

**PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF MULUNGUSHI UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
SERVICES IN MEETING USERS’ NEEDS**

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family for their unconditional love, financial support and their wise counsel during my studies.

DECLARATION

I, Kelly Sinzuwma do hereby declare that this dissertation represents my own work and that it has not been submitted by anyone else at the University of Zambia or at any other university for the purpose of acquiring a degree.

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This dissertation by Kelly Sinzumwa is hereby approved as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Masters of Library and Information Science (MLIS) by the University of Zambia.

EXAMINERS

- 1. Name..... Signature..... Date.....
- 2. Name..... Signature..... Date.....
- 3. Name..... Signature..... Date.....

ABSTRACT

This study aimed at assessing the performance of Mulungushi University (MU) Library by examining its facilities and services in relation to the needs and demands of the end users. The study was guided by the main objective which were to evaluate the performance of Mulungushi University Library in order to establish whether its facilities and services met the needs and demands of the end users. Structured questionnaire and an interview guide were used to collect data from respondents. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from fourth year undergraduate on-campus students and the interview guide was used to collect data from the key informants. The target population for this study comprised fourth year undergraduate students from the 7 schools at Mulungushi University Main Campus. The University had a population of 1,498 fourth year accommodated students from the 7 schools, and a sample size of 364 students (representing 24.29% of the population) was derived. The aim was to include 52 students from each school, as well as 7 key informants who are Heads of Departments (HoDs) from various schools and the Director of Research and Post-graduate studies. The study reveals that library users at MULIB had diverse expectations and preferences. Some users were satisfied with the library's services, while others expressed neutrality or dissatisfaction, highlighting the need for targeted improvements. On the other hand the respondents recommended that the library should invest in expanding and updating the library's collection to ensure a more comprehensive and up-to-date range of resources, including both physical and digital materials.

Key terms: Performance assessment; Mulungushi University; Library facilities; Library services; End users; Needs and demands; Service delivery; Quality expectations; User perceptions.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<i>CBU</i>	Copperbelt University
<i>IR</i>	Information Resources
<i>ICTs</i>	Information and Communications Technologies
<i>LAN</i>	Local Area Network
<i>NCDMS</i>	National College for Management and Development studies
<i>MU</i>	Mulungushi University
<i>MULIB</i>	Mulungushi University Library
<i>OPAC</i>	Online Public Access catalogue
<i>PA</i>	Performance Assessment
<i>UNZA</i>	University of Zambia
<i>SWOT</i>	Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter include the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, operational definitions of key concepts, limitations of the study and the theoretical framework.

1.1 Background of the study

Performance assessment (PA) is a method used to evaluate capabilities and qualities of an institution for further growth and development of the institution Markandya (2016). In addition, it typically involves measuring how well an institution is performing against set criteria or objectives.

The ability to conduct performance assessment of an institution or organization has a great impact on the organization or institution's success. This is simply because performance assessment brings about high productivity and improves the efficiency and effectiveness in an organization. For an institution to operate effectively there is need to know its weaknesses and strengths and also its threats and opportunities. In order to achieve this, there is need to conduct regular PA.

Following the advent of computers and other forms of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), including the internet, the relevance of libraries, let alone academic libraries has been questioned as various information resources and sources are readily available online. According to Iroaganachi and Nkiko (2016), libraries must prove that they are still relevant in the Internet era as users erroneously assume that all information required is available on the Internet and can be accessed on a computer with the click of a button. Conducting regular PA can assist library management and staff to understand whether the services and facilities provided by the library are able to avail the users with timely and relevant information. Iroaganachi and Nkiko (2016) acknowledge that with the rapid and unpredictable advancement of information technologies, libraries must continually evaluate their services and adapt their service orientations and delivery methods accordingly.

In conducting performance assessment, the use of performance appraisal systems is imperative to enable an institution to regularly review its performance and determine whether its facilities and services are fulfilling its objectives, as well as meeting the users' needs and demands.

Research on performance appraisal systems and its effectiveness in organizations conducted by Altamned (2012) at Mahatma Gandhi University in India shows that performance assessment is important in organizations because it provides the opportunity for organizational diagnosis and development.

While Mulungushi University Library has employed competent and trained staff and has amassed a substantial collection of information materials, there has been no prior assessment conducted to determine the extent to which the library has been fulfilling its mandate. This study aimed at evaluating the performance of Mulungushi University Library (MULIB) resources, specifically focusing on the library collection, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure, and other resources, including staff, in terms of their ability to fulfill users' information needs as well as align with the institution's objectives, vision, and mission. The study also considered reference services, such as lending and borrowing, operational hours, and interlibrary cooperation.

1.2 Contextual Background of Mulungushi University

Mulungushi University (MU) is located in the Central Province of Zambia. The institution has undergone several changes. It was initially called Citizenship College when it was officially opened in 1974. Later in 2001, the institution was renamed National College of Management and Development Studies (NCDMS). Finally in 2008 it was upgraded to a university status and named Mulungushi University (MU). At the time of the study, MU comprised three campuses: the Great North Road Campus located 26 kilometers North of Kabwe on the banks of Mulungushi River, the Kabwe Town Campus located along Mubanga Road, off Munkoyo Street, in the heart of Kabwe Town, and the School of Medicine situated at Livingstone Central Hospital in Livingstone, Southern Province.

Upgraded to a University on the 1st of January 2008, Mulungushi University by 2022 had a student population of more than 5000 registered students and more than 800 members of staff (MU Academic Office, 2022). The University provides Certificate, Diploma, and Bachelor's degree programmes on full-time and distance education in various fields such as Agriculture and Natural Resources, Social Sciences, Business Studies, Science, Engineering and Technology, Education, and Medicine and Health Sciences. In addition, the University currently also provides a number of Master's and PhD programmes in some fields.

1.3 Mulungushi University Library

Mulungushi University Library (MULIB) serves as a hub for information and learning, catering for the needs of management, lecturers, students, researchers, and other stakeholders. The library provides a wide range of services, including lending materials, offering reference assistance, and conducting information literacy programs. During the time of the study, MULIB consisted of three libraries: Main Campus Library, which housed 20,817 information materials and could accommodate 460 individuals, Town Campus Library with 2,178 information materials with a seating capacity of 54, and Livingstone Campus Library with 2,026 information materials and seating for 74 users. MULIB offers a diverse collection of information materials that cover various programs and fields, and it also provides reference services to its users. The library operates from 09:00 to 22:00 from Monday to Thursday, 09:00 to 17:00 on Fridays, and 09:00 to 14:00 on Saturdays. The library remains closed on Sundays (MU Library brochure, 2022).

The continuous acquisition of books through purchases and donations has boosted the library collection. The acquisition of library materials is guided by its collection development policy. The three libraries are accessible to students and members of staff of the institution, while external membership is available on request. In its quest to provide effective and efficient services to end users, the library is open to suggestions from the university community, external users and other stakeholders. All the three MU libraries provide access to a number of student computers running on a Local Area Network (LAN) with an Internet connection. To provide an interface between the library and its end users, the library uses an open source integrated library management system called KOHA. KOHA is used world-wide by the public, schools, academic and special libraries.

1.4 Statement of the problem

Mulungushi University Library plays a crucial role in providing information resources to its users, aiming to deliver high-quality services that meet both the information needs of users and the requirements of the university's curricula. In order to consistently meet these objectives, it is necessary to conduct a (PA) of the library. A study conducted by Chan (2013) on the importance of performance appraisal of library services provision to prison inmates in Nigeria reviewed that the prison libraries were meeting offenders' needs for recreational, cultural, educational and information materials. Before the study was conducted, the library staff and management were not aware of the extent to which the library met the inmates' needs, implying

therefore that performance assessment was important because it helped the management team to find out whether the services being offered were productive or were a liability to the users. PA is vital as it enhances productivity, improves organizational efficiency and effectiveness, and contributes to institutional development. Mulungushi University Library staff have not undertaken any deliberate initiatives to assess its performance, making it uncertain whether its facilities and services truly cater to the needs and demands of its users. Without regular performance assessments, it becomes challenging to determine whether the library adequately fulfills the information needs of the university, which can potentially have a negative impact on the university's overall performance.

1.5 Objectives of the study

The general objective of this study was to evaluate the performance of Mulungushi University Library in order to establish whether its facilities and services meet the needs and demands of the end users.

The specific objectives of this study were:

1. To establish the extent to which the library is meeting the expectations of the users.
2. To determine users perceptions about quality library services.
3. To investigate services and facilities essential for the provision of quality library services.
4. To investigate challenges library users face in using the library resources and services.

1.6 Research questions

This study is guided by the following research question:

1. To what extent does the library meet the expectations of the users?
2. What are the users' perceptions of quality library services?
3. Which library services and facilities are essential for the provision of quality library services?
4. What challenges do the library users face in using the library resources and services?

1.7 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to gain new knowledge about the performance of Mulungushi University Library in meeting users' needs. It aims to expand an understanding of a subject, validate existing theories and generate new hypotheses.

1.8 Significance of the study

According to Baron (2013), cited in Zulu, (2014), the significance of the study section aims to elucidate the potential worth of the study and its findings in the realm of social sciences or education. Additionally, it should identify the target audience and articulate how the results will be advantageous to them.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to bring about substantial changes and improvements within Mulungushi University (MU) and its library management. By undertaking a comprehensive assessment of the library's resources and services, this research will have far-reaching impact on the university and library management, as well as for planning, decision-making, and policy formulation.

One of the key aspects that set this study apart are its uniqueness. Despite the institution's upgrade to university status, no previous initiatives have been taken by the library staff or MU management to evaluate the performance of the library's resources and services in terms of meeting user needs and aligning with institutional objectives and mission. Therefore, this research assumes paramount importance by filling up this crucial gap and shedding light on the current state of the library's effectiveness.

The findings of this study would serve as a valuable guide for the Mulungushi University library staff, providing insights into the specific areas that require improvement to enhance end-user satisfaction. This knowledge would enable the library to refine its resources and services, ensuring they align more closely with the needs of the university community.

Moreover, the results obtained from this research would serve as a significant point of reference for future researchers who intend to explore similar or related topics within the domain of library management and performance assessment.

1.9 Limitations of the study

The study conducted at Mulungushi University (MU) had its fair share of limitations, primarily stemming from the sampling process and data collection methods this is simply because the

subject matter was sensitive, some participants may have chosen to withhold specific information, which could have influenced the accuracy and completeness of the study's findings.

In addition, the utilization of questionnaires for data collection presented certain challenges due to the busy schedules of the participants. These time constraints may have limited their ability to provide in-depth and comprehensive responses, potentially affecting the richness and quality of the data gathered.

1.10 Theoretical framework

A theoretical framework offers a specific viewpoint to analyse a subject, defines essential concepts, establishes connections between them, and discusses relevant theories based on a review of existing literature. A robust theoretical framework provides direction to research, enabling researchers to convincingly interpret, explain, and generalize their findings (Vinz, 2020).

The study draws upon the "Disconfirmation theory," which postulates that customers evaluate products and their purchasing experience based on cognitive standards, such as expectations, before making a purchase (Shi and Levy, 2005). This theory uses expectation as the disconfirmation standard putting into consideration a division of expectation into three categories as follows.

1. Customer's prior experiences with similar product or services.
2. Experience of other customers who serve as referent persons.
3. Situationally produced expectations, such as manufacturer promotion or retailer advertisement.

According to Shi, Holahan, and Jurkat (2018), library users' expectations regarding information services are formed based on their previous experiences with similar information-seeking and retrieval activities, as well as the experiences of other users who act as reference persons. Additionally, Mackenzie and Olshavsky (2018), cited in Shi and Levy (2005), state that desire and need, in addition to expectation, serve as disconfirmation standards and significantly impact customers' evaluation results.

The disconfirmation theory assisted this study to determine the standard models or parameters at which library user satisfaction can be measured. Library user satisfaction in terms of

expectation, desire and needs can be measured as positive disconfirmation or negative disconfirmation. In addition to the disconfirmation theory, the study was also informed by the SERVQUAL and LibQUAL models. The SERVQUAL model was first introduced to evaluate service quality in the field of marketing while the LibQUAL model was designed to measure service quality across the service industries.

SERVQUAL was developed in 1985, based on the perception gap between the received service quality and the expected service quality (Ravichandran et al, 2010). The model is one of the most popular models used in service marketing and has been widely adopted for explaining consumer perception of service quality.

Originally 10 dimensions of service quality were proposed (reliability, responsiveness, competence, access, courtesy, communication, credibility, security, understanding the consumer, and tangibles). Later these were reduced to five (reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurances and tangibles).

The purpose of SERVQUAL was to:

1. Identify the difference(s) between tangible goods (e.g., a car or a camera) and services (e.g. the retail or banking industry) in terms of measurement of quality and services provided.
2. Define the measures used to operationalize the constructs in service quality research.
3. Examine the determinants that characterize the service quality.

Research findings from the SERVQUAL literature include studies of retail stores, banks, hospitals, Internet providers, and many other types of service industries.

LibQUAL on the other hand was developed for library assessment purposes based on the theory of SERVQUAL, which was designed to measure service quality across the service industries (Shi and Levy, 2020). LibQUAL is now recognized as a standard tool for measuring library services and still also apply the five dimensions from SERVQUAL (reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurances and tangibles) but with its scales worded specifically to measure library services. It is an online library user questionnaire.

This study used constructs from the Disconfirmation theory, SERVQUAL and LibQUAL to measure the minimum level of service library users will accept, the desired level of service they will expect and the perceived level of service currently offered.

1.11 Operational definition of concepts

The concepts defined under this section are according to the way they have been used within the text of this dissertation. These are key words in the dissertation and their contextual definitions may not present precise meanings as given in conventional sources such as dictionaries, thesauri or encyclopedias.

1.11.1 Academic library

A library that is attached to a higher education institution and serves two major complementary purposes: to support the curriculum and the research of the university faculty and students.

1.11.2 Assessment

Assessment involves judging or deciding the amount, value, quality, or importance of something, or the judgment or decision that is made. Assessment can also be explained as the process of testing and making a judgment about someone's knowledge, ability as well as skills.

1.11.3 Performance

The accomplishment of a given task measured against specific known standards of accuracy, completeness, cost, and speed. In a contract, performance is deemed to be the fulfilment of an obligation, in a manner that releases the performer from all liabilities under the contract. In this research, performance assessment refers to a systematic assessment of the performance of MU library that includes assessing the quality of the library materials in meeting students' information needs and also assessing the staff on service delivery.

1.11.4 Performance assessment

Performance assessment involves understanding the capabilities and qualities of an institution for further growth and development of the institution (Iroaganachi and Nkiko, 2016).

1.11.5 Library

According to Shi and Levy (2020), a library is a building or room that has a collection of information materials systematically organized or arranged for retrieval to meet user's information needs.

1.11.6 Library Collection

The total accumulation of books and other materials owned by a library, catalogued and arranged for easy access, often consisting of several smaller collections for example, reference, serial, government documents, rare books, special collection and so on (Koren, 2017).

1.11.7 Service Quality

Service quality is a measure of how the library understands its users' needs and fulfills their expectations. Kothari (2019) states that, service quality is the level of satisfaction and fulfillment of users' needs and expectations in a library setting. It encompasses various dimensions and factors that contribute to a positive user experience. These dimensions include responsiveness, tangibility, reliability, assurance, and empathy.

