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**Physical Format and Users' Satisfaction with the Information
Resources in University Libraries in the South-South Zone of
Nigeria**

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Abstract

The study was conducted to determine the influence of physical format on users' satisfaction with information resources in university libraries in South-South zone of Nigeria. Survey research method was adopted for the study. The population of this study consists of 83 library staff and 7426 lecturers in the 11 university libraries in the zone during the 2011/2012 academic session. A sample of 36 library staff and 4627 lecturers from 6 of the universities in the zone was used. The researcher made questionnaire, Physical Format and Users' Satisfaction with Information Resources (PFUSIRQ), was used to collect data. Means and standard deviations were used in answering the research question while the hypothesis was tested using t-Test in IBM SPSS for Window version 20 at $p = 0.05$ level of significance. The findings revealed that there was no significant influence of physical format on users' satisfaction with information resources in university libraries in the South-South zone of Nigeria. There is a strong indication that users were satisfied with physical format of the information resources acquired in the university libraries studied. It is therefore recommended that librarians should continue to take cognizance of the variable, physical format when acquiring information resources for the libraries.

Key Words: Physical Format; Users' Satisfaction; Information Resources

Introduction

The primary functions of universities are teaching, learning and community services. As explicitly as the goals of universities are, the actualization of these goals could be a mirage without the complimentary role of university libraries (Sokari & Okpokwasili, 2011). The objectives of university libraries (those in the South-South zone of Nigeria inclusive) can only be achieved by the selection and acquisition of relevant information resources that are built around the courses offered in the institution (Edoka & Okafor, 2002), through collection development process. Information resources are made up of books (print and electronic); audiovisual materials; electronic and internet resources; government documents; periodicals, newspapers and special collections. These are the resources whose physical formats are considered in the process of selection and acquisition of information resources. These physical format are: binding, illustrations, type of paper, font size, durability, dimension (size), nature of material, volume, pagination, colour, accompanying materials (i.e books with disks) etc. The presence of all these attributes make the information materials desirable to users Popoola and Haliso (2009) defined information resources as those information bearing materials that are in both print and electronic formats such as textbooks, journals, indexes, abstracts, newspapers and magazines, reports, CD-ROMs, databases, internet/e-mail, videotapes/cassettes, diskettes, magnetic disks, computers, microforms, etc. The primary aim of university library is therefore to select, organize,

maintain, and provide access to relevant, quality and current information resource, both print and non-print to its users.

The concept of user satisfaction as a surrogate of system success is based on Cyart and March's suggestion cited in James, Thog and Yap (1996), who posited that the ability of an information system to meet the needs of its users would reinforce satisfaction, as a consequence enhanced users' research and productivity output. On the other hand, if the services do not provide the needed information, the users will be dissatisfied, thereby diminish their research and productivity output. Users' satisfaction is a product of information satisfaction, which is affected by the quality of information resources as attributed to factors such as availability, accuracy, precision, reliability, currency and completeness (Lee & Pow, 1996). Other factors according to the collection development policy of Wayne State University (2003) in no particular order are: authoritativeness of the publisher or producer; significance of the subject matter; importance/reputation of the author; price; physical format or access method (bound, printed, loose-leaf, microform, network access, Compact Disk-Read Only Memory (CD-ROM); physical quality (binding, etc); duplication in the collection, including in another format; and research level works. Haruna (2002) stated that for users' satisfaction with information resources to be achieved, there should be a sustained process of collection evaluation and such quality assurance can be attained via currency, accuracy of facts, relevance, coverage and content analysis of information resources in university libraries.

