LAFIA JOURNAL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE
Volume 8, Number 1, 2025.
Available online *https://journals.fulafia.edu.ng/index.php/ljlis*
ISSN:Print - 2814-0702, Online - 2814-0710
LJLIS

AN ASSESSMET OF INSTITUTIONAL READINESS FOR ENHANCED SERVICE QUALITY: A CASE STUDY OF FEDERAL UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES, IN NORTHEAST, NIGERIA.

Umar Ahmed
Library department, Federal Polytechnic Bali
Email- umarahmed410@gmail.com
Tel: 08033509129 / 08082203570

Professor Fatima L. Ibrahim
Department of library and information science, University of Maiduguri
Email Address,fatimahibrahim500@gmail.com
Tel: 08023893086

Dr. Ibrahim Wada
Lecturer Department of (Library and Information Science) University of Maiduguri.
Email Address, ibrahimwada@unimaid.ed.ng
Tel: 08065463632

Abstract
This study examined institutional readiness and service quality in Federal University Libraries in Northeast Nigeria. The study is guided by two objectives and two research questions, the study assessed the level of institutional readiness and the quality of services provided. The study is anchored on the Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory by (Barney, 1991) a correlational research design was adopted. The population comprised 2,141 participants, including 57 librarians and 325 registered users across three federal university libraries. Data were collected using a self-designed questionnaire and analyzed with descriptive statistics (frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations). Findings revealed that while institutional readiness demonstrated strengths in repository support, interlibrary collaboration, and conducive reading spaces, it showed gaps in modern ICT infrastructure and funding. Service quality was rated generally high, with cleanliness, respect for users, staff responsiveness, professionalism, and timely service ranked positively. The study recommends enhanced financial support through increased budget allocations for infrastructure and resource acquisition, strengthened by strategic funding proposals and oversight. Additionally, libraries should collaborate with ICT departments to invest in advanced technologies, ensuring reliable internet and modern digital systems to improve access to electronic resources and sustain high-quality services.
Keywords: Institutional Readiness, Service Quality, Academic Libraries, Federal Universities, Northeast Nigeria.

Introduction

Libraries serve as the intellectual hub of universities, providing essential resources and services to support teaching, learning, and research. They act as gateway to knowledge, deliver timely, relevant, and high-quality information services to meet the evolving academic and informational needs of students, faculty, and researchers. The effectiveness of academic libraries is increasingly evaluated by the quality of their services rather than merely the size of their collections (Fitzgerald & Eustis, 2023). Beyond acquiring and organizing books, journals, and digital

materials, academic libraries offer specialized services, including reference assistance, information literacy instruction, and interlibrary loans, which define the quality of services they provide. To justify the quality of their services, they need to delivery their services at no cost, efficiently, effectively and timely, with users' satisfaction being their focus. (Ifijeh & Yusuf, 2020).

Institutional readiness is not a static attribute but a dynamic state that evolves with technological advancements and shifts in educational paradigms (Chiparausha & Topodzi, 2020; Lewitzky, 2020; Mishra, Manglam, & Moita, 2021). It requires continuous assessment and strategic planning to ensure libraries remain relevant and capable of meeting the diverse needs of their academic communities. The success of library service delivery is directly tied to the institution's ability to align its resources, policies, and human capital with its educational and research objectives.

Librarians, as the human interface of the library, play a pivotal role in shaping user experiences through their attitudes, responsiveness, and willingness to assist. Positive attitudes enhance service efficiency and foster empathetic interactions, while institutional readiness, through resource availability, strategic planning, and administrative support, provides the backbone for effective service delivery. The synergy of these elements determines whether library services are perceived as reliable, responsive, and efficient by users. Libraries with robust infrastructure, supportive policies, and motivated librarians are better positioned to meet user expectations, while deficiencies in any of these areas can hinder service quality.

