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FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES

AN ASSESSMENT OF DISTANCE LEARNERS' USE OF INFORMATION RESOURCES AND SERVICES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA LIBRARY

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION.

CONSTANCE DINTLE MODISE

9601864

SUPERVISOR

PROF. OLADOKUN, O. S.

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DECLARATION

I declare that "An assessment of distance learners' use of information resources and services at the University of Botswana Library" is my own work, except where otherwise indicated.

Constance Dintle Modise (9601864)

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my husband, (Mhulatshi), for his love, support and prayers and to my late mother Ms Tshameko Tshabo for her unconditional love.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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ACRONYMS

ACRL	Association of College Research Libraries
ARL	Association of Research Libraries
CCE	Centre for Continue Education
DDE	Department of Distance Education
DE	Distance Education
DL	Distance Learners
LibQUAL	Library Quality Model
OCLC	Online Computer Library Center
OPAC	Online Public Access Catalogue
ORI	Okavango Research Institute
SERVQUAL	Service Quality
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UB	University of Botswana
UBL	University of Botswana Library
UNISA	University of South Africa

ABSTRACT

Delivering education through distance education mode imposes upon universities a responsibility to provide library resources and services that are adequate to address students' expectations of service quality. It is critical to provide library resources and services whose quality levels are acceptable to those who use them. This study sought to assess the distance learners' use of information resources and services provided by the University of Botswana Library. It also attempts to find out the expectations distance learners and their perceptions about library services. The study aimed to measure the quality of the access to library collections, access to library facilities and staff services from the distance learners' perspectives. The objectives of the study were 1) to ascertain the extent of use of the library resources and services by distance learners, 2) to find out the distance learners' expectations and perceptions on the quality of University of Botswana library resources and services, 3) to determine distance learners satisfaction level regarding service quality, 4) to examine the library support services offered to distance learners, 5) to identify challenges faced by distance learners and 6) to make recommendations to the library based on the findings of the study.

The study adapted LibQUAL, a library assessment instrument to measure the users' expectations, and perceptions of the quality of information services, library facilities and staff services. Armed with pragmatist research paradigm, a mixed method approach which included both quantitative and qualitative data collection was used. The study used LibQUAL survey instrument to collect data from a sample of 124 distance students representing 20 percent of the distance learners of the University of Botswana. Interviews were also conducted with five subject librarians designated to work directly with distance students. A total of 87 (70%) distance students responded to the questionnaire and all the five librarians made themselves available for interview. The results of the quantitative survey were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) to determine the frequencies of the responses and the results were displayed using tables and figures. The qualitative data was analyzed using Microsoft excel analysis and thematic analysis.

A key finding indicated that there is a gap between distance learners' expectations and perceptions of library service at University of Botswana library. Furthermore, the study found that users were not really getting the full benefit of the library services and some of the services were under-utilized. It emerged from the findings that the most problematic services for users were reference services, interlibrary loans, book reserve and electronic resources such as electronic journals and databases. Furthermore, the results of the study also indicated that library services were initially planned for all students regardless of their status. The interviews with the librarians revealed that more planning, and library awareness assessments are needed for furthering the presence of the library among distance learners. Such efforts could increase library usage and could provide useful information for library self-study and ideas for improving the quality of library services. The study recommends that University of Botswana library will have to focus on developing flexible services and promote them proactively. Librarians need to experiment with technological innovations such as virtual reference tools and social media platforms so that future service provision is increasingly effective and efficient. The study concluded by pointing out some future research areas that could be explored. The study could help inform decision making for improvement of services, future planning, training of staff and benchmarking with other libraries. This study would also provide a contribution to the depth of researches on library use by distance students in Botswana and Africa as a whole.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Education and information are increasingly becoming the core around which our society revolves. Because of this, educational patterns are changing, bringing a demand for more innovative and flexible methods of delivering education. Distance education (DE) is an innovative educational concept. The distance education system has provided the scope of education which make it free from the clutches of the four walls of a classroom, accessible to all sections of the society (Buck 2011). It makes possible for education to reach out to the learner wherever he may be and provides a scope for self-study, which in turn gives self-fulfilment to the students.

Distance education particularly in higher education has continued to grow and evolve in a tremendous manner over the last few decades in Africa. Earlier distance education was dominated by correspondence courses but today, institutions at all levels are providing instruction to distance learners through the use of information technology, which has made it possible for teachers to provide instruction to mass audience at the same time. It is often described as the formalized learning received while the student is on a location outside the university campus. Both the teacher and student are expected to have minimal physical contact, but much reliance is on electronic communication and independent studying. Adetimirin (2011) defines distance education as open learning applied to situations in which there is a geographical expiration between the learner and the learning institution. Distance education involves gaining knowledge through mediated instruction and all technologies conducive to learning at a distance (United States Distance Learning Association, 2008). This education phenomenon takes place when instructors and students are separated by time and place, but through the use of technology, they are brought together for instruction and learning.

Distance education places the onus on students to initiate the learning process. Students must be responsible to read the material, participate in the discussion, ask questions, learn the objectives, and set aside the time to learn. Therefore, the student must be self-disciplined, motivated,

responsible, and active in the learning process. Distance students are becoming an entirely new subpopulation of higher education learners. Many distance education students are mature with full time jobs or other commitments, and graduates requiring updating in their field of knowledge. As such, they have many conflicting responsibilities and need the flexibility that distance learning allows. For those who cannot afford to quit work, Distance education is the most viable option. Distance students have a variety of reasons for taking courses to broaden their education.

Distance education has made remarkable progress over the last two decades and has now gained widespread acceptance as a viable widespread acceptance system. It is gaining momentum in several institutions of higher learning by day all over the world. The enrolment trend of the University of Botswana in the last fifteen years indicates that distance education is also gaining popularity in Botswana. Distance education has had effect not only on the discipline of education, but it has also fundamentally affected services that support it (Watson, 2006). One of the most essential support systems influencing the quality of the courses offered in distance education is the provision of library and information services. The expansion into distance education has contributed to how academic libraries are reshaping their resources and services to meet the needs of distance learners. Library services are essential support services to distance education students as they are to the regular face-to-face students.

In order to meet the information needs of the distance learners, the role of academic libraries cannot be over emphasized. Though an institution may have the best stocked libraries, the use of the libraries by the students need not simply depend on the number of books and journals in the library. Many factors like expectations and perceptions, the general environment in the library, ease of access to library resources, distance from the place of residence, or where the students are located including their working places may influence the use of the library. The important thing is not how much libraries have but how well the resources and services are being used. What users think about a service is important, so is evidence for the use of a service.

For academic libraries to succeed in supporting the missions of effective teaching, research and learning, they have to become more user focused in delivering their services. In order to do this, libraries have to take the responsibility of incorporating into their work environment a culture of

ongoing assessment and a willingness to make decisions based on facts and sound analysis (Simba, 2006). Since its inception, the University of Botswana library has regularly collected usage statistics around reference service, collection used and books acquired. However, this only tells part of the story. Taken on their own, the usage statistics do not reveal the impact the library has on its user groups or its contribution to the library and university's goals. The tendency to measure the quality of an academic library in quantifiable terms regarding its collection and use does not adequately address the community's demands for information (Naidu, 2009). The annual statistics reported by UB library offers no insight on the quality of the service rendered because such measures focus on the library's internal operations rather than on its users. However, libraries exist to serve their users; only the users can justify the existence of a library. According to Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Barry (1990) the only criteria that count in evaluating service quality are defined by customers. "Only customers judge quality all other judgments are essentially irrelevant" (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Barry, 1990: 16) Listening to and asking customers to share their experiences will do much to help view the impact of library' services from the perspective of the customer (Cristobal, 2018). For any library to prosper, it is critical to develop a better understanding of its customers and how the customers' needs are changing and evolving. To provide effective library support to distance students, libraries need to continuously assess the needs of their users.

It is important to know how library users - both the on-campus and those at remote sites, perceive and utilize information. Creaser (2006) argued that in a service environment such as library services, an understanding of how users perceive and value what is available is essentially central to effective service design and delivery. Capturing changes in user perception and behavior is critical in planning library facilities and services. Given the importance of academic libraries in academic institutions and the changing nature of user perception and behavior, it is meaningful to examine users' perceptions of academic libraries and how they are related to their use of the libraries, (Kim, 2017)

1.2   UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA

The University of Botswana (UB) was established in 1982 as the first institution of higher education in Botswana. UB is a dual mode institution that teaches fulltime and distance education students. The university has three campuses: Gaborone, Francistown, and Maun Campuses. The university is divided into eight faculties: Business, Education, Engineering, Health Sciences, Humanities, Medicine, Science and Social Sciences. Distance education programmes are provided through Centre for Continue Education (CCE). The Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) was established in 1987 and it is a multi-disciplinary and inter-faculty outreach arm of the University of Botswana. The CCE offers credit and non-credit programmes, within the framework of lifelong learning. It does this through part-time evening classes, distance education programmes, professional development and training programmes, public education/outreach and other extension activities.

The Department of Distance Education (DDE) offers Diploma and Degree programmes in collaboration with the relevant faculties of the University. All these programmes currently use print media and audio visual modes of learning. DDE students are scattered across the country and attend residential/tutorial sessions at different centres depending on the student's location. The clientele are mostly working adults who were not able to study full time with the University due to a variety of reasons. The structure of DDE programmes is such that the students are able to study at their own pace and are only expected to attend 3 weeks of residential tutorial and assessment sessions at different intervals. Otherwise, the programs are structured such that the most of the time they study independently. The Department of Distance Education offers the following programmes:

- Business Degree programmes (BDP)
    - Bachelor's Degree in Accounting
    - Bachelor's Degree in Finance
    - Bachelor's Degree in Management
    - Bachelor's Degree in Marketing
- Diploma in Adult Education
- Diploma in NGO-Management

The BDP programmes which are the focus of this study were introduced in 2003 and currently 618 distance students are registered for 2017/2018 academic year. The BDP programmes are run from Gaborone, Francistown, Maun and Palapye centres.

1.2.1 THE VISION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA

The Vision of University of Botswana is to be a leading academic centre of excellence in Africa and the world, while the mission statement is to improve economic and social conditions for the nation while advancing itself as a distinctively African university with a regional and international outlook. Specifically, it states that the University will:

- Provide excellence in the delivery of learning to ensure society is provided with talented, creative and confident graduates
- Advance knowledge and understanding through excellence in research and its application
- Improve economic and social development by high impact engagement with business, the professions, government and civil society

1.3 UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA LIBRARY

UB Library is committed to providing access to information resources and services that support programmes offered by the University of Botswana. UB Library operates library services at seven locations. These include the main campus library in Gaborone, and branch libraries at the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) North – Francistown and at the Okavango Research Institute (ORI) in Maun. The UB library also has four satellite libraries, at Letsholathebe Hospital in Maun, Mahalapye Hospital in Mahalapye, and Princess Marina Hospital in Gaborone and Sbrana Hospital in Lobatse. Distance learners can borrow library materials or access online resources from any of the library sites.

1.3.1 THE MISSION OF THE UB LIBRARY

The mission of the UB Library is to develop and provide access to quality information and foster a supportive environment which promotes learning, teaching and research capabilities of the University and the nation, and contribute to international scholarship (University of Botswana, 2018). The UB library mission is to provide superior quality education which contributes to higher standards of education. In its vision statement it is affirmed that the Library will be a leading customer-centered provider of excellent, globally competitive information services and access to resources, while its mission is to provide globally competitive information services in support to learning, teaching and research (University of Botswana, 2018). It is pertinent to note that one of the four values of the UBL is particularly relevant to this study - customer satisfaction. The value states that the UBL will strive to seek out customers' information needs and provide quality services that meet or exceed customer expectations.

1.3.2 UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA LIBRARY RESOURCES AND SERVICES

The University of Botswana Library (UBL) current collection is made up of print monographs, print serials, multimedia, newspapers, electronic books and electronic databases and journals. It has a collection of approximately 600838 monographs, 28 971 pamphlets, 995 serial titles on subscription, 123 236 full text journals; 238 internet work stations, and 22028 registered users, 618 of which are distance learners (University of Botswana, 2018). In addition, it also provides access to the internet and subscribes to a number of online databases, electronic journals and electronic books. It has 116 staff members. Library operations are computerized using an integrated library automation system called Sierra. The system allows for speedy and convenient access to the library's catalogue both from within the library and remotely through the internet. Moreover, the UB libraries also provide spacious and conducive study environment with 1132 seating capacity, 15 seminar rooms, 5 carrel rooms and a learning common area with (30 computers and 50 seating capacity),

The services comprise Circulation, Reference services, Internet service, and research support services, inter library loan services, photocopying and printing, outreach service, and user education. Reference and Information services are available to ensure customers have convenient

access to professional assistance. Online reference service is also available through the UB library Facebook page. Photocopying and printing is available in all branches and is subject to the Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act of Botswana (2000). Subject librarians are available in all disciplines to provide research support services and instructions in the use of various resources, as well as information literacy skills tutorials to all students. Interlibrary loans service is extended to academic staff, research students and is done when the library does not have in stock of the item. The library website is part of the University of Botswana website. There are links to the library catalogue, library services and electronic resources that the library subscribes to from the library website. Library users can access all the online resources from remote sites where there is internet connection.

The library is open from 07.45am -23.00pm during non-exam times from Monday to Thursday. On Fridays the library is open from 07.45am-17.00. The library is also opened on Saturdays from 10.00am -16h00 and Sundays 2.00pm – 10.00pm. The normal hours are extended during examination periods. All registered students and staff may borrow library material and the distance learners are entitled to 8 books and their loan period is 6 weeks.

1.4   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since the introduction of distance education in the 1970s by the University of Botswana, there is a trend showing an increase in the number of distance education programmes over the past four decades. Unfortunately with the attractive packages programmes such as certificate in adult education, diploma in primary education and theology and bachelor of business administration, offered to distance learners, matters regarding the distance learners' use of the library services and resources and their satisfaction towards services offered have not been looked into. Library resources, facilities and staff are made available at the University of Botswana library for all students, the true value of this huge investment will only be realized through the productive use of these resources and services. Extant literature, (Fidzani, 1998, Aina & Oladokun, 2002, Oladokun, 2009) on the University of Botswana Library seems to suggest, unlike in other universities, that users' perceptions and satisfaction with library services has never been assessed. At the University of Botswana Library, there is no data available to inform library managers and administrators about users' satisfaction, across individual services, dimensions, and user groups.

A look at the 2017/18 online databases usage statistics of the University of Botswana library shows a noticeable low use of the library resources by distance students. For example, usage statistics for social sciences and business databases for August 2017 to August 2018 show, Jstor, Emerald, Oxford, Cambridge online journals were visited only 2301 times and only 17 full text journals were downloaded by students on remote sites. The University of Botswana Library circulation report for the same period shows that there are only 171 (28%) active library accounts out of 618 distance learning students registered for 2017/18 academic year. These findings are surprising because distance education is essentially self-directed learning for which the library services and resources are indispensable. The extent to which distance learners are creative, informed and knowledgeable will be shaped by the usage of the library resources available to them. Adeyemi (2009) further opined that, students' expectations and demands of the library are reflected in their library information resources usage. The usefulness of any library resource depends on its maximum utilization by students otherwise it is as good as wasted (Buck 2011). Like their on-campus counterparts, distance learning students need consistent access to library services and resources to develop and broaden their understanding of their disciplines.

Given the importance of academic libraries in universities and the changing nature of user perceptions and behaviour, it is necessary to examine users' perceptions of academic libraries and how they are related to their use of the libraries (Kim, 2017). A look at the annual statistical reports of UB library offer no insights on the usefulness of the resources and services provided to the library users because the measures reported focused on the library's internal operations rather than their users. As noted by Nitecki & Hernon, (2000) a measure of library quality based solely on collections has become obsolete. However, the library exists to serve its users. For library assessment to be valid, library users must be involved in evaluating the services they were receiving (Shi, Holahan, & Jurkat, 2012). According to the fundamental assumptions of LibQual framework, only customers' judge quality, all other judgements are essentially irrelevant (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1990). It is important therefore, to know how library users perceive and utilize information resources both on-campus and on remote sites (Tipton, 2001). Constant assessment of the use of university library, is the surest way of ensuring that information is obtained so as to ascertain whether the library is meeting its expected goals, so that adjustments should be made where necessary for effective information service delivery (Nkamnebe, 2014). In

this age of accountability, it is more important than ever for library administrators to be able to evaluate how well service is provided from a user's perspective.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study was to assess the distance learners' use of information resources and services at University of Botswana library.

Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Ascertain the extent of use of the resources and services by distance learners at UB library.
2. Explore the distance learners' expectations and perceptions with regard to the quality of UB library resources and services
3. Determine distance learners satisfaction with library resources and services they receive.
4. Examine the library support services offered to distance learners
5. Identify challenges faced by distance learners in the use of library services and resources
6. Make recommendations to the library based on the findings of the study

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following are the research questions for the study.

1. How do distance learners use the library?
2. What are the expectations and perceptions of distance learners regarding the quality of UB library resources and services
3. Are distance learners satisfied with resources and services they receive?
4. What library support services do distance learners received from the UB library
5. What are challenges faced by distance learners in the use of library resources and services
6. What strategic measures could the UB library adopt to maximize the utilization of the library resources and services by distance learners

1.7 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Since its inception UB library has never assessed the use of its resources and services by library users. The UB library has, for years, adopted the traditional approach of measuring performance based on quantitative indicators, such as collection size, number of staff, number of users entering the library, resources loaned and returned, number of computer used as evidence of good service. However, the statistical approach, although it address the expectations of library management, it does not necessarily reflect the concerns and perspectives of users. Every library needs to have an understanding of the specific needs of its users in order to provide the appropriate type and level of service that meets those needs. The purpose of carrying out such an assessment is to help improve the library and its services. It also helps monitor progress towards reaching intended goals and improving user satisfaction with the services delivered (Matthews, 2004). The assessment of how library resources and services are used by users provides important feedback for libraries to assess and improve their services to users. Similarly, Naidu (2009) pointed out that studies such as this, assist in determining which dimensions of the services need improvement in the eyes of the library users.

