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Awareness, Accessibility and Use of Serial Publications among Undergraduate Students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo

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Abstract

The research was on awareness, accessibility and use of serial publications among undergraduate students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. Five research questions guided the study. 100 copies of questionnaire were administered to the respondents in the College Library through face to face method in order to collect data. Simple Random sampling technique was also used for the study. In the data analysis, frequency counts, simple percentages, mean and standard deviation were used for the statistical analysis. The findings revealed that that the level of students' awareness of serial materials in Adeyemi College of Education Library is low. It also indicated the level of students' use of serial publications in the Library as low. The findings show the challenges confronting students' use of serial materials in the Library as poor internet services, lack of up-to-date serial collections, mutilations of the materials, unfriendly attitude of serial staff and inability to use journals for research. The paper concluded that the users are fairly aware of the serial publications available in the library and this could be the reason for poor use. The study recommended that proper awareness should be created among students for maximum utilization of the serial publications.

Keywords: Awareness, Accessibility, Use, Serial Publication, Adeyemi College of Education.

Introduction

Kidd, (2001) explained that the definition of a serial has not changed significantly over the years. The author culled from the second edition, 1998 revision of the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (AACR2) which defines a serial as ‘a publication in any medium issued in successive parts bearing numeric or chronological designations and intended to be continued indefinitely. This definition includes online (although continuous updating is a feature of some e-journals, as opposed to publication ‘in successive parts’), print, microform, and CD-ROM journals, and, for example, newspapers and popular magazines as well as academic journals.

In addition, Tomomowo-Ayodele and Hameed (2018) are of the view that serials are regarded as materials that are in tangible format, that is recorded on paper, microfilm, magnetic media or optical disk and retrievable. However, Berry (1961) observed that there is lack of clarity in the definition of serials. And this is partly responsible for the absence of an authoritative quantitative analysis of the extent of serial publishing. UNESCO recently attempted a quantitative survey on a world-wide basis, but admitted the difficulties in obtaining reliable data and in arriving at definitions which are generally acceptable. Olorunsola (1997) as cited by Hameed and Osunrinade (2010) expressed that serials help students, researchers and faculty to be well-informed about current events in various field.

Oni (2004) in Anunobi, Nwakuwo, and Ezejiolor (2010) described the unit that is responsible for serials operation in the library as serials unit where current information can be found. The importance of serial collections cannot be over emphasized in library’s operations particularly in academic libraries, because it provides the users with up-to-date information that can assist them in their academic pursuit (Owolabi, Aderibigbe, Okorie and Ibrahim, 2012).

The explosion of knowledge and publications of all kinds, conventional or non-conventional, means the universe of materials has grown much larger. One very important set of library materials in the library that can convey current information is serials (Hameed and Osunrinade, 2010). Akande (2011) as cited by Tomomowo-Ayodele and Hameed (2018) explained that there are many kinds of serials. These include newspaper, magazines, newsletters, journals, indexes, abstract, reports, proceedings and transactions of businesses in societies etc.

A periodical such as newspaper or magazine has a distinctive title and is issued more frequently than once a year containing articles. While non - periodical serials are publications that are issued in successive parts once a year or less frequently. Yearbooks, annuals or monographic series are examples of non-periodical serials. The term periodicals, serials are used inter-changeably to refer to the group of library materials which appear in a series at regular intervals (Hameed and Osunrinade, 2010).

Statement of the problem

Serial publications are information resources that bear current information. They are in various formats. They help to support academic works in the college community. The publications called serial are the spinal cord of research in the academic world. Students, lecturers and other researchers should bear it in mind that without serial publication, research cannot be done orderly and efficiently. However, in spite of the fact that the college library management has made a worthwhile efforts to acquire the resources for the use of clientele, the situation is not encouraging as students do not patronize the serial unit for information resources especially journals. This is the case of Adeyemi College of Education Library (Serial Unit). It is on this

note, that the researchers want to find out the awareness, accessibility and use of serial publications among the students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are:

1. To ascertain the level of awareness of serial materials in the library among students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.
2. To find out how students access serial materials in the library of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.
3. To find out the extent of use of serial materials by students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.
4. To determine the perception of students towards challenges confronting them in the use of the serial materials in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.
5. To propose ways to improve the use of serials by students in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.