Statement of the Problem

In an ideal academic library setting, high service quality is achieved through the seamless alignment of institutional readiness, professional librarian attitudes, and efficient service delivery systems. Libraries are expected to provide accessible, user-centered services supported by well-trained staff, adequate infrastructure, current technologies, and responsive policies. When these conditions are met, the result is high user satisfaction, improved research productivity, and an enhanced teaching and learning environment. Institutional readiness reflected in funding, infrastructure, staffing, and policy support forms the foundational capacity for delivering consistent and high-quality library services.

Despite the evident link between institutional readiness, and service quality, there remains a significant research gap, especially within the Northeast Nigeria. Few empirical studies have holistically examined these interrelated variables within federal university libraries in Northeast Nigeria. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by investigating how examine the institutional readiness influence library service quality in Federal University libraries, in Northeast, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. examine the level of institutional readiness in federal university libraries in Northeast Nigeria.
2. determine the level of service quality in Federal University libraries, in Northeast, Nigeria.

Research Questions

To achieve the set research objectives, the following research questions were answered in this study:

1. What is the level of institutional readiness in Federal University Libraries in Northeast Nigeria?
2. What is the level of library service quality in Federal University Libraries in Northeast Nigeria?

Review of related Literature

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on two interrelated theories: Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory and SERVQUAL Model of Service Quality. Together, these theories provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the relationship between institutional readiness, and library service quality.

Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory

The Resource-Based View (RBV), introduced by Barney (1991), provides a strategic framework for understanding how organizations achieve and sustain competitive advantage through the effective deployment of internal resources. According to RBV, it is not merely the external environment but rather the unique combination of internal assets—tangible and intangible—that determines an institution's success. These resources include physical infrastructure, human capabilities, institutional processes, technology, and intellectual capital. When such resources are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN), they become the foundation for superior organizational performance.

In the context of academic libraries, the RBV offers a powerful lens through which the variables of institutional readiness, attitude of librarians, service delivery, and service quality can be examined. Here, institutional readiness represents the quality and sufficiency of internal library resources such as funding, facilities, digital infrastructure, staff competencies, and administrative support systems. A library well-endowed with these resources is better positioned to deliver high-quality, responsive, and innovative services. Thus, institutional readiness acts as a foundational platform upon which library service excellence is built (Barney, 1991).

According to Barney, 1991 the attitude of librarians is also recognized as a critical internal resource within the RBV framework. This encompasses the motivation, professionalism, commitment, and adaptability of the human resource component. Librarians who are proactive, engaged, and service-oriented contribute significantly to the quality of user experiences. Their responsiveness to user needs, willingness to innovate, and positive interpersonal behavior form part of the intangible assets that differentiate a high-performing library from a poorly functioning one. Therefore, librarian attitude is not just an individual trait but a strategic asset that directly influences service delivery outcomes.

Service delivery, as operationalized in this study, refers to the actual process and manner in which library services are provided-whether digital or in-person. From an RBV standpoint, this process is shaped by the institution's ability to marshal its internal resources (readiness and human attitude) effectively. Efficient service delivery cannot be divorced from the resources enabling it; a library that lacks current databases, trained personnel, or responsive systems cannot provide quality services, regardless of its service intentions (Barney, 1991).

Ultimately, service quality the dependent variable in this study is a reflection of how well an academic library utilizes its internal resources to meet or exceed user expectations. RBV by Barney (1991) supports the idea that superior service quality is not accidental but stems from

strategic alignment of resources, people, and processes. The framework thus explains the direct and indirect pathways through which institutional readiness and librarian attitudes affect the overall effectiveness of service delivery and user satisfaction.

Institutional Readiness- involves having adequate funding, up-to-date facilities, trained personnel, access to modern information and communication technologies (ICTs), and supportive administrative structures that enable efficient and high-quality service provision to users. Institutional readiness is the sufficient budget**,** adequate personnel, suitable infrastructure, adequate technology and equipment to support its services. Institutional readiness refers to the extent to which an organization such as a university library possesses the necessary resources, infrastructure, policies, skills, technology, leadership, and organizational culture to effectively implement and sustain new initiatives, programmes, or services (Weiner, 2009).

