Effectiveness of Readers Statistics towards Service Improvement in Bingham University Library, Nasarawa State

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KEY WORDS

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the effectiveness of readers' statistics towards service improvement in university libraries, its usefulness, and the frequency at which readers statistics are taken, challenges associated with statistical record in academic libraries and some solution in tackling the problems. The data generated was analysed using simple frequency table and simple percentage. To obtain relevant data and information for study, three research questions were formulated based on the research objective to guide this research work. A case study research design was used to study the staff of the university a library and Questionnaire was used for data collection. 30 copies of the questionnaire were distributed, while 26 were retrieved. From the analysis it was deduced that readers' statistics is very paramount to the growth of the library and it is faced with some challenge such as, readers moving from one reading hall to the other in search of resources, readers leaving before the next statistics is taken because of the unconducive reading environment and so many others. The recommendations are; the library staff should be up and doing in keeping statistical records, the management should provide a good reading environment to prevent the users from leaving the library, there should be more awareness on resource location in the library to prevent readers from moving up and down.

Introduction

Bingham university library is our major focus in this study, the library was established 2005 under the Administration of the First Vice Chancellor of Bingham University, Prof Gana. The University Library houses Series of collections both print and non-print, the university library has a great capacity to accommodate large no of student, and the university library has various departmental libraries servicing the student and lecturers.

It could be said that the library has become a focal place for enrichment, entertainment, education and empowerment through knowledge. The library is an important and integral component of any higher institution which has offered opportunity for students and staffs to explore and expand in minds (Blau 2004). The library must be seen to be much more than a collection of books and the people who help find them; it is in fact the heart of any academic institution.

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According to Williams (1999) cited by Oladugba (2012) library activities can be expressed in statistical form, because they are effective tool used for the management appraisal of a library. Statistical record in library covers a wide range of library operations.

Library statistics reveal a wealth of materials of hidden success stories where libraries have opened and ensured access to relevant information for all groups of the population. Library statistics is applicable to almost every aspect of library operations as it is required in planning, evaluation and assessment for growth and development. It is understandable that the bedrock of library assessment or performance evaluation is the statistics that have been gathered, stored, analyzed and used over a period of time.

Library statistics are the basis for the establishment of standards in a library. The most common among these statistics are the size of collection, books consulted by library patrons and reader's statistics. Library use and library users are essential for revealing and confirming the outstanding value that library provides. Library statistics are necessary for effective management of libraries, but they are still more important for promoting and improving library services

As perceived by the researcher, library statistic is the statistical representation of various records in the library. It encompasses readers' statistic, book, acquisitions, and statistics of library collections. Readers' statistics are the bases for the establishment

Review of Related Literatures
In the library and information science profession, collection of data is often seen as part of administrative duties. In other instances, it has been found necessary to collect data from patrons about their opinion and usage of resources as far as statistics as a subject of study or discipline is concerned.

Attah (2002) saw statistics as the scientific method of collecting, organizing, summarizing, presenting and analyzing data .Statistical information is a vital tool for the management and development of any organization. Keeping statistics of activities is basic on the survival and progress of a library and enables the library to measure its performance periodically as the basis for the assessment of performance and the needs or improvement. Statistical records are basic to the growth and development of each and every library. Library statistics are needed in order to be able to ascertain the level of the different resources and services that a library provides and how the resources and services are being utilized by different classes of patrons.

According to Omotoso and Igiamoh (2012) the effectiveness of any library rests upon its ability to maximize the satisfaction of its users' needs while minimizing the time spent in obtaining the requested information resources. Sam Ifidon (1983) as cited by Jonathan (2014) stated that most library standards are quantitative in nature, besides many library records which provide the materials of standards are statistical.

Murray & Stephen (1998) as cited by Johnathan (2014) defined statistics as the scientific method for collecting, organizing, summarizing, presenting and analyzing data as well as drawing valid conclusions and making reasonable decisions on the basis of such analysis. This is usually done in order to minimize uncertainty. Ogundipe, Lucas & Sanni (2005) as cited by Adebowale (2006) remarked that data are the input raw materials from which information is produced and they are found everywhere. So no matter what your line of work is, you will make decisions that involve data. Statistics can be defined as a way of gathering organizing and summarizing data that was gathered for a particular purpose.

