Current Awareness Services and Utilization of Information Resources in University Libraries: A Case Study of University Libraries in Abia and Imo States, Nigeria

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The general purpose of the study is to determine how current awareness relates to utilization of information resources in university libraries in Abia and Imo States, Nigeria. The survey research design was used for the study. The research constructed three research questions which were analyzed based on mean value differentials. The research adopted census method which was used to investigate 394 registered users from university libraries in Abia and Imo States, Nigeria. Findings showed that there is a significant relationship between library publications and utilization of library resources ($x^{2}_{cal} = 272.3 \geq x^{2}_{tab} = 21.03$), current awareness services and utilization of library resources ($x^{2}_{cal} = 394.3 \geq x^{2}_{tab} = 21.03$) and notice boards and utilization of information resources ($x^{2}_{cal} = 472.1 \geq x^{2}_{tab} = 21.03$). The study recommends that standard notice boards, bulletin boards and bill boards should be placed at vantage points throughout the universities so that the user communities are duly notified about the information resources and services of the library. Again, university libraries should complement their print resources with electronic resources in order to enhance the information resources available for utilization. The study concluded that library public relations are indispensable in the utilization of information resources in the university libraries and should be sustained.

Keywords: Utilization of Information Resources, Library Publications, Current Awareness Services, Selective Dissemination of Information, Notice Boards, University Libraries

INTRODUCTION

Public relations are inherent in human society both at individual and organizational levels. According to Turney (2012), every organization, institution or individual has public relations whether or not that fact is recognized. As long as there are people, living together in communities, working together in organizations, and forming a society, there will be an intricate web of relationships among them. In its most basic form, building that intricate web of relationships is what public relations is all about. The fact that human beings live together makes them to think about their interactions and organize their relationships with one another. In a primitive society the relationships are fairly basic advances and becomes more complex so do the relationships.

Coulson–Thomas (2013), Lloyd and Lloyd (2014) and Jefkins (2015) quoting the International Institute of Public Relations, maintain that public relations is the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain good will and mutual understanding between an organization and its publics. It is the art and social science of analyzing trends,
predicting and implementing planned programmes of action that will serve both the organizations and the public interest. Ademolekun and Ekundayo (2013) state that public relations are a distinctive management function which helps to establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organization and its publics. It involves the management of problems or issues; helps management to be informed on, and responsive to public opinion; defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve public interest; helps management to keep abreast of and effectively utilize change; serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and sound ethical communication techniques as its principal tool.

Kowalski (2008) x-rays public relations from the school environment perspective. According to him, public relations are seen as a positive construct that broadly encompasses communication functions within a district or school and their multiple external publics. The process is intended to produce and maintain a positive organizational image, to ensure collaboration between school and community, and to ensure organizational effectiveness. Community relationships are seen as both a basic PR component and a primary objective for schools. At the end of a thorough examination of the above definitions of public relations, Wilcox, Ault and Agee (2013) agree that scholars have tried to clarify the meaning of PR by using these six key descriptors: deliberate, planned, performance, counseling organization leaders and implementing planned performance, public interest, two-way communication and management function.

Baines, Egan and Jefkins (2004) reason that the public relations practitioner needs to possess the following personality traits and attribute: ability to communicate, organize, and get on with people, personal integrity, imagination and willingness to learn. Salu (2015) also upholds that a practitioner ought to see things from another person’s point of view, have an eye of detail, organizing ability, ability to comprehend the views of senior managers in broad philosophical terms, possess skill at expressing a view point with clarity and succinctness and willingness to perform anonymously behind the scenes more often than not.

Osuji (2015) maintains that the public relations person is born, and then made by training and education where such a person does not possess such traits; he is bound to be misfit, a low ranger and will end up as a professional light weight. Sometimes, favouratism places such a person in such a position where he cannot do anything better than to spend his time covering up. This leads the organization to suffer. In addition, a public relations person must be mindful of his image in dressing, appearance, attitude, behaviour and language. Those who are reputed to be image makers must first create good image about themselves.

