

# Service Quality and User Satisfaction as Determinants of Perceived Image of Librarians in Selected Private Universities in South-West Nigeria

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## Abstract

*The professional image of librarians gives a vivid description of the library profession and the services offered by professionals are fundamental to the thoughtfulness of what a profession means. Library users who are the major determinants of librarians' image have divergent views of librarians' image which leads to a professional identity crisis. Therefore, the study examined service quality and user satisfaction as determinants of perceived librarians' image in selected private universities in South-west, Nigeria. This study adopted a descriptive survey design of the correlational type. The population of this study comprised 31,342 undergraduates in six purposively selected private universities in South-west Nigeria. A multistage random sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 1152 and a questionnaire was used to collect data. The study revealed that librarians provide quality services to library users and that the majority of the undergraduates in private universities in the South-west are satisfied with the services offered by librarians. The study further revealed that there exists a positive significant relationship among service quality, users' satisfaction and perceived librarians' image ( $p = 0.01 < 0.05$ ). This study therefore recommended that librarians should boost their self-esteem by taking initiative and making an effort to become more visible and improve the perception*

*of library users about their professional image. Also, the study recommended that library managers should give librarians access to extensive and ongoing professional development opportunities, such as training, seminars, professional courses, and benchmarking successful tactics that will boost librarians' level of competence and confidence in order to enhance the quality of services offered to library users.*

**Keywords:** Image, Librarian, Library Resources, Private Universities, Service Quality, User Satisfaction.

## Introduction

Users are the most critical voice and are often at the centre of any library service encounter. Both the information needs and prospects of the users of academic libraries vary (Ozor and Toner, 2022). There is no doubt that librarians earn themselves honour and relevance when they discharge their duties accordingly. Thus, librarians need to engage in services that will enhance their visibility in the academic environment. The services offered by professionals are quite fundamental to the thoughtfulness of what a profession means. For library and information science professionals, service entails supporting people in locating information materials that meet their educational, recreational, and employment needs. Service is often regarded as the fundamental value or basic competency for librarians (Hicks, 2016).

Librarians provide information services and ensure that appropriate information materials are delivered and made reachable to information users

with ease. This will go a long way in encouraging the information user to come to the library more frequently. Gyau et al. (2021) asserted that the volume of books available for use in the library, the quality of information services offered to clientele and the extent of satisfaction with the services delivered to the clientele, define the level of effectiveness of a library. This is why it is vital for a library to assess its resources, services, and the quality of personnel who provide them.

According to Calvert (2001), Service Quality (SQ) is the evaluation of the discrepancy between a client's expectation and the client's perceived feeling of genuine performance. It is the degree to which services offered to library users satisfy their information needs. Library as a social institution has its value being conveyed in terms of the services, they render to library users. Library users are the greatest judges of the quality of services being provided by librarians. Service quality is frequently related to three aspects in academic libraries: organisation, resources and information services being provided by the library staff. The success of every library that is attached to a tertiary institution is dependent on the ability to organise its resources and make available information services towards meeting the information needs of its users. Suharto and Abdul Kadir (2021) stated that the performance of academic libraries is significantly influenced by the quality of services they offer. Assessing user satisfaction with future library developments requires a thorough examination of the quality of information services provided.

Furthermore, Ojasalo (2010) categorised service quality into two, namely; functional and technical quality. The technical quality of a service is considered as what the consumer obtains as a result of the service rendered. Technical quality can be related to physical objects such as books, the library building or structure, amenities, and equipment in an academic library setting. The user's perception of the service is characterised as functional quality, which plays a critical and essential part in its appraisal. Nevertheless, the service quality of a library brings about users' satisfaction.

User satisfaction, according to Zeithaml et al. (2000), is considered a process through which clients assess whether a product or service can meet clients' requirements. It is assumed that if the products or services do not match users' demands or expectations, they are dissatisfied with the products or services. Satisfaction of library users with accessible information materials and services determines the

length of time they spend in the library. Consequently, the image of librarians can be based on the available services, quality of the service, and ultimately satisfaction with library resources and services. It is noteworthy to state that the image of every profession influences the retention and contentment of those who practice the profession and those to whom they offer services to. Attitudes of professionals in a profession can be affected if the profession is seen to be archaic or misleading (Ijiekhuamhen et al., 2015).

Several researchers such as Watson (2001), Davis (2008), Bin Hashim and Mokhtar (2012) and Hicks (2016) have indicated that librarians are too particular about their professional image which would naturally improve as the services they offer improve. The hallmark of every profession is dedication and commitment to service. The American Library Association (2009), listed services as the main value and essential competence for librarians. The service provided by librarians to users determines the value put on librarianship.

Moreover, with the rapid advancement of information technologies which have resulted in information overload, the library as a space is evolving. This is why librarians amidst a professional identity crisis need to improve their services, and relationships with library users, and demonstrate their relevance in the digital era. The inability to provide quality services can erode the little confidence reposed in librarians as information providers and this can affect users' perceptions about their image. There is no doubt that the positive effect of service quality and user satisfaction with every service rendered by librarians can bring a desired change in the perceptions of library users about librarians' image. In light of this, this study was geared towards investigating service quality and user satisfaction as determinants of perceived librarians' image in private universities in South-west, Nigeria.

## Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives were to:

1. Identify library service quality provided by librarians for undergraduates in private universities in South-west, Nigeria;
2. Ascertain undergraduates' level of satisfaction with the services offered by librarians in private universities in South-west, Nigeria;
3. Investigate the perception of undergraduates about librarians' image in private universities in South-west, Nigeria;

4. To determine the effect of service quality on the perception of undergraduates about librarians' image;
5. To determine the effect of users' satisfaction on the perceived librarians' image

### Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided the study and they were tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

H<sub>01</sub> There is no significant relationship between undergraduates' perceived service quality and librarians' image in private universities in South-west, Nigeria.

H<sub>02</sub> There is no significant relationship between undergraduates' satisfaction with library services and perceived librarians' image in private universities in South-west, Nigeria.

H<sub>03</sub> There is no significant relationship between service quality, user satisfaction and perceived librarians' image in private universities in South-west, Nigeria.

### Literature Review

Awan and Mahmood (2013) stated that only customers can determine quality when evaluating service quality. All additional judgments are immaterial. Academic libraries are concerned about service quality for a variety of reasons, including increased competition from large bookstores and the Internet. Teachers and students at universities regard the library as a valuable source of information. According to Thompson et al. (2005), the service quality of a library is determined by four factors: service quality, library space, information resources, and information access. According to Cullen (2001), academic libraries are facing significant challenges in the global digital world, because of the growing competitive environment, and of necessity to boost the quality of their services to survive.

Usuka (2017) averred that providing a comfortable and accommodating location through effective placement of appropriate aesthetics facilities is one of the service qualities offered by librarians which aims at increasing users' patronage for meeting their educational needs. Fida et al. (2020) asserted that the foundation of all library information services is embedded in quality and that every library must endeavour to provide the best possible information service.

Quality information service can be regarded as one that completely satisfies the needs and desires

of the library clientele (Sahu, 2007). It could be argued that a library is preserving quality if it delivers sufficient information to the appropriate information user when due and in the appropriate format. Libraries use quantitative metrics to assess service quality which invariably engendered users' satisfaction. Alokuk (2020) looked at students' attitudes toward using library resources. The findings revealed that 80% of respondents indicated that the environment of the library is pleasant for students to visit regularly, 70% of respondents indicated that the library offers access to useful research materials, and 60% of respondents indicated that the library makes provision for study space and a conducive reading area. Since the facilities made accessible in service delivery encourage their value, the effect of service quality influences the reputation of librarians.

User satisfaction, which is seen as judgments about how well a service is viewed by its direct customers, can be used to assess satisfaction with library information service. Nwalo (2003) asserted that a library's efficacy is assessed by exactly how it meets the needs of its clientele. Since the efficacy of the library in its entirety can be derived from information service delivery, the idea of service effectiveness as a major determinant of satisfaction is of utmost importance to university libraries. Azib et al. (2024) reported from a study evaluating user satisfaction with digital library services. The result shows that students were not totally satisfied with the library's services, particularly with the quality of information service being rendered by librarians.

Kaushamalika and Weerakoon (2020) in a study conducted on students of the Open University of Sri Lanka, showed that library users were satisfied with the available physical facilities and that is infrastructural facilities, but they were not satisfied with the library collection and ICT tools provided by the library. Satisfaction with all resources as well as services of the library would bring about librarians' image promotion. According to a study conducted by Donati and Festo (2024) on Library service provision for improved satisfaction among library users in some selected university libraries, it was reported that library users' level of satisfaction was significant at the 5% and 1% significance levels. The majority of respondents (53%) gave the service quality a high rating for information availability. The survey also found that library users were highly impacted by the services that librarians provided.

Adam (2017) evaluated undergraduates' satisfaction and the library's service quality. The study found that less than average of the respondents were satisfied with library reference services (Current Awareness Services, Selective Dissemination of Information and Internet access etc.) Deo (2016) reported from a study that photocopying, printing and reference services. Also, the majority of the respondents indicated that the library catalogue offered good service, they have access to library services electronically and the library's opening hours were outstanding. According to the findings by Suresha (2016), library users were satisfied with library circulation services, reference services and OPAC services. Business students' opinions of university library service quality and satisfaction were explored by Hsu et al. (2014), who discovered that the reliability component of library service quality was regarded as good by the majority of the respondents. The quality of the services service provided invariably determines users' level of satisfaction with library services.

According to Suharto and Abdul Kadir (2021), some of the factors that affect user satisfaction include; responsiveness, usefulness, functionality, and reliability are some of the important elements that affect user satisfaction. Academic libraries should ensure that their services help students with their research, teaching, and learning. Trivedi et al. (2021) argue that the quality of digital library services in academic libraries is increasingly scrutinized, with a shift in perception viewing libraries primarily as physical spaces rather than as providers of quality online services.

Idowu and Oso (2022) posited that librarians' image can be enhanced through the efficiency of the librarians, adequacy of library collections and ultimately satisfaction of library users' needs. Motiang et al. (2014) revealed in their study that 42.5% of users showed contentment with the available information materials, whereas 26.6% were dissatisfied while 30.9% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the services. This is why Nnadozie (2017) recommended in his research that every library should improve the quality of library collections both print and electronic by striving hard to upgrade the library's infrastructure to offer excellent services to encourage users to patronise the library and promote the relevance of the library in this jet age.