Based on the above premise therefore, there is the need for a periodic evaluation of the university libraries so as to determine how well they are meeting the objectives for which they were established. Lancaster (1999) posited that library evaluation can be carried out through internal inspection and external inspection. He stated that internal inspections are carried out by librarians for evaluation but noted that "it is much harder for the person who has developed and operated the system to stand back and evaluate it objectively." External inspections solve the objectivity problem associated with internal inspection. Users are in the best position to evaluate the effectiveness of any library. Such an evaluation should determine how well the acquired information resources satisfy the needs of its users. The present study is therefore an attempt to ascertain the influence of collection development criterion of physical format on users' satisfaction with the acquired information resources in the university libraries in the South-South zone of Nigeria. The independent variable is physical format of information resources while users' satisfaction with the information resources in the university libraries in the South-South zone of Nigeria is the dependent variable.

Objective

To assess the influence of the physical format of information resources on users' satisfaction with the information resources in university libraries in the South-South zone of Nigeria.

Research Question

To guide this study, the following research question was posed:

What is the influence of the physical format of information resources on users' satisfaction with the information resources in university libraries in the South-South zone of Nigeria?

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was tested in this study:

Mean response score on physical format of information resources does not significantly influence users' satisfaction with the information resources in university libraries in the South-South zone of Nigeria ($P < 0.05$).

Review of Related Literature

Physical format of an information resource spells the quality of the paper, the beauty of the design and strength of binding. This involves the kind of binding (hard or soft), book, non-book, e-journals and e-books. Binding helps to preserve the physical condition of a print collection. Before any library will collect information resources in any format the following points should be considered: ease of preservation, cost, durability, and ease of use by clientele (Atta-Obeng, 2007).

The academic Libraries collect materials in a variety of formats including but not limited to: books, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, and maps. Audiovisual formats continue to change, and the library will collect and provide movies, music and audio-books in whatever format meets the needs of its users. Digital resources will also be provided to library users when they meet the library's mission and goals and are selected according to the guidelines in this document. The library collects both hardback and paperback editions, with a preference for paperback editions when they are available (Ononogbo & Akanwa, 2004).

Collection development in academic libraries is undergoing immense changes because of the new information technology and electronic access (Pastine, 1996).

Digitized data are usually licensed rather than purchased. However, it is still part of acquisition process. Because electronic resources often require licensing agreement rather than true purchasing, 'acquiring' these resources is a continuing process (collection development training-acquisitions (Walters, 2013). Ifidon (1997) listed the scientific principles in the selection process as follows: author's reputation; aims; relevance; accuracy; currency and recency; scope and depth of coverage; style of writing; special features; format; and cost. Atta-Obeng (2007) listed the selection criteria as follows (items selected should meet 50% or more of the following criteria): public demand and interest; authority and competence of the author; format and durability; price in relation to total budget; practical usefulness; contribution diversity or breath of collection; effectiveness and suitability of format, durability and ease of use; and support of library's mission and roles.

The study by Shoki (2007) investigated book selection practices of one hundred librarians in twelve (12) academic libraries in South-South Nigeria. The survey, which used 20-item statement questionnaire as data collection instrument, sought information from respondents on their consideration for readability and other book selection criteria. One of the research questions that guided the study was "What guides book selection and which selection factor is mostly adopted?" Subjects who were made to respond to the instrument were purposefully chosen. They must have worked in the library or taught in the library school for at least ten years. They must all hold University Degrees. Some who do not work directly in the tertiary or teach in library schools must have been attached to curriculum units of schools. Preference is given to librarians who work or had worked directly in Collection Development Units of libraries. The questionnaire was the only instrument for the study. The instrument also seeks information from respondents' preference for one of five factors for book selection. Analysis of respondents' decision on what guides book selection and on the factor mostly considered for book selection were as follows; Currency of text , 27%, Author's popularity 12%, Publisher's popularity, 21%, Print quality, 30%, Readability, 10%. Of the five factors identified, readability had the least consideration while print quality (physical format) had the highest responses of 30%. Quality of production refers to the physical or technical level of illustration, covers, and bindings.

