**EVALUATING THE USE OF ACADEMY LIBRARY BY CADETS AND POST GRADUATE STUDENTS IN NIGERIAN DEFENCE ACADEMY, KADUNA, NIGERIA**

*By*

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***Abstract***

*The study examines the extent of use of Academy Library and information resources by Cadets and PG students in Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA), Kaduna, Nigeria. Questionnaires were used to gather data. The findings revealed that the major reason why some cadets do not use the library especially the junior ones, are that they are afraid of their seniors and lack of time due to their tight schedule. And their reasons for not using the Internet services in the e-library are that they are not aware that they can use the e-library. While the PG students’ reasons are that most of the time the Internet is not functional and that there is inadequate power supply. It is recommended among other things that the Academy library management should constantly remind the cadets and their Battalion (hostel) commanders that they (Cadets) should always feel free to come to the library and use its resources and services and that seniority is not allowed.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Nigerian Defence Academy was established in January, 1964 to provide military officer training for the Nigerian Armed Forces. It was upgraded to a degree awarding institution in 1985. The upgrading was in keeping with the trends in many parts of the world which is aimed at producing well trained officers with requisite intellectual, leadership and academic ability Hence, the NDA produces officers with broad based training in both military and academic subjects. The Academic Branch of the NDA conducts a 4 year bachelor degree and one year exclusively for military training (500 level cadets). The Academic Branch has three faculties with sixteen departments awarding bachelor degrees in Engineering, Sciences, Social Sciences and the Arts. Postgraduate programme awards doctorate degrees, masters and post graduate diplomas in various fields.

Nigerian Defence Academy is the only Military University in Nigeria. With undergraduates as military students and referred to as cadets, while the Postgraduate students are both military and civilian students. Following the upgrading of Nigerian Defence Academy to a degree awarding institution in 1985 and its subsequent relocation to the permanent site, the main library was restructured to meet the growing needs of its clientele. Therefore apart from the main library, there are other branches of the library include; the Post Graduate School Library, 3 faculty Libraries, 14 departmental libraries, 1 library in each of the Army, Navy and Air force military wings were established in order to provide cadets, PG Students, officers and staff with serene and comfortable learning environment with information resources and services delivered at their door steps.

The main library has a seating capacity of 400 and the Post Graduate School library has seating capacity of 120. The faculty and the departmental libraries have 10 each. The main library and its branches have over 30,000 volumes of books and about 50 titles of current journals, with staff strength of 31 staff (excluding 9 administrative staff and 8 cleaners) made up of 12 Professionals and 17 Para professionals and 2 junior staff.

The Academy Library is supposed to contribute to the pursuit of the Academy vision, mission and strategic goals by facilitating access to information resources in print, non-print and electronic format to all. Despite the regimentality and peculiarity of cadets’ training, the Academy Library is supposed to provide a place for reading, learning and research that is non-threatening and neutral, where rank and seniority is not tolerated.

However, observations and reports over time indicate Cadets low patronage of the Academy Library. They rarely use the library, even when they do, they come to the library to sleep, rest, dodge their seniors, etc. Hence, there is need to evaluate how Cadets and PG students access the library and utilize the information resources and services.

The importance of evaluating library use cannot be overemphasized especially due to the uniqueness of the Nigerian Defence Academy, as a military university whereby the Academy provides training in both military and academic subjects. It is very important to evaluate how Cadets and PG students use the library, know their needs and their constraints in using the library. This is because Nkamnebe (2014) stated that constant evaluation of university libraries use is the surest way of ensuring that information is obtained so as to ascertain whether the library is meeting its expected goals or not, so that adjustments can be made where necessary for effective information service delivery. Ugah (2007) also stated that “the era when University libraries assumed that they were providing excellent services is over”; he further stated that “dwindling resources and increased enrolment demand that periodic evaluation be done”. Swarez (2007) notes that “the usual method of measuring service quality has been to focus on service delivery and customer satisfaction within the framework of a marketing model, and traditionally using questionnaires and surveys to quantify data”.

**OBJECTIVEs OF THE STUDY**

The low cadets’ patronage was observed at the main library overtime, this necessitated the need to carry out an evaluation with regards to the use of library, its resources and services, so as to determine the strength and weakness in the services provided and make recommendations to the Academy Management.

The study specifically is set out to achieve the following objectives:

1. How cadets and PG students access and use the Academy Library

2. Assess the adequacy and relevancy of information resources to Cadets and PG

students in the Academy Library

3. Assess the type of information services provided to Cadets and PG students

4. Determine the reasons for the low patronage of Academy Library by Cadets and

PG students

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

Although there have been a lot of studies on use of libraries by students in universities, but since the inception of Nigerian Defence Academy, to the best of the knowledge of the researcher, no research has been done on Cadets’ use of library

Dickenson (2006) stated that the four most important reasons cited by students for using their college and university libraries were: quite space for study, availability of computers and other electronic resources, availability of specific materials and convenient location. Yusuf et el (2010) survey revealed that reading for examination and photocopying materials accounted for most students visit to the library. It was recommended among other things that the library should organize a “Library Week” each semester to showcase the various resources available in the library.