Ajala (2015), Orukari (2010) and Osuji (2014) are of the opinion that public relations functions must include writing news releases, product information, speeches, newsletters, radio and television copy. It also includes editing any communication directed at any internal and external publics, relating and contacting news media and responding to media requests for information. Others are arranging for special events, press conferences, anniversary celebrations, fund raising events, award programmes, appearing and speaking before groups of people and monitoring public relations programme effectiveness, evaluating programme impact, management and administering the operation of public relations function. Training and working with executives and other organizational figures to prepare them for television presentations, interviews, debate or other public appearances, image making by projecting a favourable corporate identity that is respected by internal and external publics are all part of the public relations functions.

According to Nkwocha (2012), and Cutlip, Center and Broom (2014), public relations is the boss’s job to build and keep strong bonds with key groups that the organization needs to grow and thrive. Once this concept of public relations is embraced at the top, it spreads and becomes part of an organization’s culture. Furthermore, public relations professionals who help organizations establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships perform an essential management function that has an impact on the larger society. They encourage social responsibility in organizations and promote public relations that plays essential role in maintaining social order. Inherent in this concept of public relations is a moral commitment to harmonious adjustment among interdependent elements of society.

Jefkins and Yadin (2013) and Obe and Adebayo (2010), affirm that public relations are groups of people with peculiar roles to play for the smooth running and survival of any organization. Organizations cannot exist in a vacuum; they need the public to patronize them and partner with them. Similarly, the publics need the services
of the organization. In other words, the two of them have a kind of symbiotic/mutual relationship. Organizations service their publics, while the publics serve their organizations in return. Every organization has two types of publics—the internal and external publics. The internal publics represent groups within an organization which ensures the provision of its financial empowerment, labour, power and managerial support. These are the managers/supervisors, staff, employees, board of directors, labour unions and shareholders. The external publics are groups located outside the organization but have something to do with it. They are regulatory authorities/government, dealers/distributors, banks and insurers, suppliers, the media, stockholders, customers, competitors, community neighbours and grade alterations. In the library situation, the external publics are the users or patrons.

Obviously, every organization including universities and tertiary institutions of learning have their external and internal publics with whom they relate in order to achieve their various objectives. Okoro, Udeze and Agbo (2015) and Ubaka (2004) identify the publics of tertiary institutions as students, staff, academic board and management, Alumni, Honorary awardees, the communities where they are located, prospective students, parents, media men-local and international, prospective donors of scholarship awards, business and professional firms, foundation and research bodies, pressure groups e.g. student unions, federal, state and local governments, labour unions, Government agencies –JAMB, NYSC, federal ministry of education, libraries and librarians and committee of registrars, bursars, librarians etc. These organizations which are the publics of the tertiary institutions service them while the tertiary institutions in return service the organizations. In the light of the above background, this study therefore, seeks to investigate the relationship between current awareness services and utilization of information resources in university libraries: a case study of university libraries in Abia and Imo States, Nigeria.

Research Questions

(i) What is the relationship between library publications and utilization of information resources in the university libraries studied?
(ii) What is the relationship between current awareness services and utilization of information resources in the university libraries studied?
(iii) What is the relationship between notice boards and utilization of information resources in the university libraries studied?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Library publications are issued out by university libraries as a public relations strategy to guide users in the use of library facilities and resources. Some of these publications according to Harrison (2012) are annual reports, library bulletins and magazines, printed catalogues, subject booklists, list of recent additions, special service folders, book week programmes and the like. Another important publication is the library guide which provides detailed and accurate information about the library. It is always written in simple language with minimum librarianship jargons. Usually, library guides are well illustrated with coloured photographs, especially of some landmark areas in the library. It contains the physical and postal addresses of the library, telephone and fax numbers, e-mail and website addresses. The guide also contains procedures for registration, opening hours, library facilities available, etc.

Deale (2014) reveals that another means of communication beyond the library is through various non-verbal techniques. While there is no unanimity on the type of publication which most effectively serves the faculty, current acquisitions list and faculty bulletins are two examples widely used. These may vary from occasional mimeographed publications to the highly professional, printed quarterlies published by some of the larger university libraries. Competition for the reading time of faculty members should convince library administrators that their publications must be attractive yet functional, present information accurately yet concisely. Stebelman, Siggins, Nutty and Long (2013) affirm that the ‘Gelman Guide’ is published at the beginning of the academic year and provides faculty with basic information about the library such as reading hours, reserve and circulation policies, a list of subject specialist librarians, library department phone numbers and e-mail addresses, and names of chief administrators.

