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# UTILIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OF SERIAL PUBLICATIONS AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF KWARA STATE UNIVERSITY, MALETE .NIGERIAN

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UTILIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OF SERIAL PUBLICATIONS AMONG  
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF KWARA STATE UNIVERSITY, MALETE .NIGERIAN  
BY

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigates serials management in kwara state university library, determines the extent to which serials are been accessed and used and appraises the influence of it availability, accessibility and use of serials on undergraduates academic performance. Questionnaire administration method was adopted to accumulate data for the study. Combinations of both open-ended and closed-form types of questions were used. The study reveals that most undergraduates' students in Kwara State University consult serials for leisure and the few that consults serials either use serials in stock. Newspaper magazines were the major forms of serials used by the students in KWASU with Newspapers being the more utilized. University libraries and Internet were the major sources of serials used by the students. The result also reports that most of students from the University consult serials for informative and recreational purpose.

### Introduction

Serial is a publication in print, non-print or electronic format issued in successive parts and intended to be continued regularly or irregularly. Serials are of various kinds and include journals, magazines, newspapers, newsletters, accessions, reports, proceedings and transactions of societies and other periodicals like abstracts and indexes. Serials are of great value because they carry latest, current, up-to-date and valuable information. Serials constitute a major part of all university libraries' collections. The goal of library services is generating, collecting, synthesizing and disseminating up-to-date, accurate, unbiased and relevant information available in serials, books and non-book formats which can be stored and retrieved whenever needed. Therefore, it is the duty of the university libraries and librarians to provide serials and services for students and other users for research activities. Universities are involved in teaching, research and publication. One of the preoccupations of any university is dissemination of information to it students. The success of every library's programme, therefore, could be easily measured in terms of its efforts in acquiring and managing relevant, current and adequate serials. The elements of serials management are serials acquisition which involves selection, deselection and subscription; organization which involves processing and display on racks for users; and maintenance which involves updating, filling the gap, preservation, and binding of back issues and repair of damaged ones. Others are provision of facilities like finding aids, reading areas equipped with tables, chairs and air-conditioners as well as provision of services such as current awareness services. The World Bank (2002) observed that Nigerian universities are still struggling to provide basic facilities, funding and adequate information that could enable the lecturers create and apply new knowledge, innovations and develop analytical perspectives on development problems and also provide service to the public and private sectors. The consequences of insufficient funding in universities are reflected in poorly-remunerated staff, crumbling academic facilities, poorly-equipped laboratories, and outdated libraries and inadequate of serials and low research output (Andrew, Bankole and Olatunde, 2000). This portends a grave danger for academics, the development of the individual

and the community. It is against this backdrop that this study investigated the influence of serials management, access and use on publication output of lecturers in federal universities in Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are to: -

1. The availability and type of serials in the Library
2. The organization of serials in the Library
3. The utilization of serials by the undergraduate students of the university.
4. The currency and relevancies of serials to learning and research needs of the students.
5. The constraints to serials utilization and management in KWASU, Library

### **Scope of the study**

This study covered serials availability, utilization and management of serials in Kwara State University, Library. The Undergraduate student from College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Education, library and information Science, Engineering and Sciences were used for the study.

### **Major findings of this research**

The major findings of the study are as follows:

1. That KWASU Library should acquire different types of serials available
2. That user's utilization level was very high with great level of satisfaction in organization of the serials.
3. That newspapers and journals were the most consulted serials materials with warm reception of the serial unit staff
4. That the serials materials acquired by KWASU Library were adequately relevant and current.
5. High cost of serials materials lack of continuity in serials publishing especially journals, problem of space for accommodation serve as impediments for utilization and management serial publications.