Nwezeh and Shabi (2011) in their findings revealed that students’ use of library and books in academic institution depends largely on faculty attitudes towards the library, the way faculty promotes and encourage students use of library by way of their own examples as well as their teaching method.

**METHODOLOGY**

A survey research method was adopted for the study. There are 1019 registered users in the Academy Library. Data for the study were collected through questionnaire. Cadets and PG School Students who visited the library within the period were randomly selected. A total of 250 questionnaires were distributed to cadets and PG School Students.

**PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

Out of the 250 questionnaires distributed, which 232 were returned, duly filled and and found usable, giving a response rate of 92.8% comprising of 173 (74.8%) male and 59 (25.4%) female. The study was analysed using simple frequency count. Interviews were conducted with some cadets and PG School Students to clarify certain issues

The sample was differentiated into 5 levels of study, 100, 200, 300, 400 and PG students. 500 level cadets are excluded because they were not in the Academy; they spend their final year in their various service units doing their military training. The response rate is presented in table 1 below:

**Table 1: Level of Students**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/No** | **Level** | **No. of Questionnaires Distributed** | **No. of Questionnaires Returned** | **% of Questionnaires Returned** |
| 1. | 100 | 40 | 37 | 14.8 |
| 2. | 200 | 40 | 36 | 14.4 |
| 3. | 300 | 40 | 38 | 15.2 |
| 4. | 400 | 40 | 39 | 15.6 |
| 5. | 500 | 90 | 82 | 32.8 |
|  | Total | 250 | 232 | 92.8 |

Table 1 above shows that 37 (14.8%) are 100 level cadets, 36 (14.4%) 200 level, 38 (15.2%) 300, 39 (15.6%) 400 and 82 (32.8%) PG students.

**Table 2: Frequency of library use**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/No** | **Period** | **Number** | **Percentage** |
| 1. | Once a week | 50 | 21.5 |
| 2. | Twice a week | 46 | 19.9 |
| 3. | Once a month | 39 | 16.8 |
| 4. | Other (specify) | 97 | 41.8 |
|  | Total | 232 | 100 |

Going by the table above, 50 (21.5%) use the library once a week, 46 (19.8%) twice a week, 39 (16.8%) once a month while quite a large number 97 (41.8%) indicated that they only use the library during exams or prep period.

**Table 3: Adequacy of Information Resources Provided**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/No** | **Information Resources Provided** | **Adequate** | **%** | **Not Adequate** | **%** | **Total** | **%** |
| 1. | Text books | 180 | 77.5 | 52 | 22.4 | 232 | 100 |
| 2. | Journals | 51 | 62.1 | 31 | 37.8 | 82 | 100 |
| 3. | Internet facilities | 112 | 62.1 | 31 | 37.8 | 232 | 100 |
| 4. | E-resources (CD roms, downloaded materials, etc) | 43 | 52.4 | 39 | 47.5 | 82 | 100 |
| 5. | Newspapers | 198 | 85.3 | 34 | 14.6 | 232 | 100 |
| 6. | Fictions | 175 | 75.4 | 57 | 24.6 | 232 | 100 |

From the result of the table above it could be seen that 82 respondents (PG students) indicated that the Academy Library adequately provide these services. High percentages (62.1%) indicated that information resources such as journals are adequately provided. Academy Library provides adequate information resources such as text books (77.5%), Newspapers (85.3%) fiction (75.4%), while Internet facilities have high percentage (52%) as inadequate.

**Table 4: Adequacy of Types of Services Provided**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/No** | **Services Offered by Academy Library** | **Adequate** | **%** | **Not Adequate** | **%** | **Total** |  |
| 1. | Internet services | 112 | 45.2 | 120 | 54.8 | 232 |  |
| 2. | Loan facilities | 220 | 94.8 | 12 | 5.2 | 232 |  |
| 3. | Reference services | 201 | 86.6 | 31 | 13.4 | 232 |  |
| 4. | Photocopying | 230 | 99.1 | 2 | 0.9 | 232 |  |

Results from the table above show that the respondents indicated that the Academy Library adequately provide loan facilities (94.8%), reference services (86.6%), photocopying (99.1%) and high percentage for Internet service (54.8%) as is inadequate.

**Table 5: Do Lecturers ask you to use the Library?**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/No** |  | **Number** | **Percentage** |
| 1. | Yes | 139 | 59.9 |
| 2. | No | 93 | 40.1 |
|  | Total | 232 | 100 |

The result in Table 5 above showed that quite a large number 139 (59.9%) lecturers do not tell their student to use the library.

