# Utilization and User Satisfaction of Public Library: A Study of Herbert Macaulay Library, Lagos State-Nigeria.

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***Abstract -*** *This study surveythe utilization and user satisfaction of Herbert Macaulay library, Lagos State, Nigeria. The study adopted surveydesign and data were collected using self-developed questionnaire that was administered randomly to the users of the library. The collected data were arranged, coded, tabulated using tables and percentages, and analyzed using SPSS version 21 for Windows. The study found out that, most of the library users are youth and young adults.The study also revealed that the respondents indicated visiting the library frequently for the purpose of general reading, followed by research work, career, recreation/entertainment, to get help always, socialize to meet friends, and to use the internet. The findings also shows that majority of the respondents indicated that the attitude of the library staff influence their visit to the library, and were generally satisfied with the resources and services rendered by the library. Therefore, it was recommended that, sincethe clientele of the library cut across all categories ofusers from the society, the library should endeavor to continually provide information resources and services that meet the different categories of users' needs.*

**Keywords:** User studies, Public libraries, Herbert Macaulay Library, User Satisfaction, Utilization.

## Introduction

The public libraries are generally refers as the 'people's university' and are considered as leading agents of social,political, educational, and cultural change in any given society because they provide wide range of readership than any other type of library. As a rule they are usually established by law and supported with public fundeither through the community, local, state or national government.Public libraries are seen as essential to the individual as well as communities they serve in general. Without any argument, public library has become a learning centre where people can take part in learning activities, discuss and share knowledge and information. The responsibility of the public library is to ensure access of information for "the community regardless of race, nationality, age, gender, religion, language, disability, economic, employment status and educational attainment" (IFLA/UNESCO, 2001, p.1).Therefore, public library is meanttoserve its users at no cost at any point in time and to do this effectively, there should be "quality information in terms of relevance, currency and accuracy that would meet and satisfy user's needs" (Ikenweand Adegbilero-Iwari, 2014, p.2).

The focus of the public library iscommonly service-oriented. Theyprovide access to information through wide range of resources, operations and services."The main function of public library in Nigeria is the provision of information contained in books, newspapers, magazines, journals, audio-visual, and electronic resources to users according to their

needs"(n.d, p. 6). In addition to provision of wide range of resources both physical and electronic, public libraries provide a variety of services that includes "digital lending material, reader development advice, internet access and support, information and reference resources and guidance, learning and elearning activities, literacy support, cultural promotion and community development"(Department of the environment, community and local government 2013, p.4).These services rendered are targeted towards satisfyingusers' expectations,and information need requirement of all types in order to encourage continual visit to the library.Accordingly, user satisfaction is usually given priority by librarian, because it shows how good users' feels after visiting and using the library and their likeness to return back to that library when next information is needed (Olayemi, Olayemi, and Abolarinwa, 2018).

Due to the recognition of the usefulness of public libraries resources and services, it is widely used because of its known ability to meet user's demands irrespective of their status. Unfortunately, public libraries in developed and developing countries are facing a period of declining in usage as a result of poor funding and wrong perception among its users (Hood and Henderson, 2005).It is regrettable to note that in Nigeria, many public libraries including local government and community-owned libraries are not usually well funded and manned byunqualified professionals (Onatola, 2004).

Even up till now the situation seems not have change, as various studies conducted across the country by different researchersrevealed that public libraries are characterized by poor funding, inadequate library staff, poor staff development, absence of information and communication technologies facilities (ICTs), outdated collections of the public libraries and lack of recognition on the part of government to know the prominence of libraries in community development (Obinyan, Obinyan & Aidenojie 2011; Saleh & Lasisi 2011; Akinola,Apotiade, Ogunmodede & Oyetola. 2013); thus operation and services of public are finding it difficult to serve their requiredpurposes.Consequently, many users' have developed poor perception of public libraries. To better understand users' view about the public library service, it is necessary to study the utilization and user satisfaction of Herbert Macaulay public library, Lagos State, Nigeria.

**Brief History of Herbert Macaulay Library**

Herbert Macaulay Library, Yaba, initially know as federal school library service was established in the mid-1960s through a grant given to the Federal Government of Nigeria by the United Nations scientific and cultural organization (UNESCO). This was possible through a proposal for the need for a library in Yaba area written to the organization by the federal government. In the course of years, the name was changed from the federal ministry of education school library service to Lagos State ministry of education school library services after the creation of Lagos state in May, 1967. The library was later renamed by Herbert Macaulay Library by Alhaji LateefJakande to honour the great nationalist for his good woks to Nigeria.