### **Literature Review**

Serial as an effective tool in modern information and research has called for serials Librarians with in-depth knowledge of their peculiarity and techniques for controlling them (Adebika, 2007). A comprehensive serials management is concerned with everything that happens to serials throughout their life cycle. The serials management operates with many concepts. There are various ways to the concepts and elements of serials management. Serials management deals with: selection and de-selection, liaison with users, collection analysis and user survey (Ogunrombi, 1997); financial control and budgeting deal with price list checking, fund allocation, invoice checking, invoice payment and receipt checking (Ford, 1999); subscription methods deal with direct ordering and subscription agents (Cowley, 1990); house-keeping routines deals with stamping, recording in statistics file, kardex card, visible index and serials lists (Tipple, 1990); cataloguing and classification deal with provision of bibliographic description for each title of serials and provision of access to serials represented in the catalogue (Adeyemi, 2001); organisation deals with cataloguing, classification and display of serials on the racks to facilitate easy access (Law, 1999); storage, preservation and binding deal with protection of serials from damage and prolong their shelf life (Elkington, 1999); direct services to the users deal with circulation, indexing, abstracting, current awareness, translation, photocopying and inter-library lending services (Clerk and O'Driscoll, 1990); and serials automation which deals with application of modern information and communication technologies in carrying out serials processes

(Woodward and Graham, 1990). Access and use analysis are central to serials management. Access to information, according to Akobundu (2008), means that users can identify and use the resources. Resources, as pointed out by Aguolu and Aguolu (2002), may be available in the library and even identified bibliographically as relevant to one's subject of interest, but the users may not be able to lay hands on them. Assessing user needs, satisfaction and library performance at the University of Washington Libraries by Hiller (2001) reported that 97% of the university lecturers had access to the World Wide Web and presumably use this to access the electronic resources including serials provided by the library. Serials are used for diverse purposes including leisure reading, scholarly research, teaching, professional reasons and hobbies (Nisonger, 1998). Lecturers and researchers in universities, according to Aina (2004), are regarded as the library and serials users with advanced degrees in their subjects of specialisation. Many scholars including Rogers (2001), Dillon and Hahn (2002), Salaam (2008) and Ogunniyi, Akerele and Afolabi (2011) confirm the fundamental concept that a fraction of the periodical collection accounts for the majority of usage.

All over the world, according to Akintayo and Oghenekohwo (2008), university education has attracted significant interest as it serves as the only way of ensuring immediate changes and transformation in human and technological advancement. One of the preoccupations of any lecturer is research. Research, as pointed out by Ntiamoah Baidu (2008), is the engine that generates new knowledge and provides ideas for national development. The outcome of research is usually published. Ogbomo (2010) maintained that publication is essential for problem-solving, leading to dynamism in library services as a response to changing times and environment. Okwilagwe (2001) asserted that the Academic Union of Universities (ASUU), Nigeria is one of the agencies and professional associations whose activities directly influence the book publishing industry in Nigeria. Publication output of lecturers, as pointed out by Okafor and Dike (2010) can be in form of journal articles, technical reports, conference proceedings, books or chapters of book.

### **Availability and Means of Acquiring Serials in University Libraries**

The office uses a network of suppliers and bibliographic representatives. Channels of acquiring serials could be through distributors, bookshops, book fairs, and even small kiosks. In the case of the latter, all that can be usually found is the latest issue of that particular serial title. If you visit the publisher direct, it may be possible to find additional back issues, but this all depends on what the publisher has in stock, and this stock is sometimes in a locked closet with only one person having the key. If for whatever reason that key holder is not available, you may have to make a special visit another time. Sometimes publishers themselves delay printing a new issue of an academic journal due to lack of articles or content. The publications of NIDOC (National Information and Documentation Center) in Egypt are but one example of where editorial decisions can be made to not publish a new issue of a publication until a sufficient quota of content has been received and accepted. In many countries, pre-paid subscriptions can be considered a good and reliable way to acquire serials with complete runs on a regular basis. This is especially so for a local contractor. For example, Egypt, Oman, Qatar, and other countries have a national distribution agency where it is possible to place pre-paid subscriptions to cover the major newspapers and magazines. However, in the Middle East/North Africa this is not the case all the time because there are many uncontrollable political and economic factors that may affect the publishing scheme for a certain titles and may delay or reduce the number of expected issues per year. Titles may be intended to be published six times a year but the reality is only one issue could be published of it, and then it may not be possible to be credited for the remaining issues. This is the deficiency of the distribution agency who may or may not be able to process at a sophisticated level. Pre-paid subscriptions do not always yield the desired results. For example, in Kuwait, we encouraged our vendor to place such subscriptions with the understanding that he would be able to receive these titles with minimal effort. What actually happened is that not all the issues of a title arrived, and thus the vendor had to make several phone calls to publishers to find out what happened to the missing issues and how they could be sent or otherwise get back into the authorized distribution channel. The cost and time

of the vendor to do claims is not always worth the meagre profit to be made from serials titles, and particularly in Kuwait, the cost of a taxi to move from place to place for the sake of a few issues may be prohibitive.

