Satisfaction With Library Services and Word of Mouth Marketing Among Students in Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria

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Abstract
The study examined the relationship between satisfaction with library services and word of mouth marketing among students in Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria. The research adopted a correlational research design. A sample of 400 respondents was drawn from an estimated population of 22,000 students. Data from the respondents were collected via a questionnaire. Statistical mean was applied to analyse objectives one and two of the study, while the Pearson's Correlation was used to analyse objective three. The study found that, students were satisfied with library services, there was low involvement in word-of-mouth-marketing about library services among students and there existed a significant relationship between satisfaction with library services and word-of-mouth marketing among the students. The research was limited to Delta State University, Abraka, as opposed to all other universities in the State. As a result, the findings should be interpreted in context and not be extrapolated to other universities without further study. The results imply that when applied, it may boost user engagement and library use, encourage patrons to let go of negative impressions about the library and foster favourable impression among library users. The study has established that students' satisfaction with library services influenced WOM marketing at the Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria.

Keywords: Satisfaction, word-of-Mouth, Marketing, Library Services, University, Nigeria.

Introduction
The University library offers a wide range of information services and resources to support the research, teaching, and learning activities of faculty members, researchers, students, post-graduate students, and other scholars inside the university. The library's collection of relevant and targeted information materials in the form of books, journals, databases, e-books etc. are well organized and made available to users for consultation and use. The university libraries no longer have the exclusive right to information service provision. The information space is dominated with competition from other information providers like Google, Amazon, and World-Wide-Web (www). Consequently, libraries have embraced marketing as a necessary strategy for survival in a highly competitive information environment (Shontz, 2004, as cited in Thomsett-Scott, 2014). An important marketing tool librarian can deploy to create awareness and increase usage of library offerings is word-of-mouth marketing (WOMM).

Word-of-mouth marketing (WOMM) has been defined in a variety of ways by marketing experts. Silverman (2011) defined word-of-mouth marketing as "the exchange of information about a product or service among people who are independent of the producers". Also the Word-of-Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA) (2007) defined it as "offering people a reason to discuss about your products and services, and making the conservation simpler to achieve". Earlier, Gildin (2002) defined WOM as "a form of communication among consumers based on their experiences and impressions of a service". According to the definitions, WOMM is a natural (non-commercial/non-profit) and inter-personal communication among customers regarding their encounters and impressions of the library's offerings. Therefore, WOMM may be summed up as voluntarily shared information between actual library users and other potential customers regarding the information services they have used. WOMM is a strategy of talking which is used among students who are users of a university library. The thoughts expressed by readers may be a valuable source of information about the services provided by the library and its reputation. In WOMM, the customers recommending the service and product are neither paid nor are they encouraged by the service provider to do so. It is free of vested interest and not biased towards the producer of the product and service.

WOMM influences consumer's decision-making process in favour or otherwise of organizations' products and services. For this reason, organizations are interested in promoting positive WOM and avoiding negative WOMM, which can be dangerous to the image of the corporation (Gildin 2002). WOMM can be communicated in the form of oral conversation, telephone, social media, and e-mail. The most authentic strategy of promoting goods or services is WOMM, which capitalizes on people's innate desire to share their experience with family, friends, and colleagues. It is considered a reliable source of information because the sender is typically unaffiliated with the organization offering the service and does not profit directly from defending it. It should be noted that WOMM has a larger impact in contexts where services are consumed because services are intangible, challenging to analyse prior to purchase, unprotected by assurances, and non-standardised. WOMM has more of an impact on services because it reduces risk.

University libraries may benefit from WOMM in different ways. Smith, (2011) noted that "Word-of-mouth strategies encourage customers to spread the word about library services through their daily interactions, boosting customer engagement and library use". Barber (2014) reported that "Broward County Library (BSL) concentrated its word-of-mouth marketing on providing consumers with 24/7 online resources and saw increase in utilisation of its online service offerings, with music downloads increasing 400%". Ogbomo (2017) in a study noted that "when carefully designed and implemented promotion (WOMM) will increase usage of library offerings such as reference services, circulation and inter library loan". On library perception, WOMM

may develop a behavioural shift in the minds of users, i.e. let go of predetermined unfavourable judgement and build positive perception among customers.