As pointed out by Ifijeh and Yusuf (2020), where there is no strong institutional readiness, university libraries may not be able to meet changing needs of students, lecturers, and researchers, especially in the rapidly evolving digital environment. Therefore, institutional readiness is a critical key to achieve high levels of service quality, positive librarian attitude, and library service delivery. Readiness of an institution is a factor of an institution's willingness and ability to well implement, sustain, and aid new change, services, or initiatives. To university libraries, it encompasses available resources required, the competence of staff, strength of the technical infrastructure, available enabling policies, and the open culture towards improvement and innovation (Weiner, 2009).

Hafez, (2020) revealed that In academic libraries, institutional preparedness is a key driver of service quality and effectiveness. It determines the extent to which libraries are able to keep up with evolving information environments, meet the needs of their users, and advance the academic agenda of their universities. University library users comprise the students, lecturers, researchers and other professionals and scholars who need current and up-to-date information resources in different formats that will enable them carry out their assignments, research and other day-to day decisions in different areas of work. To fulfil their mandate effectively, libraries do seek software applications, deploy technological utilities to facilitate and enhance services. Technology applications exponentially improve libraries' effectiveness and efficiency, provided such library could afford the infrastructure and resources required. Therefore, the emergence of digital technologies applications and devices are removing the physical barriers thereby turn the library space into an intelligent space.

Library Service Quality- is the extent to which a library's services meet or exceed the expectations and needs of its users. This is manifested in efficient, reliable, and user-centered access to information resources, research support, and learning facilities. It encompasses how well the library performs across key areas such as resource availability, responsiveness of staff, technological support, information literacy instruction, and overall user satisfaction (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988; Hernon & Altman, 2010).

According to Taomi (2016) service quality refers to the diverse range of relevant and up-to-date resources, well-maintained and easily accessible to meet the needs of diverse user groups. Over the years, those writing on the literature of library and information science (LIS) about service quality have defined it differently. Different authors have stressed the importance of developing and maintaining quality collections, have equated effectiveness (the extent to which goals and

objectives are set and met) with quality, and also looked at quality from the organizational perspective-that of the academic library or the parent college or university

According to Landrum et al. (2018) Assessment of library service quality has been based mainly on its collection size and the availability of required resources; however, these are no longer applicable as they might be lagging indicators and do not consider user satisfaction as an input to the assessment. Therefore, to assess the service quality of an academic library, user satisfaction and expectation should be considered and used as an input. SERVQUAL is a customer- or user-based tool to measure service quality, developed by Landrum et al. (2018).

Summary of Literature Reviewed and Uniqueness of the Study

The Review of literature on institutional readiness, a study of Chiparausha and Topodzi, 2020; Lewitzky, 2020; Grammenis and Mourikis (2020); Pathak and Babu, (2023) have agreed that policies related to budget allocation, resource acquisition, open access initiatives, and digital preservation are critical to ensuring that libraries have the resources and flexibility needed to respond to changing academic needs. Library service quality, a study of Fitzgerald & Eustis, 2023; Nutefall et al., (2021), revealed that implementation of automated systems, streamlined workflows, and responsive customer service practices are all strategies that can significantly improve service efficiency.