Bailey and Pearson (1983) defined user satisfaction as the sum of a user's attitudes toward a variety of factors of management information systems and identified 39 factors as comprising the domain of user satisfaction. The quality of information is typically evaluated by measuring information attributes. For example, Doll and Torkzadeh (1988) developed a measure that includes content, accuracy, format and

timeliness of system output. User satisfaction is the level to which users believe the information resources available to them meet their information needs

A study by Rafiq & Ameen (2009) investigated information seeking behavior and satisfaction level of teachers at the National Textile University (NTU), Parkistan. The study used a structured questionnaire to collect data. The instrument of Zawawi and Majid (2001) was partially used to design the questionnaire, which consisted of 15 questions. The first six questions dealt with demographic and educational characteristics. The population of the study consisted of 38 teachers of NTU. Three of 38 were abroad for higher studies. A total of 35 copies of the questionnaires therefore were personally distributed to the population and 34 were returned with an overall 97 percent response rate. One of the research objectives was to determine teachers' satisfaction with NTU library information resources. The data were analysed and interpreted using SPSS release 10.1. Result of the study showed that respondents used a variety of both print and digital information resources to satisfy their information needs. Books were still the most preferred sources for teaching and research followed by journal articles. This reveals that NTU Library collection is not meeting the information needs of the teaching community.

For a library to be sure that it is carrying out its mandate to its users, "the totality of features and characteristics of its resources and services must be able to satisfy all users' stated or implied needs." Questions about how far the totality of library resources and services meet users' needs are answered during library evaluation (Lancaster, 1999). Nwalo (1997) defined library evaluation as the quantification and comparison with laid down standards of library provisions and services. Lancaster (1978) also sees library evaluation as an evaluation of user satisfaction, which can be checked at three possible levels: effectiveness evaluation, cost-effectiveness evaluation; and cost-benefit evaluation. In simple terms, library evaluation is carried out to check and balance library activities with its mandate. This helps to see how the library is meeting its users' needs and also what decision to take and those to be revised. This is the reason why library evaluation has been referred to by some scholars as a management activity.

It can be seen that the works reviewed, although significant contribution to existing body of knowledge in collection development criterion of physical format of information resources and users' satisfaction, failed to cover both despite its management importance. This is the gap in knowledge of collection development that this study intends to fill.

Research Design and Procedure

The survey research design was adopted for this study. The area of study was six university libraries located in the South-South zone of Nigeria. There are six states in the zone, namely; Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo and Rivers. The

study covered only Federal and State-owned university libraries. There are four federal universities namely; Universities of Benin, Calabar, Port Harcourt and Uyo. Each of the universities has its own university library. Three of the federal universities were selected for the study by the researchers. These are universities of Calabar (UNICAL), Port Harcourt (UNIPORT) and Uyo (UNIUYO) libraries. It should be noted that the zone is characterized with state universities established in each of the states found in the zone. The state universities are Akwa Ibom State University of Technology (AKSUT), Uyo; Niger Delta University (NDU), Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State; Cross River State University of Technology (CRUTECH), Calabar; Delta State University (DELSU), Abraka; Ambrose Ali University (AAU), Ekpoma, Edo State; Rivers State University of Science and Technology (RSUST), Port Harcourt and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (IAUOE), Rivers State, Port Harcourt. The state university libraries that were used for the study are NDU, CRUTECH and RSUST.

The population of this study is 7509 made up of 7426 lecturers and 83 library staff in university libraries in the South-South Zone of Nigeria. A sample size of 4627 lecturers and 36 library staff was obtained from the six university libraries studied in the zone namely; University of Calabar, Cross-River State, University of Port Harcourt and Rivers State university of Science and Technology located in Rivers State, University of Uyo and Akwa Ibom State University in Akwa Ibom State and Niger Delta University in Bayelsa State. The arithmetic mean of the results of Yaro Yameni's formula for sample size determination (Baridam, 2001) was used to determine the sample for the study. The instrument for data collection was a modified Likert (5-point) Scale type of questionnaire of Very High (VH) = 5, High (H) = 4, Average (A) = 3, Low (L) = 2, very low (VL) = 1. In order to determine the reliability of the instrument, the instrument was trial tested by the researcher in four university libraries – Federal University of Technology library, Owerri, Imo State University library, Owerri, University of Port Harcourt library and Rivers State University of Science and Technology library. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) formula was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. Using data collected from the pilot study, the reliability coefficient of 0.88 for both physical format and user's satisfaction questionnaire was obtained, indicating that the instrument is reliable.