Research Questions

1. What is the level of students' awareness of serial materials in Adeyemi College of Education Library, Ondo?
2. How do students access serial materials in the library of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?
3. What are the extents of the use of serial materials by students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?

4. What are the perceptions of students towards challenges confronting them in the use of the serial materials in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?
5. What are the ways to improve the use of serials by students in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?

Literature Review

Owolabi, Aderibigbe, Okorie and Ibrahim, (2012) opined that serials formed the backbone of research collections, as a result, academic libraries cannot do without it because of the usefulness to students, researchers, scholars, and investigators. They see serial collections as sine qua non to the development of research activities in academic environment. In other word, Serials are essential tools of teaching and research in academic endeavor and remain a potential tool for dissemination of knowledge. In support, Chitumbo, Chipasha, Tembo and Banda (2016) corroborated that serial collection is a very important area in supporting the core activities of the university namely learning, teaching, research and consultancy because of the kind of information materials it stocks, especially journals. Thus, Olorunsola (1997) in Sambo and Akpojotor (2016) posited that it helps students, researchers and faculty to be well informed about current events. In order that lecturers in the university would keep abreast of the latest progress in their individual fields, they need serial materials.

There are many kinds of serials. Out of them all, journals are the most important to researchers because much of articles therein are products of research and it may never appear in any other publications (Ogunniyi, Akerele and Afolabi, 2011). Further, Onanuga and Okeh (1999) as cited by Tomomowo-Ayodele and Hameed (2018) suggested that serials are important and popular learning materials because they contain current information.

Serials are available locally and could be ordered overseas. Serials could be published as journals, newspapers, magazines, bulletins etc. In the words of Ogunnuga, (2003) as cited by Tomomowo-Ayodele and Hameed (2018), it was expressed that no matter a subject students are interested in, it is among the journals that he or she is mostly like to find the latest materials for assignment and other write-ups. More so, the extent at which serial publications is relevant, familiar and frequent to the students in universities is a pre-requisite with a nature of discussing serials activities and operations in relation with researches conducted in learning processes.

Thus, in the study of Chitumbo, Chipasha, Tembo and Banda (2016) it was discovered that among the information resources that respondents mentioned that they use in the Serials collection, frequency of use were: journals 54 respondents, Magazines 19 respondents, Newsletters 15 respondents, reports/reviews 14 respondents and bulletins with 5 respondents. This shows that among all the serial materials in the collection, journals are the most used among the serial collection. Onanuga and Okeh (1999) as cited by Tomomowo-Ayodele and Hameed (2018) asserted that the findings and studies explored revealed that much photocopying of important articles and interesting academic topics in serials are often demanded by library users in Nigerian Universities and journal is part of it.

Attama and Ezema (2002) in Owolabi, Aderibigbe, Okorie and Ibrahim, (2012) stated the importance of serials in academic environment for students which include the followings:

- Serial provides up –to -date information on any issue than textbooks.
- It supplies scientific discoveries and results of latest findings.
- It makes researchers frequent and current in the frontiers of knowledge.
- It provides a first hand and detailed information on a particular subject

- It provides empirical evidence on issue being treated.

In a study carried out in post primary schools by Aliyu (2012), the findings revealed that magazines and school journals were the most available in the schools; the students make use of the serial publications for their academic needs. In support of this findings, Owolabi, Aderibigbe, Okorie and Ibrahim, (2012) asserted that it is not a gain saying that scholarly journals occupied important position in the extension of knowledge and they are considered as principal medium for disseminating knowledge. Journals compared to books, are shorter but give a comprehensive coverage, making reading a lot easier and quicker (Chitumbo, Chipasha, Tembo and Banda 2016). This accounted for the reason why journals should be made more available to users for information sourcing.

