

**STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF SERVICE
QUALITY AT THE BALME LIBRARY,
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA.**

BY

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A Project work presented to the Department of Library and Archival
Studies in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a Master
of Arts Degree in Library Studies, University of Ghana, Legon.

NOVEMBER, 2000

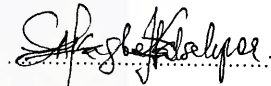


DECLARATION

I hereby declare that except for references to other people's work which have been duly acknowledged, this work is the result of my own research and that it has not been submitted elsewhere for another degree.

I take responsibility for any inaccuracies and shortcomings, which may be detected in this project work.





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DEDICATION

The work is dedicated to-

The Glory of God

My dear wife for her untiring support, and children for their understanding.

My parents, brothers and sisters for their assistance and encouragement.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, to God Almighty be the Glory and thanks for making it possible for me to complete this work; then to those whose encouragement, advice and assistance led to the completion of this work.

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ABSTRACT

The Balme library is the main library of the University of Ghana. It is the Country's premier University library and renders a wide range of services to the academic community.

Although provision of facilities and staffing appear to be adequate there seem to be less emphasis on service delivery. So far it appears that no effort has been made to assess service quality as perceived by the client at Balme.

This study is conducted to determine the perceptions of students as they relate to quality service at the Balme library.

The methodology adopted for the collection of data is the cross-sectional survey based mainly on survey questionnaire. The survey questionnaire was organised into six service determinants. The data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social science (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel.

Based on the responses, in conjunction with the comments the following conclusions could be drawn.

- The library staff is generally knowledgeable, helpful courteous according to the students they serve. However it should be recognised as a means and not an end in itself.
- Equipment needs to be widely available and to work consistently whether it be photocopier, microfilm reader or computer.
- Collections in the library needed to be expanded and updated.
- Library is not open long enough to satisfy users especially those who patronize electronic services.

Based on these and other conclusion, recommendations are made to the University authorities and the librarian on how best to improve on the emerging issues in the face of the dwindling budgetary support.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Quality issue has been of great concern to service industries and organisations in recent years.

Service Marketing Literature reveal that interest in the measurement of service quality is thus understandably high and the delivery of higher levels of service quality is the strategy that is increasingly being offered as a key to service providers' effort to position themselves more effectively in the market place (Brown and Swartz, 1998; Parasuraman, Zeithmal and Berry, 1988; Rudie and Wansley, 1985).

Librarians have long recognised the need to increase the range and maintain the quality of the products and services, which they provide, and "total quality management" and "quality control" concepts have become important in many academic libraries. However 'quality' remains a very difficult concept to define, and there are a number of different approaches used in assessing quality of services. (Brown and Swartz, 1989; Cronin and Taylor 1992).

Areas which are mostly examined among librarians are effectiveness, efficiency costing (cost-effectiveness), service quality, satisfaction and so forth, and to express the results of such evaluation in terms of more traditional quantitative measures: input, output and outcome (eg. Quality assurance).

Managerial attitudes and approaches including those developing in higher education are shifting towards incorporating the customer perspective in planning and evaluating services.

Although theoretical arguments for user-based evaluation of libraries as information systems have been posed, few measurement tools have actually been developed for managers to apply in their attempt to gather data based on user-based criteria for measuring library effectiveness or quality. The library user rarely is associated with measures of a library's quality.

This project looks at "perceived quality" - a user based approach which assumes that quality "lies in the eyes of the beholder" (Garvin 1984, p27). In a separate study Herson and Altaman (1996) state: "Quality is in the eyes of the beholder if customers say there is quality service, then there is. If they do not, then there is not. It does not matter what an organisation believes about its level of service..... what the customer thinks about both the process and the outcome of the service is the important issue in customer's perception". (Herson and Altaman, 1996:pp 5-7)

1.1. **Statement of the Problem**

While demands and costs for library resources and services are increasing, corresponding budgetary allocations are dwindling.

Although the provision of facilities and staffing at the Balme library appears to be adequate there seems to be less emphasis on quality service delivery. This is shown by the queues at the issue desk, accessibility to the CD-ROM workstation/internet service, and reliability of photocopier machines and timely delivery of answers to reference queries.

Some students appear to be frustrated by the insufficient information and sometimes the unfriendly attitude of the library staff in their quest to acquire library material for their course work.

Innovations in information and communication technology have led to changes in the expectation of users (students) in terms of what services they expect the library to provide as well as resources they require to provide these services that satisfy their needs. For instance clients (students) with computer knowledge will expect that the library services will be automated. Other groups of clients (i.e. students) like the science and the information studies who will also expect the library to be automated and then be given the necessary orientation in the use of the electronic media.

So far it would appear that no effort has been made to assess service quality as perceived by the client at Balme. Thus the need for this study to actually determine what the students' perceptions of the quality library services is.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the students' perceptions of quality service at the Balme library, University of Ghana. To this end, the following are the specific objectives.

1. To determine the main types of services provided at the Balme library.
2. Determine students' perceptions of quality service at the Balme library under the following determinants:
 - 2.1. Reliability (i.e. service delivery as it relates to dependability and accuracy).
 - 2.2. Responsiveness (i.e. the readiness of library staff in providing service)

- 2.3. Assurance (ie knowledge and courtesy of the library staff and ability to convey confidence).
 - 2.4. Access (i.e ability to reach out for something and getting it as and when it is needed).
 - 2.5. Communication (i.e. ability to keep clients informed in a language they understand and ability to listen to them)
 - 2.6. Tangibles (i.e the maintenance of the physical facilities and service ability of the equipment).
3. To determine the composition of these determinants in the overall perceptions of the students about quality service.
 4. Find out if there are any differences in the perception of quality library service between undergraduate and graduate students.
 5. To determine the relationship between biographical factors and perceived quality service of the Balme library.
 - 5.1. To determine the relationship between age and perceived quality of service of the Balme library.
 - 5.2. To determine the relationship between gender and perceived quality service of the Balme library.
 - 5.3. To find the relationship between faculty orientation and perceived quality of service.
 6. Make recommendations on how to improve the level of quality service.



1.3. LITERATURE REVIEW

(i) Definition

Much of the available literature on perception of users of service looks at it from the point of view of service quality.

Service quality is defined by Orr (1973) as how good a service is. According to him quality service is not necessarily how large or extensive the library is. The recipients of a service therefore must experience quality which may also be a property of the service itself and the client, not necessarily of the provider. Rouse (1975) as quoted by Whitehall (1992) supports this view by arguing that quality is something felt by the users of the service but it is also a property of the service itself.

In some cases the definition is an operational one designed to facilitate continued research. Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988) refer to it as "a form of attitude related but not equivalent to satisfaction (which)... results from a comparison of expectations with perceptions of performance"

Quality can also be seen as relating to the fitness of a service or product to its intended purpose or use, subject to the expectations of the customer, user or public. Quality therefore must be in conformity with the customer's requirements or needs. This means that the quality of a service can be definitions of the customer's perception of what is good or bad, acceptable or not acceptable service (Barnard, 1993).

(ii) Customer Perception

Customer perception is how customers perceive services, how they assess whether they have experience quality service and whether they are satisfied.

Perceptions are always considered relative to expectations because expectations are dynamic and evaluation may also shift over time from person to person and from culture to culture. What is considered quality service or the thing that satisfy customer today may be different tomorrow. Quality and satisfaction is based on customers' perceptions of the service - not some predetermined objective criteria of what service is or should be.