Assessing the library usage offers opportunity for evaluation of library performance. The assessment results should be used to identify new objectives, and develop new action plans. It was thus anticipated that the findings of the study would be of significant interest to library management and to management at UB in general. In the context of UB library the results of the study could be used for future improvements regarding service delivery and could thereby assist library management to achieve and maintain service excellence in the library. The results of the study should also be used as a tool to influence the university management to develop policies and mechanisms that will encourage the library to improve the quality of services to users, (Ncwane, 2016).

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is particularly important as it will provide insights on the nature and extent of use of library resources and services by distance education students. Considering the potential high growth rates of distance education in the near future, it was imperative to assess the distance learners' use of library resources and service provided at UB Library as it could provide ideas on

how to improve the existing services and resources. The findings of this study would also provide important theoretical implications on the existing literature on service quality, particularly in the distance education. It is hoped that this research would contribute in some ways to the heightening of sensitivity to the issues and problems inherent in the delivery of Library services to support distance education programmes.

The current research is very important for the development of library services for distance education planning at UB. There is a need to identify the problems and characteristics of current library services for distance education at UB library. Assessing the future demands and developing guidelines and recommendations to meet those needs, would be very helpful to distance education planners, educators and other decision-makers. This information should also help in developing alternatives to deal with problem areas and initiate workable projects relevant to library services development strategies. The report on the existing state of distance education library services should help raise awareness of the problems encountered and this would possibly generate greater support from the University of the Distance Education Programmes in the country. In addition, the study would produce baseline data for information pertaining to distance education in the University of Botswana which would be very helpful for future studies in this area. Finally, this study could also provide managerial implications to educational providers in Botswana and those providing the library services to distance learners in general.

1.9 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Due to time and financial constraints, data was not collected from the entire population of distance learners at University of Botswana instead, the study focused only on the distance learners doing bachelor of business administration degree programmes. These students would normally have had more exposure in research project writing and information retrieval challenges. The study was also limited to professional subject librarians in faculties of business and social sciences who were designated to assist distance learners with their research.

1.10 SUMMARY

This chapter covers background of the study, information on the University of Botswana (UB), the University of Botswana Library (UBL), the resources facilities and services offered by the UB library. The chapter further covers the statement of the problem, the objectives, research questions; significance of the study, as well as scope and limitations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1   INTRODUCTION

A literature review is significant and invaluable for carrying out research. It is a critical discussion of all significant and relevant literature that contributes to the understanding of a subject or study. According to Fink (2009), a research literature review is a systematic, explicit, and reproductive method of identifying, evaluating and synthesizing the existing body of completed and recorded work produced by researchers, scholars and practitioners. In a recent study by Simba (2006), it was stated that a literature review expands the researchers' understanding and knowledge of the topic under investigation and also gives a researcher an overview on what has been researched previously on the topic. This helps the researcher not only to place the study in its proper context but also reveals the key issues and gaps arising from the literature.

In this chapter, the literature pertaining to the assessment of distance learners' use of resources and services was reviewed. The literature reviewed also addresses some of the researches addressing library support for distance education. The review also examined studies that have investigated distance education students expectations and perceptions of library resources and services offered to them as well as user satisfaction. This was followed by an overview of relevant models commonly used in service quality assessment.

2.2   LIBRARY SUPPORT FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION.

Library support for distance learning and the benefits of such support for students are well documented in the literature (Sasso, 2016, Brooke, 2011). The literature reveals a multitude of ways providing timely access to library support, user education and information enquiry services for distance learners, who may feel isolated from peer-to-peer and library support (Kramer, 2010). Librarians should be proactive in maintaining a ubiquitous presence within the virtual classroom using Library 2.0 technologies (Primus, 2009). This should include embedding information literacy tutorials (Hensley & Miller, 2010) and designing web-based learning modules to replace the loss of physical interaction with librarians (Figa, Bone & MacPherson., 2009). According to Barnhart and Stanfield (2011), the use of live and interactive tools is crucial to successful

information literacy training. Librarians should constantly experiment with new technologies, mediated by an awareness of the potential challenges they and distance learners face (Whitehurst & Willis, 2009). User education should be highly accessible to fit in with Distance Learners' busy lives and should aim to facilitate lifelong learning (Barnhart & Stanfield, 2011).

According to Molefi (2008), library support services in distance learning are systems or procedures that are purposefully created and effectively utilized by a higher learning institution to support and or facilitate teaching and learning at a distance. This was confirmed by Oladukun (2002b) whose study concluded that library support services are an essential tool and should be given priority before any institution begins any open and distance learning programmes. Wasike and Munene (2012) also observed that librarians are duty bound to assess the existing library support services for non-traditional modes of learning, its availability, appropriateness and effectiveness. Just as library systems provide services to regular students; it is the task of the university libraries to equally make available equal services to distance learners. For the typical academic library this means providing books and articles, database access, interlibrary services, reserves and photocopying services, information literacy programs and advice from reference librarians. The importance of good quality library support services in distance education has been emphasized by many researchers, (Kangai, 2012, Aluko & Hendrikz 2012) because distance students' academic success depends on the availability of quality support services

2.3 THE USE OF THE LIBRARY AS A STUDY SPACE

The academic library has been described as the heart of the learning community providing a place for students and faculty to do their research and advance their knowledge (Simmonds and Andalee, 2001). Oladokun, (2002) believes that a library is a necessary tool that should be taken into consideration and given a priority in open and distance education programmes.

The sustainability of the library as a physical space has been questioned since the dawn of the digital era (Jager, 2015). With the internet and the availability of new technologies, numerous electronic resources and databases the role of the academic library has changed. Students do not have to be physically present in the library in order to access the library resources. Library users can access the library resources without stepping into the library building. Library as place is

defined as the physical environment of the library as a place for individual study, group work, an inspiration (Association for Research libraries, 2012). Students increased use of electronic resources, and internet has resulted in academic librarians concerns that student will no longer visit Libraries. Jones (2011) noted that nearly three quarters (73%) of college students said they use the internet more than the library while only 9% said they use the library more than the Internet for information searching. An interesting finding of a study that survey distance learners by Buck (2011) is the discovery that students used other libraries and resources instead of their own institution. Convenience has often been cited as the primary reason for choosing other information sources.

Students are still interested in using library buildings. In a study by OCLC, when students who did not use the library web site were asked why, 21% said they preferred to use the physical library (OCLC, Inc., 2010). Also, when asked what the most important role of the library was to them, 66% of the students reported using the library as a place to do homework or study (OCLS, Inc., 2010). The need for both quiet and group study spaces was reflected in survey results from Vaska, Chan and Power (2009). The respondents favorite study area in the library was the study carrels, followed by group spaces, suggesting a multidimensional aspect to space preferences. Many academic libraries have been changing their spaces to keep pace with the rapid increase in distance education. For example, Libraries such as University of Botswana, main library offers a range of study spaces and facilities such as seminar rooms, study carrels and learning commons. New and renovated buildings have been shown to correlate with higher library usage

Yusuf and Iwu (2010) in their study on the use of Covenant University in Nigeria, discovered that only 35.7% respondents use the library daily, 53.3% of the students visits the library 2-3 times a week, while 3.9% respondents visit the library 2-3 times a month. In another research Nduka (2013) in a study on the library services to distance learners of the University of Lagos, she found out that the highest percentage of the respondents 35.8% rarely used the library while, 5.7% of the respondents never used the library. Adetimirin (2011) in his study of the library habits of distance learning students of the University of Ibadan discovered that major constraints affecting the use of the library by the distance learners are inadequate reading materials and inadequate library literacy skills. Gor (2012) in his study on the evaluation of library utilization by students enrolled in external degree programme of University of Nairobi, Kenya discovered that most distance learners

do not use the library. When asked whether they used the university library facility, surprisingly majority 148 (53.2%) of the students indicated that they had never used the library facility and only 130 (46.8%) indicated that they had. The non-use of the library facility can be attributed to many difficulties that the distant learners experienced in accessing the facility possibly because the traditional library has no established structures to meet the unique and special needs of distance learners. Even those who indicated that they do use the library facility, results of the study revealed the usage was really limited. For example 77 (27.7%) of those who indicated that they used the facility noted that they only visited the library once in a period of three months which really is quite a minimal use of the resources for any meaningful benefit. These results concur with previous studies, by Mbwesa (2006), on library support services for distant learners at the University of Nairobi indicated minimal usage of the facility. When asked to indicate why did not use the library some of the reasons for non-use of the library facility, majority 135 (24.1%) also cited lack of library materials of the regional centres.

2.4   ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND RESOURCES BY DISTANCE LEARNERS

It is very important for library resources and services to be available to support distance learners. This simply means whether distance learners are able to find the required information in the library in the format of their choosing, in an independent and autonomous way (Association for Research Libraries, 2012). The single most contribution that librarians can make in support of distance students programme is to ensure access to the resources required by the curriculum. Gor (2012) emphasizes that having access to adequate library resources is key to the success of distance learners. Slade (2004) have identified four basic models for providing access to library services to distance learners. One such is on-site collections and library resources at remote sites. In this model students have access to core reading for the courses taught. Another model comprises inter-library cooperation, resource sharing, and students' use of other libraries.

The third model, involves the delivery of library materials from the main campus to students. The fourth model they identify is one in which there are technologies that facilitate access of electronic sources of information from off campus. This model is becoming increasingly popular in the developing countries such as Botswana and South Africa. Raubenheimer (2010) explains how the University of South Africa (UNISA) through their Mobile OPAC project, was able to offer student access, to databases and a number of electronic journals through their mobile phones. The mobile

library service puts the library catalogue in users' hands. Special arrangements with vendors were negotiated and security control is ensured by the system which allows the library to choose who can have access to what and when. University of Botswana, for example offers all its students Wi-fi services for free and it has proxy server that allows students to access University services off campus. UB students can also access library resources through their smart phones and Tablets. The online Access catalogue has revolutionized the manner and ease with which library users can search traditional collections.

Since distance learners cannot come to the library, library resources and services must be delivered to them, electronically or through other means. As Barron (2002) points out, libraries are in the business of helping students get information "they want, when they want it, and getting it to them regardless of where they are physically located. Most academic libraries are adopting a two-pronged strategy in response to this challenge. Many academic libraries are creating Web-accessible virtual or electronic libraries. Most virtual libraries have online public access catalogs (OPACs) to make students aware of their journal and book collections; remote access to electronic databases with citations, abstracts, or full-text of journal articles, books, encyclopedias, and reference works; interlibrary loan and document delivery services; remote reference assistance via chat, email, or telephone; and Web tutorials for library instructions.

2.5 EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS OF DISTANCE LEARNERS
2.5.1 DISTANCE LEARNERS' EXPECTATIONS

The assessment of users' expectations of performance of various service quality attributes are essential in determining the most effective means of predicting customer satisfaction. Expectations are desires or wants of consumers. Zerthaml (2006) describes users' expectations as beliefs about service delivery that serves as a comparison standard to judge the performance of the service delivery perceived by the service user. This view is consistent with Gronross (1984) that reiterates that service users' expectations of a service shape their evaluation of the service. Shi, Holahan, & Jurkat, 2004 agreed that expectations serve as reference points in customers' evaluation of performance. From the above definitions, it can be concluded that students' expectations are simply what the students will receive from the service providers. Expectations are therefore based on the previous experiences, word-of-mouth communications, services promised by an

organization. In addition, the desired expectations should also be based on personal needs. According to Fabunmi (2004), library users seek an information service that is timely, accurate and authentic meets their needs, easy to understand and use and delivered by courteous and knowledgeable staff. In addition, library users expect books that are current as well as the preservation and conservation of both current and retrospective materials. They expect the reading environment to be conducive to study and research. In addition, they expect their libraries to be compartmentalized in a manner that eliminates noise and dust, and that separates serious readers from leisure readers.

2.5.2   DISTANCE LEARNERS' PERCEPTIONS

There is a call from university administrators asking library directors to demonstrate their library's value to the institution. Due to these increased calls for accountability, libraries have been stimulated to study the perception of users'' on library services in anticipation that it is a key factor in determining usability of these services. Perceptions play a very important role in service quality assessment. Service perception is the users' judgment and evaluation of a service performance received and how it compares to their need (Jiang and Wang, 2006). A perception therefore is understood to be a user's judgement of the performance of a service experience. If we apply this to distance education students, we could say that the way students perceive a particular service is based on their experience of that service. Since University libraries are an integral part of the education system, how they are perceived determines their smooth existence and value to the users (Namugera, 2014).

A number of studies on the user perceptions with library resource and service performance have been carried out all over the world. Majid, Anwar and Eisenschitz (2001) investigated the factors that contribute positively in user perceptions of library effectiveness in five major Malaysian agricultural libraries. The researchers found that the adequacy of collections, services and facilities were closely linked to the perceptions of library effectiveness. Gunasekara (2014) assessed the user perception on academic library services in University of Peradeniya. The findings indicated that inadequate communication between the library and its users as well as lack of knowledge and the low state of awareness of certain services and resources and inadequate training to use the services are the main factors responsible for the ways in which users perceive the services offered by the library. The study concluded that users were not receiving the full benefit of the library

services and that some of the services were under-utilized. A recent study by Wanigasooriya (2017) tried to identify user perception on library staff. The study found that although, users were not expecting library employees' individual attention while they utilize the library for numerous purposes, users have concerns on library employees' knowledge and dependability in handling their service problems

2.6   DISTANCE LEARNERS' SATISFACTION WITH LIBRARY SERVICES.

Libraries, like all public sector services are competing for resources hence the need to justify their expenditure and existence. Libraries are social institutions as such their value should be expressed in terms of the value they provide to the users. Measurement of library services is essential to determine the level of satisfaction of the users. A good library service is rated on how satisfactorily it meets the users' needs (Bamigboye, 2007). Yang (2004) noted that user satisfaction is based on the degree of perceived quality that meets users' expectations; therefore library management should periodically evaluate the services they provide to their users. That is the only way to assess users' needs and expectations as far as the services of a library are concerned. Resources are critical to user satisfaction. The availability of resources both print and electronic can have significant influence on user satisfaction. As noted by Vijeyaluxmy (2015), the overall perception of library's services and resources contribute to user satisfaction.

Measuring users' satisfaction level is critical for a library. In his research study, Kumar (2012) evaluated the service quality and the extent of user satisfaction of University libraries of Kerala from the respondents' perspective from different user groups. The study revealed that the quality of services rendered by the university libraries is moderately good and most of the users are moderately satisfied with various services, viz., physical facilities, collection, services, and staff behavior. Shoeb, (2011) on the other hand investigated the overall service quality of the library system of Independent university of Bangladesh. He revealed that perceived services were lagging behind the desired service and attributes of service quality fall short of user perception. Kassim, (2009) also evaluated library's performance by measuring users' satisfaction with library services, infrastructure and collection provided by a Public University Library in Malaysia. The study revealed that on the average, the respondents were only quite satisfied with the library services, infrastructure/place/space, and collection information of the library as a whole.

2.7 CHALLENGES FACED BY DISTANCE LEARNERS IN ACCESSING AND USE OF THE RESOURCES AND SERVICES.

Despite the many statutes, policies and other guidelines to enforce standards which clearly states that distance students are entitled to the same level of library support and services as on campus students (ACRL, 2012), the types of services which academic libraries offer in some of the universities especially, in Africa remains below par. Several studies have painted a very desolate picture of this dilemma. In their studies almost all of them concluded that distance learners were not adequately catered for in terms of ideal services. Among most studies challenges identified include, geographic barriers, technological barriers, lack of awareness for library resources and services, lack of information literacy, problems with interlibrary loan and documents delivery.

Access to adequate library services and resources is essential for the attainment of superior academic skills in postsecondary education, regardless of where students, faculty, or programmes are located (Kavulya 2004). Kavulya (2004) in his study of distance education in four universities in Kenya opined that some of the students have little or no exposure to library use and this affects their access to library resources. A survey by Oladokun and Aina (2009), corroborated the findings in the earlier study by stating that lack of well-equipped library is considered to be one of the barriers to the use of information sources.

Lack of awareness for library resources and services appears to be a barrier to accessing library resources. The distance learners more often are not aware of the information resources and services available at their libraries; since the users do not know they cannot take advantage of the services offered by a particular library. Brooke (2011) in his study stated that the distance learners had reasons for not using the library resources among them are lack of awareness of the services offered.

Information Literacy is the set of skills needed to find, retrieve, analyze, and use information. Ultimately, information literate people are those who have learned how to learn. They know how to learn because they know how knowledge is organized, how to find information and how to use information in such a way that others can learn from them. They are people prepared for lifelong

learning, because they can always find the information needed for any task or decision at hand."
It has been observed that the distance learners do not know how to access the online resources; so
the information resources remain underutilized.

Another barrier is technological barrier. In distance education, slow access to the Internet as a
result of the bandwidth limitation or usage of old systems/technologies constitute of technological
barrier. Especially in Africa, the bandwidth limitations of the internet make information resources
difficult.

2.8   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section provided the theoretical framework that was adapted for this study as well as service
quality models that helped the researcher understand the service quality. The theoretical
framework is important because it guides the research process and it helps the research to construct
the study, to make sense of the findings and to also form conclusions. In a study by Green (2014)
it was observed that theoretical framework is an orientation to the study and makes research
findings meaningful. Another view in a study by McKim (2017) emphasized that a theoretical
framework helps elucidate, shape and guide a research. It is usually the starting point of research
since it puts the research in its proper context and guides the research to form opinions and
conclusions. There are several models that could have been used as the theoretical framework for
this study. Three of these models were discussed below.

