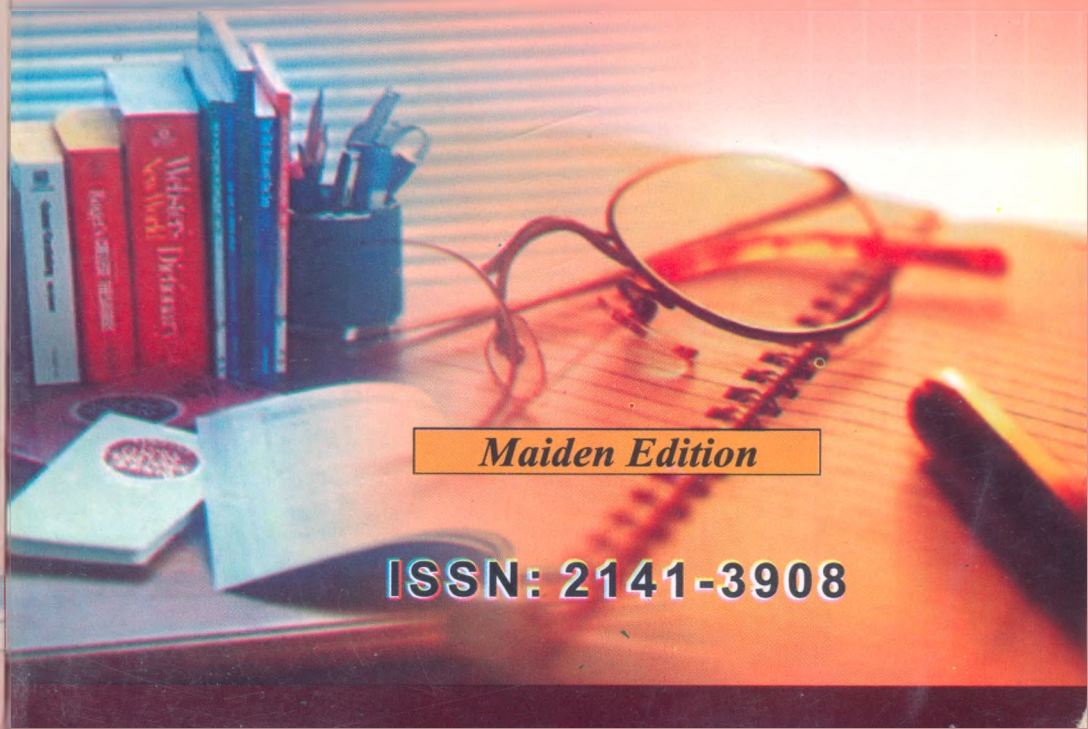
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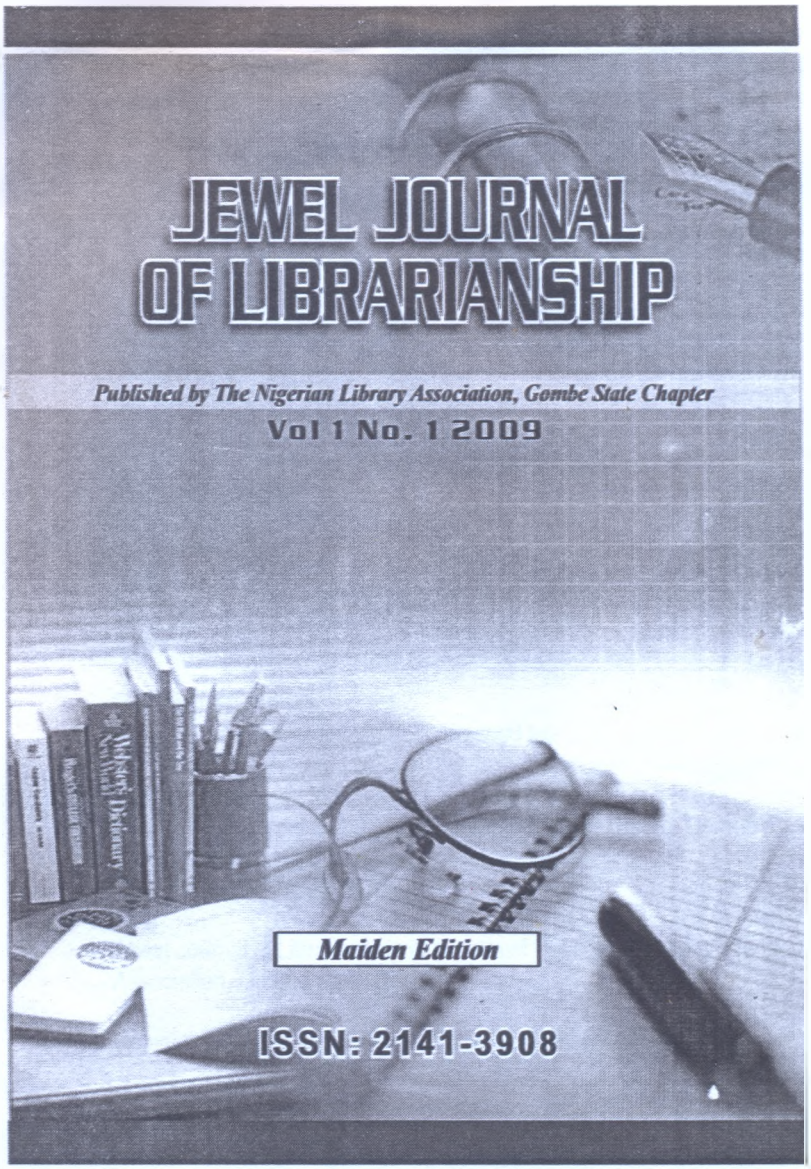
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Keywords: material selection, accession register, technical library, information dissemination