According to Collins English Dictionary (2003), a notice board is a board on which notices, advertisements, bulletins, etc are displayed. Cynosura (2009) adds that notice boards are a simple and easy way of passing information and keeping people informed. Notice boards are used for announcing office events, important organizational issues, and new regulations/office requirements and possibly for items such as employee recognition. The ideal office notice board is situated within an office near a door where staff can see it as they pass. The content should be kept up to date and someone is put in charge of updating materials at least once a week. People will stop looking at a notice board that contains out of date material or looks scruffy.

Jefkins and Yadin (2013) identify notice boards as a useful tool in the management and employee relations. Standard notice boards can be placed at vantage points throughout the organization so that all personnel are given the same information at the same time. Items may be printed poster fashion and attached to the board or the board may consist of sections or clips for each type of news item. No other items should be fixed to these boards. Ideally, items for notice boards should be given to a controller or public relations officer who reproduces the items in an attractive
form, and is responsible for positioning them. Only this person (or his or her representative) should be allowed to place items on the notice boards.

Olanlokun and Salisu (2014) reason that the library usually has a bulletin board where news release or important information about the library is pasted; the library can have more than one board. The size of the library will determine the number of bulletin boards it will use to disseminate information to the library users. Aiyegunle and Moneme (2006) infer that promotion of information resources in the library can be actualized with the public relations tool—the display boards. Publicity is the link between the resources and the users or patrons. The publicity functions are to give information about the library and resources, as well as promotion of new materials acquired. This can be achieved through notice board as a medium of publicity. Harrison (2015) adds that inside the building, the library should be in constant state of display. The foyer should be large and welcoming, with a well-staffed information desk in the foreground, a few displayed cases also frequently changed, by the way-to appeal to browsers with a few moments to spare, and bulletin boards containing posters and notices neatly displayed. A daily check on these is also essential for nothing parades faulty and inefficient organization more than bulletin boards flying tatty and out-of-date notices.

The library Association (2013) insists that no matter how well thought-out the operating systems within a library their full effectiveness will depend in part on the user understanding them and effective guiding is therefore a basic necessity. The librarian will need to plan a suitable system and draw up any briefs required to ensure that users take full advantage of notice boards and guides in the library. Laura (2012) says that the motivation for visiting libraries is to catch a glimpse of the displays on their notice boards, and to ask for permission to take pictures of the displays and bulletin boards. The knowledge acquired from such sightseeing exercise serves as a spring board to great inspiration and ideas.

In a pictorial presentation, Hesson (2009) reveals that libraries can use bulletin boards to encourage users to patronize their services and to buttress how reading can impact positively on them. Notice boards provide opportunities for users to be informed why borrowed books must be returned without delays. Users are encouraged to bounce back to the library for solution to their information needs. Library users are told that it is worthy to be carried away with reading books than lazing away precious times. The library is like an evergreen tree that grows every year with a lot of collection and other resources. A library user can acquire great knowledge through reading which can empower him to ‘hibernate’, live a good life, ‘plant a seed’, camp out and ‘catch a dragon by the tail’. Ogbuehi (2012) contributes that display boards and their materials are considered either for television use or to serve other instructional needs. They are most often used to progressively build elements of a presentation or to provide opportunities for students to participate overtly by selecting, arranging or showing relationships among items displayed.

Hilary (2014) argues that the importance of notice or bulletin boards is not restricted to the use of the library alone. It is an important component of classrooms. They provide a way to introduce new material or display student work. An eye-catching bulletin board will build interest in every student since it appeals to their usual side of learning. When there is a display of outstanding student work on the bulletin board, it motivates other students to work harder. The interactive bulletin boards add some excitement to the visual decoration and give them the opportunity to put their own spin on the board. The bulletin board also creates room to review concepts that have been previously covered in class.

