
Exhibition, Selective Dissemination of Information and Students' Patronage of Library Information Services in Tertiary Institutions in Akwa Ibom State

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ABSTRACT: *This study was conducted to investigate the effect of exhibition, selective dissemination of information on students' patronage of information services in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Ex-post facto research design was used for the study. The population of the study was all the 12739 registered undergraduate library users in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom state for the 2021/2022 academic session. Multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select a sample of 790 students for the study. A researcher developed questionnaire named "Exhibition, Selective Dissemination of Information and Students' Patronage of Information Services Questionnaire" (ESDISPISQ) was used in collecting data for the study. The instrument was face validated by three experts. Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the reliability of the instrument and a coefficient of .78 was obtained. Mean was used to answer the research questions while independent t-test was used to test the hypotheses of the study. The findings of the study indicated that there is significant influence of exhibition and selective information dissemination on students' patronage of information services in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. It was recommended among others that librarians need to conduct exhibition and dissemination of information in order to improve students' patronage of library information services.*

KEYWORDS: exhibition, selective dissemination of information, students' patronage, library information services, tertiary institutions, Akwa Ibom State

INTRODUCTION

The library is a collection of materials, books or media that are accessible for use and not just for display purposes. A library provides physical or digital access materials, and may be a physical location or a virtual space, or both. A library's collection can include printed materials, and other physical resources in many formats such as DVD, CD and cassette as well as access to information, music or other content held on bibliographic databases. The value of the library collection depends not only on the quantity of information sources but on the effective ways and means of providing and interpreting them to users. It is obvious that academic libraries are

experiencing rapid change in the use and mode of access to their resources and services. This can be attributed to emerging information technology which led to the creation of a new gateway for delivering information services to library clientele. Information products and services in a multiplicity of formats have made libraries and information centers to publicize the arrival and existence of some of their resources to clientele.

According to Olajide and Adio (2017), the major aim of any university library is to support teaching, learning and research activities of its parent institution. The library today is a busy information centre, where information is packaged in various formats, not only on the quantity of information sources but on the effective ways and means of providing and interpreting them to users. Few students visit libraries regularly except during examination periods when they need to read their personal notes for the benefit of passing their examinations. Considering the role of academic libraries as libraries attached to higher institutions of learning above the secondary level, which is responsible for providing information resources and services to support teaching, learning and research needs of students, staff and other clientele of their institutions. Academic libraries serve complementary purposes including supporting the research of the university, faculties and students. The support of teaching requires materials for learning and research and of what use are the library resources if their clienteles do not effectively utilize them.

University library clientele are diverse with varying information needs', these library clienteles include undergraduate and postgraduate students, visiting researchers, academic staff and other staff of the university. To a large extent, the library is often regarded as the heart of the intellectual system of the university or better still the nerve center of the university. Aguolu (2002) posited that university libraries are integral part of the university system. The author added that, they should not exist as inertia of knowledge, but as dynamic instruments of education to enable their institutions to achieve their goals.

As new innovations continue to surface, there is also a rapid change in information product and services, which equally affect the format of information presentation. For libraries and information services to stay viable in the current climate, it is important that they adopt marketing strategies to help meet organizational mission, goals and objectives. Marketing has long been associated with the selling of a product in order to make a profit, but was extended to the non-profit sector including libraries (Enache, 2008). In this study, two marketing indicators, exhibition and selective dissemination of information were considered.