1.12 Organisation of the dissertation

This dissertation is presented in six chapters. Chapter One introduces the topic of performance assessment of Mulungushi University Library in meeting users' needs. The background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, operational definitions of key concepts, limitations of the study and the theoretical framework are provided.

Chapter Two provides an overview of the importance of performance assessment in libraries. It reviews existing literature on various aspects such as the importance of performance assessment, adequacy of library resources, extent to which library services meet the university's curriculum, and challenges faced by library users. Chapter Three presents the methodology that was used in carrying out this research project. The research approach, research design and data collection tools like questionnaires and interviews are stated and explained. Data analysis, the population and sampling procedure used are also explained in this chapter.

Chapter Four presents and analyses the data collected from the field, taking into consideration topics of performance assessment of Mulungushi University Library in meeting users' needs. Chapter five discusses the analyses data from Chapter Four and presents general opinions based on the discussions. Lastly, Chapter Six presents conclusions made from the analyses and discussions of the data, and provides recommendations on what should be considered as a way forward.

1.13 Summary

This chapter focuses on evaluating Mulungushi University Library's performance in meeting user information needs by pointing out the importance of performance assessment. It introduces the objectives of the study, which include investigating users' perceptions of library services, identifying essential services and facilities, and exploring challenges faced by library users. The significance of the study as given in the in chapter lies in providing valuable insights for decision-making and policy formulation to enhance the library's services. The limitations of the study are acknowledged, and the theoretical framework based on the Disconfirmation Theory, SERVQUAL model and LibQUAL is discussed. The evaluation aims to contribute to the improvement of MULIB's services and resources, reinforcing its role in facilitating the academic and research pursuits of Mulungushi University.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

The literature review is a crucial component of research as it involves surveying existing literature to gain familiarity with the available knowledge in one's specific field of interest. The literature review not only provides a theoretical foundation for the study but also establishes connections between the proposed research and previous investigations. Naidu (2009, 32 cited in Ncwane, 2016), states that the literature review process includes identifying potentially relevant sources, a thorough analysis of selected sources and the construction of an account integrating and explaining relevant sources. Therefore, this chapter aims to examine relevant literature on the significance of evaluating library performance, the sufficiency of library resources for users, the alignment of library services and facilities with university curricula, and the obstacles encountered by library patrons when accessing the library collection.

Other scholars have emphasized the importance of a comprehensive literature review. For instance, Smith (2010) asserts that a thorough review of existing literature enables researchers to identify research gaps and formulate research questions that contribute to the existing knowledge base. Furthermore, Johnson et al. (2012) highlight that a literature review provides a framework for conceptualizing and contextualizing research findings within the broader scholarly discourse.

2.1 Importance of performance assessment of libraries

Performance assessment is essential in every organization. With the increases in the number of students and the library users, there is need for performance assessment in libraries so as to know if the library meets the users' needs.

Various studies have been conducted regarding the importance of performance assessment in libraries. A study conducted by Chan (2013) on the importance of performance appraisal of library services provision to prison inmates in Nigeria reviewed that performance appraisal is important because the study revealed that the prison libraries were meeting offenders' needs for recreational, cultural, educational and information materials. Before the study was conducted, the library staff and management were not aware of the extent to which the library met the inmates' needs, implying therefore that performance assessment was important because it helped the management team to find out whether the services being offered were productive

or were a liability to the users. The above study aimed at finding out the importance of performance appraisal of the library services provision to prison inmates whereas this study aims at conducting performance assessment of Mulungushi University Library in meeting user's needs.

According to Singh (2015) libraries through their collection provided additional information students required in their various courses and other general information thus, libraries were very important to their academics. The research conducted on performance assessment of the library services and students' perception on academic libraries in Uganda showed that the library users had different perceptions of the library particularly its collection, it was disclosed that the library collection was not well stocked but most of the users opted to use the internet services and that students rarely sought for help from the library staff because of bad attitude of the staff towards the library users. The study showed that performance assessment in libraries was important because it would the library staff and management know the extent to which the library met the users' needs. The gap between the above study and current study is that, the above study focused on different academic libraries and the perception that students had on the library collection whereas the current study focuses on one library and only focuses on the performance assessment of Mulungushi University Library in meeting users' needs.

2.2 The adequacy of the library resources to the user

According to Henry (2001) libraries provide various information resources to their users; these information resources include media, blogs, personal experiences, books, magazines, journals, encyclopedias, dictionaries and web pages. In addition, Koren (2019) explains that these information resources contain information that is aimed at meeting users' information needs and thus are made available and accessible to users when required. From the foregoing, it is clear that the effectiveness of the library performance lies in its ability to make information available and accessible to the library users when required.

Various other studies were being conducted with regard to the effectiveness of information resources available and accessible to students in universities. For example the University of Nottingham in the United Kingdom (2014) carried out a study that aimed at finding out how knowledgeable students were regarding the library resources that the library offered and the effectiveness of these resources in meeting student's information needs. The study showed that despite indicating that they used the library often, students expressed ignorance of some information resources that were available and accessible in the library. Furthermore, the study

revealed that some students did not make full utilization of the library resources due to lack of knowledge concerning them existing or being provided in the library. In addition, most materials that were accessible were not effective enough to meet students' information needs hence most students opted to use the internet to search for information they needed. Among the resources the library provided, 90% of students indicated to be very aware of the available resources and that they frequently accessed these resources which included materials such as dictionaries and encyclopedias.

Electronic resources both e-books and e-journals covering various fields of study were accessed on the internet through search engines such as Google. Information resources to which students expressed some ignorance and indicated they rarely used included magazines and newspapers. The researchers recommended that awareness programs must be conducted by the library to publicize the information resources that the library provided to enable students to be fully aware and effectively utilize the library collection. The study went beyond and looked at the effectiveness of the materials available in meeting student's information needs.

Pors (2016) in his research that aimed at determining the information resources at the University of Hong Kong Library and their perceived effectiveness to students' needs indicated that the library played a pivotal role in providing quality education at the University. The research further revealed that the University of Hong Kong Library had various information resources which students were aware of as opposed to the University of Nottingham. The information resources available and accessible at the Hong Kong University library according to the research included dictionaries, encyclopedias, books (print materials), electronic books (e-books), journals, journal articles, websites, newspapers, conference proceedings, reports, standards, manuscript and special collections, patents and theses. Most of these resources were effective in meeting students' needs because the library had updated materials that are useful for various courses offered at the university. The researcher recommended that the library should increase the number of the library staff owing to the fact that the library was big and had a variety of information resources but that it had few staff to attend to the users.

The gap between this study and the above study is that, the above study focused on the effectiveness of the information resources available in meeting students information needs whereas this study aimed at conducting a performance assessment of Mulungushi University Library.

In another study by Ugah and Farai (2015) whose aim was to ascertain the availability and accessibility of information resources and the effectiveness of library services at Michael

Okpara University of Agriculture in Nigeria, it was established that information resources were very accessible and effectively used due to the integration of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the library and the dedicated librarians. The findings on the effectiveness of resources available and accessible to students at the library were similar to those found in the other literature reviewed by Pors (2016). Those resources included books, journals, reference materials, magazines, newspapers, reports, electronic materials and internet access that were found to have become a very important information service provision to many students. The researchers also recommended the need to employ more ICT specialists in libraries to make them effective in their provision of services to library users. In contrast, this study focuses on the performance assessment of Mulungushi University Library.

2.3 The extent to which the library information resources meet the needs of users

Westwood (2012) states that the perception of students on the library collection in meeting the curricular of the university is greatly influenced by the level to which students feel the collection meets their information needs. A research conducted by Thapisa (2012) that aimed at finding out the perceptions of students on the library collection in meeting the curricular of the university at Bugema University library in Uganda disclosed that students felt that the library collection was not well stocked with up-to-date materials and that some materials were too old and thus needed to be weeded off and replaced with current materials. The research also discovered that this perception among students regarding the library collection had an adverse impact on how often they searched for information materials or consulted the library collection. As a recommendation, the research stated that there was need to weed off old materials in the library and acquire new up-to-date materials for the library which would greatly increase the number of students using and consulting the library and this will improve the image of the university. In addition, the research indicated that the library plays a pivotal role in the institution hence for the university to meet its curricular the library should be stocked with current materials that meet the needs of its users. The gap between the above study and this study is that, the above study was focusing only on the perception that students had on the library collection in meeting the curricular of the university. On the other hand, this study focused on performance assessment of MU Library.

In another study by Stokesa (2014), whose aim was to look at how the library met the curricular of Bayero University in Nigeria, revealed that students in Nigeria perceived that the value of the library lies in the quality of its collection and not quantity of the collection. This entails that the number of books that comprise the collection was not what really determined by the

usefulness of the collection but rather the ability of the collection to meet student's information needs. The study also depicted that students deemed the materials current and able to meet their various information needs hence the library played a vital role in uplifting the curricular of the university because the library was stocked with materials that met information needs of the students. In addition, the research indicated that the librarians were helpful in serving students to search for information resources and often times the information needs of the students were regularly met which added to the positive perception students had towards the library meeting the curricular of the university. The study recommended that more funding should be given to libraries to ensure they continue building the collection and maintain the positive perception users had over them.

Rath (2016) conducted a study to explore the perceptions of students regarding the library services in meeting the educational requirements at universities in the United Kingdom (UK). The findings of the research indicated that students frequently utilized the library facilities, including internet access (Wifi), to fulfill their information needs. The study also revealed that the library's information resources effectively supported the curriculum, as they provided up-to-date materials that catered to the users' information requirements. Regarding the library's collection, the research demonstrated that students regularly utilized the available books and borrowed them for reading outside the library. The current study, however, focused on evaluating the performance of Mulungushi University Library.

2.4 The extent to which the library services and facilities meet the curricular of the University

Westwood (2012) states that the perception of students on the library collection in meeting the curricular of the university is greatly influenced by the level to which students feel the collection meet their information needs. A research conducted by Thapisa (2012) that aimed at finding out the perceptions of students on the library collection in meeting the curricular of the university at Bugema University library in Uganda disclosed that students felt that the library collection was not well stocked with up-to-date materials and that some materials were too old and thus needed to be weeded off and replaced with current materials. The research also discovered that this perception among students regarding the library collection had an adverse impact on how often they searched for information materials or consulted the library collection. As a recommendation, the research stated that there was need to weed off old materials in the library and acquire new up-to-date materials for the library which would greatly increase the number of students using and consulting the library and this will improve the image of the

university. In addition, the research indicated that, the library plays a pivotal role in the institution hence for the university to meet its curricular the library should be stocked with current materials that meet the needs of its users. The gap between the above study and this study is that, the above study was focusing only on the perception that students had on the library collection in meeting the curricular of the university. On the other hand, this study focused much on performance assessment of MU Library.

In another study by Stokesa (2014) whose aim was to look at how a library meet the curricular of Bayero University in Nigeria revealed that students in Nigeria perceived that the value of the library lies in the quality of its collection and not quantity of the collection. This entails that the number of books that comprise the collection was not what really determined the usefulness of the collection but rather the ability of the collection to meet student's information needs. The study also depicted that students deemed the materials current and able to meet their various information needs hence the library played the vital role in uplifting the curricular of the university because the library was stocked with materials that met information needs of the students. In addition, the research indicated that the librarians were helpful in serving students to search for information resources and often times the information needs of the students were regularly met which added to the positive perception students had towards the library meeting the curricular of the university. The study recommended that more funding should be given to libraries to ensure they continue building the collection and maintain the positive perception users had over them.

Rath (2016) also carried out research that aimed at determining the perceptions of students to the library services in meeting the curricular of the universities in United Kingdom (UK). The research indicated that students constantly made use of the library and other library services like internet (WiFi) to meet their information needs. The research also disclosed that the library information resources met the curricular of the universities because the libraries provided updated materials that met information needs of its users. With regards to the library collection, the research revealed that students constantly made use of books in the collection and borrowed to read from outside the library. This study, however, focused on performance assessment on Mulungushi University Library.

2.5 Assessment of quality services models in libraries

Assessing quality services models in libraries is important before conducting a performance assessment exercise as doing so will enable library management and staff to identify the constructs within which they will concentrate to obtain appropriate information which will measure whether the service provided meet the expectations of users.

According to Iroaganachi and Nkiko (2016) performance assessment of an academic library is a complex task that does not require assessment measures or models that are imported or adapted from other fields due to the fact that aspects of those fields to be assessed differ from aspects of library operations that must be considered. They argue that the SERVQUAL and LibQUAL models that are widely accepted and adapted to LIS are used to measure service quality which is just an aspect of library operations, hence these models are not adequate for measuring the totality of library operations and systems [as well as facilities]. Iroaganachi and Nkiko (2016) argue that a fundamental requirement for assessment of library operations and systems is a model that is all encompassing and based on the perception of both librarians and users. A model that meets these requirements will better capture current status and identify areas of deficiencies. Based on this viewpoint Iroaganachi and Nkiko (2016) recommend development of “Lib-PERFQUAL” derived from “Library performance quality”, a model that comprises all indicators necessary to draw reasonable conclusion on where the goal, policy or programmes of the library is, at a given time and make appropriate recommendations for improvement.

Shi and Levy (2005) state that the disconfirmation model has been used mainly to research product consumption and on the other hand, SERVQUAL was designed as a tool to assess only services. Using the disconfirmation model, when performance is greater than expectation, resulting in positive disconfirmation, customers are satisfied. When performance falls short of expectations, resulting in negative disconfirmation, customers are dissatisfied. The LibQUAL model was developed based on the SERVQUAL.

2.6 Challenges library users face in using the library collection

According to Lock (2006), one of the challenges encountered by library users in utilizing the library collection is a lack of information searching skills and guidance from librarians, which hinders their ability to effectively and efficiently search for information. In addition, users face difficulties in accessing the library collection due to issues such as improper shelving and arrangement of materials, missing catalogued items on the shelves, and a lack of assistance

from librarians (Coles, 2010). The aforementioned study aimed to investigate the obstacles faced by users when utilizing the library collection. The present study seeks to perform a performance assessment of Mulungushi University Library, encompassing a comprehensive evaluation of its overall effectiveness and efficiency.

In Ukonuet's (2012) study conducted in Nigeria, which explored the challenges faced by undergraduate students at the University of Nigeria when using the digital library, several issues were identified. The research revealed that students encountered various difficulties, including a lack of sufficient staff or librarians to assist them in searching for information resources within the digital library collection. Additionally, the study highlighted the absence of awareness programs aimed at teaching students how to effectively search for materials, leading to challenges in accessing the digital resources despite the library having a vast collection that could greatly assist students in meeting their information needs. As a recommendation, the researchers suggested that the library should hire more staff members and implement free programs to educate students on accessing the digital materials in the library. It is important to note that the previous study solely focused on the use of the digital library collection, resulting in a limited scope. In contrast, the current study is not constrained by such limitations and instead examines the overall performance of the library collection in a broader sense.

In another study conducted by Warwick (2013) in Kenya, the challenges faced by library users in accessing information resources were examined. The research highlighted issues such as a shortage of library staff to assist users in searching for materials and the negative attitudes of some librarians, which discouraged users from seeking their help. It was found that some users preferred to search for materials without librarians' assistance due to perceived busyness or unfriendly behavior. Additionally, the study revealed that library materials were often misshelved, making it difficult for users to locate them even with the correct catalogue information. To address these challenges, the researcher recommended increasing the number of library staff and providing training to improve librarians' interaction skills, fostering a more welcoming and accommodating environment for library users (Warwick, 2013). It is important to note that the current study focuses specifically on Mulungushi University Main Library in Zambia, in contrast to the broader scope of the study conducted in Kenya.