Mazone (2014) agrees that bulletin boards can be used to differentiate the classroom environment. It helps students to develop an appreciation for the world in which they live and provide opportunities for students to “dabble” into unfamiliar topic areas and to develop interests they did not even know they had. Informational bulletin boards serve as a means of communication between several different classroom stakeholders’ teachers, students, school administration, parents and community members. It is therefore evident that notice boards are important instrument used by organization to communicate her publics, including the university libraries and her users. Bizzle and Flora (2015) are of the opinion that billboards whether located at the library or along the road provide great publicity for the library. Many libraries may consider billboards to be too expensive to use as a public relations tool, however, they can be cost effective given the level of exposure they provide. Many also argue against billboards that same people see it every day, yet a billboard is a yearlong reinforcement to people that they should visit the library regularly. It also tries to instill curiosity and sell the library as a place to visit.

According to Keenan and Johnston (2015) and Reitz (2004), current awareness service (CAS) is a service or publication designed to alert scholars, researchers, readers, customers on employees to recently published literature in their fields of specialization, usually available in special libraries serving companies, organizations and institutions in which access to current information is essential. Such services can be tailored to fit the interest profile of specific individuals or group.

Dawra (2004) and Unegbu (2013) agree that current awareness service (CAS) and selective dissemination of information (SDI) are important public relations strategies used to communicate the library users on the availability of current information resources. They reason that Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) is a specialized form of CAS. The difference between them is that CAS does not
discriminate while SDI is biased to some sets of researchers. SDI is directed to a focus group or individuals while CAS has no person in mind; its aim is to alert users of new acquisitions. So SDI is not only rendering information to users but is user-oriented. It is targeted to specific users, so it is specific user-oriented. Harrods Librarians Glossary (2014) agrees that CAS is sometimes used synonymously for SDI. Current awareness service as a public relations strategy is essentially provided to keep users up to date with the happenings in their subject areas of interest. Igbokwe (2012) and Aina (2004) note that CAS ensures that users are aware of recent developments in their fields of interest; hence users are informed of latest documents available to the library or information obtainable elsewhere. The information can be made available to the users through telephone calls, e-mail messages, letters, preprints of papers, photocopy of table of contents, periodical routings, maintenance of card files of references, library bulletins, subscription to specialized services, electronic news groups, etc. Back covers of a selection of recent acquisitions could be displayed. Libraries publish accession lists or acquisition lists at regular specified times to provide the full bibliographic details of materials recently acquired by the library. The order of arrangement of the new documents is usually by major subject categories and sent to the users directly or posted on a notice board through the electronic mail.

WhiteHall (2013) and Aina (2004:56), stress that selective dissemination of information, sometimes called current awareness services is the ability of a service to notify a client of material that matches the interests of the client. This involves scanning of material, recognizing relevant information in the material, summarizing the information and presenting the summarized information to the client. In that way, the client can decide whether or not to go ahead with acquiring the material or to wait for other information. Unlike current awareness service, which is more or less a group service, SDI is a personalized service. The user of course would have provided the library staff with his research profile; which enables the librarian to determine the users’ area of interest with precision. In addition, SDI helps to save time and money for the clients by making them aware of certain things, like: products, services and sources of information relevant to their area of interest.

Guha (2015) and Mansourian (2011) state that current awareness service and SDI are useful device through which users can be informed promptly about information generated on a subject or an area in which a group of scientists are involved in research pursuits. Kumar (2014) draws attention to the fact that current awareness services aim at bridging the time lag between the publication of primary documents and their coverage in secondary information services. Roy (2015) and Kannappanavar and Swamy (2013), state that the task of agricultural libraries is to disseminate pertinent information to the scientists at the right time through current awareness services and selective dissemination of information services. Therefore, it is impressed that all agricultural university libraries should offer current awareness services as an important dissemination function.

Ezeani (2004) upholds that current awareness services can be rendered through newsletters, journals, newspapers and current contents. She listed its advantages as keeping the information user up to date, helps the creation of new ideas and saving time and money spent on journals.

