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ASSESSMENT OF NIGERIAN INSTITUTE OF LEATHER AND SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY (NILEST) LIBRARY ON RESEARCHERS OUTPUT OF ACADEMICS/RESEARCH PERSONNEL

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Abstract

The paper examines the types, populated and performance ratings of the NILEST library with particular emphasis on the influence of the library on academics/researchers' output. The paper utilized questionnaire for collection of data from academic/research staff of the institution who patronize the library. The results collected revealed that the library collection is comprehensive and resolving the information needs of its clients. Journals were the most consulted for research, the satisfactory level ranges from excellent to poor, most respondents agreed that they are satisfied. The paper concluded that NILEST library plays significant roles in facilitating academic/research activities. The paper recommended the incorporation of electronic resources which are lacking now in the collections of the library to increase patronage while the management can expand resources subscribed by the library simply by expanding the research output considered and approved for staff promotions.

Introduction

The library of Nigerian Institute of Leather and Science Technology (NILEST) is a research library established to serve for the information needs of the organization. According to World Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science (1985) a special library is established to provide information to a special clientele on an on-going basis. The NILEST library is responsible for the subscription, organization and disseminating of information according to the mandate of the institution. Therefore, the library is organized along subjects that comprise all the fields of study undertaken in the Institute at a depth impossible for some other types of libraries. The library materials are germane to the mandate of the Institute especially because it facilitates teaching, learning and research.

As a special library, the NILEST library collections are characterized as follows:

- a. The periodical literatures are of prime importance and form the major parts of the collection (Library).
- b. Reports, standards, specification form a considerable quantity.
- c. It files information rather than materials which calls for introduction of some special techniques

(mechanical indexing, information retrieval system, e.t.c) for organization.

- d. Information here is up-to-date more than the text books, periodical literature or published reports.
- e. It ensures quick dissemination of information (SDI)

It is also imperative to report that these unique and distinguished collections provide information mostly on job related activities which enables users to improve on their skills. Sadiq (2005) noted that no good research is possible without a library because the library provides the needed required information in numerous forms and formats for decision making. Therefore, libraries are critically important in helping researchers to exploit the full benefits that abound in today's present networked world. Libraries are thwarted because they are not well – equipped to promote, support as well as facilitate access, retrieval and use of information resources for the purposes of research. However, libraries that are very functional succeed in addressing such problems and go further to establish stronger links with researchers by providing services that

promote and exploit new technologies to satisfy the information needs of patrons.

The Nigeria Institute of Leather and Science Technology (NILEST) is the only institution in Nigeria with mandate on leather products. It therefore suffices to investigate the contributory role of the library in supporting, facilitating and actualizing the aims and objectives of the institutions especially as it influences the research output of its academics and research personnel.

Objective of the Study

The research is undertaken to:

- establish the types of library resources and services academic and research staff utilize as they patronize the library's services
- determine academics/ researchers' output formats, and
- ascertain the ratings of the library services by the academic and research personnel during the course of utilization of the NILEST library.

Literature Review

Resource in Research Library

Establishing the types of library resources in a library shows the strength and weaknesses, attractiveness or desertion by patrons as well as the responsiveness of both institutional management and the librarian-in-charge. According to Reitz (2005), library resources must be comprehensive in its collections and in a specified field of interest selected to meet the information needs of users. On a general note, collections include books, journals, newspapers, reference works, music scores, microforms, maps, etc. They also include theses and dissertations, bibliographic databases, internet sources, etc. In addition, Vickery (1995) in Nwabueze *et al.* (2010) identified library research resources to include textbooks, annuals, serials, electronic and non-print media.

Library resources do not exist in isolation with the institution that could be the reason why Udondoh (2009) emphasized that the library is central to the provision of relevant information

resources and services in any institution for the purposes of teaching, learning and research. These resources also influence the services rendered through lending for a period, providing specialized reference services, organizing for new researchers and providing a secure and pleasant reading and researching environment; others are answering reference queries, providing user education, indexing and abstracting, inter-library loan, and current awareness services (Nwalo, 2000).

Rin and Rluk (2011) reported the value of libraries for research and researchers noting additional resources in the form of institutional repositories to store and make available institutional assets such as research papers and theses. In most cases, libraries are responsible for the running of their institutional repositories. These repositories promote the visibility of the institution's outputs and its research profile. This is also a clear indication that institutional libraries play significant roles in educating researchers, academics, building and bridging information gaps identified to affect research productivity across the institution.