Jilovsky (2011) reported that library statistics should reflect yesterday i.e. record and measure the past, reflect today i.e. incorporate new data elements whilst retaining continuity with past statistical reports and reflect tomorrow i.e.

develop measures which will assess and record evolving library services.

According to Obilade,(2003) as cited by Salawa (2012), library statistics are equally useful for segmenting users for current awareness services and selective dissemination of information. Library data and statistics generated from the records and surveys of the information needs and service preferences of users enable the library to provide them with latest available and relevant information in the appropriate formats, such as lists of newly acquired books or journal issues, content pages of latest journals, abstracts of publications, or complete full text publications).

Explaining library use, Reitz (2004), states that it is "the extent to which the facilities and resources of a library are actually used by its clientele. Common measures include overall or per capita circulation, turnover of collection(s), gate count, program attendance, Internet use with the building, interlibrary loan and reference ransactions, etc. Statistics on library use are nportant in documenting effectiveness and ustifying funding". Utilization of library materials is concerned with the number of information materials that are effectively used by its patron.

Library statistics are the basis for the establishment of standards in a library. The most among these statistics are the size of collection, books consulted by library patrons and reader's statistics. Library use and library users are essential for revealing and confirming the outstanding value that library provides. Library statistics are necessary for effective management of libraries, and very important for promoting and improving library services

Keeping appropriate library statistics is very important for the growth and service improvement of any library. It is important to put the statistical record into proper usage because it helps to reveal where lapses are found in the library and also helps the management to support the growth of the library.

According to Nuut (2002) readers' statistics are valuable source for library performance and measurement. It plays a very important role in decision making of many organizations as well as libraries. It also helps in revealing gaps in the

library collections. Nwalo (2001) stated that one of the best ways to determine library effectiveness is the use of readers' statistics. Libraries also benefits from the use of readers' statistics to foster development in its activities and also for improved service. Statistics are the most common means of measuring a library performance; Librarians use the facts of statistics to press on management to release funds for library growth and development.

According to Kumar (2001) library readers' statistics shows the strengths and weaknesses of a library in terms of resources, equipment, staffing and finance. Library data and statistics generated from the records and surveys of the information needs and service preference of users enable the library to provide them with latest available and relevant information in the appropriate formats. In recent times it has become necessary for libraries to compile daily, weekly and monthly acquisition and user's statistics. This has facilitated annual compilations and request for data from external, independent and corporate sources and body. According to Nwalo (2003), library readers' statistic is the art of keeping quantitative records of operation in the library. He went further to state that every standard library keeps a variety of statistics on routine operations and occurrences such as acquisition, cataloguing, bindery, circulation, reference services. IFLA (2010) manifesto identifies some usefulness of library readers' statistics. These include:- promotion of library services to different types of stakeholders, showing the adequacy of library service to their respective population, demonstrating the cost effectiveness of libraries in their service. World Bank (2000) as cited by Othman (2005) stressed the relevance of readers' statistics as helping in service improvement in the library. They are evidence on which policies are built; they help identify needs, set goals and monitor progress. Without good readers' statistics the development process will be slow.

Readers' statistics is an art of keeping record of library users on regular basis; it can be done hourly, daily, weekly, or monthly depending on the library policy and schedule. It can be done statistically for easy retrieval and accessibility. Items that are easy to count or those that have been counted in the past may not be needed to answer certain questions that need to be

answered in today's libraries. So it is vital that the statistical elements are regularly reviewed and updated in order to ensure that relevant data is collected. However, as it is important that longitudinal data is available so that trends and changes can be tracked over time, it is also critical that the review process takes this into account. In particular, statistical elements should not be deleted without appropriate consideration of their long-term importance. The challenge is then to keep the total number of data elements manageable whilst incorporating new measures and maintaining sufficient data to record trends. Libraries are not all under the same authority, most of them serve specified institutions (universities, commercial firms etc.) or communities. Other institutions may be responsible for the mission, functioning, or legal regulation of libraries in their domain. Therefore, various institutions and organizations with differing objectives may feel responsible for collecting data about the libraries within their authority. The collection of library data will always start in the individual library, but the aim should be a compilation of the data on the regional and national level. For this purpose, libraries should collaborate to form regional/national networks for library statistics in order to ensure that a national library system is running effectively. Alegbeleye 1987 as cited by Jonathan(2014) posits that utilization of information by any clientele is influenced by the kind of job done, profession or function one performs As perceived by the researcher readers' statistics is a technique that can be used in collecting analyzing and interpreting data. In the library and information science profession.