Satisfaction is a significant variable in the examination of WOMM in a service sector like university library. Ahmadi (2019) defined satisfaction as "a person's sense of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product's perceived performance (or consequence) to his or her expectation". The difference between what is anticipated and what is actually received from a good or service will produce a sense of satisfaction or disappointment for customers (Supriadi, et al 2017). When customers' delight exceeds their expectations, they are satisfied, continue to repurchase and recommend the product or service to their family, friends and acquaintances. Thus, customer satisfaction with product and service experience has a relationship with WOMM. Laksana and Ekawati (2020) in a study found that "customer satisfaction has a positive and significant influence on WOM". In this study, it is assumed that because of the nature of user experiences, student satisfaction with academic library services may affect WOMM. Satisfied students are more inclined to share their experiences with library services, with their academic community. This natural spread of positive comments helps to strengthen the library's reputation, create trust, and attract new users. As a result, a satisfied student becomes a library advocate, spreading its positive image through word-of-mouth, which is a powerful driver of increasing library usage.

Statement of the Problem
Academic libraries offer a wide range of information services to aid university research, teaching and learning, using word-of-mouth marketing to inform students, faculty, researchers, and other employees. WOMM in libraries is the promotion and dissemination of information about library services through informal and person-to-person communication in a virtual or physical environment. This may involve students sharing their library experiences with friends, classmates and faculty. WOMM encourages library users to spread the word about library services, boosts user engagement, increases library awareness and grows usage. Observation has shown that students at Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria, rarely discuss library services, which may have a detrimental influence on the library by lowering user engagement with its services. The level of satisfaction with library services may be a factor that could affect students' involvement in WOMM. While the literature recognizes the significance of customer satisfaction in various service contexts, there is a dearth of studies examining the specific link between satisfaction with library services and its impact on WOMM. Understanding the nature and extent of influence is crucial for library management and development. Therefore, this study aims to bridge this gap by investigating the relationship between students' satisfaction with library services and word-of- mouth marketing at Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria.

Objective of the Study

The primary goal of the study is to evaluate the relationship between student satisfaction with library services and word-of-mouth marketing at Delta State University (DELSU) in Abraka, Nigeria.

Specifically, the study will;

1. Determine students' level of satisfaction with library services provided at DELSU, Abraka, Nigeria.
2. Examine the extent to which students are involved in word-of-mouth marketing regarding library services.
3. Establish the relationship between student satisfaction with library services and word of mouth marketing.

Literature Review

Students' Satisfaction with Library Services

Student satisfaction in University educational activities could be seen as student's happiness or contentment with the overall university experience derived from learning, teaching and research. Weerasinghe (2017) defined students' satisfaction as "the result of an evaluation of students' educational experiences, services and facilities". Students could derive happiness from learning, teaching, research and quality library services. Their happiness with library offerings means the contentment gained by a learner's (user's) experience with library offerings. When a library resource and service meets the user's expectation (information need) he/she is satisfied. Hence it is the degree to which the library is able to meet the demands of the users (Verma & Lalrokhawina 2018 as cited in Amarasekara & Marasinghe, 2020). When a user is pleased with a service, he or she is likely to tell three others about it; nevertheless, when displeased, this number climbs to seven (Wojciechowska 2015). Several empirical studies have demonstrated students' satisfaction with University Libraries. Amarasekara and Marasinghe (2020) found that "the respondents expressed high satisfaction with staff performance, moderate satisfaction with website and facilities, and are generally pleased with the library's resources and facilities". In another study by Baffour et al (2021), they found that "the majority of survey participants, 63 (22%) highly agree and 133 (47%) agree, they are satisfied with the learning support the library provides. However, 19 (7%) disagree and are dissatisfied with the support the library provides". The authors concluded that "users were satisfied with the library's encouragement of learning and its treatment of its patrons". According to a 2017 study by Singh and Kuri, "users were happy with lending books 662 (87.6%), internet services 656 (86.7%), reference 639 (84.3%), journal/periodicals 621 (81.9%), e-journals/databases 611(80.9%), and reservation 607(80.6%)". Consequently, the authors concluded that "all patrons of IITs libraries were satisfied".

In Nigeria, Tiemo and Ateboh (2016) investigation of users' satisfaction revealed that "the library's information services provided to users were not entirely unsatisfactory". Therefore, patrons were not totally satisfied with their experience in the library of health sciences.

