ASSESSMENT OF REFERENCE AND INFORMATION SERVICES TO UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN ENUGU AND ANAMBRA STATES

A PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA, IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER DEGREE IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

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CERTIFICATION

Anne Uche Ochili, a postgraduate student in the Department of Library and Information Science with Registration Number PG/MLS/02/32738, has satisfactorily completed research requirements for the award of Masters Degree in Library and Information Science. The work embodied in this project is original and has not been submitted in part or in full for another degree of this or any other university.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my family and to Almighty God.

ACKNOWLEDEGEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to assess reference and information services rendered to the undergraduate students in federal university libraries in Enugu and Anambra stateS of Nigeria. This is with aim of ascertaining the reference and information services offered to undergraduate students in these university libraries, to identify the available resources in the reference sections in these libraries, to find out the extent to which the undergraduate students make use of reference and information sources in these libraries, to find out the extent to which the undergraduate students are satisfied with services offered in these libraries, to determine the problem encountered by using the reference collections in these libraries and to suggest possible ways of solving the identified problems. Based on the objective, six research questions guided the study. A descriptive survey design was adopted in carrying out the work. Sampling technique was used. A total number of one thousand, four hundred and sixty one (1461) respondents were used for the study. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire and oral interview. One thousand four hundred and sixty one (1461) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the undergraduate students of the two university libraries with 95% return rate. Frequency table and mean were used for the data analysis. The results obtained from the findings revealed that reference services are rendered to undergraduate students in the two university libraries, that reference resources are available in the reference sections of the university libraries, that the undergraduate students make use of the reference services offered to them in the libraries under study. The finding also revealed that greater number of the undergraduate students are satisfied with the reference services offered in these libraries. However, the findings revealed that erratic power supply and lack of money constitute major problems to reference services in these libraries. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the administration of the libraries under study should make available stand-by generator to avoid disruption of power supply and that management should release more funds to enable libraries acquire more materials.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The library is regarded as the nucleus of any academic institution including universities. University libraries are established as a knowledge/information nerve centre otherwise called the õheartö of the university. The university is a service organization with the primary objective of providing the bibliographic resources required in fulfillment of the universityøs mission. The universityøs mission according to the National Policy on Education (2004) is to make optimum contributions to national development of high level manpower within the context of the needs of the nation. For any university to cope with the task of teaching, learning and research effectively, the university requires the total support of functional libraries.

University libraries also referred to as academic libraries help their parent institutions achieve their aim by performing the following functions:

1. Provision of materials for undergraduate instruction, term papers, projects as well as supplementary reading;

2. provision of materials in support of faculties, external and collaborative researches;

3. provision of information resources for postgraduate research;

4. provision of expensive standard works especially in the professional disciplines;

5. Provision of materials for personal development (Igwebuike, 2003).

The university reference and information services department according to Sturges (2002) is agency or department responsible for providing processed or published information on specific topics to an organization's internal users, its customers or the public. However, Matthew (2001) asserts that to be successful in today's fast changing and highly competitive world, it is vital to use information technology effectively, having understood the role it plays, tremendous benefits it offers and how to make the best use of its system.

The entire human and material resources in a library are put in place at considerable expense for the overall purpose of providing effective services to the library users. On its part the library has a responsibility to ensure that its resources and services are used. This matter is so fundamental that one can define a library in terms of use. Indeed the modern library anticipates the expectation of its users and positively provides resources and services to fulfill them (Edoka 2000). According to Boulanger (1990) the traditional user groups of the academic library are the faculty, staff and students of the college or university.

The undergraduate or the university students pursuing their first degree have diverse needs such as information for writing their term papers, doing their

assignments and even how to use the catalogue to get what they need from the libraries. Some of these are reference service needs which could best be provided by the reference librarian using reference sources. The undergraduate students gain entrance to the university without the skills for making effective use of the library and its resources. Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) posit that although in the university setting development of library literacy applies to both undergraduates and the postgraduates, it is primarily directed at the former. The library contains a vast array of information and often times the resources is not accessible to the undergraduate, students, especially the new intakes due to their lack of information skills. Hence Popoola (2001) posits that information availability does not mean accessibility and utilization. For the undergraduate students to undergo meaningful university education, they need to learn how to exploit the resources of the library especially reference sources.

Reference and information services are among the most important of these services, as they bring together the user and the resources in the library. Reference service is the personal assistance given by the librarian to individuals in search of information. In effect, reference service involves providing answers to questions asked by the library users. A reader has an information need. He comes to the library and poses the question. The librarian strives to provide an answer to the question from the information resources in his library and sometimes in another

library. The essence of library service is the maximization of information resources in the library.

Encyclopedia Britanica (2003) states that the origin of formalized reference services can be found in American academic and public libraries and dated from the last quarter of the 19th century. It further noted that organized reference services appear to have been a uniquely American contribution to world librarianship. Reference services are aimed at teaching users the use of the standard reference sources and providing general answers to usersø queries. In the words of Osinulu and Balogun (2003) reference services are established primarily to facilitate the use of the library and its resources. Supporting this view Kumar (1998) highlights that in order to convert potential users into habitual users it is essential to establish a desired kind of contact between the user and the document. According to Kumar this (establishment of right contact between a user and document) assumes the existence of documents as well as users. In the same vein Ranganathan (1961) argues that the right contact between the right reader and the right book at the right time in the right personal way. Ranganathan further states that reference service is the establishment of contact between reader and book by personal services. Here personal service to each user to help him to find his requirement is emphasized. Galvin (1987) and Ugwuanyi (1997) in their different studies succinctly defined reference services as the personal assistance given to the

users finding special information whether direct or indirect. Ifidon (1997) gave a broader definition of reference service as the springboard to the library and librarianship, wherein one is involved with all aspects of information, both theoretical and practical.

Reference and information services extend beyond the provision of answers to questions. The users are to develop skills which will enable them get all types of reference and information services óon ó site, mail, telephone, email and virtual. The undergraduate students need user education to be independent library users. Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) assert that independent library use is the epitome of library use dependent upon the lecturerøs teaching methods and his attitude towards the use of the university library, and upon his perception of his role as a teacher and his conception of the objectives of undergraduate. Lyle (1961) noted that in user education, the student is lured into becoming an active participant in his own education with the teacher serving as a guide and counsellor. Lyle further states that in this type of teaching, the student comes to the library to select, sift, organize and evaluate such information as he needs.

There are levels of reference services offered to students. According to Katz (1982) the three distinct levels of reference services are as follows:

1. Conservative or minimum: This type of service consists of a little more than pointing out where reference tools may be found. The goal appears ultimately self-sufficient;

2. Moderate or middling service: Here the librarian may make an active effort to instruct certain selected patrons in the use of the library while answering their question;

3. Liberal or Maximum service: Here the librarian consistently comes up with the answer. He or she is willing and anxious to help the patron personally but only when such help is requested.

In reference service, the reference staff uses available resources in the reference section to supply answers to queries, thus meeting the information need of the patrons. These resources are in both print and non-print format. Nworgu (1991) defined reference sources as books not meant to be read from cover to cover but only to be consulted for certain information or factors. Nworgu further states that these books are expected to be in the library at all times. Kumar (1998) gave a list of reference books to include the following: encyclopedia, dictionaries, formularies etc. Print sources have been the standard format for most reference librarians. Their advantage according to Murray (1999) is that no additional equipment is needed to use them. In recent times libraries have emphasized computer-based reference sources. According to Sloan (2000) they include the

following: Electronic journals, Internet resources, digitized materials, and World Wide Web. These electronic formats are ideal for reference materials in which people are reading shorter amount of information or just looking up a fact or statistics. Murry (1999) observed that the use of CD-ROM is advantageous because they can store a large amount of information in a small amount of space. Murray further states that they also offer Boalean searching thus assisting the user in finding additional materials that might not be so easily located in a print format.

The use of computers in libraries has improved reference service. Horvat (1999) is of the view that the strongest impact on services provided by libraries has probably been made by the use of computer to do sometimes complex and time-consuming tasks. Horvat further maintained that computers are especially useful in storing and retrieving specialized information. Katz (1981) asserts that the computer has revolutionized the very philosophy of reference service as well as actual search process. Sloan (2000) defined digital reference service as the provision of reference involving collaboration between library and user and librarian in a computer-based medium.

The reference section needs to be managed by competent reference staff. The interaction between the librarians and user is the key to the entire service. The unique role of the reference librarian requires his use of skills, experience and the ability to deal with people in carrying out his work effectively. Galvin (1981)

recommends that a good reference librarian should be tactful, intelligent, energetic, sensitive, polite and assured. Similarly Kumar (1998) noted that the competencies to be developed by reference librarians include wide ranging intellectual interest; adequate knowledge of library resources; desire to assist user, ability for search literature etc. According to Oketunji (2008) reference staff require a first degree in humanities or arts or social science or sciences plus a postgraduate qualification in librarianship. Such training is necessary to equip him with sound background knowledge of the subject and the requisite skills required to render satisfactory service to users. Ifidon (1997) highlights that if the equipment is functional and furniture are available but there are no competent and user-friendly staff to operate the service, either the library will earn poor name or patrons will be reluctant to use the services.