According to a study conducted by Vassilakaki and Moniarou-Papaconstantinou (2016), public library users' perceptions of information professionals' image, status, and work performance are fair, but

it was suggested that librarians should implement new technology to perform their tasks effectively and develop themselves by acquiring required degrees to provide better services and improve their image. Amusa, Oyintola et al. (2014) outlined a number of competencies that professional librarians should possess, including technical skills like cataloguing, classification, indexing, and abstracting; communication skills; subject knowledge competencies; and reference and readers service skills (circulation and serial). They view these competencies as fundamental, conventional library talents; very few possess sophisticated technical skills.

Bin Hashim and Mokhtar (2012) posited that the advancement of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has brought a lot of improvement on the library, including the roles and expectations of librarians. Public library users' expectations of information professionals' image, rank, and work performance are fair, but librarians should introduce new technologies to perform their tasks effectively and establish themselves by obtaining the required degrees to deliver better services and improve their image. Librarians must refute the public's negative view of their professional image, improve it, and take steps to ensure that librarians have a good image and high status. Misconceptions about librarians undoubtedly affect their ability to practice their profession, since it would be difficult for librarians to successfully represent those who do not understand their importance or intent (Hicks, 2016).

Generally, this review brings to the fore, the importance of user satisfaction with the services rendered in the library and further establishes the nexus between service quality, user satisfaction and the impression that this creates in terms of the image of librarians who manage the libraries. It equally establishes the fact that the level of utilisation of library resources is directly proportional to users' confidence in services rendered in the library and the users' perceived image of the librarians.

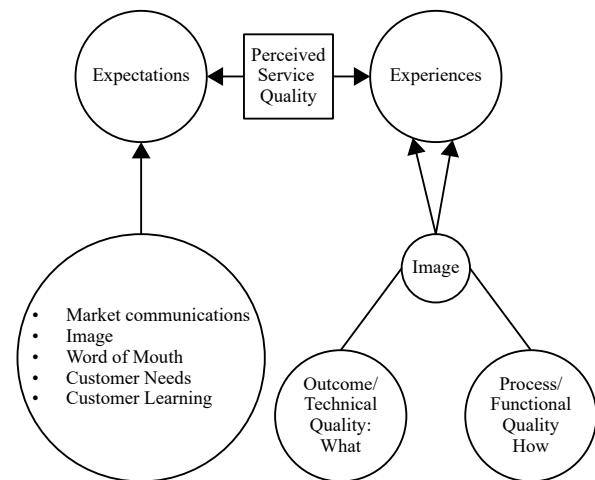
## Theoretical Framework

The model adapted for this study was established by Gronroos in 1984. According to Gronroos, what was required, was a service quality model that defined how customers assess service quality and that knowing this would help design more effective service-oriented concepts and models. Technical quality, functional quality, and image are the components of this paradigm,

which is conceived as a three-dimensional construct. Technical quality, according to the model's proponent, is what customers get as a result of their interactions with service organisations. Technical quality factors such as service quality and customer satisfaction are critical to their assessment of service quality. According to Gronroos, service quality is the result of a process in which customers compare their expectations to the service they believe they have received. As a result, consumers' experiences with a service are likely to influence their post-consumption evaluation of the service quality they received.

Furthermore, Grönroos (1984) defines functional quality as a service's sensitive performance and how the consumer receives the service. Reliability, Assurance, Tangible, Empathy, and Responsiveness are some of the variables in this concept. Furthermore, according to Einasto (2014), the library staff's command of the necessary knowledge, competence, and abilities to provide information services is also required for technological skills such as service availability assurance. Customers' expectations are influenced by their perceptions of the company, or its image. As a result, the corporate image is the result of how customers view the organisation. Service firms' image is crucial, and it is expected to be shaped primarily by the technical and functional quality of service.

The Gronroos service quality model was chosen as the most appropriate model for this study because all of its dimensions capture all aspects of this study. The service quality model, as one of the most often used reference points in librarianship, reflects the essence of the quality of service that must be delivered to information consumers. In addition to its application to the study, the model's constructs of functional and technical attributes, as well as corporate image, depict the study's principles in their entirety. The library profession is a type of service job in which customers value not just how they are served but also how well they are treated (functional quality). However, and perhaps more importantly, on the effect or nature of the services they receive and experience, which generate technical quality variables such as the quality of human and material resources available, and, finally, the quality of the service rendered. When library clients are satisfied with the services given by librarians, the public's impression of librarians' importance and image will shift. The validated model is displayed in Figure 1.



**Figure 1:** Grönroos (1984) Service Quality Model.

## Research Methodology

The descriptive survey design of the correlational type was adopted for this study. The population of this study comprised all undergraduates in private universities in South-west Nigeria. There are one hundred and forty-nine (149) private universities in Nigeria, out of which forty-seven (47) are in South-west Nigeria (NUC, 2024). Multi-stage sampling procedure was employed to select the target group for the study. The first step was to purposively select the most populated private universities in each state, which makes a total number of six universities. Therefore, the population of the study was 31,342 as presented in Table 1. The Research Advisors (2006) was used to select sample size 1152, at the confidence level of 95% with a margin error of \*2.5 out of the total population. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire which was validated by experts in the field of Library Science and has overall reliability value of 0.79, making the research instrument reliable to obtain the required data for the study. Thereafter, convenience sampling was used to administer copies of the questionnaire to undergraduates who were physically met using the library resources. The data collected from the questionnaire were analysed using mean, linear regression and correlation.