2.8.1   GRONROOS'S MODEL OF SERVICE QUALITY

Gronroos's (1982) and Lihtinen and Lihtinen's (1982) models of service quality earlier models of
service quality were developed by Gronroos (1982) and Lihtinen and Lihtinen (1982). It is evident
that these models had a lot of influence on the work of Parasuraman et al (1985). Gronroos's (1982)
perceived service quality model is based on the disconfirmation paradigm, which posits that
service users evaluate service quality by comparing their service expectations with their
perceptions of the services received (experiences). Gronroos's model (1982) proposes two
dimensions of service quality: technical quality and functional quality. Technical quality involves
the actual service received by the service user during the service encounter, and functional quality
involves the manner in which the service is delivered. Functional quality explains/reflects how

the service is delivered by defining the service user's perceptions of the interactions that take place during the service (Brady & Cronin 2001). Figure 2.8.1: shows the model of service quality.
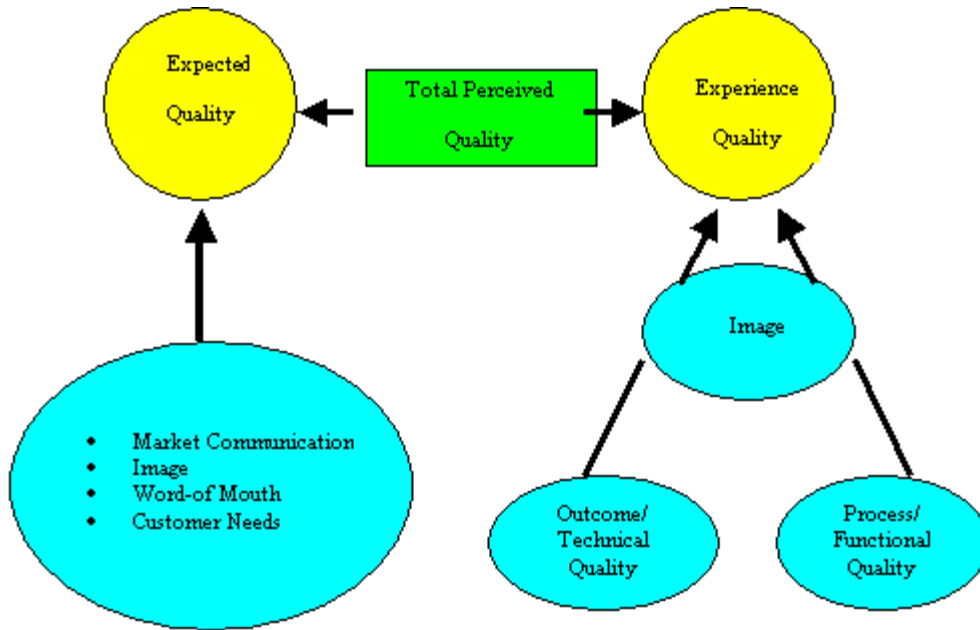
Figure 2.1   : Gronroos's Model of Service Quality

Another model to measure service quality was suggested by Lihtinen and Lihtinen (1982). These authors suggest that service quality has three dimensions. These are physical quality, which refers to buildings and equipment; corporate quality, which refers to the image of the organization; and interactive quality, which refers to interactions between service users and service providers' personnel and among service users themselves.

It is important to take note that this model is too generic without offering any technique on measuring technical and functional quality (Ghotbabadi, Baharun, & Feiz, 2012). It was for these reason that this model could not be used in this study.

2.8.2 SERVQUAL

Among the most popular assessment tools of service quality is SERVQUAL an instrument designed by the marketing research team of Berry, Parasuraman, and Ziethaml. This tool was introduced in 1988 and provides an outcome measure for managers to gauge their service. SERVQUAL, is a popular measuring tool for assessing service quality in the private sector grounded in the Gap Theory of service quality.

The researchers used the survey instrument to measure the gap between customer expectations for excellence and their perception of actual service delivered. The SERVQUAL instrument helps service providers understand both customer expectations and perceptions of specific services as well as quality improvements over time. It many also help target specific service elements requiring improvement. Nitecki and Hernon (2000) writes that although its appeal to libraries is growing SERVQUAL's standardized statement of service attributes as the basis for judging service quality in libraries limits its applicability for improving specific local services. This limitation led to the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) in partnership with the Texas A & M University Libraries to develop, test and refine a tool that would serve the particular requirements of libraries. The SERVQUAL model has had a wide acceptance in academic and research library contexts. Nitecki (1996) suggests using this model to measure customer attitudes toward the quality of services that a library renders. Quinn (1997) states that, the SERVQUAL model is a comprehensive measure because it measures both customer expectations and perceptions and that it has been extensively tested across a wide variety of service settings

Findings from years of using this model shows SERVQUAL factors are inconsistent and it is not comprehensive for different applications (Dabholkar, et al., 1996; Shahin & Samea, 2010). This model is the most used by marketing researchers and scientists, although it is an exploratory study and does not offer a clear measurement method for measuring gaps at different levels. It covers only functional (process) part of quality not the technical (outcome). It was because of these limitations that this model was not used for current study

2.8.3 LIBQUAL

The LibQUAL survey evolved from the conceptual model based on the SERVQUAL instrument, a popular tool for assessing service quality in the private sector. The application of SERVQUAL revealed some limitations and the need for a new tool that would serve the particular requirements of assessing libraries

The LibQual instrument helps librarians assess and improve library services. Majid, Anwar and Eisenschitz (2001) indicate that a user orientated approach such as LibQUAL was considered more suitable for measuring library quality effectiveness that a collection orientated approach.

According to Association for Research libraries (2012) the current model of user perceptions of library service quality upon which the LibQUAL + is based consists of three primary dimensions; Affect of Service, Library as place, Information control.

- Affect of Service is concerned with the human dimension of service quality (ARL 2012b). The Affect of Service dimension addresses the knowledge and helpfulness of library staff in delivering user services. Aspects of this dimension include user perceptions of staff helpfulness, competency, dependability and care for users (Fagan, 2014)

- The developers of LibQual have defined Information control as whether users are able to find required information in the library in the format of their choosing, in an independent and autonomous way (Association of Research Libraries, 2012b). The Information Control dimension addresses the adequacy of print and electronic collection, easy-to-use access tools, modern equipment, library website and self-reliance in information access.

- Finally, the third dimension is Library as place. Library as Place dimension focuses on user perceptions of quiet, comfortable, inviting and reflective study space that inspires study and learning

In addition to these three types of interpretation, the LibQUAL solicits open ended comments from users regarding library service quality. From these comments library administrators can obtain not

only information regarding strengths and weaknesses of library services but also suggestions from improving those services. Studies indicate that the use of the instrument has been 41 instrumental in helping libraries better serve their main user groups and to improve library services (McNeil and Giesecke 2002).

2.9   THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK USED

The current study is constructed on the LibQUAL model. Many of the research studies on user feedback and user needs assessment were based on the LibQUAL model, (Naidu, 2009, Simba, 2006, Ncwane, 2016), This is because LibQUAL+™, model, provides a more reliable survey in terms of measuring the gap between user expectations and perceptions (Marnane 2004) is more flexible and allows for local understanding of user needs. The LibQUAL+™ survey is the first instrument that claims to have produced national benchmarks for library service quality with reliability and validity (Thompson, Cook, & Thompson, 2002). This tool allows a web-based method of administration and analysis and eases the burden of administration locally, creating a scaleable and replicable protocol.

The goals of LibQUAL+™ are:
- o Foster the culture of excellence in providing library service;
- o Helps libraries better understand user perceptions of library service quality;
- o Collect and interpret library user feedback systematically over time;
- o Provide libraries with comparable assessment information from peer institutions;
- o Identify best practices in library service; and
- o Enhance library staff members' analytical skills for interpreting and acting on data (Crawford 2006).

2.10   CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter outlined the literature review and several models of service quality. Several related studies on the library use by distance learners, their expectations and perceptions on services offered to them were reviewed with their methodologies and findings identified and discussed. The chapter further discussed challenges and problems faced by distance learners in accessing information resources. The models commonly used in service quality assessment were discussed. The LibQUAL model was adopted in this study to measure the gap between

distance learners expectations for excellence and their perceptions of the actual services delivered by the University of Botswana library.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 .   INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to outline research methodology adopted to assess distance learning students' use of information resources and services the University of Botswana library. Methodology in research refers to the scientific approach followed by an investigator in studying a research problem (Kohari, 2004). It is a body of methods and techniques employed by the researcher in carrying out his investigation in a logical manner (Gogtag, 2010).

The chapter deals with the discussion of the various methods employed by the researcher in carrying out the present study. It pays attention to the research paradigm, research approach, research design, the study population, sampling procedures, data collection instruments and data analysis method and reliability and validity of tools used and ethical issues. As a means of improving the library services currently offered to distance learners at the University of Botswana Library, this study is conducted to explore the use of resources and services by distance learners and their expectations and perceptions towards services offered.

3. 2   RESEARCH PARADIGM

Paradigms are worldviews or beliefs systems that guide researchers. This worldview is the thinking or set of shared beliefs that informs the meaning or interpretation of research data. Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) define a research paradigm as the abstract beliefs and principles that shape how a researcher sees the world, and how s/he interprets and acts within that world. It is the conceptual lens through which the research examines the methodological aspects of their research project to determine the research methods that will be used and how the data will be analyzed (Creswell & Miller, 2009). Paradigms are important because they provide beliefs and influence that should be studied, how it should be studied, and how the results of the study should be interpreted.

A large number of paradigms have been proposed by researchers, but most researchers e.g., Tashakkori and Teddlie (2009), Alise and Teddlie (2010) suggest that they all can be grouped in to three main categories namely Positivist, Interpretivist and pragmatist. The positivist paradigm

underlies what are called quantitative methods, while the interpretivist paradigm underlies qualitative methods. Positivism which emphasizes objectivist approach to studying social phenomena gives importance to research methods focusing on quantitative analysis, surveys and experiments. Similarly, interpretivist which stresses on subjectivist approach to studying social phenomena attaches importance to a range of research techniques focusing on qualitative analysis, e.g. personal interviews, participant observations, account of individuals, personal constructs etc

The third category, which is the pragmatic paradigms arose among researchers and theorists who argued that it was impossible to access the truth about the real world solely by virtue of a single scientific method. Pragmatic paradigm advocates the use of mixed methods methodology.

This study adopted the pragmatist approach because the researcher believed a mixed method approach would capture the different facets of the study, which would not have been possible if only one strategy was used.

3.3   RESEARCH APPROACH

This study on the assessment of the distance learners' use of information resources and services at the University of Botswana used mixed methods research whereby both qualitative and quantitative approaches were combined. Gay, Mills & Airasian (2009) argue that despite the differences between quantitative and qualitative research, the two approaches should not be considered as oppositional but rather as complementary components of scientific and disciplined inquiry. Sandelowski (2014) contends than mixed method research is a dynamic option for expanding scope and improving the analytic power of studies. This approach to research is used when this integration provided a better understanding of the research problem than either of each alone (Crewell & Plano 2011). The advantages of this approach offset the negative aspects of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The integration gives readers more confidence in the results and the conclusions they draw from the study (O'Cathain, Murphy & Nicholl, 2010). By mixing both quantitative and qualitative research data, the researcher gains in depth understanding and corroboration, while offsetting the weaknesses inherent to using each approach by itself.
For the purpose of this study, a survey design was used to collect the majority of the quantitative data using closed and open-ended questions sent to distance learning students to explore distance learning students' expectations and perceptions and pattern of use of the library resources and

services. Maylor, Blackmon, & Huemann, (2016), define a survey research as a way to collect data from a range of respondents by asking them questions. Surveys are especially useful for capturing facts, opinions, behaviors and attitudes. The qualitative data was collected through interviews with librarians to explore the role of librarians in the distance learning.

3.4   RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design provides the researcher with a guideline in collecting, analyzing and interpreting the research findings. Research design is the plan and the structure of investigation so conceived as to obtain answers to research questions (Cooper and Schindler, 2014). It is the overall scheme or programme of the research and it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. This means that research design is a way that guides the researcher on how to go about collecting data for a topic. There are two basic approaches to research, namely, quantitative and qualitative paradigms. Both these approaches are essential to the research process.

Qualitative analysis is a set of techniques which takes people's experiences and their verbal expression seriously, while checking their value, meaningfulness and applicability when generalizing conclusions, (Jankowicz, 2013)). On the other hand, the quantitative approach generalizes and predicts findings based on the use of instruments such as questionnaires. According to Swift and Piff (2014), quantitative analysis measures phenomena using numbers in combination with statistical procedures to process data and summarize results.

3.5   POPULATION OF THE STUDY

In research, the population is the number of all people or objects that are potential respondents in which a sample can be drawn. According to Zikman (2013), population is any group of entities that share some common set of characteristics. On the other hand O'Leary (2010) defines population as the total membership of a defined class of people, objects or events. In research, the goal is often to understand what a particular group of people do or think.

The population of this study was the entire registered distance learners doing degree in business administration programmes at University of Botswana for 2017/2018 academic year and UB library senior librarians. According to the figures of the University of Botswana (2018) there were

618 distance learners who were registered for the degree programmes of the University by distance mode for the 2017/18 academic year. The complete list of distance learners' enrolment was obtained from the Centre for Continuing Education administrator. The second group of respondents was the subject librarians of the University of Botswana. According to the 2018 UB library annual report, there are 35 librarians at University of Botswana. In the current setup of the UB library where there are no distance education librarians, the choice of subject librarians was due to the fact that they handle all library users' queries including those from distance learning community. Altogether the population of the study was 653 people.

3.6   SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Sampling is the process that involves any procedure that draws conclusions based on measurements of a portion of the population. This study employed random and purposive sampling. Random sampling was used to select distance students for this study. According to Vogt (2014) a random sampling is a sampling method in which each member of the population has an equal probability of being selected for inclusion in the sample

Purposive sampling was used to select the participants for the interview, which were 5 subject librarians at the University of Botswana Library. Purposive sampling is a non-probability form of sampling. The goal of the purposive sampling, according to Bryman (2012) is to sample cases/participants in a strategic way so that those sampled are relevant to the research questions that are being posed. For the purpose of this study only the five senior librarians, were considered for this study because they deal directly with distance learners.

3.7   SAMPLE SIZE

A crucial issue that affects sampling of data for research is determination of sample size. A sample is a selection of respondents chosen in such a way that they represent the total population as good as possible. In other words, a sample is a subset from a larger population. A sample therefore means a subgroup of the population to be studied. Sample size calculations enable researchers to draw strong robust conclusions from the limited amount of information and also permit generalization of results, (Gogtag, 2010). There are different opinions with regard to the minimum

number of respondents that should be involved in an investigation in order for the sample to be representative of the target population.

Kumar (2011) however argued that as a general rule when there is a larger sample size, the findings will be more accurate. Bullen, & Brack, (2013) suggests that a good sample size is usually around 10% of the population, as long as this does not exceed 1000. Notwithstanding, this study opted for 20 percent of the total population. The researcher therefore selected 124 distance students, registered for Bachelor of Business administration for the 2017/2018 academic year, representing 20 percent of the total population (618).   In order to ensure equal chance of being selected a mailing list of all distance learners registered for 2017/2018 obtained from the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) administrator was used to select the sample for this study. The 124 distance learners selected were sent a questionnaire through e-mail. The researcher also ensured those self-administered questionnaires were distributed during the residential weekend to the learners who were not able to receive the questionnaire sent by email. Specifically, 85 questionnaires were emailed to respondents and only 39 were distributed during the residential weekend. According to Watson (2001) there is no set percentage that is accurate for every population. She observed that what matters is the actual number or size of the sample, not the percentage of the population

Another category of respondents were University of Botswana senior librarians, whose units serve distance learners. The study purposively selected 5 librarians, namely, one senior librarian from business section, one librarian from social science, two branch librarians and one senior librarian in the customer and extension services unit who were deemed to engage with distance learners. Since there were no specific librarians designated to handle distance learners, only those who handle distance students' research or reference queries were considered for the study. The total sample size adds up to 129, comprising of 124 distance learners and five senior librarians and one librarian.

3.8   DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

The research methodology chosen has an impact on the techniques and instrument used. In this study, data was collected through questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire was used as the main instrument for data collection from the distance learners and the interviews were adopted as the second techniques used to collect data from the librarians.