The study is unique in the fact that a study of Madu (2017), on Institutional readiness and application of web 2.0 tools for information service provision in university libraries., and that of Noorafrooz and Shahid (2020), who carry out a study on assessment of electronic readiness in university libraries: An exploratory model., also Wagayan and Vega (2015) Carryout a study on "The Readiness of a State College for the Establishment of a Digital Library., Masion, and Diaz (2024) also Carried out a research work on The Influence of Service Quality of Public Libraries on the Library User's Engagement. Gathoni and Walt (2016) also carried out a research work on evaluating library service quality at the Aga Khan University library: Application of a total quality management approach while this study was conducted to assess institutional readiness for service quality in North East Federal University Libraries, Nigeria. The scope of this study was also unique in the sense that the previous study of Wisdom et al., (2019), who carried out a study, in three selected universities in Osun State, the selected universities are Obafemi Awolowo University IleIfe, Osun State University, Oshogbo and Redeemers University Ede. Nigeria, and that of Yusuf et al., (2021) which was conducted in Federal Universities in South West Nigeria, a relevant study of Farah (2013) also conducted a research study in garissa provincial in Library University of Nairobi, Kenya. , and also UKAEGBU (2020), carried out a study in Donald Ekong Library of the University of Port Harcourt Nigeria., another research carried out by Cristobal (2018) in Cagayan Philippines. While this study was conducted in three (3) North East Federal University Libraries, Nigeria.

Research Methodology

This study employed a correlational research design to examine the influence of institutional readiness, on the quality of library services in federal university libraries in Northeast Nigeria. According to Curtis, Comiskey, and Dempsey (2016), a correlational research design involves analyzing relationships between variables without manipulating them, enabling researchers to identify patterns, associations, and relationships, thus providing valuable insights into the phenomenon under investigation. Questionnaire were used for data collection, while

Descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations, were used to address all research questions by describing the data and identifying patterns of alignment or divergence among respondents.

The study population comprised 2,141 librarians and library users. This included 57 librarians, with 26 from Federal University Kashere in Gombe State, 24 from Federal University Gashua in Yobe State, and 7 from Federal University of health Sciences Azare in Bauchi State. Additionally, there were 2,084 registered library users, of whom 1,238 were from Federal University Gashua, Yobe State, 516 from Federal University Kashere, Gombe State, and 330 from federal university of health science Azare, Bauchi state.

The study utilized two sets of questionnaires. The first, titled Institutional Readiness (IR) Questionnaire (IRQL) for Librarians, was designed for librarians and consisted of four sections labeled A, B, C, and D. Section A addressed demographic information with 14 items, Section B focused on Institutional Readiness (IR) with 8 items. This questionnaire was used to collect data using a 5-point Likert scale: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), and Strongly Agree (5). The second questionnaire, titled the Service Quality (SQ) and Questionnaire (SQ) for Library Users, was designed for library users and comprised two sections. Section A focused on demographic information with 8 items, Section B covered library service quality with 8 items. This questionnaire also employed a 5-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree [1], Disagree [2], Neutral [3], Agree [4], Strongly Agree [5]). Both questionnaires were validated by research experts to ensure they accurately measured the intended constructs. Validation was critical to enhancing the reliability and credibility of the research findings. Descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations, were used to address all research questions by describing the data and identifying patterns of alignment or divergence among respondents.

Data Presentation

Table 2: Demographic Information of the Respondents

Category	Subcategory	Freq.	%
University	Federal University Gashua (FUG)	22	41.5%
	Federal University of Health Sciences, Azare (FUHSA)	7	13.2%
	Federal University Kashere (FUK)	23	43.4%
	Gombe State University (GUG)	1	1.9%
Gender	Male	33	62.3%
	Female	20	37.7%
Years of Working Experience	1–5 years	26	49.1%
	6–10 years	17	32.1%
	11–15 years	4	7.5%
	Above 20 years	6	11.3%
Highest Qualification	Doctorate degree	2	3.8%
	Master degree	15	28.3%
	Bachelor degree	33	62.3%
	Diploma	3	5.7%

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Institutional Readiness in Federal University libraries, Northeast Nigeria