**Table 1:** Population of the Study.

State	University	Population
Ekiti	Afe Babalola University	8,500
Lagos	Caleb University	1,832
Ogun	Babcock University	12,000
Ondo	Achievers University	1,400
Osun	Bowen University	4,325
Oyo	Lead City	3,285
<b>Total</b>		<b>31,342</b>

Sources: Academic Planning Units of selected University, 2022.

## Data Presentation and Interpretation

### Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The demographic profile of the respondents is represented in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Demographic Profile of Respondents.**

S/N	Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
1	Male	502	43.6	43.6
2	Female	650	56.0	100.0
<b>Total</b>		<b>1152</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
<b>Age</b>				
1	16-20years	595	51.6	51.6
2	31-40years	300	26.0	77.7
3	36-40years	202	17.5	95.2
4	41 and above	55	4.8	100.0
<b>Total</b>		<b>1152</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
<b>Level of Study</b>				
1	100	298	25.9	25.9
2	200	289	25.1	51.0
3	300	273	23.7	74.7
4	400	179	15.5	90.2
5	500	87	7.6	97.7
6	600	26	2.3	100.0
<b>Total</b>		<b>1152</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Source: Author's Computation, 2024

Table 2 presented results on the demographic profile of respondents. The result reveals that 595 (51.6%) of the respondents were between the age of 16-20 years, 300 (26.0%) of them were between 21-30 years, 202 (17.5%) were between 31-40 years; while 55 (4.8%) were within 41 years and above. This implies that most of the students who partook in the study were youth within the age of 16-20 years, followed by those between 21-30 years category.

In terms of gender, it was shown in the result that out of the 1,152 respondents, 502 (43.6%) were males; while 650 (56.0%) were females. Hence, over (50%) of those who responded or took part in the research were females.

The result on the level of study of respondents is in the order of 100 level, 298 (25.9%); 200 level, 289 (25.1%); 300 level, 273 (23.7%); 400 level, 179 (15.5%); 500 level, 87 (7.6%) while 600 level is indicated by 26 (2.3%) respondents. Hence, most of the respondents in this research were the 100-level students, followed by the 200-level students respectively.

### Analysis of Research Questions

**Research Question 1:** What is the library service quality offered by librarians in private universities in South West, Nigeria?

**Table 3: Service Quality offered by Librarians in Private Universities in South-West, Nigeria.**

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std. Deviation
<b>Tangibility</b>							
1	The library is equipped with modern and functional equipment that enables quick access to information	395 (34.3%)	543 (47.1%)	149 (12.9%)	65 (5.6%)	3.10	.830
2	Using my personal computer, I can access electronic resources both outside and inside the campus	364 (31.6%)	589 (51.1%)	154 (13.4%)	45 (3.9%)	3.10	.772
3	The e-resources that I need for my studies are available in the library	312 (27.1%)	629 (54.6%)	154 (13.4%)	57 (4.9%)	3.04	.776
4	The library has functional infrastructures to ease learning	487 (42.3%)	496 (43.1%)	127 (11.0%)	42 (3.6%)	3.24	.789
<b>Reliability</b>							
1	Users feel safe and at ease during interaction with librarians	251 (21.8%)	664 (57.6%)	179 (15.5%)	58 (5.0%)	2.96	.757
2	The library is open to users at the appropriate time	386 (33.5%)	542 (47.0%)	142 (12.3%)	82 (7.1%)	3.07	.860
3	Users are well informed about when service will be delivered	468 (40.6%)	368 (31.9%)	214 (18.6%)	102 (8.9%)	3.04	.972
4	Library keeps appropriate records of users	510 (44.3%)	475 (41.2%)	122 (10.6%)	45 (3.9%)	3.26	.799
<b>Responsiveness</b>							
1	Librarians are available at all times to attend to my needs	404 (35.1%)	562 (48.8%)	126 (10.9%)	60 (5.2%)	3.14	.806
2	Librarians are skilled at resolving users problems	476 (41.3%)	517 (44.9%)	125 (10.9%)	34 (3.0%)	3.25	.762
3	All types of users are respected by librarians	408 (35.4%)	501 (43.5%)	153 (13.3%)	90 (7.8%)	3.07	.892
4	Users have confidence in librarians' abilities to assist them	370 (32.1%)	523 (45.4%)	192 (16.7%)	67 (5.8%)	3.04	.848
<b>Assurance</b>							
1	Librarians are always eager to assist library patrons	285 (24.7%)	507 (44.0%)	265 (23.0%)	95 (8.2%)	2.85	.887
2	Librarians often deliver services at the time agreed upon	283 (24.6%)	537 (46.6%)	256 (22.2%)	76 (6.6%)	2.89	.849
3	Librarians are always courteous	210 (18.2%)	392 (34.0%)	374 (32.5%)	176 (15.3%)	2.55	.958
<b>Empathy</b>							
1	Librarians are empathetic and patient when meeting users	319 (27.7%)	530 (46.0%)	229 (19.9%)	74 (6.4%)	2.95	.855
2	Individual activities are well-served by the librarians' ample and peaceful library space	368 (31.9%)	516 (44.8%)	199 (17.3%)	69 (6.0%)	3.03	.855
3	The library is a welcoming and friendly setting	329 (28.6%)	421 (36.5%)	273 (23.7%)	129 (11.2%)	2.82	.970

Source: Author's Computation, 2024

The results in Table 3 reveal the response rates on the quality of services offered by librarians in private universities in South West, Nigeria. From the results presented in the table above, the responses on the tangibility of library services indicate that the library is equipped with modern and functional equipment that enables quick access to information and that users can access library electronic resources both in and out of the campus with their personal computers, as evident by a mean score of ( $x = 3.10$ ) respectively. Also, respondents agreed that the e-resources needed for their studies are available in the library, corresponding to ( $x = 3.04$ ).

