

Materials Acquisition And Use In Simeon Adebo Public Library, Abeokuta, Ogun State

By
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Abstract

The paper assesses the use and acquisition of books of Simeon Adebo Public Library, Abeokuta using records of acquisitions and library use kept by this library between 2004 – 2008. The study was carried out to assess how the library has fared following some recent effort by the Ogun State Government to renovate and equip the library in year 2003. The data were collected and analysed using tables, charts, percentages and graphs. Findings revealed among other things that most of the books acquired (98.8%) came in as gift and only 2.2% was actually purchased. Subject analysis of books consulted and borrowed showed that books in class 500 (pure sciences) were most consulted and borrowed by the library users. Also more male patronized the library in both the junior and adult sections and level of use by children is low. Some of the recommendations made include beefing up of the library stock, stepping up of reading awareness campaign to increase level of patronage by Ogun State tax payers.

Introduction

Reputable Organizations in the world keep records of their activities and the level of patronage received from their clientele. One of the reasons why they do this is for them to evaluate and re-examine their positions in the industry in which they operate.

Libraries, like any other organizations keep several records about what they do and usage of their services. Studies have shown that Librarians have been involved in collecting and disseminating statistics about library activities for many years. It has been part of library tradition to use statistics of usage to describe and assess the operations of library activities. Hiller and Self (2004); Adetoro(2008) hinted that in many libraries, statistics are usually computed daily, weekly, monthly and annually about activities including traffic, registered users, materials consulted and loaned out.

Allen (1985) added that library do this because librarians perceived that there is relevant relationship between numeric measurements of certain aspect of library.

Simeon Adebo library being a public library needs to keep, analyse and disseminate statistics about its services to stakeholders in Ogun State and beyond as the library competes with other public agencies for funding. It is through these facts and figures that such library could show case its relevance and justifies the need for continuous support from the public and government.

The history of library services in Ogun State is dates back to February. 3rd 1976, when the state was created from the Old Western region. The Headquarters of Ogun State library services was commissioned on 27th July 1990. The complex was named Simeon Adebo Library, in recognition of contributions of the former Head of Ogun State civil service chief late Simeon Adebo. The library is housed within the Headquarters of Ogun State

library Board at Abeokuta, the Capital of Ogun State and it is under the control of the State's Library Board. The seating capacity is put at 300, while its collection is over 40,000 volumes of books. It is the only functional public library serving the population of Abeokuta and its environs. It has both adult and the children sections and its operations hours are 8.00 am-7.00pm (Monday – Friday) 9.00am- 1:00pm on Saturdays.

Justification for the study

Although, the library was commissioned in July 1990, it was not opened to the general public until 1992. The library was overgrown with weeds prior to 2003 and the structure dilapidating. During this period, the levels of activities were at lowest ebb. However, all these changed when the State Government appointed a consultant on library matters. The State government rehabilitated the structures and provided funds for equipment and other resources needed in the library.

Ever since the change in policy of the State government toward the library over six years ago, there has not been any study on the assessment of the library in terms of Acquisitions and level of usage. This study intends to fill this gap and show the pattern of book acquisitions and usage using statistical records that have been compiled in the past five years (2004-2008). This study will identify areas it has done well and areas where improvement is needed so that Ogun State tax payers could be served better.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to analyse the acquisitions and use of this library books for the last five years the library was rejuvenated by the Ogun-State government.

The specific objectives are:

1. To find out the numbers of books acquired during the period covered by this study (i.e. 2004-2008).

2. To analyse the sources and patterns of acquisitions during the period.
3. To determine the volumes of books consulted by library patrons during the period covered.
4. To ascertain the traffic levels and number of registered members of the library in the period understudied.
5. To determine the number of borrowers and total volumes of books loaned out during the period.
6. To ascertain the gender analysis of borrowers during the period covered by the study.
7. To find out the subject analysis of books consulted and borrowed during the period covered by this study.

Limitations

Materials acquisition in this study means book collection, which include textbooks, reference sources, Fiction, supplementary books and monographs acquired by this library and used by its patrons during the five years (2004-2008) covered by this study.

This study is limited to acquisition and use of the books collection of this library alone, it excludes journals and other library materials acquired and use by the library clientele. Another limitation is that the library does not have data on subject analysis of books acquired in the period studied, hence the study could not present the subject analysis of books acquired.

Literature Review

Data can be defined and used in different ways. To Hiller and Self (2004) data are records of observation collected for reference or analysis. Data may take a number of forms; such as transactions, observations, survey or interviews. All these forms provide data, qualitatively and quantitatively, from which inference may be drawn by means of analysis.