S/N	Statements	SDA Freq(%)	DA Freq(%)	NE Freq(%)	AG Freq(%)	SAG Freq(%)	Mean	Std.D
1	The library receives adequate funding to regularly acquire current books, journals, and digital resources for user needs.	5 (9.4)	3 (5.7)	14 (26.4)	19 (35.8)	12 (22.6)	3.57	1.185
2	The physical infrastructure of the library (furniture, lighting, space, etc.) is conducive for reading and research.	3 (5.7)	1 (1.9)	13 (24.5)	26 (49.1)	10 (18.9)	3.74	0.984
3	The library is equipped with reliable internet for accessing electronic databases and online services.	3 (5.7)	1 (1.9)	13 (24.5)	26 (49.1)	10 (18.9)	3.74	0.984
4	The library is equipped with computer systems for accessing electronic databases and online services.	3 (5.7)	7 (13.2)	10 (18.9)	22 (41.5)	11 (20.8)	3.58	1.134
5	The collection is regularly updated to reflect current academic and research trends in various disciplines.	2 (3.8)	3 (5.7)	15 (28.3)	25 (47.2)	8 (15.1)	3.64	0.942
6	Power supply in the library is stable and supported by backup systems (generators, inverters, or solar).	3 (5.7)	0(0)	14 (26.4)	29 (54.7)	7 (13.2)	3.70	0.911
7	A Library Management System (LMS) is in use and supports cataloguing, circulation, and user communication effectively.	2 (3.8)	5 (9.4)	9 (17.0)	26 (49.1)	11 (20.8)	3.74	1.022
8	The library staff possess the professional and technical skills needed to deliver high-quality services.	4 (7.5)	1 (1.9)	16 (30.2)	17 (32.1)	15 (28.3)	3.72	1.133

Source*:* Field Survey, 2025; **Scale**: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly Agree (5); Decision Rule (DR); **Mean score** ($\bar{x}$), Standard Deviation (Std**Library Service**

Quality (LSQ)

S/N	Statements Describing Library Service Quality	Very Low (f/%)	Low (f/%)	Moderate (f/%)	High (f/%)	Very High (f/%)	$\bar{X}$	Std.D
1	Cleanliness, comfort, and conduciveness of the library for learning	3 (1.1%)	7 (2.6%)	34 (12.5%)	103 (38.0%)	124 (45.8%)	4.25	0.853
2	Availability of modern facilities and technology to support service delivery	6 (2.2%)	12 (4.4%)	50 (18.5%)	105 (38.7%)	98 (36.2%)	4.02	0.962
3	Consistency of service availability during official hours	5 (1.8%)	4 (1.5%)	35 (12.9%)	119 (43.9%)	108 (39.9%)	4.18	0.849
4	Timeliness and efficiency in delivering requested information and services	5 (1.8%)	8 (3.0%)	37 (13.7%)	109 (40.2%)	112 (41.3%)	4.16	0.900
5	Promptness of staff in responding to user inquiries	0 (0.0%)	9 (3.3%)	32 (11.8%)	117 (43.2%)	113 (41.7%)	4.23	0.785
6	Regular updates on new library services/resources	4 (1.5%)	15 (5.5%)	48 (17.7%)	106 (39.1%)	98 (36.2%)	4.03	0.946
7	Librarians' professionalism and competence	3 (1.1%)	7 (2.6%)	34 (12.5%)	126 (46.5%)	101 (37.3%)	4.16	0.823
8	Users' confidence and security in library services	3 (1.1%)	13 (4.8%)	28 (10.3%)	121 (44.6%)	106 (39.1%)	4.16	0.874
9	Staff concern and interest in meeting users' needs	3 (1.1%)	8 (3.0%)	36 (13.3%)	120 (44.3%)	104 (38.4%)	4.16	0.844
10	Users are treated with fairness and respect at all times	5 (1.8%)	8 (3.0%)	29 (10.7%)	103 (38.0%)	126 (46.5%)	4.24	0.894

Source: Field Survey, 2025; **Scale**: Very Low (1), Low (2), Moderate (3), High (4), Very High (5); Decision Rule (DR); **Mean score** ($\bar{x}$), Standard Deviation (Std.D)

Conclusion

The study is carried out on institutional readiness, librarians' and service quality in Federal University Libraries in Northeast Nigeria provides significant discovery about the factors shaping effective library services. The findings confirm that. Institutional readiness, characterized by robust infrastructure, internet access, and staff competence, significantly predicts service delivery, explaining 61.1% of its variance, though funding remains a moderate constraint.