The use of digital resources in reference service has changed even the work of reference staff. In addition to skills he already has, he needs in-service training to enable him/her use newly evolved resources effectively. Chigbu (2003) asserts that the traditional role of libraries and librarians is changing with the introduction of new technologies in library and information service worldwide. Again Oketunji (2008) observed that digital reference service will no longer be place-bound. The place at which it is based will not be a reference desk staffed by reference librarian. Oketunji further noted that instead, it will be an information consultation room in

which a librarian can work face ó to ó face with a user or from which a librarian can work screen ó to ó screen with a remote user. The University of Nigeria Website and other University Websites are a development that transcends a buildingøs fixity and aims at saving the time of the researcher and assuring that every bit of information has its user and every user finds his/her needed information.

With the development of commercial information service and internet connectivity, reference services offered to users need to be assessed to determine level of quality and satisfaction. Devis (2002) observed that academic libraries are facing two major challenges: a global digital environment and increasing competition. Devis further noted that they must improve the quality of their services in order to survive. Similarly Hernon (2002) posits that it is important for libraries to know the quality of their performance by getting feedback from users because userøs assessment indicates the librariesø success in service performance. Levy (2000) asserts that the assessment of a specific reference service program examines how well a particular reference effort in a known environment is able to achieve its goals.

Assessments of reference and information services pose problems. Rothstein and Altiman (1998) maintained that a number of studies have attempted to ascertain the opinion held by reference clientele regarding the service received for

purposes of future evaluation. Welch (1982) noted that although personal observation by administrators and others has been a means of evaluating the reference process, many problems arise concerning the validity and reliability of this method of appraising reference service. In similar vein Levy (2000) highlights that it is extremely difficult to assess digital library public service, especially online reference service in part because we do not really know yet what types of demanded services will emerge from user of digital libraries as they settle into these online environments. Pomerantz, Mon and McChure (2008) assert that indeed, because of the complexity of planning for and delivering high quality remote reference services, evaluation is perhaps even more critical for this than for other services. Parasuraman Zeithaml and Berry (1988) developed an instrument with which to measure service quality and what customers value as important and it is called SERVQUAL. Nitecki (1996) noted that SERVQUAL is the mechanism that shifts the assessment of quality of library traditions of measuring collection size and counting incidents of its uses to begin investigating how the provision of service related to the library userøs service quality. Assessment according to Ifidon (1997) is the assessment of extent to which a collection is necessary in order to determine the scope, depth and usefulness of the collection. It will also help to convince the library authorities that the allocated resources are being judiciously utilized and identify area where additional weeding is required. Reference

collection should be assessed by obtaining opinions from regular users, direct examination of shelves or applying library standards.

The two federal university libraries under study have ideal reference and information department that can meet information needs of students.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of an academic library is the provision of high quality reference and information services that will meet the information needs of the undergraduate students as well as other users. The provision of reference service in the library is aimed at ensuring that the undergraduate students have access to the information they need for academic work.

Effective reference services are essential if the performance and the general standard of education of the undergraduate students are to be of high quality. However, it appears that the undergraduate students in some university libraries may not be receiving effective services in their reference sections. This may be due to inability of these libraries to procure current resources/thereby affecting the delivery of quality reference services to the undergraduate students. Again some problems encountered while using reference sources may constitute problems to undergraduate students. The inability to receive satisfactory reference services by the undergraduate students may equally be affecting their performance and library use.

Scholars have carried out studies on different aspects of reference services in different types of libraries but assessment of Federal University libraries reference services to undergraduate students in south eastern Nigeria has not been carried out. It is for this reason that this study is set to assess the reference services offered to undergraduate students to ascertain how well they are doing, the problems they encounter and what could be done to overcome the identified problems in these federal university libraries in south eastern Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to assess the Federal University libraries reference and information services to the undergraduate student in south eastern Nigeria.

The specific objectives include to:

1. ascertain the reference service offered to undergraduate students by university libraries;

2. identify the available resources in the reference sections in these libraries.

3. find out the extent to which the undergraduate students make use of reference sources in the libraries;

4. find out the extent to which the undergraduate students are satisfied with the services offered in these libraries.

5. determine the problems encountered by the undergraduate students while using the reference collections in these libraries.

6. suggest possible ways of solving the identified problems.

Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the reference services rendered to the undergraduate students in the federal university libraries in Enugu and Anambra State, Nigeria?

2. What are the available resources in the reference sections of the libraries?

3. To what extent do undergraduate students make use of reference and information services in these libraries?

4. To what extent are the undergraduate students satisfied with reference and information services offered in these libraries?

5. What are the problems encountered by the undergraduate students while using reference and information materials?

6. What are the possible strategies for overcoming the identified problems?

Significance of the Study

The result of this study will hopefully be beneficial to the undergraduate students, other researchers, reference libraries and the university administration.

The findings of this study will make the undergraduate students and other researchers develop skills that will enable them exploit available resources and technology in their library and thus make them capable of getting their needed information independently.

The recommendation of this study will sharpen the focus of the reference librarian concerning professional role and responsibilities of a competent reference staff in terms of skills and personal qualities expected of them to carry out their job effectively.

This study will be of benefit to the University administration by unveiling the extent of finance needed to procure reference and information resources for libraries. The knowledge of this fact will enable University administration make adequate budgetary allocation with which to equip the library with resources and information communication technology (ICT) needed in the library.

Scope of the Study

The study will cover the two federal university libraries in south eastern Nigeria. They are the University of Nigeria, Nsukka and Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. It will also cover assessment of reference services such as user education rendered by reference sections of the federal university libraries.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature review is organized under the following sub headings.

A. Conceptual Framework

- Nature of Reference and Information Services

- Reference and Information Services Rendered to Library Users

- Assessment of Reference and Information Services to Library Users

- User Satisfaction in Reference and Information Service Delivery

- Problems Associated with Reference and Information Services

- Strategies for Enhancing Reference and Information Services

B. Review of Related Empirical Studies

C. Summary of Literature Review

Conceptual Framework

Over the years reference services have been topic of discourse both nationally and internationally by scholars like Osunuhu and Balogun (2003) Dada

(1983); Galvin (1981); Katz (1995); Bowker (1991). Their different studies point to the fact that reference services entails assisting the users to select from the body of available knowledge or information on a given topic in the library.

In recent times emphasis is on digital and hybrid reference services and studies carried out by scholars like Greth (1996) Broughton (2001); Berger (1996); Clausen (1997); Grandfield (2001); Hasting and Tennant (1996); James and Hill (2002); Miccrossan and Smith (1995); Meola and Stormonat (1999) all highlight the effectiveness of digital resources in reference services.

The importance of reference interview is a complex process that combines a unique set of behaviors and knowledge to allow an information professional to find answers efficiently is stressed by the works of Grogan (1997); Ross (2003); Ugwunna (1983) and Shedlock (1998). Also the need for user-friendly and computer literate staff is highlighted by Tyckoson (2003) and Bange (1984).

Nature of Reference and Information Services

Oketunji (2008) defined reference services as the professional advice and assistance provided by the library staff, from materials in the libraryøs reading rooms or making enquiries by mail, telephone or online to meet their information needs.

Well organized reference and information services in a university library help the users to gain quick access to relevant materials for studies and research.

Hence Olufemi (1982) posits that the need to obtain information for specific purposes is invariably the reason that reference services are requested (and provided). Similarly Ranganathan (1931) admits that if the number of books in a library is very small there would be no need perhaps to provide any reference. According to Ranganathan in his book õFive Laws of Library Scienceö all the five laws of library science point to reference service as the supreme and ultimate function of a library. Green (2004) opined that readers in popular libraries need a great deal of assistance. This is particularly needed by persons unused to handling books or conducting investigation. Supporting this view Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) argue that most students in the Nigerian universities had never used any type of library before entering the university. Aguolu and Aguolu further noted that some had never even seen a library.

Aboyade (2003) observed that the reference section of the library was crucial in a library set up since it is the first point of contact of the library with its users. Aboyade further states that the impressions generated at this point could raise or mar the image of the library. In similar vein Dada (2003) noted that the readerøs services department of any given library could be described not only as the image maker of the establishment but also the public relations section.

Provision of current information to patrons increases their desire to use such reference services. Hence Tyckoson (2003) highlights that the success of the

library depends on its ability to provide information needed or desired by members of its community. Butler (1993) admits that researchers in the scientific and technical disciplines dedicate considerable time tracking the latest development in their specialized fields. Again Prytherch and Wellis (1995) assert that standard reference work entails identifying and evaluating the widest possible range of reference materials in the fields of generalia, language and literature and the arts. Supporting this view Marion and Bowker (1991) argue that knowledge of reference books by type, content and commonly held features ensure a better choice in answering queries and a more expertly developed reference collection.

Research has shown that reference interview carried out by the reference staff helps in meeting the information needs of users. Katz (1982) asserts that an important consideration in analyzing the reference interview involves the levels of service that the user is likely to receive. Again, Ross (2003) states that the dialogue between the librarian and patron conveys the specifics of information desired. According to Ross other factors such as tone of voice, facial expression and body language help the librarian through the process. Katz (1982) categorically states that failure to carry out a satisfactory reference interview may leave the user frustrated. Supporting this view Tyckoson (2003) posits that patrons clearly value the human contact with the librarian even if the results of their specific queries are not successful. Ross (2003) observed that in the traditional in-person form of

reference, the librarian receives cues about patronsø needs. According to Ross in both the chat and the in-person environment, the central focus is the human interaction between the librarian and the patron. Grogan (1997) noted that what gives it its unique status of course is firstly, its face - to ó face - character which makes it the most human of user services. Secondly according to Grogan the assurance in advance that the effort exerted is meeting a specific need makes a user have confidence.