Although satisfaction and quality are used interchangeably they are fundamentally two different concepts in terms of their underlying causes and outcome. Satisfaction is generally viewed as a broader concept while service quality assessment focuses specifically on dimensions of the service. Based on this view perceived service quality is a component of customer satisfaction (Zeithamal & Bitner 2000)

(iii) Dimensions of Service Quality

Service quality is made up of three significant dimensions: service process, inter personal factors and physical evidence.

The first is concerned with the system of policies adopted by the service provider. For example, in some instances the rigid nature of an organisation can cause dissatisfaction when employees are unable to deliver good services to a customer (Bell and Zemke, 1992; Normann 1991) a trait found in most public organisations. Additionally it has been suggested that frontline employees can influence the degree of satisfaction that a customer experiences (Berry et al, 1985; Bitner et al, 1990). These two aspects are

closely related in that company/organisation policies and /or the service delivery system will determine the way the service is provided to the customer.

Customer satisfaction is often established through the quality of personal contacts. The interaction between students and their influence on each other is a powerful determinant of overall satisfaction. As the personal interaction and "labour intensity involved in the delivery of most services" (Hill, 1995 p 10) are heterogeneous the quality of service delivery can vary within the same organisation (Berry et al., 1985).

Interaction between customer and service organisation lies at the heart of service delivery. People who deliver the service are of key importance both to the customer they serve and the employer they represent. To the customer (students) the employee (Library staff) epitomises the service (Boom and Nypuist, 1981).

The employee's ability and willingness to satisfy and his/her manner and appearance, all play a part in determining how satisfied the customer is with the service encounter. In many ways employees may be the only means a service provider can differentiate itself (Palmer, 1994). For example, this can be in terms of politeness, knowledge and helpfulness compared to employees delivering competitive services. Lovelock (1981) believed that in "people processing" service, such as hospitals and educational institutions which are high personal contact situation those taking part in the provision of the service may often be evaluated by the

customer in terms of their technical or customer - related skills, personality, consistency of performance and appearance.

The work of Zeithaml et al. (1992) suggests that one of the prime issues of poor performance by service firms is not knowing what their customers expect. Many organisations are keen to provide service quality but fail simply because they do not have an accurate understanding of what customers require of them, whilst the absence of well defined "tangible clues" can make this understanding much more difficult than it would be in the case of goods.

It is observed that, even in instances where the core product is intangible (for example, in education such a product could be information), it is "almost always embodied in some tangible form" (Kotler and Fox, 1985: p 224).

The intangible element of a service has led to increasing interest in the tangible evidence, which is a feature of service processes (Bitner, 1990; Wakefield and Blodgett,1994). The physical evidence associated with a service can be designed to create a level of satisfaction.

Educational establishments could be said to be utilitarian in nature. Students spend much of their time in contact-with physical elements of their educational experience (in lectures, libraries, I-T laboratories), and therefore it is likely that they would be influenced by the physical facilities. "Students who spend hours every day in a school are likely to have attitudes towards the school system that are strongly influenced by the physical facilities" (Wakefield and Blodgett, 1994 p 68).

Customers cannot see a service but they can see and experience various tangible elements associated with the service.

They are service facilities, equipment, employees uniforms, pamphlets, leaflets etc, all these are referred to by Zeithamal et al (1992) as "clues" and is possible to manage the evidence using the clues. "A prime responsibility for the service marketer is the management of available tangibles so that the proper signals are conveyed about the service" (Berry, 1980)

SERVQUAL is a well - known and much used instrument for measuring customer perceptions of service quality. It has been used in replication studies in a wide range of service industries, such as advertising, healthcare, telephone, banking, laundry as well as in professional services such as those of the physician, attorney or dentist and is now being introduced explicitly into the library field with slight modification as needed.

According to Zeithamal (1991), four elements must be addressed in order to exceed customer expectations:

- (1). Assurance
- (2). Responsiveness
- (3). Empathy
- (4). Communication

Real customer satisfaction therefore represents the difference between what customers (library users) actually expect to get and the actual service performance exceeding such expectations.

Zeithaml et al. (1990) have identified precisely four gaps in this regard.

- (1) Actual customers expectation and management's perception of customers expectations.

- (2) Service quality Specifications and management's perception of customer expectations
- (3) Service delivery and service quality specifications
- (4) Service delivery and external communications relating to it.

In order to achieve real quality service these gaps need to be closed by dwelling on the expectations and needs of the customer, and not of the administration or organisation.

Libraries as social organisation are established to serve people and not vice versa.

However, Cronin and Taylor (1991) have criticized the appropriateness of measuring the gap between expectations and perceptions. They developed and tested an alternative instrument, which measured performance only (SERV PERF) based on the construct that service quality should be measured as an attitude" (p64).

As part of the study the present research will adopt these quality service determinants to use as basis to assess the students perception of the service at the Balme library. The conclusion at the end of the study will help establish the validity or appropriateness of these and contribute to the general literature.

1.4. Scope and limitation of study

The study should cover all the Universities in Ghana. Unfortunately, time and financial constraints at the disposal of the researcher make it absolutely impossible for a research of that magnitude.

It has been found necessary to limit the project to the Balme library, University of Ghana.

Secondly, it is impossible to consider all user groups of the library within the time frame of three months, particularly when the students' population is over 10,000. The study therefore covered postgraduate students and the final year undergraduate students.

1.5. Usefulness of the Study

It is hoped that the findings of the research project will be of benefit to the students, University authorities and the library.

The study will provide information on how the students view the library services and its resources.

The outcome of the study will help the authorities to correct any deficiencies in the library services identified by the study and thereby improve on the quality of services.

1.6. Description of the Chapters

The study (project work) is organised into four chapters.

Chapter One: The introduction, the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, literature review, scope and limitation of study, usefulness of the study, as well as brief description of chapters.

Chapter Two: The study setting and methodology (methods and techniques adopted to collect and analyse data for the study).

Chapter Three: The data analysis and findings

Chapter Four: The discussion of findings conclusion and recommendation.

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CHAPTER TWO

DESCRIPTION OF STUDY AREA AND METHODOLOGY

2.1. Brief Description of University of Ghana and Balme Library

2.1.1 University of Ghana

The University of Ghana began in 1948 as an affiliate college of the University of London. In 1961, however the University College of Ghana was by an act of parliament re-organised as the University of Ghana to award its own degrees.

The University is centered around seven faculties composed of various departments. They include Faculties of Agriculture, Arts, Law, Science, and Social Studies. There are two semi-autonomous schools of Administration and Medicine.

Each faculty has associated with it a research institute of which there are five: (i) the Institute of African Studies, (ii) Institute of Adult Education, (iii) the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research, (iv) Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research and (v) the Regional Institute for Population Studies.

2.1.2. The Balme Library

The Balme library is the central library of the University of Ghana and the largest in the country. The library was established in 1948 (Alema, 1994) together with its parent institution on the premises of Achimota College. This was on the basis of the Reports of the Asquith Commission on Higher Education and the Elliot Commission in West

Africa (London,1945). In 1959 the library moved with the University College to its present building designed to accommodate 350 readers and 250,000 books.

The library now has a stock holding estimated at 300,000 volumes and 5000 periodical titles.

The clientele of the library are faculty members, postgraduates, undergraduate, research workers, non-research staff, the Administration and the general University Community.

