



## LIBRARY SERVICES AND USER SATISFACTION FOR THE SANDWICH STUDENT: THE CASE OF UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

**Afful-Arthur, P.**

*University of Cape Coast Library, Cape Coast, Ghana.*

### **Abstract**

*Sandwich education has made it possible for people with peculiar time constraints to attain education hitherto impossible through conventional means. The significant advantage of this module of education has led to many Universities and Colleges of Education in Ghana adopting this concept. Having heeded to this global trend of flexibility of university education, and with 6,010 students currently on admission, the University of Cape Coast is credited to be one of the few public universities in Ghana to run a successful sandwich programme over time. The compressed nature of the sandwich academic calendar implies that library services need to be fashioned out extraordinarily to meet the information needs of such students. It is in the spirit of gauging the propriety of library services rendered in support of the sandwich programme that the satisfaction of sandwich students was assessed in a survey. To this end, the study examined the perception of library users on the quality of academic library services and its impact on their academic work. This study employed the descriptive survey research design to engage 200 Sandwich students who patronize the library. Self-administered questionnaire containing 37 open and close-ended items based on SERVQUAL as a tool for quality service measurement was used to elicit information from respondents, and analyzed using SPSS version 2.0. It emerged that an overwhelming majority of the sandwich students knew about the library and its services from persons other than library staff, with still a majority using the library for reference or library searches. Respondents also considered print library resources to be very relevant but considered internet access not so adequate to access the few academic databases that the library subscribes to. It is quite refreshing to realize that nearly a ninth of respondents (89%) claimed library staff were welcoming and courteous and 81% indicated that there was willingness on the part of staff to readily help. Respondents were of the view that the Library should increase the opening hours, if not more, at least to the level of what the regular students enjoy, a suggestion the author concurs. Also, accessibility to resources outside of the Library should be improved while Web 2.0 tools should be employed in the delivery of library services. More importantly, an efficient orientation or user education programme should be run for sandwich students.*

**Keywords:** Library services, Sandwich education, Sandwich students, SERVQUAL, University of Cape Coast, User satisfaction

### **Introduction**

The quest of many career professionals for higher education has often been confronted with limited availability of time, a situation often aggravated by the demands of work. This, coupled with the ever-growing qualified applicants that seek regular university education, and the slow pace of expansion of existing facilities in educational institutions, makes it practically difficult for all qualified students to access higher education (UNESCO, 2001). Thus with the advent of the

information age, the desire for higher education, and the lack of space in tertiary institutions have brought about the need for distance, part-time, and sandwich education opportunities. This is to make higher education flexible to all manner of persons without necessarily compromising quality. For this reason, academic institutions which have diversified their programmes to be accessed through evening lectures, long distance/online education and sandwich or modular packages could only be

described as smartly playing to the exigency of the times (Basaza, Milman & Wright, 2010).

This trend of how university education is being offered in a flexible manner has been a global phenomenon. In many Ghanaian universities, it has been the norm that during semester breaks, another category of students, called sandwich students, are offered admission to run a different academic calendar for some of the programmes or courses offered on regular basis. This innovation has afforded people the convenience of acquiring university education often without the necessity of having a physical interface with their parent institution (Garrison & Shale, 1990).

The University of Cape Coast continues to be the preferred choice for many of these career men and women who intend to climb further the academic ladder for career or professional progression. Since its inception in 2002, and with courses run by only the School of Business and Education Faculty, the concept of sandwich education has continued to provide wider options for diploma, degree and postgraduate hopefuls. Today, as captured in the 48<sup>th</sup> Congregation Basic Statistics, the university runs 70 sandwich programmes with an enrolment of 6,010 sandwich students (UCCa, 2015). This innovation has afforded people who would have ordinarily had difficulty in accessing university education on the normal calendar despite their qualification.

An indispensable condition needed for sandwich programmes to succeed is the existence of a well-resourced functional library. Academic libraries continue to be critical for the efficient functioning of universities due to the support they play in their teaching, learning and research mandates. Libraries continue to play these supportive roles through the many services rendered to the academic community ranging from digital initiatives, information literacy and independent lifelong learning (Aina, 2004). Many academic libraries have continued to provide services to clients in the midst of the challenges of reduction in budgetary allocations and increasing technological advancement with its corresponding sophistication in the expectations of users (Research Information Network, 2010; Siguenza-Guzman, 2015). These developments demand that libraries continuously assess the services provided to ascertain how satisfactory clients are, in order for these limited resources to yield maximum returns.

## **Statement of the problem**

University libraries have been tasked with the mandate to support teaching, learning and research. While libraries continue to carry out these services, there has often been the need to gauge the level of satisfaction of library users for whom these services are rendered. Whereas the perception of service quality is a measure of how well a received service meets a client's expectation prior to receiving the service, customer satisfaction is the extent to which the customer is happy with the service received. Often used interchangeably with service quality, satisfaction is actually a broader and a more long-term concept than service quality which varies from one transaction to the other, and is a component of the former (Zeithaml et al., 2006).

Various libraries the world over continue to measure the quality of service and level of customer satisfaction in order to meet the ever-complex demands of clients (Nitecki & Herson, 2000; Lincoln, 2002). It is the belief of Kiran (2010) that the use of traditional measures of collection size, counts of use, number of staff and size of physical infrastructure to measure the impact libraries are having on their academic communities are no longer tenable. The concern for quality and accountability in information services of higher education, he contends, has increased prompting a demand for a rather more empirical means of measuring service delivery. Even though the University of Cape Coast Library actually believes in, and engages in occasional assessment of its service delivery to clients, the focus has often been on regular students. With the increasing patronage and wider acceptance of non-conventional or sandwich programmes it has become quite imperative to gauge the level of satisfaction of sandwich students regarding library services.

## **Objectives**

The study broadly sought to assess the level of satisfaction of sandwich students on the delivery of library services. To this end, it examined the perception of library users on the quality of academic library services and its impact on their work. Specifically, the study sought to answer these research questions:

1. How relevant are library resources to the needs of sandwich students?
2. How accessible are library resources to sandwich students?