Effective communication with the patrons by the reference staff yields tremendous result in reference services. Ugwunna (1983) suggests that good communication process should be employed to satisfy patronsø information needs. Sharing the same view Shedlock (1998) noted that the manner in which information is communicated to users strongly influence the perception of quality. Osunulu and Balogun (2003) opined that the library should increase its communication skill by mounting periodic displays and exhibition of its products and services. In similar vein Ross (2003) posits that successful communication takes place ó implies success in the reference process. Ross further noted that failure to communicate no matter how good the tools for communication dooms the process to fail.

Hybrid reference service is a new development in reference service where print and electronic publishing must co-exist in libraries. Kumar (1998) is of the

view that the scope of reference service is vast and the subject dynamic. According to Kumar the rapid advances have occurred in computer technology, telecommunication, printing reprography etc. Grawfield (2003) observed that the modern day library to a great degree is a web based learning environment. According to Grawfield the term digital reference is the provision of reference over the Internet. In the same vein Marison (1995) admits that the Internet is one of the constituencies of cyberspace as a mansion of many rooms. Marison further noted that Internet is just one room in cyberspace.

Technological advances in library operation have improved reference services a lot. Ogbonna (2003) is of the view that computer is a telecommunication device, an electronic media that has brought tremendous changes in library operation and services. Alabi (1985) posits that computer is used to carry out information handling like acquisition, cataloguing, circulation, literature searches, compilation of bibliographies and selection (SDI) services. Similarly Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) noted that computers accomplish such repetitive and tedions task as book ordering, loan and recalls much faster, more efficiently and untiringly than any human. Again Ifidon (1995) admits that with computer storage facilities, record can be kept for longer periods, protected from disasters or reproduced in case of accidental destruction. Supporting this view Belinger (1999) states that the advantages of preservation using microfilm include a long cold storage, (300 years

in colour) easy, in expensive maintenance. Murray (1981) asserts that computerized databases contain bibliographic information essentially the same as found in indexing and abstracting services. Murray further added that the reference product for user is usually a bibliography on a topic or topics. Kumar (1998) noted that the forth generation computers make it possible to build up vast databases and the instantaneous retrieval of information stored in them. According to Kumar the real breakthrough, however took place with the online service being provided through a terminal in the form of type writer or visual display (television) screen.

Quality resources especially digital resources have brought considerable improvement in resource sharing in reference service. Akinade (2000) highlights that expectations of people are high when sourcing and retrieving information hence frustration too is high when their expectations are not met. Akinade further states that for a library to satisfy the needs of users both human and material resources must be available. In similar vein James (2004) observed that people not only need a range of source and services, they want those resources and services to be quick and cheap (or rather still free). James further noted that customers want it to be easy to use and access and perhaps most important good enough. Similarly, Sharp (2000) opined that the Internet is democratizing information, empowering the masses and allowing end users access to a vast array of resources. Ugwuanyi (2003) assets that the use of CD ROM as a pattern to the Internet encourages

resource sharing to its economy and portability. According to Ugwuanyi it can be lent to other libraries and received from them. Supporting this view Kumar (1998) posits that the essence of the latest technologies lies in enormous storage coupled with speed in retrieval of information. Horowitz, Flanagan and Helman (2005) posit that digital reference offer the opportunity to make help available from anywhere, as does the õanytime anywhereö accessibility of online collections to which users have become accustomed. According to Horowitz, Flanagan and Helman virtual location permits the service to be located in one online place even for campuses with multiple library units. Sharing the same view, sharp (2003) observed that these network advances have transformed modes of communication and will result in significant changes in traditional library structures to accommodate organized information and access to it. Kumar (1998) observed that the social revolution lies in the fact of centralization of information at selected points in the country on possibly in the whole world. According to Kumar the national barriers in respect of dissemination of information have begun to give way in favour of international cooperation. Again Nebraska (1991) asserts that comprehensive introduction into libraries has meant a considerable increase in the workload of reference and public service. Similarly, Gennaro (1985) highlights that the new information processing technologies will increase the role and capabilities of academic library Meola (1999) states that by using digital reference

to put a human face on the library learned skill can be defined not just as an access point or content aggregator, it is all about context.

The patrons are to be considered while adopting certain reference services. McClure, Rayan and Moen (2002) in their guidelines posit that understanding the users reason for use can play a role in the continuing assessment and development of marketing of digital reference services. In similar vein straw (2000) noted that use expectations are an important consideration when thinking about the form of real time-reference.

However Coffman and Arret (2004) suggest that good telephone service is one possible alternative to chat ó reference for reasons of cost, staffing and time. Coffman and Arret further stated that offering õa more effective asynchronous reference service using either e-mail or web forms in place of chatö. Cummings, Cummings and Frederickson (2007) observed that synchronous chat based reference is one example of a communication technology that was enthusiastically accepted by the library community producing several highly successful digital reference service nationwide. In similar vein Borgman (1981) admits that online service offer users the capability of interacting directly with databases and allow them to build and refine search strategies at a terminal session. Kumar (1998) opined that basically most of the online system function as online bibliographic retrieval system. The computer has decided advantage over the printed word.

According to Kumar most of the online services yield information data the actual documents are usually obtained by ordering through mail or inter-library loans or fax or a floppy. Brandi (2000) highlights that e-mail puts the emphasis on answering request rather than the õcallö. However Cummings, Cummings, and Frederisken (2007) posit that in response to declining use statistics reference desks staffed by librarian who meet face ó to ó face or by phone with students in a defined physical space are increasingly supplemented by e-mail, virtual reference instant messaging services and web logs. Straw (2000) states that the expectation patrons have are simply to get an answer to the question or to be shown where to start the research process. According to Straw the specific expectation digital patrons have includes: the librarian introduction, questioning (the reference interview) and the presentation of information in a helpful manner. In similar vein Johnson (2001) opined that rather than completely moving reference online, a mixture of local and virtual reference service is the best way to serve patrons. Kings (2006) states that digital library researchers have began to examine the social apects of the design, use and impact of information.

Generally, achievements in reference services are obvious in certain areas. Webb (1994) noted that it is known that in no distant future academic library journals, books, workload, bibliographies and even newspapers are likely to be produced entirely in electronic form. However Oketunji (2008) posits that, as

libraries have done with, OPAC web interfaces, they need to identify necessary tools and adapt them to their needs taking the lead rather than being led by technologies that donøt serve those needs. Kumar (1998) asserts that due to development in information technology, information can be made available to the furthest conners of the globe. According to Kumar while the bibliographical sources may not be made directly available to a user, still he can have access to information. Similarly Odesanya and Ajiferuke (2000) remarked that information technology brings about improved productivity, customer satisfaction and significant improvement in the quality of information dissemination. However Chigbu (2003) is of the view that if libraries in developing countries cannot provide the current resources for their clientele, it will definitely impinge on their educational standard.

Reference and Information Service Rendered to Library Users

Reference and information service according to William (1974) is õthe ability of the reference librarian to translate the query into terms that can be met by a given reference sourcesö. Here emphasis is on the meaning of the term. Again William further defined reference service as the formalized provision of information in diverse forms by a reference librarian who is interposed between the questioner and the available information sources. Similarly Kumar (1998) noted that broadly speaking reference service is what a reference librarian does. Osinulu

and Balogun (2003) highlight that it is aimed at teaching users the use of standard reference works among others. These standard works provide general information and factual answers to users queries. Similarly Ifidon (1992) asserts that the job of the information officer or librarian, is to interact with the users to find out what they need or want to know and to provide clients with the relevant information needed.

Current trend in library practice and information technology has influenced reference service. Thomsen (1999) states that reference collections are in a state of great change as traditional print formats give way to various electronic formats and as resources previously only found in libraries, like periodical indexes, are becoming directly available to home, office and school users over the World Wide Web. Supporting this view Cassell (1997) admits that many factors besides electronic reference tools have brought about the extraordinary changes in reference service, such as changes in the way users look for and handle information. Cassell further states that users want more current information and increasing number of them want to find it all on a computer screen so that they can print it out and to go with them. In similar vein library users desire a wide range of alternative, customized service options, self service and universal accessibility and availability. Supporting this view Cassell (1999) posits that users expect librarians to know about all the electronic resources the library has and to help the users learn

to use them quickly. Thomsen (1999) is of the view that managing these changing resources can be difficult and challenging, but a collection of reference resources on our shelves or service electronically, is the foundation of reference.

Assessment of Reference and Information Service

Knowledge generated from the library is used for assignments and research work. Achebe (2000) noted that the rationale is that a well organized reference service in a university library helps the user to gain quick access to relevant materials for studies and research. Loho (1992) asserts that it is necessary to point out that users and their needs must be understood in order to provide effective services. Loho further states that to meet the usersø needs it will require the librarian to know what information sources can be created and maintained.