### **Organization of serial in KWASU Library**

Library collection of any form at when selected and acquired needs to be properly organized for easy retrieval. Thus, serial collection in KWASU after stamping, the university library organized the serial by cataloguer and classifying online using koha cataloguing modules and also provide a dedicated desktop pc for serial library holding which users can search when there is no internet services. The Library operates an open access system to serials where users are freely allowed to browse through the shelves and consult any materials of their choice. Consequently, interview conducted with users indicate that lack of space, shelves and power outage serve as an impediment for them.

### **TOPOLOGY OF SERIAL AVAILABLE IN KWASU LIBRARY**

Serial collection in KWASU includes journals, periodical, proceedings, newspapers, newsletters, magazines, prospector, reviewer, ephemerals , annuals and transaction .The aforementioned serials available agree with the description of serials as provided by AACR2 (1978) as any publication in any medium issued and successive parts bearing numerical or chronological description and intended to be continued indefinitely

### **USEFULNESS OF SERIAL IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES**

Harrey 1978 in Arelola 2001 emphasized that serial constitute the back bone of research collection because of its currency of content regularity of publication , primary source of information, journals contain research result, contain bing and straight forward information, contain proceedings and discussion of learned societies,serve as a base for further development or research in political area. He said further that serials provide a platform for the communication of a new knowledge, exchange ,new ideas,certainly publish materials in the same vein, Dauda (2008) opined that serial materials in University Libraryprovides current information in various dispeline within a researchable time limit by making available places in various subject areas. ABDULSALAM(2006)hinged the success of university libraries on the information dissemination potentially serial collections which help the library to fulfil its obligations of supplementing the university in tis teaching and research actualization of both students and staff.

### **Demographic description of data**

Table 1: Distribution of the Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	346	52.4
Female	314	47.6
Total	660	100.0

Table 1 shows that out of the 660 respondents that participated in the survey, 346 representing 52.4% of the respondents were male, while 314 representing 47.6% of the respondents were

female. This shows that there were more male participants than female in this study.

Table 2 : Distribution of Respondents by College

College	Frequency	Percent
Valid		
Pure and Applied Science	150	22.7
Engineering Technology	120	18.2
Education	50	7.6
Humanities and Social Science	200	30.3
Agric.	40	6.1
Information and Communication Technology	100	15.2
Total	660	100.0

Table 2 reveals that out of the 660 respondents that participated in the survey, 150 representing 22.7% of the respondents were from College of Pure and Applied Science, 120 representing 18.2% of the respondents were from College of Engineering Technology, 50 representing 7.6% of the respondents were from College of Education, 200 representing 30.3% were from College of Humanities and Social Science, 40 representing 6.1% were from College of Agriculture, 100 representing 15.2% were from College of Information and Communication Technology. This shows that College of Humanities and Social Science had more participants than other colleges that participated in this study.

**Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Level**

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	100	118	17.9
	200	176	26.7
	300	193	29.2
	400	159	24.1
	500	13	2.0
	Total	659	99.8
Missing	System	1	.2
Total		660	100.0

Table 3 reveals that out of the 660 respondents that participated in the survey, 118 representing 17.9% of the respondents were in 100 level, 176 representing 26.7% of the respondents were in 200 level, 193 representing 29.2% of the respondents were in 300 level, 159 representing 24.1% were in 400 level, 13 representing 2.0% were in 500 level, and a missing value of 1 representing 0.2%. This shows that there were more 300 level participants than any other level participants.

Table 4: Type of serials available in the Library?

<b>Availability</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Percentage ranking</b>
<b>Journals</b>	126	<b>19.1</b>	<b>4th</b>
<b>Newspapers</b>	143	<b>21.7</b>	<b>1st</b>
<b>Magazines</b>	133	<b>20.2</b>	<b>3rd</b>
<b>Bulletins</b>	118	<b>17.9</b>	<b>5th</b>
<b>Others specify</b>	140	<b>21.2</b>	<b>2nd</b>
<b>Total</b>	660	<b>100</b>	

Table 4 above shows that Newspapers constitute the bulk of the types of serial holdings in the library with 143(21.7%), Journals followed with 126 (19.1%) while Magazines, Bulletins and others followed with percentage score of 20.2%, 17.9% and 21.2% respectively.

