dissemination of information* | 33 | 118 | 165 | 44 | 2.37 | 0.84 |
| *Referral/Inter-library loan* | 29 | 93 | 166 | 72 | 2.29 | 0.80 |
| *E-resources Retrieval training or demo* | 31 | 80 | 200 | 49 | 2.26 | 0.80 |
| *Indexing and Abstracting services* | 46 | 137 | 126 | 51 | 2.22 | 0.86 |
| *Grand mean* | | | | | 2.57 | |

**NOTE:** X stands for the mean while S.D stands for standard deviation

TABLE II
THE LEVEL OF USE OF VARIOUS LIBRARY SERVICES BY USERS

| Variables | Very High | High | Low | Very Low | X | S.D |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Sit, read and study* | 155 | 128 | 61 | 16 | 3.17 | 0.87 |
| *Reprographic services (e.g photocopying=* | 90 | 126 | 106 | 38 | 2.74 | 0.95 |
| *Borrowing/Loaning of information materials* | 84 | 116 | 106 | 54 | 2.73 | 1.89 |
| *Reference/Information service* | 77 | 139 | 104 | 40 | 2.71 | 0.94 |
| *Reservation of book services* | 58 | 133 | 124 | 45 | 2.57 | 0.91 |
| *Library Social Media address/weblog/website* | 63 | 98 | 137 | 62 | 2.45 | 0.97 |
| *Circulation service* | 49 | 107 | 145 | 59 | 2.41 | 0.92 |
| *Current Awareness Service* | 40 | 99 | 146 | 75 | 2.32 | 1.03 |
| *Selective dissemination of information* | 42 | 89 | 161 | 68 | 2.32 | 1.01 |
| *OPAC/Web OPAC service* | 36 | 104 | 156 | 64 | 2.31 | 0.88 |
| *E-resources retrieval facility (Internet, server hosted databases, etc.)* | 45 | 87 | 156 | 72 | 2.29 | 0.93 |
| *Indexing and Abstracting services* | 39 | 96 | 152 | 73 | 2.28 | 0.91 |
| *Use of multimedia facility (CD, Tape, Film, etc.)* | 51 | 85 | 127 | 97 | 2.25 | 1.01 |
| *E-news services* | 43 | 75 | 169 | 73 | 2.24 | 0.91 |
| *Document delivery* | 29 | 85 | 170 | 76 | 2.19 | 0.86 |
| *Telephone/Virtual referencing* | 33 | 82 | 161 | 84 | 2.18 | 0.89 |
| *Referral/Inter-library loan* | 31 | 76 | 166 | 87 | 2.14 | 0.88 |
| *E-resources retrieval training or demo* | 31 | 61 | 177 | 91 | 2.09 | 0.87 |
| *Grand mean* | | | | | 2.41 | |

TABLE III
PERCENTAGE LEVEL OF SATISFACTION OF USERS WITH
THE LIBRARY SERVICES

| Degree of respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| *Very high* | 41 | 11.39 |
| *High* | 199 | 55.28 |
| *Low* | 96 | 26.67 |
| *Very low* | 24 | 6.67 |
| *Total* | 360 | 100.01 |

TABLE IV
THE VARIOUS CHALLENGES TO KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF LIBRARY
SERVICES AMONG THE USERS

| Variables | No of respondents | Percentage of response |
|---|---|---|
| *Inability to locate where the services are located* | 159 | 42.5 |
| *Library staff attitude* | 147 | 40.83 |
| *Irregularity in service provision* | 118 | 32.77 |
| *Long process of accessing the services* | 113 | 31.38 |
| *Poor ventilation* | 50 | 13.88 |
| *Outdated books* | 50 | 13.88 |
| *Available resources are limited in supply* | 15 | 4.17 |
| *Incompetent staff* | 5 | 1.39 |
| *Poor maintenance of library facilities* | 1 | 0.28 |
| *Lack of flexibility of service* | 1 | 0.28 |

TABLE V
THE RESULT OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR EACH OF THE VARIOUS
KNOWLEDGE OF LIBRARY SERVICES WITH THE USE OF LIBRARY SERVICES

| Variables | β | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|
| Circulation service | .555 | 12.671 | .000 |
| OPAC/web OPAC service | .615 | 14.752 | .000 |
| E-resources Retrieval Facility (internet, server-hosted databases, etc) | .569 | 13.083 | .000 |
| E-resources Retrieval training or demo | .555 | 12.615 | .000 |
| Current Awareness Services | | | |
| Reference/Information services | .382 | 7.824 | .000 |
| Reservation of book service | .351 | 7.102 | .000 |
| Reprographic services | .329 | 6.602 | .000 |
| E-news services | .438 | 9.211 | .000 |
| Selective Dissemination of information | .395 | 8.132 | .000 |
| Document delivery | .391 | 8.029 | .000 |
| Referral/Inter-library loan | .382 | 7.826 | .000 |
| Indexing and Abstracting services | .421 | 8.770 | .000 |
| Telephone/Virtual referencing | .375 | 7.660 | .000 |
| Library Social Media address/weblog/website | .428 | 8.967 | .000 |
| Sit, read and study | .425 | 8.872 | .000 |
| Borrowing/loaning of information materials | .178 | 3.425 | .001 |
| Use of multimedia facilities e.g. CD, Tape, film video etc. | .441 | 9.287 | .000 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
(β is the Beta value on regression analysis, t is the t-test value obtained and p is the level of significance)

The result shows that for all the library services, the knowledge of them is related to the use of the library services as shown in the table.

Hypothesis two (H02) stated that the general level of knowledge of the various library services is not significantly related to the general use of the library services. Testing for hypothesis two, spearman correlation was used and the result is presented below.