Exhibition is a marketing vehicle that involves conveying information of services to the public through the media be it print or electronic. Exhibition is given to products and services by various advertising methods. For example, library book fairs, marketing library information service in university bulletins which are distributed round university campuses, library website and general study course entitled "The use of Library and study skills" are used for disseminating information related to programs and activities in the library. Mathews (2009) asserts that a good website helps to bring services and resources together in a unique way, because it is a direct link between the library and its specific users (for example students and

academics) and the services it is seeking to promote. Davidson (2001) emphasised on the importance of marketing library and information services through displays and exhibitions. Exhibition can boost current awareness in the library because it give the library user the opportunity to know the existence of materials in the library. Therefore, for the public confidence to be fully won and established, librarians should be able to carry along the community members by organizing library orientation, talks and seminar on the importance of displays and exhibitions. According to Shapiro (1999) library displays racks are very good forms of advertisement in the library. Display racks should be placed in strategic areas of the library where it would draw attention of the clientele, and the shelves should be boldly and clearly labelled for easy identification and retrieval of information resources. Once this marketing strategy is fully implemented in libraries it will aid in an increase in user patronage of information service. Aside from exhibition, selective dissemination of information (SDI) is another library marketing indicator that can help promote students' patronage of library information products.

Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) in the library is a deliberate, planned, and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between the library and the public (users). According to Laulenglager (2003), SDI is the management function which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures, of an individual or an organization with the public interest and plans and executes a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance. SDI activities help to provide a coordinated effort to communicate a positive image of the library and promote the availability of the library's materials, programs, and services. Murray (2005) asserts that the importance of SDI activities cannot be overlooked in any library; especially in academic libraries. The significance of academic libraries specifically university libraries cannot be over emphasized. SDI is an effective part of a library's overall marketing strategy. It establishes favorable press relations to get news out about the library on a regular basis and creates goodwill for the library. To investigate how exhibition and selective dissemination of information influence students' patronage of library information services in public institutions in Akwa Ibom State, this study was conducted.

Statement of the Problem

In any institution of higher learning, the library is the information hub. Information in various subjects, even more than what one needs can be obtained from the library. Academic libraries also provide a quiet environment for students to study, together with group study space, such as meeting rooms. However, many students these days hardly visit the library and many who does are only going there to enjoy the quiet environment without really patronizing the information in the library. Many students complain that there are outdated information in the library even when the library is updated with new information resources. This makes the information services of the library to be underutilized, while the students are in serious hunger for proper information. One can wonder what is responsible for such saddening situation. Many researchers have suggested various library marketing indicators as solution to the low patronage of information resources in the library and many institutions have implemented many of such indicators. However, little attention has been paid to exhibition and selective

dissemination of information as library marketing indicators by researchers, especially in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State. Therefore, this study was conducted to determine the influence of exhibition and selective dissemination of information on patronage of library information services in tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine the influence of library marketing indicators on students' patronage of information services. Specifically, the study seeks;

- 1) To determine the influence of exhibition on students' patronage of information services in the public institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
- 2) To determine the influence of selective dissemination of information (SDI) on students' patronage of information services in public institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Significant of the Study

The findings of this study would be significant to various individuals such as librarians and library users. To the librarians, the finding of the study would help them become aware of how exhibition and selective dissemination of information as library marketing indicators influence students' patronage of information services in University libraries. This will also promote bring information resources to the door steps of students' and scholars' together under conditions which encourage reading for pleasure, self-discovery, personal growth and sharpening of intellectual curiosity.

To library users, the findings of this study on exhibition and selective dissemination of information will change the perception of library users' from the wrong notion that the library houses outdated information resources and is not ICT complaint as such is incapable of delivering effective information service. The library users' will be reassured that the library is the first point of call for users' when seeking for information as it houses current and authentic information resources. This study will also inform the users' of the wealth of knowledge the library houses and the various formats in which they can retrieve information relevant to their information search effectively and efficiently.

Research Questions

The following questions were raised and will be answered in this study;

- i. How does exhibition influence students' patronage of information services in public institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria?
- ii. What is the influence of selected dissemination of information (SDI) on students' patronage of information services in public institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and would be tested at .05 levels of significance.