Similarly, in a research conducted by Slatter (2011) in Algeria, the aim was to identify the challenges faced by students when utilizing academic libraries. One of the highlighted challenges was the students' lack of knowledge on how to effectively search for library

materials. Additionally, there was a significant imbalance between the number of students and the available books. Despite libraries having extensive collections, not all materials were frequently consulted by users, while the materials in high demand were often in short supply. Consequently, when users needed these materials, they discovered that they had already been borrowed, posing a hurdle in accessing them. Contrasting with the previous study, which focused on challenges faced by students in academic libraries, this particular study primarily assesses the performance of the Mulungushi University Library.

2.7 Summary

This chapter provides an overview of the importance of performance assessment in libraries. It reviews existing literature on various aspects such as the importance of performance assessment, adequacy of library resources, extent to which library services meet the university's curriculum, and challenges faced by library users. The literature highlights the significance of performance assessment in determining if libraries meet users' needs and reveals the impact of information resources and services on students' perception and satisfaction. Additionally, it explores models used for assessing library services and identifies challenges faced by library users, including lack of information searching skills and guidance. The literature further revealed that the disconfirmation theory and SERVQUAL are used to measure customer expectations and satisfaction while LibQUAL which was developed from SERVQUAL is used specifically to assess quality library service.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

Chapter Two presented a comprehensive examination of the significance of performance assessment in libraries through a review of existing literature. This review encompassed various aspects, including the importance of performance assessment, the sufficiency of library resources, the alignment of library services with the university's curriculum, and the challenges experienced by library users.

Chapter Three builds upon the foundation established in Chapter Two by delving into the specifics of the research process. The chapter provides a detailed account, justification, and validation of the methodology employed to conduct the essential investigation aimed at addressing the research questions raised in this study. According to O'Leary (2014:85) "research methodology refers to the framework associated with a particular set of paradigmatic assumptions that are used to conduct research namely scientific method, ethnography and action research".

Thus, this chapter encompasses various elements such as research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedure, data collection methods and procedures, data analysis, and ethical considerations. The chapter also focuses on the practical aspects of conducting the study, taking into account the importance of performance assessment in libraries, the adequacy of library resources, the alignment of library services with the university's curriculum, and the challenges encountered by library users.

3.1 Research design

Research design is a strategy that justifies the logic, structure and the principles of the research methodology and methods, and how these relate to the research questions, hypothesis or proposition (Jupp 2010:265). A research design involves a set of decisions regarding the topic to be studied pertaining to population, the research methods and the purpose by providing the overall structure for the procedures the researcher follows, the data the researcher collects and the data analysis done (Babbie 2014:112), it is a strategic framework or plan that guides the execution and implementation of research, serving as a bridge between research questions and the actual research process. It involves specifying the most appropriate operations to be

conducted to test specific hypotheses under given conditions. The research design aims to arrange the conditions for data collection and analysis in a manner that combines relevance to the research purpose with procedural efficiency

In the words of Jupp (2016), a research design is a strategic plan that justifies the logical structure and principles of the chosen research methodology and methods, and how they are related to the research questions, hypotheses, or propositions. It encompasses a series of decisions concerning the research topic, the target population, the research methods, and the purpose, which collectively provide a framework for the overall procedures followed by the researcher, the data collected, and the data analysis conducted (Babbie 2014).

Bryman (2018) explains that a research design serves as a blueprint for gathering and analyzing data, and the selection of a particular research design reflects the researcher's decisions about the relative importance given to various dimensions of the research process. These dimensions include:

- Expressing Causal Connections: The extent to which the research design is geared towards establishing cause-and-effect relationships between variables.
- Generalization: The emphasis placed on generalizing research findings to larger groups beyond the specific participants involved in the investigation.
- Understanding Behavior in Context: The consideration of the social context and the significance of behavior within that specific context.
- Temporal Appreciation: The recognition of the temporal aspects of social phenomena and their interconnected nature over time.

In this study, the researcher utilized a quantitative approach for gathering and analysing data. As stated by Bertram (2004, 59 cited in Ncwane, 2016), quantitative analysis involves the use of numerical data and statistical techniques to measure and summarize phenomena. This approach is particularly suitable for investigating the performance assessment in libraries and gaining an insight into the various factors at play.

3.2 Research methods

According to (O'Leary, 2014: 85), research methods encompass various techniques used to collect data, including surveying and participative observation. Creswell (2013: 17) defines research methods as specific approaches to data collection and analysis which in quantitative research methods, these methods can involve predetermined instrument-based questions such

as performance data, attitude data, observational data, and census data, analysed through statistical analysis. In qualitative research methods, they can involve emerging methods using open-ended questions, such as interview data, observation data, document data, audio-visual data, and text and image analysis. Mixed methods research combines both predetermined and emerging methods, utilizing open-ended and closed-ended questions, multiple forms of data, and employing statistical and text analysis (Creswell, 2013). For the current study, the survey method was deemed appropriate.

3.2.1 Survey research

Survey research refers to a cross-sectional design where data is collected through self-completion questionnaires or structured interviews, focusing on multiple cases at a specific point in time. This approach aims to gather quantitative or quantifiable data related to two or more variables and identify patterns of relationships between them (Bryman, 2008). Survey research provides techniques for studying various units of analysis, which can include individuals, families, cities, states, companies, and more (Babbie, 2020). Units of analysis, such as libraries, can be described based on their components, such as services, facilities, or collections.

According to Neuman (2012), survey research allows for the precise measurement of features in social reality, which can then be converted into quantitative data. Statistical analysis can then be used to examine causal relationships that exist within social reality. In the current study, survey research was chosen as it was cost-effective and reliable, enabling data collection from different participants and respondents using questionnaires and interview schedules. A cross-sectional descriptive survey was conducted in August 2022 to collect raw data. According to Powell (1997: 64 cited in Ncwane 2016), the most straightforward type of survey research is descriptive and it is designed to ensure that the sample is reasonably representative of the population which the researcher wishes to generalize and that the relevant characteristics of the population have been accurately measured.

Punch (2015) explains that the term "survey" can be used to describe any research that collects data, whether quantitative or qualitative, from a sample of people. A normative survey, status survey, or descriptive survey primarily aims to describe a sample in terms of proportions and percentages of responses to different questions.

A normative survey, as described by Bicchieri (2016), seeks to examine social norms or values within a specific population by investigating acceptable or appropriate behavior, attitudes, or beliefs, often involving the assessment of the disparity between observed and desired behaviors or attitudes. Normative surveys play a crucial role in comprehending societal expectations and informing interventions or policy-making choices.

According to Fowler (2013), a status survey entails gathering data to evaluate the existing state or condition of a particular subject or phenomenon, offering a comprehensive overview encompassing factors like prevalence, distribution, characteristics, and trends, and is commonly employed in disciplines such as environmental science, public health, and social sciences to assess the current situation and guide decision-making.

Groves et al. (2011) explain that a descriptive survey aims to provide a summary or depiction of the characteristics, behaviors, attitudes, or opinions of a particular population or sample, focusing on obtaining accurate information about the current state of affairs without intending to establish causality or make predictions, and is widely employed in social sciences, market research, and public opinion polling to collect data on diverse subjects of interest.

In this study, the descriptive survey method of data collection was employed to assess quality library services. By employing a descriptive survey, it was envisaged that the current study can systematically gather data, measure the quality of services, identify areas for improvement, and make evidence-based decisions to enhance the overall quality of library services for their users.

3.3 Target population

The term "population" in research refers to the units of analysis, which can include not only individuals but also groups, programs, or any other cases of interest to the researcher (Monette, Sullivan & Dejong 2011:135). Trochin (2000: 1 cited in Ncwane, 2016) states that the term population refers to the larger group from which the sample is taken and to which findings are to be generalized. According to Bryman (2008) a population has a broader meaning beyond its everyday usage, which typically associates it with an entire nation's population.

Defining the population in research is a crucial step that allows researchers to select an appropriate and representative sample. According to Kish (cited in Monnette, Sullivan & Dejong 2011:136), the definition of a population should consider four key aspects:

- Content: This involves identifying the specific characteristics shared by the members of the population under investigation.
- Unit: It refers to the level of analysis or the entities that will be included in the research, such as individuals, nations, regions, organizations, or other cases.
- Extent: This pertains to the geographical or spatial coverage of the population, indicating the boundaries within which the population is defined.
- Time: It refers to the specific temporal period during which the units included in the population must possess the relevant characteristics to be eligible for inclusion in the sample.

By carefully considering these aspects when defining the population, researchers ensure that their sample is representative and aligned with the research objectives. This improves the validity and generalizability of the research findings.

Unclear population definition can result in ambiguous generalizations and inaccurate conclusions drawn from the sample (Monette, Sullivan & Dejong 2011:136). It is essential to also take into account the homogeneity or heterogeneity of the population before selecting a sample. If the population is highly heterogeneous, like a sample representing an entire country or city, there will likely be significant variation among its members. Conversely, if the population is relatively homogeneous, such as a sample of students or members of a specific occupation, there will be less variation in the characteristics of the individuals within the sample (Bryman 2012:182). Considering the level of homogeneity or heterogeneity among participants allows researchers to gain insights into the range of characteristics within their sample and the impact it has on the accuracy and applicability of their results (validity and generalizability of their findings).

Mulungushi University consists of 7 distinct schools that encompass a broad spectrum of academic subjects. These schools include the School of Agriculture and Natural Resources, School of Business Studies, School of Education, School of Engineering and Technology, School of Medicine and Health Sciences, School of Natural and Applied Sciences, and School of Social Sciences. Each of these academic units adds to the university's varied student body and provides specialized programs and classes within their specific areas of expertise.

This research primarily focused on fourth-year students who resided on campus at both the Main Campus and Town Campus of Mulungushi University. The target population consisted of 1,498 students from the 7 schools accommodated at the Main Campus and Town Campus,

with the aim of simplifying the sampling process and gaining a better understanding of the library services and facilities at Mulungushi University (MU). Specifically, the study involved fourth-year undergraduate students from different schools as they were deemed to have had sufficient exposure and experience with the university library. Furthermore, the inclusion of fourth-year students was justified by their longer duration at the university, which allowed them to become familiar with the resources and services offered by the library.

According to the Mulungushi University 2022 Quarter Report Volume 1, the institution had a total student population exceeding 5000, comprising both full-time and distance learning students. The inclusion of full-time undergraduate students in this study provides a representative sample to investigate the performance assessment of libraries at MU.

Additionally, the research involved the Heads of Departments from the 7 different schools within the university and the Director of Research and Post-graduate Studies as part of the target group. These individuals were considered significant sources of information due to their positions and responsibilities in supervising academic programmes. Their valuable insights into the alignment of the library with the curriculum made them key informants for this study.

3.3 Sample size and sampling procedure

In this study, the sample size represents the number of participants or units that were included, while the sampling procedure refers to the method used to select those participants. In this case, the sample size was determined by considering the target population, which consisted of fourth-year students residing on campus from different schools at Mulungushi University's Main Campus and Town Campus. The sampling procedure was thoughtfully designed to ensure that the sample was representative, thereby enhancing the validity and generalizability of the study.

3.3.1 Sample size

As implied above a sample refers to a subset of the population that is selected for study. It is impractical and often impossible to study an entire population, so researchers choose a representative sample to draw conclusions about the larger population based on the characteristics and behaviours observed within the sample. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2022: 262), a sample is "a subset of a larger population selected to represent and provide information about that population". The sample should be carefully chosen to ensure it accurately reflects the characteristics of the population of interest.

In August 2022, Mulungushi University had a combined population of 1498 fourth-year students who were accommodated and residing at both the Main Campus along the Great North Road and the Town Campus (Mulungushi University, Academic Office, 2022). The student population was divided into 7 distinct schools. For this specific study, a sample size of 364 fourth year accommodated students was proportionately selected, which accounted for approximately 24.29% of the total accommodated fourth year student population. Additionally, the study planned to conduct interviews with 8 key informants who held the positions of Heads of Departments (HoDs) in the 7 schools, as well as the Director of the Directorate of Research and Post-graduate Studies. Due to the small number of HoDs and the Director, it was determined that there was no need to obtain a sample from this group, and therefore, all of them were included in the interviews.

Table 3.1 shows the distribution of the 364 students across the 7 different schools accommodated students while Table 3.2 shows the number of students from each school along with their respective proportions in the population.

Table 3.1: The distribution of 364 students across the 7 different schools

SN	School/ Directorate	Population	Sample Size
1	School of Agriculture and Natural Resources	206	52
2	School of Business studies	250	52
3	School of Education	243	52
4	School of Medicine and Health Sciences	87	52
5	School of Natural and Applied Sciences	196	52
6	School of Science and Technology	458	52
7	School of Social Sciences	58	52
Total		1498	364

Table 3.2: Number of students with their respective Proportions in the population

SN	School/ Directorate	Number of Students	Proportion in Population
1	School of Agriculture and Natural Resources	52	3.47%
2	School of Business studies	52	3.47%
3	School of Education	52	3.47%
4	School of Medicine and Health Sciences	52	3.47%
5	School of Natural and Applied Sciences	52	3.47%
6	School of Science and Technology	52	3.47%
7	School of Social Sciences	52	3.47%
Total		364	24.29%

3.3.2 Sampling procedure

Sampling is the process of selecting participants or units for inclusion in a study. It involves determining how the sample will be selected, the size of the sample, and the method used to obtain the sample. The sampling procedure should be designed to minimize bias and increase the likelihood of obtaining a representative sample. According to Bryman and Bell (2021: 123), sampling "is concerned with the selection of a subset of individuals from within a larger population to represent that population". They further explain that sampling is crucial for making valid inferences about the population and ensuring the reliability of the study's findings.

The specific sampling method used may vary depending on the research design and objectives. Some common sampling methods include probability and non-probability sampling. The choice of the sampling method will depend on various factors such as the accessibility of the participants, the representativeness of the sample, and the resources available for data collection. It is important for researchers to clearly document the sample size and sampling procedure in their study to provide transparency and allow for the evaluation and replication of the research

Probability sampling is a technique that ensures every member of the target population has a known and non-zero chance of being selected for the sample, aiming to enhance sample representativeness and enable statistical inference from the sample to the larger population (Sekaran and Bougie, 2022; Bryman and Bell, 2021). It encompasses various techniques such as simple random sampling, stratified sampling, and cluster sampling. Hence it can be stated here that probability sampling is a method that ensures every member of the target population has an equal opportunity of being chosen for the study enabling the selection process to be conducted in a way that maintains fairness and provides each individual in the population a chance of being included in the sample.

On the other hand, non-probability sampling methods, involve selecting participants based on non-random criteria, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Examples of non-probability sampling include convenience sampling and purposive sampling. As pointed out by (Creswell and Creswell, 2017; Neuman, 2014; Guest, Bunce and Johnson, 2006), non-probability sampling is a method of selecting participants or units based on non-random criteria, where not every member of the population has an equal chance of being included, and while it may not ensure representativeness or precise statistical inference, it can still provide valuable insights in certain research contexts.