3. How supportive is the library environment to the academic life of sandwich students?
4. To what extent were library staff approachable to sandwich students?
5. What is the perceived impact of library services on academic work of sandwich students?

### **Significance of the study**

With the concept of sandwich education having come to stay, the peculiar nature of such students and their information needs have become necessary to be scientifically interrogated. Thus, apart from the study making invaluable contribution to literature in the field of client satisfaction and quality of service in academic libraries, it informs library and university management about the real difficulties and expectations of the various segments of students, and how best issues could practically be addressed. It is believed that the study will be helpful to UCC Library and other academic libraries to render efficient client-tailored services to support teaching, learning and research.

### **Literature Review**

#### ***Non-conventional/Sandwich education***

The proportion of highly-qualified prospective university candidates is increasing and Wittenberg (2002) indicates that this is a world-wide trend. It is estimated that barely a fourth of university applicants are actually offered admission. The increasing changes in structure of employment compounded by increasing expectations of educational participation, and the academic focus of a growing number of professions, promote the expansion of higher education (Teichler, 2004). Appropriately, institutions of higher learning are duty-bound to address the demand for higher education by offering programmes beyond the mainstream.

To this end, virtually all the tertiary institutions in Ghana – colleges of education, polytechnics and universities– are providing flexible, part-time or sandwich education for the backlog of university hopefuls as well as individuals who are constrained by jobs and family commitments. Singh (1997) identified such an educational scheme as an approach to bring education to the doorsteps of a large and varied clientele who cannot benefit from the conventional system of education.

The desire for this flexibility has led to what Wittenberg (2002) terms as the multiplication of study options. The notion of lifelong learning – the further qualifications an employee independently acquires after work – is greatly enhanced by such flexible educational programmes (Leidenfrost, 2006). Therefore, in addition to mainstream study programmes, universities are to provide for flexible continuous education with non-traditional students more strongly integrated.

In the midst of the many virtues espoused about flexible university education options, certain challenges are imminent. These include, but not limited to, shaping the knowledge society, generating employability, integrating the dimension of sustainability, internationality, quality orientation and competitiveness as well as development and use of new forms of teaching and learning.

#### ***Library service for specialized groups***

To Shale and Gomes (1998), certain features of flexible education schemes make it appropriate to the peculiar needs and interests of individuals not favoured by the conventional university. Contributing to how the information needs of sandwich students could be met, Cooke (2004) concludes that the provision of library services to non-regular and remote users can be greatly enhanced if the library understands the needs of these adult learners. In the view of Jaggen, Taliman and Waddell (1994), even though several relevant resources existed at the library, non-regular students rather preferred instructor-provided materials. Newton (2007) argues that incorporating academic library professionals within course teams is the most essential issue to be tackled in non-conventional programmes. This, he believes, is informed by the fact that librarians naturally are willing to become involved in teaching and to take responsibility for the delivery of information literacy courses for off-campus learners, but in order to do so effectively they must operate and interact with students within the same learning space as the academic staff.

It has been realized that some universities in Africa simply enroll students in non-conventional programmes without providing for the library needs of such students (Mabawonku, 2004). In a study into the challenges of providing library services to non-conventional students by Kavulya (2004), adequate library services were emphasized if

students were to gain quality education. Boadi and Letsolo (2004) discovered that to most non-conventional students, the sources often relied upon for information included colleagues, personal collections and family members. They use the on-campus library resources less because access to them is not easy. As such, the provision of adequate ICT in the service delivery of the library is recommended. In a study by Oladokun and Aina (2009), it was found that the university library does not adequately cater for the library and information needs of the students and thus recommended some public and school libraries to keep some relevant materials in their collections for non-conventional students to use.

In an earlier study conducted by Neimi, Ehrard, and Neeley (1998) it emerged that non-conventional learners expect libraries to afford them the ability to search periodical indexes, abstracts, Compact Disc Read-Only-Memory (CD-ROMs) and bibliographic services over the telephone or email as a dependable feedback system.

### ***Service quality and customer satisfaction***

In supporting the view of Parasuraman et al. (1985) of service quality as being “the global evaluation or attitude of overall excellence of services”, Nitecki and Hernon (2002) further added that the terminology sums up the difference between customer perceptions and expectations of service. The key determinants of library service quality have been found to include electronic and print publications, equipment, library environment, and human side of user service (Martensen & Gronholdt, 2003; Majid et al., 2001; Hernon et al., 1999).

Kotler (1996) considered customer satisfaction a comparative behavior prior to and after the use of a service. He thus defined the concept as “the level of a person’s felt state resulting from comparing a product’s perceived performance or outcome in violation to his/her own expectations”. Ruyter et al. (1997) avowed that service quality should be treated as an antecedent of customer satisfaction. It is believed that a significant relationship exists between service quality and customer satisfaction, with the former impacting significantly on the latter (Sureshchandar et al., 2002; Brady et al., 2001).

Essentially, quality of service is an aggregate of a client’s viewpoint on reliability, assurance, responsiveness, empathy and tangibles (Zeithaml et

al, 2006; Kuo-YF, 2003; Parasuraman et al., 1988;). Thus the satisfaction of a customer is based on the level of service quality provided by a service provider (Lee et al., 2000; Saravana & Rao, 2007).

### ***Service quality in academic libraries***

Advances in information and communication technology, with its attendant information overload, have led to sophistication in the needs and expectations of the average information user (Minishi-Majanja, 2007; Binuyo & Brevis-Landsberg, 2014). This lends credence to Rosenblatt’s (1999) belief that as information technology puts increasing percentage of relevant information resources on the scholar’s desk rather than on library shelves, the user’s expectations for other library services too will change. This situation has led to enormous pressure on information service providers to which the academic library is no exception. Kiran (2010) has observed that the use of a library’s collection size and other varied forms of counts to assess a library performance is no longer tenable. The intangible concept of ‘quality’ of library resources in meeting set goals and objectives have rather gained currency in many of the studies of library service provision (Nitecki & Hernon, 2000).