Students' Involvement in WOMM

In the university, students' learning experiences are significantly influenced by WOM. Students inform friends, classmates, family, lecturers, social clubs, and the wider public about the university. Due to their satisfactory experiences or perceived value, students tell stories about university services like teaching, learning, research and library offerings through WOM. WOM marketing according to Word of Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA) in 2007 is "the act of consumers (students) providing information to other customers". Harahap, et al (2018) noted that "WOM is a message about a service or company (University/Library) in the form of comments or impressions about the product, friendliness, honesty, speed of service and others felt and experienced by someone then delivered to others". Depending on the communicator's (student's) experience about the products or services used, information communicated or exchanged might be either positive or negative. Therefore, WOM plays a crucial function in customer decision making when choosing or purchasing a good or service

Harahap et al (2018) found that "WOM positively affected students' decision to choose Faculty of Economics, Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara (USIU)". This indicates that WOM has a favourable and considerable impact on students' decisions to select Economics as a field of study. In UK, Cowrie (2016) examined WOM communication among students and discovered that "Overseas and UK undergraduates students studying at universities in the UK report the same intention to speak both positively and negatively about their experiences, university and, tutors". In 2015, Bhayani studied social and peer influences in college choice at the University of Wollongong in Dubai. The result revealed that "word of mouth or recommendations of opinion leaders (student representatives) also act as anchor for student's choice. Around 50% of respondents reported that they did select the universities that was first recommended by opinion leaders". Thus, a student's decision to enlist at a certain university was impacted by the suggestions of other students already enrolled there. Corroborating the facts above, Maulana (2022) revealed that "students who actively sought WOM communication were susceptible to its inputs (recommendations), and listed friend and relative who were studying or have graduated abroad as important WOM communication source". WOM marketing influences the decision-making process of consumers (students), reduces consumption uncertainty, and improves service quality perception. WOMM significantly affects behavioural intention of students to purchase goods and service especially their decision to attend university and programme of study. The current study assumed that, satisfaction with library services in intricately associated with WOMM. Positive WOMM experience creates a ripple effect, fostering a supportive community that actively promotes the library leading to increased user engagement.

Relationship between Satisfaction and WOMM

Whether customers are happy or unhappy, they will talk about their experience and the story will spread. The customer's story undoubtedly influenced the dissemination of

information about the product/service. This invariably means that satisfaction affects the spread of information about services. Consumer happiness with consumption experience is thus a factor influencing service-related WOMM. Extant literature have shown that customer satisfaction and WOM marketing are related. The connection could either be positive or negative. Stribbell and Duangekanong (2022) in an investigation on satisfaction as antecedent for WOM in international education found that "satisfaction had a significant and direct impact on parent word of mouth". They demonstrated that generational referrals and parental recommendations depend on satisfaction because it had the greatest impact on word-of-mouth. Parents who are pleased with services of the university where their children are studying engaged in WOMM i.e. recommendation to guide other parents and friends in the choice of university to be admitted to. In an earlier study, Wirtz and Chew (2002, as cited in Kundu & Rajan 2017) showed that "satisfied customers were more likely to generate purchase information". Chienwattanasook et al (2019) in their study on customer satisfaction, WOM and conventional bank in Thailand, discovered that "customer satisfaction has a favourable influence on WOM". The implication of the finding is that customer contentment leads to better feedback and recommendations for other potential bank clients. In this regards, happy customer can create word of mouth for an organisation's product and service. Customers who are happy with company's services will attract benefits to the organization like repeat business, brand loyalty, encouraging WOM, and increase profit. In another development, Yudiantoro et al (2018) studied customer satisfaction towards WOM in commercial bank in Indonasia and revealed that "customer satisfaction has a clear impact on word-of-mouth because the probability value is 0.000 less than 0.05". The researchers concluded that "customer satisfaction has an impact on loan customers' word-of-mouth marketing, thus when clients are happy with a bank's services, they are likely to recommend it to others". Confirming the finding above, Ahmadinejad (2019) showed that "customer satisfaction influenced WOM and that satisfied customers would return to purchase and spread positive WOM and customers will start WOM marketing".

Contrary to the presentation so far, there are lots of evidences to suggest that a negative relationship exist between customer satisfaction and WOMM. Kusuma et al (2021) in a study on when satisfaction is not enough to build word of mouth and repurchasing intention, found, that "customer satisfaction is proven to have no effect on WOM". Also, Nazwirman and Kom (2015) revealed that "there was no relationship between customer satisfaction and WOM". The inference drawn from the above, could mean that a happy customer would not be eager to tell other prospective customers about his satisfaction with a good or service. Consequently, an inprovement in satisfaction may not necessarily translate into an equivalent rise in WOM recommendations or referrals.