Recommendations

1. University management and government funding agencies should enhance financial

support for Federal University libraries in Northeast Nigeria by prioritizing budget allocations for resource acquisition and infrastructure development, achieved through strategic funding proposals and rigorous financial oversight, to strengthen institutional readiness and support robust service delivery.

2. Library management, in collaboration with university ICT departments, should invest in advanced information and communication technology infrastructure, ensuring reliable internet and modern computer systems through consistent procurement and maintenance schedules, to address technological limitations and enhance access to digital resources.
3. University administration should implement sustainable power solutions, such as solar panels or backup generators, by partnering with energy providers and establishing maintenance protocols, to ensure uninterrupted library operations and mitigate disruptions to service delivery.

References

Barney, J. (1991). Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. *Journal of Management*, 17(1), 99–120. https://doi.org/10.1177/014920639101700108

Chiparausha, B., & Topodzi, T. (2020). *Institutional readiness and library service delivery in Zimbabwean universities*. Library Philosophy and Practice, 1–13.

Cristobal, L. R. (2018). Expectations on library services, library quality (LibQual) dimension and library customer satisfaction: Relationship to customer loyalty at Cagayan. *International Journal of Academic Library and Information Science*, 6(2), 21–35.

Curtis, E., Comiskey, C., & Dempsey, O. (2016). Correlational research: Importance and application in nursing and health research. *Nurse Researcher*, 23(6), 20–25. https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.2016.e1382

Fitzgerald, A. & Eustis, M. (2023). Innovation in academic library services: A user-centered approach. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 49(2), 101-119.

Gathoni, N. W., & Walt, A. J. (2016). Evaluating library service quality at the Aga Khan University Library: Application of a total quality management approach in Kenya. *Performance Measurement and Metrics*, 17(3), 187–203.

Grammenis, C., & Mourikis, C. (2020). University library readiness for digital transformation: Evidence from Greece. *Library Management*, 41(4/5), 187–199.

Ifijeh, G., & Yusuf, F. (2020). *Provision of library services in the digital era: The need for institutional readiness in Nigerian universities*. Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal).

Lewitzky, M. (2020). *Managing institutional change in academic libraries*. Journal of Library Innovation, 11(1), 35–49.

Manglam, S., & Moita, C. (2021). Librarians' attitudes and service delivery efficiency: A user-centered approach. *International Journal of Library and Information Science*, 13(4), 44–57.

Madu, C. O. (2017). Institutional readiness and application of Web 2.0 tools for information service provision in university libraries, Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/1837

Mason, D. C., & Diaz, P. L. (2024). The influence of service quality of public libraries on library user engagement in the Philippines. *Philippine Journal of Library and Information Science*, 40(1), 88–103.

Noorafrooz, M., & Shahid, M. (2020). Assessment of electronic readiness in university libraries: An exploratory model. *International Journal of Information Science and Management*, 18(2), 75–89.

Nutefall, J. E., Ryder, P. M., & Schroeder, R. (2021). Redefining library services in the digital era. *College & Research Libraries*, 82(4), 584–601.

Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, L. L. (1988). *SERVQUAL: A multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality*. Journal of Retailing, 64(1), 12–40.

Pathak, S., & Babu, S. (2023). *Strategic policy frameworks for academic libraries in the digital age*. Library Management, 44(1), 47–63.

Ukaegbu, C. O. (2020). Attitude of academic staff and their utilization of library resources and services in Donald Ekong Library, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/

Wagayan, M. A., & Vega, A. R. (2015). The readiness of a state college for the establishment of a digital library in the Philippines. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 4(1), 55–67.

Wisdom, O. C., Afolabi, F. K., & Kazeem, A. A. (2019). Library service delivery in selected university libraries in Osun State, Nigeria. *Nigerian Libraries*, 52(2), 101–115.