As a concept that dwells mostly on marketing, client satisfaction has been viewed to encompass a client’s perspective of service enjoyed based on earlier held expectations. Several tools have been developed to measure and study clients satisfaction or quality of service rendered by academic libraries. A lot of such tools have equally become standards to measure similar phenomenon in the marketing, retailing, health care and education sectors (Gronroos, 1984; Rust & Oliver, 1994; Loiacono, Watson & Goodhue, 2002). Of these, SERVQUAL seems to be the most widely used in assessing the quality of library service. In the view of Kiran (2010), these models basically provide the constructs and form the conceptual framework of measurement tools used to assess service quality ranging from traditional face-to-face service to digital or web-based services. However, satisfaction is more of an emotional and subjective reaction to a time-limited event or the cumulative experiences that a customer has with a service provider. There is a significant gap between customers’ expectations in general and those perceptions relating to a particular library and its services.

## Materials and Methods

### Research design

This study employed the descriptive survey research design. A descriptive survey is aimed at determining the nature of a situation as it exists at the time of the study. This method is concerned with the analysis of the relationship between variables and development of generalizations (Kirk, 1995). In the view of Amedahe (2002), descriptive surveys spell out the nature of a given phenomenon and allow facts and findings to be reported as they are. In their estimation, Fraenkel and Wallen (2002) pointed out that a descriptive survey entails asking over the same set of questions in the form of questionnaire or ability test of a huge population by mail, telephone or in person. The outcome of the result obtained from the sample can be generalized as the representation of the population according to Sarantakos (2005). Sandwich students characteristically spend a short period of time on campus as compared to regular students. Thus, in assessing their level of satisfaction of library services, the descriptive survey design was appropriate for this study due to its ability to elicit information from a large group of people over a

short time period, and to allow generalization from a sample to a larger population for the purpose of inference.

### Population, sample and sample size

Currently, the University of Cape Coast has 6,010 sandwich students comprising post-graduates and undergraduates (UCCa, 2015). The study however decided to use a working population of students who patronize library services. That is, all sandwich students are eligible for the study but students who patronize library services at the Main Library of the University were targeted. The Main Library of UCC has a maximum seating capacity of 2000, and the daily on-peak and off-peak data showed that the Library witnessed an average daily visit of 2,300 over the 2014/2015 sandwich period.

The University of Cape Coast Library has four study floors with each floor having two wings. There is an average of 250 study seats in each wing. A random selection of twenty-five (25) students was made from each floor, making a total of 200 respondents (25 students by 8 wings).

**Table 1: Study respondents**

Population of sandwich students	Number of library users on-peak	Sample size
6,010	2000	200

Source: Field Data, 2015

### Data collection instrument and procedure

The instrument of data collection was a self-administered questionnaire. This tool was used due to its strength concerning objectivity and the ability to cover large respondents within a short time period. Nevertheless there are some drawbacks that are connected to the use of questionnaire as a tool for gathering data such as difficulties in creating room for further probing and clarification of questions. The questionnaire comprised five sections with thirty-seven (37) open and close ended questions. The first section looked at the background information of respondents, whilst the second section considered the perception of sandwich students on the relevance of library materials. Sections C and D respectively ascertained

how library resources are accessible to students and the extent to which the library environment has been supportive. Section E was to determine their perception on the attitude of library staff.

The questionnaire was based on SERVQUAL as a tool for quality service measurement which was developed in the late 1980s by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, and widely adopted by academic libraries in the USA (Nitecki & Herson, 2000; Parasuraman et al, 1985; Parasuraman et al, 1988). However, the items were essentially modelled to suit the local conditions of the University of Cape Coast.

Prior to the administration of the questionnaire, every tenth seat in each wing was marked until the total 250 was exhausted in the wing. The purpose

was to distinguish them from the other seats in a manner that was only discoverable by the fieldwork team. Later at peak time, students seated on such marked seats were given the questionnaire to respond to. They were collected after an hour's interval. It emerged that all 200 questionnaire were retrieved and deemed to be fit for analysis. The

completed sets of questionnaire were numbered serially and analyzed using the SPSS version 20. Simple counts of frequency, percentages as well as tables, charts and graphs were used to present the results. This made it easier for the researcher to bring out frequency distribution of the responses.

## Findings

### *Background of respondents*

Of the 200 respondents engaged in the study, 68% were females and 32% males. As indicated by Table 2 below, the proportion of students aged 30-39 years were more than any other age group

(46.5%), with those aged less than 20 years being the least (2.5%).

**Table 2: Age of respondents**

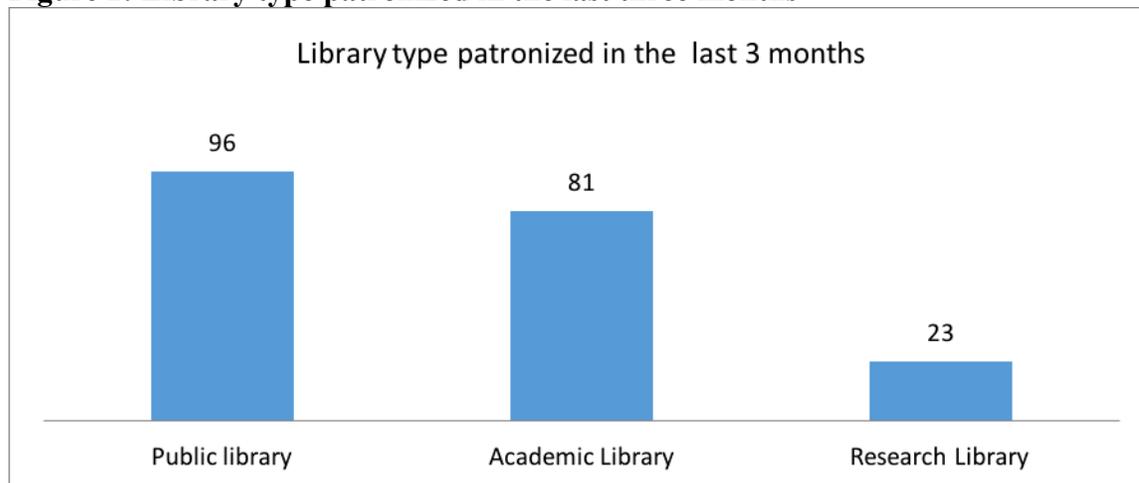
Age	<20	20 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50+	Total
<b>N(%)</b>	5(2.5)	52(26)	93(46.5)	42(21)	8(4)	<b>200(100)</b>

Source: Field Data, 2015

### *Type of library patronized*

The study sought to ascertain the type of library respondents patronized in the last three months prior to the period of study. It emerged, as shown in Figure 1 that the Public Library was the most patronized by sandwich students in the last three months prior to their coming to campus for their programme. In a multiple response question, almost all respondents (96%) indicated that they patronized public libraries for their information needs. This runs contrary to a position held by Boadi and Letsolo (2004) who discovered that most non-conventional students relied upon colleagues, personal collections and family members as sources of information.