For this study, a simple random sampling technique was employed to select a sample of 364 fourth-year students from a population of 1,498 students who were accommodated and living on campus at Mulungushi University's Main Campus along the Great North Road and the Town Campus. A simple random sample is a probability sampling technique where each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected for the sample (Sekaran & Bougie, 2022: 177). It involves selecting participants in an unbiased and random manner, such that every individual or unit in the population has an equal and independent probability of being included (Cochran, 2017: 75). In this sampling method, a random mechanism is employed to choose participants without any bias or preference (Sekaran & Bougie, 2022: 177). This can be achieved through various means, such as using random number generators or drawing names from a hat (Cochran, 2017: 75). By ensuring that each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected, a simple random sample increases the representativeness of the sample and allows for statistical inference to be made from the sample to the larger population (Sekaran & Bougie, 2022: 177).

Among the reasons why a simple random sample was chosen for the current research are as follows:

- **Representativeness:** A simple random sample aims to be representative of the entire population from which it is drawn. By randomly selecting individuals or items from the population, each member has an equal chance of being included in the sample. This helps ensure that the sample reflects the characteristics, diversity, and variability of the population accurately (Cochran, 1977).
- **Elimination of bias:** Simple random sampling minimizes bias in the selection process. Since every individual or item has an equal probability of being chosen, there is no systematic favoritism or prejudice towards any particular characteristic or subgroup. This reduces the potential for selection bias, ensuring that the sample is more likely to provide unbiased estimates and inferences about the population (Sekaran & Bougie, 2022; Groves et al., 2009; Levy, 2008).
- **Statistical validity:** Simple random sampling is statistically sound and allows for the application of probability theory in statistical analyses. It provides a solid foundation for making generalizations about the population based on the characteristics observed in the sample (Lohr, 2019).
- **Simplicity and ease of implementation:** Simple random sampling is straightforward to understand and implement. It does not require complex stratification or sampling

techniques, making it accessible and feasible in many research contexts. Additionally, advancements in technology have made random sampling easier to execute using random number generators or software tools (Levy and Lemeshow, 2008).

- **Efficiency:** Simple random sampling can be an efficient method when the population size is relatively small and known. It allows researchers to obtain a representative sample without the need for extensive resources or time-consuming procedures. The simplicity and efficiency of simple random sampling make it a practical choice in many research studies (Sekaran & Bougie, 2022).
- **Homogeneity:** This sampling method is often used when the population is relatively homogeneous and there is no specific characteristic or variable of interest that needs to be taken into account. It provides an unbiased representation of the population, allowing researchers to make generalizations and draw conclusions about the larger population based on the characteristics observed in the sample.

3.4 Data collection methods and procedures

Data collection methods refer to the techniques and strategies used to gather data or information for research or analysis purposes. These methods determine how data is collected, from whom or what sources, and through what means. On the other hand, data collection procedures encompass the specific steps and protocols followed in implementing the chosen data collection methods (Groves et al., 2009). Data collection methods can vary depending on the nature of the research, the type of data needed, and the research objectives. Some of the most commonly used data collection methods include the following:

- **Surveys:** Surveys involve administering a set of structured questions to a sample of individuals or groups to gather information about their opinions, attitudes, behaviors, or characteristics.
- **Interviews:** Interviews involve direct interaction with participants, either in person, over the phone, or through digital platforms. They can be structured (with predefined questions) or unstructured (allowing for open-ended exploration).
- **Observations:** Observations involve systematically watching and recording behaviors, events, or phenomena in their natural settings. Researchers may be passive observers or actively participate in the environment being studied.
- **Experiments:** Experiments involve manipulating variables and observing their effects on the outcome of interest. They typically involve random assignment of participants

to different groups and control over conditions to establish cause-and-effect relationships.

- **Secondary data analysis:** Secondary data analysis involves using existing data that were collected for other purposes. Researchers analyze and interpret the data to answer new research questions or gain additional insights.
- **Case studies:** Case studies involve an in-depth examination of a particular individual, group, organization, or phenomenon, often using multiple data collection methods such as interviews, observations, and document analysis.
- **Document analysis:** Document analysis involves examining written, printed, or electronic materials such as documents, texts, reports, or archival records to extract relevant data or information.

3.4.1 Data collection instruments

A self-administered structured questionnaire was used as a suitable method to collect data which. This questionnaire was created on google form and was administered online. The use of a structured questionnaire ensured reliability and validity in the process of data collection. Reliability is important as it is premised on the notion that there is some sense of uniformity or standardization in what is being measured, and that methods need to consistently capture what is being explored (O’Leary, 2010: 59). Validity on the other hand is premised on the assumption that what is being studied can be measured or captured and seeks to confirm the truth and accuracy of these measured and captured data (O’Leary, 2010: 61), as well as the truth and accuracy of any findings drawn from the data. The cross-sectional survey was undertaken in August 2022.

Denscombe (2017:154 cited in Zulu 2014) pointed out the following scenarios under which a questionnaire can be used:

- When used with large numbers of respondents in many locations.
- When what is required tends to be fairly straightforward information - relatively brief and uncontroversial.
- When the social climate is open enough to allow full and honest answers.
- When there is a need for standardised data from identical questions - without requiring personal face-to-face interaction.
- When the respondents can be expected to be able to read and understand the questions - the implications of age, intellect and eyesight need to be considered.

- When time allows for delays caused by production, piloting, posting and procrastination before receipt of a response.
- When resources allow for the cost of printing, postage and data preparation.

The questionnaire used in the current study was adapted to Mulungushi University context from Ncwane (2016) who adapted the LibQUAL+™ based questions to the MUT-NSL context (See Appendix 1 for the questionnaire used in this study). The questions included in the questionnaire were designed to effectively address all the objectives of the study and provide answers to the research questions that were raised.

The questionnaire used to collect data for this study comprised six sections which requested information on the following:

- Section 1, Background information: This section of the questionnaire aimed to collect background information from participants, including gender, age, school affiliation, and frequency of library resource usage in order to understand participants' demographics and engagement with library resources. It was anticipated that this information would provide insights into potential relationships and patterns among responses.
- Section 2, Expectations of Service Quality: This section of the questionnaire focused on participants' expectations of library services. Participants were asked to rate their expectations using a scale of 1 to 5. The questions covered various aspects, including access to information, library facilities, staff service, and the overall impact of the library on their academic or research needs. The purpose was to assess participants' satisfaction and determine how well the library was meeting their expectations and needs.
- Section 3, Perceptions of the library services: This section of the questionnaire aimed to collect data on participants' perceptions (actual experiences) of the library services currently provided. Participants were asked to rate their perceptions using a scale of 1 to 5. The questions covered categories such as access to information, library facilities, staff service, and general perceptions on how the library services were beneficial to the users. The objective was to assess participants' satisfaction and their real-life experiences with the library services they have encountered.

- Section 4, User satisfaction of library services: This section of the questionnaire focused on evaluating user satisfaction within MU library setting. It involved gathering feedback from library users regarding their overall satisfaction with various aspects of the library experience. The section aimed to assess user satisfaction with access to information, library facilities, and staff services. By obtaining user feedback, it was envisaged that the library could identify areas of strength and weakness, and make improvements accordingly.
- Section 5, Overall quality of library services: In this section of the questionnaire, participants were asked to rate the overall quality of library services provided by the library using options ranging from "Very good," "Good," "Neutral," "Poor," or "Very poor." The purpose was to collect feedback on the general quality of services without focusing on specific aspects. The responses gathered here offered valuable insights into the effectiveness and perceived value of the library's offerings. This information is beneficial for assessing performance, identifying areas for improvement, and enhancing the overall user experience.
- Section 6, comments: This section was open ended to allow the respondents to give their views of or comments on any information and issues that might not have been covered in the questionnaire.

In addition to the questionnaire, an interview guide was used to collect data from the heads of departments who were the key informants in the current study to consolidate the data collected from respondents to the questionnaire. According to Punch (2005:168), the interview method is one of the main data collection tools in qualitative research, which is a very good way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of reality. The advantages of interviews are that they enable the interviewer to follow up and probe responses, motives and feelings, and their potential value is that the recording of nonverbal communications, facial expressions and gestures can enrich the qualitative aspects of the data (Sage Dictionary 2006:157).

In the current research, interviews were conducted with 8 key informants who held the positions of Heads of Departments (HoDs) in the 7 schools, as well as the Director of the Directorate of Research and Post-graduate Studies. The inclusion of these 8 key informants was done on the assumption that they would provide valuable information to evaluate the performance of MULIB due to their positions and responsibilities in supervising academic programmes, as well as their insights into the alignment of the library with the curriculum. The

interview were conducted in August 2022 at the same time with administration of the questionnaire.

The interview guide was designed to gather information about the performance assessment of MULIB in meeting users' needs. It sought to obtain insights from key informants within the institution. The information that was solicited included the interviewee's position and years of service, their view on the library's collection, whether the collection adequately met users' needs, measures implemented by the library to ensure curricula alignment, policies for easy access to resources and services, and the challenges faced by the library in providing user services. The collected information was for the purpose of assessing the library's effectiveness in meeting user needs and identifying areas for improvement.

3.5 Data analysis

In this study, quantitative analysis using SPSS was employed to analyse and interpret the closed questions. The data analysis process in this study involved reviewing and correcting questionnaire errors, coding the data, preparing data tables, and interpreting the data by generating summaries. Babbie (2011, 411) states that, before analysing the raw data, each completed questionnaire should be checked for missing data, ambiguity, omissions and errors. This research put all that into consideration so as to have clear information. According to Powell (1997) cleaning data can involve everything from simply reading results, looking for surprising responses and unexpected patterns, to verifying or checking the coding of the data. In addition, content analysis was used to analyse data from the interview guide.

3.6 Ethical considerations

This research ensured that the questionnaires are distributed fairly according to the framework of student by not going against the principle of the research methods being used. This in turn ensured that the research findings are not biased but valid. In addition, this research aimed at avoiding biasness in any aspect including research design, data analysis, interpretation and conclusion of findings.

Furthermore, this research ensured that the work of other scholars is acknowledged when using secondary data so as to avoid plagiarism, this was done by giving full details of the materials being used and the reference provided. In addition, to ensure that utmost respect and fairness is given to the respondents, the research ensured that informed consent is assured before the questionnaires are distributed. This was achieved by getting permission from the academic

office to be allowed to do this research at the institution. This research will maintain a high degree of confidentiality and privacy by ensuring that the participants are aware of the purpose of the research and the use of the data being collected and this will be achieved by not publishing the feedback of other respondents. It will also ensure that participants only participate in the study voluntarily. Lastly, this research will ensure that the respondents are not harmed in any way, by not disturbing the students and HoDs during class time or their studying time in order to participate in the research.

3.7 Summary

Chapter Three provides an overview of the research methodology employed in the current study. It begins by explaining the concept of research design and its significance in guiding the research process. The chosen research design for this study is a quantitative approach using constructs of a case study research. The chapter further discusses the research methods, with a focus on the survey research method, which was deemed appropriate for gathering data on library performance assessment. The target population is defined as fourth-year students from the 7 distinct schools at Mulungushi University, along with Heads of Departments and the Director of Research and Post-graduate Studies. The sample size was 364 students, and a simple random sampling technique was employed for participant selection. Data collection methods included using structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews with key informants. The collected data was analysed using quantitative techniques in SPSS, and content analysis was used for interview data. Ethical considerations have been addressed, emphasizing fairness, confidentiality, informed consent, and the avoidance of harm to participants.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.0 Overview

This chapter presents the outcomes of the investigation into how effectively Mulungushi University Library meets the needs of its users. The research employed a combination of self-administered questionnaires and interviews. The study involved 364 students, which accounted for 24.29% of the total population of fourth-year students (1498 students), along with 7 key informants who were heads of departments (HoDs) from different schools and the Directorate of Research and Post-graduate Studies, representing the entire population of HoDs.

To ensure a representative sample, the goal was to have 52 students from each of the 7 schools within the institution and 8 key informants. The study achieved a remarkable response rate of 77.47% from students and a 100% response rate from key informants. This high response rate among key informants was expected due to their limited number. However, the 77.47% response rate from students was considered sufficient for the purposes of data analysis, reporting, and making generalizations about the findings.

4.1 Demographics of Respondents

The survey was carried out using a self-administered structured questionnaire developed through Google forms and administered online. Each section of the questionnaire was validated upon submission, and the outcomes are displayed in the sections hereunder.

The question regarding gender garnered responses from 141 females (50.9%) and 136 males (49.1%), indicating a nearly equal representation of both genders. This balanced distribution underscores the importance of inclusivity in research, ensuring that the assessment considers the perspectives and needs of both male and female users. It provides an opportunity to explore potential gender-specific insights in evaluating the library's performance, while also recognizing that the small difference in percentages may require further statistical analysis to determine its significance.

Response by age on the other hand showed that the majority of respondents 162 (57.7%) fell within the 21-25 age group, while 85 (30.2%) were in the 16-20 age group. Older students (36 and above) constituted a smaller portion of the sample 11(3.9%). The age group of 26-30 had 15 (6%) respondents, and the age group of 31-35 had 8 (2.8%) respondents. However, it is

important to note that the results were limited to fourth-year undergraduate student because this group of students was deemed to have stayed long enough to understand the facilities and services offered by MULIB. To ensure more accurate generalizations, future research may include a more diverse sample that encompasses different academic levels and roles within the university community. In other words, the largest age group among these students was 21-25 years old, accounting for 57.7% of the sample. The 16-20 age group represented 30.2%, while older age groups (26-30, 31-35, and 36+) constituted a smaller percentage (12%) combined.

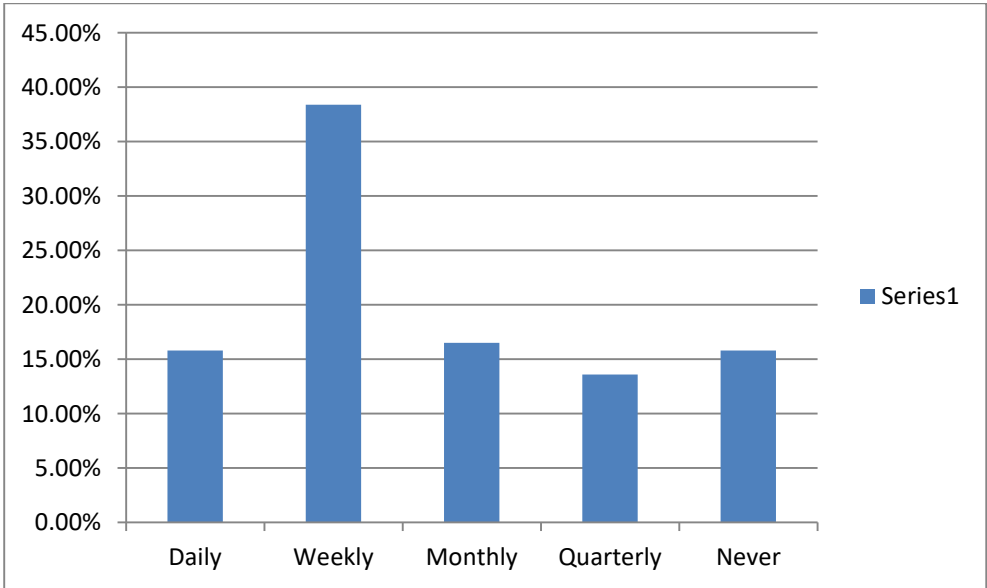
Table 1: Demograchics of the respondents

Variable	Values	Frequency (n=281)	Percent
Gender	Female	141	50.9
	Male	136	49.1
Age	16-20	85	30.2
	21-25	162	57.7
	26-30	15	5.3
	31-35	8	2.8
	36+	11	3.9

4.2 Use of Library Resources and Services by users

To discern the frequency of library usage among participants, the question on how often they used the library was asked. The results as portrayed by Figure 4. 2.1 showcased a range of library usage patterns.

