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**AVAILABILITY OF CURRENT AWARENESS SERVICES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN
KATSINA STATE NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

A current awareness service has been in the past observed to be educational, political, and social development, of the rural population. The objective of this study is to examine the availability and use of current awareness services in public libraries in Katsina State. A case study research design was employed, and a random sampling technique was adopted so as give the libraries equal participation. Questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection and data collected was analyzed with the use of simple statistical tools like frequencies and percentages. The findings revealed that the users have access to current awareness services as current awareness is an essential ingredient to the educational, political social development of the rural population and it was recommended that government must find public libraries and expose them to global world educational challenges e.g. conference.

Introduction

The fundamental aim of libraries is to provide timely, accurate, pertinent, and reliable information for their users. Aguolo (2012) noted that librarians are devoted to improving access to information, and satisfying the user is paramount. There is a growing recognition that library services, particularly in public libraries, are an integral part of national and socioeconomic development and improvement of the general quality of life. Public libraries are the part of the government, in terms of administration and budget procedures. The establishment of public libraries in Katsina State however, has been mostly limited to urban area which has resulted in illiteracy and ignorance among young people in rural areas.

The role of public library services in Katsina state was set for the benefit of individual in urban and rural area in addition implies that a reader can acquire knowledge through the availability of current awareness service which plays the role of control of information in print and other media, through provision of facilities for use. Establishment of library boards and the considerable resources spent by state governments, library service and public libraries still remain inaccessible to the rural population in Katsina state. Public libraries in developed nations function as social development agent by extending services, sharing books, among others establishment control and maintenance of wide public library service. And also encourage participation in the development of local book production industry; and setting standards and policy in the establishment and maintenance of school library system within the state.

Statement of the Problem

The researchers visited the Katsina state current awareness services on three different occasions and the public libraries in particularly, but to their dismay the libraries were always devoid of users thereby raising some fundamental question such as: do they obtain their current awareness services through the e-library? This forms the basis for the present research.

Objectives of the Study

This study attempts to examine the availability and use of current awareness services in public libraries in Katsina state, the objectives of the study are:

- i. To determine the various types of current awareness services in public libraries
- ii. To determine the extent to which current awareness can improve or enhance public libraries services within Katsina state
- iii. To determine the extent to which current awareness affects public libraries in Katsina state

Research question

- i. What are the various types of current awareness services in public libraries?
- ii. To what extend can current awareness improve or enhance public libraries?
- iii. What are the effects of current awareness services in public libraries?

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviewed various literature related to the study. The review was carried out under the following sub-headings.

- Conceptual framework
- Type of current awareness services in public libraries
- Current Awareness in the improvement of public library services
- Effect of Current Awareness on Public Library Services
- Benefits of Current Awareness Services in Public Libraries
- Problems Associated with The Development of Current Awareness Services in Public Libraries
- Summary of literature review

Types of current awareness services in public libraries

Current-awareness service is to inform the users about new acquisitions in their libraries. Here Public libraries in particular have used display boards and shelves to draw attention to recent additions, and many libraries produce complete or selective lists for circulation to patrons. Some libraries have adopted a practice of selective dissemination of information. Useni (2016) sees a library as being critical to the fortune of a nation. That it is a reservoir of knowledge containing a collection of data (information) required for meeting the varied needs of the users. The libraries perform roles which include the provision of library and information services that include careful selection, acquisition, organization, storage and dissemination of information materials in prints and non-print formats to meet and support the objectives and information needs of their users.

Similarly, Aina (2014) defined a Library as where organized collections of information materials, in form of books and non- books materials with trained personnel, who manipulates the materials to provide library and information services to meet the information needs of their users. Also, according to Aina, there are various types of libraries that depend on the type of organization or institution they find themselves. Which are public libraries, Schools libraries, and Special libraries, and National libraries, libraries established to meet the highly specialized requirements of professionals or business groups. A public library is depending on whether it covers a collection, a public subject or available to the users or even the type of parent organization. Also, a library that collects only firms, current materials printed book, journals can be categorized as a public libraries because of its collections.

However, Davis (2013) stated that current awareness services can operate either as a standalone as a fully integrated, in which the reference and research to analysis in a user-friendly format to enable them to draft current information in the public libraries. Prytherch (2020) examined the concept of public library as a collection of current books and other library materials that are kept for reading, study and consultation. Library is a place or building, room in a separate place for keeping and use of a collection of books etc. In a similar view, Aguolu (2012) defines libraries as social institutions created to conserve knowledge, preserve the cultural heritage, provide information, under gird and underpin, educate research and serve as fountain creation.