In terms of the reliability of library services, the highest mean score ( $x = 3.26$ ) indicates that the library keeps appropriate records of users. Other responses from respondents on reliability show that the library is open to users at the appropriate time ( $x = 3.07$ ); users are well informed about when service will be delivered ( $x = 3.04$ ), and users feel safe and at ease during interaction with librarians ( $x = 2.96$ ). In addition, library users strongly agreed that librarians are skilled at resolving users' problems ( $x = 3.25$ ); libraries are available at all times to attend to their needs ( $x = 3.14$ ); all types of users are respected

by librarians ( $x = 3.07$ ); and users have confidence in librarians' abilities to assist them ( $x = 3.04$ ), all corresponding to the level of responsiveness of librarians in delivering their services.

Furthermore, the responses on the criteria used to evaluate the level of users' assurance of library services show that librarians often deliver services at the time agreed upon ( $x = 2.89$ ); librarians are always eager to assist library patrons ( $x = 2.85$ ); and that librarians are always courteous ( $x = 2.55$ ). Moreover, in terms of empathy from librarians while in their service delivery, the majority of the respondents indicated that individual activities are well-served by the librarians' ample and peaceful library space, as evidenced by a mean score of ( $x = 3.03$ ). This is followed by those who agreed to the fact that librarians are empathetic and patient when meeting users ( $x = 2.95$ ); and that generally, the library is a welcoming and friendly setting, as indicated by a mean value of ( $x = 2.82$ ).

This result implies that libraries in private universities in South-West, Nigeria are providing quality services to library users.

**Research Question 2:** What is the level of undergraduates' satisfaction with the services offered by librarians in private universities in South West, Nigeria?

**Table 4:** Level of Undergraduates' Satisfaction with the Services offered by Librarians in Private Universities in South-West, Nigeria.

S/N	Statement	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Access to Information	398 (34.5%)	568 (49.3%)	121 (10.5%)	65 (5.6%)	3.13	.813
2	Reading carrels (tables and chairs)	420 (36.5%)	577 (50.1%)	107 (9.3%)	48 (4.2%)	3.19	.768
3	Study area	329 (28.6%)	625 (54.3%)	143 (14.4%)	55 (4.8%)	3.07	.773
4	Shelf arrangement	451 (39.1%)	525 (45.6%)	137 (11.9%)	39 (3.4%)	3.20	.777
5	Ventilation	258 (22.4%)	603 (52.3%)	212 (18.4%)	79 (6.9%)	2.90	.821
6	Lighting	395 (34.3%)	531 (46.1%)	144 (12.5%)	82 (7.1%)	3.08	.865
7	Opening hour	412 (35.85)	422 (36.6%)	215 (18.7%)	103 (8.9%)	2.99	.950
8	Quietness	482 (41.8%)	514 (44.6%)	106 (9.2%)	50 (4.3%)	3.24	.792
9	Cleanliness	387 (33.6%)	566 (49.1%)	123 (10.7%)	76 (6.6%)	3.10	.835
10	General library services	451 (39.1%)	554 (48.1%)	108 (9.4%)	39 (3.4%)	3.23	.754

Source: Author's Computation, 2024

Table 4 illustrates the response rate on the extent to which undergraduates are satisfied with the services offered by librarians in private universities in South West, Nigeria. From the results presented in the table above, the extent of users' satisfaction with services offered by librarians are in the order of Quietness ( $x = 3.24$ ); General library services ( $x = 3.23$ ); Shelf arrangements ( $x = 3.20$ ); Reading carrels ( $x = 3.19$ ); Access to information ( $x = 3.13$ ); Cleanliness ( $x = 3.10$ ); Lighting ( $x = 3.08$ ); Study area

( $x = 3.07$ ); Opening hour ( $x = 2.99$ ) and Ventilation ( $x = 2.90$ ).

This result implies that the majority of the undergraduates in private universities in South-West, Nigeria are very satisfied with the services offered by librarians. These services cut across quietness in the library, general library services, shelf arrangements for easy accessibility to information materials, comfortable reading carrels, cleanliness, lighting, study area, opening hour, ventilation, and so on.



**Research Question 3:** What are the perceptions of undergraduates about librarians' image in private universities in South-west, Nigeria?