Assessment of academic library reference service is necessary so as to determine both quality of staff and service rendered to users. Lankes and Kasowitz (1998) posit that assessment is defined as the deliberate process of comparing the reality of a service against both its stated goals and the realm of the possibilities for such a service. In addition, Summerhill (1994) argues that there is need to reassess services and service delivery methods in order to operate effectively with commercial information service. Summerhill further states that areas of concern including inappropriate allocation of librariansø time to tasks not enquiring their

skills and inherent inefficient service delivery method, centred round the reference desk. Welch (1999) admits that on establishment of guideline for assessment of reference librarian's effectiveness in the reference services have tended to favour the following approaches.

1. Accurate answer model

2. User satisfactory model

3. Marketing model

Oketunji (2008) is of the view that õquality dataö are those that are

I.   Reliable ó The measures produce the same result every time they are used to produce data

II. Valid ó The measures actually measure that which they are intended to measure.

III. Useful ó The data assist library decision ó makers to make better decisions than if the data were not available. In similar vein Kyrilldou (1998) asserts that common example of such measures include collective size and breadth of subject coverage, volume held per student of the number of transactions of different services.

The term assessment is used interchangeably with evaluation. Katz (1978) asserts that evaluation concerns the efficiency and effectiveness of reference service in terms of individual user. Supporting this view Saracevic and Covi (2000)

defined evaluation as an appraisal of the performance or functioning of a system or part thereof relation to articulated objective. According to Saracevic and Covi any evaluation must specify clearly what elements are being evaluated because any exhaustive evaluation of anything is impossible. Grandfield (1996) posits that a library must use performance measures and goals that are meaningful and easily understood and effectively and deliberately used. Pomerance Jeffer, Monlorri and McClure (2008) assert that any library service needs ongoing evaluation conducted at a specific key points in time, such as annually by semester or quarterly (summative).

Usually evaluation is conducted when some aspects of a service needs to be evaluated. Katz (1976) is of the view that evaluation might be undertaken for the following reasons:

 I.   to check the current state of the service

 II.   to discover methods for immediate and often

III.   to determine the need for modification of goals and philosophy of service.

Katz further noted that no matter what type of evaluation measures are employed the final result will be better service for more people. Whitson (1999) asserts that its better to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of service at both the reference and information desk, and to provide much more on giving reference updates, training and to review for reference staff. Edward and Brown (1995) are

of the view that the criteria supplied by users, in judging the quality of a service can be quite different from those that librarians consider most important.

Evaluation of reference service now centres more on users. CAVAL Report of 1978 has it that towards the 1970, there was a shift towards the evaluation of materials. Libraries seeking to rationalize, customize and personalize their service and collection looked for measures which would provide an indication of what directions to take for improvement. Engelbrecht and Westerman (1988) highlight that user surveys are an established method of evaluating library services in general and reference service in particular.

Literature reveals certain problems in evaluating reference services. Dividdon (1995) suggests that the amount of effort needed to evaluate a service should be in proportion to the amount of staff time involved in providing the service. Cullen and Calvert (1995) argue that library effectiveness has been extremely hard to convert into reality because as the ideal is explored in detail, it appears to grow in depth and complexity. Cummings, Cummings and Fredensksen (2007) observed that assessment of virtual reference services by user is somewhat problematic issue since most of the data are subjective. Cummings, Cummings and Frederiksen further noted that there are three primary means for collecting information regarding user perception:

Utilizing õsecret patronsö such as students or other faculty õassignedö to pose questions and note the responses, based on given criteria, analyzing follow up surveys sent to users or after a digital reference transaction and actually surveying patrons who are users or potential users. Again Lankes and Kasowitez (1998) posit that it is extremely difficult to assess digital library public service especially online reference services in particular because we do not really know yet what types of demand services emerge from users of digital libraries as they settle into these new online environment.

User Satisfaction in Reference and Information Service Delivery

High quality reference collection and services rendered to patrons will enable them to get the information needed and thus make them satisfied with such library services. Nwokocha (1993) highlight that the reader as the commerstone of any kind or type of library service ó his presence and ability to make meaningful use of information can be the yardstick, to measure library service in a given situation. In their studies Dervin and Nilan (2005) admit that user satisfaction is the post-consumption evaluation of product or service. Yaksel and Rimington (1998) observed that user-satisfaction is essential to successful marketing because satisfied customers are more likely to show loyalty and spread positive word of mouth recommendation. Similarly Henning and Klee (1997); Kasper (1998); Martensen and Grouhold (2003) in their work respectively noted that the

measurement of customer satisfaction has been the focal point in most service organizationøs marketing research programs although in academic libraries the need for gauging customer satisfaction as relevant measure of quality has been recognised rather recentlyö. Nitecki (1996); Nitecki and Franklin (1999) posit that considerable effort has gone into identifying appropriate rating formats to measure quality and customer satisfaction and such services.

Some academics contend that satisfaction is transaction specific, whereas service quality is cumulative evaluation of multiple transactions over time. Cronin and Tylor (1992) noted that although today customer satisfaction has come to be recognised as necessary but not sufficient condition for customer repurchasing. Jones and Sasser (1995) in their studies admit that assuring customer satisfaction remain a goal in most organization including libraries.

In 1997 a major project to develop a standardized measure of library service quality was undertaken by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) in collaboration with Texas A & M University. The result of this project is an instrument named LibQualt TM, which measures library personal control and Access to information.

Roszkoski (2005) highlight that based on this paradigm customer satisfaction constitutes the õgapö (i.e difference) between the service and the service that she or he actually experiences. SERQUAL psychometric gap score is

well established scale that has been used in numerous and diverse setting. Mccleary and Swan (1976); Lan (2002); Newman (2001) posit that gap score as a measure of satisfaction which has been questioned in the literature on both theoretical and empirical grounds. Andaleeb and Simmonds (2000) in their research noted that the library will be able to provide satisfactory services which has been shown to be a component of service.

Problems Associated with of Reference and Information Services

Some studies carried out in reference services tried to find ways and means of rendering reference services effectively without much difficulty. Huang (1997) observed that reference interviews as complex communication process between a librarian and a user which deserves intensive inter disciplinary research described the four dimensions of an interview to be as follows: Structure, Coherence, Pace and Length.

Bourne (1977) admits that one of the major information service problem in developing countries has to do with the provision of document delivery services. In a similar vein Ike (2004) in his research on acquisition and utilization of reference materials noted that poor funding for acquisition of reference materials, inadequate professional librarian to handle the job, constitute problems in reference service. Ajaegbo (2006) is of the view that the libraries experience problems such as poor relationship with users, lack of full comperization and uncoordinated interlibrary

cooperation in their various libraries. Eze (2003) noted that the use of obsolete equipment, power outage and lack of expertise staff constitute problems in reference service. Force (1994) admits that planning online reference service has become more complex because of the number of alternatives that have become available. However Force further recommends that the librarian can choose from local tape loads, C.D ROMS, gateways, or traditional online access for variable or fixed fees. Ifidon (1992) is of the view that space is one of the most crucial aspects and yet one of the greatest problems of a reference unit. According to Ifidon other features to consider in locating a reference unit are ground floor accommodation for ease of access to all categories of users and especially the elderly and disabled people. Similarly Force (1994) states that getting an optimal mix to match local needs has become a complex planning.

Finance constitutes major problems in reference services. To this Summerhill (1994) argues that traditional reference services are not cost-effective and proposes moving to an office consultation model for reference service through schedule in-depth consultation which may be combined with an information desk for more routine enquires. Force (1994) observed that the planning changes for the 90s to include cost consideration, local online information building the local telecommunication and computing infrastructure, and ensuring access for all.

There are other problems in reference service. Dee and Alan (2006) highlight that factors such as link visibility, position and language used to label the service all contribute to the success or failure of a library's Digital reference service. Summerhill (1994) opined that the advent of networked information tools and resources present challenges to reference librarians in search libraries. According to Summerhill the chief challenge presented by networked databases is the difficulty of providing reference and consultation services for remote resources.

Increased use of automation and marketing of products to the end users are changing the manner in which library clientele use research libraries. Gullikson, Blade and Bragdon (1999) posit that in essence a site may be visually appealing, contains all the resources that meet the site's objective, but still be humanly unusable. Similarly Dee and Alan (2006) discovered that features such as frames, brower's incompatibilities and the requirement for the user to download a special client before he or she can use the service are still barriers to users of DRS. Paul (2007) noted that there was a conflict between the confidentiality of the client and the feeding tips to the newsroom. According to Paul the newspapers lawyers counseled that they cannot guarantee that information request would remain confidential.