As perceived by the researcher, readers' statistics is a technique that can be used in collecting analyzing and interpreting data in the library and information science profession.

Statement of the Problem

Effective utilization of libraries has been a matter of concern to librarians, information scientists and educationists in general. Therefore underutilization of readers statistics has no doubt assume a worrisome dimension, given that libraries and librarians have a responsibility of ensuring that their resources and services are effectively utilized especial when huge amount of money is voted for resources procurement. Though there is statistical data kept on readers'

usage of the library and information resources at Bingham library, this data has neither been analyzed nor updated and compared with data on previous years. This study has therefore been focused on investigating the effectiveness of reader's statistics, the frequency at which readers statistical record is been taken, the usefulness of reader's statistical record to the library and the challenges faced while taken the readers statistics.

Research Objectives

Generally, the study is channeled on effectiveness of Readers Statistics towards Service Improvement in Bingham University Library.

1. To determine the extent of the effect of readers' statistics on library service improvement in Bingham University library
2. To determine the extent of use of readers' statistical record in this library.
3. To find out the challenges faced by library staff in taking readers' statistical records in this university library.

Research Questions

1. To what extent does readers' statistics affect service improvement in the library?
2. To what extent is readers' statistical record used in the university library?
3. What are the challenges faced by library staff while taking readers statistic in this library?

Research Methodology

A case study research technique was employed to carry out this study. Case study was considered appropriate since there was need for an indepth study of a single library's staff population. The instrument used for data collection for this study is questionnaire. Timothy and Dangwaran (2017) citing Cohen and Morrison (2012) is of the opinion that questionnaires is widely used and it is a useful instrument for collecting survey information, providing structured often numerical data, being able to be administered without the presence of the researcher and often comparatively straightforward. The target (population) of this study comprises of 30library staff of Bingham University Library. Because the population is small and manageable, the entire population was used for the study.

Population of the study

Sambo (2008) as cited by Sani (2016) defines

population as asset of all element, objects or events that are of interest in a particular study. The target (population) of this study comprises of staff of a Bingham University Library.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size
In the study, the only respondent considered were the staff of the library. According to Muhammad (2012) Sample Size can be deter-mined non-statistically by using a face value evaluation. Sample size was generated using simple random sampling. The sample size is 30.

Method of Data Analysis.
Data collected where analyzed using descriptive statistics, which consist of frequencies, percent-ages and degrees.

Table 1. Extent at which readers' statistics affect service improvement in the library

S/N	ITEMS	HIGH EXTENT	LOW EXTENT
1	Planning Library budget	20 (77%)	6 (23.1)
2	Creating of more reading rooms to accommodate readers.	18 (69.3%)	8 (30.8%)
3	New acquisition	24 (92.3%)	2 (7.7%)
4	It helps to improve services being rendered in the library.	22 (84.6%)	4 (15.4%)
5	Extension of Library opening hours	6 (23.1%)	20 (77%)

Table 1 above reveals that the respondent agreed that 20(77%) of the statistic been recorded is been used for planning the library budget in a high extent while, 6(23.1%) said it is not been used for planning the library budjet. 18(69.3%) were of the opinion that the statistical records helps the library management in creating of more reading rooms to accommodate library users to a high extent, while 8(30.8%) disagreed. 24(92.3%) agreed that statistical record is used for new acquisition to a high extent while 2(7.7%) respondent said it does not make the library acquire new collection while 22(84.6%) are of the opinion that readers statistics helps to improve services being rendered in the library to a high extent while 4(15.4%) did not agree to it. 6(23.1%) respondent are of the opinion that library statistics helps extension of library hours to a high extent, while 20(77.7) disagreed to the fact that library statistics helps the extension of library opening hours