2.1.2.1 **The Mission of the Balme Library**

The mission of the library is to play its full part in support of the academic functions of the University, namely teaching, learning and research. To achieve this mission the library is guided by the following:

1. Acquiring, organising and disseminating information in form of books, journals, CDs, films, etc needed for academic work.
2. Instructing readers (especially students) in the effective and efficient use of the library and its resources
3. Providing the physical facilities and equipment needed for the purposeful use of the resources.
4. Assisting and co-operating with faculty members in their academic programmes.
5. Co-operating with other libraries in building total library resources, through inter-Library co-operation.
6. Making materials available to a government agency on request and the wider Ghanaian public selectively. (Library Manual 1999)

With the introduction of modern technology in recent years, the services have expanded to include photocopying; searches on the Internet; e-mail services and compact disk read only memory (CD-ROM) facilities.

2.1.2.2 The Management of Balme Library

The library is managed by the librarian, assisted by the library Board. The library Board is composed of the following:

- The Vice - Chancellor or nominee (Chairman)
- The Librarian
- A sub-librarian (in-attendance) as a Secretary
- Representatives from each faculty Board.
- Two members appointed by the finance committee.
- Registrar (in attendance)
- Finance (in attendance)

The library Board supervises and directs policies of the library and other matters that require its attention.

2.1.2.3 The Balme Library Staff

As in most places of work, the Balme library has a structure consisting of three main categories of staff:

- Senior members, (professional staff).
- Senior staff who are mostly sub-professionals, library assistants, Administrative and Technical assistants who have earned promotions from their junior grades and also university graduates.



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Administrative and Technical assistants who have earned promotions from their junior grades and also university graduates.



- The junior staff consists of junior library and bindery assistants, clerks and janitorial staff.

In all the staff strength stands presently at 113 members of staff with the following breakdown: 14 senior members, 34 senior staff and 65 junior staff.

2.1.2.4 Services

The library provides a wide range of service. These include lending, reference, Current Awareness Services, computer based search services (CD-ROM), inter lending and document delivery services, photocopy services and a newly created computers laboratory service.

The opening hours of the library to its clientele are 8am to 10pm week days and from 9 am to 4 pm on Saturdays.

Lending Services

The library provides opportunity for its readers to borrow books from its collections for a period of 2 weeks, renewable for another 2 weeks if not requested by another user. Undergraduate students are allowed to borrow up to three books whilst the postgraduate six. This right of borrowing is limited to only patrons who have registered with the library.

Reference Services

The large collection of the library makes it the most well-stocked academic library in the country. It provides opportunity for all categories of users in the various subject orientations to use the library for reference purposes. Students are allowed to borrow a book each from the reference

collection over the weekend. Periodicals and rare documents are strictly for reference only. The rare documents are strictly on closed access in locked cases. Readers have to be signed on before getting access to them.

CD-ROM Services

The CD- ROM service is a new service introduced in the Balme library. It was initiated in May 1994 by the America Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and the International African Institute. The 3 years AAA CD-ROM pilot project aims at supplementing the dwindling journal subscription in some African libraries in order to facilitate research. Balme library was among the seven African Universities which benefited and is one of the areas selected for the project. The project was funded by Carnegie Corporation and Ford Foundation and co-ordinated by the AAAS (Balme Annual Report, 1994).

The CD-ROM is an optical disc which stores information in the form of electronic databases and covers many subjects' area. Though the CD-ROM room is open to all students, the emphasis is on the need to aid research work of the faculty members and graduate students of the university. There are 4 computers at the CD-ROM office out of which 3 are in used for accessing the CD-ROM databases. There is also a Dos matrix printer which is now replaced with a laserjet printer.

Electronic Mail (e-mail Services)

In addition to the CD-ROM is the electronic mail services (e-mail). The e-mail is one of the basic services of the Internet done through the use of the computer. The service encourages users to communicate with people in and outside their environment. The service is opened to students, members of staff as well as the general public. It has provided a forum for intellectual discussion and exchange of research findings among colleagues within and outside the country. This facility is located in the Electronic Support Unit where there are 4 computers and 2 printers.

Inter-Library Lending And Document Delivery (ILL/DD)

The Inter-library lending and document delivery service is a new package of an old library service of Inter-library loan conceived by IFLA and funded by Danida. The service formerly done manually now allows users to browse the Internet to search for materials. Materials identified through the Internet are either down loaded through the net or are ordered through the mail for users.

This service complements the library's effort in the provision of information and literature needs of the faculty members and students. It provides one of the fastest methods of obtaining current information from the world. There are 3 computers, a scanner and a printer in this office.



Computer Laboratory Service

The Balme library has newly created a computer laboratory. The objective of this laboratory is to provide students with Internet services for purely

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Computer Laboratory Service

The Balme library has newly created a computer laboratory. The objective of this laboratory is to provide students with Internet services for purely

academic work. The laboratory currently has 8 computers and one LaserJet printer.

Photocopying Service

In the Balme library photocopying text- books and library materials is a very important service provided by the library. As a result of the limited number of textbooks, those available are heavily photocopied by students. The library charges students for photocopies made. The library has two heavy-duty photocopiers. The money charged is used to make the photocopy service self sustaining.

2.2. Methodology

The study is a survey. This is preferred for the study because of its statistical importance in libraries. Busha and Harter (1980) explain that quantitative survey are more relevant to librarians for their uniqueness in enhancing decision making in libraries. This view is also supported by St. Clair (1993 p. 80) who observes that "a user survey is just what the name implies, a survey of users, and its purpose is to enable those responsible for the planning and delivery of information services and products to have quantifiable data about the services" Further more questionnaires can easily be distributed to a large number of people and thus enable the researcher to make valid judgements about a large customer base. (Albrecht, 1988, p. 164).

The instrument used in the collection of data is the questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered at only one point in time and the



generated on the measured characteristics was studied and conclusions drawn. This design was found appropriate because of the limited time frame within which the investigations had to be carried out.

2.2.1 Instrument

Questionnaire was used as the main research instrument for collecting data from the users (students), considering the large population involved the time schedule and other meagre resources available for the research.

Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected. The instrument for data collection consisted of open ended as well as close ended questions.

The open-ended questions solicited free responses from the respondents. The questionnaire covered three main sections of the library, that is the aspects relating to physical facilities, technical facilities such as computer appreciation and the attitude and competence of staff.

2.2.1.2. Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire for the investigation of quality service perception among students was administered to the students (both graduate and undergraduate).

It contained 37 open-ended and close-ended questions. The questionnaire reflected six determinants of quality service. Each section ended with an open-ended question which allowed the respondents to assess the overall impression of a given criterion or criteria of quality service. All the close-ended questions were designed to solicit responses on a five point

likert scale to measure both respondents' satisfaction and perception of service quality.

The questionnaire was based on the definition of quality service provided by Seay et al. 1996, p 476) used by Thapia (1999) which they adopted with changes from Parasuraman et al. (1988).

The questionnaire is a replication of that of Thapia with slight modification using data from the Ghanaian environment.

2.2.1.3. Administration of Questionnaire

As earlier indicated questionnaire was the main instrument used in collecting data from the students on their perception of quality service at the Balme library University of Ghana.

The questionnaire was distributed personally to 183 students.

Five (5) weeks was used in administering the questionnaire. To ensure that a student did not complete the questionnaire twice, students were asked if they had already been given the questionnaire.

2.2.1.4. Problems Encountered and Response Rate

Not everyone (students) entering the library accepted the questionnaire. Those respondents who completed the questionnaire deposited it in a box provided and placed at the circulation desk (eg. at the main entrance). Others who took theirs away deposited it in the pigeon hole of the researcher.