Populated research output format

Wardikar and Gudadhe (2013) noted that research publications constitute the most important form of communication in nearly all academic community, making scientific information publicly available and allowing the rest of the academic audience to evaluate the quality of the research. McBurney and Novak (2002) gave the most popular research output formats to include books, journals, conference papers, newsletters, magazines, bulletins, technical reports, monographs, and others they categorized under miscellaneous papers. What is most applicable to NILEST researchers and academics is likely not to include all the aforementioned. A justification by Egwunyenga (2008) argued that specialized research institutions the world over turn out chunk of research outputs in technical, annual and miscellaneous reports which relate to developmental issues not only in the country but also within the region. The study by Javed and

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Shah (2008) revealed that 49.52% of citations pertained to journal articles and the rest to other resource types. This view was also shared by Gideon (2008) who reporting on Nigeria observes that scholarly publishing played a much greater role in terms of dissemination of information through scholarly journals. He pointed out that academic research is a focal point in Nigeria, compulsory for both lecturers and students, but particularly for lecturers who are affected by the concept of 'publish or perish' which has come to strap their subsistence and promotions making them to also rely on the academic environment and the volume of their research output and published works. Collaborating the above statement, Thanuskodi (2010) revealed that periodicals are the primary sources and channels of information dissemination for researchers. They are also important media for communicating the latest research findings, containing the current research development in any field of knowledge, which reflect and indicate literature growth.

The essence of identifying what is obtainable in terms of populated research output is also shared by Henczel (2007). He affirmed that by so doing, it will help in the identification of information that could be critical to the responsibilities and activities that are carried out by employees in the institution and ensuring that such information are provided in a way that complements existing workflow and information use practices to actualize information needs to satisfy the yearnings of readers.

Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) stated that availability, accessibility and use of information resource are indispensable to the teaching, research, and community development. However, quality research output in numerous formats exposes researchers to current information and sharing research results with others. In addition, it enables researchers to share insight, demonstrate positive research output and gain recognition for creative thinking. The rewards according to Yusuf (2005) may not deviate from the "publish or perish" adage among academics in

Nigeria which underscores the importance attached to research output.

The emphasis on research output formats is an indication that academics and researchers are in touch with the latest development in their field and are more likely to be in the forefront of their discipline (Lertputtarak, 2008). A study conducted by Perry et al. (2005) showed that academic staff viewed successful research completion and publication as an important factor in evaluation and requirement for promotions.

Satisfaction with Library services

According to Ives (1983), library users' satisfaction is the extent to which users believe the library and information services available to them meet their information needs. Ankpa (2000) cautioned on what is most expressed in literatures whenever studies on user satisfaction are undertaken. The paper reported that most studies focused on information needs of users and not how satisfied users are with services provided despite its management importance on the existence, sustenance and retention of clients. Oyelude (2004) gave the requisite characteristics of libraries on which rating user (students') satisfaction can be evaluated. These include: relevance of resources collected, adequate storage facilities, sufficient access provision, platforms that strategically take into cognizance information formats, unpublished or in non-traditional formats and facilitate retrieval of resources through self-help or an intermediary.

Methodology

The study is a quantitative research which employed survey design to collect data using structured questionnaire as its instrument. The populations were the researchers and academics from Nigerian Institute of Leather and Science Technology (NILEST). Their choice stems from the fact that they are the categorized personnel who depend on volume of publications and involvement in research-based activities to attain promotion. The questionnaire was administered for two weeks by the researchers but retrieval took four weeks after administration to the

staff of the Institute concerned. The data collected were analysed descriptively using means, percentages and relative important index presented using tables.

The Institute has a total of one hundred and seventy seven (177) researchers/ academics; these automatically constitute the population of the study as obtained

from the Registry Department. However, only sixty one (61) researcher/academics representing (34%) of the population were purposively sampled for the study because of their records with the library as most patronizing which is the basis on which the study is set to promote.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Types of library resources available and utilized by academic/research personnel of NILEST as they patronize the library with corresponding mean scores and ranking

Library resources	Frequency of responses					□FX	Mean Score	RII	Ranking
	4	3	2	1	0				
Books	25	20	12	2	2	186	3.05	0.76	1 st
Periodicals	20	48	16	8	14	92	1.51	0.38	7 th
Pamphlets	4	54	34	13	12	105	1.72	0.43	5 th
Journals	26	18	9	3	5	179	2.93	0.73	2 nd
Newspapers/Magazines	12	57	30	10	14	109	1.79	0.45	4 th
Technical Reports	32	30	20	16	17	98	1.61	0.40	6 th
Audio Visual Reports	16	33	22	5	20	76	1.25	0.31	8 th
Reference Sources	40	45	30	4	17	119	1.95	0.49	3 rd
Special Collection	4	30	22	15	34	71	1.16	0.29	9 th