Herbert Macaulay library was established primarily to service all the educational institutions around the library, such as the foremost Yaba college of technology, University of Lagos, Akoka, Federal college of education, Akoka, and other institutions including residents of Yaba and its environ. In the history of the state and that of libraries in Nigeria, the library occupies a pride of place as one of the foremost oldest librarieswhich dates to the pre-independence era of the state.The library is public library funded by the Lagos state

government. It serves all categories of users without any form of discrimination. The library was recently adopted and upgraded to a multi-functional knowledge Centre by Guaranty Trust Bank Plc. throughthe Adopt-A-Library initiative of the Lagos State government (Lagos State Library Board, n.d).

**Objectives of the Study**

The objective of this study is to investigate the utilization and user satisfaction of Herbert Macaulay public library. The specific objectives of the study are:
1.   To find out the frequency of users to the public library;
2.   To examine the purpose of using the public library;
3.   To ascertain if the attitude of library staff influence the way they use the library;
4.   To find out the level of satisfaction with the library resources and services;
5.   To find out theusersperceivedroles of the public library.

**Research Hypothesis**
The followinghypothesis was raised for this study:

**Ho**: There is no significant relationship between frequency of visits to the library and satisfaction with the library resources and services.

**Literature Review**

The existing literature published shows that different studies have been conducted on the perceptions, resources and services of public library in both developed and developing countries.Bopape, Dikotla andMahlatj (2017) examined the information needs of public library and information services users in Limpopo province. The results of the study indicated that youth and young adults constitute majority of the library users, who specifically use these libraries and information services for study space and accessing the internet.Similarly,Kumara andNikam (2012) studied the perception of young adults towards public library services, and found out that majority of young adults visit library daily for the purpose of using available information resource, meet friends and relax, use the library space, find answers for reference queries and the internet, and are satisfied with the library services rendered.

Bhatti, Marwatand Khan (2015)studied user's perception of services quality of the Central public library Bahawalpur.Findings of the study revealed that respondents were satisfied with the quality of different library services rendered.Ikenwe andAdegbilero-Iwari (2014) studied the utilization and user satisfaction of public library services in South West Nigeria. The finding shows that lack of sufficient facilities, outdated information resources and e-resources services in Nigeria public libraries were revealed by the users as major factors affecting user satisfaction of public library services.Likewise, Nnadozie,OkekeandOnyekweodiri(2015) revealed that, majority of their respondents were dissatisfied with the available resources, facilities and services.

**Methodology**

The study adopted survey design and questionnaire was used for the data collection. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the library users of selected understudy.A convenient sample of 100 library users was used for the study, and 82 representing 82% were found

useful for the analysis. The collected data were arranged, coded, tabulated using tables and percentages, and analyzed using SPSS version 21 for Windows.

**Result and Discussion**

**Table 1: Gender of Respondents**

| Gender | | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Valid** | Male | 53 | 64.6 |
| | Female | 29 | 35.4 |
| | **Total** | **82** | **100.0** |

Table 1 shows that, out of the 82 respondents used for the analysis 53 (64.6%) were male and 29(35.4%) were female. This shows that male use the library more than their female counterparts.

**Table 2: Age of Respondent**

| Age | | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Valid** | Under 24 | 17 | 20.7 |
| | 25-34 | 37 | 45.1 |
| | 45-54 | 19 | 23.2 |
| | 55-64 | 6 | 7.3 |
| | 65& Over | 3 | 3.7 |
| | **Total** | **82** | **100.0** |

With regards to age of the respondents, table 2 shows that the highest age group of all respondents was the 25-34 37(45.1%) respondents, followed by 45-54 19(23.2%), under 24 17(20.7%), 55-64 6(7.3%) respondents. The least age group of the respondents was that of those who are above 65 years 3(3.7%). These figuresshows that majority of the respondents were the youth and young adult. The findingis in conformity with the findings of Bopape, Dikotla and Mahlatj (2017) whose study discovered that youth and young adults constitute majority of the public library users.

**Table 3:Marital Status**

| Marital Status | | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Valid** | Single | 53 | 64.6 |
| | Married | 27 | 32.9 |
| | Divorced | 1 | 1.2 |
| | Widow | 1 | 1.2 |
| | **Total** | **82** | **100.0** |

Table 3 shows that majority of the respondents 53 (64.6%) were single, 27 (32.9%) married, 1(1.2%) divorced and 1(1.2%) widow.

