



Availability and Accessibility of Library Services to Students of National Open University of Nigeria

La Disponibilité Et L'accessibilité Des Services De Bibliothèque Pour Les Etudiants De L'université Nationale De L'enseignement A Distance Du Nigeria

Loveth Ogoegbunam Ekwueme PhD

Enugu Study Centre Library,
National Open University of Nigeria
lekwueme@noun.edu.ng

Abstract

This study is a descriptive survey on the availability and accessibility of library services to students of National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). The objectives of the study were to identify the extent of library services that are available and the extent of accessibility to these library services by the students of NOUN in their study centres across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. Population for the study consisted of 15 librarians and 22,115 undergraduates from six study centres across the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. A sample size 847 students were derived from using Yaro Yamane formular. The researcher used two sets of questionnaires and interview for data collection in the six study centre. The data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation and hypotheses were tested using ANOVA statistics at a 0.05 level of significance. The results showed that the availability and accessibility of library services to students of NOUN are low. The ANOVA results showed that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of librarians in their different study centres on the extent of library services provided while there is a significant difference between the mean ratings of students in their different study centres on the extent of accessibility of library services

across the six geo-political zone of Nigeria. The study recommended that more library services should be provided for these students and should include online library services. The existing library services should be marketed to increase accessibility and usage.

Résumé

Cette étude est une enquête descriptive sur la disponibilité et l'accessibilité des services de bibliothèque pour les étudiants de la National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). Les objectifs de l'étude étaient d'identifier l'étendue des services de bibliothèque disponibles et l'étendue de l'accessibilité à ces services de bibliothèque par les étudiants de NOUN dans leurs centres d'étude à travers les six zones géopolitiques du Nigeria. Deux questions de recherche et deux hypothèses nulles ont guidé l'étude. La population étudiée se composait de 15 bibliothécaires et de 22 115 étudiants de premier cycle de six centres d'études répartis dans les six zones géopolitiques du Nigeria. Un échantillon de 847 élèves a été obtenu à partir du formulaire Yaro Yamane. Le chercheur a utilisé deux séries de questionnaires et d'entrevues pour la collecte de données dans les six centres d'étude. Les données recueillies ont été analysées à l'aide de la moyenne et de l'écart-type, alors que les hypothèses ont été vérifiées au moyen de l'ANOVA à un niveau de signification de 0,05. Les résultats ont montré que la disponibilité et l'accessibilité des services de bibliothèque pour les étudiants du NOUN sont faibles. Les résultats de l'ANOVA ont montré qu'il n'y a pas de différence significative entre les notes moyennes des bibliothécaires de leurs différents centres d'études sur l'étendue des services de bibliothèque fournis, tandis qu'il y a une différence significative entre les notes moyennes des étudiants de leurs différents centres d'études sur l'étendue de l'accessibilité des services de bibliothèque dans les six zones géopolitiques du Nigeria. L'étude recommandait que plus de services de bibliothèque soient fournis à ces étudiants et qu'ils comprennent des services de bibliothèque en ligne. Les services de bibliothèque existants devraient être commercialisés afin d'en accroître l'accessibilité et l'utilisation.

Keywords: *Availability, Accessibility, Library Services, Students, National Open University of Nigeria*

Mots-clés : *Disponibilité, Accessibilité, Services de bibliothèque, Étudiants, Université ouverte nationale de l'Ontario.*

Introduction

The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) is a tertiary institution aimed at providing University education in Nigeria by using the open mode of instructional delivery. It was established in 1983 and suspended on 25th April 1984. Eight years after the closure and was resuscitated. That is on 1st of October, 2002 (NOUN, 2012) in order to fill the vacuum created by the profit-oriented outreach programmes of many conventional universities scattered all over the country then. Also, there was the need to bring education to the doorstep of any individual who aspires to be educated irrespective of their age. This is expressed in the university's mission statement, which is to provide functional, cost-effective, flexible learning which adds lifelong value to quality education for all who seek knowledge (NOUN, 2017). All these mission statements cannot be achieved without adequate planned curriculum programmes and library support services. The university library is set up to serve its parent institution and is considered to be an organ around which all academic activities revolve and therefore the library can aptly be described as the "heart" of the university (Ogbuiyi & Okpe, 2013). So a library is established and saddled with the responsibilities of ensuring that knowledge is acquired, transmitted to desired users (Usman, 2010). This can only be achieved through the availability and accessibility of library resources and services. These resources and services will help in inculcating such knowledge to the library users. These resources and services are made available by professionals known as librarians and other supporting staff. The librarian is a person who works professionally in a library and is trained in librarianship also known as a library and information science (Umar, 2013) and they provide information sources and services that support teaching, learning and research at all levels of education. This implies that the duties of librarians in the National Open University of Nigeria are to ensure that library services and resources are made available to their students to support learning and research at all levels of their education.