The above discussions on CAS and SDI, as well as on other public relations variables justify the views of Adeyoyin, Omotosho and Bello (2011) that libraries must strive and thrive because they still have a role to play in the academic community. Librarians like other professionals have to adapt to and cope with the changes taking place in the environment in which they operate. The operation of the library depends on the demonstrated use of the services it provides. Librarians therefore have the responsibility of encouraging the use of the services they provide. Effective marketing and public relations provide the means by which users are made aware of the services of the library. Heavy patronage therefore determines the worth of the library.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey research design was used for this study using questionnaire as an instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was titled Current Awareness Services and Utilization of Information Resources in University Libraries Questionnaire (CASUIRULQ). The population of the study is 394 registered users of the libraries in Abia and Imo States, Nigeria. This instrument was administered on the 394 registered library users of the four public universities in Abia and Imo States, Nigeria. No sample size was drawn from the population. This is because the population of the study is small and accessible. The census method was used to ensure that opinions of all the registered users were captured for the study.

Analysis

A total of three hundred and ninety-four (394) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to users in the four university libraries in Abia and Imo States, Nigeria. Out of these, three hundred and twenty-eight (328) copies representing 83.2% were duly completed and returned for analysis.

Research Question 1

What is the relationship between library publications and utilization of Information resources in university libraries in Abia and Imo States, Nigeria?
Table 1: Mean Values of how Library Publications relate with Utilization of Information Resources in University Libraries in Abia and Imo States, Nigeria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Library Publications</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>It helps me to know books in various subjects</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>It assists me to identify books on the shelves</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>It teaches me procedure to borrow information resources</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>It does not publish library operation</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>It helps me to know library rules and regulations</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant Mean Value = 2.8

Analysis as shown on Table 1 indicates that the relationship between library publications such as printed catalogue, library guide, newsletters and library bulletin and utilization of library resources based on the significant mean value of 2.8 is in three main aspects. These are that library publication helps users to know books in various subjects in the library ($\bar{x} = 3.0$), assist users to identify books on the shelves ($\bar{x} = 3.0$), and teaches the users the procedure to borrow information resources in the library to use ($\bar{x} = 3.0$). The other two reasons namely that library publication does not publish library operations or helps users to know library rules and regulations have mean values of ($\bar{x} = 2.0$) and ($\bar{x} = 2.8$) respectively. Library publication does not publish library operations is not related to the utilization of library resources because the mean value is less than the significant mean value of 2.8.

Research Question 2

What is the relationship between current awareness services (CAS) and utilization of information resources in university libraries in Abia and Imo States, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean Values of the Extent of Relationship between Current Awareness Services (CAS) and Utilization of Information Resources in University Libraries in Abia and Imo States, Nigeria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Current Awareness Services (CAS)</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>It informs me when current information resources are available in the library</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>It enables me receive scanned literature from the library</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>It notifies me on the latest information about a particular subject clearly</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>It makes me to waste much time to locate library information resources</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>It gives me quick notice on the latest publication in my discipline.</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant Mean Value = 2.9

Based on the significant mean value of 2.9 as shown on Table 2, current awareness services has relationship with the utilization of information resources in university libraries in Abia and Imo States, Nigeria because it informs users when current information resources are available ($\bar{x} = 3.2$), enables users to receive scanned library literature from the Internet ($\bar{x} = 3.2$) and notifies users clearly on the latest information about a particular subject ($\bar{x} = 3.2$). However, current awareness services did not relate to utilization of information resources because users time were usually wasted due to the services and did not give them quick notice on latest publications. These two had their mean values less than the significant mean value of 2.9. Current awareness services include notification on current information resources, telephone calls, letters, e-mail services, table of contents notifications and display of back covers of recent acquisitions.

Research Question 3

What is the relationship between notice boards and utilization of information resources in university libraries in Abia and Imo State, Nigeria?