**Table 5:** Perceptions of Undergraduates of Librarians Image in Private Universities in South-West, Nigeria.

S/N	Statement	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Never	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	I have contacts with librarians	383 (33.2%)	318 (27.6%)	279 (24.2%)	172 (14.9%)	2.67	1.003
2	Librarians give my enquiries appropriate time and attention	486 (42.2%)	290 (25.2%)	280 (24.3%)	96 (8.3%)	2.82	.893
3	Librarians assist me in literature search and book reservation	508 (44.1%)	305 (26.5%)	244 (21.2%)	95 (8.2%)	2.89	.891
4	The end result of my contacts with librarians is useful	400 (34.7%)	479 (41.6%)	197 (17.1%)	76 (6.6%)	3.04	.884
5	Librarians treat me fairly and without discrimination in their dealings with me	352 (30.6%)	331 (28.7%)	294 (25.5%)	175 (15.2%)	2.66	1.019
6	Librarians provide accurate answers and quality service	399 (34.6%)	383 (33.2%)	263 (22.8%)	107 (9.3%)	2.92	.963
7	Librarians respond clearly and accurately to enquiries	490 (42.5%)	368 (31.9%)	222 (19.3%)	72 (6.3%)	3.00	.873
8	Librarians provide resources that are appropriate for my course	374 (32.5%)	341 (29.6%)	277 (24.0%)	160 (13.9%)	2.67	.991
9	Librarians enable me to be well-organised in my academic endeavours	314 (27.3%)	503 (43.7%)	234 (20.3%)	101 (8.8%)	2.89	.903
10	Librarians help me distinguish between trustworthy and untrustworthy information	474 (41.1%)	409 (35.5%)	177 (15.4%)	92 (8.0%)	3.04	.909
11	Librarians provide me with the information competence skills I need in my study	509 (44.2%)	308 (26.7%)	218 (18.9%)	117 (10.2%)	2.88	.921
12	Librarians often listen to recommendations for new or different Resource	400 (34.7%)	334 (29.0%)	277 (24.0%)	141 (12.2%)	2.65	.977
		<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
13	Librarians assist me in staying current in my area of interest	336 (29.2%)	491 (42.6%)	211 (18.3%)	114 (9.9%)	2.91	.929
14	Librarians frequently assist me in my academic pursuits	237 (20.6%)	345 (29.9%)	300 (26.0%)	270 (23.4%)	2.48	1.063
15	Librarians motivate me to be more productive in my academic endeavours	223 (19.4%)	417 (36.2%)	371 (32.2%)	141 (12.2%)	2.63	.931
16	Through the help of librarians, I am able to know the difference between trustworthy and untrustworthy information	358 (31.1%)	557 (48.4%)	169 (14.7%)	68 (5.9%)	3.05	.832
17	Librarians equip me with the information literacy abilities I require for my study	511 (44.4%)	359 (31.2%)	208 (18.1%)	74 (6.4%)	3.00	.866
18	In general, I am pleased with the treatment I receive from librarians	382 (33.2%)	402 (34.9%)	198 (17.2%)	170 (14.8%)	2.45	.942
19	In general, I am pleased with the support I have received for my educational, learning and research needs	325 (28.2%)	491 (42.6%)	196 (17.0%)	140 (12.2%)	2.87	.960
20	Librarians attitude has influenced the way I use the library	490 (42.5%)	300 (26.0%)	253 (22.0%)	109 (9.5%)	2.85	.915
21	Librarians are difficult to approach	90 (7.8%)	197 (17.1%)	341 (29.6%)	524 (45.5%)	2.97	.883
22	Librarians are professional and very friendly	310 (26.9%)	435 (37.8%)	300 (26.0%)	107 (9.3%)	2.82	.933
23	I don't think librarians have any training	104 (9.0%)	221 (19.2%)	304 (26.4%)	523 (45.4%)	2.89	.898
24	I think librarians generally have positive image	447 (38.8%)	323 (28.0%)	293 (25.4%)	89 (7.7%)	2.87	.910

Source: Author's Computation, 2024

The result presented in Table 5 above shows that the majority of the respondents agreed that through the help of librarians, they are able to know the difference between trustworthy and untrustworthy information as indicated by mean value ( $x = 3.05$ ); closely followed by those that strongly agreed that the end result of their contacts with librarians is useful and that librarians help them distinguish between trustworthy and untrustworthy information as indicated by mean values ( $x = 3.05$ ) respectively. Likewise, a larger percentage of the respondents also agreed that librarians equip them with the information literacy abilities required for their studies, this corresponds to the mean value ( $x = 3.00$ ). It was also agreed upon by the respondents that librarians provide accurate answers and quality services ( $x = 2.92$ ); librarians assist them in staying current in their area of interest ( $x = 2.91$ ); librarians assist them in literature search and book reservation, librarians enable them to be well-organised in their academic endeavours, as indicated by mean values ( $x = 2.89$ ) respectively. Furthermore, the results also

reveal that librarians provide undergraduate students with the information competence they need in their studies ( $x = 2.88$ ); and most of these students think librarians generally have a positive image and are also generally pleased with the support they have received for their educational, learning and research needs with mean values ( $x = 2.87$ ) respectively.

Similarly, librarians attitude was found to have influenced the way undergraduate students use the library ( $x = 2.85$ ) as these students agreed that librarians are professional and very friendly and that librarians give their enquiries appropriate time and attention as indicated with mean values of ( $x = 2.82$ ) respectively. Moreover, a reasonable number of the respondents agreed to have contact with librarians, and that librarians provide resources that are appropriate for their course of study ( $x = 2.67$ ) respectively. In addition, they agreed that librarians are fair and without discrimination in their dealings with students ( $x = 2.66$ ); librarians often listen to recommendations for new or different resources ( $x =$



2.65); librarians motivate them to be more productive in their academic endeavours ( $x = 2.63$ ); librarians frequently assist me in their academic pursuits ( $x = 2.48$ ); and in general, the students are pleased with the treatment they receive from librarians ( $x=2.45$ ). However, some of the respondents believe that librarians are difficult to approach as indicated by mean value ( $x = 2.97$ ); and that they do not think librarians have any training ( $x = 2.89$ ).