ABSTRACT
This paper attempts to stimulate thought and discussion on practices that are appropriate for information centres and libraries to advance dissemination of information and services in ways that are within their capabilities and terrains. One hundred and seventy four respondents were interviewed and surveyed for data collection. These are the people who formed the mailing list of the library accession register of the Institute for Agricultural Research Library, Zaria. The goal was to look at desirable properties of the system, the problems and the strengths of the accession register as a specific information dissemination method and how it could be capitalized upon to enhance the library service. The responses received indicated that the library must not deter but continue producing and circulating the accession register, it should also try to include new innovations that would be attractive to patrons especially incorporating web links that have direct bearing on the areas of the respective stakeholders. In conclusion, library services must be pursued with vigorousness like marketing and be community inclined by incorporating strategies like corporate social responsibility. Suggestions were proffered which include ensuring that clients/patrons plight is the focal point.

INTRODUCTION

The efficient exploitation of limited resources in any library and information centre to provide a useful service requires more than the traditional techniques of cataloguing, classification and bibliography. These techniques do not tell a reader what he is expected to know on what are newly available and where to find them, and a variety of other questions. This assertion is supported

by Waldman (2003) who posited that information professionals have long sought to comprehend what factors are relevant in encouraging a person to seek out information.

Libraries need strategic plans which will reinvigorate their systems and make them more efficient from a cost perspective and be more user-friendly in terms of service administered. Libraries must embrace challenges like succeeding generations who seek ways of being better than their predecessors. As custodians of knowledge, they automatically become facilitators for the actualization of the advancement of different generation. Libraries provide the links and dictates what expectations are of a current generation. Librarians can do this by supporting, improvising simplified channels and ease of information dissemination.

Libraries provide an essential supplement to the education system. They provide more than books, provide nurturing environment, the physical resources and are means to progress and be successful in the information age. In support of this assertion, Ajibola (2008) in a paper on the essentials of patron services reported that with the current level of competition in the knowledge industry, the era of armchair librarianship is definitely over. The threat posed by the emergence of new knowledge management centres informs the need for immediate change both in terms of technology and attitude in order to generate the much needed quality service. This implies that we must learn to really care for our patrons to achieve our corporate objectives.