TABLE VI
SPEARMAN CORRELATION SHOWING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF LIBRARY SERVICES

| | Knowledge | Use |
|---|---|---|
| Knowledge Correlation | 1.000 | .679** |
| Coefficient Significant (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| Use Correlation Coefficient | .679** | 1.000 |
| Significant (2-tailed) | .000 | |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From the table, the P value obtained is 0.000 and the level of significance is P< 0.01. The P value obtained is less than the P level of significance which shows that knowledge of library services is related to the use of library services.

## VII. Discussion

Table 1 revealed that the users have a good knowledge of most of the services available in the library as mean value for nine (9) out of eighteen (18) different library services have mean value equal or greater than 2.57. Also, the grand mean also shows a good value at 2.57. Therefore, the library services have a grand mean greater than 2.0 on a 4.0 likert scale.

Table 2 which gives the mean value of the various use of library services revealed that only seven (7) library services have a mean greater than or equal to 2.41, which is the grand mean. The level of usage of all the library service is above 2.0 on a likert scale of 4.0; 11(eleven) out of eighteen (18) different library services fall below the average mean.

Comparing the mean value of knowledge of library services with the use of library services it shows that the knowledge is higher as nine (9) library services are above grand mean value of 2.57 while seven (7) use of library services are above grand mean of 2.41. Also, the grand mean for knowledge of library services is 2.57 which is higher than use of library services which is 2.41. The mean value of nearly all the library services in terms of knowledge is higher than the use.

On the level of satisfaction of users with the various library services, very high and high have a total percentage of 66.67. This is indicative that the users were pleased with the library services provided. This was in contrast Omotunde, Ehioghae, Aluko-Arowolo and Ayoola (2014) findings that satisfaction was low for library information services at Babcock University. The total percentage for low and very low is 33.34 which indicates that about one-third were not satisfied with the library services provided. The low percentage level of satisfaction is 26.67 while very low is just 6.67%. There is therefore a need for an improvement in the quality of service to take care of those with low and very low level of satisfaction.

On the basis of challenges, the sum total of those who identified a particular challenge was taken and the percentage indicated. The solutions to the challenges are as follows:

1. The library should indicate what is obtainable at each of the offices with good label so that the users can access them better. There is the need for the services that are available under each section or offices to be indicated for users' accessibility.

2. The issue of staff attitude is something to work upon as over 40% indicated it as a challenge. Library must continually seek to understand the psyche of users and respond to them accordingly. There is the need to train the front-line staff of any library on customer services as this is becoming very important to have a good attitude to users.

3. Irregularity in service provision has to do with power outages and instability of internet access. Libraries must ensure that these are properly taken care of as these affect most of the services provided. Bowen University is operating as e-library where most of their services can be accessed and used through the internet.

4. Poor ventilation and outdated books were both rated 13.88% which is relatively low, Bowen university philosophy of book selection is not to buy anything older than ten years ago. So most of the materials are recent and the building is well situated with enough air-conditions and windows for comfort of the users. Libraries should have a good policy in place in terms of publication date to buy or accept as donation and location of libraries.

5. Challenges of incompetent staff, lack of flexibility of service and poor maintenance of library facilities scored so low because Bowen library has competent hands as the head of each unit of the library with related subject background. Also, the e-library system allows for a lot of flexibility as the users can be served anytime and as they wanted through e-mail, facebook and telephone. The library also engages the service of cleaners with compliant officers whose major duty were to ensure that all the library facilities were well maintained. Each floor of the library has two compliant officers per duty who goes round from time to time to ascertain the condition of the facility and report to the appropriate quarter promptly.

The relatively high percentage of some of the challenges could be attributable to the lesser average mean of use of library service obtained. Libraries should work on reducing the challenges to use of library services so that the knowledge can effectively transform to use.

On testing hypothesis one, it shows that there is a significant relationship between knowledge of each of the various library services and the regression analysis coefficients for all the different variables are 0.000 with only one being 0.001 showing that it is significant. This implies that having a good knowledge of each of the library services will make the users use each of the library services better. This implies that specific training or education should be organised by each of the section of the library. Therefore hypothesis one was not supported and is hereby rejected.

The second null hypothesis shows that the general knowledge of library services is significantly related to the use of library services. The Spearman correlation coefficient shows the level of relationship is 67.9% which is quite high. Also, the significance shows 0.000 at $P < 0.001$. This indicates that educating users about the library should be emphasised as this is related to use of library. This implies that a good knowledge of the general library services will lead to the good use of the general library services. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not supported and is hereby rejected.

## VIII. Conclusions and Recommendations

It was concluded that there is significant relationship between the knowledge and the use of library services. The result also shows that when the users have a good knowledge of the services, they will be motivated to make use of them for their own benefit.

The following are some of the recommendations based on the findings of the study:

1. Libraries should intensify efforts in imparting knowledge of the various library services to the users so as to make them use the services. Library orientation, users' services training, e-library training, library instruction services/literacy should be intensified to pass knowledge to the users.
2. Libraries should also endeavour to train their staff in the area of attitude and psyche of users so as to represent the library well.
3. The less known services in the library should be brought forth to location where they can easily be seen or recognised both for the knowledge of them and eventual use by users.
4. Libraries should also keep the issue of infrastructure very dear as it may not be easy to replace and it can send users away if not satisfied or comfortable coming to the library.
5. Infrastructures like electricity and internet should be improved upon to allow for more regularity in service provision. Other factors affecting usage apart from knowledge should be improved upon so that the usage of various library services can be improved as the knowledge of library services improve.

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