Data are everywhere and no matter what an Organisation does, it has to make use of data to make informed decisions. Tanur, Masteller and Pieters (1989) emphasised that data serve as a guide to unknown while Afonja (1982) had earlier stressed that good data analysis minimises uncertainty when crucial decisions are to be taken.

Library activities are amenable to statistical analysis; hence libraries have been known to keep data of their operations. This assertion was attested to by various studies which includes Simmon (1970); Hiller and Self (2004); Hameed (2004); Hiller and Jilovsky (2005) Agee (2005) and Adetoro (2008).

Osburn(1992); Knievel, Wicht and Connaway (2006) gave some light as to why libraries and

information centers show increasing interest in keeping statistical records of their operations and use. According to them, economic difficulties and strains prompted libraries to become statistical records conscious. They contended that reducing buying power of libraries makes the use of data in collection development of increasing importance as difficult selection and funding decisions are more informed when they consider usage data.

In response to these challenges, libraries and collection development research have relied more on statistics based models and goal programming based approaches.

Libraries have shifted from spending acquisitions budgets on the basis of speculation to spending on the yardstick of demand and this could be attained when library keeps and uses data on library usage and acquisitions. Hamaker (1995) corroborated this as he remarked that collection for the sake of collection is no longer possible except in the most financially insulated institutions. This new approach of wise spending decision is impossible without data which are kept and maintained by libraries.

Library statistics are not just compiled for nothing sake. Many reasons and benefits could be adduced for this important task performed in libraries. According to Association of Research Library (1989) library data is critical for two reasons; in assessing current library performance and measuring progress towards achievement of goals and objectives. Riggs (1984) opined that library statistics provides a pragmatic way of showing the strength and weakness especially when objectives of libraries are being scrutinized. Luther (2002) also remarked that compiled library statistics aids selection decision and helps in making case for additional library funding.

Rodriguez (2008) recent study shows how computerized library data collection development system was used to explore the use of aggregated circulation information or a combination of circulation and budget expenditure information divided by subject area to inform collection management decisions. In the same vein, Connaway and Littman(2002) revealed that circulation analysis have been applied to a number of important issues including evaluating collection acquisition policies, funding management decision, allocating physical space for materials, identifying materials for office storage, allocating funding for materials and suggesting approaches to deselection.

Despite the usefulness of library statistics, some libraries rarely use them adequately when it matters. Allen (1985) warned that libraries are great compilers of statistical data, but exhibit poor abilities in its interpretation, manipulation and use.

He contended that most of the data are grossly unused by libraries either innocently or deliberately. Hiller and Self (2004) also made similar accusation on libraries.

In order to ensure proper use of library statistical data, there is need to be more cautious as the usefulness of usage statistics could be affected by the type of data provided, how they are supplied, and managers' skill in utilizing statistical data. Against this background, Van house, Weil and McClure (1990) strongly advised that the statistical data should be carefully selected and intelligently used to determine the extend to which objectives of compilation are accomplished, set priorities for resources allocation, justify services and demonstrate the degree of library effectiveness to library parent organization.

Methodology

Descriptive survey design was used for this study. The statistical record kept for five years (2004-2008) by Simeon Adebo Public library provided data for this study. Data and records compiled includes acquisition records, users' traffic, books consulted, registered members and loan records. The data were collected and analyzed using tables, charts, graphs and percentages.

During the period covered by this study, a total of 10,902 users were registered as bonafide members of the library. The table above further revealed that registered members increased during the five years studied. In year 2005, it increased by 47.2% from 1470 recorded in 2004. In year 2006 it increased by 7.8%, it went on by 3.2% in 2007 and it increased by 5% in 2008.

Gender analysis of members revealed that more male (5,546) registered as bonafide members of the library as against 5,356 (49.1%) female.

The study further revealed different categories of users that registered with the library. Prominent professions and user groups among them include secondary school students (26.3%), Primary school pupils (13.64%), unemployed (13.62%), civil servants (12.3%), undergraduates (10.2%) and self-employed (4.7%).

The table 2 bellwoe shows the patterns and trend of book acquisition of the library for the period covered by this study. The library acquired books from two sources; namely Purchases and Gift, none was acquired through exchange and inter - library loan. The result further shows that bulk of the books acquired were from Gift, i.e. 47,200 (97.82%), followed by purchase of 1,050 (2.17%).

Table 1: Analysis of Registered Library Users

Year	Male	Female	Total
2004	723	747	1470
2005	1136	1028	2164
2006	1149	1184	2333
2007	1237	1170	2407
2008	1301	1227	2528
Total	5546	5356	10902

Table 2: Acquisition of Library Books. (2004- 2008)

Sources	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Total
Purchase	-	250	300	-	500	1050
Gift/Donation.	-	-	40,450	-	6,750	47,200
Exchange	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	250	40,750	-	7,250	48,250

Table 3: Library traffic (2004-2008)

Year	Adult Section					Children Section					Total Traffic
	Male	%	Female	%	Total	Male	%	Female	%	Total	
2004	2462	81.38	563	18.6	3025	90	51.4	85	48.6	175	3,200
2005	3120	61.03	1992	38.97	5112	120	41.8	170	58.6	290	5,402
2006	3832	56.35	2968	43.6	6800	290	67.4	140	32.6	430	7,230
2007	4832	68.83	2188	31.1	7020	437	54.6	364	45.4	801	7,821
2008	4075	45	4980	55	9055	560	53	497	47	1057	10,112
Total	18,321	59.1	12,691	40.9	31,012	1,497	54.4	1,256	45.6	2,753	33,765

Table 4: Books consulted by Library Patrons (2004-2008)

Year	Adult	Children	Total
2004	7,687	900	8,587
2005	11,438	1,115	12,553
2006	13,400	1,550	14,950
2007	21,357	1,780	23,137
2008	27,125	1,900	29,025
Total	81,007	7,245	88,252

Table 5 above depicts traffic level of the library patrons for the period and the gender analysis of the users' attendance. The total number of patrons that patronized the library for the five years was 33,765. The records show that more adult consulted the library than children as the former accounted for about 92.9% of the total users that availed themselves of library services. The table further shows that total readers, attendance increased steadily in the period covered by this study. In year 2004, library was patronized by 3,200 users, it went up sharply to 54021 (68.8%) in 2005, while in 2006, it had about 33.8%, by 2007, it recorded a slight increase of about 8.1% and in 2008, it increased by 29.3%.

Gender analysis of users revealed that more adult male visited the library in years covered by this study with 18,321(59.1%), it was only in year 2008

that female (4980) which represent (55%) outnumbered male readers in the adult section. The attendance shows almost the same trend in the junior readers' category as more male children consulted the library in the period covered with 1,497(54.4%), it was only in 2005 that 170 (58.6%)female junior users were more than 120 (41.7%)male that consulted the library.

Table 4 above table shows that the total volumes of books consulted by library patrons are 88,252. Out of this, children section only accounted for 7,245 volumes which are just 8.21% of the total books consulted. This is not a surprise as fewer children visited the library. It is interesting to note that records of books consulted increased by 46.18% in 2005 from the initial 8587 recorded in 2004 and it reached the peak in year 2008 with 29,025 volumes.

Table 5: Subject Analysis Of Books Consulted

Year	000	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900	Ref	Fic	Total
2004	99	72	55	1671	1114	1261	1004	72	66	1146	26	2001	8587
2005	147	102	86	2123	1876	2461	1947	105	107	1126	28	2445	12553
2006	160	151	129	2445	2227	2347	2741	186	167	2005	47	2345	14950
2007	345	728	645	3645	3928	3824	3478	502	571	2127	66	3278	23137
2008	405	927	804	3927	4528	4748	3927	1128	1004	3463	157	4007	29025
Total	1156	1980	1719	13811	13673	14141	13097	1993	1915	9867	324	14076	88252

Table 6: Subject Analysis of Books Borrowed (2004-2008)

Year	000	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900	Fic	Total
2004	-	4	12	51	32	104	92	-	45	-	11	351
2005	-	22	18	62	22	128	180	17	66	20	25	560
2006	-	17	28	77	48	308	261	35	46	-	40	860
2007	-	10	15	261	82	388	370	47	52	28	51	1234
2008	-	27	35	362	82	428	395	18	21	25	65	1458
Total	-	73	98	723	232	1652	1583	107	230	73	192	4463

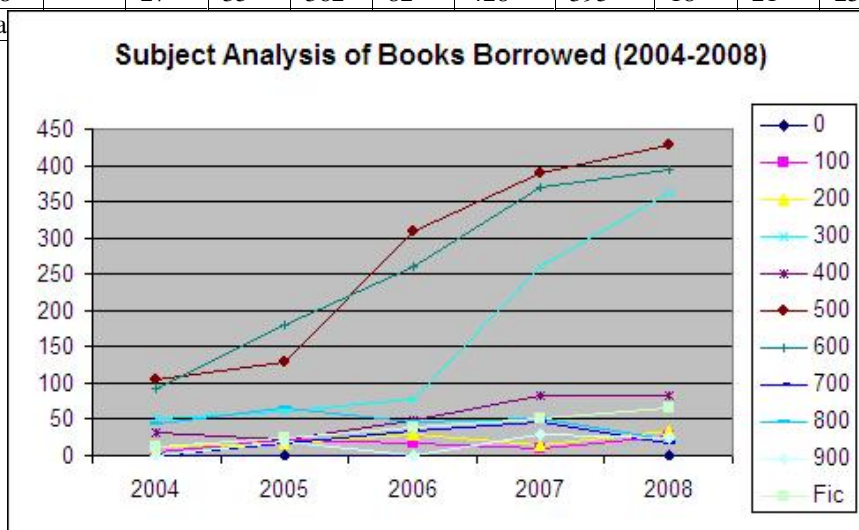


Figure 1: Subject Analysis of books Borrowed.

Subject analysis was based on the main classes of Dewey Decimal classification scheme. The study shows that class 500(pure Sciences) has the highest in terms of books consulted with 14,141 representing 16.02 % of the total books consulted. This was closely followed by Fiction class with 14,076 volumes, Social sciences was next with 13,811 books while class 000 (Generalia) has the least with just 1,156 volumes of books consulted.

During the five-year period, a total volume of 4,463 books were loaned to registered library users. The highest volumes were loaned in year 2008, with 1,458 books. The loaned books were on the increase right from year 2005 to 2008; but the rate of increase differs. In 2005, it was about (59%), 2006(53.5%), and (18.2%) in year 2008.

In terms of subject analysis of books borrowed, incidentally, the highest volume of books (1,592) were borrowed in class 500(Pure Sciences) by the library patrons, this is not surprising as the same

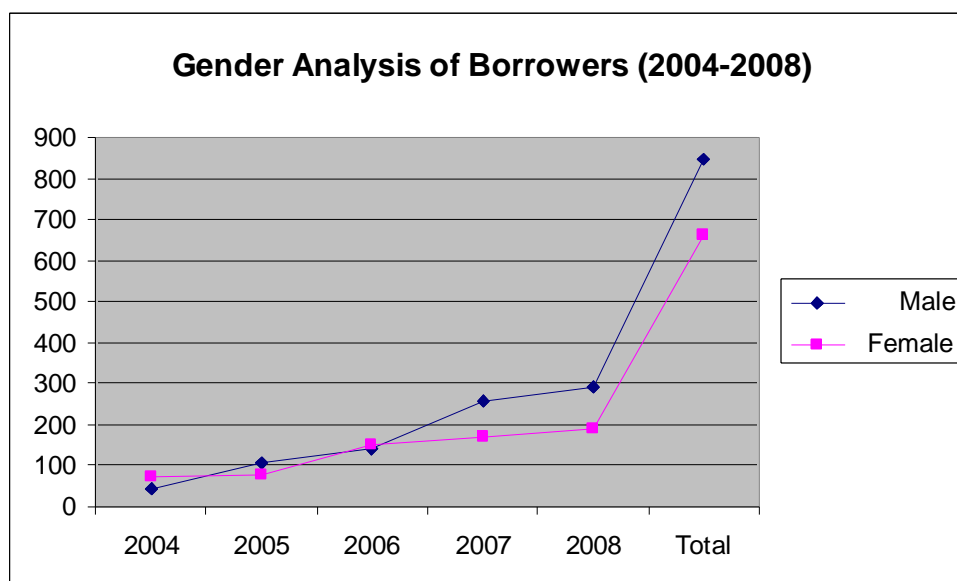
subject class had the highest volumes of books consulted in the five -year covered by this study. Class 600 (Arts) followed with 1,298 volumes, the next subject area was class 400(Language) with just 266 volumes of books. It is quite revealing that no book was borrowed from class 000(Generalia) during the period by the library users while (Fiction) class that had substantial volumes in terms of books consultation could only accounted for 192 volumes in the library loan record .

Gender Analysis of Borrowers

Gender Analysis of borrowers between 2004 and 2008 is depicted in the table and line graph below. A total of 1,504 registered library clientele borrowed books. Out of this, 847 were male users representing 56.3% while 660 (43.7%) were female users. It further rein -enforced that more male took advantage of borrowing privilege than female patrons.