The Accession Register, its Contribution to Library and Technical Services

The most important feature of library services is its viability. It has to be aware of users' needs and preferences, and be responsive to them. The Agricultural Library provides Accession Register as part of the library general affairs. It is client based service with the goal to satisfy client. This over the years has improved staff and students of both the Institute for Agricultural Research and the Faculty of Agriculture measured by the services provided by the library and also because of its unique position in the overall system. To some extent, the accession register is the library's prime or chief publicity technique. It provides information about the general stock and is the "official spokesman", by providing summaries of books, journals, periodicals/abstracts, etc available in the library at a particular time. It also provides access to the important documents thereby reducing many problems of literature search. The accession register of the Agricultural Library has the following features; class mark; author(s); title; edition statement; imprint, collation, series statement; ISBN/ISSN; bibliographic notes; language; type of publication (pamphlet, book, thesis, etc) accession number and location.

The Accession register has helped to disaggregate uses by discipline/departments and has proven to be important knowledge in the design

of its specific dissemination of information (SDI) and its material selection techniques. In the course of time, most of the accession registers were viewed and examined by staff and such information as could be gathered at the time was recorded on an information sheet as statistics for future use in the technical section especially is acquisition. The system eases dependency on library staff as the publication within the particular data is properly represented.

Agricultural Library and Information Services

There are many indications that the library service of IAR is under-utilized, which may also be the case elsewhere. Under-utilization of library services has been argued and one of the best known reasons remains discrepancy between the services provided and the real needs of users. This is a complex problem with a variety of aspects, some of which have not yet been adequately identified and studied (Kasa, 2008). Once the services have been established like the accession register, efforts are systematically made to pass them across to attract users and to evaluate the use of information and the services provided. The solution of the information problem observed does not rest entirely in the hands of the suppliers of information. The fact is that many potential users do not motivate or show interest in the matter, because the statistics of responses on materials request of all new arrivals in the Agricultural library have been on the decline as well (Annon., 2008). Librarians like the internet must revolutionize the ways information they packaged, processed, stored and disseminated. Librarians are therefore expected to formulate links that would facilitate their library survival by the ways they portray the library image on the minds of users and the funding agency. Every library must be able to determine the outcome of the quality and effectiveness of her services; she must be able to anticipate the desires and requirements of actual and potential users to fulfillment.

The steady growth in world book production and the expanding scale of scientific research have confronted research libraries with many new problems regarding the most rational way of building up, arranging, storing and making effective use of their stock. These problems include the deteriorating conditions of libraries and institutional funding in Nigeria. The interventions by the Federal Government through The World Bank Federal Universities development Sector Adjustment Credit, the Petroleum Special Trust Fund, National Education Materials Procurement Programme and the Education Tax Fund have no clear cut on our status till today (Ikpaahindi, 2006). This also applies to the Institute for Agricultural Research Library, IAR/ABU. Therefore, it is pertinent how libraries can adopt a detailed decision concerning further improvements in the quality of stock held by them and the

need to ensure that they could satisfy the information needs of their clients. This is the problem that gave rise to this paper.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

The major aim of this study is to assess the impact of accession register, an information dissemination medium and how it affects material selection, patronage and effectiveness of library services. The specific objectives are to:

1. investigate the direct or indirect influence of the library accession registrar on valuable material selection, specific dissemination of information and patronage of the library services.
2. examine what will happen if effective marketing and principles of corporate social responsibility are adopted for specific dissemination of information.
3. determine to what extent personal interest of patrons affects their choice of library resources and services.

METHODOLOGY

Study Area

The study was conducted in the Agricultural Library of the Institute for Agricultural Research, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The population of the study is the mailing list for the accession register of the library made up of 261 recipients. Criteria or eligibility include all heads of departments who facilitated communication to staff of their respective departments, professors and senior lecturers/programme leaders because of their status in the Institute and Faculty of Agriculture, friends of the library which comprised other staff and postgraduate students who frequency into the library and abiding by the rules and regulation of the library especially not keeping the library resources overdue.