Table 5: Level of satisfaction with the organization of Serials in the library

<b>Level of Satisfaction</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Percentage ranking</b>
<b>Highly Satisfied</b>	211	<b>32.0</b>	<b>3rd</b>
<b>Satisfied</b>	218	<b>33.0</b>	<b>2nd</b>
<b>Fairly satisfied</b>	227	<b>34.4</b>	<b>1st</b>
<b>Not satisfied</b>	4	<b>7</b>	<b>4th</b>
<b>Total</b>	660	<b>100</b>	

As shown in table 5 above, 227(34.4%) of the respondents were fairly satisfied, 218(33.0%) of the respondents were satisfied, 211(32.0%) of the respondents were highly satisfied and 4(7%) of the respondents were not satisfied with the organization of serials in the library.

Table 6: Frequency of serials utilization in the Library?

<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Percentage ranking</b>
<b>Daily</b>	164	<b>24.8</b>	<b>1<sup>t</sup></b>
<b>Weekly</b>	150	<b>22.7</b>	<b>2<sup>d</sup></b>
<b>Forth nightly</b>	89	<b>13.5</b>	<b>5<sup>h</sup></b>
<b>Monthly</b>	122	<b>18.5</b>	<b>4<sup>h</sup></b>
<b>Occasionally</b>	133	<b>20.2</b>	<b>3<sup>d</sup></b>
<b>Total</b>	658	<b>99.7</b>	
<b>Missing</b>	2	<b>.3</b>	
<b>Total</b>	660	<b>100</b>	

The responses in table 6 showed that 164 (24.82%) of the respondents use the serials daily, 150(22.7%) use the serials weekly while 133(20.2%) use it occasionally, 122(18.5%) consult the serials monthly, whereas 89(13.5%) use the serials fortnightly. Going by this ranking, it vividly shows that the undergraduate students of KWASU used the serials regularly

Table 7: What type of serials used more frequently?

<b>Types of serials</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Percentage ranking</b>
<b>Journals</b>	137	<b>20.8</b>	<b>2<sup>d</sup></b>
<b>Newspapers</b>	177	<b>26.8</b>	<b>1<sup>t</sup></b>
<b>Magazines</b>	118	<b>17.9</b>	<b>4<sup>t</sup></b>
<b>Bulletins</b>	103	<b>15.6</b>	<b>5<sup>h</sup></b>
<b>Others Specify</b>	123	<b>18.6</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>
<b>Total</b>	658	<b>99.7</b>	
<b>Missing</b>	2	<b>.3</b>	
<b>Total</b>	660	<b>100</b>	

The result as shown in table 7 shows how frequently they consult the serials. Majority of the respondents 177(26.8%) consult Newspapers mostly, 137 (20.8%) use Journals, 118(17.9%) use Magazines frequently, while 123(18.6%) signify that they consult others serials materials like annuals, proceedings, reviews etc. Frequently, whereas minority of the respondents i.e 103(15.6%) consult bulletins frequently.

Table 8: Attitude of Library staff toward users when consulting serials?

<b>Attitude</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Percentage ranking</b>
<b>Very friendly</b>	214	<b>32.4</b>	<b>2nd</b>
<b>Friendly</b>	278	<b>42.1</b>	<b>1st</b>
<b>Undecided</b>	119	<b>18.1</b>	<b>3rd</b>
<b>Hostile</b>	49	<b>7.4</b>	<b>4th</b>
<b>Total</b>	660	<b>100</b>	

Table 8 showed that 278(42.1%) rated the attitude of staff in serials division are friendly, followed by 214(32.4%) said they are very friendly while 119(18.1%) of the respondents undecided, 49(7.4%) were hostile

Table 9: Degree of relevance of serials to research and learning?