Analysis of the research question was done using mean and standard deviation statistics, while the hypothesis was tested using t-Test statistics in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Data Analysis and Results

Research Question:

What is the influence of physical format of information resources on users' satisfaction with the information resources in university libraries in the South-South zone of Nigeria?

The answer to the research question is presented on Tables 1, 2 and 3.

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations of Responses by the Library Staff on Physical Format of the Information Resources in University Libraries under Study (N = 36)

S/N	Physical Format of the Information Resources		Categories					Total Score	Mean (Total Score ÷36)	Std Dev(SD)
			Very High (5)	High (4)	Average (3)	Low (2)	Very Low (1)			
1	Physical format is a factor when library acquires information resources	Freq	19	11	1	3	2	150	4.17	1.12
		Score	95	44	3	6	2			
2	Demand for a particular format is a factor when library acquires information resources	Freq	10	11	10	5	0	134	3.72	0.60
		Score	50	44	30	10	0			
3	In the library, paperback is preferred in book acquisition.	Freq	0	2	8	9	17	67	1.86	0.26
		Score	0	8	24	18	17			
4	In the library, hardback is preferred in book acquisition.	Freq	25	5	3	0	3	157	4.36	1.47
		Score	125	20	9	0	3			
5	Electronic resources are preferred to other formats when library acquires information resources	Freq	3	7	17	6	3	109	3.03	0.52
		Score	15	28	51	12	3			
6	Print formats are preferred to other formats when library acquires information resources	Freq	14	15	3	2	2	145	4.03	0.92
		Score	70	60	9	4	2			
7	The library acquires audiovisuals that will withstand multiple usage	Freq	8	14	9	3	2	131	3.64	0.63
		Score	40	56	27	6	2			

8	The library acquires materials that have quality prints	Freq	18	15	3	0	0	159	4.42	1.14
		Score	90	60	9	0	0			
9	The library acquires materials that have beautiful illustrations	Freq	18	11	6	1	0	154	4.28	1.04
		Score	90	44	18	2	0			

Researcher’s Field Survey, 2013

Table 1 presents data from responses by library staff on physical format of information resources. Items 1-9 are the different statements pertaining to the variable; physical format under the five categories of Very High, High, Average, Low and Very Low. Table 1 further shows the respondents mean scores for the items 1-9 statements are to some extent consistent ranging from 3.03, SD 0.52 (electronic resources are preferred to other formats when library acquires information resources) to 4.42, SD 1.14 (the library acquires books that have quality prints). As shown in the table, it is only the item number 3 with the statement - in the library, paperback is preferred in book acquisition – that have a mean score of 1.86 (SD, 0.26) which is less than the criterion score of 3.00. The mean scores for the other eight item statements are higher than the criterion score of 3.00; an indication that the information resources in the South-South university libraries are built taking cognizance of the variable, physical format of information resources. The overall mean score for the nine item statements is 3.72 with a standard deviation of 0.83 as shown in Table 3.

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations of Responses by the Lecturers on Users Satisfaction Based on Physical Format of the Information Resources in Universities under Study (N = 368)

S/N	Physical Format of the Information Resources	Categories					Total Score	Mean (Total Score=368)	Std Dev (SD)
		Very High (5)	High (4)	Average (3)	Low (2)	Very Low (1)			
1	I prefer hardback to other formats for my work.	Freq	129	102	87	25	1389	3.77	0.71
		Score	645	408	261	50			
2	I prefer paperback to other formats for my work	Freq	27	41	107	107	920	2.50	0.24
		Score	135	164	321	214			
3	Information resources with some special features (like maps, indices and illustrations) were helpful	Freq	110	122	88	33	1383	3.76	0.65
		Score	550	488	264	66			
4	I prefer electronic resources to other formats for my work	Freq	86	125	113	29	1342	3.65	0.59
		Score	430	500	339	58			
5	I prefer print formats to other formats for my work	Freq	71	110	105	59	1251	3.40	0.47
		Score	355	440	315	118			
6	Audiovisuals collection in my field will withstand multiple usage	Freq	65	95	120	47	1192	3.24	0.45
		Score	325	380	360	94			