Strategies for Enhancing Reference and Information Services

Competent reference staff is crucial for effective reference and other library services. Ross (2003) succinctly pointed out that the librarian is the key to the information seeking process. Reference librarians are information professionals who provide a link between the reader and the intellectual content of the library Ranganathan (1931) believed that the happiest moment in the life of a librarian is the moment of his doing reference service. Reference services are particularly carried out in reference section of the library through the reference librarian. Dada (2003) noted that the person manning this section must have an intimate knowledge of materials in his stock complied with the ability and experience to patrons. In similar vein Sharp (2003) opined that the core skills traditionally associated with information professionals, which include: information handling skills, training and facilitating skills, evaluation skills, and concern for the customer, are all still relevant. Supporting this view Uche (2003) asserts that reference libraries should possess a wide range of intellectual interest, the desire to assist users, flair for document to search the literature and adequate knowledge of resources of the library skills would enable librarians provide direct and indirect reference services to patrons. Sharp (2003) posits that librarian of the future must be equipped with a wide range of personal and transferable skills in order to manage the changing environment in which he works. Similarly Hasting (1996) argues that management and interpersonal skills will make librarians more

effective managers of network resources and services. Hasting further noted that the librarians possess particular qualities (which are innate) rather than skills in information organization, are more necessary in this age of information explosion. According to Sharp these skills cover chat collection developments and when these wanes in importance and access waxes, the teaching library is the route to go.

The ability to conduct reference interview portrays the effectiveness of the reference staff. Tyckoson (2003) posits that librarians who make effort to conduct a thorough reference interview are more likely to succeed in finding what their patrons want than who do not take their time for the reference interview. Similarly Cummings, Cummings, and Frederickson (2007) asset that the ability to communicate with users in a variety of modes is an important one for the librarians, it is often cited as a reason that many new services are designed or purchased and implemented.

User-friendly staff promotes reference services. Bunge (1981) is of the view that high staff moral, reasonable workload and user-friendly environment greatly enhance quality of reference service. Ugwunna (1983) noted that librarians serve people, not books and doing this pleasantly and in a spirit of helpfulness is first step of eliminating unfriendliness in our reference õdeskö. In similar vein Sololo (1983) found out that the quality of services rendered to users or readers in any library reflect the quality of the staff. Sololo further states that if a library is

managed by well experienced and cultured staff, users will always be encouraged to make use of the library. Supporting this view Audu (2006) posits that to be relevant, therefore, academic libraries must be user-friendly by ensuring effective use of their resources with minimal difficulties. McFadden and Hostetler (1995) admit that there is a great need for research to be from the user perspective are developed in user system design.

Technological advances in reference services have altered a little the way reference staff carry out their work. Murray (1999) admits that new technology has made staff development an increasingly important issue, training has become an integral part of library work and staff skill must be continually upgraded. According to Murray, the original goal of technology to reduce staff size has not been realized instead technology has brought about redeployment of staff with technological expertise. Medhurst (1995) stresses that librarian should not feel threatened by computer and technological development but should move forward with the new technology and take a pivotal role within organization. Similarly Okiyi (2006) suggests that librarians should be more pushful and assertive as they carry out their duties in various libraries so that their impact can be felt more than ever before.

User education makes it possible for library users to acquire skills they need to be able to locate needed information and the technicalities of using various

library resources independently. Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) observed that information explosion and the proliferation of various media for the organization and dissemination of information coupled with the unprecedented rise in admission to institutions of higher learning in Nigeria, forced academic libraries to give priority to user education. Edoka (2000) opined that user education is the art of educating the patrons, whether students, staff or member of pubic on how best to make use of the overall resources of the library.

However Adunge (2001) and Nnadi (2004) discovered that in Nigeria library orientation and instructions were the most widely used. Kapun (2000) noted that the sophistication of information technology brought in new methods for user education as power point technology in Minnesota State University.

Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) and Kapun (2003) admit that the use of a combination of methods or multimedia to teach user education makes learning to be permanent and interesting. Supporting this view Tiefiel (2000) posits that dramatic changes in technology and society are having a considerable impact on libraries and their instruction programs. According to Tiefiel these changes have created an urgency to teach users, how to become more effective efficient and independent in their information searching. Green and Gilbert (1995) observed that information literacy will be essential for the growing cadre of knowledge workers need. In similar vein Murray (1981) noted that information literacy instruction

services offer components of computer literacy, technology literacy, library literacy, media literacy and more. Katz (1985) maintained that the conventional way of helping user to master computer searches is via the traditional workshops and tutorials wherein the librarian shows a lay person the basic searching. Clausen (1997) asserts that computer literacy is important in this information age, but what is more fundamental and more difficult is information literacy. According to Clausen information literacy is the skill required to handle information in any form. However Rowley (2000) suggests that users may keep themselves reasonably aware of developments by selecting an appropriate range of authoritative sources and be scanning these on a regular basis. Rowley further states that software can assist with the process and allow users or organizations on behalf of a group of clients design tailored alerting services. Clausen (1997) argues that without information literacy there is danger of uncritically accepting whatever is on the Internet and failing to see the need to look beyond it to other information services.

Literature revealed certain problems associated with user education. Adeyenmi (2000) is of the view that user education program in university libraries in Nigeria, needs reviewing if libraries are to justify their establishment in the university system. For orientation Alemna (1990) and Zaki (1999) lamented the increasing large number of freshmen to be handled by fewer personnel. Aguolu

and Aguolu (2002) and Eze (2004) blamed the piecemeal admission policy of the institution. Also in Edem and Lawal (1996) and Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) respectively featured the inadequacy of the curriculum and the uncooperative attitude of the staff. Strategies for improvement suggested include methodological reorientation. LuWehabura (1996) stresses the need for provision of qualified staff. Edem and Lawal (1996) reviewed the salary while Adunge (2001) reviewed the duration of contact hours.

The need for adequate funding of libraries cannot be overemphasized since no organization functions effectively without fund and library is no exception. Anafulu (1996) asserts that every library stands on three legs: a building, collections and staff. According to Anafulu the tendon that holds each of these legs and ultimately binds together into a whole is money. Edoka (1999) admits that the library and information services are traditionally free to the bonafide users/researchers of the institution. Similarly Alemna (1993) and Mohammed (1993) in their different works attested that little or no funding is for librarianship and information science researchers in Africa.

Odini (1991) posits that most libraries do not have enough fund to buy computers and install them to the Internet. Campton (1994) observed that funding higher education in Nigeria have been comparatively poor and is witnessing a worse financial allocation in many years. According to Campton the effect is that

academic libraries are poorly funded and unable to acquire and instill ICT products. Again Gennaro (1981) admits that changes in technology affect the methods and economic of collecting, storing, retrieving, communicating and disseminating information. Suggestions on how to solve monetary problem in library abound. Murray (1999) suggests that one route has been electronic resources and to increase the library's budget. Galvin (1979) asserts that the cost of increasing and maintaining networks cannot be met from currently available local resources of support and that more federal and state aid will be required. In similar vein Murray (1999) opined that entering into consortial arrangements with other libraries and sharing the cost of electronic databases can help tremendously in cost saving.

Poor funding of libraries affect even minor duties needing little money Anafulu (1996) categorically states that where finance is lacking, it is impossible to organize library services of any kind and where it is inadequate the efficiency of that services is bound to be adversely affected. Anafulu further states that money is essential for procurement and processing of materials, for writing of personnel, for the purchase and maintenance of equipment. Murray (1991) observed that most libraries already budget carefully just to manage their small library material budget, are feeling the financial strain of new electronic resources and have been forced to rethink their budgets. However, Edoka (1991) noted that it is perhaps not

in doubt to any information professional in public funded libraries in Nigeria that budgetary allocation for running the libraries are grossly inadequate. Murray (1991) highlights that librarians have always complained about the lack of adequate money for programs. Similarly Amekuedee (1993) admits that the explosion in the quantity cost and communicability of information is a new phenomenon which calls for new responses. Also Butler (1993) is of the view that when budgets are strained, extending such services may seem beyond the possible, especially to libraries serving large faculty population. Edoka (1991) noted that the effect of this on library and information services are not far to see. According to Edoka new books are hardly purchased, journals subscriptions cannot be renewed, worn out resources are not replenished, staff vacancies cannot be filled.

The National University Commission (NUC) in January 1993 sent a circular to all Federally-funded universities and centre directing that henceforth the following 10% of the annual recurrent grant to each institution shall be set aside for the operations of the library:

1. Out of this account, the ratio of expenditure on collection vis-à-vis personal cost, other goods and services shall be 60:40;

2. Library funds shall be listed and released separately;

3. Library funds may be carried forward from one financial year to the next;

4. Utilization of funds shall be quarterly according to the NUC.

5. The amount actually allocated between books and journals shall be decided by each institution.

Anafulu (1996) states that the prevailing economic crunch has driven many public establishment to critically review their services and relations with people, devise arrangements for generating some fund internally. Internationally Edoka (1991) opined that in UK several public and a few academic libraries have advertised for few positions of business information service. In similar vein Anafulu (1996) posits that the reality of the prevailing financial constraints in many libraries appear to be compelling libraries to reach out for other means of raising fund.

Review of Related Empirical Studies

Empirical review related to the study was consulted and they are follows:

Jacoby and Obrien (2005) carried out a study on the assessing the impact of reference services provided to undergraduate students. The study targeted undergraduates receiving non-directional reference assistance. The researchers employed survey research design and the population of the study was the undergraduate students of the institution. Questionnaires and interview were the instruments used for data collection. Data generated for the study was analyzed using frequency tables, percentages, bar and pie chart. It was found that reference services can play a significant role in helping students become confident,

independence information seekers, correlations between variables and multiple regression model further indicates that friendliness of the best predictors of studentøs confidence in their ability to find information on their own.