The investigator distributed 183 questionnaires, of which 156 (85.25%) were completed and returned. These completed questionnaires were analysed in relation with the objectives.



2.2.1.5. **Quality Service Determinant at the Balme Library**

The following were used as service determinants in the investigation of students' perception

Reliability

This refers to the delivery of service as it relates to dependability and accuracy. It includes.

- giving correct answers to reference questions;
- making relevant information available;
- keeping records consistent with actual holdings/status;
- making sure that overdue notices and fines notices are accurate.

Responsiveness:

Responsiveness measures the readiness of library staff in providing service.

It includes;

- timeliness in delivery needed information;
- making new information available;
- checking in new journals and newspapers promptly;
- calling back a patron who has telephoned with a reference question immediately;
- minimising computer response time;
- re-shelving books quickly
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Assurance

Assurance measures the knowledge and courtesy of the library staff and their ability to convey confidence. This includes:

- valuing all requests for information equally and conveying the importance of an inquiry to the client;
- clean and neat appearance of staff;
- thorough understanding of the collection;
- familiarity with the workings of equipment and technology
- learning the customer's specific requirements;
- providing individual attention; and
- recognising the regular customer

Access

Access measures the ability to reach out for something and finding or getting it as and when it is needed. It includes:

- waiting time at circulation desk
- availability of computer terminals, Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) etc without waiting too long;
- library hours meeting expectations;
- Location and centrality of the library and convenience.

Communications

Communications measures the ability to keep clients informed in a language they understand and the ability to listen to them;

- avoiding library jargon;
- determining the needs of the client through gentle follow-up questions;

- developing precise, clear instructions at the point of use;
- teaching the customer library skills;
- assuring the customer that his/her problem will be handled.

Tangibles

Tangible includes the maintenance of the physical facilities and service ability of the equipment. They encompass various environmental elements surrounding the services and the collections;

- condition of the building (heat, light etc)
- condition of equipment such as microfilm readers, copiers, computers used to provide library public services;
- Impact of other patrons on the library.

(Source: Seay et al; 1996 p. 476 Quoted also by Thapisa & Gemini 1999 p 376)

2.2.3. Population of Users.

The nature of the university's programme necessitates three distinct groups of users in the university community.

- (i) The Research Fellow/Workers
- (ii) The teaching faculty
- (iii) The students

Of these identified groups of user, the focus of the study was the students. The student's enrolment for the 1999/2000 academic year in the University of Ghana stood at 11,865 made up of 8173 males and 3692 females. (University of Ghana Basic Statistic 2000)



However the target population were the levels 400 and 600 students of the University of Ghana. The total population of the students was 3038, consisting 1740 level 400 students and 1298 level 600 students. These levels were considered because they are students who have been exposed to the services of the library for a long time and are therefore in position to assess the service quality of the library. The short time frame within which the research had to be carried out is another reason for limiting the study to the target group. Again they were available during the period of collecting data.

2.2.3.1. **Sampling Technique**

According to Nkpa (1997) for populations that run into thousands, a range of 5% to 20% sample sizes may be drawn. In view of this, out of the target population of 3038 students (consisting of 1740 and 1298 students from levels 400 and 600 respectively) 183 was decided on (representing 6% of the population). This was made up of 79 level 600 students (ie post-graduate) and 104 level 400 students (ie undergraduate).

This ratio was arrived at to ensure that each group was adequately represented. A simple Random Sampling method was used to select the respondents.

This involved adopting the convenience or the chance method (ie, the students who use the Balme library during the period of collection of data in July and early August).

2.2.4. Data Analysis Procedure:

Responses to items constituting each determinant were added and a simple arithmetic mean was found. The mean of each determinant for each respondent was computed by adding the scales or ratings and dividing it by the number of questions. As an example, for reliability the numbers in cells for question 2.1, 2.2., 2.3 and 2.4 were added. The total was divided by 4. This was done for each respondent or case.

The mean for each respondent was also calculated across determinants. This is considered as the mean for service quality rating for each respondent.

The mean of service quality construct was then computed to arrive at a single measure.

The student t-test was employed to test for difference across gender, age and faculty. Significance levels of 1 percent, 5 percent and 10 percent were employed.

Two computer spreadsheet software, the Statistical Package for Social Science (S.P.S.S.) and Microsoft Excel were used for the data analysis

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CHAPTER THREE**DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS****INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the results of the study in a way that helps to answer the objectives of the study. It provides interpretation and discussion of the findings. The results were the outcome of the responses to the student's questionnaire.

3.1. Biographical Data of Respondents

Out of the total of 156 respondents 97 were males and 59 were females. They constituted 62.2% and 37.8% respectively.

Table 1.1 below indicates the gender distribution of the respondents.

Table 1.1: Gender distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	97	62.2
Female	59	37.8
Total	156	100%

The modal age group 20-29 years, (table: 1.2) makes up as high as 69% of the respondents. The least or lowest age group constituting 2% of the respondents is under 20 years. The age distribution is illustrated below.

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Table 1.2: Age distribution of Respondents.

Age	Frequency	Percent
Under 20	3	2.0
20 - 29	103	69.1
30 - 39	37	24.8
40 - 49	6	4.0

The Respondents are made up of graduate and undergraduate students. The graduate respondent is made up of 43.9% whereas that of the undergraduate constitutes 56.1%.

The level of distribution is indicated below in Table 3.

Table 1.3: Composition of Respondents

Levels	Frequency	Percent
Graduates	68	43.9
Undergraduates	87	56.1
Total Responses	156	100%

Majority of the respondents are made up of students from the faculty of social science; they form 41.3% followed by faculty of Arts 18.7%, school of Administration 14.2%... and the law Faculty constituting the least that is 1.9%.



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Table 1.4: the faculty distribution

Faculty	Frequency	Percent
Arts	29	18.7
Agriculture	16	10.3
Soc. Science	64	41.3
Science	21	13.5
Law	3	1.9
School Administration	22	14.2

3.2. Determinants of service quality.

Reliability

Of the total respondents of 156, 99(63.5%) expressed that the cataloguing and classification of library materials are consistent whereas 23 (14.8%) said this is inconsistent. Thirty-four (21.8%) respondents indicated not sure. This is depicted in table 2.1

Table 2.2. below depicts that 80 out of 156 (51.3%) agree that fine notices sent by the library staff are accurate whilst 28 (17.9%) indicated that this is inaccurate Forty-eight (30.7%) indicated not sure. This is probably so because they might have not experienced overdue and fine notices in their dealings with the library staff.

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Table 2.1: Reliability of cataloguing and classification of information

	Very consistent	Consistent	Inconsistent	Very inconsistent	Not sure	Total
Catalogue & classifications	16 (10.3%)	83 (53.2%)	21 (13.5%)	2 (1.2%)	34 (21.8%)	156(100%)

Table 2.2: Reliability of overdue and fine notices

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Fine and notices	8(5.1%)	20(12.8%)	48(30.8%)	67(43.0%)	13 (8.3%)	196(100%)

Responsiveness

On the currency of material 16 out of 156 (10.3%) respondents indicated that they are able to get current published material in their subject areas as against 132 (84.6%) who said they cannot find current materials from the library's collection. Eight (5.1%) indicated not sure.

With regards to response time 64 respondents out of 156 (41.0%) indicated prompt staff responses to their requests whilst 80(51.3%) indicated not very often. Twelve (7.7%) indicated not sure.