3.8.1   QUESTIONNAIRE

In order to establish the opinions and views of distance learning students undertaking distance learning programmes, a structured questionnaire which adapted to LibQual instrument, as explained in the adopted theoretical framework for the study, was administered to collect quantitative data from students enrolled for Bachelor of Business Administration and registered for 2017/2018 academic year. Questionnaires are common data collection tools used in studies on the evaluation of library use and student perceptions of library support services. The questionnaire was administered during residential study weekends and others were emailed to the distance learners.   Questionnaire is an effective and easier instrument to reach a large number of people. According to Bulmer, (2004), a questionnaire is a well-established tool within social science research for acquiring information on participant social characteristics, present and past behaviour, standards of behaviour or attitudes and their beliefs and reasons for action with respect to the topic under investigation. Questionnaire has the advantage of reaching out to a wider audience compared to interviews. It has a disadvantage of not being possible to customize it to individuals as it is possible with other methods of data collection

3.8.2   INTERVIEWS.

Interview is one of the main data collection tools in qualitative research. Interviews refer to verbal questionnaire whereby the researcher speaks directly to the respondent and asks questions and records the answers (Maylor, Blackmon, & Huemann, (2016). It is a very good way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of reality (Punch, 2005). It is also one of the most powerful ways of understanding others. According to Shneiderman and Pleasant (2005), interviews can be very productive since the interviewer can pursue specific issues of concern that may lead to focused and constructive suggestions. The main advantages of interview method of data collection according to Shneiderman and Plaisant, (2005) include: a)

direct contact with the users often leads to specific, constructive suggestions; b) they are good at obtaining detailed information; c) few participants are needed to gather rich and detailed data. Depending on the need and design, interviews can be unstructured, structured, and semi-structured with individuals, or may be focus-group interviews. The structured interview uses preset questions, which are asked to all the candidates. Saunders and Lewis (2012) define a structured interview as data collection technique in which an interviewer physically meets the respondents, reads them the same set of questions in a predetermined order and records his or her response for each. Conversely, in an unstructured interview, the questions which are asked are not determined in advance, rather they are spontaneous. Jankowicz (2013) on the other hand, defines a semi-structured interview as a techniques in which the content and sequence of questions is not fully specified in advance. They will ask more open-ended questions, allowing for a discussion with the interviewee rather than a straightforward question and answer format.

In this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 5 librarians (3 subject librarians from the main library in Gaborone and 2 branch librarians, from Francistown and Maun libraries. These librarians were purposively chosen because as team leaders heading their units and branch libraries, they are in a better position to provide valuable information on the administrative and management issues regarding policies. They were also selected because they are part of a team that teaches information and literacy skills classes for all first year students. They are part of distance learner support and they work directly with distance students in their everyday search and use of information resources.

This study adapted both telephone and face to face semi-structured interview approaches for the five librarians from the Gaborone main campus, Francistown and Maun. The face to face semi structured interview method was used to interview the three librarians from Gaborone main campus. There are many advantages of using the face to face method of interviewing. One advantage is that the interviewer can help the participants to understand the questions and additional questions can be used to collect more detailed information. Another advantage is that in this type of interview, the researcher can also pick up nonverbal cues from the respondent, any discomfort, stress, or problem that the respondent experiences can be detected through frowns, nervous and other body language unconsciously exhibited (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016)

Due to time and resources constraints, the two branch librarians in Maun and Francistown were interviewed via the telephone. The advantages of a telephone-based interview are that it can be used to reach interviewees over a wide geographic area. The main advantages of telephone interviews from the research point of view is that a number of different people can be reached (if need be, across the country or even internationally) in a relatively short period of time (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). Data collected during the interviews was recorded in the researcher's tablet and later downloaded in to the computer.

3.9   RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF INSTRUMENTS

The validity and reliability of research instruments is critical in research. Validity of a research instrument is the extent to which the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Spiering and Erickshon, 2006). According to Bouma and Ling (2004) validity is crucial in construction of questionnaires to measure a person's attitudes, beliefs and values. For a questionnaire to be valid it should examine the full scope of the research question in a balanced way.

Reliability represents how consistent a measure is, in that the different attempts at measuring the same thing converge on the same point (Zikmund 2013). Williams (2003) defines reliability as an assessment of the reproducibility and consistency of an instrument". According to Williams (2003) two aspects of reliability, test-retest and internal consistence, for a self-completed questionnaire need to be examined.

For purposes of reliability and validity of the instruments, the researcher, in designing the questions to be included in the instruments, was guided by LibQual instrument adopted as the theoretical framework of the study. The instrument has been used in numerous studies around the world and as Simba (2006) has concluded, it has been thoroughly tested and its validity is well established. It measures what it is supposed to measure. The content validity and reliability of the instruments was also determined through constant reviews and evaluation by the researchers' supervisors, as well as a statistician who are experts in the field of study.

3.10 PILOT TESTING

The questionnaire was subjected to pilot testing using 5 part-time graduate students of the University of Botswana. A pilot test is a small-scale study to test a questionnaire, interview checklist or observation schedule, to minimize the likelihood of respondents having problems in answering the questions as well as to allow some assessment of the questions validity and reliability of the data that will be collected (Saunders and Lewis, 2012). Based on the pilot testing results, any form of ambiguity pointed out was corrected after the suggestions of expert and results of the pilot test were examined and suggestions were incorporated before the distribution of the questionnaires to the respondents.

3.11 DATA ANALYSIS

The process of data analysis begins with the categorization and organisation of data in search of patterns, critical themes and meanings that emerge from the data. According to Simba (2006) data analysis is a process of making meaning from the data collected. The goal is to create descriptive, multi-dimensional categories that provide a preliminary framework for analysis. Marshall and Rossman (2011) describe data analysis as the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. Data analysis is to summarize data in a way that they will provide answers to research questions. This process is essential because it reveals the findings of the study.

This study used both qualitative and quantitative techniques. The quantitative data from questionnaires was analyzed using Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS). Landau and Everitt (2004) define SPSS as a package of programs for manipulating, analyzing and presenting data. The importance of SPSS is that it computes raw data or facts collected into information that can convey message about the topic. This is software that enables data to be analyzed using tables, pie charts, graphs and reports. Tables, graphs and pie charts, were used to group responses from distance learning students

To analyze non numerical (qualitative) data, Microsoft excel analysis technique was applied. Using this approach, the data from interviews was analyzed to identify and make meaning from common themes, as well as from unique or dissenting perspectives.

3.12   ETHICAL ISSUES

In compliance with ethical conduct of research, no participant was coerced into the study. Participation and withdrawal was purely voluntary even though none of the identified participants withdrew from the study. A consent form was designed and presented to all the participants for signature before the interview started. The consent form provides a clear and brief statement explaining the purpose of the study and the rights of the respondents particularly the one informing them that their participation is voluntary and withdrawal can be done at any time without any reprisal whatsoever. In an attempt to maintain confidentiality, names of all the people participated in the survey and their unique identifiers were not requested and will not be revealed to anyone.

3.13   SUMMARY

In this chapter the research methodology was considered. The chapter highlights the research paradigm, research approach and design, population of the study, sample size, sampling procedure, data collection instruments used and data analysis among others.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings and analysis of the data collected in the study which investigates distance learners' use of information resources and services at the University of Botswana Library. The main objective of this study was to find out how distance learning students use the library resources and services, their expectations and perceptions on services offered. The data collection instruments used for the study comprised of questionnaires and interviews. The first set of respondents were the distance learning students doing Accounting, Finance, Management and Marketing degrees in Business Administration. The second set of respondents were 5 (five) librarians from the UB library, comprising one subject librarian for Business and one Subject librarian for social science, one Senior Librarian, for Customer and Extension Services, one Senior Librarian, in Maun and one Librarian in Francistown. As noted in chapters one and three, University of Botswana has campuses in Gaborone, Maun and Francistown.

4.2 RESPONSE RATE

A total of 124 copies of questionnaire were distributed to distance learning students at UB and 87 were returned. This indicates a response rate of 70 percent. This is considered a good response rate as recommended by Babbie and Mouton (2010) who have stated that a response rate of above 60 % is sufficient. Additional data was also collected via face to face and telephone interviews which were conducted with five (5) librarians to obtain more information. All the 5 librarians agreed to the interview. Further details are presented on Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Response rate details

N= 5

Study respondents	Data collection instruments	Expected	Received	% response rate
Distance Learners	Questionnaire	124	87	70%
Librarians	Interview	5	5	100%

4.3   SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS.

This section presents the background information of the respondents involved in the study. In carrying out the study, 87 distance learners responded to the questionnaire and while 5 librarians were interviewed. The details of each of these groups of respondents are discussed below.

4.3.1: Gender distribution of distance learners

The gender distribution of distance learners' respondents shows that, of the 87 respondents, 66 were female and 21 were male, therefore, more females participated in the study.

Table: 4.2:   Gender distribution of distance learners

N = 87

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	21	24
Female	66	76
Total	**87**	**100%**

4.3.2:   Age of the distance learners.

The age categorization of distance learners' respondents is captured in Figure 4.1 below. The study revealed that 45 or 52% of the respondents were in the age ranges of 31-40 years while 30 (34%)

were between 41-50 years. The 20 -30 years age range was fairly represented with 12 (14%). The research findings revealed that distance learners are usually adults. The age characteristics of the distance learners in this study correspond with findings of Kilemba (2016) who described the age of the distance learner as between 25 – 50 years.

N = 87
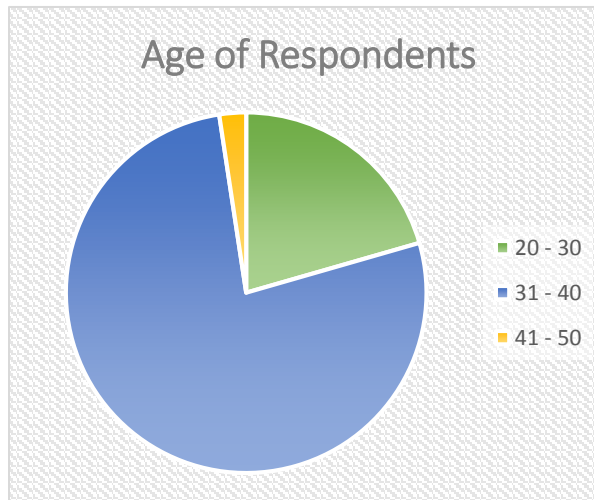
Figure 4.1: Age of distance learners' respondents

4.3.3   Programme of Study

On the respondents course of study, the results showed that the majority of respondents **26** (30%) registered for Accounting, **21** (24%) were registered for Finance and **20** (23%) each were registered for Management and Marketing respectively.
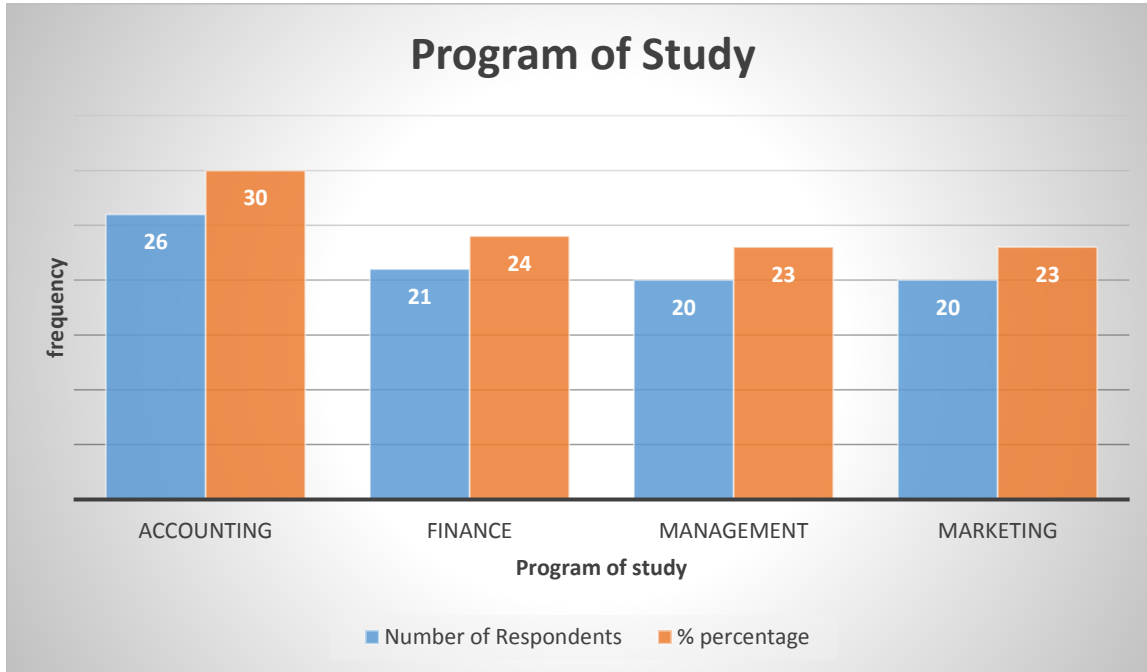
Figure 4.2.   Programme of Study

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4.3.4   Year of study

The respondents' year of study is reflected in Table 4.3 below. Table 4.4 showed that the majority, **33** (38%) of the respondents were in their 3rd year, followed by **24** (28%) fourth years, who were 24. There were only **11** (13%) and **18** (21%) respondents were in year 1 and 2 respectively

Table 4.3   Year of study

N = 87

	Frequency	Percent
First year	11	13
Second year	18	21
Third Year	33	38
Fourth year	24	28
Total	**87**	**100%**

4.3.5 The study Centre

The study Centre that had the highest number of respondents, **63** (73%) was Gaborone, followed by Francistown by **15** (17%) of the respondents and **9** (10%) from Maun.

N= 87
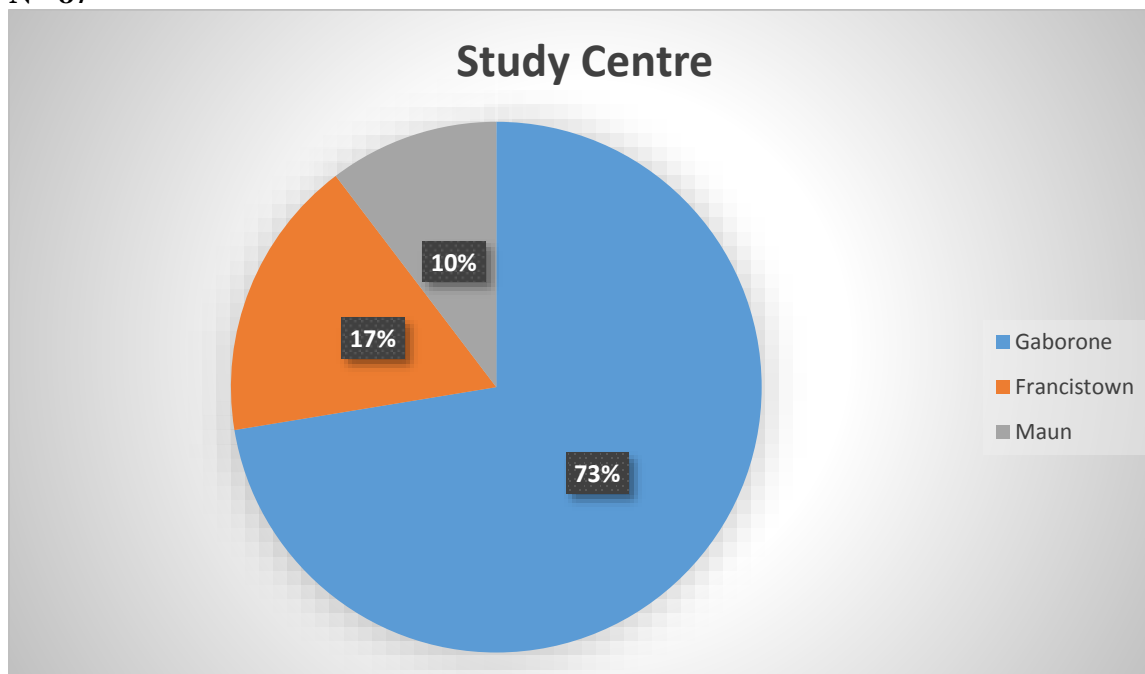
Figure 4.3   Study Centre

4.3.6 Demographic distribution of librarians

The semi-structured interviews were conducted with 5 members of staff (4 senior librarians and 1 librarian). Table 4.4 below presents basic descriptive information on each interviewee. Two of the interviewees were males and 3 were females. The length of time served in their librarian positions ranged from 5 to 25 years. Only 2 of the librarians were head of branch libraries, 2 were heads and coordinators of their units and 1 was the customer and extension services librarian.

Table 4.4: Demographic Information of librarians

N= 5

Branch	Gender	Professional title	Years of experience	Qualification
Maun	Male	Senior Librarian	10	Master in library & information studies (MLIS)
Francistown	Female	Librarian	5	MLIS
Gaborone	Male	Senior Librarian, Customers & extension Services	20	MLIS
Gaborone	Female	Senior Librarian	15	MLIS
Gaborone	Female	Senior Librarian	25	MLIS

4.4   RESEARCH FINDINGS

This section focuses mainly on findings based on the research objectives. The study involved 6 objectives as indicated in chapter 1**.**

4. 4. 1   SECTION B: USE OF LIBRARY RESOURCES AND SERVICES BY DISTANCE LEARNERS

The first objective of the study sought to ascertain distance learners' extent of use of the library resources and services. In addressing the objective, questions were asked to find out whether distance learners used the library and its resources and services and how often they used them. This was done to determine the impact of frequency of use of library resources and services on users' expectations and perceptions of service quality.

4.4.2   FREQUENCY OF USE OF LIBRARY

The distance learners' respondents were asked how frequently they used the library for their distance education coursework. Among those who responded to the question, the results on Table 4.6 shows that **9** (10%) of the respondents used the library daily, **13** (15%) used the library once week, while, **24** (28%) used the library twice a week and only **26** (30%) used the library once a month and **15** (17%) of the respondents reported never using the library at all. The low frequency of usage of the library by distance learners can possibly be explained by the fact that they are studying by distance mode and leaving away from the library. This means that they are not on campus during the week and only attend classes on the weekends. This finding is consistent with the findings of Adetimirin and Omogbhe (2011) study on library use and habits of distance learning students in a Nigerian University who found that the majority of distance learners rarely used the library.