<b>Relevance</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Percentage ranking</b>
<b>Very relevant</b>	209	<b>31.7</b>	<b>2nd</b>
<b>Relevant</b>	286	<b>43.3</b>	<b>1st</b>
<b>Fairly relevant</b>	145	<b>22.0</b>	<b>3rd</b>
<b>Not relevant</b>	20	<b>3.0</b>	<b>4th</b>
<b>Total</b>	660	<b>100</b>	

This table shows the level of relevance of serials to teaching, learning and research purposes. Acquisition, organization and management of serials in any library must gear towards how relevant it is thus, the table shows that 286(43.3%) of the respondents indicated that the serials collections are very relevant, 209(31.7%) shows that the serials are relevant while, 145(22.0%) and 20(3.0%) opted for fairly relevant and not relevant respectfully.

Table 10: Assessment of serials found in Library in terms of currency?

Currency	Responses	Percentage (%)	Percentage ranking
<b>Highly Current</b>	175	<b>26.6</b>	<b>3rd</b>
<b>Current</b>	273	<b>41.4</b>	<b>1st</b>
<b>Fairly Current</b>	209	<b>31.7</b>	<b>2nd</b>
<b>Obsolete</b>	3	<b>.5</b>	<b>4th</b>
<b>Total</b>	660	<b>100</b>	

Table 10 above shows the response of academics rating on the serials in the terms of their currency. Majority representing 273(41.42%) rated the serials as current, followed by 209(31.7%) who indicated that the serials are fairly current, 175(26.6%) believed the serials are highly current, and 3(0.5%) indicated that the serials are obsolete in terms of current information.

Table 11: Adequacy of the serials collections?

Adequacy	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Percentage ranking
<b>Very adequate</b>	252	<b>38.2</b>	<b>2nd</b>
<b>Adequate</b>	302	<b>45.8</b>	<b>1st</b>
<b>Not adequate</b>	100	<b>15.2</b>	<b>3rd</b>
<b>Undecided</b>	6	<b>.9</b>	<b>4th</b>
<b>Total</b>	660	<b>100</b>	

Table:11 above shows how adequate the serials collection in KWASU Library. 302(45.8%) of the respondents responded that the serials are adequate, 252(38.2%) believed the serial collection is very adequate, while 100(15.2%) opted for not adequate and 6(0.9%) of the respondents responded undecided.

This person sought to know from the library the constraints associated with management and utilization of serials in the Library. Whereas, constraints to utilization were answered by the users while constraints to management were inflation, lack of continuity in publishing, problem of space to accommodate large number of users etc.



## Discussion of Result

Since the inception of KWASU Library in 2009, it has been acquired serials materials that cut across all the departments in which newspapers has the highest proportion as shown in table 4 with 21.7% followed by magazines and journal. These findings indicate that serials materials are available in KWASU library.

Organization is one of the most important professional duties of librarians aimed at providing easy access and retrieval of materials in the library. In the light of this, KWASU library employed the use of Broad Library of congress classification number to organize their serials which paved way for easy access and relevant, that is why the users are really satisfied.

Large proportions of serials are very relevant to leaving and research. Table 6 shows on high degree of use daily (24.8%) to weekly (22.7%) occasionally (20.2%) and monthly (13.5%) this is in connection with the friendly attitude of the library staff as indicate in table 8. As friendly (42.20%) and very friendly (32.4%)

Academic Library may acquire, processed and stock all the required titles in its serials collection but if they are not up to date and relevant to the need of its users the effort may be in vain. A result of this study shows that, serials available in KWASU library are highly current and relevant. Table 10 indicated 273(41.42%), 209(31.7%) and 175(26.6%) as current, fairly current and highly current respectively. This shows that KWASU Library has been involved academic staff in selection of serials collection. This is in line with Raganathan second law of the library services that librarians should know the readers and their requirement so as to provide for the readers.

## CONCLUSION

Inadequate funding of the library which results to dividing acquisition, inflations, lack of continuity in publishing, problem of space to accommodate numbers of users This will have negative effect on the academic standard of the university. Though, Library provides open access to serials cum friendly attitude of the Library staff in the serials collection, users have unhindered access in locating and using serials in the library That portrait good library.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Base on the findings the following recommendations are offered.

1. Library management should be more proactive and look inward in providing adequate funding to the library to acquired adequate and relevant serials collections because of their current research
2. Library management should have standing order with reputable vendor's journal publishing house so that they can keep the library abreast on the new development.
3. The library should urgently make available enough current editions of cataloguing and classifications tools
4. The university management should be encouraged to abide by decree 11 of 1993 which was enacted as a result of FGN/ASSU agreement

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