Table 3.2. shows that 42 respondents out of 156 (26.9%) indicated that interlending service is effective whereas 24 (15.4%) indicated that it is not effective. Ninety (57.7%) said that they are not sure

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Table 3.1: Currency of material and prompt staff response

	Very often	Often	Not sure	Not at all	Not very often	Total
Currency of material	2(1.3%)	14(9.0%)	8(5.1%)	42(26.9%)	90 (57.7%)	156(100%)
Prompt staff response	14 (9.0%)	50(32.0%)	12 (7.7%)	21 (13.5%)	59(37..8%)	156 (100%)

Table 3.2: Satisfactory inter-library service

	V. effective	Effective	Don't know	ineffective	v. ineffective	Total
Satisfactory Inter library services	7(4.5%)	35(22.4%)	90(57.7%)	20(12.8%)	4 (2.6%)	156(100%)

Assurance

On the part of CD -ROM system being user friendly, 72 respondents out of 156 (44.4%) indicated that the system is user friendly. Thirty- four (21.7%) indicated a negative response whereas 50 (32.1%) are not sure. This finding is not surprising. This is because currently, the library has limited number of CD- ROM drives (only 3) as against the large numbers of student population.

The results on table 4.1. show that 103 out of 156 (66.0%) indicated a regular good staff rapport whenever they approached the library staff for information, whereas 21 (13.5%) are of the contrary opinion. Thirty-two (20.5%) indicated not sure.

Table 4.1: CD-ROM user friendly and staff Rapport

	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly	Total
CD Rom User						
Friendly	10(6.4%)	62(39.8%)	50(32.1%)	25(16.%)	9 (5.7%)	156(100%)
Staff Good Rapport	20 (12.8%)	83(53.2%)	32 (20.5%)	16 (10.3%)	5(3..2%)	156 (100%)

Access

The results on table 5.1. show that 88 out of 156 (56.0%) respondents perceived staff availability at the reference desk to be good while 66 (42.3%) of respondents perceived this to be poor.

On access to computer terminals 49 (31.4%) of respondents indicated that there is poor access (i.e long waiting) whereas another 49(31.4%) indicated that they are kept waiting but not often. Fifty-eight (37.2%) indicated they are not sure.

On the processing of transaction at the circulation desk only 27 (17.3%) respondents indicated that they were often kept waiting, whereas 102 (65.4%) indicated that they were not kept waiting. Twenty-seven (17.3%) respondents indicated they were not sure.

Table 5.1: Staff availability, access to terminals and waiting time

	Very often	Often	Not very often	Not at all	Not sure	Total
Staff (availability)	28(17.9%)	60(38.6%)	53(34.0%)	13(8.3%)	2 (1.2%)	156(100%)
Access to Computer Terminals	19 (12.2%)	30(19.2%)	24 (15.4%)	25(16.0%)	58(37.2%)	156 (100%)
Waiting at Circulation	4(2.6%)	23(14.7%)	64(41.0%)	38(24.4%)	27(17.3%)	156(100%)

On the adequacy of photocopying facilities 109 respondents out of 156 (69.9%) indicated that they are not sufficient, whereas 36(23.0%) indicated that they are sufficient. Eleven (7.1%) indicated they were not sure.

On the library opening hours 54 respondents out of 156 (34.6%) indicated that it was inconvenient, whereas 97 (62.2%) indicated that the opening and closing hours were convenient. Five (3.7%) said they were not sure.



Table 5.2: Sufficiency of photocopier and convenience of library hours

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Photocopier						
Machine	44(28.2%)	65(41.7%)	11(7.1%)	30(19.2%)	6 (3.8%)	156(100%)
Library						
Hours	16 (10.3%)	38(24.3%)	5(3.1%)	73 (46.8%)	24(15.4%)	156 (100%)

Communication

On the part of awareness of facilities and services at the Balme Library, 61 out of 156(39.1%) indicated that they are aware of most of the facilities and services at the library. Of the remaining respondents, 93(59.6%) indicated that they are aware of some and 2(1.3%) an insignificant number indicated none of them.

With regards to how they learnt about the use of the library and its equipment, the result indicates that 102 counts out of 184 (56.0%) indicated that they learnt about the Balme Library and its equipment through library orientation. Twenty-six (14.3%) learnt this from their colleagues whereas 16(8.8%) learnt this by themselves (self taught)

Table 6.1: Awareness of facilities and Services at Balme Library

	All of them	Most of them	Some of them	Few of them	None of them	Total
Awareness of facilities and Services	7(4.5%)	54(34.6%)	74(47.4%)	19(12.2%)	2(1.3%)	156(100%)

Table 6.2: How students learnt about services & facilities

	Counts	Percent of Responses
Watching Video	2	1.1
Library orientation	102	56.0
From friends	26	14.3
Teaching staff	9	4.9
Library staff	27	14.8
Self taught	16	8.8
Total responses	182	100%

Tangibles

In terms of the temperature setting 98 respondents out of 156 (62.8%) indicated that they find the atmosphere conducive. Fifty-three (34.0%) respondents did not find it conducive. Five (3.2%) respondents indicated they were not sure.

On sufficient lighting, 106 out of 156(68.0%) indicated there is sufficient light while 46(29.5%) did not find the lighting sufficient. Three respondents (1.9%) said they were not sure.

On level of silence, 117 respondents out of 156 (75.0%) found the noise level to be very low whilst 35(22.4%) indicated that the noise level is high. Four respondents (2.6%) said they were not sure.

Table 7.1: Conducive atmosphere of the Library

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Suitable Temp. Setting	20(12.8%)	33(21.2%)	5(3.2%)	81(51.9%)	17 (10.9%)	156(100%)
Sufficient lighting	15 (9.6%)	32(20.5%)	3(1.9%)	92 (59.0%)	14(9.0%)	156 (100%)
Level of Silence	13(8.3%)	22(14.1%)	4(2.6%)	100(64.1%)	17(10.9%)	156(100%)

3.3. Composition of quality service determinants

The mean for the various determinant of quality service was drawn. Assurance was the highest with a mean of 3.68, followed by Reliability and Tangibles with the mean of 3.25 each then by communications 3.23 and the least being Access with a mean of 2.86 (Table 8).

Using the range of 1-5, the average means, which constitute the service quality, is 2.57 just about the midway of the two extremes. Thus the perception of quality service by the student is about average.

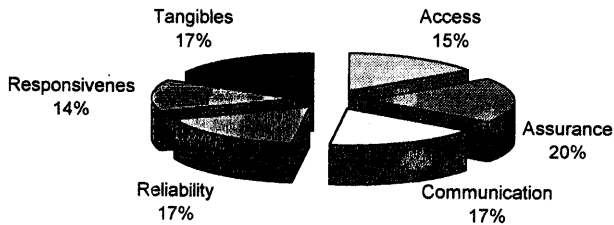
Table 8: Mean of the Determinants

Variable	Mean
Reliability	3.25
Responsiveness	2.57
Assurance	3.68
Access	2.86
Communication	3.23
Tangibles	3.25
Service quality	2.57

Tangibles, Reliability and Communication contribute equally (Figure 1).

Responsiveness and Access contribute lower. Assurance contributes biggest to service quality.

Figure 1
Contribution of Determinants of Service Quality



3.4. Perception of Quality Library Service between Levels

The t-test was computed for the levels - graduate and undergraduate students (Table: 9). The statistic are lower than the critical values in the statistical table, thus the differences between graduates and undergraduates students on perception of service quality was by chance. Essentially both groups do not differ in their perception of service quality.