**Figure 1: Library type patronized in the last three months**

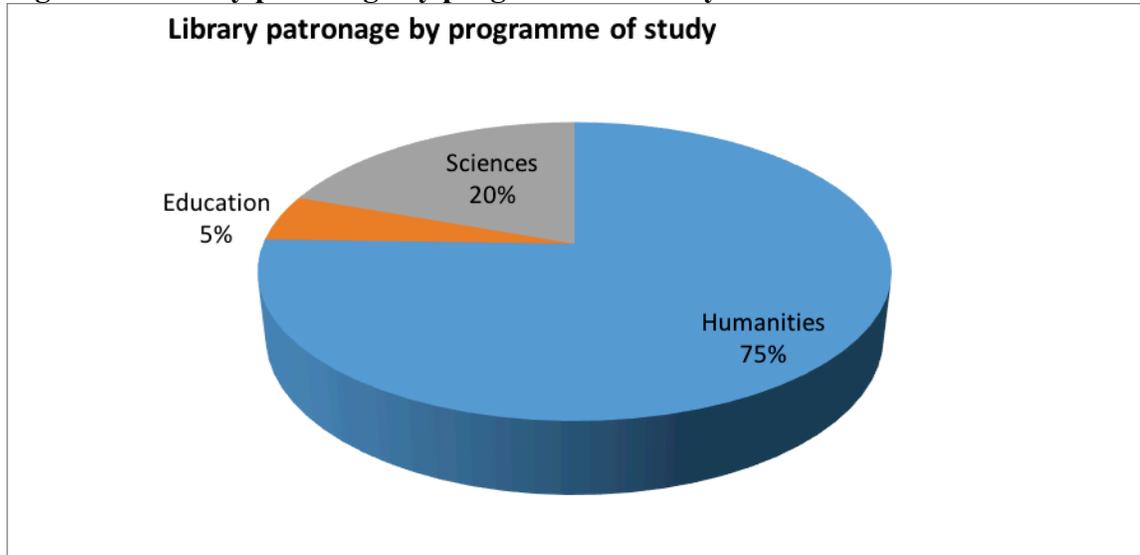


### *Library patronage by programme of study*

The study revealed, as shown by Figure 2 that 75% of the respondents who patronized the library at the time of study were students pursuing programmes in the College of Humanities (75%) with those from the College of Education Studies making up only 5% of respondents. The low turnout by students from the latter college may be attributed to the fact that most students of this faculty have their lectures at the southern part of the

University campus and thus, are likely to patronize departmental libraries than trekking to the main library which is located on the Northern Campus.

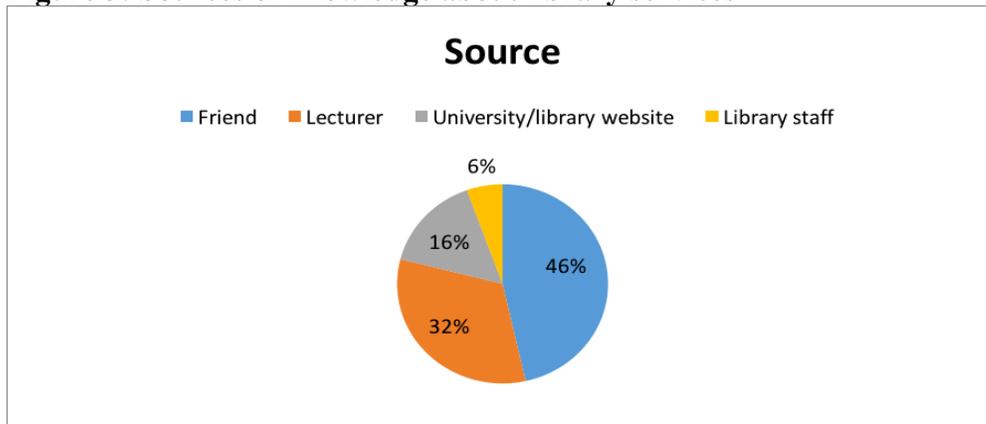
**Figure 2: Library patronage by programme of study**



**Sources of knowledge about library services**

When respondents were asked about how they got to know about the Library and its services, nearly a third (33%) claimed they were told by their lecturers. Also, a look at Figure 3 indicates that a tenth of respondents (6%) admitted being informed about library services by library staff. This clearly reveals that even though library staff directly perform roles to meet the information needs of the students, it was rather other non-library persons who promote the Library and its services to students. Therefore, the Library must continue to foster a healthy relationship with the university community in order that they could serve as ambassadors or friends of the Library.