Journal could be in print or online form. The use of online journal is on the increase due to technology breakthrough in the age. In agreement, Chitumbo, Chipasha, Tembo and Banda (2016) opined that the decrease in the use of print collection was a suggestion that many patrons preferred to use online journals to print journals. Online journals were preferred by the students due to their free access, quick data retrieval and their proximity. Meanwhile, a research on the effects of online journals on print journal use showed a significant decrease in journal use each year. But usage for those journals which were in both print and electronic formats went up compared to those that only existed in print. The results further showed that print journal usage decreased significantly as they became older. Hence, Blackwell, (2014) asserted that, the argument for the value of the serials collection should be based not on how good the collection is perceived to be, rather, on what users do with the contents of the collection and how the uses can be tied to measurable results.

Apart from announcing scientific discoveries and serving as avenues for the publication of scientific researches, research-in-progress, serials are also a safeguard to researcher for sifting through the maze of irrelevant materials in their search for the relevant ones. And so where recentness of information is of prime consideration, the serials have a distinct advantage over the book (Adebika, 2007). In the same vein, Nutsupkui and Owusu-Ansah (2017) referred to serials as the nerve-centre of any university library because they contain the most up-to-date information on research and knowledge. Serials are invaluable information materials for academic work.

In the findings of Chitumbo, Chipasha, Tembo and Banda (2016) on the challenges to the use of serial publications, in their research it was revealed that the levels of serials usage are low due to lack of knowledge of serials collection and its services by users, inadequate search skills, insufficient orientation at both 1st year level and later on, unavailability of some information needed by some users, outdated resources, serials collection being a closed access area and so on.

Nutsupkui and Owusu-Ansah (2017) therefore, concluded that whether a library provides electronic or print journals, the most important factor for use is awareness and knowledge of these resources.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design for the study was descriptive survey research design. It is a design that allows a population to be studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a sample considered to be representing the entire population. This is suitable for this research because none of the variables will be manipulated but explained the way they occur in the field of study.

Population of the Study

The population comprised all the Degree students in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Simple Random sampling technique was also used for the study. Therefore the sample size of the study was one hundred (100) degree students.

Research Instrument

The research instrument was adapted by the researcher and used for the study. Section A comprises information on Biodata; Section B was on Likert type scales which asked questions on Awareness, Accessibility and Use of Serial Publications among students of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.

Validity of Instrument

To ensure the validity of the instrument, samples were given to two senior researchers/experts in the field of librarianship in the College Library of the Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. Observations and corrections made by them assisted in validating the research instrument.

Procedure for Data Collection

The researcher and research assistants collected the data through face-to-face administration of questionnaire. This involves going to the various sections of the college library to administer the questionnaire and collecting them back at the same time.

Procedure for Data Analysis

The responses of the respondents were collected, aggregated, and presented in a tabular form. Based on this, frequencies of occurrence were established and used for the analysis using percentages, mean and standard deviation.