Table 9: Computed t-statistic of levels

	Graduates	Undergraduate
Graduate		1.6281
Undergraduates	1.6281.	

Levels of significance: (1) * 10%, (2) ** 5%, (3) *** 1%.

3.5. Biographical data and quality of service.

(i). Age:

The t-test was performed for the age group of respondents. It was discovered that the perception the age group under 20 was different from the perception of the other age groups in terms of quality service.

The age group of 20-29 years does not differ with older groups on service quality; likewise age group of 30-39 does not also differ with the older group. Table 10 below represents the above.

Similarly under 20^s have a lower rating for all the determinants of service quality compared with older groups based on the mean.

This presupposes that young people have a higher expectation and tend to be particular and demanding. This result is not of much concern since under 20- year group constitutes only 2% of the respondents (sampled from levels 400 and 600).

Table 10: Computed t-statistic of age group of Respondents

	Under 20	20-29	30-39	40-49
Under 20		3.6720 **	3.4492 **	2.23117 *
20-29			0.9377	0.4803
30-39				0.1236
40 - 49				

Levels of significance: (1) * 10% , (2) ** 5% , (3) *** 1%

(ii) Gender:

The t-test was performed for gender. The results indicate that the male and the female students do not differ in their perception of the service quality.

(Table11) They both perceived service quality the same.

Table 11: Computed t-statistic of Gender

	Male	Female
Male		1.6751
Female	1.6751	

Levels of significance: (1) * 10%, (2) ** 5%, (3) *** 1%

(iii) Faculty

The result of the t-test rating service quality by faculties reveals a level of significance between Arts, Agriculture, Social Sciences and Science against that of Administration.

This could probably mean that Arts and Social Sciences do not have a faculty library and therefore tend to use the Balme library more and thus rated quality of services of the Balme library higher.

Although Agriculture has a faculty library they also rated service quality higher: This could also mean that the size of their library is small and in terms of facilities much is desired.

The school of Administration library is bigger and covers many courses.

It is more independent than the Agriculture faculty library and as a result the school of Administration students use their library more than they would use Balme Library. Secondly because they are independent their library may have more and better facilities; therefore their perception would be different. Students from the Law faculty rate service quality at Balme the lowest. This is because most often than not they use their own faculty library. The Balme library does not stock materials in their field; it only provides them with bibliographical citation to the locations of some materials in their library.

Again because some of them only use the Balme library for reading purposes they tend to have a low perception of quality service at the Balme library.



Table 12: Computed t-test rating service quality by faculty

	Arts	Agriculture	Soc. Science	Science	Admin.	Law
Arts		1.1398	1.5908	0.0970	2.7775 **	3.8767 **
Agric.			0.5261	1.2786	3.0136 **	2.9210 **
Soc. Science				0.7781	4.2707 ***	3.7300
Science					1.3633 **	1.7880 **
Admin.						1.7107
Law						

Levels of significance: (1) * 10%, (2) ** 5%, (3) *** 1%

3.6. Summary of Findings

The results of the research investigation may be summarized as follows;

1. Environmental conditions (tangibility) including temperature condition, lighting, and quietness have been perceived to be of average quality. Conditions of equipment in the library are however seen as poor.
2. Courtesy and knowledge of library staff have overwhelmingly been perceived to be of very good quality.
3. With regard to reliability (dependable and accurate service) the findings are that cataloguing and classification and fine notices have been reported to be very consistent and accurate. On the contrary

however, information resources have been found to be far inadequate and therefore perceived to be of poor quality.

4. Accessibility (promptness of information access) has been perceived to be very poor in the library. Particularly, access to computer terminals, CD-ROM Service and staff have been found to be inadequate. Long delay have also been reported of access to photocopy services.
5. Responsiveness (readiness and timely provision of information). The readiness with which library staff are able to provide information was perceived as fair. However, information materials have been found to lack currency and interlending services are poor.
6. Communication (ability to inform and listen to clients) User awareness have been found to be fair and library orientation good.
7. On the whole the students perception of quality service of the Balme library measured on the likert scale of 1-5 is perceived to be a little above average (2.57).
8. Results also indicated that there is virtually no difference between the perception of graduate and undergraduate in perception of quality service.
9. The age group, under 20 years have a higher expectation of resources and services than the older age groups (ie 20-29, 30-39, 40-49).

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Discussion

This study explores the students' perception of service quality at the Balme library. In recent times emphasis in information provision has shifted from acquisition of material to access to quality information. Thus the academic library's value has become a function of how successful access to needed information is provided to users (ie students).

Linking users with the information sources they need, regardless of the location or format of those sources, is a fundamental objective of academic libraries. Making successful linkages requires attention to not only the identified sources (the products of library operations) but also the experience users have in obtaining them (library services). Greater attention is needed to provide quality library services but as yet, there is not a clear concept of what that means nor how to monitor it within academic libraries.

It is for these reasons that the present study on students' perception looked at Tangibles (the physical evidence of the study), Assurance (knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence), Reliability (ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately), Access (ability to reach out and finding it as and when it is needed), Responsiveness (readiness of library staff in providing service) and Communication (ability to keep clients informed in a language they understand and ability to listen to them).

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The Tangibles determinant category represents 17% of respondents comment on the service quality of Balme Library. The responses have to do with quiet environment conducive to library usage or the lack of it in the building as well as temperature conditions within the library. The result showed that machines like photocopiers or microfilm readers did not work. The fact that there were as many positive comments about tangibility as negative indicated in the findings, show that the environment in which people work and study even when the environment is a good one, remains a paramount user concern.

Courtesy and knowledge of library staff represents 20% of respondents comments that is classified as assurance. These comments overwhelmingly tended to be complimentary as stated by the students " people are helpful" or as others indicated "nice people". The comments compared with all other service determinant are startling. The positive responses far outnumbered the negative.

Respondents' comments about library's reliability accounts for 17% of quality library service. Students indicated that they expect to find information - a book or journal article but were disappointed. They were less often pleased. Reliability as the student understands it is a question of having appropriate information. Many of these comments related to the collections in general but many specifically cited the journal collection. Concern was also expressed about the availability of materials and difficulty in locating them. This finding is much expected because library resources in developing



Countries tended to be inadequate. This finding have been affirmed by Kissiedu (1994) when she observed that collections or library resource in Ghanaian University libraries have dwindled since the past three decades. Similarly Badu (1997) observed that the economic environment have further adversely affected university library collections due to uncontrollable inflationary situations since 1972.

Results of the survey show that 15% represents the contribution of access to library quality service. The negative comments outnumber the positive. For instance 49 respondents out of 156 (31.4%) indicated that access to computer terminals was poor. Further more 58(37.2%) indicated not sure which presupposes they do not use the facility because of limited user-access. According to Boye (1996) limited user-access to CD-ROM or like facilities (Computer terminals) are due to the tendency to over-protect the facility. The systems are designed to be end user-systems. They are to encourage independence and browsing. Again results show that 109 (69.9%) indicated inadequacy of photocopying facility.

Users (students) recognise the insufficient numbers of staff at post during the library hours of operations.

The perception about responsiveness makes up 14% of respondent's comment in relation to service quality. As already mentioned responsiveness measures the readiness of library staff in providing service and includes timeliness in delivering needed information; making new information available among others. The survey results showed that currency of material

at the Balme library was perceived to be poor by 132 out of 156 respondents (84.6%). Interlending service was also perceived to be negative. Ninety out of 156 respondents (57.7%) indicated that they do not know of the service and therefore could not pass judgement on the service. With prompt staff response 80(51.7%) respondents perceived it be negative.