The study is related to the present study in that both studies have the undergraduateøs students as their population. References interview is stressed in the two studies as a good techniques used by reference staff to make the undergraduate students get their needed information from the library. User-friendly staff is emphasized in the two studies as very important in making students become independent information seekers.

Onifade and Sowole (2011) in their research studies reference services in a university library: awareness and perception of undergraduates students. The researcher used survey research design while the population of the study was the undergraduate students of the institution. Questionnaire was used for data collection. Data for the study was collected and analysed using frequency table and percentages, bar and pie charts.

It was found that reference services can play a significant role in helping students become confident, independent information seekers, correlations between variables and multiple regression model further indicates that friendliness of the reference staff was one of the best predictors of students confidence in their ability to find information on their own.

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The study is related to the present study in that the two found that users that are not familiar with reference materials do not know the importance of these materials to their study.

Achebe (2000) carried out a research on librarian competencies for reference services in Nigerian University Libraries. The study tried to identify and validate required competencies for describing the details of the reference librarian's job as well as their competencies. The research used descriptive survey design and the populations were the librarians, library educators and reference librarians in University libraries. Questionnaire was used for data collection. Data obtained for the study was analyzed using frequencies, percentages, mean and correlation coefficient. It was found that 84 reference related competencies were identified validation

The study is related to the present study in the sense that both tried to emphasis reference skills, behavioral and personal quality traits of reference librarian as important in offering effective reference services to users.

Summary of Literature Review

In the course of reviewing the literature related to this study, the researcher consulted textbooks, journal articles, seminar papers, articles from the Internet and other relevant publications. Attempt was made to look at the concept of reference service and its efficacy in helping patrons use the library and its resources.

Literature reviewed highlighted that human interaction between the librarian and patron makes reference service the most human of all user services. The literature reviewed revealed the essence of high quality reference collection that

enables patrons obtain current information and thus receive satisfactory reference service. Literature reviewed stressed the need for the reference librarian to study the content of the reference collection as this will make him to be effective in carrying out reference service and tied success in reference service to good communication between librarian and patron as well as meeting patronsø information needs.

The literature reviewed showed that digital resources are now being emphasized in reference service as they make for acquisition of current information and also the need for computer literate staff. Also, literature revealed the essence of continuous training on the part of staff to make them competent, equipping them with skills with which to select, evaluate and master newly evolved resources. The literature reviewed laid emphasis on the need for comprehensive user education including digital resources management.

Literature reviewed placed emphasis on the need for adequate funding of reference service and also revealed that where finance is lacking or inadequate, reference service become almost impossible to organize. Ezenwa (1993) categorically stated that the library is the root of learning and instruction in all educational environments and like the tree any branch that attempt to cut off the source of its nourishment is bound to atrophy.

From the works reviewed, it was observed that previous literature exist in related areas of this study. Most of the literature are found in advanced countries of the world such as United States of America. Few works are found in Africa and not too many in Nigeria. Interestingly no similar work has been carried out in the area of present study to the best of the knowledge of this researcher. This is therefore a gap which this study is intended to fill.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter describes the method (s) to be adopted in carrying out the study. It covers the research design, area of the study, population, instrument for data collection, method of data collection and method of data analysis.

Design of the Study

The researcher adopted descriptive survey research design for this study. Nwoga (2006) asserts that descriptive survey aim at collecting in a systematic manner, the characteristics, features or facts about a given population. It is the most appropriate design for this study in the sense that there is large population to be covered. Again, descriptive survey is used based on the fact that the study requires opinion, view and feelings of respondents and describing these feelings to arrive at required data.

Area of the Study

The area of this study includes Anambra and Enugu states of Nigeria. These two states were among the five states south ó Eastern geopolitical Zone of Nigeria. Anambra and Enugu states were the former Anambra state which was split into two to form Enugu and Anambra states. Enugu state shares boundary with Anambra to the east. Ebonyi state to the North, Cogi state to the west and Abia

state to the south, the Nnamdi Azikiwe University and University of Nigeria Nsukka are the only federal Universities in the two states.

Population of the Study

The population of this study comprised the registered undergraduate students users in two federal University Libraries in southóeastern geopolitical zone of Nigeria.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample for this is 1461 registered undergraduate students representing ten (10) percent of the population in line with Nwanna (1981) when he recommends that when population runs into hundreds, use40%, or more, when several hundreds, use 20%, when thousands, use 10% and when several thousands, use 5% or less. Simple random sampling was used to select the users.

Instrument for Data Collection

Questionnaire titled õAssessment of Federal University Library Reference and Information Service Questionnaire (AFULRISQ) was developed by the researcher for the purpose of data collection. The questionnaire was designed for the undergraduate students in the two University libraries. The questionnaire contains two sections. Section A was on bio data while section B was on the subject of the study.

Validation of Instrument

The instrument was validated by the researcher's supervisor and other research experts in the Department of Library and Information Science, University of Nigeria Nsukka. Face validation was carried out by three research experts. They examined and critically analyzed the research instrument in order to ascertain the relevance of the content to the study, the appropriateness of the language and the charity of expression. Their comments and corrections made were finally used in the modification of the research instrument.

Method of Data Collection

The relevant data for this study was collected by the researcher with the assistant by administering the instrument to the respondents. This was collected back immediately to ensure a high return rate. The researcher made use of trained research assistants. This was done by giving the research assistants detailed instructions on how to carry out the data collection. The researcher oral interview for the Librarians

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected will be analyzed in line with the research questions. Data gathered will be orderly organized in tabular forms to indicate raw scores which

will be converted into frequencies and mean for easy clarification. For the four likert types questions, the mean formular, would be used analyze the data.

$$X = \frac{\hat{U}fx}{\hat{U}Nf}$$

After gathering and reviewing the required data, they will be carefully examined to see how they have been applied in the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF DATA

This chapter presents the result of the study. This is done with reference to the research questions to direct the study. The data is presented and analyzed using frequency table and mean. It is presented in a tabular form.

Research Question One

What are the reference and information services rendered to the undergraduate students in the federal university libraries in Enugu and Anambra States of Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean of Reference Services Rendered to the Undergraduate Students in the Federal University Libraries in South Eastern Nigeria

(N = 1450)

SN	ITEMS	VLE	LE	LIE	NA	Mean	Decision
1.	Assistance in the use of reference books	-	256	450	744	3.52	Agree
2.	Assistance in the use of library catalogue	-	123	661	666	3.37	Agree
3.	Assistance in location or searching document	-	55	590	805	3.34	Agree

		HA	A	LA	NA	Mean	Decision
4.	User education	253	576	132	489	3.11	Agree
5.	Bibliographic services	197	206	394	653	3.08	Agree
6.	Online services	273	330	394	453	3.04	Agree
7.	Inter ó library loan services	295	184	519	452	2.81	Agree
8.	Current awareness services	-	335	623	492	2.78	Agree
9.	Readerøs advisory services	295	349	225	561	2.75	Agree
10.	Literature and CD óROM search	412	171	574	293	2.71	Agree
11.	Referral services	-	273	612	309	2.67	Agree
12.	Answers to request	403	385	357	305	2.59	Agree
13.	Selective dissemination of information	403	497	267	283	2.52	Agree
14.	Translation services	182	395	393	480	2.39	Disagree
15.	Reprographic services	117	232	526	575	2.29	Disagree

Table1above shows that all the reference services rendered to the undergraduate students in the two university libraries have their mean greater than 2.50 except translation and reprographic services. This shows that all these reference services rendered to the undergraduate students in south eastern Nigeria. However, translation and reprographic services that their mean less than 2.50 indicates that these two services are rarely or not used by the undergraduate students in these university libraries.

Research Question Two

What are the available resources in the reference sections of the libraries?

Table 2: Mean of the Available Resource in Reference Sections of these Libraries

					(N= 1450)		
SN	ITEMS	HA	A	LA	NA	Mean	Decision
1.	Encyclopedia	-	14	535	901	3.79	Agree
2.	Dictionaries	-	14	281	115	3.61	Agree
3.	Literature guide	117	170	231	932	3.46	Agree
4.	Bibliographies	139	131	558	622	3.36	Agree

No.	Item					Mean	Decision
5.	Indexes		55	903	492	3.30	Agree
6.	Journals	412	129	423	759	3.29	Agree
7.	Directories	273	41	553	444	3.27	Agree
8.	Handbooks	139	277	320	580	3.25	Agree
9.	Abstracts	273	169	308	834	3.24	Agree
10.	Map /atlases	117	67	406	704	3.15	Agree
11.	Online services	273	264	570	493	3.11	Agree
12.	Pamphlets	370	237	483	457	3.06	Agree
13.	Library website	402	108	647	325	3.03	Agree
14.	Theses / dissertations	117	246	661	141	2.99	Agree
15.	Electronic resources	117	298	571	404	2.96	Agree
16.	Vertical books	117	733	600		2.95	Agree
17.	Year books	117	435	898	845	2.82	Agree
18.	Almanac	117	192	296	4078	2.78	Agree
19.	Gazetteers	156	153	734	407	2.71	Agree
20.	Bibliographic publication	153	1990	307		2.64	Agree
21.	Clipping of pictures and album	122	1159	169		2.37	Disagree

Table 2 reveals that all reference resources in the reference sections of the two university libraries have their mean greater than 2.50 expect clipping of pictures and 2.37. This shows that all these reference sections of these university libraries. However clipping of pictures and album with the mean as 2.37 implies that it is not available in these reference sections of the federal university libraries

Research Question Three

To what extent do undergraduate students make use of reference services in these libraries?