Researcher’s Field Survey, 2013

Table 2 shows data from responses by lecturers on users’ satisfaction with information resources based on physical format. Items 1-6 are the different statement pertaining to the variable; users’ satisfaction based on physical format under the five categories of Very High, High, Average, Low and Very Low. Table 2 further shows that the respondents (users) are however divided in their opinion about their level of satisfaction with the information resources stocked by the university libraries based on physical format with mean scores between 3.77 and less than 3.0. Specifically the lecturers are satisfied with the item statements of; I prefer hardback to other formats for my work, 3.77 (SD 0.71); information resources with some special features (like

maps, indices and illustrations) were helpful, 3.76 (SD 0.65) ; I prefer electronic resources to other formats for my work, 3.65 (SD 0.59); I prefer print formats to other formats for my work, 3.40 (SD 0.47); and audiovisuals collection in my field will withstand multiple usage, 3.24 (SD 0.045); but are not satisfied with only one of the item statements; I prefer paperback to other formats for my work, 2.50 (SD 0.24). The mean scores for the other five item statements are higher than the criterion score of 3.00; an indication that the users of information resources in the South-South university libraries are satisfied with the acquired information resources based on physical format. The overall mean score for the six item statements is 3.39 with a standard deviation of 0.48 as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Respondents Concerning the Influence of Physical format on Users’ Satisfaction with Information Resources

Variable	Mean score (\bar{X})	Standard Deviation (SD)	Remarks
Physical format	3.72	0.83	High Level of Physical Format
Users’ Satisfaction	3.39	0.48	Moderate Level of Users’ Satisfaction

*** Criterion Score = 3.00**

In Table 3, the mean score for physical format 3.72 (SD, 0.83) is greater than the criterion score of 3.00. This indicates high level of physical format of the information resources in the university libraries in the South-South zone, Nigeria. The inference is that university libraries in the South -South zone, Nigeria highly consider the criterion, physical format while acquiring information resources for the libraries. The same Table 3 shows that the mean score for users’ satisfaction is 3.39 (SD, 0.48) based on physical format which is slightly higher than the criterion score of 3.00. This infers moderate level of users’ satisfaction with information resources based on physical format in university libraries in the South-South zone of Nigeria. The deduction is that the users of the university libraries in the South-South zone, Nigeria are slightly satisfied with the information resources in those libraries in term of the physical format. The mean score of 3.72 for physical format is higher than the mean score of 3.38 for users’ satisfaction with information resources. Also there is a wide margin in the standard deviations of 0.83 and 0.48. Therefore physical format and users’ satisfaction with the information resources in university libraries in the South-South zone of Nigeria are different.

Hypothesis:

Mean response score on physical format of information resources does not significantly influence users’ satisfaction with the information resources in university libraries in the South-South zone of Nigeria ($P < 0.05$).

The test of the hypothesis is presented in Table 4

Table 4: t-Test Analysis of the Influence of Physical Format of Information Resources on Users’ Satisfaction with Information Resources.