Table 4.5 Frequency of use of library (N = 87)

	Frequency	Percent
Daily	9	10.0
Once a week	13	15.0
Twice a week	24	28.0
Once a Month	26	30.0
Never	15	17.0
TOTAL	**87**	**100**

4.4.3   REASONS FOR NON-USE OF THE LIBRARY RESOURCES & SERVICES

A follow up question was asked to determine why some of the respondents did not use the library. A total of 1**5** (17%) of the respondents had indicated in their response to the previous question that they did not use the library and its resources. Table 4.6 below indicated that most of this group of respondents **7** (47%) said they stayed far from any of the UB libraries, followed by **3** (20%) who said that they did not have time to visit the library. Only **2** (13%) said they did not think the library

had anything to offer them and another **2** (13%) indicated that they had difficulties accessing the online library resources from where they live while only **1** (7%) indicated she was not aware of library resources and services available to her. The use of library raises important issues of information literary and support. Evidence from the current research is that balancing study with other commitments seemed to be a challenge for distance learners. This results in difficulties for students in benefiting from libraries. Importance should be placed on providing proactive, targeted and regular support at the point of need for distance learners (Gruca, 2010).

Table 4.6: Reasons for non-use of library resources & services (N=15)

Reasons for non-use	Frequency	Percent (%)
Stay too far from the library	7	47.0
I don't think the library has anything relevant to my course	2	13.0
Don't have time to go to the library	3	20.0
Not aware of what the library can offer me	1	7.0
Not able to access library online resource from home	2	13
Total	**15**	**100**

4.4.4: RESOURCES AND SERVICES USED BY RESPONDENTS

The specific UB library resources and services used by the respondents were identified in Table 4.7 below. The respondents were asked to indicate information sources they used to meet their information needs. The results in Table 4.7 shows that, a significant number of respondents **52** (72%) used the library online catalogue to search for resources to use, followed by **48** (67%) who borrowed out books to read. A total of **39** (54%) respondents said they used electronic databases and electronic journals as their sources of information, followed by **37** (52%) who said they consulted print books during their visit to the library. Other resources or services used in descending order include ebooks **15** (21%), only **11** (15%) respondents consulted with the librarians and reference services (5%). The results also showed that none of the respondents used the print journals, book reserve and interlibrary loans. Findings from the current research support the views found in the literature. For example, Tury, Robinson, & Bawden, (2015) in their study

found that 80% of their participants regularly used course textbooks and just over 56% used online library

Table 4.7 Resources and services used by respondents (N=72)

Resources used by respondents	Count	%	Total
Online Catalogue (OPAC)	52	72%	72
Electronic Databases and ejournals	39	54%	72
Interlibrary Loans service	0	0	0
Reference Services	4	5%	72
Book reserve	0	0	0
Book Loan Services	48	67%	72
Subject Librarians	11	15%	72
Print journals	0	0	0
Print books	37	51%	72
ebooks	15	21%	72

4.4.5: PURPOSE OF PHYSICAL LIBRARY VISIT BY RESPONDENTS

Table 4.8 below illustrates the purpose of physical library visit by distance learners. The study revealed that distance learners visit the physical library to different activities All of them **72** (100%) indicated that they visit the library to study for examination and to do class assignments and **71** (99%) indicated that they come to library to do group work. A total of **56** (78%), come to borrow and return print books, **36** (50%) come to use the computers and only **18** (25 %) come to consult with the librarians. The findings below indicate that most distance learners only come to the library to use the facilities. This finding is consistent with the findings of Tury, Robinson, & Bawden, (2015) who found that distance learning information needs are strongly task orientated and are determined by the need to complete course work or prepare for examinations. The results of their findings confirmed the current research and showed that majority of students (74%) sought information in order to prepare for exams and (65%) to complete their course work and assignments.

Table 4.8: Purpose of library visit by respondents (N = 72)

	YES Count N	YES %	NO Count	Subtotal Count
To study for examination	72	100%	0	72
To do group work	71	99.0%	1	72
To use computers	36	50.0%	36	72
To get research help from subject librarians	18	25.0%	54	72
To borrow and return print books	56	78.0%	16	72
To do class assignments	72	100.0%	0	72

4.4.6: OTHER INFORMATION SOURCES USED

The respondents were asked to indicate alternative information sources from the list that they used other than the library sources. Table 4.9 below shows that all the respondents **87** (100%) indicated that they used lecture notes and course modules to supplement their reading. These findings are in line with findings of Byrne and Bates (2009) who concluded that lecturers, learner support and tutors played a vital role in assessing the validity of distance learners. A further **67** (77%) of respondents said they use the internet. Findings from an Online Computer Library Center report (OCLC, 2006) echoed this trend, its findings also indicated a strong preference among distance students for the internet and search engines when conducting information search. A total of **58** (67%) of the respondents said they buy their own books, **47** (54%) also said they ask their Tutors to assist with information relevant to their courses. Only **22** (25%) indicated that they used Public libraries in their area as their information source. This emphasized the important of these alternative sources. Reasons for choice of alternative sources were probably familiarity, and ease of access and of use, rather than quality, relevance or being up-to-date. The results of this study also confirms the results of other studies in that distance learners rely on other sources other than the library at the institution at which they are enrolled (Oladokun, 2009, Simba, 2006). These findings also confirm those of other studies (Boadi et al. 2004; Oladokun 2010b) which found that distance learners frequently used local public libraries more than their university library although they often found such collections lacking

Table 4.9: Other information sources used (N= 87)

	YES		NO	
		Row Total N	Count	Row Total N
Other information sources used	Count	%		%
Public Library	22	25.0%	65	75 %
Lecture notes	87	100.0%	0	0
Course Modules	87	100.0%	0	0
Lecturer/Tutor	47	54.0%	40	46 %
Internet	67	77.0%	20	27 %
Buy own books	58	67.0%	29	23%

SECTION C: DISTANCE LEARNERS' EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE QUALITY OF SERVICE AT THE UB LIBRARY

4.5. USERS' EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS OF SERVICE QUALITY

The second objective of this study was to explore the distance learners' expectations and perceptions with regard to the quality of UB library resources and services. The questions raised are important to the study in terms of answering the research questions and identifying the gap between expectations and perceptions.

The result on table 4.10 showed that respondents had high expectations of the role that librarians play in providing essential services. According to Naidu (2009) an academic library needs staff that is passionate about customer care, who is loyal and dedicated to their users. Table 4.10 below indicates a substantial majority of respondents, **68** (78%) strongly agreed that they expect staff who are willing to help users**, 67** (77%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they expected staff to be able to improve users skills, **65** (75%) agreed that they expect staff to give users individual attention and **63** (72%) expected staff who are knowledgeable to answer users' questions.

Table 4.10:   Users expectations of Library staff (N = 87)

Service quality indicators	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%
Staff instill confidence in users	62	71	17	19	4	5	2	2	3	3
Staff give users individual attention	65	75	11	13	6	7	3	3	2	2
Subject librarians improve users research skills	67	77	10	12	9	10	1	1	0	0
Staff are knowledgeable to answer users questions	63	72	11	13	14	16	0	0	0	0
Staff are knowledgeable to answer service problems	55	63	15	17	16	18	1	1	0	0
Staff are willing to help users	68	78	12	14	7	8	0	0	0	0
Staff deal with users in a caring fashion	60	69	13	15	10	11	4	5	0	0
Staff provide users with the information skills needed for work or study	53	61	19	22	11	13	2	2	2	2

The majority of respondents had high expectations regarding access to information. The three statements which elicited the highest percentage of strongly agree were 'a website which enables location of information, easy access to electronic databases, electronic journals that are easily accessible. Table 4.11 showed that many respondents (**62** or 71%) indicated that they expected ease of access to electronic database, **61** (70%) indicated that they expected Ejournals that were easily accessible and **60** (69%) expected a website which enables location of information. This

was followed by **50** (57%) of respondents who expected adequate print books, **44** (51%) who expected an adequate print journal collection, **41** (47%) expected timeous interlibrary loans services.

Table 4.11: Users expectations of access to information (N= 87)

Service quality indicators	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%
Timeous interlibrary loans (books from other libraries)	41	47	14	16	26	30	3	3	3	4
A website which enables me to locate information on my own	60	69	17	20	7	8	2	2	1	1
Adequate print journals (periodicals) collection	44	51	27	31	10	12	3	3	3	3
Adequate printed library materials (books)	50	57	20	23	15	17	0	0	0	0
Electronic journals that are easily accessible	61	70	23	26	2	2	1	1	1	1
Easy access to electronic Databases	62	71	15	17	10	12	0	0	0	0

Library facilities play a critical role in satisfying users' needs. According to Bhim (2010), the absence of good facilities would be an indication of a library that is not adequately equipped to assist users. Most of the respondents had high expectations of library facilities. The respondents' expectations of library facilities are reflected in Table 4.12. The highest percentage of respondents **66** (76%) strongly agreed that they expected Quiet and comfortable space for individual activities in the library **65** (75%) strongly agreed that they expected computers that work well. This was closely followed by **64** (74%) who indicated that they expected adequate number of computer workstations. Only **63** (72%) of respondents expected sufficient space for group learning and group study in the library, **61** (70%) of the respondents expected space that inspired study and

learning, **60** (69%) expected adequate hours of service, **57** (66%) expected adequate printing facilities in the library and **56** (64%) expected adequate photocopying facilities in the library**.**

Table 4.12 Users expectations on library facilities (N = 87)

Service quality indicators	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%
To have space that inspires study and learning	61	70	17	20	5	6	2	2	2	2
An adequate number of computers workstations in the UB library	64	74	16	18	4	5	2	2	1	1
Computers that work well in the Library	65	75	13	15	6	7	1	1	2	2
Adequate photocopying facilities in the library	56	64	22	25	7	8	3	3	0	0
Adequate printing facilities in the library	57	66	18	21	9	10	2	2	1	1
Quiet and comfortable space for individual activities in the library	66	76	12	14	8	9	1	1	0	0
Sufficient space for group learning and group study in the library	63	72	15	17	10	11	0	0	0	0
Adequate hours of service	60	69	20	23	5	6	1	1	1	1

4.6   USERS' PERCEPTIONS OF SERVICE QUALITY

Questions were also asked with respect to the user perceptions on the quality of resources and services provided by UB Library. The respondents were asked to rate the statements (on a scale of 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = disagree; and 5 = strongly disagree) by indicating the number that best described their perceptions of service quality that the library provides.

Table 4.13 showed that respondents' responses vary in regard to perceptions of library staff, **55** 63% of respondents agreed that Staff are willing to help users, **53** or 61% agreed that Staff are knowledgeable to answer users' questions and **52** or 60% agreed that Staff are knowledgeable to answer service problems and **51** or 59% agreed that staff deal with users in a caring way. However, only **14** or 16% agreed that staff provide users with the information skills, **10** or 11% agreed that staff give users individual attention and only **4** or 8% agree that the subject librarians improve users' research skills.

Table 4.13   Users perceptions of Library staff

N = 87

Service quality indicators.	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	count	%	count	%	count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Staff instill confidence in users	39	45	35	40	9	10	3	3	2	2
Staff give users individual attention	2	2	10	11	17	20	42	48	17	19
Subject librarians improve users research skills	15	17	4	8	13	15	47	54	5	6
Staff are knowledgeable to answer users questions	19	22	53	61	10	11	3	4	2	2
Staff are knowledgeable to answer service problems	18	21	52	60	11	13	4	5	1	1

Staff are willing to help users	17	20	55	63	15	17	0	0	0	0
Staff deal with users in a caring fashion	22	25	51	59	8	9	5	6	1	1
Staff provide users with the information skills	19	22	14	16	4	5	43	52	4	5

In general, the respondents had low perceptions regarding access to information. Table 4.14 below indicates that only a few respondents agreed that the library provided adequate access to its collection. For example, **18** or 21% agree that the library has adequate print library materials, **17** or 20% agreed that there is adequate print journal collection, **14** or 16% agree that the library has a website that enables users to locate information on their own. **10** or 12% agreed that there is a timeous interlibrary loan and that the electronic journals are easily accessible. Only **8** or 9% agreed that there is easy of access to electronic databases.

Table 4.14: Users perceptions of access to information

N = 87

Service quality indicators	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Timeous interlibrary loans (books from other libraries)	10	12	13	15	24	28	19	22	20	23
A website which enables me to locate information on my own	14	16	16	18	11	13	31	36	15	17
Adequate print library materials (books)	18	21	17	19	21	24	24	28	7	8

	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Adequate print journals (periodicals) collection	17	20	16	18	26	30	28	32	0	0
Electronic journals that are easily accessible	10	11	6	7	28	32	42	48	2	2
Easy access to electronic Databases	8	9	7	8	29	33	29	45	4	5

The respondents also had low perceptions of the library facilities and the library as a study space. The respondents' perceptions of service quality in this category are reflected in Table 4.15 below. A total of **34** or 39% agreed that the library has adequate printing facilities, **30** or 35% agreed that computers work well in the library, **25** or 29% agreed that there is sufficient space for group learning and group study. A further **24** or 28% agreed that the library has adequate printing facilities and **23** or 26% agreed there was adequate number of computer workstations. Only **21** or 24% agreed that the library has adequate hours of service, **10** or 11% quiet and comfortable space for individual activities in the library and **9** or 10% agreed that the library has space that inspires study and learning.

Table 4.15 Users perceptions on library facilities

N = 87

Service quality indicators	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Has space that inspires study and learning	9	10	8	9	23	26	37	42	11	13
Adequate number of computers workstations in the UB library	23	26	15	17	17	20	23	27	9	10
Computers that work well in the Library	30	35	24	28	19	22	7	8	6	7
Adequate photocopying	24	28	23	26	17	20	12	14	10	12

facilities in the library										
Adequate printing facilities in the library	34	39	22	25	15	17	10	11	7	8
Quiet and comfortable space for individual activities in the library	10	11	8	9	8	9	38	44	23	27
Sufficient space for group learning and group study in the library	25	29	23	26	22	25	5	6	3	4
Adequate hours of service	21	24	18	21	19	22	15	17	14	16

4.7:   SECTION D: LEVEL OF USER SATISFACTION

The third objective of the study was to determine distance learners satisfaction level regarding service quality. In this section four questions which investigated the distance learners' satisfaction with access to information, library facilities, staff services and overall quality of library services were asked. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction and rate the overall quality of services offered by UB library.
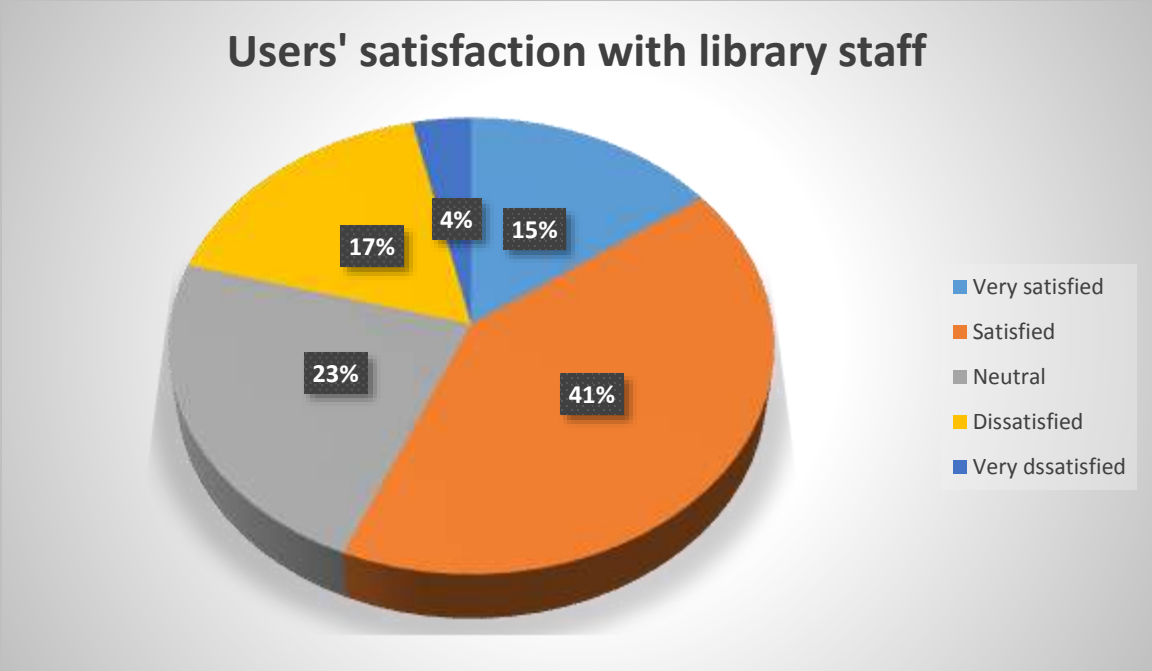
Figure 4.4. Users' satisfaction with library staff (N = 87)