Table 3: Mean Values of the Relationship between Notice Boards and Utilization of Information Resources in the University Libraries in Abia and Imo States, Nigeria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Notice Board</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>It gives me news release from the library</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>It informs me of latest decision from the library management</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>It tells me when to expect full library services or less</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>It does not offer me useful information about the library</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>It reminds me to comply with library rules and regulations</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant Mean Value = 3.0
Notice Boards according to Table 3 relate to utilization of information resources in the university libraries in four main areas. These are that notice boards gave users news from the library from time to time ($\bar{x} = 3.3$), informed users of the latest decision from the management on certain issues ($\bar{x} = 3.2$), told users when to expect full library services or less ($\bar{x} = 3.1$) and reminded users to comply with library rules and regulations and the penalty thereto ($\bar{x} = 3.3$). From this revelation, notice boards such as billboard, bulletin board and display board show its significance in the area of encouraging users to utilize library services and its resources. However, the study found out that many students did not make effective use of notice boards as some of the library users responded that notice board did not offer them useful information about the library.

Findings

The findings show that library publications have significant relationship with utilization of information resources by users in the university libraries in Abia and Imo States. As indicated on Table 1, that library publications like library guide, quarterly/annual reports, fact sheet and occasional publications, help users to know books in various subjects, assist users to identify books on the shelves, teach users the procedure to borrow information resources and also help users to know library rules and regulations. This finding agrees with Harrison’s (2012) revelation that library publication such as library guide provides detailed and accurate information about the library such as registration, opening hours, library facilities available to the users. Again, this finding affirms the outcome of the research by Stebelman, Siggins, Nutty and Long (2013) affirm that the ‘Gelman Guide’ provides users with basic information about the library such as building hours, reserve and circulation policies, a list of subject specialist librarians, library department phone numbers and e-mail address and names of Chief administrators.

Findings as shown on Table 2 revealed that there is a significant relationship between current awareness services and utilization of information resources in university libraries. The result shows that CAS informs users when current information is available, enables users scan resources from the cyber and clearly notifies users on the latest information about a particularly subject. The result agrees with Dawra (2004) and Unegbu’s (2013) findings that current awareness service and selective dissemination of information are important public relations strategies used to communicate the library users on the availability of current information resources. The findings also corroborate with the findings of Mansourian (2011) who reports that current awareness service and selective dissemination of information are useful device through which users can be informed promptly about information generated on a subject or an area in which a group of scientists are involved in research pursuits.

Findings show that there is a significant relationship between notice boards and utilization of information resources in university libraries. Notice boards where circulars, reports, invitations and other messages are placed give users news from time to time as they emanate from the library, inform users of the latest decisions from the management on certain issues, tell users when and how to expect full library services or less and remind users to comply with library rules and regulations and the penalty thereto. These findings are in line with the reports by Ayegunle and Moneme (2006) that promotion of information resources in the library can be realized with the public relations tool - the display boards. The result also agrees with Olanlokun and Salisu (2014) and Hesson (2009) state that libraries can use bulletin boards to encourage users to patronize their services and to buttress how reading can impact positively on them. The findings are also in line with the report of Bizzle and Flora (2015) that regardless of the location of the notice board it provides great publicity for the library and her services. However, part of the findings show that some of the users claim that notice board does not offer them useful information about the library. This tends to weaken the argument that notice board is an effective library public relations tool.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In the light of the above findings, the study concluded that library publications as major library public relations tool was resolved to have a significant relationship with utilization of information resources by users in the university libraries. The research also deduced that Current Awareness Services (CAS) have a significant relationship with utilization of information resources by users. The investigation also ended with the conviction that notice boards have a significant relationship with utilization of information resources by users in the university libraries. The demand for library collections can be created through library publications. Articulated and colourful library publications programmes can increase and sustain library patronage in Nigeria where the reading culture is low.

Libraries should ensure that users are aware of recent developments in their fields of interest; hence users are informed of latest publications through CAS. In this information age when information can be accessed through various fora, university libraries must adopt and consistently use CAS to reach out to their teeming users. This would help to make them more relevant and deeply appreciated in the university system. Standard notice boards, bulletin boards and bill boards should be placed at vantage points throughout the universities so that the user communities are duly notified on the information resources and services of the library. Brilliant and stimulating captions should be used to enhance and uphold the attention of library users to the information displayed on
the notice boards. University libraries should make extra effort especially during the library orientation to make the users to deeply appreciate the notice board as effective library public relations tool that cannot be overlooked in their use of the library.

REFERENCES


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