**Table4: Educational Status**

| Educational | | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Valid** | No Education | 1 | 1.2 |
| | Primary Education | 2 | 2.4 |
| | Secondary Education | 19 | 23.2 |
| | Tertiary Education | 60 | 73.2 |
| | **Total** | **82** | **100.0** |

With regards to educational level of the respondents, table 4 shows that majority of the respondents had tertiary education 60(73.2%), followed by those with secondary education 19 (23.2%), primary education 2(2.4%). Only 1(1.2%) indicated No education. This result shows that the public library accommodates all groups of users without biased to their level of education, thus, the users' recognition and usage of the library.

**Table 5: Occupation**

| Occupation | | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | Employed | 18 | 22.0 |
| | Unemployed or not working | 18 | 22.0 |
| | Self-employed | 25 | 30.5 |
| | Student | 19 | 23.2 |
| | Retired | 2 | 2.4 |
| | **Total** | **82** | **100.0** |

When inquired about their respective occupations, table 5 shows that majority of the respondents, 25 (30.5%) were self-employed, followed by19 (23.2%) students, employed and unemployed/not working represented by 18 (22.0%) and 18 (22.0%) respectively. While the remaining respondents were 2(2.4%) retired. This result indicated that the users of the public library comprise allcategories of people that cut across different level of occupation with varying information needs. This further depicted that public libraries are established to serve all members of their community without any form of discrimination or status.

**Table 6: Frequency of Use**

| Use of Library | | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Valid** | Seldom/Rarely | 12 | 14.6 |
| | Sometimes | 30 | 36.6 |
| | Frequently | 31 | 37.8 |
| | Always | 9 | 11.0 |
| | **Total** | **82** | **100.0** |

The respondents were asked about their common visit to the public library.Table 6 shows that majority of the respondents indicated that31 (37.8%) visit the library frequently, followed by 30(36.6%) sometimes, 12(14.6%) seldom/rarely, and 9(11.0%) always. This result indicated that most of the users visit the library frequently.This finding was supported by Haliso and Aina (2012)who maintained that "library that provides quality and relevant information materials will keep the users and they will continually beusing the library. This makes library users to have good perception about library services"(p.27).

**Table 7:Purpose for Using the Library**

| Purpose | Frequency( N=82) | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| General reading | 56 | 68.3 |
| Socialize to meet friends | 8 | 9.8 |
| To get help always | 11 | 13.4 |
| Career | 49 | 59.8 |
| Research work | 53 | 64.6 |
| Recreation/Entertainment | 14 | 17.1 |
| To use the internet | 7 | 8.5 |
| Others | 3 | 3.7 |

Table 7 shows that majority of the respondents use the library for their general reading(68.3%), followed by research work 53(64.6%), career 49(59.8%), recreation/entertainment 14(17.1%), to get help always 11(13.4%), socialize to meet friends 8(9.8%), to use internet 7(8.5%) and others 3(3.7%). Results shows that people use the library for different purposes. This is in conformity with the findings ofKumara andNikam (2012) who revealed that the public library is used for different purpose which includes utilization of available information resource, meeting friends and relaxation, using the library space, finds answers for reference queries and the internet.

**Table 8:Attitude of Library Staff**

| Attitude of library staff | | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Valid** | Yes | 70 | 85.4 |
| | No | 12 | 14.6 |
| | **Total** | **82** | **100.0** |

The respondents were asked whether the attitude of the library staff influence their use of the library. Table 8 shows that 70 (85.4%) that represent majority of respondents attested Yes, while the remaining 12(14.6%) said No. The attitude of the librarians to users will largely determine how users will perceived the library relevancy to him/her. If librarians are viewed negatively by the people who they are intended to serve and caused desire change, patrons may be less likely to use the library or librarians in general; this in turn can affect the amount of respect and funding that libraries receive (Rudolph, 2008). Therefore, the people working in the library must create the level of morale and the caliber of service for their patrons.