Where 4 – very high 3 – high 2 – low 1 – very 0 – Don't know

Table 1 shows the types of library resources available in the library for client use, corresponding ranking is necessary to investigate the extent of the influence of the research materials the library acquired and subscribed to support research output in NILEST. This was done using the mean score and relative importance index (RII). The results revealed that books, journals, and reference materials ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd having RII of 0.76 (3.05), RII of 0.73 (2.93) and RII of 0.49 (1.95) respectively.

Periodicals, Audio visual and Special collection occupied the 7th, 8th, and 9th position respectively in the ranking because of RII and mean scores (0.35; 1.51), (0.31; 1.25), and (0.29; 1.16), respectively. These are clear indicators that the resources are rarely consulted by researchers which may have influence on the research output. Most of the resources subscribed by NILEST library comprise books, periodicals, pamphlets, etc according to Reitz (2005) are comprehensive which can meet the information needs of users. Particularly, other resources subscribed as revealed by Nwabueze *et al.* (2010) include textbooks, annuals, serials, electronic and non-print media. The implication of the results is

that the NILEST library is inclusive of all its stakeholders' information needs (take them into account when they subscribe for information resources).

Table 2: Most Consulted Research Output format in NILEST library

Publication	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Book/Chapters in books	3	4.9
Journals	38	62.3
Conference paper	8	13.1
Seminar	12	19.7
Total	61	100

Table 2 presents the respondents' assessment of the most consulted research output format by academics/researchers who patronize the NILEST library. From the result, journals are the most patronized resources utilized for research output scoring 62.3% followed by seminar scoring 19.7%, books/chapters in book is the lowest utilized resources (4.9%). Academics/researchers of NILEST also publish by their choice of resources and corroborate with the submission of Wardikar and Gudadhe (2013) who noted

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that research publications constitute the most important form of communication in nearly all academic research, making scientific information available to the rest of the academic audience to evaluate the quality of the research in this case in NILEST. This could be the motivating factor and role specific of the library whose desire is to compete with other libraries in providing and supporting the research output by its academics/researchers.

Though McBurney and Novak (2002) gave the most popular research output formats to include books, journals, conference papers, newsletters, magazines, bulletins, technical reports, monographs, and others they categorized under miscellaneous papers. Most of these resources are not major collection of NILEST Library for obvious reasons particularly that other resources are restricted and/or not acceptable for academic/research staff promotions. The preference for journals is justified by Thanuskodi (2010) who reported that journals are the primary sources and channels of information dissemination. They are also important media for communicating the latest research findings, containing the current research development in any field of knowledge which reflect and indicate literature growth and utilization.

Table 3: Respondents rating of the NILEST library resources in support of research activities

Grades	Response	%
Excellent	2	3.2
Very Good	15	24.6
Good	25	41.0
Fair	11	18.0
Poor	8	13.2
Total	61	100

Table 3 shows academic/ researchers' levels of satisfaction with the NILEST library, the highest scores of 41% rated the library good and least scores of the library as excellent (3.2%), respectively. Only 13.2% score the library as poor and 18% said it was fair. Rating library services and resources is pertinent

because of the numerous benefits itemized by Oyelude (2004) which comprise ascertaining the relevance of resources collected, whether such resource provided satisfy the information needs of clients, obtain strategic feedback that can help the library in decision making.

Conclusion

The NILEST library plays significant roles in promoting Institutional objectives especially those influencing academic/ research performance. Based on the analysis and interpretation of data collected, it can be concluded that types of resources, popular research output formats as well as respondents rating their satisfactory levels of the library resources and services render adequate support to boost research output of the academics/researchers of NILEST.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made from the results and conclusion reached:

1. Majority of the types of library resources are print-based, It is recommended that electronic resources should be subscribed to boost the library collections and possibly increase the patronage of the library.
2. The institution is recommended to expand research output resources from journals, book/chapters in books, newspapers/magazines, technical report and others so that the academics/researchers can bridge the information gaps especially those caused by dearth of information about the research activities of the institution.
3. The respondents' ratings of their level of satisfaction with the library position in promoting academic/ research activities is encouraging; it is recommended that such efforts should be improved upon and sustained.

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