The majority of respondents **30** or 41% were satisfied with library staff, **17** or 23% were neutral about library staff services and **11** or 15% were satisfied with library staff services. Only **12** or 17% and 3 or 4% were dissatisfied and very dissatisfied respectively with library staff services
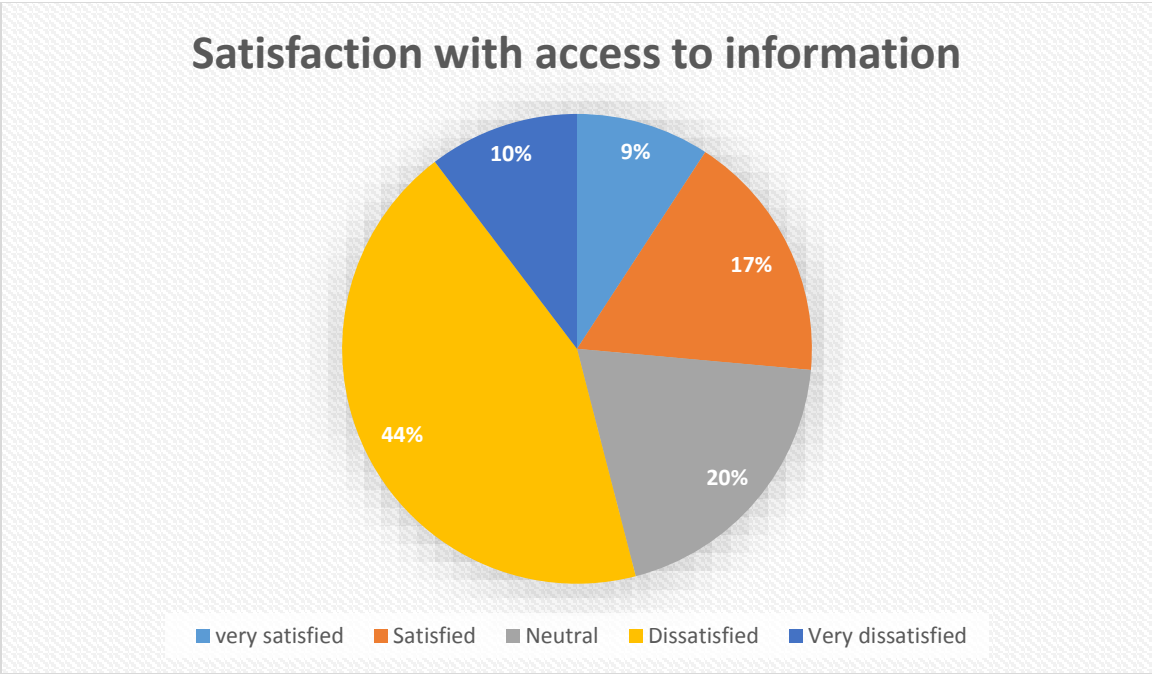
Figure 4.5: Users' satisfaction with access to information (N = 69)

Figure 4.5 indicates that the majority of respondents **32** or 44% were dissatisfied, and **7** or 10 % were very dissatisfied with access to information. This was followed by **14** or 20% who were neutral, which means they were undecided about their satisfaction with access to information. Only **12** or 17% and **6** or 9% were satisfied or very satisfied with access to information.
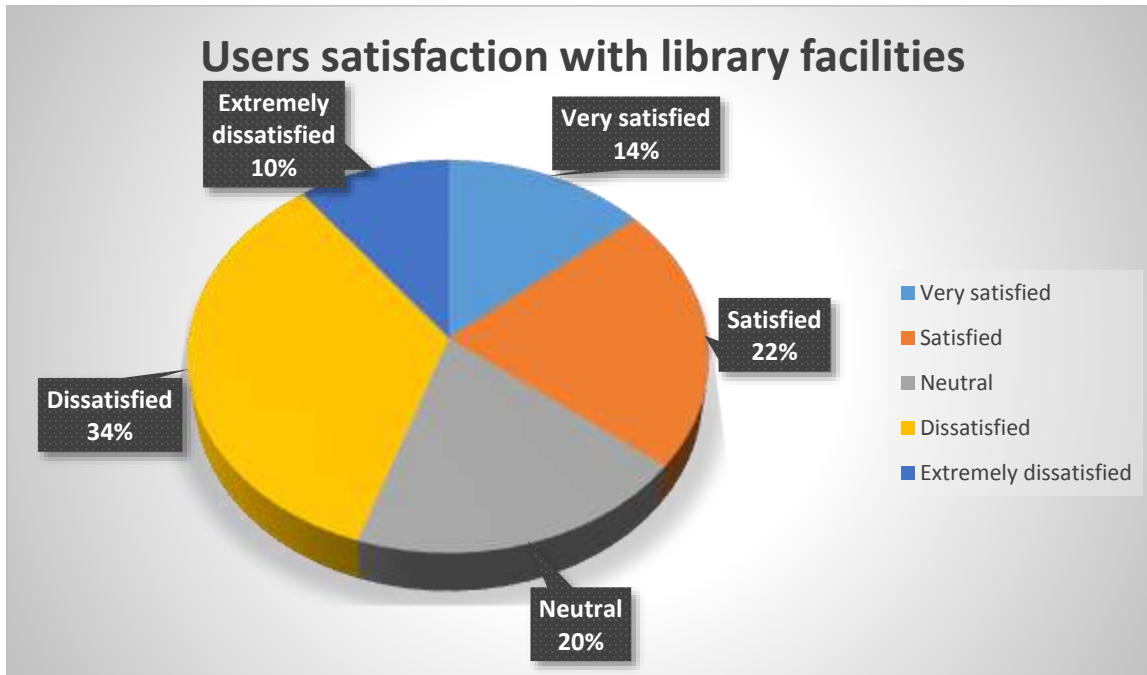
Figure 4.6: Users' satisfaction with library facilities (N = 87)

Figure 4.6 indicates that a majority of respondents (**30** or 34%) were dissatisfied with library facilities, **19** (22%) were satisfied and **12** (14%) were very satisfied with the library facilities and **17** (20%) took a neutral stance, while **9** or 10 % were extremely dissatisfied with the library facilities.

N = 87
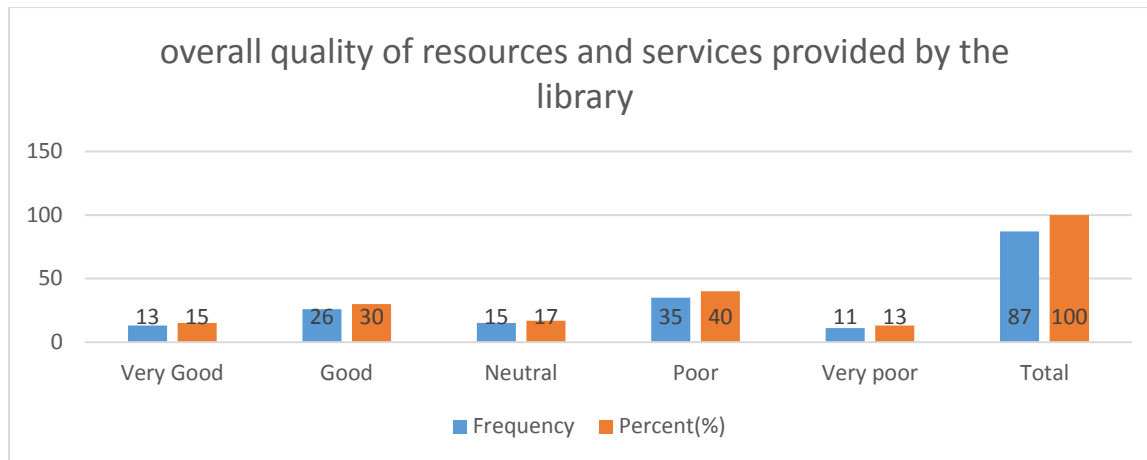
Figure 4.7: Overall quality of resources and services provided by the library

The findings in figure 4.7 revealed that a significant majority of respondents **35** (40%) and **11** (13%) rated the overall quality of library services as poor or very poor. A total of **26** (30%) and 13 (15%) of respondents rated the overall quality of services as very good and good and only **15** (17%) respondents remained neutral. The results suggest that there is need to improve how the UB library serves its distance learning community.

4.8: THE ROLE OF LIBRARIANS IN SUPPORTING DISTANCE LEARNERS

The fourth objective of the study was to examine the library support services offered to distance learners by the librarians. There was a need to establish the role librarians play in distance education programmes and to find out the library support services they offer to distance learning students.   In view of this, interviews were conducted with librarians at UB library who worked directly with distance learners. The members of staff included senior librarian, customer and extension services, heads of Francistown and Maun libraries, and Senior Librarians, Faculty of Business and Social Sciences. In the absence of a distance education librarian, these subject librarians were deemed to play that role.

4 .8.1: Budgetary and policy issues

In seeking to establish the budget allocation for providing information services to distance learners, all respondents said there was no special budget for distance learners. One subject librarian "*explained that the library was allocated annual budget for purchasing of electronic and print*

resources and added that the library budget does not discriminate students but cuts across all the disciplines"

4.8.2: Staffing

The respondents were asked of their opinions on staffing in the library to support distance learners. They all explained that there was no distance education librarians and added that the same librarians who serve fulltime students also serve distance learners. The business librarian insisted that we subject librarians are always available

4.8.3: Provision of Library resources and services to Distance learners

When asked to describe how well they believed their library meets the information needs of distance students, the interviewees' answers varied. Three librarians felt their current library collection supports fulltime students as well as distance learners. Two librarians felt the library is not doing all it can to serve distance learners. In a follow-up question, they were asked to list the kind of resources and services they offered. They listed e-resources, print books and, face to face reference services. Those who responded in the negative felt that the services provided need to be adjusted to suit distance learners.

4.8.4: Access to online library resources and services by Distance learners.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays a vital role in distance education to meet the requirements and expectations of the learners. For this purpose, respondents were asked on the adequacy of ICT infrastructure in supporting distance learners information needs. Some respondents said learners can access OPAC from the comfort of their homes, others cited online databases, eBooks and E-journals as some of the online services that were available to distance learners. One respondent stated that there was inadequate ICT infrastructure to support distance learners needs and one respondent further stated that '*the UB library has access problems especially remote access to web-based resources that the library has.*

4.8.5: Provision of user education to distance learners

Respondents were asked to establish whether they offered user education to distance learners. All the respondents claimed they offered orientation to all students, at the beginning of first semester, but they added that they do not have specific user education for distance learners.

4.8.6: Collaboration with other libraries.

Respondents were asked whether there were any collaboration with other libraries or information service providers. One librarian said there was collaboration with libraries that are members of the Botswana libraries Consortium. He further said that "*the library is keen to improve on their library and information provision and share resources with other libraries. He added that efforts have been made to collaborate with other libraries to negotiate with publishers on joint procurement, shared storage with other government libraries*". Other respondents said they do not know of any collaborative efforts made by the library and thought if made this could solve some of the challenges they have in reaching their distance learning communities.

4.8.7: EVALUATION

Assessing the information needs of distance learners is a way of understanding their needs in an effort to provide adequate resources and services. Librarians had the opportunity to have a clear picture of expectations, attitudes, beliefs and perceptions held by their distance users. One librarian explained "*we don't really have a formal systematic way of assessing what students need or like or what they would want us to do differently*". She added that the resources and services offered to distance learners were based on their course outlines.

4.9   SECTION E: CHALLENGES FACING DISTANCE LEARNERS AND LIBRARIANS

The fifth objective of the study, which was meant for the distance learners and librarians sought to identify challenges faced by both distance learners and librarians in accessing the library services and resources.

4.9.1: Challenges faced by Distance learners

The respondents were asked to provide information on the factors that were affecting their use of the library and factors that were hindering their access to the library resources. Table 4.16 below shows the problems encountered when accessing the library resources. Table 4.16 shows that lack of access to online resources was a major challenge faced by **17** (13%), followed by **15** (11%) who indicated lack of time to visit the physical library, long distance from the library came at

13 (10%) and poor internet access was **11** (8%). Other problems militating against access to library resources were, outdated books **8** (6%), missing books, **7** (5%), noisy reading rooms, **5** (4%) and lack of information search skills **4** (3%).

Table 4.16: Challenges affecting use of information sources by distance learners

Challenges	Frequency	%
Unable to access online resources from outside UB campuses	17	13
Lack of time to visit library	15	11
Long distance from library	13	10
Outdated print books	8	6
Library is noisy	5	4
Lack of information search skills	4	3
Books missing from the shelves	7	5
Poor internet access	11	8
Total	75	100

4.9.2 Challenges affecting librarians in supporting distance learners.

The challenges the librarians face when supporting distance learners fall in to three main areas namely; cost of information resources and budgetary concerns, issues of licensing, intellectual property and copyright laws and difficulties establishing collaborative relationship with course tutors. Librarians recognize the importance of collaboration with course tutors, but often found this problematic and difficult to achieve. One librarian stated that though she liaises with her other faculty lecturers daily, she unfortunately does not have any relationship with distance learning course tutors. This is because most of the tutors are also based off-campus. She admitted that her lack of engagement with distance education course tutors prevents her from knowing 'exactly what

distance learners require and also prevents the tutors from full understanding the support offered by the library". Another challenge faced by the librarians surveyed in providing library and information services to distance learners was the escalating cost of e-resources and print books, and stagnant and decreasing budgets. This, one librarian claimed was 'making it difficult for the library to fully support the UB community including distance learners programmes'. Other challenges cited include issues of licensing, intellectual property and copyright laws which one librarian said "impacts heavily on the digitization and distribution of library material.

Summary

This chapter discussed the library usage patterns, users' expectations and perceptions of library service quality. It also discussed user satisfaction with library support, and the overall quality of service provided by the library. The distance students used the library and its resources on a regular basis. Generally, users' expectations of library service quality were high and their perceptions were very low.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the findings of the study in the light of the research objectives and the reviewed literature. The primary purpose of this study was to assess the distance learners' use of information resources and services at the University of Botswana library.

The study also sought to determine factors affecting the use of the library by distance learners and the extent to which library support services are provided to distance students. It also sought to examine the extent of availability and accessibility of the library resources and services to distance learners. Finally, the study sought to determine the distance learners expectations and perceptions of the quality of library service they received at UB library and their level of satisfaction regarding service delivery.

Specifically, the study aims to:

- Ascertain the extent of use of library resources and services by distance learners.
- Find out the distance learners' expectations and perceptions on the quality of UB library resources and services
- Examine the library support services offered to distance learners
- Determine distance learners satisfaction level regarding service quality.
- Identify challenges faced by distance learners in accessing library services and resources
- Make recommendations to the library based on the findings of the study

This study used a structured interview with librarians and a survey questionnaire administered to distance learners to obtain data. The structured interview was developed to gather data from the librarians designated as liaisons to distance learners. The survey questionnaire was developed to collect data from distance students.

5.2   DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section discusses the findings of the study in relation to the objectives of study.

OBJECTIVE 1: ASSESS THE DISTANCE LEARNERS' USE THE LIBRARY RESOURCES AND SERVICES

The study investigated the sources of information used by distance learners for their academic purpose and how often they used the library resources. The results of the study showed that, in general, many distance learners are aware of the importance of the library and make use of library facilities and resources, although there are variations in terms of how often they use the library resources. Overall, only a few distance learners make use of library services to gain access to information on a daily (10%), weekly (28%), once a month (30%). The results of this study also indicated that, those distance learners who use the library services tend to use the online catalog. From the options made available, **52** (72%) indicated 'search for books', followed by **48** (67%) who borrowed out books to use. A total of **39** (54%) respondents said they used electronic databases and **37** (51%) said they consulted print books during their visit to the library. Other resources or services used in descending order include, ebooks **15** (21%), **11** (15%) respondents consulted with the librarians and only (5%) of the respondents use the reference services. The study also revealed that the interlibrary loan services, book reserve and print journals were never used by the respondents. The results of this study indicated that distance learners of the University of Botswana appear to underutilize the library services and resources. This was surprising because the library is the key to an institution's academic strength; it is the heart and soul of the learning process (Khasseh, Jowdar and Sharif, 2009).

The low use and of the library and its resources can possibly be explained by the fact that distance learners are not on campus during the week and only attended classes on the weekends or by video conferencing and may not have the chance to utilize the library. The result of this study is corroborated by Adetimirin and Omogbhe (2011) in a survey entitled library habits of distance learning students of the University of Ibadan that came to the conclusion that the majority of the

distance learning students rarely use the library due to the fact that distance learning programme is run on a part-time basis and students only use the library when they are in session. In a study on library use by distance learners in three Nigerian universities by Mabawonku (2004), it was found that many of the students attributed their low use of the library to their tight schedules which were fully occupied with lectures and interactions with lecturers. Other previous studies by international scholars that cover areas such as availability and utilization of library resources that have been conducted to assess library and information services to distance education students have come to the same conclusion. Tipton (2001) reports a survey that evaluated library support services for distance learning within the Texas A & M University system. The study revealed that students were not utilizing library services and resources to their full potential. The study of Rowland and Rubbert (2001) on the information needs and practices of distance education students in the UK showed that the university libraries included in their sample ''often did not cater for the specific needs of part-time and distance learners, which leads to an increasing use of the internet as a substitute for traditional information channels.''

Boadi and Letsolo (2004) in a survey entitled ''Information needs & information seeking behavior of distance learners at the Institute of Extra-Mural Studies in Lesotho'' came to the conclusion that information provided for distance learners must be relevant, timely, easily available, and up-to-date. Generally, the provision of library and information services can no longer be considered as a marginal activity in distance education. It is hoped that the findings of this study would be useful for future planning of library resources to distance users.

OBJECTIVE 2:   EXPLORE THE DISTANCE LEARNERS' EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS WITH REGARD TO THE QUALITY OF UB LIBRARY RESOURCES AND SERVICES.

This study sought to determine the extent to which distance learners perceive that their information needs are met. In the context of this study, distance students expectations exceeded their perceptions. Generally the study revealed that distance learners had high expectations of access to information, staff services and library facilities. On users' expectations of the library staff, the study focused on the attention staff gave to users, willingness to help users, subject librarians who

improve users' research skills and staff who understand the needs of the users. The results of the survey showed that the respondents had high expectations concerning staff services. The results indicate that a substantial majority of respondents, **68** (78%) strongly agreed that they expect staff who are willing to help users**, 67** (77%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they expected staff to be able to improve users skills, **65** (75%) agreed that they expect staff to give users individual attention and **63** (72%) expected staff who are knowledgeable to answer users' question. Expectations are *desired* wants-the extent to which customers believe a particular attribute is *essential* for an excellent service provider (Parasuraman, Berry, & Zeithaml, 1991). Academic libraries are faced with escalating pressure to demonstrate quality and efficiency. As Cullen (2001) stated, focusing more energy on meeting customers' expectations is critical in the contemporary environment. Lakos and Phipps (2005) noted, that libraries must develop internal organizational systems that enable successful assessment and evaluation of their services and processes to achieve positive outcomes for customers. Accordingly, the fundamental assumption of LibQUAL+TM is that only customers judge quality; all other judgments are essentially irrelevant (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1990,

With respect to Users' expectations of access to information, reference is made to a library website which enables location of information, adequate print library collection, easy access to electronic databases, electronic journals that are easily accessible and access to OPAC. Many respondents (62 or 71%) indicated that they expected ease of access to electronic database, 61 (70%) indicated that they expected Ejournals that were easily accessible and 60 (69%) expected a website which enables location of information. This was followed by 50 (57%) of respondents who agreed that there were adequate print books and 44 (51%) who expected an adequate print journals collection.