Figure 4.2.1: Extent to which Respondents use the Library Resources and Services



The most common frequency was weekly usage, reported by 107 (38.4%) respondents, indicating that a substantial portion of individuals regularly rely on the library for their academic needs. 44 (15.8%) of respondents reported daily library usage, others reported less frequent library visits, with 46 (16.5%) using the library monthly and 38 (13.6%) quarterly, suggesting specific or occasional usage, 44 (15.8%) of respondents admitted to never using the library, underscoring the presence of a group of non-users.

4.2.2 Views of respondents who never used the library

Responses from individuals who reported that they never used the library were 44 (15.8%), and these were categorized into various themes, shedding light on the reasons behind their choice. These categories encompassed concerns related to resource availability, library environment, personal preferences, time constraints, alternative study methods, and other factors. The following is a summarized breakdown of the reasons given:

Table 4.2.2 Views of respondents who never used the library

Themes	Responses
Resource Availability	-Limited and outdated books. -Few copies of required textbooks. -Insufficient materials for studying. -Difficulty finding specific materials
Library Environment	-Overcrowding and noise. -Lack of conducive conditions for studying. -Library closes early. -Unfavorable environment for studying (e.g., restrictions on drinks, uncomfortable seating).
Personal Preferences	-Prefer studying in own room. -Discomfort with crowded places. -Studying in private due to personal reasons.
Times constraints	-Limited time as a part-time student. -Inadequate time to visit the library.
Alternative study methods	-Using online resources instead of physical books. -Relying on class notes and modules from lecturers.
Other reasons	-Personal preference for web-based information. -Library is too comfortable (leading to distraction). -Lack of interest in reading books.

4.2.3 Users' expectations pertaining access to information

Notably, a substantial 60.0% strongly agreed that they expect a user-friendly website for locating information, while 53.2% expressed strong feeling regarding easily accessible electronic journals. Additionally, 57.6% strongly agreed with the importance of easy access to electronic databases. However, the survey also revealed a significant demand for traditional resources, with 53.4% strongly agreeing on the need for an adequate collection of printed books, and 46.5% strongly agreeing on access to the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC). This diverse set of expectations underscores the importance of providing both digital and physical resources and efficient services such as inter-library loans to cater for diverse needs of MU library users effectively.

Table 4.2.3: Expectations pertaining to access

Information Expectations	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Website which enables location of information	161(60.0%)	55 (20.5%)	31 (11.7%)	17 (6.3%)	4 (1.5%)	268
Electronic journals that are easily accessible	140 (53.2%)	68 (25.8%)	31 (11.8%)	20 (7.6%)	4 (1.5%)	263
Adequate printed library materials (Books)	140 (53.4%)	61 (23.3%)	43 (16.4%)	12 (4.6%)	6 (2.3%)	262
Easy access to electronic databases	152 (57.6%)	56 (21.2%)	35 (13.2%)	9 (3.4%)	12 (4.5%)	264
Adequate printed journal collection	95 (36.4%)	94 (36.0%)	46 (17.6%)	22 (8.4%)	4 (1.5%)	261
An efficient interlibrary-loans service	99 (37.8%)	83 (31.7%)	49 (18.7%)	21 (8.0%)	10 (3.8%)	262
Access to the Online Public Access Catalogue	121 (46.5%)	83 (31.9%)	38 (14.6%)	9 (3.5%)	9 (3.5%)	260
An efficient short loan	90 (33.7%)	79 (29.6%)	63 (23.6%)	18 (6.7%)	11 (4.1%)	267

4.3 Users' expectations of staff service

Table 4.3 shows a range of expectations held by library users regarding library staff and services. 70.5% of respondents strongly agreed that library staff should be willing to help, underlining the pivotal role of approachability and user-centered assistance. Additionally, over 75% valued staff who gave individual attention, emphasizing the importance of personalized support. Users also anticipate staff who instill confidence (58.4%), subject librarians who enhance research skills (62.3%), and staff who provide essential information skills (60.7%). This highlights the vital role of staff in empowering users' academic and research pursuits. Furthermore, there was a strong demand for staff who deal with users in a caring way (63.7%) and understand user needs (59.5%), reinforcing the significance of creating a welcoming and empathetic library environment. Lastly, over 81% strongly agree that staff should be knowledgeable, underscoring the essential role of staff expertise in addressing user inquiries effectively. In summary, these statistics illuminate the user-centric expectations placed on library staff, emphasizing their critical role in providing a supportive and enriching library experience. Meeting these expectations is key to enhancing user satisfaction and engagement with library resources and services.

Table 4.3: Expectations pertaining to staff service

Expectations	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Count
Staff who are willing to help	184 (70.5%)	39 (14.9%)	23 (8.8%)	9 (3.5%)	6 (2.3%)	261
Staff who give individual attention	133 (52.2%)	59 (23.1%)	46 (18.0%)	14 (5.5%)	3 (1.2%)	255
Staff who instill confidence	149 (58.4%)	61 (23.9%)	30 (11.8%)	10 (3.9%)	5 (2.0%)	255
Subject librarians who improve users' research skills	157 (62.3%)	57 (22.6%)	23 (9.1%)	10 (4.0%)	5 (2.0%)	252
Staff who provide information skills needed for work or study	153 (60.7%)	52 (20.6%)	32 (12.7%)	10 (4.0%)	5 (2.0%)	252
Staff who deal with users in a caring way	161 (63.7%)	55 (21.7%)	19 (7.5%)	12 (4.7%)	6 (2.4%)	253
Staff who understand the needs of users	151 (59.5%)	58 (22.8%)	29 (11.4%)	12 (4.7%)	4 (1.6%)	254

Staff who are knowledgeable to answer questions	166 (64.6%)	44 (17.0%)	30 (11.7%)	13 (5.1%)	4 (1.6%)	257
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4.4 Users' general expectations

Table 4.4 provides the general expectations of library users in different aspects, majority of respondents (82.2%) either strongly agreed or agreed that they expected the library to help them advance in their academic endeavors. Only a small number (6.6%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this expectation. Similarly, when it comes to research needs, a large portion of respondents (79.9%) either strongly agreed or agreed that they expect the library to assist them. In contrast, for recreational needs, the majority (68.9%) of respondents either disagree or strongly disagreed with expecting the library to help in this aspect, indicating that most users did not consider the library as a primary source for their recreational needs. Furthermore, (69.3%) either strongly agreed or agreed that they expect the library to help them keep abreast of developments in their fields of study. Only a minority (11.7%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this expectation. These statistics highlight that users had strong expectations from the library in terms of academic support and research assistance, while they did not have the same level of expectation for recreational needs.

Table 4.4: General expectations

Expectations	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Count
The library to help advance in academic needs	145 (56.2%)	67 (26.0%)	29 (11.2%)	14 (5.4%)	3 (1.2%)	258
The library to help with research needs	130 (51.2%)	73 (28.7%)	31 (12.2%)	16 (6.3%)	4 (1.6%)	254
The library to help with recreational needs	4 (1.6%)	23 (9.4%)	51 (20.7%)	73 (29.7%)	95 (38.6%)	246
The library to help users keep abreast of developments in their fields of study	102 (41.1%)	70 (28.2%)	47 (19.0%)	21 (8.5%)	8 (3.2%)	248

4.5 Users' perceptions pertaining to access to information

In Table 4.5, shows library users' perceptions regarding various aspects of library resources and services examined. The statistics revealed that the majority of respondents held positive perceptions in several key areas. Notably, 81.5% of users either strongly agreed or agreed that the library's website effectively facilitate the location of information. Similarly, electronic journals received positive feedback, with 77.9% of respondents perceiving them as easily accessible. Furthermore, a significant 79.4% of users believed that the library provided an adequate collection of printed books. Electronic databases also receive high marks, with 80.2% of respondents finding them to be easily accessible. Printed journals, Inter-library loans, and the Online Public Access Catalogue all garnered positive perceptions from a majority of users. However, for the efficient short loan service, while a considerable 72.2% viewed it positively, there is more variability in perceptions, with a notable portion expressing neutrality or disagreement. Overall, these statistics indicate a generally favorable view of the library's resources and services among users, although there are areas with room for improvement.

Table 4.5: Perceptions pertaining to access to information

Perceptions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Count
Website which enables location of information	148 (63.5%)	42 (18.0%)	27 (11.6%)	10 (4.3%)	6 (2.6%)	233
Electronic journals that are easily accessible	116 (51.3%)	60 (26.6%)	28 (12.4%)	16 (7.0%)	6 (2.7%)	226
Adequate printed library materials (Books)	116 (52.0%)	61 (27.4%)	28 (12.6%)	11 (4.9%)	7 (3.1%)	223
Easy access to electronic databases	117 (52.7%)	61 (27.5%)	27 (12.2%)	13 (5.9%)	4 (1.8%)	222
Adequate printed journal collection	112 (51.1%)	61(27.9%)	27 (12.3%)	11 (5.0%)	8 (3.7%)	219
An efficient Inter-library loans service	98 (44.8%)	71 (32.4%)	31 (14.2%)	12 (5.5%)	7 (3.2%)	219
Access to the Online Public Access Catalogue	116 (52.0%)	59 (26.5%)	32 (14.4%)	7 (3.1%)	9 (4.0%)	223
An efficient short loan	104 (47.5%)	54 (24.7%)	39 (17.8%)	14 (6.\$%)	8 (3.6%)	219

4.6 Users' perceptions pertaining to the quality of library facilities

The data in Table 4.6 provide library users' perceptions pertaining to the quality of various library facilities and services. The majority of respondents had positive views regarding these aspects. 86.3% of users strongly agreed or agreed that the library offers adequate hours of service, reflecting high satisfaction with its accessibility. Similarly, 80.5% expressed positive perceptions about the library's photocopying facilities. The availability of computer workstations also garnered favorable feedback, with 83.5% of users in agreement, (78.5%) finds the library's printing facilities to be sufficient. The functionality of computers in the library is positively perceived by 85.4% of respondents, while 84% feel that the library space is inspiring for study and learning. Furthermore, 85.6% agree that the library provides a quiet and comfortable environment for individual activities. However, opinions on the sufficiency of space for group learning and study are more divided, with 51.9% strongly agreeing or agreeing, but 17.5% expressing neutrality or disagreement. These findings collectively underscored the library's success in meeting user expectations in many areas, while pointing to potential areas for further enhancement and investigation.

Table 4.6: Perceptions pertaining to library facilities

Perceptions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Count
Adequate hours of service	148 (67.9%)	40 (18.4%)	14 (6.4%)	6 (2.8%)	10 (4.6%)	218
Adequate photocopying facilities	126 (58.6%)	47 (21.9%)	22 (10.2%)	11 (5.1%)	9 (4.2%)	215
Adequate number of computer workstations	128 (60.4%)	49 (23.1%)	23 (10.9%)	8 (3.8%)	4 (1.9%)	212
Adequate printing facilities	117 (54.7%)	51 (23.8%)	27 (12.6%)	7 (3.3%)	12 (5.6%)	214
Computers working well in the library	131 (61.5%)	51 (23.9%)	17 (7.9%)	6 (2.8%)	8 (3.7%)	213
Library space inspiring study and learning	127 (59.6%)	52 (24.4%)	17 (8.0%)	9 (4.2%)	8 (3.8%)	213
Quiet and comfortable space for individual activities	134 (64.4%)	44 (21.2%)	18 (8.7%)	6 (2.9%)	6 (2.9%)	208
Sufficient space for group learning and group study	110 (51.9%)	52 (24.5%)	26 (12.3%)	11 (5.2%)	13 (5.2%)	212

4.7 Users' perceptions on staff service

Table 4.7 presents library users' perceptions of staff services, the data reflects positive feedback regarding various aspects of staff assistance. A substantial 63.7% of respondents strongly agreed that staff are willing to help, with an additional 21.2% in agreement. Furthermore, 79.7% either strongly agreed or agreed that staff provide individual attention, highlighting the personalized assistance offered. The staff's ability to instill confidence is evident, with 58.7% strongly agreeing and 24.8% agreeing, making it a total of 83.5% expressing positive sentiments. Subject librarians also receive praise, as 57.5% strongly agree and 23.2% agreed that they enhance users' research skills. In terms of providing information skills for work or study, 82.7% either strongly agreed or agreed that staff fulfill this role effectively. The staff's caring attitude and understanding of users' needs were acknowledged by 55.6% and 57.8% of respondents, respectively. Lastly, 53.2% strongly agreed, and 27.6% agreed that staff are knowledgeable to answer questions, totaling 80.8% in agreement. These findings collectively indicate that library staff are perceived positively, playing a crucial role in providing support, instilling confidence, and enhancing the overall library experience.

Table 4.7: Perceptions pertaining to staff service

Perceptions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Count
Staff who are willing to help	135 (63.7%)	45 (21.2%)	16 (7.6%)	10 (4.7%)	6 (2.8%)	212
Staff who give individual attention	116 (55.0%)	52 (24.6%)	28 (13.3%)	7 (3.3%)	8 (3.8%)	211
Staff who instill confidence	121 (58.7%)	51 (24.8%)	21 (10.2%)	6 (2.9%)	7 (3.4%)	206
Subject librarians who improve users' research skills	119 (57.5%)	48 (23.2%)	28 (13.5%)	5 (2.4%)	7 (3.4%)	207
Staff who provide information skills needed for work or study	105 (50.5%)	67 (32.2%)	23 (11.1%)	6 (2.9%)	7 (3.4%)	208
Staff who deal with users in a caring way	115 (55.6%)	54 (26.1%)	24 (11.6%)	5 (2.4%)	9 (4.4%)	207
Staff who understand the needs of users	118 (57.8%)	49 (24.0%)	22 (10.8%)	5 (2.5%)	10 (4.9%)	204

Staff who are knowledgeable to answer questions	108 (53.2%)	56 (27.6%)	21 (10.4%)	10 (4.9%)	8 (3.9%)	203
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4.8 Users' general perceptions

In terms of general perceptions about the library's role and services, the data as shown in Table 4.8 reveals several key findings. Firstly, respondents totaling 82.2%, either strongly agreed (59.4%) or agree (22.8%) that they expect the library to help them advance in their academic needs. Similarly, regarding research support, a significant portion of participants, constituting 78.4%, have positive perceptions, with 52.6% strongly agreeing and 25.8% agreeing that the library plays a crucial role in assisting them with research requirements. On the other hand, expectations for the library to address recreational needs are more divided, with 49.1% agreeing, 19.8% being neutral, and 17.8% disagreeing. Lastly, when it comes to staying informed about developments in their fields of study, a substantial number of users, 74.2% in total, hold positive perceptions, with 45.5% strongly agreeing and 28.7% agreeing that the library serves as a valuable resource for this purpose. These statistics underscore the library's significance in supporting academic and research-related endeavors, reflecting the high expectations users have for these aspects of library services.