**Table 6: Useful of books to help with their work**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/No** | **Availability of Materials** | **Number** | **Percentage** |
| 1. | Always | 40 | 17.5 |
| 2. | Most of the time | 58 | 25.0 |
| 3. | Sometimes | 99 | 42.7 |
| 4. | Not very often | 33 | 14.2 |
| 5. | Never | 0 |  |
| 6. | Other (specify) | 2 | 0.9 |
|  | Total | 232 | 100 |

Table 6 as presented above, revealed that of the 232 (99%) that responded to whether they find useful books to help them with their work, the number of those who responded to ‘sometimes’ are 99 (42.6%) and ‘Not very often’ are 33 (14.2%) are too high. The high rate could be due to the fact that the books on their field are not too relevant to them.

**Table 7: Use of Internet facilities in the library**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/No** |  | **Number** | **Percentage** |
| 1. | Yes | 147 | 63.3 |
| 2. | No | 85 | 36.7 |
|  | Total | 232 | 100 |

From table 7 above, Majority of the respondents, 147 (63.3%) cadets and PG students use the Internet facilities in both the main library and the PG School library. The 85 (36.6%) that indicated that they do not use the library, gave various reasons such as: they are not aware of the Internet services, they do not have time, while the PG students reasons are that most of the time the Internet is not functional and that there is inadequate power supply.

**Table 8: Reasons for using the library**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/No** | **Reasons** | **Number** | **Percentage** |
| 1. | Pleasure, personal interest | 24 | 9.2 |
| 2. | For study | 113 | 43.2 |
| 3. | For assignment | 70 | 26.8 |
| 4. | Read newspaper | 24 | 9.2 |
| 5. | To browse internet | 22 | 8.4 |
| 6. | Other (specify) | 8 | 3.1 |
|  | Total | 261 | 100 |

The table 8 above required respondents to choose more than one item: The result indicated that majority 113 use the library for study. The respondent that indicated others gave reasons as: To rest and to photocopy.

Two shades of opinions emerged from the open ended question which called for individual and honest responses on what could be done in the library to encourage more cadets and PG students to use the library and to improve it: The cadets want the use of the library to be made a parade, with the condition that seniors should not disturb the junior cadets; assignment should be given to them to enable them use the library more; make their schedule more flexible to accommodate time for extra study in the library, the library should be included in cadets’ lecture time table. The PG students responses are: the library should be more equipped with useful, relevant and current books, extend opening hours of the PG school library beyond 2pm and open on Sundays, increase reading space, provide efficient functional Internet facilities, alternative power supply should be provided, increase staff strength to serve students better.

**INTERVIEW**

The individual student interview was helpful to the researcher. Cadets were interviewed during prep period which is conducted one to two months prior to examinations and it is compulsory to attend. The researcher wanted to clarify why some cadets do not use the library, majority of those interviewed indicated that they are afraid of their seniors and passing near the Military Training Unit which is located near the main library, and their tight schedule do not give them much time to come to the library.

**CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION**

The major revelation of the study is that the junior Cadets reasons for not using the Academy Library are that they are afraid of the senior Cadets and the reasons for not utilizing the e-library Unit is that the Cadets are not aware that they can use the services in the e-library Unit. The study also revealed that majority of the respondents use the library either once a month, during exams and prep periods. Majority gave their reasons for using the library for study 113 (48 %) and 70 (29 %) for assignment.

Effective use of the library by all cadets irrespective of level, and PG students, is the principal objectives of the Academy Library. It is therefore important to put strategies aimed at encouraging adequate use of the Academy Library.

In view of the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made so as to encourage the Cadets and PG students to use the Academy Library and also to improve the services of the Academy library:

1. The Academy Library Management should not relent their effort to constantly remind the cadets and their Battalion (hostel) Commanders that they (Cadets) should feel free to come to the library and use all the available resources and services, and that they should be aware that one of the functions of the Academy Library is to provide them with a place for reading, researching and browsing that is non-threatening and neutral, where rank and seniority is not salient.

2. The prep period which is usually conducted one to two months before examination once a year, though not regular, should be conducted twice, i.e. two months before first semester examinations and two months before second semester examinations.

3. Adequate, relevant, useful and current books and journals are acquired to boost

the collections of the Academy Library.

4. Lecturers should make frantic effort to give cadets assignment that will allow

them make use of the library and its resources.

5. The Academy Management should provide efficient and effective internet

facilities services in the main and all the branch libraries and subscribe to online journals and books

6. The Academy Management should provide alternative power supply such as

inverters and big generator in the PG School library.

7. Library staff strength should be increased so as to serve the students better,

especially in the PG library.

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