The second part of this objective was to determine users' perceptions of the quality of library service. The study showed that the users' perceptions were lower than their expectations. According to Brooke (2011), where customer perceptions of service quality are lower than customer expectations, the customer is dissatisfied with the level of service quality. The library therefore, should strive to deliver services at a level where perceived service is higher than expected service. Edgar (2006) explained that if the academic library does not deliver quality services such as convenient customer access, reference assistance, library instruction, and

extensive collections, students will often act on their perceptions to abandon the services quickly, even if the services' essence is there. If these essential services are not provided, the students will gradually perceive this underlying reality and abandon the library (Posey, 2009).

The respondents' perceptions regarding staff services were lower for all the services in this category. For example, **55** (63%) of respondents agreed with the statement that staff are willing to help users, **53** (61%) agreed that staff are knowledgeable to answer users' questions and **52 (**60%) agreed that Staff are knowledgeable to answer service problems. However, a total of **47** (54%) respondents strongly disagree that the subject librarians able to improve users' research skills and **43** (52%) disagreed that staff are able to provide users with the information skills needed for work or study. There are also some disagreements as **42 (**48%) respondents disagreed that staff give users individual attention. The UB library has no distance education librarian and there are no formal information literacy skills classes for distance learners. This was confirmed by subject librarians interviewed by the research. This could be a contributing factor to the low perceptions, the students have towards staff services.

In general, the respondents had low perceptions regarding access to information. The results of the study indicated that only a few respondents agreed that the library provided adequate access to its collection. For example, **18** or 21% agree that the library has adequate print library materials, **17** or 20% agreed that there is adequate print journal collection, **14** or 16% agree that the library has a website that enables users to locate information on their own. **10** or 12% agreed that there is a timeous interlibrary loan and that the electronic journals are easily accessible. Only **8** or 9% agreed that there is easy of access to electronic databases. The library collection plays a vital role in support the university's mission and vision. The respondents in this study were concerned about outdated print collection and remote access to online resources. This was emphasized by one of the respondents who stated that '*the library has insufficient, outdated book collection in my research area*". Naidu, (2009) explained that a balanced library collection plays a significant role in terms of service quality in an academic library.

In this study library facilities referred to the opening hours, photocopying facilities, computer workstations, printing facilities and computers that work well in the library. Library facilities play

a critical role in satisfying user's needs. Library users expect to find relevant information resources and they also expect good facilities. According to Bhim (2010), the absence of good facilities would be an indication of a library that is not adequately equipped to assist users with their relevant needs. This study is in line with Gunasekara (2014), who assessed the user perception on academic library services in University of Peradeniya. The study concluded that users were not receiving the full benefit of the library services and that some of the services were under-utilized.

The results in connection to library facilities showed that the highest percentage of respondents **66** (76%) strongly agreed that they expected Quiet and comfortable space for individual activities in the library, **65** (75%) strongly agreed that they expected computers that work well. This was closely followed by **64** (74%) that indicated that they expected adequate number of computer workstations. Only **63** (72%) of respondents expected sufficient space for group learning and group study in the library, **61** (70%) of the respondents expected space that inspired study and learning and **60** (69%) expected adequate hours of service.

The highest number of respondents, 38 **or** 44% strongly disagreed that the library was a quiet and comfortable space for individual activities. A further **37 or** 42% disagreed that the library was a space that inspired study and learning. Only **23 or** 27% disagreed that there was adequate number of computer workstations and **25 or** 29% agreed that there is sufficient space for learning and group work and only **21 or** 24% believed in adequate hours of service. Distance learners use the physical library regularly during their visits to campus and during exams. Cannell (2007) noted that the library is used as a place to find books/electronic resources, get help to work, use e-learning resource, celebrate research and meet together. Library is a convenient place for students to revise for examinations, study course work and research. Mizrachi (2010), investigated how students view the library. She found that many of them valued the physical space of the library as a study area, a place to stop between classes, or a place to access computers and photocopiers.

OBJECTIVE 3: DETERMINE DISTANCE LEARNERS' SATISFACTION LEVEL REGARDING SERVICE QUALITY.

In the investigation of the users' level of satisfaction with staff service, access to information, library facilities and overall quality of library services, findings revealed that most of the students are not satisfied with the library support services they received as distance learners in all categories. For instance, only **11** or 15% respondents were satisfied with library staff services **30** or 41% respondents were satisfied with library staff, **17** or 23% were neutral and. A total of **12** or 17% and **3** or 4% were dissatisfied and very dissatisfied respectively with library staff services.

On users' satisfaction level with access to information, the majority of respondents **32** or 44% indicated they were dissatisfied, and **7** or 10 % were very dissatisfied with access to information. This was followed by **14** or 20% who were neutral, which means they were undecided about their satisfaction with access to information. Only **12** or 17% and **6** or 9% were satisfied or very satisfied with access to information. On Users satisfaction with library facilities, Figure 4.6 in chapter 4 indicates that a majority of respondents **30** (or 34%) were dissatisfied with library facilities, **19** (22%) were satisfied and **12** (14%) were very satisfied with the library facilities and **17** (20%) took a neutral stance, while **9** or 10 % were extremely dissatisfied with the library facilities. Rating the overall quality of resources and services provided by the library, the respondents as seen in figure 4.7 revealed that a significant majority of respondents 35 (40%) and 11 (13%) rated the overall quality of library services as poor or very poor. A total of **26** (30%) and 13 (15%) of respondents rated the overall quality of services as very good and good and only **15** (17%) respondents remained neutral. Most respondents were dissatisfied with overall service provided by the library, and the majority hardly used its resources, especially access to information. The results suggest that there is room for improvement with regard to services and resources provided by the library to distance learners.

According to Roszkowski et al., (2005), "Customer satisfaction, is generally defined as the post-consumption evaluation of a product or a service, is essential to successful marketing, because satisfied customers are more likely to show loyalty and to spread positive word-of-mouth

recommendations. Bhim (2010) stated that user satisfaction has been used primarily to describe a library's level of performance of services. Cullen (2001) agreed that the library needs to compete both in terms of service quality and customer satisfaction.

OBJECTIVE 4: EXAMINE THE LIBRARY SUPPORT SERVICES OFFERED TO DISTANCE LEARNERS

The fourth objective of the study was to examine the library support services offered to distance learners. There was a need to examine library support services in place to aid the distance educational curriculum. According to Brooke, C. (2011), library support services in distance learning are systems or procedures that are purposefully created and effectively utilized by a higher learning institution to support and or facilitate teaching and learning at a distance. For the typical academic library this means providing books and articles, database access, interlibrary services, reserves and photocopying services, information literacy programs and advice from reference librarians. Just as library systems provide services to regular students; it is the task of the university libraries to equally make available equal services to distance learners.

Something that came out very strongly from this research was that UB library did not provide sufficient support for distance learning students to pursue their courses. Evidence from the study revealed that distance students needed more support to access resources off-campus. It was found that students were not getting enough information about the services or how to use them. The findings of this research also indicated the desire of distance learners for more instruction, guidance and communication with designated distance learning librarians. The challenges experienced by distance learners were confirmed by the librarians during the interviews when one of them noted that they have '*remote access problems due to the access restrictions imposed by vendors*'. The study also indicated that the librarians experienced difficulty establishing the desired relationships with distance education unit and course tutors. By working more effectively with academic staff, librarians might avoid some of the confusion, misunderstandings and difficulties that students experience.

The importance of good quality library support services in distance education has been emphasized by many researchers. As Gruca (2010) stated, the importance should be placed on providing proactive, targeted and regular support at the point of need of distance learners. Wasike and Munene (2012) also observed that librarians are duty bound to assess the existing library support services for non-traditional modes of learning, its availability, appropriateness and effectiveness. This was confirmed by Oladokun (2002b) whose study concluded that library support services are an essential tool and should be given priority before any institution begins any open and distance learning programmes.

SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the respondents' library usage patterns. The bulk of the chapter was directed at discussing users' expectations and perceptions of library service quality and examines the library support services offered to distance learners. The chapter also discussed the level of user satisfaction and the overall quality of service provided by the library. Finally, the challenges faced by the distance learners in using the library resources and services.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. INTRODUCTION

This study was undertaken to assess the distance learners' use of information resources and services at the University of Botswana Library. This chapter presents the summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations of the study. The study addressed the following research objectives:

1. Ascertain the extent of use of library resources and services by distance learners.
2. Find out the distance learners' expectations and perceptions on the quality of UB library resources and services
3. Determine distance learners satisfaction level regarding service quality.
4. Examine the library support services offered to distance learners
5. Identify challenges faced by distance learners in accessing library services and resources
6. Make recommendations to the library based on the findings of the study

Based on the above objectives, the following corresponding research questions were investigated as follows:

1. How do distance learners use the library?
2. What are the expectations and perceptions of distance learners regarding the quality of UB library resources and services
3. Are distance learners satisfied with resources and services they receive?
4. What library support services do distance learners received from the UB library
5. What are challenges faced by distance learners in accessing library resources and services
6. What strategic measures could the UB library adopt to maximize the utilization of the library resources and services by distance learners

6.2:   SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The summary of research findings was based on the six research objectives developed for the study. This section presents a summary of the findings in relation to each objective of the study.

HOW THE DISTANCE LEARNERS USE THE LIBRARY RESOURCES AND SERVICES.

The results of the study showed that none of the library services specifically targeted distance learners. The services were ideally planned for all students regardless of their status or category at the University of Botswana. The findings revealed that the resources available were purposefully sourced for all users of the university without any plans or arrangements being made for distance learners. The findings also revealed that no formal policies exist that address the provision of library support services to distance learners. This was confirmed by one of the senior librarians who indicated that "*UB Library collection policy needs to be updated to address different user groups."* It was also established that UB library does not have distance education librarians.

 In addition, with budget constraints mentioned by librarians during the interviews, the Library services offered to distance learners remained the traditional ones offered to all students at UB library. This ideally included printed books for loan, journals and newspapers, photocopying facilities, modest internet facilities, face to face reference services and online databases. The findings also showed that interlibrary loan facilities, reference services and reserve were not used by distance learners. These were usually offered on-campus which did not benefit distance learners who would have to travel to the library to access and use them. The findings also revealed that information literacy services and user education were offered at UB library. These were usually offered on-campus which did not benefit distance learners who would have to travel to the library. These services were offered as part of user support services and they were offered at periods that did not favour the attendance of distance learners.

DISTANCE LEARNERS' EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS WITH REGARD TO THE QUALITY OF UB LIBRARY RESOURCES AND SERVICES

Findings from the research reveal the need for librarians to continue to understand the changing needs and expectations of distance learning students. In essence the respondents' expectations exceeded their perceptions. A significant gap exists between the users' expectations and their perceptions. Their actual experiences of the library services were not in keeping with their high expectations and this resulted in gaps in service delivery. The results would appear to indicate that the UB Library is lacking in quality service to a certain extent; and it should be noted that quality information service is about helping users to define and satisfy their information needs, building their confidence in using information retrieval systems and making the whole activity of working in a conducive environment a pleasurable experience.

DISTANCE LEARNERS' SATISFACTION LEVEL REGARDING SERVICE QUALITY.
The third objective of the study was to determine the level of satisfaction of distance learners of the University of Botswana. The findings of the study revealed that most distance students rated the overall quality of service as poor. Most of respondents, 35 (40%) and 11 (13%) rated the overall quality of library services as poor or very poor. A total of **26** (30%) and 13 (15%) of respondents rated the overall quality of services as very good and good and only **15** (17%) respondents remained neutral. This suggests that there is room for improvement on the part of the library regarding improving the quality of services provided

LIBRARY SUPPORT SERVICES OFFERED TO DISTANCE LEARNERS
The research showed that UB library has not made genuine adaptations in their services to meet the needs of distance learners. Current practice does not follow external guidelines and criteria such as the Guidelines for Distance Learning Library Services adopted by the Association of College and Research Libraries, which clearly states that every student, faculty member, administrator, staff member or any other member, or any other member of an institution of higher education, is entitled to the library services and resources of that institution, including direct communication with the appropriate library personnel, regardless of where enrolled or where located in affiliation with the institution, ACRL (2008).

CHALLENGES FACED BY DISTANCE LEARNERS IN ACCESSING LIBRARY SERVICES AND RESOURCES

The fifth objective of the research was to identify challenges faced by distance learners in accessing library services and resources. One of the findings is that distance learners under-utilized the library resources and services, and they have cited challenges that hinder them from accessing library resources and electronic resources. Challenges identified include lack of awareness for library resources and services, lack of information literacy skills, inaccessibility of electronic resources from remote sites, limited interlibrary loans services and, outdated book collection. This was affirmed by the librarians interviewed who indicated that they are still struggling to overcome the geographical and technological barriers, budgetary and staffing restraints in order to provide adequate and equitable distance learning library resources and services.

Coupled with this was distance learners lack of information search skills, which meant that students were not able to find the relevant information which they required. The study also revealed that the other challenge was the lack of user education and information search skills of distance learners in accessing library services. Without a well-grounded user education training, these students are not able to gain access even to those materials that are relevant and actually available in the library.

Other challenges revealed by the findings included lack of collaboration with other libraries or information suppliers to assist learners with interlibrary loans and resource sharing. The research also indicated the difficulty librarians have with establishing the desired relationship with CCE, and becoming involved in course planning or committee meetings. This research also revealed that there is no collaboration/partnership of librarians and CCE in providing resources and support services to distance students. Only by understanding all key players in the distance education scenario will UB library begin to learn how to best meet the needs of remote users.

6.3: CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

The literature addressing research on library services for distance learning has "grown in tandem with developments in distance learning" (Slade, 2004). A substantial body of literature has been undertaken to assess the effectiveness of library service programmes and library support on distance education programs in Botswana and in Africa as a whole. Much of the previous research centred on the role of the library in distance education and on specific areas of library support and were led by library professionals such as Oladokun (2002b), Kavulya (2004), Oladokun(2009), Kilemba (2016). However, these studies have hardly addressed the perspective of the library users. Involving customers through listening to their voice will ensure that library management understands the perceptions of its customers and the value the library provides rather than drawing conclusions and inferences using the one-sided vision of the library management's assumptions and beliefs (Cristobal, 2018)

The findings of this study contribute to the body of educational research within the distance learning with a specific focus on user expectation, user perception and the use of the academic library. This study will fill the gap in literature and will also seek to understand the actual perceptions of distance learners at the University of Botswana. Slade believed that "the development of a strong research base will help librarians reach consensus on the essential criteria to use in measuring performance and documenting good practice (Slade, 2004). Study results may help to inform academic librarians and institution administrators of current practice and trends as well as to guide future planning and improvements related to the support of distance learning library users. Such an analysis makes a valuable contribution to distance learning library services

6.4   CONCLUSION

UB distance learners generally appreciate the library, but the scope of library services accessed is limited and they seemed not to be fully partaking of the vast array of services and collections offered by the Library. This study used the LibQual as a framework to investigate the library use, the perceptions and expectations of service quality at UB library by the distance learners of the institution. The study showed that distance learners expected good library facilities, adequate library collection and easy access to resources and proper and enough study space. The results

show that the average mean scores of expectations were higher than scores for users' perceptions. The results also indicated that the gaps have negative marks, and there is significant difference between users' perceptions and their expectations. This implies that the level of expected services were greater than the actual services received.

6.5   RECOMMENDATIONS

The sixth objective of this study was to make recommendations to the UB Library based on the findings and conclusions of the study. In view of this, the following recommendations are made to improve the efficiency and effectiveness and quality of library services and resources offered to distance learners.

6.5.1. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

In this study, users have expressed their need for appropriate and up to date reading materials such as books and electronic journal articles. The library may not be able to purchase all of the resources that distance education program want due to financial constraints. In this regard, it is recommended that the library collection should be enhanced to ensure that there is enough and balanced collection reflecting the interest of not only the face-to-face students, but also that of distance learners. The library should consider buying more electronic books with more liberal licenses that enable unlimited access. The advantage here is that any number of users can access the same e-book simultaneously anywhere and anytime they wish. The distance learners can access the eBooks regardless of whether they are distant or near a physical library.