Availability of library services means providing or ensuring that library-based resources and services both printed, online, audio-visual and audio materials that aid teaching, learning and research are put in place for access and use by library users. The followings are the most common library services available to distance learners; access to library card catalogue, access to print materials, remote access to online catalogue, electronic databases, electronic books, and journals, library orientation, online information literacy tutorials, electronic research guides on academic and special interests and topics, electronic general library guide, CD- ROMs, videotapes, Ask ó A ó Librarian, interlibrary loans, electronic reserve, photocopying services and document delivery services (Nicholas & Tomeo, 2005). Access to these library services is a vital element for any student in NOUN to achieve his or her educational pursuits.

Accessibility can be seen as the ability to be reached or approached, to use and obtain. This shows the extent to which a user or customer can obtain a service whenever it is needed. According to Nwachukwu, Abdulsalami & Salami (2014), accessibility can be described as the degree to which a system is usable by a wide range of users. In other words, it can be described as the degree to which one gets to a certain location from the other locations. Accessibility is very important specifically when it deals with distance learners and their access to educational opportunities and learning facilities. It is one thing to provide these library services and it is another thing for students in distant learning programmes to have access to these library services.

Students of National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) are distance learners. Their concept of education is limited to their course materials which are in printed and online copies accessible through the university website assisted learning through ICT facilities and sometimes face ó to- face facilitation. According to Littlefield (2017), most of these students are adults, matured, employed, having family responsibilities and are willing to take responsibility for their own education. They tend to be independent, self-motivated and assertive but they ought to have good ICT skills for effective learning in order to achieve their educational aims. According to Iyere (2010), these students are not resident in the providing institution and learning activities do not take

place at a particular place or time and they are flexible students since they make choice on how, when and what to learn and where to be accessed unlike the students in conventional universities. It is the duty of the National Open University authority to provide library services to these students for effective research and learning processes.

Review of Related Literature

The distance learning library service as defined by Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL, 2008) is library services that support the college, university, or another post-secondary Course and program offered away from the main campus regardless of where credit is given. The courses being supported may be taught in traditional formats or media, may or may not require physical facilities and live interaction between teachers and students. Also, the Standard Guideline in ACRL (2008) further specifies that distance learning library has the primary responsibility to make its resources and services available to its users regardless of their physical locations. The followings, although not exhaustive are essential library services offered to distance learners, according to Raraigh-Hopper (2010): remote access to online library catalogue; electronic databases, electronic books and journals; online information literacy tutorials; electronic research guides on academic and special interest topics, electronic general library guides, Ask-A-Librarian (Chat, e-mail, or telephone), interlibrary loan; electronic reserves and document delivery service.

Availability of Library Services

The availability of library services is one thing but the accessibility of the services by the user is paramount for effective utilization of the library services. However, for these services to be utilized by these students, the librarian should not only provide the resources and the services for them but should create awareness service for their numerous users to know what is available and how to access them. Fisk & Summey (2005) said that distance learning students may not think of the campus library as the first place to fulfil their information needs and may not even be aware of the services available for them. The author noted that one way to reach out to these students is for librarians to adopt and adapt marketing technique from the business

world for the marketing of these library services in order to create awareness on the library resources and services for possible accessibility. If services are available and adequate but are not accessed there is an urgent need to address this situation. The extent to which students gain access to library services depends solely on the awareness created on such services. Thus access measured in line with utilization is dependent on the affordability, physical accessibility and acceptability of services by users and not merely adequacy of supply of the resources and services. Library services available must be relevant and effective if the students are to gain access to satisfy their information and research needs.

Accessibility of Library Services

The American National Standards Institute /Human Factors and Ergonomics Society (ANSI/HFES, 2008) defined accessibility as a set of properties that allows a product, service or facility to be used by people with a wide range of capabilities, either directly or in conjunction with assistive technology. Accessibility ensures that all the users can have access to all the services provided to achieve specified goals. Accessibility of library services can be measured in relation to utilization of library services which depends merely on the ability to afford Internet facilities, computer, physical accessibilities and acceptability of the services provided for the users and not merely on the availability of such services provided. Nwachukwu, Abdulsalami, and Salami (2014) in support of this opined that what is available but not accessible is equally useless, only what is accessible is usable. So the library services provided for the students of National Open University of Nigeria can only be usable when they are accessed by them, to satisfy their academic and research purposes but when they have not accessed the services are underutilized.

The underutilization of these library services can be traced to poor accessibility of the services by the users. Oyediran, in Ugah (2008) carried out a research on the low use of the library by students of Yaba College of Technology, Lagos and the low patronage of the library was attributed to accessibility problems. So accessibility to library services is a vital factor in the effective utilization of these services that are available to students in higher education irrespective of the type of

education. The librarians should endeavour to make the library services available for these students to be accessible through informing and creating awareness on the services provided because you cannot access what you do not know exists. Gulliford, Figueroa, Figueroa-Munoz, Morgan, Hughes, Gibson, Beech and Hudson (2002) agree that equity of access may be measured in terms of the availability, utilization or outcomes of services.

Also in the findings from a research carried out by Ugah (2008) on availability and accessibility of information sources and the use of library services at Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Abia state indicated that nearly 80 percent agreed that the use of library services depends on the accessibility of information sources; that information sources are not easily accessible to users due to poor indexing and cataloguing, inefficient loan and circulation system, poor shelving and lack of adequate guides to library arrangements as well as administrative and physical barriers. Also, accessibility of information is affected when the library lacks adequate hardware which will aid the accessibility of the information sources in non-prints media and electronic forms. The researcher recommended improvement in these areas so as to encourage accessibility of these library services by users.

Furthermore, Library of Queensland operational Plan (2014) advocated that for the library to attain a high level of the accessibility of library services to the users, the following should be achieved: increase the use of collections by making them accessible through a range of platforms, including Internet Archive, Flickr Commons, YouTube, Vimeo, Historypin, increased digital modes of delivery to increase public value and make content, services and programmes accessibility to everyone, identify and address barriers to access, including print and digital literacy issues; and technological barriers and increased ease of access, including an identity management solution to provide simpler access to content and services. This barrier that limits the access to these services can be improved through employing adequate marketing strategies and channels by librarians and library staff in creating awareness on the available library services. In view of this Siddike and Mahamudi (2013) in a survey conducted on the marketing of web-

based academic library services in 54 private and 31 public universities in Bangladesh indicated that no Bangladesh public university library provided online application forms, reservation, renewal request, and online user education or information literacy programs to their users. Siddike, Munshi and Mahamudi (2013) conclude that "these libraries need to understand and respect the current needs of users. To improve the accessibility of library services by students of NOUN, the role of online library services and online library marketing cannot be ignored.

Statement of the Problems

The availability and access to library and information services have become a serious problem for information seekers who desire to use the university library resources and services. This problem could be due inadequate funding of libraries. This perhaps may have hindered university librarians' efforts in acquiring information resources and provision of adequate library services to their numerous users. The availability of products determines the access and usage of the products. Also, it will promote poor reading culture in the students and over patronage of cybercafés by few serious students. Access to appropriate library services and resources are essential for the attainment of superior academic skills. In spite of this, it is not certain whether these library services are available to students of the National Open University of Nigeria. Where these library services are available, what is the extent of their accessibility by these students? It is on this note that the study aimed at finding out the availability and accessibility of library services to students of National Open University of Nigeria

Objectives of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to investigate the availability and accessibility of library services to students of the National Open University of Nigeria in the conventional study centres in the six geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. Identify the extent of library services available to students of National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) in their study centre libraries across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria;
2. Ascertain the extent of accessibility of library services among students in their study centres across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study;

1. What is the extent of library services that are available to students of National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) in their study centre libraries across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria?
2. What is the extent of the accessibility of library services by students in their study centres across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at a 0.5 level of significance;

- HO 1. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of students in their different study centres across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria on the extent of library services that are available to students of NOUN in their study centre libraries.
- HO 2. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of students on the accessibility of library services by the students in their different study centres across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey. According to Aina (2004), descriptive research design is only interested in describing certain variables or events as they are in relation to the population. The design is appropriate for the study because it used to determine the nature and extent of library services available to students of NOUN and the extent of accessibility of these services by the students in the six study centres libraries across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria.

The population of the study was drawn from Study Centres libraries across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria using a multi-stage sampling technique. One centre library was selected from the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria namely Yola (North-East) Kaduna (North-West), Jos (North-Central), Benin (South-South), Enugu (South-East) and Lagos (South-West). A sample size of eight hundred

and forty seven (847) students was drawn from a total of twenty-two thousand one hundred and fifteen (22,115) students from six study centres of NOUN. The study centres are McCarthy Study Centre, Lagos; 5,153; Jos; 2,729; Enugu; 4,336 and Benin; 7, 822, Kaduna; 1,799 and Yola 276 respectively. Yaro Yamane formular $\frac{n}{N} (\frac{n}{N})$ in Uzoagulu (2011) was used in calculating the sample size for each stratum in order to have proportional representation. A sample size of 847 students were selected as follows: McCarthy Study Centre, Lagos (152); Jos (147); Enugu (151); Benin (153); Kaduna (144); and Yola (100) students from the six study centre libraries across the six geo-political zones in Nigeria while the entire population of 15 librarians was used. A total of 862 questionnaires were drawn and administered to the respondents comprising 847 undergraduates and 15 librarians. Oral interview was conducted with six study centre librarians.

Two instruments namely interview and questionnaires were used for data collections. The questionnaires were constructed on a four-point Likert scale of Very High Extent (VHE, 4Points); High Extent (HE, 3Points); Low Extent (LE, 2Points); Not Applicable (NA, 1Point).

The 23-items Likert scale questionnaire and for Librarians focused on the extent of library services available to Students of NOUN. The oral interview was conducted with each centre librarians on the extent of library services available to these Students.

The students of NOUN were asked to respond to the 23-items Likert scale questionnaire that focused on the accessibility of library Services by the students of NOUN.

The instruments for data collection were validated by two experts from Library and Information Science and one from Measurement and Evaluation. The irrelevant items and responses were cancelled from the questions and suggestions were made to increase the number of the library services and space should be provided for the respondents to add services which were not listed. The corrections were effectively applied to improve on the quality and content validity of the instrument before administration. A trial test was carried with 20 undergraduates from NOUN study centre library at 14/16 Ahmadu Bello way, Victory

Island Lagos and all librarians also the centre librarian was interviewed. The internal consistency reliability coefficient was obtained for each questionnaire responses using the Cronbach Alpha method. This method was adopted because the items are not scored dichotomously. The internal consistency reliability coefficient obtained from librarian's questionnaire was .93 while the student's questionnaire responses yielded .94 Internal Consistency Reliability Co-efficient.

Analysis of Data

The data were organised in tables according to research questions, standard deviation (SD) and Mean (\bar{X}) scores. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used in analyzing the data generated from the respondents. Analyses values were assigned to the four response categories and the mean was interpreted in line with the 4-point scale ranging from (4) highest to (1) the lowest. In decision making the lower limit of the high degree response category, which was 2.50 was used as cut off. Any item with a mean response of 2.50 and above was accepted as an influencing factor. ANOVA was used in testing the hypotheses, the results were based on a P-value of 0.05 benchmark. Where the level of significance is above 0.05 it means that there is no significant relationship between the variables. The data collected from the interviews with centre librarians were used to determine the similarities and differences with the responses from the questionnaires. The responses were used to either confirm or refute the responses from the questionnaire.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the extent of library services provided to students of NOUN in the conventional study centre libraries in the six geopolitical zone of Nigeria.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Librarians on the Extent of Library Services available to Students of NOUN in their Study Centre Libraries across the Six Geopolitical Zones of Nigeria

N = 13 Librarians

S/No		Benin	Enugu	Yola	McCarthy	Kaduna	Jos	Total	Rank	Decision
		\bar{X}	\bar{X}	\bar{X}	\bar{X}	\bar{X}	\bar{X}	\bar{X} SD		
1	Provision of Past Question papers	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	3.92 0.28	1 st	VHE
2	Access to print materials (books)	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.50	4.00	3.85 0.38	2 st	VHE
3	Access to current e-books and e-journals for users.	3.67	3.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.50	3.62 0.51	3 rd	VHE
4	Access to Abstracts, theses and other research works.	3.67	3.50	4.00	3.00	3.75	3.50	3.62 0.51	3 rd	VHE
5	Assisting patrons to conduct literature search.	3.67	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.25	3.00	3.38 0.51	5 th	HE
6	Organization of Library orientation.	3.33	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.75	4.00	3.15 0.69	6 th	HE
7	Subscribing to electronic databases (EBSCO, JSTOR, AGORA, HINARI)	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	3.25	3.00	3.00 0.58	7 th	HE
8	Compilation of bibliographies.	2.67	3.00	4.00	3.00	2.75	3.00	2.92 0.49	8 th	HE
9	Online resource sharing and inter library loan with other libraries.	2.67	2.50	3.00	2.00	3.00	2.50	2.69 0.86	9 th	HE
10	Provision of e-mail and chat services to users.	3.00	2.50	1.00	3.00	2.75	2.50	2.62 0.96	10 th	HE
11	Availability of Internet services to users.	2.67	2.00	3.00	2.00	2.25	2.50	2.38 0.51	11 th	LE
12	Provision of Audio & Visual services.	2.33	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.25	3.00	2.31 0.63	12 th	LE
13	Providing Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) services.	2.00	2.50	2.00	2.00	2.50	2.00	2.23 0.44	13 th	LE
14	Organizing Library guided tour.	2.33	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.08 0.49	14 th	LE
15	Provision of Photocopying services.	2.33	2.50	1.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.08 0.64	14 th	LE
16	Provide printing and scanning of documents	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	2.50	2.00 0.58	16 th	LE

17	Ask ó A ó Librarian online chat with users to answer questions.	2.33	1.50	1.00	1.00	1.50	2.00	1.69	0.86	17 th	NA
18	Provision of Document Delivery	2.33	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.25	1.50	1.69	0.86	17 th	NA
19	Provision of bindery services to users	1.33	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.75	1.50	1.38	0.51	19 th	NA
20	Provision of Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC).	1.00	1.00	1.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	1.23	0.83	20 th	NA
21	Publication of Library Usersø manual.	1.33	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.08	0.28	21 th	NA
22	Provision of User education courses including online and offline.	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	22 th	NA
23	Provision of Library Card Catalogue	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	22 th	NA
	Overall	2.51	2.35	2.22	2.26	2.37	2.43	2.39	0.54		LE

Key: VHE - Very High Extent, HE–High Extent, LEóLow Extent, NA – Not Applicable.

Results in Table 1 show the mean ratings and standard deviations of librarians on the extent of library services available to students of NOUN in their study centre libraries across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. Results showed the mean scores and standard Deviation of the following items are; provision of past question papers (\bar{X} 3.92, SD 0.28); access to print materials (\bar{X} 3.85, SD 0.38); access to current e-books and e-journals for users (\bar{X} 3.62, SD 0.51); access to abstracts, theses and other research works (\bar{X} 3.62, SD 51); assisting patrons to conduct literature search. (\bar{X} 3.38, SD 0.51); organization of Library orientation (\bar{X} 3.15, SD 0.69); Subscribing to electronic databases (EBSCO, JSTOR, AGORA, HINARI) (\bar{X} 3.00, SD 0.58); access to compilation of bibliographies ((\bar{X} 2.92, SD 0.49); online resource sharing and interlibrary loan with other libraries (\bar{X} 2.69, SD 0.86); provision of e-mail and chat services to users (\bar{X} 2.62, SD 0.96); had their mean ratings within the range of 2.50 ó 3.49 set as a criterion for -high extentø The overall mean of 2.39 with a standard deviation of 0.54 showed that the extent of library services provided to students of NOUN in the conventional study centre libraries in the six geopolitical zone of Nigeria was low. The study centre librarians

interviewed from the six study centre libraries of NOUN libraries in the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria in confirmation with the findings agreed that the following library services were provided to their users thus: access to print resources, photocopying services, interlibrary cooperations, assisting students to conduct literature search, provision of past question papers, access to journals, access to written project/theses, subscription to EBSCO, JSTOR, AGORA and other databases and provision of past question papers. In summary, therefore, the extent of library services provided to students of NOUN in the conventional study centre libraries in the six geopolitical zone of Nigeria was low.

Hypothesis 1

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of librarians in their different study centres across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria on the extent of library services provided to students of NOUN in the conventional study centre libraries.

Table 2: ANOVA of The Significant Difference Between the Mean Ratings of Librarians in their Different Study Centres across the Six Geopolitical Zones of Nigeria on the Extent of Library Services available to Students of NOUN in their Study Centre Libraries.

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Dec.
Between Groups	0.097	5	0.019	0.347	0.86	**
Within Groups	0.390	7	0.056			
Total	0.487	12				

** = Not Significant

Table 1 contains the ANOVA result of the significant difference between the mean ratings of librarians in their different study centres across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria on the extent of library services available to students of NOUN. The result showed that an f-ratio of 0.347 was obtained with a probability value of 0.86. Since the probability value of 0.86 is greater than 0.05 set as level of significance, it means that the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant

difference between the mean ratings of librarians in their different study centres across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria on the extent of library services available to students of NOUN was not rejected. The inference drawn is that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of librarians in the different conventional study centres in the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria on the extent of library services available to students of NOUN across the study centre libraries.

Research Question 2: What is the extent of accessibility of library services by students in their study centres across the six geopolitical zone of Nigeria?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Students on the Extents of Accessibility of Library Services by Students in their Study Centres across the Six Geopolitical Zones of Nigeria.

N = 651

S/No		Benin	Enugu	Yola	McCarthy	Kaduna	Jos	Total	Rank	Decision
		\bar{X}	\bar{X}	\bar{X}	\bar{X}	\bar{X}	\bar{X}	\bar{X} SD		
1	Access to print materials (books)	3.44	4.00	4.00	3.73	3.87	3.81	3.78 0.49	1 st	VHE
2	Access to Past Question papers	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.86	2.95	3.10	3.58 0.61	2 nd	VHE
3	Access to Abstracts, Thesis and other research works.	3.93	4.00	4.00	3.80	3.04	2.83	3.52 0.74	3 rd	VHE
4	Provision of Audio & Visual services.	3.29	3.09	3.01	3.03	2.85	3.11	3.06 0.63	4 th	HE
5	Assisting patrons to conduct literature search.	3.19	2.20	3.21	2.82	3.45	3.04	3.05 0.76	5 th	HE
6	Compilation of bibliographies.	2.05	2.91	3.49	3.37	3.30	2.95	3.01 0.85	6 th	HE
7	Organization of Library orientation.	3.18	2.46	2.67	3.06	3.05	3.21	3.01 0.65	6 th	HE
8	Provide printing and scanning of documents	1.61	2.45	2.29	2.80	2.73	2.42	2.40 1.02	8 th	LE
9	Subscribed electronic databases (EBSCO, JSTOR,AGORA, HINARI	2.24	2.07	3.01	2.19	2.88	2.01	2.39 0.83	9 th	LE
10	Access to internet services to users.	2.04	2.55	2.25	2.22	2.54	2.68	2.38 0.89	10 th	LE
11	Organizing Library guided tour.	2.66	2.34	2.59	2.15	2.59	1.80	2.33 0.67	11 th	LE

12	Provision of Photocopying services.	2.01	2.00	1.49	1.97	2.97	2.97	2.32	0.84	12 th	LE
13	Providing Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) services.	1.38	2.00	2.35	2.21	2.68	2.93	2.30	0.84	13 th	LE
14	Online resource sharing and inter library loan with other libraries.	1.22	1.00	1.71	2.79	3.00	1.77	2.04	1.06	14 th	LE
15	Access to current e-books and e-journals for users.	1.20	1.00	1.65	2.41	3.05	2.06	2.02	1.03	15 th	LE
16	Provision of e-mail and chat services to users.	1.00	1.29	1.00	2.43	2.80	2.37	1.94	1.09	16 th	NA
17	Provision of bindery services to users	1.86	1.91	2.28	2.20	1.88	1.56	1.93	0.80	17 th	NA
18	Ask ó A ó Librarian online chat with users to answer questions.	1.87	1.79	1.82	1.79	1.70	1.83	1.80	0.40	18 th	NA
19	Access to Document Delivery	1.66	1.64	1.72	1.93	1.75	1.88	1.78	1.08	19 th	NA
20	Access to Library Card Catalogue	1.73	1.54	1.86	1.72	1.67	1.75	1.72	1.15	20 th	NA
21	Provision of User education courses including online and offline.	1.00	1.18	1.00	1.88	2.07	2.30	1.67	0.90	21 st	NA
22	Access to Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC).	1.35	1.86	1.68	1.53	1.61	1.45	1.55	1.02	22 nd	NA
23	Publication of Library Users manual.	1.24	1.48	1.48	1.57	1.36	1.34	1.40	0.49	23 rd	NA
24	Overall	2.14	2.21	2.37	2.50	2.60	2.40	2.39	0.82		LE

Key: VHE - Very High Extent, HE–High Extent, LEóLow Extent, NA – Not Applicable.

Results in Table 3 show the mean ratings and standard deviation of students on the extent of access to library services by students in their study centres across the six geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The results showed that the following items: access to print materials (books) (\bar{X} 3.78, SD 0.49), access to past question papers (3.58, SD 0.61); access to abstracts, theses and other research works (\bar{X} 3.52, SD 0.74); Access to Audio ó Visual services Access to Audio ó Visual services (\bar{X} 3.06, SD0.63); access compiled bibliographies(\bar{X} 3.01, SD 0.85) and

organization of library orientation (\bar{X} 3.01, SD 0.65) had their mean ratings within the range of 2.50 to 3.49 set as a criterion for high extent. The highest mean score of 3.78 is for access to print materials. Items 8 to 23 have mean ratings within the range of 1.50 to 2.49 set as a criterion for low extent. The lowest ranked means score is 1.40, followed by 1.55 and 1.67 which are for access to library users' manual, access to Online Public Catalogue and users' education respectively. The overall mean rating is 2.39 with a standard deviation of 0.82 therefore; these results showed that the accessibility of library services among students in the conventional study centres in the six geopolitical zone of Nigeria was low.

Hypothesis 2

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of students in their different study centres in the six geopolitical zone of Nigeria on the extent of accessibility of library services.

Table 4: ANOVA of the Significant Difference between the Mean Ratings of Students in their Different Study Centres across the Six Geopolitical Zones of Nigeria on the Extent of Accessibility of Library Services.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Dec.
Between Groups	175.997	5	35.199	226.859	0.00	**
Within Groups	100.078	645	0.155			
Total	276.076	650				

** = Significant

Result in Table 4, is the ANOVA result of the difference between the mean ratings of students in their different study centres across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria on the extent of accessibility to library services. The result showed that an f-ratio of 226.859 was obtained with a probability value of 0.00. Since the probability value of 0.00 is less than 0.05 set as the level of significance, it means that the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of students in their different study centres across the

six geopolitical zone of Nigeria on the extent of accessibility of library services was rejected. The inference drawn is that there was a significant difference between the mean ratings of students in their different study centres across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria on the extent of accessibility to library services.

Summary of the Findings

The results in Table one showed that the available library services in the six study centre libraries across six geopolitical zones of Nigeria with an overall mean of 2.39 were to a low extent. User education courses online and offline, provision of bindery services, library tour, and provision of the online public catalogue; and document delivery were not available in the six study centres libraries. This position was affirmed by the interviewees from the six study centre libraries. Above, all the centre librarians lamented on the absence of user education course for the new students in the university programme of studies. The findings agree with the findings expressed by Siddike and Mahamudi (2013) in a survey conducted on the marketing of web-based academic library services in 54 private and 31 public universities in Bangladesh that no Bangladesh public university library provided online application forms, reservation, renewal request, and online user education or information literacy programs. Siddike, Munshi and Mahamudi (2013) concluded that "these libraries need to understand and respect the current needs of users. We are living in the 21st century where the availability of online resources and services are vital for easy and rapid access to information.

The ANOVA result showed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of librarians in their different study centres across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria on the extent of library services available to students of NOUN. This implies that the library services provided in the study centre libraries were the same. This has far-reaching consequences on satisfying the information needs of these students and would not promote inter-library cooperation among the centre libraries of NOUN.

Also, there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of students in their different study centres across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria on the extent of accessibility to library services. This implies that accessibility of the library services at the various study centres depended on the availability. The difference in the accessibility can be attributed to students' access to the Internet; study centres like Enugu, Kaduna and Jos had Internet services, unlike Yola, McCarthy and Benin study centre libraries. Poor access to the Internet and non-availability of Internet services and electricity could affect access rate of these students to online library services. When available library services are not adequately accessed by their clientele, it means that aims and fund spent in providing them are lost and useless. Similarly, Nwachukwu, Abdulsalami and Salami (2014) noted that what is available but not accessible is equally useless, only what is accessible is usable. So the library services provided by the students of Open University can only be used when they are accessed by the students in satisfying their academic and research needs.

Recommendations

- The Library management of NOUN should introduce more library services to their students to increase accessibility of the resources and services by their students.
- Also, the existing library services should be marketed online and offline to improve their accessibility and patronage.
- The study centre libraries across the study centres of National Open University of Nigeria should endeavour to provide online library services such as Ask-A-Librarian online chat, online library tour and provision of Online Public Access Catalogue to help their students who are all distance learners to access the library services and information from anywhere and anytime in order to satisfy their information quest and encourage patronage.
- There is a need for the librarians at the various study centres libraries to increase the quality and quantity of their online library services bearing in mind that their users are distance learners and need library services and resources that can be accessed at any time and at any place.

- Also, Internet services should be provided in the study centre libraries that do not have one and a generator set should be provided for alternative power to improve access and patronage of the library services.

In order to improve on the accessibility to these library services in the study centres, librarians should provide more services and embark on aggressive online and offline marketing of the available library services. This will increase the utilization of the services and create a good image of the library and librarian to the students and the general public.