- i. There is no significant influence of exhibition on students' patronage of information services in public institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

- ii. There is no significant influence of selective dissemination of information on students' patronage of information services in public institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

RESEARCH METHODS

The ex-post facto design was used for this study. It involves collection of standardized information from a sample of the population. The researcher finds the ex-post facto design more applicable here than other research designs because the events to be measured has already occurred and the researcher only has to make inference about the influence of library marketing indicators and students' patronage of information services based on facts already on ground. The study was conducted in public institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The population of this study comprised 12739 registered undergraduate library users in the public tertiary institution libraries under study in 2021/2022 academic year. The sample of the study was 790 registered undergraduate library users being 7.5% of the registered undergraduate library users in the sampled institutions. Multistage sampling procedure was employed in the study. Stage one: three public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria were randomly selected using cap and draw method to ensure that all universities had equal opportunity of being selected. Stage two: 7.5% of the registered undergraduate library users were randomly selected which resulted in 790 registered undergraduate library users. A researcher-developed questionnaire named "Exhibition, Selective Dissemination of Information and Students' Patronage of Information Services Questionnaire" (ESDISPISQ) was used in collecting relevant data. ESDISPISQ is a 2-part questionnaire for undergraduate library users. Part A seeks for demographic information of the respondents; and part B consists of 20 items with a 4 point scale responses that solicit data on exhibition, selective dissemination of information and students' patronage of information services. The options in the four point scale were Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) which will be scored 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was subjected to face validity by three lecturers in the Faculty of Education, University of Uyo. Two from the Department of Educational Technology and Library Science and one from the Department of Educational Foundations, Guidance and Counseling all from the University of Uyo. Four items were amended in the questionnaire, suggestions on separating items with two or more ideas were given. Their suggestions and corrections were effected on the instrument before it was used to collect data for the study.

Internal consistency reliability was conducted for the instrument. To obtain this, the instrument was administered to 30 respondents who were selected from the population of the study but were not included in the study sample. The scores obtained from the respondents were subjected to Cronbach Alpha statistics. The reliability coefficient obtained for the instrument was .79. The instrument was therefore regarded as reliable and good for the study since the coefficient was high. Mean was used to answer the research questions and independent t-test statistics was used in testing null hypotheses. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level for test of significant difference. If the calculated t-test is greater than the critical t-test value at .05 significant level, the null hypotheses will be rejected but otherwise accepted. Score of 12.5 and above was regarded as agreeing to each variable in the questionnaire but less than 12.5 was

regarded as disagreeing. This was used to arrange the scores of the dependent variables corresponding to respondent who agreed to the items from those who did not. This was used as a measure of influence.

RESULT

Research Question 1

How does exhibition influence students' patronage of information services in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria?

Mean was used in answering the research questions, summary data shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Exhibition on Students' Patronage of Information Services

Items	N	Mean	S D
The library staff maintain a good relationship with us the clientele	783	3.46	.81
We have confidence in the library' services	783	3.26	.77
The librarians maintain a goodwill image among the public towards the institution	783	3.33	.87
The librarians evaluate our attitudes towards their services	783	3.66	.70
We encounter one on one discussion with the librarians	783	2.86	1.20
		3.31	

The result in Table 1 indicated the mean of exhibition on students' patronage of information resources in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The grand mean of 3.31 indicated that there is influence of exhibition on students' patronage of information resources in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Also, items "We encounter one on one discussion with the librarians" and "We have confidence in library services" with mean of 2.86 and 3.26 respectively had no influence on patronage of information resources among students in university libraries while the items "The librarians evaluate our attitudes towards their services" and "The library staff maintain a good relationship with us the clientele" with mean of 3.66 and 3.46 respectively had influence on patronage of information resources among students in university libraries.

Research Question 2

What is the influence of selected dissemination of information (SDI) on students' patronage of information services in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria?