The library collection are on agriculture and inline with the mandate of the Institute which is on genetic improvement of groundnut, sorghum, maize, cowpea, sunflower, cotton and castor plant; others are agricultural extension, farming systems of north west region of Nigeria, Farming Systems research in north west agro-ecological zone, training stakeholders and students of Faculty of Agriculture at all levels, design, development and fabrication of agricultural implements and equipment, provision of laboratory and other technical services, collaboration with relevant institutes and organizations. The Library is by classification a special/technical library which has a major role of providing direct assistance to the problem solving behaviour of its users. Every user of the library is believed to have a problem in the intellectual and knowledge of the institute, and the library attempts to help in solving many of these. The problems vary depending on the status of users; the users range,

for example, from the researcher requiring obscure document to development of theory to undergraduates / post graduate looking for a minimum effort solution to an essay preparation problem.

Analytical Tools

One hundred and seventy four (174) recipients representing two third of 261 mailing list of the accession register were analysed using simple descriptive statistics using frequency distribution and percentages. The 174 were the available recipients, others were either on leave or absent from office during the time the research was undertaken. Integrity of the results received was determined by comparing results of interview and the acquisition lists submitted by Heads of Departments of the Faculty of Agriculture and programme leaders of the Institute.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Direct or indirect influence of the library accession registrar on material selection, specific dissemination of information and patronage of the library services

The accession register is the key to information received and/or acquired in the library as books, pamphlets and periodicals at a given period of time.

Table 1 revealed that those who were directly influenced (64.4%) by the register accepted that the information they received has facilitate them improve their lecture notes and added to their reading lists for students. One hundred and fifty respondents representing 86.2% agreed that it has improved their citation of recent bibliographies in research, teaching and articles writing (Table 1). The list had reduced and restricts the dialogue between patrons and the library staff to specifics. Most often is guide to the author, subject and geographical catalogues. The working policy of the accession register stipulates that the materials would be displayed for only two weeks in the shelves tagged "new arrivals", after which the materials can be borrowed and/or returned to their appropriate locations on the shelf as classified, this is also indicated on the accession register as condition which must be fulfilled before the materials are loan out. The materials can be consulted at the designated locations in the library for easy retrieval and return to the shelves. Bookings and reservations are made on materials waiting for the two weeks and it is on a first come and first serve.

Responses received as indirect influence on material selection from sixty two respondents representing 35.6% said they notify other colleagues of the materials who use them instead. This is believed to constitute the down turn of 13.8% on specific dissemination and 8% in the patronage of the library

services respectively. Usually it is expected that the head of departments paste the list on their notice boards so that information could have a wide publicity. The result by implication means the indirect influence could be attributed to not having direct need of the resources sent at that particular time but are aware of others who need them.

Table 1. Direct and indirect influence of the library accession register on material selection, specific dissemination and patronage of the library services (N = 174)

Influence	Material selection		Specific dissemination		Patronage of the library services	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Direct	112	64.4	150	86.2	160	92.
Indirect	62	35.6	24	13.8	14	8
Total	174	100	174	100	174	100

The subject arrangement of the accession register had saved time. Recipients and patrons go straight to subjects having direct bearing to them. The subjects are inline with the mandate of IAR and departments of the Faculty of Agriculture; some are Agricultural economics and rural sociology, agronomy, Animal science, Plant science, Crop protection and Soil science. They are further sub-grouped for easy tracking, i.e., Crop protection, sub-group include; entomology, parasitology, nematology. Animal science, sub-group includes; Food and nutrition forage. Agronomy, sub-group includes; farming systems, irrigation, crops. Agricultural economics and rural sociology, sub-group include; economics, rural development, extension services, etc.