Table 2. Extent of use of readers' statistical records

S/N	ITEMS	HIGH EXTENT	LOW EXTENT
1	It helps in formulating library policies	22 (84.7%)	4 (15.3%)
2	For effective management of the library	22 (84.7%)	4 (15.3%)
3	It helps in the implementation of the formulated policies	18 (69.3%)	8 (30.85%)
4	It makes the university management aware of the challenges the library is facing	16 (61.5%)	10 (38.4)%
5	It helps to determine the adequacy of the library services to the readers.	17 (64.5%)	9 (34.6%)

From Table 2 above it was deduced that 22(84.7%) of the respondent agree that statistical record helps in formulating library record to a high extent, while 4(15.3) said it doesn't help in formulating library policies.22(84.7%) indi-cated high extent for effective library manage-ment while 4(15.3) disagree to the fact that statistical record helps the effective management of library.

18(69.3%) of the respondent agreed that library statistics helps in the implementation of the formulated policies 8(30.85%) disagree that library statistics helps in the implementation of formulated policies. 16(61.5%) of the respondent are of the opinion that library statistics makes the university management aware of the challenges the library is facing while 10(38.4)% of the respondent are of the opinion that library statistics does not makes the university management aware of the challenges the library is facing. 17(64.5%) are of the opinion that library statistics helps to determine the adequacy of the library services to the readers. While 9(34.6%) disagree that readers statistics helps to determine the adequacy of the library services to the readers.

Table 3: Challenges of Taking Statistical Records in the Library

S/N	Items	StronglyAgree	Disagree
1	Its tiring at times staff often forget	8 (30.8%)	18 (69.3%)
2	No adequate supervision and usage of the statistical records by librarians	14 (53.9%)	12 (46.1%)
3	Readers often move from one reading hall to another in search of resources	16 (61.5%)	10 (38.5%)
4	Lack of good reading environment (readers often live before statistics is taking)	22 (84.6%)	4 (15.4%)

From table 3 above it was deduced that 8(30.8%) are of the opinion that readers statistics is often tiring and sometimes the people in charge forget while 18(69.3%) disagree that tiredness and forgetfulness is not a challenge facing readers statistical record 14(53.9%) indicated that No Adequate Supervision and Usage of the Statistical Records by Librarians while 12(46.1%) disagree to no adequate supervision and usage of the statistical records by librarians. 16(61.5%) are of the opinion that readers often move from one reading hall to another in search of resources while 10 (38.5%) disagree to that fact that readers often move from one reading hall to another in search of resources. 22 (84.6%) indicated that readers statistics is affected by lack of good reading environment (readers often live before statistics is taking) while 4 (15.4%) disagree that readers statistical record is affected by lack of good reading environment (readers often live before statistics is taking)

Discussion of Findings
From the data gathered the following emerged that library statistics helps in planning the library budget. The study also reveals reader's statistical record will help the library management in the area of creating more reading rooms to accommodate their members. From the finding it was deduced that the study helps in acquisition of new collections in the library,

The data gathered also shows that reader's statistics is good for formulation, implementation of policies and for effective management of library service. The study reveals that no adequate supervision and usage of the statistical records by librarians and also lack of good reading environment (readers often live before statistics is taking)

Conclusion
In the library and information science profession, collection of data is often seen as part of administrative duties

Given the findings in this study, some pertinent conclusions were drawn, 30 questionnaires were distributed to the staff of Bingham university library and 26 were retrieved. From the findings it was discovered that the university is faced with some challenges. Taking of statistical records is very tiring and staff often forget, it was also discovered that no adequate supervision and usage of statistical records by the library, readers usually move from one reading hall to the other in search of information resources by so doing its alters the statistical readers records. Lack of good reading environment is also a major factor contributing to the problems of effective readers statistics.

Certain things need to be put in place for effective service delivery. For the problems to be solved and for service improvement.

Recommendation

There are some recommendations that can help the staff of the university library when taken statistical records.

* The library Staff should be up and doing in taking statistical record of users regularly.
* Statistical record should be supervised regularly by librarians and should be put to adequate use.
* The library should create more awareness to enlighten the Readers about the location of resources in the library, this will discourage the student from moving from one reading room to the other in search of resources.
* The management of the university through the university library should provide adequate and conducive environment for readers to allow them stay longer in the library.

Finally such statistics should be periodically examined and analyzed by the University librarian for further recommendation to management for improvement in resources acquisition and service delivery.

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