**Table 9:Satisfaction of the Library Resources and Services**

| Satisfaction | | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Valid** | Very Satisfied | 15 | 18.3 |
| | Satisfied | 47 | 57.3 |
| | Not satisfied | 13 | 15.9 |
| | Undecided | 7 | 8.5 |
| | **Total** | **82** | **100.0** |

The importance of users' satisfaction cannot be over-emphasized in any type of library. Results on table 9 shows that majority of the respondents 47(57.3%) were satisfied, 15(18.3%) were very satisfied, 13(15.9%) dissatisfied, while remaining 7(8.5%) were undecided. User satisfaction of public library resources and services has become vital; especially now that people have varying information need that motivate them to visit the library. "There is no doubt that satisfaction of library services influences the degree in which the services are used and it has been found to be an important factor that affects the use or non-use of library services"(Ikenwe&Adegbilero-Iwari, 2014, p. 1). Therefore, libraries must strive to cultivate a culture of adequate satisfaction ofusers' needs in order to boost its image and encourage regular patronage.

**Table 10: Users Perceived Roles of the Public Library**

| S/N | Statement | SA | A | DS | SD | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Providing educational role in enhancing access to information for all | 56 (68.3%) | 25 (30.5%) | 1 (1.2%) | - | 3.67 |
| 2 | Social role by bringing desired | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | attitudinal change through the information and services rendered | 22 (26.8%) | 54 (65.9%) | 6 (7.3%) | - | 3.20 |
| 4 | Cultural development of individual and social groups | 9 (11.0%) | 46 (56.1%) | 25 (30.5%) | 2 (2.4%) | 2.76 |
| 5 | Helping society move away from misinformation to clarity and balance | 51 (62.2%) | 25 (30.5%) | 4 (4.9%) | 2 (2.4%) | 2.79 |
| 6 | Provisions of computer and internet services for the public | 43 (52.4%) | 30 (36.6%) | 5 (6.1%) | 4 (4.9%) | 3.37 |

Key: SA=Strongly Agree; A=Agree; DS=Disagree; SD= Strongly Disagree

Table 10 reveals the respondents perceived degree roles of the public libraries. These items are rank according to their mean score: providing educational role in enhancing access to information for all $\bar{x}$=3.67, social role by bringing desired attitudinal change through the information and services rendered $\bar{x}$=3.20, cultural development of individual and social groups $\bar{x}$=2.76, helping society move away from misinformation to clarity and balance $\bar{x}$=2.79, provisions of computer and internet services for the public $\bar{x}$=3.37. Public libraries, in particular, are poised to play a crucial role in building communities and connecting people. In providing local communities with 'a safe place to go', libraries are in a distinctive position to facilitate access to information, building of trust and relationships between members of the communities they serve as well as shaping their thinking and attitude towards community building (Hillenbrand, 2005).

**Analysis of Hypothesis**

$H_{o1}$: There is no significant relationship between frequency of visits to the library and satisfaction with the library resources and services.

**Table 11: Testing of Hypothesis**

| | Calculated Value | df | P=value | Table Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Pearson Chi-square** | 12.000[a] | 3 | 0.213 | 0.352 |

**Inference**: At 5% level of significance, P= 0.213, therefore P value is higher than 0.05 Hence, Ho is accepted, therefore, there is no significant relationship between frequency of visits to the library and satisfaction with the library resources and services.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

This study was anchored on utilization and users' satisfaction of Herbert Macaulay public library. The demographic results of the study revealed that majority of the respondents are male. Another significant observation of the study is that most of the library users are youths and young adults. The study also revealed that the respondent indicated visiting the library frequently for the purpose of general reading, followed by research work, career, recreation/entertainment, to get help always, socialize to meet friends, and to use internet.
More so, the findings shows that majority of the respondents indicated that the attitude of the library staff influence their visit to the library, and were generally satisfied with the resources and services rendered by the library. Finally, survey result indicated that the respondents

perceived and acknowledge the roles of the public library to include providing educational role in enhancing access to information for all, social role by bringing desired attitudinal change through the information and services rendered, cultural development of individual and social groups, helping society move away from misinformation to clarity and balance, as well as provisions of computer and internet services for the public.

Public libraries rely on the support of the people they serve for survival and existence.Therefore, it is recommendedthat,librarians need to frequently access patron utilization and satisfaction. Efforts and strategies to attract the users to the libraries in order to maintain and sustain their relevance should become a priority (Hillenbrand, 2005). Since the users of the library cut across all categories of people from the society, the library should endeavor to continually provide information resources and service that will always meet individuals' needs.Lastly, the library should further draw the attention of the community to the roles and values of libraries in contributing to their well-being, education and socio-economic activities.

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