Methodology
The correlational research methodology was deployed to examine the association between student satisfaction with library services and word-of-mouth marketing. A

sample of 400 was drawn from a student population of about 22,000 in the 2019/2020 academic year (Delta State University, 2022). The survey, titled Satisfaction with Library Services and Word of Mouth Marketing (SLSWOMM), was used to collect the data. The questionnaire was divided into sections A and B. Section A contained eleven items about respondents' satisfaction with library services. Section B focused on word of mouth marketing, adapted from Goyette et al (2010) and contained eleven items. Four hundred (400) copies of the questionnaire were administered, returned and found useful. Data collected were analysed using mean and Pearson Product Moment Correlation at a significant level of 0.05.

Presentation of Findings
Students' Satisfaction with Library Services.
Table 1: Level of Satisfaction with Library Services among Students of Delta State University

S/N	Items	Highly satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Highly dissatisfied	Mean
1	Circulation services	112	136	94	58	2.76
2	Reference services	128	169	53	50	2.94
3	Access to Periodicals/journals	126	145	77	52	2.86
4	Reserve services	98	94	96	112	2.04
5	Research/citation management support	129	130	86	55	2.83
6	Access to E-resources	138	151	67	44	2.96
7	Newspapers and magazines service	124	160	66	50	2.90
8	Reference desk services	73	143	156	28	2.70
9	Interlibrary loan	39	88	194	79	2.21
10	Reprographic service	62	88	142	108	2.26
11	Internet services	156	142	68	34	3.05

| **Aggregate Mean** | | | | | **2.70** | |

Criterion Mean = 2.50
Table 1 shows the mean rating of students' satisfaction with DELSU library services. The finding demonstrates that the students are satisfied with DELSU library services. This is because the aggregate mean score ($\bar{x} = 2.70$) is higher than the criterion mean ($\bar{x} = 2.50$). Consequently, students were satisfied with library services. Also, the results show that the students were mainly satisfied with internet services ($\bar{x} = 3.05$)

and access to E-resources ($\bar{x} = 2.96$). However, the students were dissatisfied with reserved services ($\bar{x} = 2.04$) and interlibrary loan ($\bar{x} = 2.21$).

Table 2: Extent of Students' Involvement in WOMM.

S/N	Statements	Highly Involved	Involved	Less Involved	Not Involved	Mean
1	I spoke of the library much more frequently	118	172	88	22	2.96
2	I spoke of the university library information service much more frequently than about any other type of information service on campus	75	64	140	121	2.23
3	I have spoken favorably of the university library service to other students	60	92	122	126	2.20
4	I am proud to say to others student that I am satisfied with the library service	86	124	47	143	2.40
5	I have spoken unfavorably of the university library to other students	75	148	33	144	2.39
6	I discuss the variety of the services offered to student in the library	119	101	30	150	2.47
7	I would be willing to pay for using the university library	73	120	52	155	2.30
8	Price is not an important factor in my decision to continue using the university library	68	112	68	152	2.24
9	I am very interested in what others think about the university library	76	55	126	143	2.20
10	I recommend the university library to newly admitted students who asks my advice	127	48	86	139	2.41
11	I encourage friends and course mate to always use the university library	130	45	94	131	2.44

Aggregate	Mean	=
2.38		

Criterion Mean = 2.5

Results in Table 2 demonstrated that students were less involved in WOMM about library services. This is because the aggregate mean score ($\bar{x} = 2.38$), is lower than the criterion mean ($\bar{x} = 2.50$). Conclusively, students were less involved in WOMM about library services. In addition, the results revealed that the students spoke of the library much more frequently ($\bar{x} = 2.96$). On the contrary, students indicated that they have not spoken favourably of the university library services to other students ($\bar{x} = 2.20$). The later result suggests that there may be dissatisfaction or perceived shortcomings in the university library services, as students were not inclined to provide positive recommendation to their classmate and friends.

Relationship between Satisfaction with library services and WOMM.