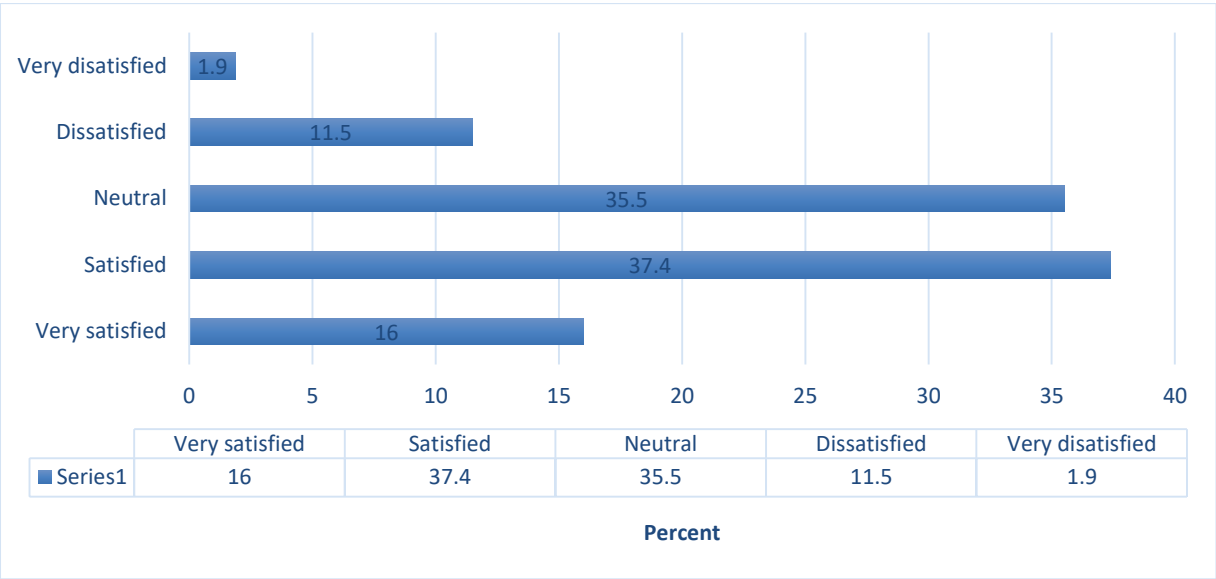
Table 4.8: General perceptions

Perceptions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Count
The library to help advance in academic needs	130 (59.4%)	50 (22.8%)	24 (11.0%)	8 (3.7%)	7 (3.2%)	219
The library to help with research needs	112 (52.6%)	55 (25.8%)	32 (15.0%)	7 (3.3%)	7 (3.3%)	213
The library to help with recreational needs	104 (49.1%)	49 (23.1%)	42 (19.8%)	11 (5.2%)	6 (2.8%)	212
The library to help users keep abreast of developments in their fields of study	97 (45.5%)	60 (28.7%)	38 (17.8%)	9 (4.2%)	9 (4.2%)	213

4.9 User satisfaction level on access to information

The results of the survey on the question assessing users’ satisfaction levels on access to information as shown in Figure 4.9, 53.4% of respondents were satisfied with their access to information, with 16% indicating they were "very satisfied" and 37.4% stating they were "satisfied." However, 35.5% of respondents remained neutral about their library experience, while 11.5% expressed dissatisfaction, and 1.9% reported being "very dissatisfied." These results suggest that the majority of library users are content with the information access provided, but there is room for improvement to address the concerns of those who are neutral or dissatisfied. It is essential to further investigate the specific reasons behind these sentiments and take steps to enhance the overall library services to meet the needs of all users.

Figure 4.9: Users satisfaction pertaining to access to information

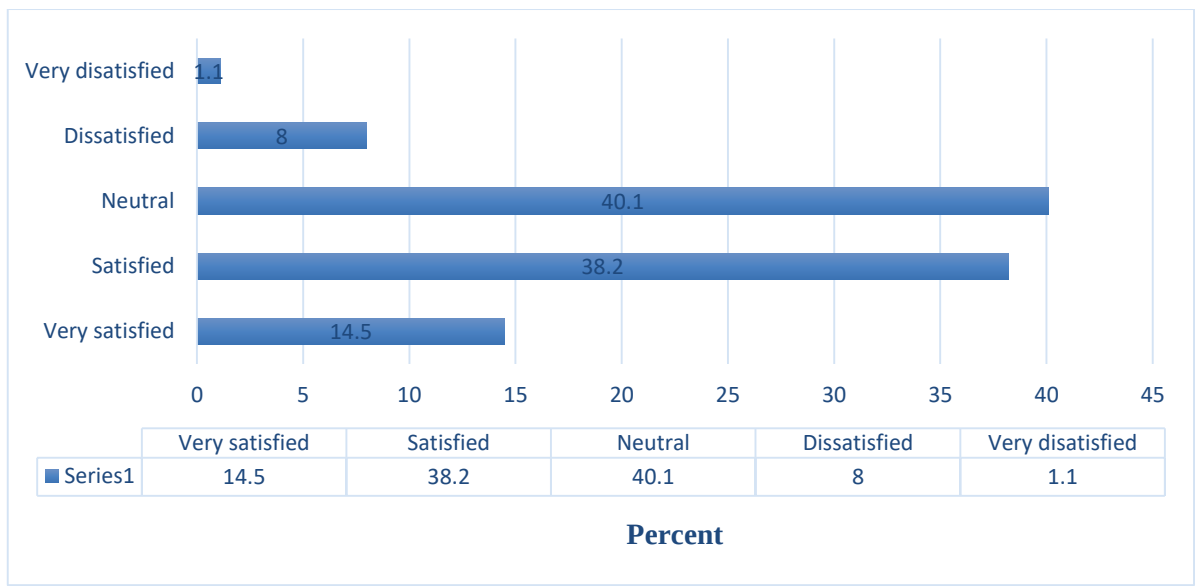


4.10 Users’ satisfaction pertaining to library facilities

The results as shown in Figure 4.10 on the question to assess user satisfaction with library facilities at MU Library revealed that 52.7% of respondents expressed satisfaction, with 38.2% reporting being "Satisfied" and 14.5% stating they were "Very satisfied." A significant portion, 40.1%, remained "Neutral" about their satisfaction with the facilities, while 9.1% expressed dissatisfaction, including 8% who were "Dissatisfied" and 1.1% who were "Very dissatisfied." These findings indicate that the majority of library users have a positive perception of the facilities, though a notable number remain neutral, suggesting potential areas for improvement.

Addressing the specific concerns of the dissatisfied users can contribute to enhancing overall satisfaction with library facilities.

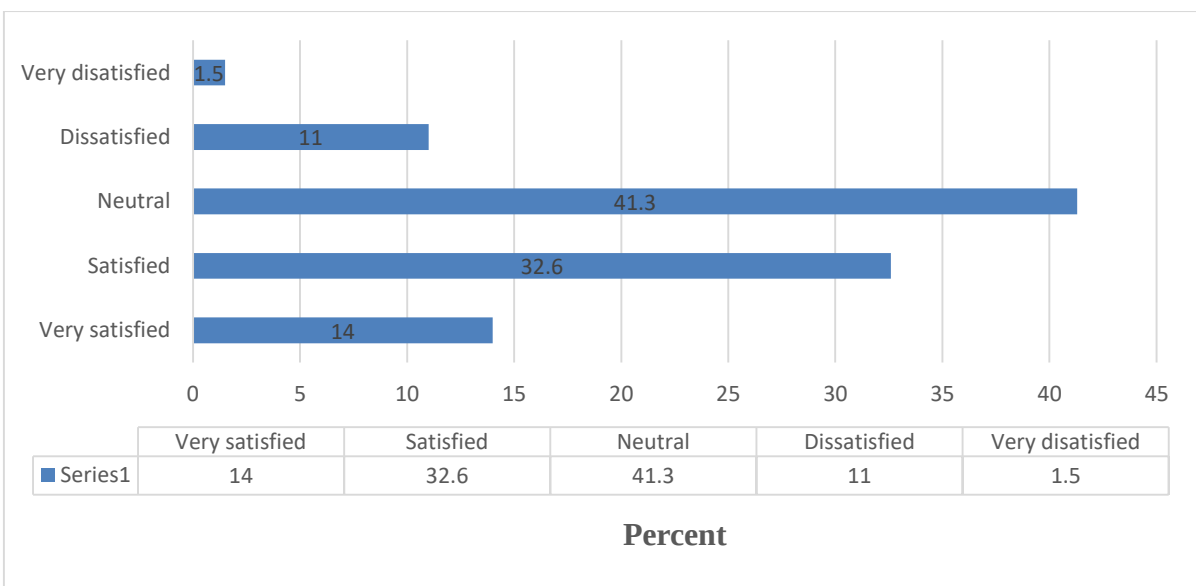
Figure 4.10 Users satisfaction pertaining to library facilities



4.11 Users’ satisfaction pertaining to staff service

In Figure 4.11, the results assessing user satisfaction with staff services offered by MU Library revealed a range of opinions among respondents.

Figure 4.11 Users satisfaction pertaining to staff services

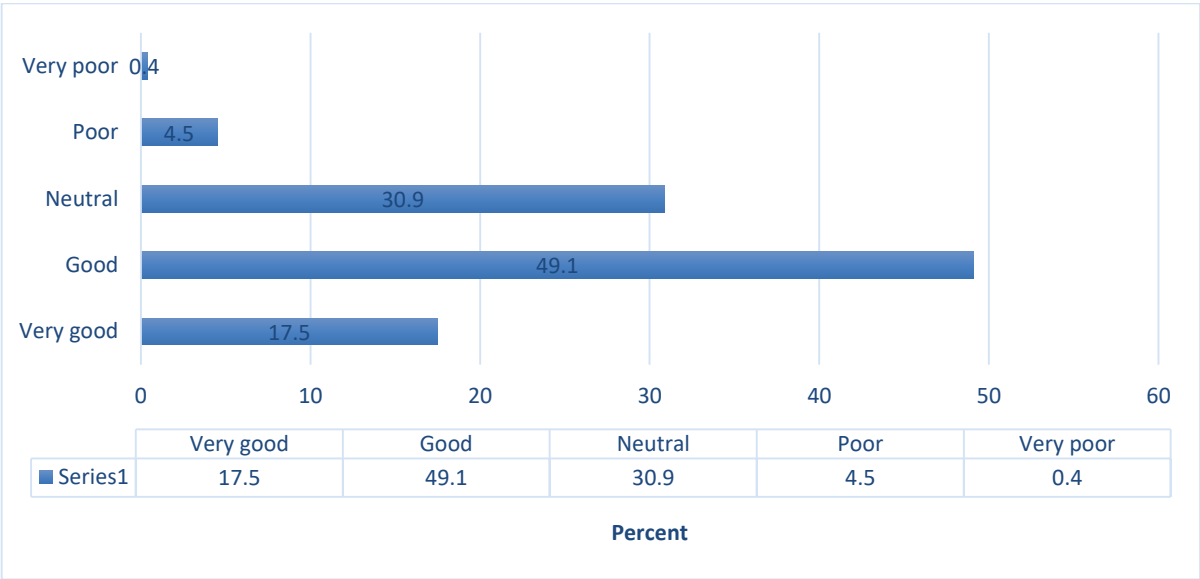


Approximately 46.6% expressed satisfaction, with 14% indicating they were "Very satisfied" and 32.6% reporting they were "Satisfied." A significant portion, 41.3%, remained "Neutral" in their assessment, suggesting a need for further investigation into their specific experiences. On the less positive side, 12.5% expressed dissatisfaction, comprising 11% "Dissatisfied" and 1.5% "Very dissatisfied." While the majority of users have a favorable view of staff services, the large proportion of neutral responses and the minority of dissatisfied users highlight the importance of gathering detailed feedback and addressing specific concerns to enhance the overall quality of staff services at the library.

4.12 Users’ satisfaction pertaining to overall quality of library services

In Figure 4.12, the results assessing the overall quality of services provided by MU Library revealed that a significant majority of respondents, totaling 66.6%, have a favorable view of the library's offerings. Specifically, 17.5% rated the services as "Very good," and 49.1% considered them "Good." However, a substantial portion, 30.9%, remained "Neutral" in their assessment, indicating mixed feelings or a lack of strong opinions. A minority, comprising 5.1% of respondents, expressed dissatisfaction, with 4.5% rating the services as "Poor" and 0.4% as "Very poor." While the library has garnered positive feedback from most users, the concerns of those who are neutral or dissatisfied should be explored and addressed to continuously improve the overall quality of library services.

Figure 4.12 Users satisfaction pertaining to overall quality of library services



4.13 General comments on the performance of the MU Library

The feedback on the open-ended question allowing users to state their comments or suggestions on the performance of Mulungushi University Library in meeting users' needs yielded 63 responses revealing a mix of positive comments and areas for improvement. Users appreciated the library as an inspiring study space and the helpfulness of staff. However, common concerns included the need for better internet and Wi-Fi services, extended operating hours, increased resources like books and equipment, and maintaining a quiet study environment. Users also suggested the addition of a photocopying machine and making better use of the suggestion box for feedback. These suggestions and concerns provide valuable insights for enhancing the overall quality of services and resources provided by the library.

4.14 Responses from interviews

Eight key informants, comprising deans of seven different schools and the Director of the Directorate of Postgraduate Studies at the institution, were interviewed. Among them, four had served in their positions for 1-5 years, while the other four had more than 5 years of experience. Overall, the key informants expressed positive views regarding Mulungushi University Library, highlighting its well-updated collection of information materials that generally meet users' needs. However, they noted challenges such as limited copies of recommended materials and insufficient seating capacity due to the institution's growth.

To ensure alignment with the institution's curriculum, the informants recommended several measures for the library, including providing information literacy sessions facilitated by librarians, collaborating closely with faculty to align resources and services with curricular goals, offering easy access to a wide range of electronic resources, and regularly assessing and evaluating library operations based on user feedback. In terms of policies to enhance user access, the informants suggested extending operating hours, ensuring an adequate number of copies for high-demand materials, establishing interlibrary loan services with partner libraries, and implementing effective communication and outreach strategies to keep users informed about new resources and services.

4.15 Challenges users face

The challenges facing the library in providing user services, according to the informants, encompass limited physical space, staffing and training issues, the need for enhanced outreach and promotion efforts, the overwhelming influx of digital information necessitating information literacy programs, and budget constraints affecting material acquisition.

4.16 Summary

Chapter four presented the results investigation into the effectiveness of Mulungushi University Library in meeting the needs of its users. Through a combination of self-administered questionnaires and interviews with students and key informants, the chapter revealed a diverse range of findings. These included insights into library usage patterns, reasons for non-usage, user expectations spanning access to information, library facilities, and staff services, as well as user perceptions and satisfaction levels. Notably, while many users expressed satisfaction with various aspects of the library, there were also areas for improvement, particularly in addressing the needs of those who remained neutral or dissatisfied. The chapter also incorporated valuable feedback and suggestions from users, offering a comprehensive overview of the library's performance and providing a foundation for enhancing its services and resources to better serve the academic community at Mulungushi University.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

5.0 Overview

Chapter Four presented and analyzed the data gathered during the field study. The primary objective of Chapter Five is to probe into an in-depth interpretation and discussion of the findings. This chapter serves the crucial purpose of elucidating the significance of the findings and offering thoughtful insights into the issues raised in the study. Moreover, it provides an understanding of the research questions that have guided this investigation. As articulated by Bryman (2008:667), the discussions in this chapter are not only intended to reflect on the implications of the findings but also to shed light on how these findings relate to the research questions that have steered the entire research endeavor.