Accordingly, Miller (2014) explained the concept of library as the organization of one or more trained people, who use carefully selected and organized books, periodicals, and other familiar materials, as a means of giving to those who may appropriately use it to the fullest extent to their need and desires, the information or enrichment or delight, which is obtained from the written word.

According to Horwath (2013) Current awareness therefore is the knowledge of recent developments in a field. Generally, the knowledge is of developments which relate to an individual's profession.

Current Awareness in the Improvement of Library Services

According to Khera (2017) improvements in document delivery through conventional resource sharing among public libraries. Online union catalogues greatly facilitate items location, and network messaging systems make the transmission of a request from one library to another a virtually instantaneous process. In some library consortia, some users can bypass the local library, at least for monographic materials, using the network to make their requests directly to another library and having the item delivered to their public libraries or local library due to increased method involved in coping with information explosion.

The awareness of computer processed information enhanced certain library services and functions such as selective dissemination of information to a large number of areas. Computerized information enable public libraries to network their services as data stored in one computer can be available in another computer. However, the convergence of computers and telecommunications in handling and processing information constitutes what is now known as information communication technology (ICT). ICT applied to public libraries through on-line searching, CD-ROM technology and the internet (Aina, 2014). Nwebueze (2010) defined CD-ROM (Compact Disc Read Only Memory) as a compact disc that contains data accessible by computer compact disc format was originally designed for music storage and play back, that format was later adapted to hold any form of library data. Improvement of CD-ROM over printed sources and online services are that it is a more economical technology for Katsina state libraries because of inadequate funding in another study.

Olatoku (2017) looked at improvement of current awareness services as a component very vital to human existence and that the users are aware of ICTs available which includes, Networked computers, stand alone computers, telephone, printers, local area Network (LAN), Wide Area Network (WAN) been used in the public libraries. Olatoku (2017) maintained that electronic publishing is highly beneficial to the development of the improvement collection and services of the public libraries, especially with regard to the use of Open Access resources on the Internet. He stated that Open Access enables patrons/authors to be seen by all their peers and their recognition; allow readers to view all the research literature they need; and assist librarians to satisfy the information needs of their users as well as reduce the cost of acquiring the journals whose budget is beyond their reach, have received a great deal of attention in the library literature for the improvement of communication between library staff to facilitating current awareness services for library patrons through the use of electronic technology and subject familiarity, librarians can enable hundreds of people at one time to become library users by providing them with access to a broad spectrum of useful information.

Furthermore, Olatoun (2017) opined that Current awareness rout in journals, tables of contents, and manually monitoring local news, industry, and topical journals for items of interest to the library users. With the advent of ubiquitous subscriptions to online services at the desktop, information vendors introduced electronic alert services. Current awareness system was promoted to staff in a variety of ways. The author stated that a current awareness page was added to the internal library website featuring links to the public libraries. Nwabueze (2010) Observed that Library Developments prints official and unofficial news and reports about libraries in the state, an annotated subject bibliography of new books in the state library's library science collection, a calendar of continuing education opportunities, and other miscellaneous items of interest to state librarians. It can therefore be described as a library that is provided whole or partly form public fund and the use of which is not restricted to any class of person in the society or community but is freely available to all. Encourage and anticipation in the development of local books production industry and setting standards and policy in the establishment and maintenance of library system.

Extent to which current awareness affects public libraries

According to Zhu (2016) Current Awareness Service is designed to alert scholars, researchers, readers, customers, or employees to recently published literature or resources in their field of specialization, usually available in public libraries serving the users in which they can access to current information is essential. Such services can be tailored to fit the interest profile of a specific individual or group. Also as stated by Harris (2019), new theoretical ideas and hypotheses; new problems to be solved; new methods and techniques for solving old and new problems; and new circumstances affecting what people do and how they may do it. In many aspects, the current awareness process is the opposite of the retrospective search. The retrospective search begins with the need to locate information on a specific topic for specific purpose or purposes

Therefore the goal of current awareness on the other hand is less specific. It is the need to understand current developments in public library in order to do one's work more effectively, the assumption that information can be applied on the job is what motivates a professional to maintain current awareness, the current awareness process is one of serendipity rather than one of organized purpose. The library and information services; are provided by trained library staff to satisfy users' information needs. Such services, span through lending, current awareness services, user education, literature searches, books exhibitions,

Cooke (2016) added that current awareness systems were delivered by e-mail, and those who despise the thought of getting any more e-mail than absolutely necessary. The author had hoped to move away from e-mail completely, but it became obvious that this was not realistic if she was going to successfully balance her needs with the needs of the staff. Adding new subject blogs and creating the e-mail digest based on interview feedback created a system that served staff better than the original system affect the public libraries. The author had envisioned, and reinforced that the current awareness system truly was for staff and the users benefit.

The benefits of current awareness services in public Libraries

Aina (2006) viewed the benefits of Current Awareness services designed as a materials items within the library collection that may include books, journals, reports, miscellaneous publications, microform, multimedia, and other physical objects. Generally, library materials do not include official records, but convenience copies of records may be included to alert scholars, researchers, readers and employees to recently published literature or resources in their field of specialization, usually available in public libraries serving state governments urban, and rural area essential, such services can be tailored to fit the interest profile of a specific individual or group.

Also, Akande (2013) stresses that setting up the new current awareness system was not difficult. The Blog lines software was intuitive, and although the free version of Blog lines does not include as many features as the full version, it was sufficiently functional for the purposes of this project. The only barrier to setting up multiple blogs was the need for an individual email account for each blog. This was resolved by asking IT staff to create new email accounts for each subject that were tied to the author's e-mail account. The time involved in identifying new items of interest and creating postings on the blogs varied from day to day, but the task was easily incorporated into the author's morning routine. Manually producing an e-mail digest added to the time taken for current awareness activities, but it was worthwhile based on the positive response from staff involved in the test.

Additionally, Kraft (2016) elaborated the benefits of references in the library as the services provided by library staff to meet the information needs of patrons (in person, by telephone, or electronically), including but not limited to answering questions, instructing users in the selection and use of appropriate tools and techniques for finding information, conducting searches on behalf of the patron, directing users to the location of library resources, assisting in the evaluation of information, referring patrons to resources outside the library when appropriate. Miller (2014) explained that except for one person, everyone who was monitoring the benefits of current awareness posts found that the posts were useful for their work, saved them time, and were easy to use. They felt the new system made it much easier to keep current for their own projects as well as project areas in which they were not involved but held a personal interest. These staff liked that they could reserve e-mail for stakeholders, and the ability to browse through an archive of previous posts was appealing.

Problems Associated with the Development of Current Awareness Services in Public libraries

According to Nwokocha, (2012) most library materials are purchased from outside Katsina, mostly from Europe and America, and due to a shortage of foreign currency and a high exchange rate, acquisitions have dropped sharply and in some states completely stopped. Many libraries in Katsina cannot afford to purchase and install computers and establish an Internet connection, especially in rural areas. Lack of funds is the greatest problem libraries face. Inadequate funding is hindering the development of public libraries in Katsina. Consequently, Callinan (2015) attributed this to economic conditions, government attitude, and particularly information infrastructure. Callinan further opined that the major obstacles inhibiting efficient information services in rural areas are poor communication infrastructure and widely-dispersed rural

population. In developed nations, state government provide ICTs into the public libraries that aid timely delivery of information a majority of Katsina's rural population still lacks the most basic information.

Accordingly, Aina (2006) mentioned that Thus, Librarians at the public library recognized the challenges patrons face in keeping current with the literature, as well as the potential of new service utilizing library material while the volume of tables of content feeds supplied by publishers and vendors have increased markedly, feeds were still not readily recognized by, or easily accessible to public library's patrons, few of whom reported using library materials as a means of staying current with the literature. The use of was well outside the mainstream of librarianship, and, even among colleague who aware of OPML, few had considered how it could be used easily share groups of feeds, between users and readers. The value of identifying, collection, and categorizing new journal articles as a service to public library's the librarianships set out to develop and promote a new kind of materials-based current awareness services that would save time, minimize effort, ensure equality, and allow customization inspired by the working group was formed and charge with exploring possibilities for an

library's materials current awareness services moreover, the benefit of materials for journal content in the dispersed digital environment is limited, as the identification, location, and management of new journal article from multiple feeds can frustrate and overwhelm even the user. While library literature on feeds has been plentiful in recent years, few articles discuss services that fully leverage the push technology power of idea of providing a convenient and time- saving service to library users by collecting journal feeds and then bundling them into Outline Processor Markup Language (OPML) files categorized by subject has not been developed in the literature.

Another problem is non-provision of adequate security for protection of materials and the state government should endeavor to provide current materials in public libraries for the benefit of the users and also support the librarianship should be an involvement of challenges to the relevant government agencies and also encourages Katsina state to trust and migrate to e-library system.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design

This study is a case study, because it deals with in depth study of a particular... The goal of this research project is to gain a clearer view of availability of current awareness services in public libraries in Katsina State.

Population of the study

The population of this study comprises of all the staff of public libraries in Katsina state. And the total population of one hundred

Sample and Sample Technique

A random sampling technique was used in selecting sixty (60) out of all the librarians working in the public library, which is ten (10) in each of the library in Katsina State. The sampling was

done through a random selection in order to get relatively unbiased, more rounded information from the group being studied.

Instrument for data collection

Sections A, B and C. Section A focused on the personal data of respondents while section B contain an over view of availability of current awareness services in public libraries. And section C focused on the major problems affecting the growth of public libraries in Katsina State.

Validity of the instrument

For effective validity of the research instrument, the self-designed research instrument was given to the supervisor for vetting. The validity was done in order to promote easy understanding of the various items on the questionnaire. Thereafter the corrected version of the questionnaire were effected and retyped.

Method of data collection

The researchers personally visited the public libraries in Katsina State. And the questionnaire was randomly distributed to respondents. Completed questionnaires were immediately retrieved.

Method of Data analysis

Data collections were analyzed using frequency count and simple percentage. Results were shown in tables. Questionnaire was used as instrument was designed for this study. The questionnaire consisted of some personal questions about the participants. The questionnaire is made up of three sections A, B and C.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: frequency count and percentage of education qualification of respondents

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High degree	19	31.7%
B.sc/HND	17	28.3%
NCE/ND	13	21.7%
SSCE	11	18.3%
Total	60	100%

Table 1 revealed that 19(31.7%) of the respondents have higher degree while 17(38.3%) of respondents have either a first degree or higher national diploma and 13(21.7%) respondents have either certificate of education or national diploma, 11(18.3%) of respondents has either secondary school certificate education this implies that more than three quarter of respondents have university or equivalent education generally, it implies that all the respondents are educated at least up to school certificate level

Table: 2. Frequency count percentage of Sex of the respondents

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage %
Male	43	71.7%
Female	17	28.3%
Total	60	100%

From Table 2, it showed that 43(71.7%) of the respondents are male while for 17(28.3%) of the respondents are female this implies that there are more male, than the female.

Table: 3. frequency count and percentage of rank designation of respondents

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Senior staff	45	75%
Junior staff	15	25%
Security related staff	0	0%
Total	60	100%

The table 3 shows that 45(75%) of the respondents are senior staff while 15(25%) of respondents are junior staff this is also represent 100% respond rate to the item, this implies that a little of half of the respondents are senior staff.

Availability of current awareness services in public library

Table: 4.you allow the user to get current information from the library

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	60	100%
No	0	0%
Total	60	100%

The analysis shows that the librarians allow the user to obtain current information from the library; the table indicates that all the 60 respondents agreed to this. This also represents a 100% response rate for this questionnaire item.

Table: 5. Do you use internet to obtain current awareness in the library

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	37	61.7%
No	23	38.3%
Total	60	100%

Table 5 revealed that 37(61.7%) of the respondents indicated they used internet to obtain current information while for 23(38.3%) of the respondent do not do so.

Table: 6. Do you use your personal collection to get current awareness services

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	35	58.3%
No	25	41.7%
Total	60	100%

From the Table it is shown that 35(58.3%) of the respondents agree that they use personal collection to get current awareness service while for 25(41.7%) of the respondents did not respond.

Table: 7. would you be interesting in seeing more classes offered in the library

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	38	63.3%
No	22	36.7%
Total	60	100%

Table shows that 38(63.3%) of the respondents indicate that they will be much more interesting in seen more classes offered, while 22(36.7%) of the respondents disagree with the idea.

Table: 8. Are there additional services that you would like to see offered by the public library.

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	36	60%
No	24	40%
Total	60	100%

The Table shows that 36(60%) of the respondents agree to see more additional services offered in the library while 24(40%) of the respondents did not respond, this implies that they are satisfied with the library services as they are.

Table: 9. Frequency count and percentage on constraint to current awareness services use in public library by respondents

S/N	Constraints	Yes	No	Total
1	Lack of enough library collection	60(100%)	0(0%)	60(100%)
2	The library collection are out-dated	47(78.3%)	13(21.7%)	60(100%)
3	Lack of awareness of the library existence	45(75%)	15(25%)	60(100%)
4	The library collection are beyond understanding of the user	5(8.3%)	55(91.7%)	60(100%)
5	Lack of qualified staff	15(25%)	45(75%)	60(100%)
6	Lack of conducive of atmosphere	17(28.3%)	43(71.7%)	60(100%)
7	Inadequate funding	38(63.3%)	22(36.7%)	60(100%)

Table: 9. Showed constraint to current awareness services use by respondents from the table, it shown that lack of enough library collection is a constraint to 60(100%) of the respondents agree to this. This also represents a 100% response rate for this questionnaire item. While for 47(78.3) affirmed to this, as against. 13(21.7%) of the respondents did not respond to the item. this indicate that the library collection are outdated. 45(75%) of the respondents lack of awareness of library existence. 15(25%) of the respondents did not respond to the item. this indicate access to awareness on ability to get the right information from the existence, 5(8.3%) of the respondents gave affirmation while 55(91.7%) of the respondents said they are able to get the current information from the library collection.

The table further showed that 15(25%) are test to the fact that lack of qualified staff is a constraint to the library while 45(75%) of the respondents said no, this indicate that the staff are qualified. The Table showed that 17(28.3%) of the respondents said lack conducive atmosphere is a constraint while 43(71.7%) of the respondents did not respond. 38(63.3%) of the respondents are agree, inadequate funding is a constraint while 22(36.7%) of the respondents disagree this implies that there is no inadequate funding in the libraries.

Summary of findings

The data for the research was collected through a questionnaire shared out to librarians of the public library in Katsina state, which is the case study. The data was analyzed mainly using frequency distribution tables.

The response rates of 60 and 37 represent 100% and 61.7% respectively. The finding also revealed that most of the users seek their information from the current awareness as to the availability and use of the current information it helps them and up-date their knowledge.

This is indicating by the response rate 35, 38 and 36 represent 58.3%, 63.3% and 60% respectively. Findings showed that personal collections help them to be more aware of current materials in the library services. The Findings from the study showed that the table result of 60 and 47 representing 100% and 78.3% respectively. Finding showed that lack of enough library collections is a constraint. In the Tables, 45, 75% findings show that in lack of awareness of library existence is a constraint to the respondents. And in the Tables 5, 8.3% of the respondents findings show that the collections of library materials are beyond understand is a constraint. In table 15, 25% of respondents finding show that lack of qualified staff is a constraint to the library services. And in table 17, 28.3% of respondents finding show that lack of conducive atmosphere is also a constraint in the library services in table 38, 63.3% of respondents finding show that inadequate funding is a constraint to respondents.

Conclusion

This research project began with discussions on how availability of current awareness services can create effective human resources, needed to the use of materials especially at the public libraries level. As the study has observed, all the public libraries have information needs which the library and other agents endeavor to satisfy. A current awareness service is an essential ingredient to the educational, political, and social development of the rural population. The information gap between the urban and rural areas can be bridged by effective library services. The federal, state, and local governments have the responsibility to better the lives of rural people by reaching rural communities through effective library services. The failure of libraries in the urban and rural areas in the Katsina states may be due to lack of political will, poor infrastructure, inadequate funding, and inadequate human resources.

Recommendations

Having discovered several problems relating to the use of current awareness services in the public library the researcher wishes to recommend some measures which should be taken to remedy the situation as well as prevent further degradation in the process of carrying out their services.

There should be a reliable current collection and also there should be adequate funding of the library. The atmosphere should be conducive and at the same time making a reliable and qualified staff.

Katsina state library board should be given enough fund to help them acquire current and enough library collections and also the fund will help them advertise the library by organizing workshop and public lecture to the members of the public by so doing creating awareness services.

The library should provide enough materials, the library should purchase current materials they should also make sure they employed qualified librarians. The government must find public libraries and expose them to wider/ global world educational challenges e.g. conference, services further studies.

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