		Satisfaction with Library Services	Involvement in WOM Marketing
Satisfaction with Library Services	Pearson Correlation	1	.956**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400
Involvement in Word of Mouth Marketing	Pearson Correlation	.956**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400

Table 3 shows the correlation between satisfaction with library offerings and word of mouth marketing. The finding revealed a significant and positive association between involvement in word-of-mouth marketing and satisfaction with library services (r=.956**, N=400, P0.05). Consequently, there existed a positively significant relationship between student satisfaction with library services and word-of-mouth marketing.

Discussion

An objective of the current study was to identify the level of students' satisfaction with DELSU library services. It was found that students were satisfied with the library services. This satisfaction may reflect the effectiveness of the library in meeting the information needs and expectations of the students of DELSU, Abraka, Nigeria. This finding corroborates that of Amarasekara and Marasinghe (2020) who revealed that "the respondents expressed high satisfaction with staff performance, moderate satisfaction with website and facilities, and generally pleased with library's resources and facilities". This result supported Baffour et al (2021) who found that "users were satisfied with the library's encouragement of learning and its treatment of its patrons". Also the finding corroborated Singh and Kuri (2017) who revealed that "all patrons of IITs libraries were satisfied".

On students' involvement in word of mouth marketing (WOMM) about library services, the study discovered a low involvement in word-of-mouth-marketing (WOMM) about library services among students. This indicates that students made few recommendations to friends, classmates, and acquaintances about library services. Though involvement in WOMM was low, the students talked about the library services either positively or negatively. This finding confirmed Cowrie (2016) who discovered that "Overseas and UK undergraduate students studying in the UK report the same intention to speak both positively and negatively about their experiences, university and, tutors". Also, the result authenticated Bhayani (2015) whose study result revealed that "word of mouth or recommendations of opinion leaders (student representatives) also act as anchor for student's choice. Around 50% of respondents reported that they did select the universities that was first recommended by opinion leaders."

In terms of the correlation between students' satisfaction with library offerings and word of mouth marketing, the study found that there existed a significant relationship between student satisfaction with library services and word-of-mouth marketing. The relationship stems from the fact that satisfied students may not actively spread word of mouth, but their pleasant experiences may have a subtle, indirect impact through infrequent recommendations or conversation with classmates. The secret is in the organic and indirect nature of word-of-mouth marketing. This suggests that when students' satisfaction with services of the library increases there will be a proportional increase in word-of-mouth marketing among students. The finding corroborated that of Stribbell and Duangekanong (2022) who found that "satisfaction had a significant and direct impact on parent word of mouth". The study's result supported Chienwattanasook et al (2019) who discovered that "there is a positive effect of customer satisfaction on word of mouth". Also, the finding confirmed Yudiantoro et al (2018) who revealed that "customer satisfaction is proven to affect the WOM of loan customers, meaning that when customers are happy with a bank's services, the customer will give positive word of mouth to others." Another result the study supported is that of Ahmadinejad (2019) who found that "customer satisfaction influenced WOM and that satisfied customers would return to purchase, spread WOM and customers will start WOM marketing".

Conclusion and Recommendations
The goal of this study was to empirically investigate the connection between student satisfaction with library services and word-of-mouth marketing (WOMM) activity at the DELSU, Abraka, Nigeria. The study discovered that students were satisfied with library services, there was a low involvement in word-of-mouth-marketing (WOMM) about library services among students and, there existed a positively significant relationship between student satisfaction with library services and word-of-mouth marketing (WOMM). The finding suggests that an increase in student's satisfaction with library services may lead to an equivalent increase in WOMM at DELSU, Abraka,

Nigeria. Accordingly, student satisfaction with library services is a strong predictor of WOMM at DELSU, Abraka, Nigeria. Recommendations:

1) Librarians should maintain and further enhance library services especially reserve services, inter library loan and reprographic services to improve students' satisfaction.
2) The university library administration should give students more reasons to talk about (i.e. WOMM) library services by offering 24/7 online library services via social media.
3) Librarians should improve students' satisfaction by providing additional online library services (e-books and audio-books) that are accessible remotely via mobile devices like Android phones to increase positive WOMM of library services among students.

Limitation: The research was limited to DELSU, Abraka, as opposed to all other universities in Delta State. As a result, the findings should be interpreted in context and not be extrapolated to other universities without further study.

Implication: The results imply that when applied, it may boost user engagement and library use, encourage patrons to let go of negative impressions about the library and foster favourable impression among library users.

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