5.1 Quality expectations of library users

The study reveals diverse library usage patterns among students at MULIB. While a significant portion of respondents regularly relied on the library for their academic needs, a notable number reported never used the library. These findings highlight the importance of understanding the reasons behind these usage patterns to ensure the library effectively meets the expectations of all users. The research identifies several challenges faced by non-users of the library. These challenges encompass concerns related to resource availability, the library environment, personal preferences, and time constraints. Users who prefer online resources or have discomfort with crowded places may opt not to use the library. To meet quality expectations, the library needs to address these specific challenges by improving resource availability, enhancing the physical environment, and accommodating diverse preferences. These findings are similar to a research conducted by Thapisa (2012) that aimed at finding out the perceptions of students on the library collection in meeting the curricular of the university at Bugema University library in Uganda that disclosed that students felt that the library collection was not well stocked with up-to-date materials and that some materials were too old and thus needed to be weeded off and replaced with current materials. The research also discovered that this perception among students regarding the library collection had an adverse impact on how often they searched for information materials or consulted the library collection.

User expectations were also explored, revealing a wide range of requirements related to access to information, library facilities, and staff services. Users expect both digital and physical

resources, user-friendly websites, easy access to electronic databases and journals, and extended library hours. Staff members are expected to be helpful, knowledgeable, and capable of providing individual attention. Meeting these expectations is crucial for ensuring that the library effectively meets users' quality expectations. The study shows that while many users expressed satisfaction with library resources, facilities, staff services, and the overall quality of library services, a significant number remained neutral or expressed dissatisfaction. To establish that the library meets quality expectations, it's essential to address the concerns of these neutral and dissatisfied users, gather detailed feedback, and make improvements accordingly.

Input from key informants, including deans and the Director of Postgraduate Studies, provides valuable recommendations. These recommendations include aligning library services with the institution's curriculum, providing information literacy sessions, collaborating closely with faculty, extending library hours, and improving staff training. These insights offer guidance on areas where the library can enhance its services to better meet quality expectations. In conclusion, the findings offer a thorough examination of the challenges faced by library users and their expectations. To ensure that MULIB meets the quality expectations of its users, it is essential for the library to take these findings into account, address specific challenges, and continuously improve its services to support the academic and research needs of its diverse user base effectively.

In the context of the study, the findings suggest that there are instances of both positive and negative disconfirmation among library users. Those who express satisfaction with the library's resources and services likely experienced positive disconfirmation, where their expectations were exceeded. Conversely, those who express neutrality or dissatisfaction may have experienced negative disconfirmation, where their expectations were not met. To ensure that the library effectively meets the quality expectations of its users, it is essential for the library administrators to address the concerns of users who have experienced negative disconfirmation. This may involve improving resource availability, enhancing the library environment, and providing better staff services to bridge the gap between user expectations and perceived performance. By doing so, the library can strive to ensure that a higher proportion of user experience was positive leading to increased satisfaction and user loyalty. These efforts closely relate to key constructs from the SERVQUAL and LIBQUAL models (Chapter one), emphasizing the importance of understanding, managing, and enhancing service quality.

It is noted that people's preferences and experiences with libraries can vary greatly. The responses highlighted the importance of addressing factors like resource availability, library environment, convenience, and personal study preferences to create a more inviting and useful atmosphere at MULIB.

5.2 Users' perceptions of quality library service

The research findings highlight various aspects of users' perceptions of library services at MULIB, covering access to information, library facilities, staff services, and the overall quality of services. In terms of access to information, users generally held positive perceptions. They appreciated the effectiveness of the library's website in locating information, easy access to electronic journals and databases, and the availability of printed books and the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC). These positive perceptions indicate that users value the library's efforts to provide accessible and diverse information resources. These findings are similar to a research by Ugah and Farai (2015) whose aim was to ascertain the availability and accessibility of information resources and the effectiveness of library services at Michael Okpara University of Agriculture in Nigeria, it was established that information resources were very accessible and effectively used due to the integration of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the library and the dedicated librarians.

Library facilities also receive favorable feedback from users. They expect extended service hours, sufficient computer workstations, printing facilities, inspiring study spaces, quiet areas for individual activities, and space for group learning. These perceptions emphasize the importance of creating a conducive and versatile environment within the library that caters to diverse user needs, from individual study to collaborative work. Users' perceptions of staff services are highly positive. They expect library staff to be willing to help, provide individual attention, instill confidence, enhance research skills, offer information skills, and exhibit a caring attitude. These expectations underscore the crucial role of library personnel in providing user-centric assistance and support, enhancing the overall library experience.

Assessing the overall quality of library services, the majority of respondents have a favorable view, considering the services either "Very good" or "Good." However, a significant number of users remain "Neutral" in their assessment, indicating mixed feelings or a lack of strong opinions about the overall service quality. A minority express dissatisfaction, highlighting areas where improvements are necessary to enhance overall user satisfaction. The findings offer a comprehensive understanding of users' perceptions of library services at MULIB. The

findings suggest that while users generally appreciate the library's efforts in various aspects, there is room for improvement, especially in addressing the concerns of those who remain neutral or express dissatisfaction. By actively addressing these perceptions and working to meet user expectations, the library can enhance the quality of its services and provide a more satisfying and supportive environment for its diverse user community.

The study's findings, which include both positive and negative perceptions, underscore the importance of aligning users' expectations with their actual experiences. It is crucial for library administrators to consider the specific areas where users express dissatisfaction or neutrality. Addressing these concerns can lead to positive disconfirmation for a larger portion of users, resulting in increased satisfaction and a more favorable perception of the library's services. Overall, the disconfirmation theory provides a valuable framework for understanding how users' perceptions of library services are shaped by their expectations and actual experiences.

By actively working to meet or exceed user expectations, the library can enhance user satisfaction and deliver a higher quality of service. Through a concerted effort to consistently meet or surpass user expectations, libraries can elevate user satisfaction levels and deliver a notably higher caliber of service, also aligning with key constructs from the SERVQUAL and LIBQUAL models.

5.3 Essential services and facilities for quality library service

One significant aspect highlighted in the findings is the importance of access to information. Users prioritize digital resources and services, such as user-friendly websites for information retrieval, easily accessible electronic journals, and databases. At the same time, there is high demand for traditional resources like printed books and access to the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC). This dual need emphasizes the necessity of providing a balanced collection of both digital and physical resources to cater for diverse user preferences and requirements effectively.

The research also underscores the essential role of library facilities. Extended service hours are identified as crucial for accommodating users at convenient times. Adequate computer workstations and printing facilities are highly valued, emphasizing the integration of technology in modern libraries. Furthermore, the provision of inspiring study spaces, quiet areas for individual work, and collaborative spaces for group learning is deemed essential.

These findings reflect the evolving nature of libraries as multifunctional spaces designed to meet a wide array of user needs.

Library staff play a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of services, as indicated by the findings. Users and informants alike emphasize the importance of staff members who are approachable, provide individualized attention, and instill confidence in users. Subject librarians who enhance research skills and staff who offer information skills are also highly valued. The findings highlight the significance of a caring attitude, an understanding of user needs, and staff members' knowledge ability in addressing user inquiries effectively. Lastly, the research reveals high expectations for the overall quality of library services. Users and informants expect the library to assist them in advancing their academic and research needs, reflecting the library's central role in supporting these endeavors. While users do not hold the same expectations for recreational needs, there is an overall positive perception of the library's contribution to academic and research-related pursuits. These findings are similar to a study by Rath (2006) who carried out a research about the library services and facilities in meeting the curricular of the universities in United Kingdom (UK). The research indicated that students constantly made use of the library and other library services like internet (WiFi) to meet their information needs. The research also disclosed that the library information resources met the curricular of the universities because the libraries provided updated materials that met information needs of its users. With regards to the library collection, the research revealed that students constantly made use of books in the collection and borrowed to read from outside the library.

The findings provide a comprehensive overview of the services and facilities deemed essential for quality library services at MULIB. These findings serve as valuable guidance for library administrators and decision-makers, helping them prioritize areas for improvement and investment to meet user expectations and enhance the overall quality of library services. By addressing these essential components, the library can better fulfill its mission of supporting the academic success of its user community. Incorporating the disconfirmation theory into the analysis of essential library services and facilities stresses the importance of aligning user expectations with actual service delivery. By consistently meeting and, when possible, exceeding these expectations, the library can enhance user satisfaction and maintain a positive perception of its services, ultimately contributing to its mission of supporting academic success and research excellence.

Integrating the disconfirmation theory into the evaluation of crucial library services and facilities harmonizes with fundamental concepts found within the SERVQUAL and LIBQUAL models. By placing a strong emphasis on user expectations, the perception of service quality, the level of information control, the role of the library as a physical space, and the importance of personalization, libraries can consistently meet or even surpass user expectations. This approach cultivates positive disconfirmation, ultimately resulting in elevated user satisfaction. As a consequence, the library effectively fulfills its mission of bolstering academic achievements and advancing research excellence.

5.4 Challenges library users faced in using the library collection

One of the prominent findings highlighted in the chapter is the diverse range of challenges faced by library users. These challenges encompass issues related to resource availability, the library environment, personal preferences, distance and online learning, time constraints, alternative study methods, ineffective library experiences, and miscellaneous factors. Among these, resource availability emerges as a significant concern, with users citing limited and outdated books, a scarcity of required textbooks, and difficulties in finding specific materials. These issues reflect the library's collection and acquisition challenges that need to be addressed to better support users' academic needs.

The library environment is another critical aspect that impacts user experience. Overcrowding and noise in the library, as well as a lack of conducive conditions for studying, were identified as challenges. Additionally, the limited operating hours of the library and restrictions on drinks and seating discomfort were mentioned as unfavorable aspects of the library environment. These findings highlight the importance of creating a comfortable and user-friendly space within the library to facilitate effective learning and research.

Personal preferences also play a role in the challenges faced by library users. Some individuals prefer studying in their own rooms due to various reasons, including discomfort with crowded places or personal preferences. These personal preferences underline the need for libraries to consider diverse user needs and provide flexible options for studying and accessing resources. Ensuring that online resources are easily accessible and user-friendly is crucial for supporting these students effectively. Time constraints were cited as a challenge by students who have limited time for library visits. This emphasizes the need for libraries to offer flexible operating hours and services to accommodate the diverse schedules of their users.

Alternative study methods, such as relying on online resources and class notes from lecturers, were mentioned by some users, indicating that they may not see the library as their primary information source. Libraries should consider ways to demonstrate their value and complement these alternative methods effectively. Ineffective library experiences, including difficulties in finding needed materials and unhelpful librarians, were also reported by some users. These issues point to the importance of staff training, resource organization, and user support to enhance the overall library experience. Miscellaneous factors like personal preferences for web-based information or the perception that the library is too comfortable (leading to distraction) were mentioned as challenges. These factors highlight the need for libraries to actively engage with their users, understand their preferences, and continuously improve services to meet their evolving needs.

In general, the findings provided a comprehensive overview of the challenges that library users faced when using the library resources and services at MULIB. These findings serve as critical feedback for library administrators, helping them identify areas for improvement and develop strategies to address these challenges. By addressing these obstacles, the library can enhance its usability and better support the academic success of its user community.

The diverse challenges faced by library users at MULIB can result in various disconfirmation outcomes, including negative, neutral, or positive disconfirmation. It is essential for the library to actively address these challenges, align its services with user expectations, and continually improve its offerings to ensure that users' experiences are consistently positive. By doing so, the library can enhance user satisfaction and better fulfill its role in supporting academic success.

Addressing the challenges faced by library users at MULIB and aligning library services with their expectations relate to various constructs from the SERVQUAL and LIBQUAL models. These models provide a structured framework for assessing and improving service quality in libraries, ensuring that users' experiences are consistently positive and that the library fulfills its role in supporting academic success. These findings are similar to a study by Ukonuet's (2012) who conducted a study in Nigeria which explored the challenges faced by undergraduate students at the University of Nigeria when using the digital library. In this study, several issues were identified. The research revealed that students encountered various difficulties, including a lack of sufficient staff or librarians to assist them in searching for information resources within the digital library collection. Additionally, the study highlighted the absence of

awareness programs aimed at teaching students how to effectively search for materials, leading to challenges in accessing the digital resources despite the library having a vast collection that could greatly assist students in meeting their information needs.

These findings are similar to a research done by Ukonuet's (2012) which was conducted in Nigeria, the study explored the challenges faced by undergraduate students at the University of Nigeria, and several issues were identified. The research revealed that students encountered various difficulties, including a lack of sufficient staff or librarians to assist them in searching for information resources within the digital library collection and the library being stocked with outdated materials. Additionally, the study highlighted the absence of awareness programs that aimed at teaching students how to effectively search for materials.

5.5 Summary

Chapter Five presented an analysis and discussion of the research findings from the field study conducted at MULIB. This chapter aimed to elucidate the significance of the findings and provide insights into various aspects of library services and user experiences. It began by restating the research objectives and questions, encompassing user satisfaction, perceptions of library services, essential service components, and user challenges. The chapter looked at: the quality expectations of library users, users' perceptions of library service quality, essential services and facilities, and the challenges faced by library users. The disconfirmation theory was used to highlight the importance of aligning user expectations with actual experiences to enhance user satisfaction. Overall, Chapter Five provided an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of library services at MULIB, emphasizing the need for continuous improvement and user-centric approaches to support academic success and research excellence while connecting these findings to established service quality models such as SERVQUAL and LIBQUAL.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Overview

Chapter Five provided interpretations and discussions of the findings of the study. Drawing from the interpretations and discussions in Chapter Five, Chapter Six presents conclusions and gives recommendations for consideration and possible future action by relevant authorities, the library fraternity and other stakeholders. The chapter further identifies areas for further research. Conclusions and recommendations are made in order to relate the findings and discussions to the research questions.

6.1 Conclusions

From the interpretations and discussions provided in Chapter Four, several key conclusions were drawn as explained. User expectations is one key factor, the study revealed that library users at MULIB had diverse expectations and preferences. Some users were satisfied with the library's services, while others express neutrality or dissatisfaction, highlighting the need for targeted improvements. In addition, resource availability and variety is very important to users, users prioritize access to a wide range of resources, both digital and physical. Balancing the provision of digital databases and journals with traditional resources like printed books is essential to meet diverse user needs. It is also important to facility enhancement. Extending library hours, providing ample computer workstations, creating inspiring study spaces, and offering both quiet and collaborative areas are crucial for enhancing the library's physical environment.

6.2 Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn from the research findings, the following recommendations are made to improve library services at MULIB:

1. Resource enhancement

Invest in expanding and updating the library's collection to ensure a more comprehensive and up-to-date range of resources, including both physical and digital materials in order to improve user satisfaction.

2. Facility improvements

Extend library hours to accommodate users with varying schedules. Enhance the physical environment by providing additional computer workstations, comfortable study spaces, and areas suitable for group collaboration.

3. Staff training

Conduct regular training for library staff to enhance their knowledge and customer service skills. Emphasize the importance of being approachable and providing individualized assistance to users.