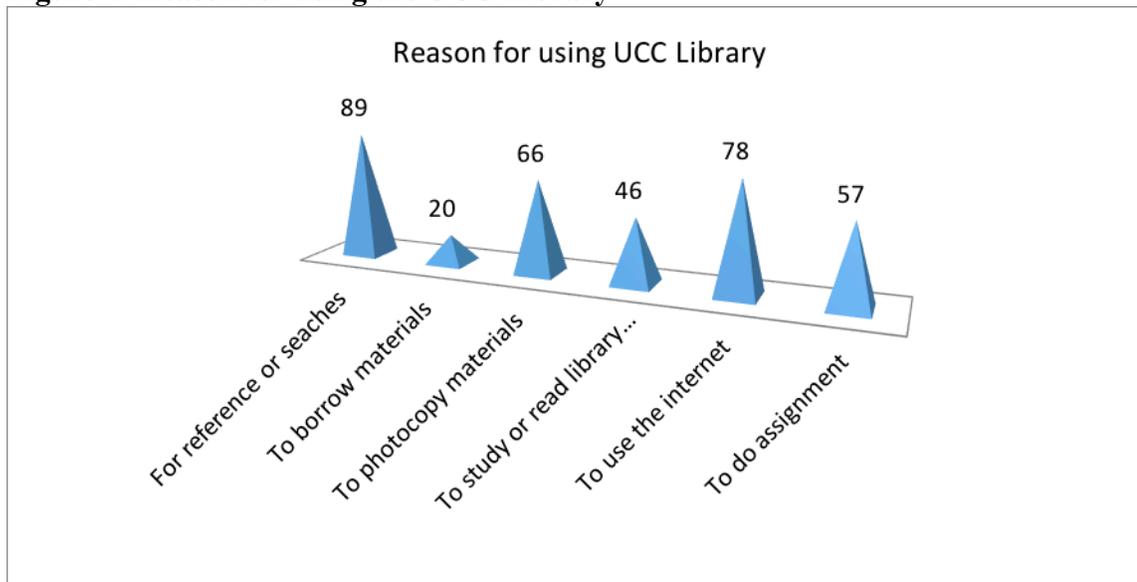
**Figure 3: Sources of knowledge about library services**



**Reasons for using the library**

Reference or library searches led as the most recurrent reason for the use of the library with 89% of respondents making this claim. It is however instructive to note that less than a quarter (20%) patronized the library for the purpose of borrowing. This may be attributed to the short duration of the academic calendar of sandwich programmes (eight weeks) as compared to that of regular programmes (16 weeks). For this reason, it was not surprising to observe that reprographic services were also patronized by about two-thirds of students (66%) as shown by Figure 4. This agrees with the findings of Gopakumar and Baradol (2009) who recommended some client-specific library and information services that can be offered to non-conventional students.

**Figure 4: Reason for using the UCC Library**



### Suitable time for study

Table 3 reveals that the morning is not a period so convenient for sandwich students to use the library as less than 15% of respondents indicate it as the best time. The evening is considered by a greater proportion of the respondents (47.5%) as the best time available for them to study as compared to any other period the library operates.

**Table 3: Suitable time for study**

Best time to use the library	Frequency	Percent (%)
Morning	29	14.5
Afternoon	76	38
Evening	95	47.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Data, 2015

### Library resources

It emerged from the study, as depicted by Table 4 that respondents have the relevant materials available in the Library. This is indicated by close to a ninth of respondents who affirmed that the Library's collection included relevant materials for their programmes. The implication of the 11.5% who believe there are not relevant materials in the Library for their programme suggest that the library should not relent in its efforts to build its collection to the level that will address the specific needs of users as suggested by Gopakumar and Baradol (2009) and Osinulu and Amusa (2010).

**Table 4: Perception of relevance of library collections**

Relevancy	Frequency	Percent (%)
Relevant	177	88.5
Not relevant	23	11.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Data, 2015

### Technology

When respondents' views were sought concerning the adequacy of technological tools to enhance the meeting of information needs, it emerged that access to online databases outside of the Library left a lot to be desired.

Only about a quarter of respondents (26%) considered access to this as being adequate. This situation is different with access to computers considering the fact that nearly all respondents (98%) consider access to computers in the Library as adequate. On line with the view held by Mclean and Dew (2004) that students rely more on technological and electronic resources than regular instruction, this result suggests that a lot will have to be done in order to meet the demands of students.

**Table 5: Adequacy of technological tools**

<b>Technology</b>	<b>Perception of adequacy (%)</b>
Computers	98
Internet access	49
Accessibility of online databases outside of library	26

*Source: Field Data, 2015*

### **Reprographic service**

Reprographic services are very critical for the academic excellence of the average sandwich students. Due to the intensive nature of the programme, and its resultant reduction in the contact hours in library patronage, photocopying and scanning of some relevant portions of print materials to use outside of the library becomes very necessary. When the perception of respondents was measured about the quality of this service, it emerged that 95% testified of its high quality, with 85% affirming that the service was comparatively affordable. It is however worthy of note that despite all these positives, a considerable proportion of respondents believe that the waiting time for the reprographic service is too long. This is a concern which cannot be easily whisked away for the obvious reason that time is not an ally of these groups of library users. In fact, Ranganathan's Fourth Law of Library Science admonishes librarians to save the time of the user (Rubin, 2004).

**Table 6: Satisfaction about reprographic service**

<b>Perception</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
High quality	95	5
Affordability	85	15
Long waiting time	40.5	49.5

*Source: Field Data, 2015*

### **Accessibility of Library Resources**

The existence of library materials alone is not enough to satisfy users' information needs. The extent to which such resources are accessible is equally significant in how library clients perceive service satisfaction. The study sought to ascertain how easy it was for users to search, locate and find library resources. It emerged, as depicted by Table 7 that almost a sixth of respondents (58%) claimed they found what they were looking for in their last visit, with about a quarter (24.5%) of respondents indicating they partly found the item. It is, however, instructive to note that about one in five respondents suggested they never found what they were looking for in their last visit. It is this proportion, however small, that the library should focus on satisfying. This is because a materials existence is as good as its accessibility.

**Table 7: Accessibility of library resources**

<b>Results</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Fully accessible	104	58
Not accessible	43	21.5
Partly accessible	49	24.5
Total	200	100

*Source: Field Data, 2015*

### **Reason for not finding materials**

The finding above passes an objective judgment about the manner in which the library organizes its collection, the kind of orientation given to library users and to some extent, how helpful library staff have been to sandwich

students. It is interesting to note that 67.8% of the 43 respondents who could not find what they sought on their last visit to the Library claim they did not understand the finding tools. Having adopted a comprehensive library management system, it is highly prudent on the part of the University Library to continually educate users as and when new members of the community emerge. Though it could be argued that these students did not avail themselves for the numerous library orientation programmes, it is also the case that such programmes should necessarily be tailor-made.

**Table 8: Reason for not finding materials**

Reason	Frequency	Percent (%)
I couldn't interpret what the finding aid meant	30	67.8
The material was not at the designated location	13	32.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Data, 2015

The University of Cape Coast library has a considerable number of electronic resources made available through its online portal. These include the institutional repository of the University as well as links to some electronic databases the library subscribes to. When respondents were asked about their experience with respect to the use of these resources, it emerged as shown in Table 9 that 18% of sandwich students have never tried accessing the electronic resources that reside on the Library's website. From an open-ended response, it emerged that lack of searching skills as well as lack of trust for materials found online, were the key reasons why they never tried the digital alternatives. Table 9 again indicates that 67.9% of respondents who ever used the Library's online platform were successful in their searches.

**Table 9: Ever tried using/accessing e-resources on the library's platform**

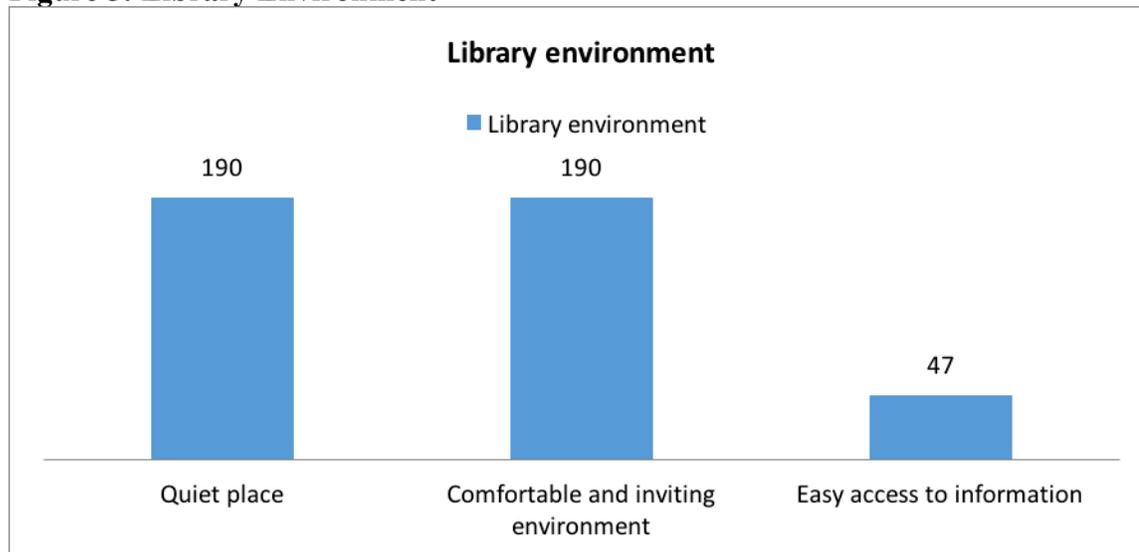
	Yes	No	Total (%)
Ever used	164(82%)	36(18%)	<b>200(100)</b>
Successful	111(67.9%)	53(32.1%)	<b>164(100)</b>

Source: Field Data, 2015

### Library environment

It was unanimously agreed that the library space and arrangement of the University of Cape Coast supported learning. That is, a congenial atmosphere for sound academic work exists for students to take advantage of.

**Figure 5: Library Environment**

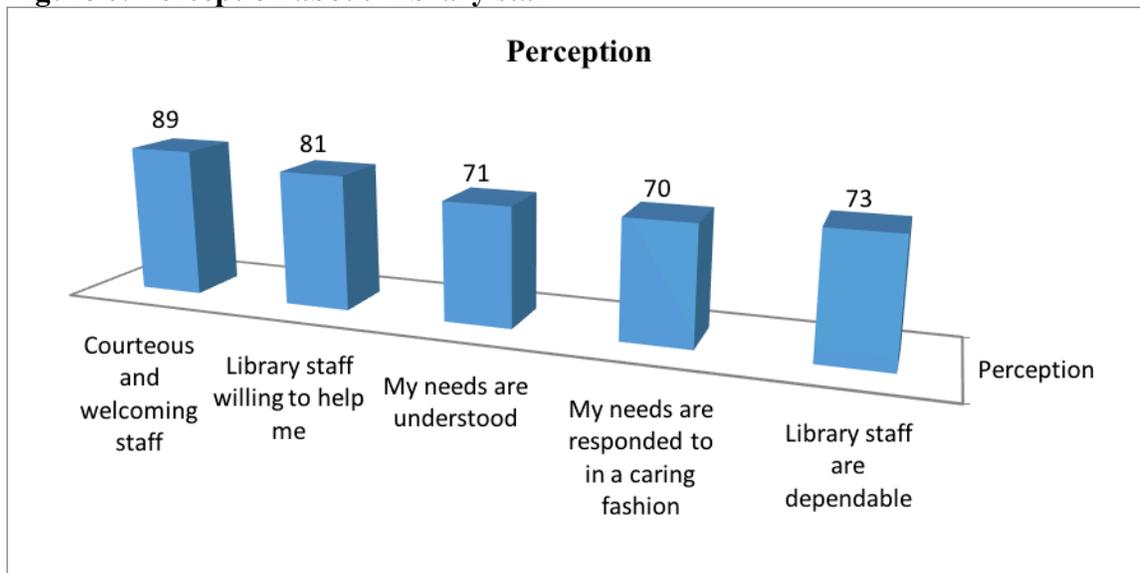


### Students' Perception of Library Staff

An initial look at Figure 6 portrays that respondents generally had a positive assessment of the manner in which library staff served them. It is quite refreshing to realize that nearly a ninth of respondents (89%) claim library staff were welcoming and courteous and 81% indicating that there was willingness on the part of staff to readily help. It runs in conformity with the belief of Newton (2007) that librarians are naturally willing to support the academic endeavours of their clients.

This notwithstanding, it is very essential to focus on the proportion that had a negative perception about the way library staff deliver on their job. For example, even though as many as 73% perceive that library staff are dependable, around a quarter of respondents (27%) think otherwise. Same could also be said of the 29% who did not believe that library staff understood their needs. It is this unending expectation that culminate into the belief of Newton (2007) that in order for librarians to become involved in the teaching and learning process, they must operate and interact with students within the same learning space as the academic staff.

**Figure 6: Perception about Library staff**



In a study by Calvert (2001, cited in Kiran [2010]) on user expectations it emerged that staff attitude was very instrumental in satisfaction or otherwise. Adnan and Mumtaz (2006) on faculty perception on student library use also revealed that faculty members regard students' efficient use of the Library depended on the critical role library staff play in assisting users to fulfill or meet information needs.

### Suggestions for further improvement

In a typical open-ended fashion, respondents were made to proffer suggestions as to which aspect of library service should be improved or introduced to meet their information needs as sandwich students. The thematic coding revealed that a greater proportion of respondents (68%) want the operational time of the Library to be extended. For instance, a respondent puts it succinctly in this manner, "even regular students who have enough lecture contact hours and long revision time enjoy a 24-Hour library operational period, then how much more we sandwich students". Also, other suggestions by 6.5% of respondents included the need for more orientation, improvement in library signage and the provision of more e-resources.

**Table 10: Suggestions for improvement**

Suggestion	Frequency	Percent (%)
Place for group discussion	51	25.5
More opening hours	136	68
Others	13	6.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

## Conclusions and Recommendations

It is the firm belief of this study that the satisfaction of sandwich students with respect to the services offered by the University of Cape Coast Library is averagely satisfactory in meeting their information needs. Much as this study has a limitation based on the fact that it engaged only patrons of the academic library and also did not involve any library staff, it by no way reduces the soundness of this conclusion. This is because the core mandate of the Library has not changed.

Therefore, if the university structures its systems to accommodate the changing times, it is only prudent that the library follows suit. Since the sandwich programme is a specialized approach to offering university education to a peculiar group of people, library services should be tailored to suit their needs. It is for this reason that the study makes these recommendations based on the findings.

To begin with, the operational hours of the Library should be reviewed. The Library may consider running a 24-hour operational period especially during the revision and examination periods. Also, on weekends when no lectures occur, the Library should be opened long enough for clients to use.

Also, accessibility of library materials from outside should be improved. Since the University of Cape Coast Library is a hybrid library, the electronic services of the Library should be greatly improved in order to reduce the physical interface of clients' service delivery. It is incumbent on the Library to employ Web 2.0 tools such as social networking sites and social media to address the information needs of clients.

Again, the fact that sandwich students have very short period of stay on campus should rather be a strength than weakness for the Library to render an efficient orientation or user education programme that will be well-participated by all students. A lot of these students might not have been patronizing library services prior to their gaining admission or if they did, the academic library was not the type they used. This becomes an opportune time for the Library to assist such crop of students to become life-long independent learners. In this wise, the university must make it a point to incorporate library orientation in the university-wide orientation organized for sandwich students. If regular students

are always given such opportunities, why not the sandwich students as well?

## References

- Adnan, A. A. & Mumtaz, A. (2006). Student library use: a study of faculty perceptions in a Malaysian University. *Library Review*, 55 (2), 106-19.
- Aina, L.O. (2004). *Library and Information Science Text for Africa*. Ibadan: Third World Information Services Limited.
- Alvy, D., Jacobs. L. C., & Razavieh, A. (1993). *Introduction to research in education*. New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston Inc.
- Amedahe, F.K. (2002). *Note on educational research*. Unpublished monograph.
- Amenyah A. M. (2009). *Higher Education in Ghana*. Feature Article. Retrievable from: <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Higher-Education-in-Ghana-160902>
- Babbie, E. & Mouton, J. (2002). *The Practice of social research*. Cape Town: Oxford.
- Basaza, G. N., Milman, N. B., & Wright, C. R. (2010). The Challenges of Implementing Distance Education in Uganda: A Case Study. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 11(2).
- Binuyo, A. O., & Brevis-Landsberg, T. (2014). Does Information and Communication Technologies contribute to organizational performance: Evidence from Nigerian Universities. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, 12(1). Retrieved September 9, 2015 from: [http://businessperspectives.org/journals\\_free/ppm/2014/PPM\\_2014\\_01cont\\_Binuyo.pdf](http://businessperspectives.org/journals_free/ppm/2014/PPM_2014_01cont_Binuyo.pdf)
- Boadi, B. V., & Letsolo, P. (2004). Information needs and information seeking behaviour of distance learners at the Institute of Extra-mural Studies in Lesotho. *Information Development* 20(3): 189-199.
- Brady, M. K. & Robertson, C. J. (2001). Searching for a consensus on the antecedent role of service quality and satisfaction: an exploratory cross-national study. *Journal of Business Research*, 51(1): 53-60.