The remaining service determinant, communications (that is the ability to keep clients informed in a Language they understand and the ability to listen to them) constitutes 17% of quality service at the Balme library. Although the survey results show that library orientation is good { that is, 102 counts out of the total of 184 (i.e56.0%) } and awareness creation about services and facilities are average, the students indicated that they are not aware of the full range of services and resources available within the library.

4.2. Conclusion

The following is the conclusion drawn from the results of the study:

On Tangibles, effective library service as perceived by the users (students) at the Balme library depends on maintaining a comfortable quiet facility with ancillary equipment in working order. Seay et al (1996) in their work measuring and improving the quality of Public Services confirm this view.

An area that is overemphasised relates to the relationship between library staff and users. Librarians seem to overestimate the importance of the

assurance factor, that is the extent to which they as service providers are knowledgeable and courteous and engender a feeling of trust and confidence in the service being provided. The users appear to be more focused on what they come to the library for rather than on the characteristic of the people who provide it. This confirms the findings of Edwards and Browne (1995) who observed that users are not quite so concerned with the competence of the librarian or the politeness, friendliness or the impression of trustworthiness they give. However it is important to provide a degree of civility and competence in a service and information service managers need to recognise this as a means and not an end in itself.

With regards to reliability the users (students) felt that the Balme library's collections needed to be expanded and updated.

The issue is that materials are available in the library but students have difficulty in locating them. This could be attributed to materials not being found on the shelves, being mutilated, or the students lacking the knowledge in the use of such tools like bibliography, catalogue etc. to search for these materials.

In connection with Access determinant, limited user- access to CD-ROM and other like facility, the librarian needs not be a search intermediary for each student, unless the student so requests or has a problem. The facility should be used whenever it is free for student's use rather than limiting use to whenever a librarian can be scheduled. This will enable users (students) get maximum access and the CD-ROM for example get maximum use.

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Similarly, although users are satisfied with the library's opening hours, the complaint was that electronic services such as ILL/DD, CD-ROM workstation as well as photocopying close long before the library.

Additionally others expressed the need for more staff and in particular trained and competent staff. From the above, the comments indicate the inadequacy of this determinate at the Balme library which calls for more attention.

Librarians needed to pay more attention to the other aspects of the service than hitherto. They need to recognise the importance that respondents place on responsiveness and attend to building their service profile so that the willingness of front-line staff to help users is apparent and responsive to requests. For instance an important service like the inter library loan should be made to deliver prompt service through expeditious followings.

Lastly, though communication between staff and users and vice versa is not all that bad, more could be done by communicating with users about willingness to obtain material from other sources and to arrange for course related material to be made available for the students.

4.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study carried out, the following recommendations are made.

In the face of poor budgetary allocation Balme library must have a way of generating funds to provide some of the amenities needed in the library, such

as photocopier, air conditioner and to replace the microfilm/microfiche equipment in the library among others.

The library must be prepared to work with private photocopier operators in order to increase the number of photocopiers and reduce the price of photocopying to enable the students to afford the cost.

The library should expand its instruction on library use to students by including user-education, a programme of instructions through which users are made aware of the value of information and motivated to know the skills of locating information from the various resources available in the library.

The advantages of new services introduced which serve as aid to gathering, processing, storing and retrieval of relevant information among others, by the use of computers are issues that need to be seriously considered for the development of an information network systems in the country and particularly in the library. The library should be provided with more computers and facilities such as CD-ROMS and desktop publishing software. This should be seen as priority items in the set up of the library.

Concerning the inadequacy of the library's collections to meet the requirement needs of students, the library needs to expand and update current collections particularly journals. Similarly because it is not possible for any library, however large and comprehensive, to have the resources to satisfy the needs of all users at all times it is imperative that libraries organise schemes for inter-library lending. This scheme is extremely important in the Ghanaian

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situation since research materials are often out of print and libraries are therefore unable to acquire them.

In order to address the importance that students' place on responsiveness, there is the need to increase efforts by all library units to publicise library resources and services and to introduce graduate students to the full range of resources and services available to them. There should be the provision of Current Awareness Services (CAS) for graduate students in their research project.

It could either be done by informing or notifying them about new arrivals through notices or by providing selective dissemination of information (SDI) matching publications with students interest profile, where possible.

Staff with the requisite technical know-how should be made to assist users to conceptualise searches when the need arises, conduct searches for users only on requests. For the better trained one is, by itself is publicity, and makes one more flexible in his performance to go an extra mile to solve the problem of users.

The opening hours of the electronic services (i.e.CD-ROM workstation, photocopy service etc,) should be extended considering the number of equipment and that of the students who patronizes these services at a time. The opening hours should be extended to cover the normal working hours of the library to allow more users to make use of the facility.

Suggestion for Further Study

User perceptions should always be considered to be just a part of an over all quality evaluation effort. It should be used in conjunction with other quality evaluation instrument such as direct observation, provider's survey, or focus groups. Quality is a broad concept that no single approach adequately and fully measures alone; any one of these approaches can address only a piece of the total quality picture. Within well - defined limits however experience suggests that clients can play a useful role in measuring many aspects of client satisfaction with quality library services. They can contribute to our understanding of how client perceive certain subjective aspects of quality and access to services that may be difficulty to assess with other evaluation methodologies. Indeed the simple act of asking the client his/her views, and obligating the service provider to listen to them, is perhaps the most important outcome from the application of this methodology.

To obtain a more comprehensive evaluation of the services and resource at the Balme library, it is suggested that a further/ other assessment of the facilities and services be made using other methods like direct observation, focus groups etc.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

**STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF QUALITY SERVICE
AT THE BALME LIBRARY**

The questionnaire is seeking information to help determine students' perceptions of quality service at the Balme Library.

The success of the project work depends very much on your candid answers to the questions, so your co-operation will be highly appreciated. All responses will be treated confidential.

Thank you.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Please indicate the most appropriate answers by a tick in the brackets provided below.
2. Where a space is provided use a pen to write your answer in it.

BIOGRAPHIC DATA

1.1. Are you:

- (a) Male ()
- (b) Female ()

1.2. Your age:

- (a) Under 20 ()
- (b) 20-29 ()
- (c) 30-39 ()
- (d) 40-49 ()
- (e) 50 and above ()

1.3. Are you:

- (a) Graduate Student ()
- (b) Under-graduate ()

- 1.4. Faculty:
- (a) Arts ()
 - (b) Agriculture ()
 - (c) Social Science ()
 - (d) Science ()
 - (e) Law ()
 - (f) School of Administration ()

2. Reliability

2.1. Are you able to find reliable information to most of your queries in the reference collection?

- (a) All of them ()
- (b) Most of them ()
- (c) Some of them ()
- (d) Few of them ()
- (e) None of them ()

2.2. Have you ever had the experience of giving up a search, because you could not find the relevant information?

- (a) Very Often ()
- (b) Often ()
- (c) Not very often ()
- (d) Not at all ()
- (e) Not sure ()

2.3. How consistent is cataloguing and classification of the Balme Library Materials?

- (a) Very consistent ()
- (b) Consistent ()
- (c) Inconsistent ()
- (d) Very inconsistent ()
- (e) Not sure ()

2.4. Overdue and fine notices sent by the library staff are accurate

- (a) Strongly agree ()
- (b) Strongly disagree ()
- (c) Disagree ()
- (d) Strongly disagree ()
- (e) Not sure ()

2.5. Comment on the ability of the library staff in providing reliable information

.....