4. User feedback mechanism

Establish a robust system for gathering user feedback and suggestions. Actively engage with users to understand their needs and preferences better.

5. Communication and outreach

Promote library services effectively, ensuring that users are aware of the resources and assistance available. Provide information literacy sessions to enhance users' research skills.

6. Continuous improvement

Implement a culture of continuous improvement within the library. Regularly review and update services and facilities based on user feedback and changing needs.

7. Technology Integration

Embrace technology to enhance user experiences. Ensure that the library's online presence, including the website and electronic databases, is user-friendly and easily accessible.

8. User-Centric Approach

Place users at the center of decision-making processes. Consider their preferences and expectations when planning and implementing changes in library services.

It is anticipated that by implementing these recommendations, MULIB can enhance its library services, align them more closely with user expectations, and create a more satisfying and supportive environment for its diverse user community. This, in turn, will contribute to the library's mission of supporting academic success and research excellence at the institution.

6.3 Areas for further research

Building upon the research conducted in this study, there are several areas for further research that can provide valuable insights into library services and user experiences. One area that this study recommends is investigating the specific needs and challenges of online learners in accessing library resources and support. This area is crucial for ensuring equitable access to services in an increasingly virtual educational environment. Additionally, conducting longitudinal studies to quantify the impact of library services on student success metrics and graduation rates can provide valuable insights that can enable researchers to advocate for continued investment in libraries as vital contributors to academic achievement. These research areas can contribute to the ongoing development and improvement of library services, ensuring that they remain relevant and effective in meeting the evolving needs of users in the digital age. Researchers and practitioners in library and information science can explore these topics to advance the field and enhance the user experience in academic and research libraries.

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APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LIBRARY USERS ADAPTED FROM NCWANE (2016)

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

Dear Respondents,

I'm a Masters student doing Master's Degree in Library and Information Science in the School of Education at the University of Zambia. I'm carrying out a research on the topic, "*Performance assessment of Mulungushi University Library in meeting users' needs*". You have been randomly selected to participate in this research. I request you to help me with relevant and accurate information concerning the topic.

Be assured that the information provided shall be treated with high level of confidentiality and for academic purposes only.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Please do not write your name on this questionnaire.
- Tick(✓) the answer of your choice provided
- Write your response where you are required to do so

Background information

1.1 Indicate your gender

Male ☐

Female ☐

1.2 Please indicate your age

16-20 ☐

21-25 ☐

26-30 ☐

31-35 ☐

36 and above ☐

1.3 Please select your school

Agriculture and Natural Resources	☐
Business Studies	☐
Education	☐
Medicine and Health Sciences	☐
Natural and Applied Sciences	☐
Science, Engineering and Technology	☐
Social Sciences	☐

1.4 How often do you use the resources in the library?

Daily	☐
Weekly	☐
Monthly	☐
Quarterly	☐
Never	☐

1.5 If your answer to 1.5 is never, please give a reason/s

.....

.....

.....

.....

2. Please put a tick [✓] in the table below the number that best describes your “EXPECTATIONS” (Expectations refer to what you personally want) of the service in the library. 1 = Strongly Agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Disagree; 5 = Strongly Disagree

2.1 Access to information

	I expect the library to provide...	1	2	3	4	5
2.1.1	A website which enables me to locate information on my own					
2.1.2	Electronic journals that are easily accessible					
2.1.3	Adequate printed library materials (books)					
2.1.4	Easy access to electronic database					
2.1.5	An adequate print journal (periodical collection)					

2.1.6	An efficient Interlibrary-loans service (books from other libraries)					
2.1.7	Access to the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC)					
2.1.8	An efficient short loan (Reserve service)					

2.2 Library facilities

	I expect...	1	2	3	4	5
2.2.1	Adequate hours of service					
2.2.2	Adequate photocopying facilities					
2.2.3	An adequate number of computer workstations					
2.2.4	Adequate printing facilities					
2.2.5	Computers that work well in the library					
2.2.6	Library space which inspires study and learning					
2.2.7	Quiet and comfortable space for individual activities					
2.2.8	Sufficient space for group learning and group study					

2.3 Staff service

	I expect the library to provide...	1	2	3	4	5
2.3.1	Staff who are willing to help users					
2.3.2	Staff who give users individual attention					
2.3.3	Staff who instil confidence in users					
2.3.4	Subject librarian who improve users' research skills					
2.3.5	Staff who provide users with the information skills needed for work or study					
2.3.6	Staff who deal with users in a caring way					
2.3.7	Staff who understand the needs of users					
2.3.8	Staff who are knowledgeable to answer users' questions					

2.4 General

	The library...	1	2	3	4	5
2.4.1	Helps me to advance in my academic field					
2.4.2	Helps me with my research needs					
2.4.3	Helps me with my teaching needs					
2.4.4	Helps me stay abreast of developments in my field(s) of interest					

3. Please put a tick [✓] in the table below the number that best describes your “PERCEPTIONS” (your actual experiences) of the services the library currently provides. 1 = Strongly Agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Disagree; 5 = Strongly Disagree

3.1 Access to information

	I expect the library to provide...	1	2	3	4	5
3.1.1	A website which enables me to locate information on my own					
3.1.2	Electronic journals that are easily accessible					
3.1.3	Adequate printed library materials (books)					

3.1.4	Easy access to electronic database					
3.1.5	An adequate print journal (periodical collection					
3.1.6	An efficient Interlibrary-loans service (books from other libraries)					
3.1.7	Access to the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC)					
3.1.8	An efficient short loan (Reserve service)					

3.2 Library facilities

	I expect...	1	2	3	4	5
3.2.1	Adequate hours of service					
3.2.2	Adequate photocopying facilities					
3.2.3	An adequate number of computer workstations					
3.2.4	Adequate printing facilities					
3.2.5	Computers that work well in the library					
3.2.6	Library space which inspires study and learning					
3.2.7	Quiet and comfortable space for individual activities					
3.2.8	Sufficient space for group learning and group study					

3.3 Staff service

	I expect the library to provide...	1	2	3	4	5
3.3.1	Staff who are willing to help users					
3.3.2	Staff who give users individual attention					
3.3.3	Staff who instil confidence in users					
3.3.4	Subject librarian who improve users' research skills					
3.3.5	Staff who provide users with the information skills needed for work or study					
3.3.6	Staff who deal with users in a caring way					
3.3.7	Staff who understand the needs of users					
3.3.8	Staff who are knowledgeable to answer users' questions					

3.4 General

	The library...	1	2	3	4	5
3.4.1	Helps me to advance in my academic field					
3.4.2	Helps me with my research needs					
3.4.3	Helps me with my teaching needs					
3.4.4	Helps me stay abreast of developments in my field(s) of interest					

4. User satisfaction

Please put a tick [✓] in ONE box only.

4.1 In general, how satisfied are you with access to information?

Very satisfied ☐

Satisfied	☐
Neutral	☐
Dissatisfied	☐
Very dissatisfied	☐

4.2 In general, how satisfied are you with the library facilities?

Very satisfied	☐
Satisfied	☐
Neutral	☐
Dissatisfied	☐
Very dissatisfied	☐

4.3 In general, how satisfied are you with the staff services offered by the library?

Very satisfied	☐
Satisfied	☐
Neutral	☐
Dissatisfied	☐
Very dissatisfied	☐

5. How would you rate the overall quality of the services provided by the library?

Put a tick [√] in ONE box only.

Very good	☐
Good	☐
Neutral	☐
Poor	☐
Very Poor	☐

6. If you have any further comments and/or suggestions to make on the performance of Mulungushi University Library in meeting users’ needs please do so.

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for your participation.

APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS

**TOPIC: PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF MULUNGUSHI UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY IN MEETING USERS NEEDS**

Date of interview:

Name of School:

1. What is your position held in the institution?
.....
2. How many years of service have you served in the above position?
.....
3. What is your view on Mulungushi University Library collection?
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
4. Do you think the library collection is adequate enough in meeting users' needs? Justify your answer.
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
5. Do the library resources and services meet the university curricula? If yes, justify.
.....
.....
.....
.....

-
-
-
6. What measures has the Library put in place to ensure that they meet the curricula of the institution?
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
7. What policies has the library put in place to ensure that each user has easy access to the Library resources and services?
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
8. What challenges does the library face in providing user services?
-
-
-
-
-
-

APPENDIX 3



MULUNGUSHI UNIVERSITY REGISTRAR'S OFFICE

Great North Road Campus,
P. O. Box 80415,
Kabwe. ZAMBIA.
TEL: +260 5 228003

October 31, 2022

Kelly Sinzumwa
C/o Mulungushi University
P.O Box 80415
KABWE

**RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH AT MULUNGUSHI
UNIVERSITY LIBRARY - YOURSELF**

Reference is made to your undated letter in which you sought permission to conduct an academic research at Mulungushi University (MU) library on Performance Assessment of MU library in meeting users' needs.

I wish to inform you that permission has been granted for you to conduct the said research.

Gubula C. Siaciti
REGISTRAR

Copy: Vice-Chancellor
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Chief Librarian
Deputy Registrar - Administration and Establishment



THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

REF NUMBER: 2022-NOV-017

PROGRAMME (MASTERS/PHD): MASTER IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

STUDY TITLE: PERFORMANCE ASSESSEMENT OF MULUNGUSHI UNIVERSITY LIBRARY IN MEETING USER NEEDS

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI): KELLY SINZUMWA

OTHER INVESTIGATORS: N/A

SUPERVISOR: PROF AKAKANDELWA AKAKANDELWA

1. Title

The title is clear and but the PI should consider adding the period which is being covered in the assessment.

2. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The research problem is clear.

3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The PI can include the specific time frame of interest in the study to the purpose of the study so that the reader is not given the impression that the assessment covers the period from the time the library was opened. If that is the case, this should be clearly stated.

4. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives are clear.

5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The first research question will require refinement so that it does not warrant a yes or no kind of response.

6. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of the study is clear.

7. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The PI can include an explanation on how the potential limitations of the study will be addressed to ensure the success of the study.

8. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This is clear.

9. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This is clear and well elaborated.

10. LITERATURE REVIEW

It is clear and comprehensive.

11. METHODOLOGY

(i) Research paradigm and design

The PI is encouraged to include the research paradigm in which the study is situated. The type of case study being used can also be explained.

(ii) Sample and sampling procedure

The sections are clear.

(iii) Research Collection Methods

This is clear.

(iv) Data analysis

The practical steps to be used in the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data need to be explained.

(v) Quality control

The PI should consider addressing this aspect.

12. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The section is clear.

13. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The instruments are clear.

14. VERDICT

Based on the foregoing observations and suggestions, the protocol is recommended for approval subject to moderate corrections.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'N. Mwale', is written in a cursive style.

NAME OF REVIEWER: Nelly Mwale (PhD)

22nd December 2022



THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

Great East Road Campus | P.O. Box 32379 | Lusaka10101 | Tel: +260-211-290 258/291 777 Fax: (+260)-211-290 258/253 952 | E-mail: director.drgs@unza.zm | Website: www.unza.zm

APPROVAL OF STUDY

IORG No. 0005376
HSSREC IRB No. 00006464

30th March, 2023,

REF NO. HSSREC:-2022- NOV- 017

Mr. Kelly Sinzumwa
School of Education,
P.O.BOX, 32379,
LUSAKA.

Dear, Mr. Sinzumwa,

RE: “PERFORMANCE ASSESSEMNT OF MULUNGUSHI UNIVERSITY LIBRARY IN MEETING USER NEEDS”

Reference is made to your submission of the protocol captioned above. The HSSREC resolved to approve this study and your participation as Principal Investigator for a period of one year.

REVIEW TYPE	ORDINARY REVIEW	APPROVAL NO. HSSREC:-2022- NOV-017
Approval and Expiry Date	Approval Date: 30 th March, 2023	Expiry Date: 29 th March, 2024
Protocol Version and Date	Version - Nil.	29 th March, 2024
Information Sheet, Consent Forms and Dates	☐ English.	To be provided
Consent form ID and Date	Version - Nil	To be provided
Recruitment Materials	Nil	Nil
Other Study Documents	Questionnaire.	
Number of Participants Approved for Study		

Specific conditions will apply to this approval. As Principal Investigator it is your responsibility to ensure that the contents of this letter are adhered to. If these are not adhered to, the approval may be suspended. Should the study be suspended, study sponsors and other regulatory authorities will be informed.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

- No participant may be involved in any study procedure prior to the study approval or after the expiration date.
- All unanticipated or Serious Adverse Events (SAEs) must be reported to HSSREC within 5 days.
- All protocol modifications must be approved by HSSREC prior to implementation unless they are intended to reduce risk (but must still be reported for approval). Modifications will include any change of investigator/s or site address.
- All protocol deviations must be reported to HSSREC within 5 working days.
- All recruitment materials must be approved by HSSREC prior to being used.
- Principal investigators are responsible for initiating Continuing Review proceedings. HSSREC will only approve a study for a period of 12 months.
- It is the responsibility of the PI to renew his/her ethics approval through a renewal application to HSSREC.
- Where the PI desires to extend the study after expiry of the study period, documents for study extension must be received by HSSREC at least 30 days before the expiry date. This is for the purpose of facilitating the review process. Documents received within 30 days after expiry will be labelled “late submissions” and will incur a penalty fee of K500.00. No study shall be renewed whose documents are submitted for renewal 30 days after expiry of the certificate.
- Every 6 (six) months a progress report form supplied by The University of Zambia Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee as an IRB must be filled in and submitted to us. There is a penalty of K500.00 for failure to submit the report.
- When closing a project, the PI is responsible for notifying, in writing or using the Research Ethics and Management Online (REMO), both HSSREC and the National Health Research Authority (NHRA) when ethics certification is no longer required for a project.
- In order to close an approved study, a Closing Report must be submitted in writing or through the REMO system. A Closing Report should be filed when data collection has ended and the study team will no longer be using human participants or animals or secondary data or have any direct or indirect contact with the research participants or animals for the study.
- Filing a closing report (rather than just letting your approval lapse) is important as it assists HSSREC in efficiently tracking and reporting on projects. Note that some funding agencies and sponsors require a notice of closure from the IRB which had approved the study and can only be generated after the Closing Report has been filed.
- A reprint of this letter shall be done at a fee.

- All protocol modifications must be approved by HSSREC by way of an application for an amendment prior to implementation unless they are intended to reduce risk (but must still be reported for approval). Modifications will include any change of investigator/s or site address or methodology and methods. Many modifications entail minimal risk adjustments to a protocol and/or consent form and can be made on an Expedited basis (via the IRB Chair). Some examples are: format changes, correcting spelling errors, adding key personnel, minor changes to questionnaires, recruiting and changes, and so forth. Other, more substantive changes, especially those that may alter the risk-benefit ratio, may require Full Board review. In all cases, except where noted above regarding subject safety, any changes to any protocol document or procedure must first be approved by HSSREC before they can be implemented.

Should you have any questions regarding anything indicated in this letter, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us at the above indicated address.

On behalf of HSSREC, we would like to wish you all the success as you carry out your study.

Yours faithfully,



Dr. J. I. Ziwa

DR. J. I. Ziwa

**ACTING CHAIRPERSON
THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA HUMANITIES AND
SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE - IRB**

CC: Director, Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies
Assistant Director (Research), Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies
Assistant Registrar (Research), Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies