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Acquisition and Use of Library Resources in a University of Technology: A Statistical Record Assessment

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Introduction

Many organizations rely on data-driven decisions to evaluate and improve. Adebowale (2006), Ogundipe, Lucas & Sanni (2005) defined data as raw facts, unassembled and frequently unrelated symbols which are the building blocks of information. Tanur, Mosteller and Peters (1989) as quoted by Adetoro (2008) also corroborated and suggested that data is a guide to the unknown. Adamu S & Johnson (2006) emphasized that statistics is the aspect of decision making which has to do with numerical information. According to Adetoro (2008), the library relies on numerical data to understand the present and make corrections and improvements in the future. In many libraries all over the world, statistics which is an important aspect of modern life are compiled on daily, weekly, monthly and annual basis through recording information about activities and services which the library provides for its users. Library statistics include: traffic, registered users, materials consulted, and materials loaned which Adetoro (2008) quoted Sokoya (2002), describes as derived records of library use.

Bells University of Technology

The Bells University of Technology, Ota is the first private University of Technology in Nigeria. It was established by the Bells Education Foundation and obtained its operational license on 9th June, 2005. In addition to teaching, learning and research, the University has "training" as a mission, so that its products can go from "Lab to Land." The University is committed to the development and transformation of the society through environmental friendly technology and other innovations

The University Library

The University Library has a collection of over 15,000 volumes of current and relevant books in its core areas as well as related programmes. It equally makes provision for recreational reading materials, study kits, general knowledge materials, with about 600 Journal titles in about 1,500 volumes. The library is connected to the Internet with the electronic section having over 70 computers and accessories with open access to web based and non web based electronic resources of over 50,000 titles and subscriptions to

more than 600 print journal titles, local and foreign, as well as national newspapers and magazines.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to analyze the acquisition and use of library books and journals for the last five years in a University of Technology

The specific objectives are:

- To determine the number of books and journals acquired during the period under study.
- To ascertain the number of books and journals consulted by different categories of users during the period under study.
- To assess traffic levels and the number of registered users during the period under study.
- To determine the number of loans issued to users during the period under study.

The Research Problem

This study was necessitated by the need for BELLSTECH library to evaluate its collections with the aim of identifying its weaknesses and make amendments to adjust to the challenges of its two new colleges of Environmental Sciences and Engineering Sciences. The library books and journals collection at BELLSTECH library are presumed to be adequate to cope with the population of students and Staff, but may be inadequate for the new colleges.

Literature Review

Spiegel, Murray & Stephen (1998) defined Statistics as the scientific method for collecting, organizing, summarizing, presenting and analyzing data as well as drawing valid conclusions and making reasonable decisions on the basis of such analysis. This is usually done in order to minimize uncertainty. Adebowale (2006), Ogundipe, Lucas & Sanni (2005) remarked that data are the input raw materials from which information is produced and they are found everywhere, and no matter what your line of work is, you will make decisions that involve data. Library activities can be expressed in statistical form, which is why librarians have compiled

statistics to evaluate the library. Statistics according to Hameed (2004) as quoted by Adetoro (2008) are an effective tool for management appraisal of a library, while comparing statistics from several years can also be useful in planning (Kumar, 2001).

Thus, Library effectiveness measures are concerned with determining how well the library meets the needs of its users, relative to the library goals and objectives Nwalo (2001)

Through the use of compiled daily, weekly, and monthly acquisitions and statistics. According to Nwalo (2001), one of the best ways to determine library effectiveness is the use of library statistics, while Amusa (2008) observes that the standard of libraries may be measured and assessed by its services and is such the basis for the establishment of library standards. The most common among these are statistics on size of collection, volumes added annually, circulation, reference questions answered and unanswered, interlibrary loan requests and expenditure. The documentation of facts about individual library's history, resources, clientele, organization, administration, and management also has relevance in the conduct of research by librarians. This, in the view of Onye (1998) as quoted by Adetoro (2008), will lay the foundation for further critical interpretations and solutions to problems for the overall improvement of library operations and services.

Methodology

The descriptive survey design was used for the study. Data was obtained from the library

statistics which had been compiled over a five year period covering 2005/2006 – 2009/10, that is from the inception of the library till date. The data were compiled and collated by the staff in the readers' services department, which includes circulation, security Desk and Serials. The data were analyzed using frequencies, bar charts, and percentages.

Results

Table 1; Acquired Books and Journals:

BOOKS						JOURNALS				
SESSION	SIZE OF COLLECTION	PURCHASE		GIFTS		SIZE OF COLLECTION	PURCHASE		GIFTS	
		TITLE	VOLUME	TITLE	VOLUME		QTY.	TITLE	VOLUME	TITLE
2005/06	4815	221	681	431	4134	17	-	-	17	17
2006/07	6185	321	939	431	431	296	52	84	106	212
2007/08	8096	466	1176	43	735	360	75	90	101	270
2008/09	14899	234	6747	29	56	386	105	294	31	92
2009/10	15329	110	382	15	48	416	90	180	32	236
TOTAL	15329				5404	1475	322	648	223	827

The number of books and journals both in titles and Volumes increased during the period under study, at a very high rate of increase. A total of 15,329 volumes of books were added to stock during the period under study, of which about thirty-five percentage were gifts. Journals added for the five year period were 454 titles or 1,475 volumes,

Table 2: Consulted Books and Journals

SESSION	BOOKS		JOURNALS	
	BOOK TITLES	BOOK VOLUMES	JOURNAL TITLES	JOURNAL VOLUMES
2005/06	610	903	2	5
2006/07	2018	2318	66	148
2007/08	3847	4998	89	287
2008/09	5836	8034	125	321
2009/10	9775	10564	58	125

The total number of consulted books during the period under study rose sharply and reached its peak during the 2009/2010 academic session, with 10,564 books, while the consulted journals also rose gradually reaching its peak in 2008/2009 session with 321 journals

Table 3: Readers Attendance and Registered Users

SESSION	READERS' ATTENDANCE		REGISTERED USERS	
	STAFF	STUDENTS	STAFF	STUDENTS
2005/06	480	650	48	42
2006/07	1240	11752	35	102
2007/08	2460	15078	44	307
2008/09	4610	18287	48	166
2009/10	5290	20089	52	436
			227	1053

The table 3 above, shows that the readers' attendance and the number of registered users

increased gradually during the period under study. In 2005/06, library visits by students was 650, and by 2009/10 session it had risen to 20089. Staff attendance rose from 480 in 2005/06 to 5290 in 2009/2010. User's registration expectedly increased generally during the period under study as the University population increases.. Registered students in 2005/06 totaled 42. By 2009/10; the number of registered students was 1053. Registered staff as at 2005/06 was 48, while 227 staff had registered during 2009/10 out of the total population of 262. This constitutes about eighty-seven percentage (87%) of total staff

Table 4: Loans to Users

SESSION	STAFF	STUDENTS
2005/06	86	507
2006/07	103	3487
2007/08	219	1713
2008/09	328	3957
2009/10	124	1020

Loans to undergraduate students were initially low during 2005/2006, because the University had just taken off as a university of Technology 2005. As the population of students rose, the number of loans to students jumped from a mere 507 in 2005/06 to 3,487 loans in 2006/2007 session. Loans to students were reduced in 2007/2008 but thereafter witnessed a steady increase, reaching its highest point in the 2008/2009 session with 3957 loans. The unusual reduction in loan during the 2009/10 is due to the fact that the university is its first quarter of the session at the time of this study. The trends of Loans to staff have been relatively low as shown on fig. above. Bells University has staff strength of about 265 and the loans to staff reached its peak of 328 during the 2008/09 session.

Summary of Findings

- The total book collection of 15,329 volumes and journals titles of 545 is relatively adequate for the total population of 1053 students and 262 staff members of the University,
- A total of 15,329 volumes and 545 journal title were added to the collection during the five year period.
- Books and journals consulted in the library by all categories of users had a steady increase during the five-year period.
- Reader's attendance for all categories of users increased gradually during the period.
- The highest number of registered students was recorded in 2009/2010 academic session while the highest number of staff (52) was registered in 2009/10.
- Loans issued to students totaled 10,684 while 1,228 loans went to staff.

Recommendations

In view of the findings, it is therefore recommended that:

- The creation of the colleges of Engineering and Environmental Sciences should propel the library into creating a proactive acquisition policy and the purchase of relevant books and journals in appreciable quantity and quality.
- There is the need for an improved and comprehensive user education programme for staff and new students as well as members of staff of the university.
- Priority should be given to the purchase of journals (local and international) and users must be promptly informed of the presence of these journals.
- There is the need for further investigation into the analysis of loans and consulted materials by subject and gender.
- The reasons for low patronage by staff should also be investigated'

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[CONTENTS](#)

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