Table 3: Mean of Use of Reference Service by the Undergraduate Students in these Libraries

						(N = 1450)	
	Items	VO	O	S	NA	Mean	Decision
1.	Assistance in the use of reference book	123	356	315	756	3.28	Agree

2.	User education	-	322	492	636	3.27	Agree
3.	Answer to queries	-	256	537	657	3.22	Agree
4.	Assistance in the use of library catalogue	156	662	632		3.22	Agree
5.	Assistance in the location or searching document	285	139	744	282	3.18	Agree
6.	Bibliographic services	129	465	579		2.96	Agree
7.	Readers advisory services	256	332	510		2.92	Agree
8.	Online services	117	218	271		2.70	Agree
9.	Literature and CP-ROM search	139	417	315	759	2.69	Agree
10.	Selective dissemination of information	412	195	281	562	2.69	Agree
11.	Current awareness services	385	165	661	239	2.66	Agree
12.	Inter-library loan services	665	171	387	227	2.54	Agree
13.	Referral services	664	545	55	186	2.52	Agree
14.	Translation services	438	118	566	328	2.12	Disagree
15.	Reprographic services	129	279	557	485	1.84	Disagree

Table3 reveals that all reference services in the two university libraries have their mean greater than 2.50 except translation and reprographic services. This show that the undergraduate students make use of all other reference services in these university libraries. Translation and reprographic services have their mean less than 2.50.This indicates that the undergraduate students do not make use of these two reference services in the two university libraries.

Research Question Four

To what extent are the undergraduate students satisfied with reference services offered in these libraries?

Table 4: Mean of Extent of Satisfaction of the Undergraduate Student with Reference and Information Services

						(N= 1450)	
SN	Items	VS	S	FS	NS	Mean	Decision
1.	Assistance in the use of reference books	262	259	240	689	3.28	Agree
2.	Assistance in the use of library catalogue	297	505	648	-	3.24	Agree
3.	Bibliographic service	257	527	666		3.10	Agree
4.	Assistance in the location or searching document	41	118	440	480	2.94	Agree
5.	Answer to request	256	368	826	-	2.95	Agree
6.	Inter library loan services	139	412	858	41	2.68	Agree
7.	User education	256	464	480	250	2.68	Agree
8.	Literature and CDóROM search	380	171	435	464	2.68	Agree
9.	Current awareness services	268	554	319	309	2.49	Agree
10.	Readers advisory services	541	383	175	351	2.46	Agree
11.	Online services	385	416	369	280	2.39	Agree
12.	Referral services	665	421	178	186	2.38	Agree
13.	Selective dissemination of information	664	171	264	351	2.23	Agree
14.	Reprographic services	321	159	642	328	2.21	Agree
15.	Translation service	622	55	773		1.92	Disagree

Table 4 shows that ten reference services have their mean greater than 2.50. This implies that the undergraduate students are satisfied with these reference services rendered in these university libraries. However, items with their mean less than 2.50 are reference services in numbers 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15. This means that the undergraduate students are not satisfied with the reference services rendered in these university libraries.

Research Question Five

What are the problems encountered by the undergraduate students while using reference and information materials?

Table 5: Mean of Problems Encountered by the Undergraduate Students While Using Reference Materials

(N = 1450)

SN	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1.	There is erratic power supply and it effects the use of internet facilities	452	41	583	374	2.71	Agree
2.	Some of the resources are not available	747	367	156	180	2.61	Agree
3.	I do not known how to find the reference materials I need	423	209	179	639	2.51	Agree
4.	I find it difficult to find relevant materials for my assignment.	648	274	225	303	2.46	Disagree
5.	Current materials need for my research are not available	485	298	385	282	2.33	Disagree
6.	The reference staffs are hostile to users sometimes.	917	55	129	349	2.32	Disagree
7.	Reference staff are not providing the required assistance to users.	158	245	1047	-	2.12	Disagree
8.	The internet facilities available	158	139	264	-	1.84	Disagree

Table 5 shows that three items have their mean greater than 2.50. This implies that these items constitute problems encountered by the undergraduate students in these university libraries while using reference materials. However, six item 2.50. This means that problems are not the problems encountered by the undergraduate students while using reference materials

Research Question Six

What are the possible strategies for overcoming the identified problems?

Table 6: Mean of Strategies for Overcoming the Identified Problems

SN	Items	VA	A	FA	IN	Mean	Decision
1.	Provision of current information for research	123	309	225	793	3.61	Agree
2.	Provision of relevant materials for assignment	123	247	299	781	3.29	Agree
3.	Provision of user instruction and computer literacy	293	129	403	625	3.16	Agree
4.	Provision of effective reference staff that give users require assistance	917	55	129	349	3.14	Agree
5.	Provision of useró friendly staff to help user	422	156	163	-	2.93	Agree

Table 6 reveals that the mean for each of the strategies for overcoming the identified problems are greater than 2.50. This indicates that all the listed strategies are accepted as ways of overcoming the identified problems in reference services in these university libraries.

Summary of Findings

The following finding can be deduced from the study. Reference services rendered to the undergraduate students in the reference sections was studied. The study found that the undergraduate students mostly make use of assistance in the use of reference books. This finding is in line with what the reference librarian said

in an oral interview. She noted that they render one to one service retrieving the materials that students want. The study found that reference resources are available in the reference sections of the libraries and that the resource that the undergraduate students use mostly is the encyclopedia. In addition, reference librarians also stated that all reference materials are available in the reference sections of the university libraries. The study found also that the undergraduate students make use of reference services in these libraries. The reference said that those undergraduate students make use of the reference services in the reference sections on daily basis. The study also discovered that the undergraduate students ate satisfied with the reference services offered to them in these libraries. The study found that all the problems encountered by the undergraduate students while using reference services, erratic power supply which affects use of internet facilities constitute major problem to reference services. The study also found that provision of current information for research will effectively solve the problems of reference services in these federal university libraries.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the results of the finding presented in the previous chapter, was discussed. The chapter also discusses the implication of finding, recommendations, limitation of the study, suggestion for further study and conclusion of the study.

Discussion of Findings

The discussion of the findings of this study is organized based on the objectives of the study and the six research questions under the following headings:

Reference services rendered to the undergraduate students in the federal university libraries in Enugu and Anambra state

The results show that reference services are rendered to the undergraduate students in the libraries under study. This finding agrees with Oketunji's (2008) view that reference services are the professional advice and assistance provided by the library staff from materials in the library's reading rooms or making enquires by mail, telephone or online to meet their information need. Also Green (2004) stated that readers in popular libraries need a great deal of assistance. This is particularly needed by persons unused to handing books or conducting investigation. Also Osinulu and Balogun (2003) agree that reference services are established primarily to facilitate the use of the library and its resources. However, in Agolu and Agnolu's (2002) view to be able to under go a meaningful

undergraduate education they must learn how to exploit the recourses of the university library, this skill if acquired is essential to life long education. This agrees with the views of Horowitz, Flanagan and Helman (2000) that digital reference offer the opportunity to make help available from anywhere as does the ‑anytime anywhere ø accessibility of online collection to which users have become accustomed. The interview result with librarians reveal that they render one and one services retrieving materials that the students want.

Available resources in the reference sections of the libraries

From the results, reference resources are available in the reference sections of the libraries. This is in line with Willianmøs (1994) view that reference service is the formalized provision of information in diverse forms by a reference librarian who is interposed between the questioner and the available information sources. Also Edokaøs (2000) view is that user education is the art of educating the patrons, whether students, staff or members of the public on how best to make use of the overall resources of the library. However, Popoolaøs (2001) view is that information availability does not mean accessibility and use.

Extent to which undergraduate students make use of reference services offered to them in these libraries

The study revealed that the undergraduate students make use of the reference service offered to them in the libraries under study. This agrees with Tyckosonøs (2003) view that the success of library depends on its ability to provide information

needed or, desired by members of its community. Also Jameøs (2004) view is that current resources usually will enable user have access to current information. This agrees with Butterøs (1993) view that researchers in scientific and technical discipline dedicate considerable time tracking the latest development in their specialized fields. However, Chigbnøs (2003) view if that is libraries in developing countries cannot provide the current resources for their clientele; it will definitely impinge on their educational standard.