On patronage of the library services those with indirect influence (8%) revealed that their visits to the library are based on having notices of new arrivals and nothing more. This may be borne on the fact that every body wants something new to improve on the old ones. The materials sent to the library for acquisition from the departments and patrons of the library so far collected from 2000 to 2008 totaling 4,085 revealed that 65% or 2656 resource materials sent are those materials in the accession register that was purchased in few copies. The library maximally purchases only two copies of each because of the thin funding. In some cases, only one is purchased because of the price of the material. This has helped the library in its acquisition so far. Only few new titles are added. For this single reason, the librarian has resolved to sending selected titles and in some instances complete publishers catalogue. Patrons on the library mailing list have shown themselves physically to inspect new materials displayed on receiving the accession register.

Effective marketing and principles of corporate social responsibility and specific dissemination of information

According to Ikpaahindi (2006) and Omo-Fregene (2008) libraries must market their products and services through sale, exchange, lent and transmission. Developments of good collection and user-oriented services still and will always remain the focal point of librarianship.

Responses for making the accession register effective and having improvement from what is earlier obtainable is presented in Table 2. The multiple responses received revealed that needs new innovation that would attract patrons. Many suggested the inclusion of recent web sites and URLs (91.9%). Abstract/summary had the lowest suggestion of 54.0% to be included to attract patrons. The highest response came from 170 respondents representing 97.7% who suggested the inclusion of keywords.

Table 2. Response on effective marketing and corporate social responsibility for the dissemination of information.

Innovations	Frequency*	Percentage
Inclusion of website/URLs	160	91.9
Inclusion of abstract/summary	94	54.0
Inclusion of keywords	170	97.7

*multiple responses

All libraries must respond to patrons numerous needs and also contribute to the development of its parent organization. The accession register could be emulated for effective service delivery which agrees with John Cotton Dana action in Denver who encouraged librarians to:

- send circulars advertising the services of their libraries
- make personal visits to client who frequent the library to gate their sympathy and support towards the library development;
- reach out to the business community by allowing them to access facilities of the library;
- publish a monthly newsletter about the library and achievements of the community;
- develop schemes to train the community on how to utilize the services of the library;
- participate in the local activities of the community, like departmental seminars, workshops and conferences so that contributions made to

literary development and types of resources needed for research could be procured; and

- encourage the community to deposit literary materials and send acknowledgement receipts to those who comply, in some instances make visits to show your appreciation to donors.

The libraries by these services have responded to the patrons numerous needs and also contribute to the development of the institute, the faculty of agriculture and the university at large.

Personal interest of patrons and their choice of library resources and services

Response revealed that innovations on the accession list may make the production of the accession register more expensive but with the relevant innovations patrons could made to support its production. It is now clear that patrons see their interest as the only requirement for library improvement. Therefore libraries are encouraged to exploit these personal interest that may include, organizing training on information search, allocating air time for cheap browsing compared to what is obtainable in the community and access would be strictly for registered library patrons. Library could include participation in the different departmental seminars as a routine duty to support and contribute to the presentation. The support patrons get from the library would be reciprocated by patrons because many believed the library is not doing enough.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings it could be concluded that there is an interconnection between highly specialized and broadly based subject-matter in the reading requirements of users.

Stocks of libraries are continually expanding but services are under-utilized, attributable to the discrepancy over users needs. Library services and materials selection are influence by a direct and indirect influences of the services a library offer.

Effective utilization of library service include new and better innovations, but personal interest of parent institutions and users suggestions support the development and expansion of library and services offered.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the findings, it is recommended that all libraries should build its stock systematically on the basis of long-term and current acquisition plans. Such plans should have both community and patrons interest above

every, it could also solicit patrons opinion in acquisition of new resources and be consistent with the changing environment.

All information release from the library reflecting its stock and services should be easily comprehensible not filled with the library technical terms.

Considering patrons interest and suggestions makes the library very competitive and places it in a position where it could solicit for assistance and support. It is therefore recommended that new innovations should include organizing training on information search, be active participants in all literary activities and contribute to the presentation. This helps in exerting the relevance of the library in the affairs of the organization.

The library is recommended to always seek and solicit patrons opinion in acquisition of new resources in the wake of thin budgetary allocations. Finally, librarians must be proactive not deteriorate to such level that their libraries and services be tagged dead zones.

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