.....

.....

.....



3. Responsiveness:

- 3.1. Are you able to get the latest and current published books in your subject-area?
- | | | |
|-----|----------------|-----|
| (a) | Very often | () |
| (b) | Often | () |
| (c) | Not very often | () |
| (d) | Not at all | () |
| (e) | Not sure | () |
- 3.2. Do library staff attend to your requests promptly within 3 minutes (Response time)
- | | | |
|------|----------------|-----|
| (a). | Very often | () |
| (b) | Often | () |
| (c) | Not very often | () |
| (d) | Not at all | () |
| (e) | Not sure | () |
- 3.3. The books are expected to be re-shelved promptly within
- | | | |
|-----|-------------------|-----|
| (a) | Half day | () |
| (b) | One day | () |
| (c) | One and half days | () |
| (d) | Two days | () |
| (e) | Not sure | () |
- 3.4. How effective is the inter-library loan system in satisfying your information need?
- | | | |
|-----|------------------|-----|
| (a) | Very effective | () |
| (b) | Effective | () |
| (c) | Ineffective | () |
| (d) | Very ineffective | () |
| (e) | I do not know | () |
- 3.5. How current is the periodicals available on the periodical display shelves?
- | | | |
|-----|-----------------|-----|
| (a) | Very latest | () |
| (b) | Latest | () |
| (c) | Not latest | () |
| (d) | Not very latest | () |
| (e) | Not sure | () |
- 3.6. Comment on the readiness of library staff in providing you timely information
-
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-
-

3. Responsiveness:

- 3.1. Are you able to get the latest and current published books in your subject-area?
- (a) Very often ()
 - (b) Often ()
 - (c) Not very often ()
 - (d) Not at all ()
 - (e) Not sure ()
- 3.2. Do library staff attend to your requests promptly within 3 minutes (Response time)
- (a). Very often ()
 - (b) Often ()
 - (c) Not very often ()
 - (d) Not at all ()
 - (e) Not sure ()
- 3.3. The books are expected to be re-shelved promptly within
- (a) Half day ()
 - (b) One day ()
 - (c) One and half days ()
 - (d) Two days ()
 - (e) Not sure ()
- 3.4. How effective is the inter-library loan system in satisfying your information need?
- (a) Very effective ()
 - (b) Effective ()
 - (c) Ineffective ()
 - (d) Very ineffective ()
 - (e) I do not know ()
- 3.5. How current is the periodicals available on the periodical display shelves?
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-
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4. Assurance

- 4.1. What is the appearance of the library staff to the readers?
- (a) Neat and clean ()
 - (b) Inviting ()
 - (c) Untidy ()
 - (d) Messy ()
 - (e) Irritating ()
- 4.2. How efficient is the library staff in providing the relevant material from the collection of the library?
- (a) Very efficient ()
 - (b) Efficient ()
 - (c) Inefficient ()
 - (d) Very inefficient ()
 - (e) Not sure ()
- 4.3. The CD-Rom system is user-friendly and familiar.
- (a) Strongly agree ()
 - (b) Agree ()
 - (c) Disagree ()
 - (d) Strongly disagree ()
 - (e) Not sure ()
- 4.4. The library staffs take personal interest when you approach them for information
- (a) Very often ()
 - (b) Often ()
 - (c) Not very often ()
 - (d) Not at all ()
 - (e) Not sure ()
- 4.5. The library staff recognises you when you approach them regularly (Rapport).
- (a) Strongly agree ()
 - (b) Agree ()
 - (c) Disagree ()
 - (d) Strongly disagree ()
 - (e) Not sure ()

5. **Access**

5.1. Is the library staff available to you always at the reference desk?

- (a) Very often ()
- (b) Often ()
- (c) Not very often ()
- (d) Not at all ()
- (e) Not sure ()

5.2. The photocopier machines available are sufficient for student use.

- (a) Strongly agree ()
- (b) Agree ()
- (c) Disagree ()
- (b) Strongly disagree ()
- (e) Not sure ()

5.3. Have you ever been kept waiting to use the computer terminal at any time?

- (a) Very often ()
- (b) Often ()
- © Not very often ()
- (d) Not at all ()
- (e) Not sure ()

5.4. The library opening and closing hours are convenient and ideal.

- (a) Strongly agree ()
- (b) Strongly disagree ()
- (c) Disagree ()
- (e) Not sure ()

5.5. Have you ever been kept waiting in long queues in circulation?

- (a) Very often ()
- (b) Often ()
- (c) Not very often ()
- (d) Not at all ()
- (e) Not sure ()

5.6. State whether the library staff, equipment and hours of service are sufficient for students use.

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6. Communications

6.1 Are you aware of the facilities and services available in the library?

- (a) All of them ()
- (b) Most of them ()
- (c) Some of them ()
- (d) Few of them ()
- (e) None of them ()

6.2 How did you learn about the use of the library and its equipment?

- (a) Watching Video Cassettes ()
- (b) Library orientation ()
- (c) From friends ()
- (d) Teaching staff ()
- (e) Self taught ()

6.3 The CD-Rom user manuals where available are clear and easy to use

- (a) Very easy ()
- (b) Easy ()
- (c) Not so easy ()
- (d) Difficult ()
- (e) Not sure ()

6.4 When you approach the library staff for information, does she/he ask you questions regarding the exact information you want?

- (a) Most frequently ()
- (b) Frequently ()
- (c) Less frequently ()
- (d) Not at all bothered ()
- (e) not sure ()

6.5 What is the communicating (marketing) ability of library staff in providing (selling) their services?

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7. Tangibles

7.1 Are the chairs provided, convenient and comfortable for you?

- (a) Very convenient ()
- (b) Convenient ()
- (c) Inconvenient ()
- (d) Very inconvenient ()
- (e) Not sure ()

- 7.2. The temperature setting in the library is suitable.
- (a) Strongly agree ()
 - (b) Agree ()
 - (c) Disagree ()
 - (d) Strongly disagree ()
 - (e) Not sure ()
- 7.3. There is sufficient lighting in the library to carry on with work.
- (a) Strongly agree ()
 - (b) Agree ()
 - (c) Disagree ()
 - (d) Strongly disagree ()
 - (e) Not sure ()
- 7.4. The study halls are silent enough to enable peaceful work.
- (a) Strongly agree ()
 - (b) Agree ()
 - (c) Disagree ()
 - (d) Strongly disagree ()
 - (e) Not sure ()
- 7.5. Please state any problem in using the microfilm/microfishe reader, photocopiers, and computers in the library?

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- 7.5 What area of the library services would you like to be improved?

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Thank you for taking time to comment.

APPENDIX B
QUESTIONNAIRE CODING

In order to convert the responses in five-point scale the coding below was employed.

The Letter (a) to (e) were coded as follows

- a - 5
- b - 4
- e - 3
- c - 2
- d - 1

This was applied to the following questions;

- 2.2, 2.3, 2.4.
- 3.2, 3.4, 3.5.
- 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5.
- 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5.
- 6.3, 6.4,
- 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4.

Question 3.3. was coded as

- c - 1
- a - 2
- b - 3
- c - 4
- d - 5

Question 2.1, 4.1 and 6.1 were coded as:-

- a - 5
- b - 4
- c - 3
- d - 2
- e - 1

Open ended questions were coded as separate variables.

It was discovered that some respondents ticked more than one option or answer for question 6.2. As a result, the answers or option were coded as separate variables.

APPENDIX C
ORGANOGRAM OF BALME LIBRARY