- Calvert, P. J. (2001). International variations in measuring customer expectations. *Library Trends*, 49 (4): 732-757.
- Fraenkel, J. R., & Wallen, N. E. (2002). *How to design and evaluate research in education* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Garrison, D. R., & Shale, D. (1990). *Education at a distance: From issues to practice*. Melbourne, FL.: Krieger.
- Gay, L.R. (1992). *Educational research: competencies for analysis and adaptation* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.) New York: McGraw Hill Inc.
- Gopakumar, V., & Baradol, A. (2009). Assuring quality in distance education for library and information science: The role of the library. *Library Philosophy & Practice*. Retrieved October 31, 2015, from: <http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/~mbolin/gopakumar-baradol.html>
- Gronroos, C. (1984). A service quality model and its marketing implications. *European Journal of Marketing* 18(4): 36-44.
- Hernon, P., Danuta, A. N., & E. Altman (1999). Service quality and customer satisfaction: An assessment and future directions. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 25(1): 9-17.
- Jaggen, K. E., Taliman, E. M., & Wadeell, W. B. (1994). Library services to off-campus sites: An assessment survey. In *Seventh off-campus library services conference proceedings*, ed. C. J. Jacob, 131-135. Mount pleasant, MI Central Michigan University.
- Kalvuya, J. M. (2004). *University Libraries in Kenya: A study of their practices and performance*. PhD Thesis. Institute of Library Science, Humboldt University Berlin.
- Kiran, K., 2010. Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction in Academic Libraries: Perspectives from Malaysian University. *Library Review*, 59(4): 261-273.
- Kirk, R. E., (1995). *Experimental design*. Brooks: Pacific Groove.
- Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G. (1996). *Principles of Marketing*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Kuo, Y.F. (2003). A study on service quality of virtual community websites. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, 13(4): 461-473.
- Lee, H., Lee, Y., & Yoo, D. (2000). The determinants of perceived service quality and its relationship with satisfaction. *Journal of Service Marketing*, 14(3): 217-231.
- Leedy, D.L., & Ormrod, J. E. (2005). *Practical research: planning and design* (8<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Leidenfrost, J. (ed.). (2006). *Change Management and New Governance in European Higher Education: Ombudsing as a Contribution to Quality Assurance*. ENOHE - European Network for Ombudsmen in Higher Education - Occasional Paper Nr. 2
- Lincoln, Y.S. (2002). Insights into library services and users from qualitative research. *Library and Information Science Research*, 24: 3-16.
- Loiacono, E.T., Watson, R.T., & Goodhue, D.L. (2002). WebQUAL: a measure of web site quality. *Proceedings of the AMA Winter Educators' Conference*, Chicago, IL: American Marketing Association.
- Mabawonku, I. (2004). Library use in distance learning: a survey of undergraduates in three Nigerian Universities. *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science*, 14(1); 151-166.
- Majid, S., Anwar, M. A. & Eisenschitz, T. S. (2001). User perceptions of library effectiveness in Malaysian Agricultural Libraries. *Library Review*, 50(4): 176-186.
- Martensen, A. & Gronholdt, L. (2003). Improving library users' perceived quality, satisfaction and loyalty: An integrated measurement and management system. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 29(3): 140-147.
- McLean, E., & Dew, S. H. (2004). Assessing the Library needs and preferences of off-campus students: Surveying distance education students from the Midwest to the West Indies. *Journal of Library Administration* 41(1/2): 265-302.
- Minishi-Majanja, M. K. (2007). *Integration of ICTs in Library and Information Science Education in sub-Saharan Africa*. A presentation to the World Library and Information Congress: 73rd IFLA General Conference and Council 19-23 August 2007, Durban, South Africa. Retrieved September 9, 2015 from: <http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla73/index.htm>

- Neimi, J. A., B. J. Ehrard, & L. Neeley 1998: Off-campus library support for distance adult learners. *Library Trends*, 47 (1): 147.
- Newton, R. (2007). Developing information literate off-campus learners: pedagogical issues and current practice. *Libri* 57 (3): 140-164.
- Nitecki, D. A. & Hernon, P. (2000). Measuring service quality at Yale University's Libraries. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 26(4): 259–273.
- Oladokun, O. S. & Aina, L. O. (2009). Library and information needs and barriers to the use of information sources by continuing education students at the University of Botswana. *Information Development*, 25 (4).
- Osinulu, L. F., & Amusa, O. I. (2010). Information Technology, Quality Assurance, and Academic Library Management. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. Paper 324. Retrieved October 25, 2015 from: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/324>
- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, L. L. (1985). A conceptual model of service quality and its implications for future research. *Journal of Marketing*, 49: 41-50.
- 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.
- Patton, M. Q. (2003). *Qualitative research and evaluation method* (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Research Information Network. (2010). *Challenges for academic libraries in difficult economic times: A guide for senior institutional managers and policy makers*. Retrieved September 9, 2015 from: <http://www.rin.ac.uk/challenges-for-libraries>
- Rubin, R. E. (2004). *Foundations of Library and Information Science* (2<sup>nd</sup>ed.). New York: Neal- Schuman Publishers.
- Rust, R. T., & Oliver, R. L. (1994). Service quality: insights and managerial implications from the frontier in R. T. Rust and R. L. Oliver (eds.) *Service Quality: New Directions in Theory and Practice*. California: Sage.
- Ruyter, K. D., Bloemer, J., & Pascal, P. (1997). Merging service quality and service satisfaction: An empirical test of an integrative model. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 18(4): 187– 406.
- Sarantakos, S. (1998). *Social research* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). New York: Palgrave.
- Sarantakos, S. (2005). *Social research* (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.). Sydney: McMillan.
- Saravanan, R., & Rao, K. S. P. (2007). Measurement of service quality from the customer's perspective – An empirical study. *Total Quality Management*, 18(4): 435-449.
- Shale, D., & Gomes, J. (1998). Performance indicators and University Distance Education Providers. *Journal of Distance Education*, 8(4): 12-25.
- Siguenza-Guzman, L., den Abbeele, A. V., Vandewalle, J., Verhaaren, H., & Cattrysse, D. (2015). A holistic approach to supporting academic libraries in resource allocation processes. *Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy*, 85(3): 295-318
- Singh, B. (1997). The practice and management of distance education. *Journal of Distance Education*, 8 (4): 42-54.
- Sureshchandar, G. S., Rajendran, C., & Anantharaman, R. N. (2002). The relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction– a factor specific approach. *Journal of Service Marketing*, 16 (4), 363–379.
- Teichler, U. (2004). Changing Structures of the Higher Education Systems: The increasing complexity of underlying forces. UNESCO Forum Occasional Paper Series, Paper No. 6. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2001) *Education in the E-9 Countries: The Development and future of distance education programmes in the Nine High-Population Countries*. Paris, UNESCO.
- University of Cape Coast [UCCa]. (2015). *48<sup>th</sup> Congregation: Basic statistics*. Issued by Students Record and Management Information Section (SRMIS).
- University of Cape Coast [UCCb]. (2015). *Vice Chancellor's annual report to the 48<sup>th</sup> Congregation*. Cape Coast: UCC Printing Press.
- Wiersma, W., & Jurs, S. (2005). *Research methods in education: An introduction* (8<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Wittenberg, H. (2002). Current and future trends in Higher Education. Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture.

Zeithaml, V. A., Bitner, M. J., & Gremler, D. D. (2006). *Services marketing* (4<sup>th</sup> ed). Boston: McGraw-Hill.