Mean was used in answering the research questions, summary data shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Selected Dissemination of Information on Students' Patronage of Information Services

Items	N	Mean	S D
There is provision of electronic access to information	783	3.87	.34
The library has a web page	783	3.66	.59
New arrivals are displayed by the librarians	783	3.39	.95
We receive flyers of the services the library renders	783	3.19	.83
We receive posters for advertisement and exhibition	783	2.87	.96
Grand Mean		3.40	

The result in Table 2 indicated the mean of selected dissemination of information on students' patronage of information services in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibon State, Nigeria. The grand mean of 3.40 indicated that there is influence of selected dissemination of information on students' patronage of information services in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibon State, Nigeria. However, the items "We receive posters for advertisement and exhibition" and "We receive flyers of the services the library renders" with mean of 2.87 and 3.19 respectively have no influence on patronage of information resources among students in university libraries while the items "There is provision of electronic access to information" and "The library has a web page" had influence on patronage of information resources among students in public tertiary institution libraries.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant influence of exhibition on students' patronage of information services in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibon State, Nigeria.

Independent t-test was used in testing the hypothesis, summary data shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Independent t-test Analysis of Exhibition on Students' Patronage of Information Services in Public Tertiary Institution Libraries

Exhibition	N	Mean	S D	t	df	Sig.
Utilized	326	34.84	2.22	27.86	781	.000
Not Utilized	457	28.81	3.43			

The result in Table 3 indicated that the calculated t-value of 27.86, $p = .000$ involving the influence of exhibition on patronage of information services in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibon State, is significant at 781 degrees of freedom and .05 levels of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant influence of exhibition on students' patronage of information services in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibon State, Nigeria is rejected. Hence, there is significant influence of exhibition on students' patronage of information services in the public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibon State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant influence of selective dissemination of information on students' patronage of information services in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibon State, Nigeria. Independent t-test was used in testing the hypothesis, summary data shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Independent t-test Analysis of Selective Dissemination of Information on Students' Patronage of Information Services

Selective Dissemination	N	Mean	S D	t	Df	Sig.
Utilized	313	35.08	1.86	29.78	781	.000
Not Utilized	470	28.82	3.39			

The result in Table 4.11 indicated that the calculated t-value of 29.78, $p = .000$ involving the influence of selective dissemination of information on patronage of information services in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State is significant at 781 degrees of freedom and .05 levels of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant influence of selective dissemination of information on students' patronage of information services in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Hence, there is significant influence of selective dissemination of information on students' patronage of information services in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result of testing null hypothesis 1 indicated that exhibition has significant influence on students' patronage of information services in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The reason for this result could be that the library might have been holding regular exhibition of their materials, thus, helping students to see the content of the library for patronage. Many libraries are stocked with electronic journals that might not easily be known to the students with the library holding exhibition. Electronic journals offer a solution to some of the problems facing the management of the academic journals, they are space saving, they enhance speed of communication, provide powerful searching tools, can provide immediate access to your desk and they can provide facilities such as integrated text, hypertext links and multi-media that the printed journal cannot offer. All these are made known to students during exhibition which might also improve patronage from students.

The result of testing null hypothesis 2 indicated that selective dissemination of information has significant influence on students' patronage of information services in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The reason for this result could be that the library from time to time have been finding out students need and advertising the availability of such information in the library. This is in line with the view of Laulenglager (2003) who indicated that selective dissemination of information is the management function which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures, of an individual or an organization with the public interest and plans and executes a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance. The result could also be an indication that the library have been creating, promoting, or maintaining goodwill through effective dissemination of information service and a favourable image amongst the public toward the institution, thus attracting students to direct their information needs to their institutional library. The finding off this study is in line with that of Starck and Kruckeberg (2003) who assert that many libraries recognize the value of SDI as a strategic marketing tool they can use to increase patronage of their resources and services.

Whether used alone or as part of an integrated marketing campaign, SDI can contribute to effective user patronage of information service in many ways.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it was concluded that exhibition and selective dissemination of information have the potential of influencing students' patronage of information services in public tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study;

1. Librarians should conduct exhibition on a regular basis in order to create awareness on the amount of information present in the library.
2. Selective information dissemination should be carried out regularly in order to provide library users easy access to the needed information.

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