Extent to which the undergraduate students are satisfied with reference service offered in the libraries

The results show that greater number of the undergraduate students is satisfied with the reference services offered in these libraries. This agrees with Jones and Sasserøs (1995) views that assuring customer satisfaction remains a goal in most organization including libraries. This is in line with what Nitecki (1996) Nitecki and Franklinøs (1999) views that considerable effort has gone into identifying approporate rating formats to measure quality and customer satisfaction and such services. This agrees with the views of Henning and Klee (1997) ; Kasper (1998); Martensen and Grou hold (2003) that measurement of customer satisfaction has been the focal point in most service organizationøs marketing research programs although in academic libraries the need for gauging customer satisfaction as relevant measure of quality has been recognized rather recently. Also Yaksel and Kimingtonøs (1998) views stressed that user ó satisfaction is

essentially successful marketing because satisfied customers are more likely to show loyalty and spread positive word of mouth recommendation. The study found that there are undergraduate students that are not satisfied with the reference services offered in these libraries. This agrees with Ifidon's (1997) view which he summed up by stating that if the equipment is functional and furniture are available but there are not competent and user – friendly staff to operate the service, either the library will earn poor name or patrons will be reluctant to use the services

Problems encountered by the undergraduate students while using reference materials

The results on the problems encountered by the students while using reference materials revealed that erratic power supply which affect the use of internet facilities constitute one of the major problems in reference services in the university libraries under study. The is in line with Eze's (2003) view that the use of obsolete equipment, power, outage and lack of expertise staff constitute problems in reference services. The result of study reveals that money is also one of the major problems in reference service. This agrees with Butter's (1993) view that when budget are strained extending such services may seem beyond the possible, especially to libraries serving large, faculty population. Also Edo ka (1991) is of the view that the effect of this on library and information services are not far to see according to Edoka new books are hardly purchased journal

subscriptions cannot be renewed, worn out resources cannot replenish, staff vacancies cannot be filled.

Strategies for overcoming the identified problems

The result made on the strategies for overcoming the identified problems revealed that the provision of current information for research will effectively alleviate the problems of reference service as a strategy. This agrees with Graw fieldøs (2003) view that the modern day library to a great degree is a wed based learning environment. According to Grawfield the term digital reference is the provision of reference over the internet. However all other strategies for overcoming identified problems are shown to be effective in alleviating the problems of reference services in the university libraries under study. Provision of current information for research has the highest mean followed by provision of relevant materials for assignment. This is because nobody will desire obsolete information for research or assignment.

Implication of the Study

Lack of library skills will make it impossible for the undergraduate students to exploit the resources of the library. The undergraduate students need user education or user instruction to be independent library users. Without this knowledge the students will be unable to get the needed information from a lot of available information in the library for research and assignment. This in turn will affect their stand of education generally. Inadequate fund to procure resources will

not enable the users to get the latest information and this will affect satisfaction and patronage.

Recommendations

Based on the finding of the study the following recommendations were made to improve reference and information services in libraries:

1. Library administration should make available stand by generator to avoid disruption of power supply.

2. Management should release more fund to enable libraries acquire more materials / resources and for maintenance culture

3. More current resources should be made available in these libraries like internet facilities.

4. Management should encourage library instruction and computer literacy as a course for all the new students to improve the students on library use.

5. Staff with computer literacy to be employed in the library

6. Management to encourage in- service training for staff to enable them cope with newly evolved resources

Suggestion for Further Study

1. It is recommended that similar studies be carried out periodically to keep management and reference librarians informed on how the library and users are faring.

2. Further study should be conducted to ascertain the extent to which the reference librarians in Nigerian university libraries improve their services to library users

3. Further study should be conducted to determine the best way to teach reference related knowledge to users.

4. Further study should be conducted to ascertain the extent to which the students use hybrid reference services

Limitation of the Study

In the course of carrying out this study, the researcher experienced some setbacks:

1. The attitude of the undergraduate students was not encouraging. It was more of persuasion before they could fill the questionnaire.

2. There was also problem of covering two university libraries within the period.

Conclusion

The study was conducted to assess reference and information services to the undergraduate students in federal university libraries in Enugu and Anambra states. The study was carried out to ascertain how the students acquire skill for library use. It is known that this knowledge if acquired will enables students to get

information needed for assignment and research. This will also make them to be independent library users and improve their university education in general.

The researcher used six research questions and a descriptive survey to guide the study. Data was analyzed using mean and frequency distribution table. The finding of the study revealed that reference services are rendered to the undergraduate students. The study found out that reference resources are available in the reference sections of the two libraries under study and that students make use of available resources in these libraries. The study found out that students are satisfied with the reference services offered to them in these libraries.

None the less a number of factors affect reference service in these university libraries. These factors include unstable power supply, inadequate funding and lack of competent staff.

To curb the indentified problems in these libraries, the study suggested the following remedies as measures of overcoming these problems. Provision of stand by generator, increased funding and in ó service training of staff to enable them cope with newly evolved resources.

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APPENDIX A

ASSESSMENT OF FEDERAL UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES REFERENCE SERVICES TO UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN SOUTH EASTERN NIGERIA (AFULRSQ)

Instruction

The questionnaire is divided into two sections. Please indicate by ticking (ç) in box (es) that represent your option(s).

Section A: Bio-Data

Name of the University Library _____

You are a:

a) 1st year ☐

b) 2nd year ☐

c) 3rd year ☐

d) 4th year and above ☐

Your gender is Male ☐   Female ☐

Section B

1. The extent of availability of and information services provided to undergraduate student infedral universities in Enugu and Anambra states.. Tick (ç) very large extent (VLE), large extent (LE), little extent (LIE) and not at for the correct options(s).

S/N	Reference Services and information services	VLE	LE	LIE	NA
A	Assistance in the location or searching for document				
b	Assistance in the use of library catalogue				
c	Assistance in the use of reference books				
d	Answers to requests				
E	Online services				
F	Literature and CD-ROM search				
g	Current awareness services				
h	Users education				
I	Readersø advisory services				
J	Selective dissemination of information				
k	Referral services				
L	Translation services				
m	Reprographic services				
n	Inter-library loan services				
o	Bibliography services				

2. Extent of information and Reference services rendered to undergraduate students in federal Universities in Enugu and Anambra states. Tick (ç) Highly rendered (HR), Rendered (R), Partially rendered (PR) and not Rendered (NR) for the correct options (s).

S/N	Information and reference services	HR	R	PR	NR
a	Assistance in the location or searching for document				
b	Assistance in the use of library catalogue				
c	Assistance in the use of Reference books				
d	Answers to requests				
e	Online services				
f	Literature and CD-ROM search				
g	Current Awareness services				
h	Users education				
i	Readersø advisory services				
j	Selective dissemination of information				
k	Referral services				
l	Translation services				
m	Reprographic services				
n	Inter-library loan services				

o	Bibliography services				

3. Extent of use of information and Reference services by the undergraduate students. Tick (ç) very often (VO), often (O), sometimes (S), and not at all (NA) for the current options (S).

S/N	Use of Information and reference services	VO	O	S	NA
a	Assistance in the location or searching for document				
b	Assistance in the use of library catalogue				
c	Assistance in the use of Reference books				
d	Answers to requests				
e	Online services				
f	Literature and CD-ROM search				
g	Current Awareness services				
h	Users education				
i	Readersø advisory services				
j	Selective dissemination of information				
k	Referral services				
l	Translation services				
m	Reprographic services				
n	Inter-library loan services				

		VS	S	SS	NS
o	Bibliography services				

4 Extent of satisfaction of the undergraduate students with the Reference and information services. Tick (ç) very satisfied (VS), satisfied (S), sometimes Satisfied (SS) and not satisfied (NS) for the correct option (s).

S/N	Extent of satisfaction with reference Information and reference services	VS	S	SS	NS
a	Assistance in the location or searching for document				
b	Assistance in the use of library catalogue				
c	Assistance in the use of Reference books				
d	Answers to requests				
e	Online services				
f	Literature and CD-ROM search				
g	Current Awareness services				
h	Users education				
l	Readersø advisory services				
j	Selective dissemination of information				
k	Referral services				
l	Reprographic services				

m	Inter-library loan services				
n	Bibliography services				

5. Problem the undergraduate students encounter while using the reference materials. Tick (ç) strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (DA) strongly Disagree (SD) for the correct option.

S/N	Problem of information and Reference service	SA	A	DA	SD
a	Current materials I need for my research are not available				
b	I find it difficult to find relevant materials for my assignment				
c	I do not know how to find the reference materials I need using the catalogue				
d	Some of the resources are not easily accessible				
e	The internet facilities available are not functional				
f	There is erratic power supply and it affects the use of internet facilities				
g	Reference staff are not providing the required assistance to users				

h	He reference staff are hostile to the some of time				

6. Strategies for overcoming the identified problems. Tick (ç) strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and strongly Disagree for the correct option.

S/N	Strategies for overcoming identified problems	SA	A	DA	SD
a	Provision of available current information for research				
b	Provision of relevant materials for assignment				
c	Provision of user instruction and computer literacy				
d	Provision of functional internet facilities				
e	Steady power supply to enable users use internet facilities				
f	Provision of effective reference staff that give users required assistance.				
g	User-friendly staff to help users all the time be needed				

APPEDIX B

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AND SAMPLE

Universities	Population of Undergraduate Students	Sample
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka	7111	711
University of Nigeria, Nsukka	7500	750
Total	14611	1461
Source	University brochure 2010	

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR UNVERSITY LIBERRIANS IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES ENUGU AND ANAMBRA STATE

The interview questions

1. What are the reference services rendered to the undergraduate students in the Federal University Liberians in Enugu and Anambra States of Nigeria?

2. What are the available resources in the reference sections of the libraries?

3. To what extent do undergraduate students make use of reference services in these Liberians?

4. To what extent are the undergraduate students satisfied with reference services offered I these Liberians?

5. What is the problems encounter by the undergraduate students while using reference materials?

6. What are the possible strategies for overcoming the identified problems?