The results above indicate that undergraduates in private universities in South-west, Nigeria have a positive perception of librarians' image. This is so as many of these students agreed that through the help of librarians, they are able to know the difference between trustworthy and untrustworthy information; they are

equipped with information literacy abilities required for their studies; and that librarian provides accurate answers and quality services, as well as assisting them in literature search and book reservation. Also, they stated that librarians enable them to be well-organised in their academic endeavours, and have influenced the way they use the library. The students were found to be pleased with the support they have received from librarians for their educational, learning and research needs, and in general, they believe librarians are professionals, very friendly and have positive images. Lastly, they agreed that the end results of their contacts with librarians were useful.

**Research Question 4:** What is the effect of service quality on the perceived librarians' image?

**Table 6:** Effect of Service Quality on the Perceived Librarians' Image.

Model Summary						
Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1		.091 <sup>a</sup>	.008	.007	9.020	
a. Predictors: (Constant), Service Quality						
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	773.747	1	773.747	9.511	.002 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	93556.128	1150	81.353		
	Total	94329.875	1151			
a. Dependent Variable: Perceived Librarians' Image in Private Universities in Nigeria						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Service Quality						
Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	73.058	1.685		43.361	.000
	Service Quality	-.276	.090	-.091	-3.084	.002
a. Dependent Variable: Perceived Librarians' Image in Private Universities in Nigeria						
Source: Author's Computation, 2024						

The Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> value in the model summary corresponding to (0.008) suggests that the model fits well. The F-Statistics score of (9.5111) indicates that the model is statistically significant as a whole. Also, the significant value  $p = 0.002 < 0.05$  shows that library

service quality has a significant positive effect on the perceived librarians' image.

**Research Question 5:** What is the effect of users' satisfaction on the perceived librarians' image?

**Table 7:** Effect of User Satisfaction on the Perceived Librarians' Image.

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.163 <sup>a</sup>	.027	.026	8.936	
a. Predictors: (Constant), Users' Satisfaction					

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2505.992	1	2505.992	31.385	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	91823.883	1150	79.847		
	Total	94329.875	1151			
a. Dependent Variable: Perceived Librarians' Image in Private Universities in Nigeria						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Users' Satisfaction						

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	64.003	.748		85.540
	Users' Satisfaction	.167	.030	.163	5.602
a. Dependent Variable: Perceived Librarians' Image in Private Universities in Nigeria					
Source: Author's Computation, 2024					

The Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> value in the model summary corresponding to (0.026) suggests that the model fit well. The F-Statistics score of (31.385) indicates that the model is statistically significant as a whole. In addition, the p-value,  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$  reveals that users' satisfaction has a positive significant effect on

the perceived librarians' image.

### Test of Hypotheses

**H0<sub>1</sub>** There is no significant relationship between service quality and perceived librarians' image in private universities in South-West, Nigeria.

**Table 8:** Relationship between Service Quality and Perceived Librarians' Image in Private Universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Correlations			
		Service Quality	Perceived Librarians' Image in Private Universities in Nigeria
Service Quality	Pearson Correlation	1	-.091**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	1152	1152
Perceived Librarians' Image in Private Universities in Nigeria	Pearson Correlation	-.091**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	1152	1152
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			
Source: Author's Computation, 2024			

The result in Table 8 shows that there is a significant relationship between service quality and perceived librarians' image in private universities in South-West, Nigeria as indicated by p-value ( $0.002 < 0.05$ ). Since the p-value (0.002) is less than the alpha value (0.05), the alternative hypothesis is

therefore accepted, while the null hypothesis is rejected.

**H0<sub>2</sub>** There is no significant relationship between users' satisfaction with library services and perceived librarians' image in private universities in South-West, Nigeria.

**Table 9:** Relationship between Users' Satisfaction with Library Services and Perceived Librarians' Image in Private Universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Correlations			
		Users' Satisfaction	Perceived Librarians' Image in Private Universities in Nigeria
Users' Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.163**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1152	1152
Perceived Librarians' Image in Private Universities in Nigeria	Pearson Correlation	.163**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1152	1152
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			
Source: Author's Computation, 2024			

The result above shows that there is a significant relationship between users' satisfaction with the library services and perceived librarians' image in private universities in South-West, Nigeria, corresponding to p-value ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). Since the p-value (0.000) is

less than the alpha value (0.05), the null hypothesis is therefore rejected.

**H0<sub>3</sub>** There is no significant relationship between service quality, users' satisfaction and perceived librarians' image in private universities in South-West, Nigeria.

**Table 10:** Relationship between Service Quality, Users' Satisfaction and Perceived Librarians' Image in Private Universities in South-West, Nigeria.