References

- Aina, L.O. (2004). *Library and information Science Text for Africa*. Ibadan: Third World. Information Services Limited, 302
- American National Standards Institute / Human Factors & Ergonomic Society (ANSI/HFES,`2008). ANSI/HFES200 Human Factors and Engineering of Software User Interfaces. Available at <http://www.hfes.org/publications/productDetail.aspx?ID=79>. Accessed 19/03/2016.
- Association of College and Research Libraries (2008). *Standards for distance learning library services* Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/standards/guidelinesdistancelearning.cfm>. Accessed on 12/06/2013
- Fisk, J. & Summey, T. P (2005). Go to Distance Services: Marketing Remote Library Services to Distance Learners. *Internet Reference Services, Quarterly*. The Haworth Information Press 9 (1/2), 77-91 Available at <http://www.haworthpressinc.com> Accessed 06/12/2014.
- Gulliford, M., Figueroa-Munoz, J., Morgan, M., Hughes, D., Gibson, B., Beech, R. & Hudson, M. (2002). What Does Access to Health Care Mean? *Journal of Health Services Research Policy* 7 (3), 186-8. Available at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12171751> accessed 27/04/2017
- Iyere, T. O. (2010). Exploring Strategic: Marketing Options to Create a Demand for the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) System in Nigeria in *Global Perspectives in Open and Distance Learning: Essays in Honour of Professor Olgbemirol Jegede* edited by Ifeanyi, P.A and Olakulehin, F. K., Lagos: National Open University of Nigeria, 281 ó 300

- Littlefield, J. (2017). Is Distance Learning Right for You? available at <https://www.thoughtco.com/is-distance-learning-right-for-you-1098087>. accessed 25/04/2017
- National Open University of Nigeria, (2012). *Noun Profile*. Lagos: National Open University of Nigeria.
- National Open University of Nigeria, (2017). *National Open University of Nigeria Profile 2016/ 2017*, Abuja: NOUN, 20 ó 37.
- Nicholas, M. and Tomeo, M. (2005). *Can You Hear Me Now? Communication Library Services to Distance Education Student and Faculty. Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration. Viii, 11 Available at <http://www.edu/o/o7/Edistance/ojdl/summer82/nichol182htm> on 12/05/2014*
- Nwachukwu, V. N., Abdulsalam, T. L. and Salami, P. F. (2014). Availability, Accessibility and Use of Information Resources and Services among Information Seekers of Lafia Services Public Library in Nasarawa State. *Information and Knowledge Management* 4(10). Available at www.iiste.org
- Ogbuiyi, S. U. and Okpe, I.J. (2013). Evaluation of Library Materials Usage and Services in Private Universities in Nigeriaö Kuwait *Chapter of Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review*, 2(8), 33-42
- Raraigh-Hopper, J. (2010). Improving Library Services for Distance Learners: A Literature Review. *The Reference Librarian*, 51, (1), 69-78, Available at www.citeulike.org/user/paulabadgett/author/RaraighHopper.d oi:10.1080/02763870903389384 Accessed on 24/11/2014.
- Siddike, M. A., Munshi, M. N. and Mahamud, R. (2013). Marketing of Web-Based Academic Library Services in Bangladesh. *International Journal of Information Science*.

5(10), 378 ó 385. Available at
www.academicjournals.org/LJLIS. Accessed 24/06/2016

The Library Board of Queensland (2014). Operational Plan Improve Access to Library Services. Available at http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/_slqmedia/about-us/corporate/publications/strategic-planning/SLQ-Operational-Plan-2014-15approvedbyMin.pdf accessed 28/04/2017

Ugah, A. D. (2008). Availability and Accessibility of Information Sources and Use of Library Services at the Michael Okpara University of Agriculture. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. Available at <http://www.webages.udidaho.edu/~mbolin/ugah4.htm>. accessed 19/03/2016.

Umar, B. F. (2013). The Roles of Libraries in the Digital and Global Information Networking Environment, in the *Provision of Library and Information Services to Users in the Era of Globalisation* Edited by A.O.Issa, Igwe and C.P. Uzuegbu. Lagos: Waltodanny Visual Concepts 330-349.

Usman, A.S. (2010). The Role of Information and Communication Technology as a Tool for Change in University Libraries. *Nigerian Forum Journal of Opinion on World Affairs*, .119-120.

Uzoagulu, A. E. (2011). *Practical Guide to Writing Research Project Reports in Tertiary Institutions*. Enugu: Cheston. 53 ó 66.