Data Presentation and Analysis

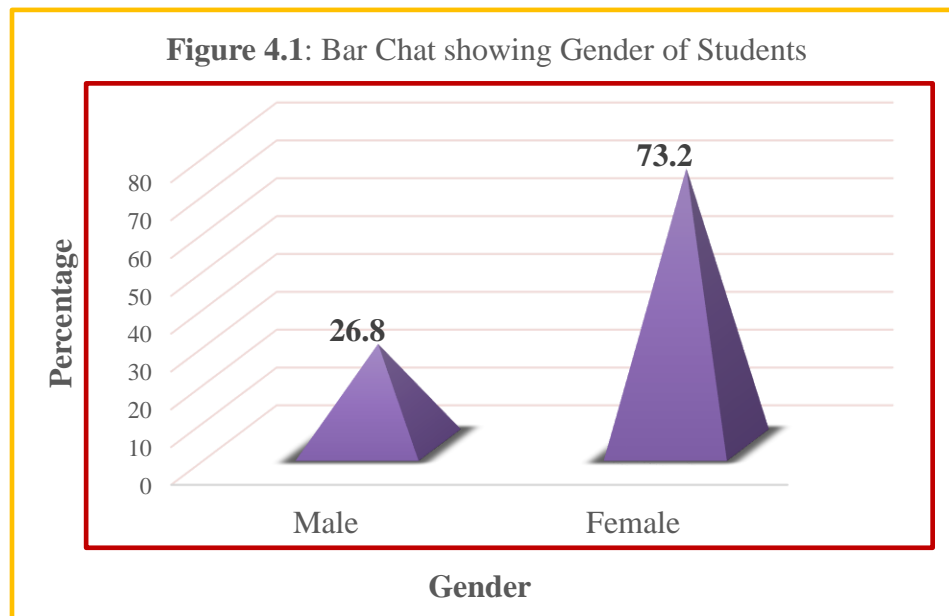
This section presents the demographic information of the respondents that were selected for this study. It presents answers to the research questions. It also presents the discussion of the findings which are based on the research questions.

4.1 Demographic Information of Respondents

Table 4.1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	26	26.8
Female	71	73.2
Total	97	100.0

Table 4.1 shows that out of 97 respondents used in this study, 26.8% (26) were male while the remaining 73.2% (71) were female. The result from this table implies that the female students were more than the male students. Figure 4.1 below further presents the result from the table in bar chart.



4.2 Answers to Research Question

Research Question1: What is the level of students' awareness of serial materials in Adeyemi

College of Education Library, Ondo?

Table 4.2: Level of Awareness of Serial Materials in the Library

S/N	Item	SA	A	FA	NA	Mean	Std. D	Remark
1	Journals	5	31	11	50	1.90	1.02	Fairly Aware
2	Newspaper	44	31	11	11	3.11	1.00	Aware
3	Magazines	41	31	12	13	3.03	1.04	Aware
4	Online Journals	19	24	22	32	2.30	1.13	Fairly Aware
5	Annual Reports	11	27	29	30	2.19	1.00	Fairly Aware
6	Newsletter	11	34	29	23	2.34	.96	Fairly Aware
7	CD ROM Database	8	20	23	46	1.89	1.00	Fairly Aware
	Others;	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Weighted Average							2.39	

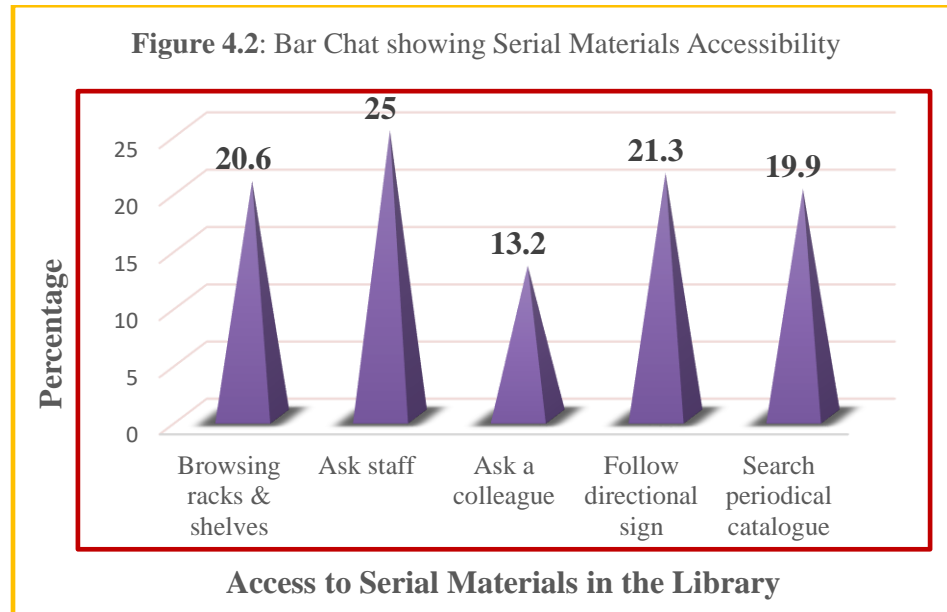
N= 97

Key: SA = Strongly Aware, A = Aware, FA = Fairly Aware, NA = Not Aware

Decision Value for remark: 0.00 - 2.49 =Low, 2.50 - 4.00 = High

Table 4.2 shows the students' level of awareness of serials materials in Adeyemi College of Education Library, Ondo. The table shows that the students are fairly aware of the following serial materials: journals ($\bar{x} = 1.90$), online journals ($\bar{x} = 2.30$), annual reports ($\bar{x} = 2.19$), newsletter ($\bar{x} = 2.34$) and CD Rom database ($\bar{x} = 1.89$). The table further shows that the students are aware of newspapers and magazines with ($\bar{x} = 3.11$) and ($\bar{x} = 3.03$) respectively in the college library. Meanwhile, based on the value of the weighted average (2.39 out of 4.00 maximum values obtainable) which falls within the decision value for low, it can be concluded that the level of students' awareness of serial materials in Adeyemi College of Education Library is low.

Research Question 2: How do students access serial materials in Adeyemi College of Education Library, Ondo?



The figure above shows the various ways which students access serial materials in Adeyemi College of Education Library, Ondo. It can be seen from the figure that only “Ask a colleague” has the lowest response with 13.2%. Therefore, the ways which students access serial materials in Adeyemi College of Education Library, Ondo are by asking staff, follow directional sign, browsing the racks and shelves and by searching periodical catalogue in that order.

Research Question 3: What is the level of students’ use of serial publications in Adeyemi College of Education Library, Ondo?

Table 4.3: Level of Students’ Use of Serial Publications in the Library

S/N	Item	HU	AU	FU	NU	Mean	Std. D	Remark
1	Journals	15	19	26	37	2.12	1.09	Fairly Used
2	Newspaper	15	21	28	33	2.18	1.07	Fairly Used
3	Magazines	11	31	23	32	2.21	1.03	Fairly Used
4	Online Journals	9	17	21	50	1.84	1.02	Fairly Used
5	CD ROM Database	11	14	23	49	1.86	1.04	Fairly Used
6	Newsletter	12	12	35	38	1.97	1.01	Fairly Used

7	Annual Reports	9	9	26	53	1.73	.97	Fairly Used
	Others;	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Weighted Average								1.98

Key: HU= Highly Used, AU = Adequately Used, FU = Fairly Used, NU = Not Used

Decision Value: 0.00 - 2.49 = Low, 2.50 - 4.00 = High

Table 4.3 shows the students' level of use of serials publications in Adeyemi College of Education Library, Ondo. The table shows that all the serial publications are fairly used with means score as follows : journals ($\bar{x} = 2.12$), newspapers ($\bar{x} = 2.18$), magazines ($\bar{x} = 2.21$), online journals ($\bar{x} = 1.84$), CD-ROM database ($\bar{x} = 1.86$), newsletter ($\bar{x} = 1.97$) and annual reports ($\bar{x} = 2.19$).

Based on the value of the weighted average (1.98 out of 4.00 maximum value obtainable) which falls within the decision value for low, it can be inferred that the level of students' use of serial publications in Adeyemi College of Education Library, Ondo is low.

Research Question 4: What are the perceptions of students towards challenges confronting them in the use of serial materials in Adeyemi College of Education Library, Ondo?

Table 4.3: Challenges Confronting Students' Use of Serial Publications

S/N	Nature of Challenges	Frequency	Percentage
1	Lack of up-to-date serial collection	41	23.0
2	Mutilations of the materials	21	11.8
3	Poor internet service (online journal)	48	27.0
4	Unfriendly attitude of serial staff	20	11.2
5	Inadequate staff	15	8.4
6	Difficulty in accessing the materials	13	7.3
7	Don't know how to use journals for research work	20	11.2

Table 4.3 above shows the challenges confronting students' use of serial publications in Adeyemi College of Education Library, Ondo. Overall, poor internet services received highest response (27%) followed by lack of up-to-date serial collections (23%), mutilations of the materials (11.8%), unfriendly attitude of serial staff and don't know how to use journals for

research work with (11.2%) each. The challenges that received least response are inadequate staff (8.4) and difficulty in accessing the materials (7.3%). Therefore, the challenges confronting students' use of serial materials in the Library are poor internet services, lack of up-to-date serial collections, mutilations of the materials, unfriendly attitude of serial staff and don't know how to use journals for research. Of course, as one of the challenges as given by the respondents there is lack of up to date serial collection which was corroborated by Salaam (2008) in Tomomowo-Ayodele and Hameed (2018) that the Nigerian Universities libraries had not fared well in their provision of relevant and adequate journals for research.

Research Question 5: What are the perceptions of students towards challenges confronting them in the use of serial materials in Adeyemi College of Education Library, Ondo?

Table 4.4: Ways to Improve Students' Use of Serial Publications

S/N	Ways	Frequency	Percentage
1	Acquisition of current serial collections	29	15.1
2	Mutilated materials should be weeded	12	6.3
3	Internet services should be improved	47	24.5
4	Serial staff should be users-friendly	20	10.4
5	More staff should be employed in the serial unit	13	6.8
6	Librarians should teach students how to access the materials	40	20.8
7	Information Literacy Skill should be painstakingly taught in Library Instruction Programme	31	16.1

Table 4.4 above shows the various ways to improve the use of serials in Adeyemi College of Education Library, Ondo. The table shows that internet services should be improved which got the highest response (24.5%), librarians should teach students how to access the materials received (20.8%), information literacy skill should be painstakingly taught in Library instruction Programme got (16.1%) and acquisition of current serial collections is (15.1%). While serial staff should be users-friendly is (10.4%), more staff should be employed in the serial unit received (6.8%) and mutilated materials should be weeded is (6.3%). Therefore, the ways to improve the

use of serial publication by students in Adeyemi College of Education Library, Ondo are that internet services should be improved, librarians should teach students how to access the materials, information literacy skill should be painstakingly taught in Library instruction Programme and acquisition of current serial collections should be given priority. In support, Olubiyo, Ogunniyi, Ademilua and Akanmidu-Fagbemi (2019) concluded that there should be creation of high level of awareness on information literacy and that lecturers should be friendly with students for proper knowledge impartation.

Conclusion

Serial publications in the library serve as the channel to recent information in all fields and as a source to current news in the presentation of media. It brings to limelight the academic activities taking place in the world through the awareness brought about by the articles.

In this regard, it was discovered that the users are fairly aware of the serial publications available in the library and this could be the reason for poor use. Hence, the information specialists in charge of serial publications should make students, researchers and faculties to tap into the resources contained in these information sources in order to compensate the effort made in providing these resources through proper awareness.

Recommendations

- Proper awareness should be created among students for maximum utilization of the serial publications.
- Mutilated materials should be weeded to give space for the new ones.
- Internet services should be improved to help students get access to online publications.
- Serial staff should be trained to be more users-friendly.

- More staff should be employed in the serial unit to serve users.
- Librarians should teach students how to access the materials through Library Orientation.
- Information Literacy Skill should be painstakingly taught in Library Instruction Programme in the class room.

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