Model Summary						
Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1		.213 <sup>a</sup>	.045	.044	8.852	
a. Predictors: (Constant), Service Quality, Users Satisfaction						
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4289.666	2	2144.833	27.370	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	90040.209	1149	78.364		
	Total	94329.875	1151			
a. Dependent Variable: Perceived Librarians' Image in Private Universities in Nigeria						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Service Quality, Users Satisfaction						
Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	71.181	1.677		42.440	.000
	Users Satisfaction	.205	.031	.200	6.698	.000
	Service Quality	-.434	.091	-.142	-4.771	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Perceived Librarians' Image in Private Universities in Nigeria						
Source: Author's Computation, 2024						

The Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> value in the model summary corresponding to (0.044) indicates that the model fits well. The F-Statistics score of (27.370) shows that the model is statistically significant as a whole. In addition, the p-value,  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$  implies high significance among the three variables tested.

This result means that there exists a strong positive relationship between service quality, users' satisfaction and the perceived librarians' image in private universities in South-West, Nigeria. In other words, a quality service delivery by librarians would automatically increase the level of users' satisfaction, thus positively influencing their perceptions of librarians' image, and vice versa. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

## Discussion of Findings

One of the findings of this study shows that contemporary and functional equipment which allows for easy access to information, comfortable and inviting locations, functional infrastructures to ease learning, adequate and quiet space for individual activities and adequate keeping and maintenance of users' records are some of the library service quality indexes rendered by librarians for undergraduates in private universities in South-west, Nigeria. The outcome of this study is in tandem with the findings of Alokuk (2020) who affirmed that the majority of the respondents in his study revealed that the library offered the right to use beneficial information materials in addition to a favourable reading environment. This finding is also in agreement with that of Adam (2017) who attested

that the majority of the undergraduates were highly pleased with the hygiene of the library environment, illumination of the library edifice, seating organisation of the library, the understanding and politeness of library staff in offering information services, current and relevant collections of information materials in both print and electronic and proper arrangement of information materials for easy access and retrieval.

Another finding of this study is that the majority of the undergraduates of private universities in South-west, Nigeria indicated to be very satisfied with the services offered by librarians. These services cut across general library services, shelf arrangements for easy accessibility to information materials, comfortable reading carrels, cleanliness, lighting, study area, opening hour, ventilation and so on. This means that library services rendered by the private universities in South-west, Nigeria are, to a large extent, meeting part of the anticipations of the patrons. The outcome of this investigation is contrary to the results of Motiang et al. (2014) where less than 50% of those who responded reported satisfaction with library services offered by librarians in the University of Limpopo. On the other hand, the finding agrees with the findings of Shah (2011) and Ijiekhuamhen et al. (2015) which revealed students' satisfaction with many aspects of library services offered by librarians in their respective institutions. Since the baseline of determining satisfaction is when experience surpasses expectations, thus, it can be deduced from this finding that private university students were highly satisfied with the status of library services received from their various universities. One could infer from this that the huge cost of attending private universities

in Nigeria is justified considering the moderate level of satisfaction reported by the students.

The next hypothesis showed that there is a positive significant correlation between undergraduates' perceived service quality and librarians' image in private universities in South-west, Nigeria. This means that service quality enjoyed by library users portends the proficiency of the librarians. The finding of this study confirms the result of Okhawere et al. (2017) who reported that most of those who responded perceived all the information services delivered by the library to be highly effective. The implication of their submission is that their information needs were adequately met.

The finding of this study also indicated that there was a positive significant relationship between undergraduates' satisfaction with library services and perceived librarians' image in private universities in South-west, Nigeria. It means that satisfaction with library services is dependent on the competency of the librarian in effective service delivery to library users. This finding disagrees with the findings of Alison et al. (2012), Sivathaasan (2013) and Bulama et al. (2017) whose results revealed that a medium but noteworthy correlation existed between students' satisfaction with library services and librarians' image. On the other hand, Ikolo (2015) revealed in a study that a significant positive correlation exists between satisfaction with users' services and librarians' image. The outcome of the study suggests that the stronger the librarian's level of competency or image, the greater the degree of user satisfaction with library services and vice-versa. This implies that the role of librarians cannot be over-emphasised in the overall satisfaction of students and other library clientele.

## Conclusion

It is concluded based on the results of this study that service quality has a direct significant positive effect on librarians' image, also, user satisfaction has a significant positive effect on librarians' image. This study concludes that both perceived service quality and user satisfaction jointly determined librarians' image. Also, private university owners, to a large extent have met the expectations of undergraduates in standardising their libraries and have equipped librarians with adequate facilities needed to provide high-quality services to the satisfaction of users.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The findings of this study revealed that the service quality rendered by librarians in private universities was high. Efforts should be made by all stakeholders to sustain this tempo. To have improved library services, the management of private universities should provide the necessary facilities required in any standardised library, particularly, an ICT-integrated system for effective performance.
2. The findings of this study revealed that the image of librarians is perceived to be positive. Efforts should be made by librarians in private universities in South-west, Nigeria to continuously update their knowledge the more and enhance their proficiency level through capacity-building programmes such as attendance of seminars, workshops, conferences and training programmes in their profession. This will go a long way in meeting the students' library needs and help in sustaining the positive image that the students have had about the university librarians.
3. Since the findings of the study indicated that there is a high level of satisfaction with services provided by librarians, therefore it is recommended that librarians should sustain the service provided for undergraduates. Also, university librarians should endeavour to employ client-friendly strategies and indirectly educate them on how to access library resources.

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