(Level of significance set for this study is 0.05 alpha)

Variable	N	Mean Score (\bar{X})	SD Score	$p = \text{Sig}(2\text{tailed})$	t-Statistics Calculated	t-Critical	Remarks
Physical Format	36	3.72	0.83	0.387	0.895	1.960	Accept Ho
Users’ Satisfaction	368	3.39	0.48				

Total N = 404. DF = 404-2= 402

In Table 4, the t-Test was run to determine the influence of physical format on users’ satisfaction with information resources in university libraries in the South-South zone, Nigeria. The Table 3 shows the influence of physical format of information resources on users’ satisfaction. The mean and standard deviation scores of the respondents’ responses with regards to the influence of physical format on users’ satisfaction with information resources in the university libraries in the university libraries in South-South zone, Nigeria is presented in Table 3. The table shows that the mean score for the physical format is 3.72, which is greater than the criterion score of 3.00. This shows that librarians in the zone build their library collection taking cognizance of the variable, physical format. The table also provides that the mean score for users’ satisfaction is 3.39, which is greater than the criterion score of 3.00. This reveals that users of the university libraries in the South-South zone of Nigeria are satisfied with the libraries’ information resources based on physical format.

From the above table the p (*sig, 2-tailed*) value is 0.387 and is greater than the pre-specified alpha level of 0.05. The indication is that there is no significant influence of mean response score of physical format on users’ satisfaction with the information resources in university libraries in the South-South zone of Nigeria. According to this, results indicate that there was no influence of physical format on users’ satisfaction which was not statistically significant $\{t(402) = 0.895, p = 0.387 > 0.05\}$. The t-

statistics is 0.895 with 402 degrees of freedom. The corresponding two-tailed p -value is 0.387, which is higher than 0.05, the pre-set alpha level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted and the conclusion is that there is no significant influence of mean response score of physical format on users' satisfaction with the information resources in university libraries in the South-South zone of Nigeria.

In addition to using a Sig (2-tailed) value to determine whether to reject or retain the null hypothesis, in Table 3, the t -calculated for physical format and users' satisfaction with information resources is 0.895, while the t -critical value at 0.05 level of significance is 1.960 at 402 degrees of freedom (df). The t -calculated was found to be less than the t -critical. The calculated t is statistically not significant at alpha (α) = 0.05 level of significance, since it is less than the critical value of t . This infers that there is no significant influence of mean response score of physical format on users' satisfaction with information resources in university libraries in the South-South zone of Nigeria. It therefore follows that the hypothesis that mean response score of physical format of information resources does not significantly influence users' satisfaction with the information resources in university libraries in the South-South zone of Nigeria is accepted.

Interpretation and Discussion of Results

From the data collected and analysed, mean response score on physical format of information resources does not significantly influence users' satisfaction with the information resources in university libraries in the South-South zone of Nigeria ($P > 0.05$). There is no significant influence of physical format on users' satisfaction with information resources. This result infers that there exists no significant influence of physical format on users' satisfaction with information resources in university libraries in the South-South zone of Nigeria. Users' satisfaction is influenced by physical format of the information resources. This is in agreement with Shoki (2007) findings that the physical format of a material is a very important criterion in the selection of information resources in academic libraries. Also Ifidon (1997) stated that one of the criteria for evaluating the quality of a publication is the format and production quality. Therefore, library's information resources acquisition should among other criteria be based on the suitability of the physical format for users. This is supported by Atta-Obeng (2007) who posited that before any library will collect information resources in any format the following points should be considered; ease of preservation, cost, durability, and ease of use by clientele. Physical format of an information resource spells the quality of the paper, the beauty of the design and strength of binding. The inference is that the librarians should ensure that the physical format of the information resources they want to acquire must be of high standard in terms of paper used, typeface or fonts, binding, design, colour and illustrations.

Conclusion

It can be concluded from the findings of this study that the acquisition of balanced information resources for university libraries will help the universities achieve their basic functions of teaching, research and community service. The results of the study revealed that there is no significant influence of the collection development criteria of physical format on users' satisfaction with information resources in the university libraries in the South-South zone of Nigeria. The implication of these findings is that users of university libraries in the zone will continue to get satisfaction from the use of information resources that are balanced in terms of physical format and content.

Recommendations

1. Librarians should take cognizance of the physical format of resources when acquiring information resources in their libraries.
2. They should endeavour to acquire resources that are balanced in terms of physical format and content

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