6.5.1.1   REMOTE ACCESS TO RESOURCES

The study found that the current setup of delivery of most of the UB library services originates from the main campus library. In this setup, services are provided from the main campus library to all users and users can either access from their homes, branch libraries near them or satellite libraries. However, this setup is not always effective because of access restriction posed by vendors and licensing challenges. In view of this the study recommends the following;

6.5.1.2 USE OF PROXY SERVER

The study has revealed that the users have difficulty accessing electronic library resources from outside UB campuses. The licensed resources of UB library are made available to the users on IP ranges/intranet environment which is limited to users residing on campus. The library management therefore should intensify efforts in enhancing the online access from outside campus and should consider a separate gateway for distance learners. A separate gateway could alleviate the problems and frustrations distance learners experience when locating and accessing online library resources. In this regard, UB library management should consider a proxy server. As stated by Baikady (2014) the proxy platform provides a single point remote access to various subscribed resources of the library and as well as digitized contents provided by the institution, thus maximizing the utilization of library resources

6.5.1.3.   USE OF CLOUD COMPUTING

Adequate and efficient ICT is crucial in the delivery of distance education library services due to study circumstances of the distance learners. It is therefore important that decisive measures are taken to ensure that an appropriate and efficient ICT infrastructure is in place. To achieve this, it is recommended that the library should incorporate cloud based computing software to its information services as this will boost access to the online library resources and services. When cloud computing is used in the library, this will likely have a significant impact on library services since the only thing that is needed is an internet connection. According to Spreeuwenberg (2012), with cloud computing, it becomes easier to access data with several devices. By shifting their services to cloud computing technology, the library users can use the resources and its services anywhere and anytime accessing through standards devices such as mobile phones, laptops and Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs)

6.5.1.4.   ADOPTION OF OPEN SOURCE TECHNOLOGY

UB library should venture into the open source technology because as Njoku (2017) states, it's free, reliable, stable, adaptable and supported by the global community. Kumar (2010) defines open source as computer software whose source code, free distribution and no discrimination against field of knowledge is available under a license such as public domain. On the other hand, Santos, Kuk,

Kon and Pearson (2013) elaborately argued that open source software is the software that provides access to the source code, meaning that users are free to see how the product is made, has a right to modify the product code, update to different versions, resell the new product with the guarantee that they must also provide their source code. Open source offers useful savings in time, money and resources. Development of Open Source Software is an effective way to automate library operations without undertaking substantial financial investment and it can be used to provide enhanced and extended library services to distance learning students at a lower cost. Some of the benefits that open source software unquestionably offer organizations are cross-platform simplicity and an easing of licensing restrictions (Cervone, 2008). It can also provide a way of equalizing some of the issues of access to library services that distance students encounter

6.5.2   RESOURCE SHARING.

This study has revealed that electronic resources and data packages come at a high price and subscriptions of ejournals and databases are increasing yearly and the library budgets are shrinking. In this tough economic climate, it is highly recommended that the UB library should consider switching to shared subscription or consortium-based subscription for electronic journals and databases. According to Natarajan (2011) shared subscription of electronic resources and databases through consortia of libraries is a feasible strategy to increase the access to electronic resources across institutions at highly discounted rate of subscriptions. Consortia based subscriptions can relieve the pressures such as diminishing budget and rising cost of electronic resources. This cooperation and partnership will enable cooperating institutions to extend limited resources. The distance learners had indicated that they use public libraries to support their school work. UB library as a member of the library Consortium can use this to their advantage and collaborate with public libraries, and special libraries that are library consortium members in Botswana to deliver services and resources to distance students. Such services as inter-library loans with delivery to the closest Library to the students would be readily accessible through a consortia agreement. Sharing the resources that the member libraries have would help meet users' needs and expectations and solve the problem of access to information resources and services

6.5.3   LIBRARY STAFF

Evidence from the study has revealed that there are no distance education librarians at UB and that distance learners are assisted by the same subject librarians that also assist full-time face-to-face students. Librarians have a critical and vital role to play in providing library services to distance learners and in ensuring that distance learners receive the same quality of resources and services provided to fulltime students. It is strongly recommended that the library should create a fulltime distance education librarian position. This librarian would be a single contact person to answer all queries from distance students. The Librarian would be well positioned to become more active member of the distance education administration team and assist the faculty to effectively integrate library literacy program assignments into distance education courses. As Gandhl (2016) suggests librarians need to become more visible to distance students as well as faculty to help distance students overcome their apprehension of circumstances that require the use of library resources.

It is also difficult for librarians to provide library services to distance students without the support of the faculty and university administrators. It is therefore important for librarians to become good at educating and lobbying faculty and administrators and marketing their services to all groups concerned. UB library should also adopt the embedded librarian model where provision of library services to distance education students is through integration of librarians within the distance education classes. Hoffman (2011) suggests that a significant benefit of embedded librarianship is the development of the student-librarian relationship. Muir and Heller-Ross (2010) state that embedded librarianship has resulted in improved student learning and increases contact with library resources and services. UB librarians could begin a partnership with Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) and this partnership would allow for distance education librarians to be designated as a member within the distance education courses which will allow for the students to receive assistance from the librarians through blackboard or by communicating through email and facebook. The embedded librarian services have been explored at Athens State University where the librarians electronically deliver library assistance through the electronically embedded librarian program. In the electronically embedded librarian program at Athens State, the embedded librarian has access to the course syllabus, the class list, all assignments and course materials, and

all communication tools, and has authority to post materials to the class site. As Herring (2009) states the electronically embedded librarian program reflects the current paradigm shift in the academic environment that has evolved from the combination of new technologies and a new generation of students. Libraries, and their institutions, need to be ready and able to provide support and services for this new generation of students who expect access to all resources, human and otherwise, anytime and anywhere.

6.5.4. LIBRARY FACILITIES AND LIBRARY AS STUDY PLACE

The library as a place of study cannot be overemphasized because of its purpose in the university community. This is echoed by Bhim (2010) who states that a library that is not adequately equipped with the necessary facilities will not be fulfilling its obligation in providing a quality service and meeting the information needs of the community it serves.

The results of the survey revealed that even though the distance learners rarely meet at the library regularly, they occasionally meet there when they come to campus, during residential weekends or during examination, however, the frequency of visits differs among users. The results of the study showed that some respondents are satisfied with the study space in UB library because it offers a quiet environment; comfortable seating; enough study space whenever they make use of the library. Respondents also found quiet study spaces important to their academic work thereby supporting the conclusion that it is the library that is the preferred place for academic activity as reported by Applegate (2009). To make these study spaces more accommodating and worth visiting, some improvements need to be carried out as expressed by the respondents. In the light of the findings of this study, the following recommendations emerge to enhance better learning environment:

- The library management should provide study space and group study rooms for distance learners.
- Stringent efforts should be made to control noise in the library, while improving the supporting facilities in the library such as photocopiers, fast internet services and printing facilities for the enhancement of academic work.

6.5.5.   TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Distance learners at University of Botswana are navigating their way through a university and a library that has historically been structured around fulltime students. While attention to traditional library services such as library materials, reference services and user education and training is still essential, the ways in which they are offered may need to be adjusted in light of distance students overall needs (Kazner, 2002). It is necessary therefore, to re-examine and modify these library services to suit distance learning students. As distance students start to use technologies that solve some of the problems of remote access to library resources and services, they need help in learning how to use them. UB library has commonly provided training and support through mechanisms like, reference, information literacy skills classes and outreach programs., most of which happened on site. Now, with distance learners, this is another area where the structure and delivery will have to change.

The study found that library resources and services are not being fully utilized by the distance learners because they are either not aware of them or do not know how to use them. Based on the comments and responses of respondents, there appeared to be a need for orientation and training on how to use the resources and services. Conducting a comprehensive information literacy program is crucial to educate the distance learners about the resources and services of the library and how to use them. Distance learners should be equipped with information literacy skills and should be orientated on a regular basis on what resources and services are available to them. The information literacy skills will assist the students to know how to seek information concerning their courses, assignments, research and examinations. According to the results of this study distance learners are usually only on campus for limited time, on weekends and during examinations, UB library, needs to consider and develop online tutorials and online library instructions on searching method for distance learners to use at their own pace.

Currently, the UB library users can access reference help in person at the main campus library or at one of the branch libraries. Reference services and other interpersonal services are largely 'traditional' library services whose provision may need to be changed to meet the needs of distance students. Reference services can be offered via email, or Facebook, or WhatsApp. Students can also submit short specific reference questions to a librarian electronically through Facebook, email, WhatsApp or twitter. The UB library should also provide personalized one-on-one reference

support virtually. Librarians could chat with distance learners to offer virtual reference service that focuses primarily on guiding students in the use of libraries resources and services.

6.6 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study has provided preliminary information that can help enhance library services of distance students at University of Botswana. A survey of other key players such as a survey of faculty teaching distance education classes, to ascertain their perceptions and expectations of library support for distance education courses and students might shed more light on meeting the needs of distance learners. A follow up survey of distance education faculty may also help facilitate collaboration partnership of librarians and teaching faculty in providing resources and support services to distance learners. Only by understanding all key players in the distance education scenario will the UB library begin to learn how best to meet the needs of distance learners at University of Botswana.

6.7. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided a summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study that assess distance learners' use of information resources and services at the University of Botswana Library . The study has contributed to a new body of knowledge and new management practices to better understand not only the expectations and perceptions of distance education students but also the provision of library and information services to meet the unique information needs of distance learners. As a conclusion, further research was suggested in some areas. This would assist in the provision of library resources and services to distance learners, so that the service quality of libraries and standards in supporting distance learners can be improved, not only in Botswana but also in Africa and other parts of the developing world.

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APPENDIX 1

The Questionnaire ON AN ASSESSMENT OF DISTANCE LEARNERS' USE OF INFORMATION RESOURCES AND SERVICES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA LIBRARY

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Q1. Gender (please tick where appropriate)

- Male
- Female

Q2. Age (please tick where appropriate)

- 20 – 30 years
- 31 – 40 years
- 41 – Above

Q3. Program of Study (please tick where appropriate)

- Accounting
- Finance
- Management
- Marketing

Q4. Year of Study (please tick where appropriate)

- First Year
- Second Year
- Third Year
- Fourth Year

Q5. Study Centre near you (please tick where appropriate)

- Gaborone
- Francistown
- Maun
- Palapye

SECTION B: USE OF LIBRARY RESOURCES AND SERVICES BY DISTANCE LEARNERS

Q6. How often do you use the UB Library resources and services?

- Daily
- Once a week
- Twice a week
- Once a month
- Never

Q7. If your answer to Q6 is Never, please give a reasons?

……
……
……

Q8. What UB library resources and services have you use in the past?

- o   Online Catalogue (OPAC)
- o   Electronic databases and ejournals
- o   Interlibrary loans services
- o   Reference services
- o   Book reserve
- o   Book loan services
- o   Print journals
- o   Print books
- o   Ebooks

Q9. What are your reasons for visiting the UB library?

- o   To study for examination
- o   To do group work
- o   To use computers
- o   To get research help at reference desk
- o   To borrow and return print books
- o   To photocopy
- o   To do class assignment
- o   To consult Print collection

Q10. What other sources other than UB library do you use to meet your information needs?

- o   Public library
- o   Lecture notes
- o   Course modules
- o   Lecturer/tutor
- o   Internet

SECTION C: THE EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS OF DISTANCE LEARNERS OF SERVICE QUALITY

Q 11. Please describes your "EXPECTATIONS" (Expectations refer to what you personally want) of the helpfulness of library staff in the UB library.
1 = Strongly Agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Disagree; 5 = Strongly Disagree

I expect the library to have	1	2	3	4	5
Staff who instill confidence in users					
Staff who give users individual attention					
Subject librarians who improve users' research skills					

Staff who are knowledgeable to answer users' questions					
Staff who are knowledgeable to answer service problems					
Staff who are willing to help users					
Staff who deal with users in a caring fashion					
Staff who provide users with the information skills needed for work or study					

Q 12. Please describes your "EXPECTATIONS" (Expectations refer to what you personally want) of access to resources and services in the UB library.
1 = Strongly Agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Disagree; 5 = Strongly Disagree

I expect the library to provide….	1	2	3	4	5
Timeous Interlibrary-loans (books from other libraries)					
A web site which enables me to locate information on my own					
Adequate printed library materials (books)					
An adequate print journal (periodical) collection					
Electronic journals that are easily accessible					
Easy access to electronic databases					

Q 13. Please describes your "EXPECTATIONS" (Expectations refer to what you personally want) of the quality of facilities in the UB library.
1 = Strongly Agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Disagree; 5 = Strongly Disagree

I expect …	1	2	3	4	5
Library space which inspires study and learning					
An adequate number of computer workstations					
Computers that work well in the library					
Adequate photocopying facilities					
Adequate printing facilities					

Quiet and comfortable space for individual activities					
Sufficient space for group learning and group study					
Adequate hours of service					

Q14. What are your "PERCEPTIONS" (your actual experiences) of the helpfulness of library staff in the UB library?
1 = Strongly Agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Disagree; 5 = Strongly Disagree

The library currently has……	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Staff who instill confidence in users					
Staff who give users individual attention					
Subject librarians who improve users' research skills					
Staff who are knowledgeable to answer users' questions					
Staff who are knowledgeable to answer service problems					
Staff who are willing to help users					
Staff who deal with users in a caring fashion					
Staff who provide users with the information skills needed for work or study					

Q15. What are your "PERCEPTIONS" (your actual experiences) of access to resources and services the UB library currently provides?
1 = Strongly Agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Disagree; 5 = Strongly Disagree

The library currently provides…. 1	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Timeous Interlibrary-loans (books from other libraries)					
A web site which enables me to locate information on my own					
Adequate printed library materials (books)					

An adequate print journal (periodical) collection					
Electronic journals that are easily accessible					
Easy access to electronic databases					

Q16. What are your "PERCEPTIONS" (your actual experiences) of the quality of library facilities the UB library currently provides?
1 = Strongly Agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Disagree; 5 = Strongly Disagree

The library currently provides…	1	2	3	4	5
Library space which inspires study and learning					
An adequate number of computer workstations					
Computers that work well in the library					
Adequate photocopying facilities					
Adequate printing facilities					
Quiet and comfortable space for individual activities					
Sufficient space for group learning and group study					
Hours of service that are adequate					

Section D: Distance learners satisfaction with the library resources and services

Please put a cross (X) in ONE box only

Q17. Overall, how satisfied are you with the quality of the access to resources and services provided by the UB library?

- o   Very satisfied
- o   Satisfied
- o   Neutral
- o   Unsatisfied

Q18. Overall, how satisfied are you with the quality of the access to resources and services provided by the UB library?

- o   Very satisfied
- o   Satisfied
- o   Neutral
- o   Unsatisfied

Q19. Overall, how satisfied are you with the quality of the access to resources and services provided by the UB library?

- o Very satisfied
- o Satisfied
- o Neutral
- o Unsatisfied

Q20. How would you rate the overall quality of the resources and services provided by the UB library?

- o Very good
- o Good
- o Neutral
- o Poor

Section E: Challenges and suggestions

Q21. What challenges do you come across when using any of the library resources and services of UB Library? (Please list as many as possible)…………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
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………………………………………………………………………………………….

APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONNAIRE COVERING LETTER

As part of the requirements for a Master of Library and Information studies at University of Botswana, I am conducting a research entitled **AN ASSESSMENT OF DISTANCE LEARNERS' USE OF INFORMATION RESOURCES AND SERVICES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA LIBRARY.** It is in this regard that I am requesting for your cooperation in participating in the research project by completing the attached questionnaire.

Participation in this research project is voluntary. You can withdraw from the research project at any stage. All the information gathered during this survey will be used for academic purposes only. Confidentiality and anonymity of records identifying you as a participant will be maintained by the researcher.

If you have any questions or concerns about participating in this study, please feel free to contact the researcher at tshailac@mopipi.ub.bw or my mobile numbers at +267 71225937 and +267 72 555338.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for participating in this research project.

Thank you

Constance Dintle Modise

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE SUBJECT LIBRARIANS

I am a final year in Master of Library and Information studies at University of Botswana. I am conducting a research on **AN ASSESSMENT OF DISTANCE LEARNERS' USE OF INFORMATION RESOURCES AND SERVICES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA LIBRARY**

The research is intended to gather information on the use of library resources and services by the distance learners of the University of Botswana. The research is also intended on to find out distance learners' expectations and perceptions on resources and services are offered.

I will be extremely grateful if you could assist me in this endeavor by answering the following questions. Your responses will be kept anonymous and confidentiality is guaranteed.

Demographic Information of respondents

      1. Name of your Branch Library

      2. Your Position

      3. Number of years in the UB Library

Budgetary and policy issues

      4. How much of the library budget is allocated to acquiring resources for use by distance learners

5. Does UB library have distance education policy?
6. Are there any guidelines and collection development policies relating to the acquisition of resources for Distance learners?

Staffing

7. Does UB library have staff designated for supporting distance learners?
8. Are library staff provided with training to deal with distance students?
9. In your opinion does the library have sufficient staff to support distance learning?

Provision of Library services and resources to Distance learners

10. Does UB library provide services and resources for distance learners? Yes ( ) or No ( )

11. If Yes, please list the services provided

……………………………………………………………………………………………

Collaboration with other libraries or information service providers.

12. Do you collaborate with any other libraries or information service providers to provide resources and services to distance learners Yes ( ) NO ( )

13. If Yes please describe such collaborative efforts

……………………………………………………………………………………………

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Access to online library resources and services by Distance learners.

14. Does your library provide online resources (OPAC, online databases etc. to distance learners? Yes ( ) No ( )

15. Please explain your answer

……………………………………………………………………………………………

ICT infrastructure

16. In your opinion do you think the ICT infrastructure of your library is adequate to support distance learning? Yes ( ) NO ( )

17. Please explain your answer

……………………………………………………………………………………………

Training

18. Does the library provide User Education for distance learners Yes ( ) No ( )

19. Please explain your answer

……………………………………………………………………………………………

Evaluation

20. Does the Library evaluate the needs of its users regularly? Yes ( ) No ( )

21. Does the Library evaluate the needs of distance students regularly? Yes ( ) No ( )

22. If yes, how are such evaluations conducted? Please explain

……………………………………………………………………………………………

Challenges faced by distance learners

23. In your opinion, what are the main challenges in providing library services to distance students

24. What additional comments or Suggestions do you have regarding the provision of library resources and services to distance learners? …………………………………………………………………………………………