Table: 7 Gender Analysis of Borrowers (2004-2008)

Year	Male	Female	Total
2004	45	72	117
2005	108	79	187
2006	140	149	289
2007	260	168	425
2008	294	192	486
Total	847	660	1504

**Figure 2: Gender analysis of Borrowers.****Discussion**

The study revealed that about 97.8% books acquired in the library came as donation, while less than 3% were purchased. The library did not acquire any book in years 2004 and 2007. Many reasons could be adduced for this. In 2004, the administration of Governor Gbenga Daniel was just a year then while 2007 was electioneering year, when the government machinery were set towards the successful conduct of the elections.

The result further reinforced the fact that too much attention is given to re-electioneering campaign and political scheming at expense of developmental projects and programmes that could bring succor to the populace in Nigeria. This result further buttress the fact that public libraries in Nigeria suffer serious neglect from government that established them. This is in line with the assertion of Alokun (2003). If not for gift; the library would just have acquired only 1,050 volumes of books for five years period. This is not good enough if the government has really come up with new initiative to develop public library system in the state as claimed by government in various public fora. The library should not be seen as beggars at all times. It is high time government spent substantial fund in

direct purchase of books based on the needs of the users of this library.

The study also revealed that the rate of borrowing among the bonafide library members is quite low, when the ratio of 4463 borrowed materials is compared with 88,252 volumes of books consulted. In addition, the number of borrowers is also too meager when the 10,902 library registered users and total traffic of 31,012 library recorded for five years are considered.

The total borrowed books for the whole five years are just about 5% of the books consulted for the same period. One tends to wonder what could be responsible for this. It might be a sign that majority of this library books do not meet the needs of its registered members and as such they do not see reasons why they should borrow. It may also be attributed to the fact that most of the registered members were secondary school students and primary school pupils, who by their level of education do not do serious academic research, hence they might find it much easier to copy or note down the information in the library rather than checking out the books from the library. It is also possible that the right users of library stock have

not been attracted to the library as bonafide members that will have privileged to borrow books.

The figure of children that consulted this library is too meager as it is represented by just 8.1% of the total users that patronized the library during the period covered by this study. This study attests to the fact that Nigerian children do not use library.

Summary of findings

- i. A total of 48,250 volumes of books were added as additions to stock in the period covered by this study is not enough. Total books purchased for the five years is 1,050 volumes, which is just only about 2.2% of the additions to stock while the great sunk i.e 47,200(97.8%) books were gifts.
- ii. The library acquired books through Purchase and Gift during the period studied.
- iii. Books consulted continued to increase right from year 2005-2008 and it was at its highest in 2008 with 29,025 volumes of books consulted.
- iv. Subject analysis of books consulted reveals that books under class 500(pure science) were read most by users recording 14,141 volumes of book.
- v. In terms of books borrowed, class 500(Pure Sciences) were mostly borrowed by the library clientele with 1,592 volumes of books in the period covered by this study, while the least was recorded in class 100 (Psychology & Philosophy) with 80 books loaned and the only class where no book was borrowed is class 000(Generalia).
- vi. The rate of borrowing by users is low as only 4463 volumes of books were lent out by the library during the period.
- vii. More males made use of the library than female. This is supported by the data recorded for readers' attendance, borrowers and bonafide registered members as more male registered, visited and borrowed books.
- viii. The library is also used by adult users than children as figure revealed that adult users represented 31,012 (92.9 %) while meager 2,753(8.1%) were children. One tends to ask how we can stimulate future readers with this revelation in the public when we

actually know that functional school libraries are no where to be found in Nigerian schools environment?

- ix. Generally speaking, the level of traffic of library users is still low when population, numbers of Nursery and primary, secondary schools, higher Institutions and the status as State's capital of Abeokuta are considered.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. The library needs to beef up its collection; the library can not be relying on donations and gifts.
- ii. There is need for the library to step up reading awareness campaign for stimulation of reading and library usage among the general public in Abeokuta and its environs. This campaign should be taken to schools; primary and secondary schools; civil servants, market places and higher institutions in the areas the library serves.
- iii. The library also needs to enlighten its users on how to maximize usage and increase the level of borrowing as the current level is low.
- iv. The female should be more encouraged to patronize the library as record shows their low patronage in relation to the male counterpart.
- v. The library should be mounting programmes specifically for the promotion of reading among children in the areas the library serves as their current usage is low. The library can also spearhead the establishment of reading clubs in public schools in the State.
- vi. There is need for the library to be compiling and keeping records of books borrowed by children as such data could not be supplied for this research. This will go a long way in assisting the library in taking serious decisions in respect of services to this category of users.

Areas of Further Studies

There is need for similar study on the subject analysis of books acquired in this library. There is also the need for in-depth study on the pattern of children use of this library. The low rate of borrowing by the library registered users can also be investigated. In addition, similar study may be carried out on the usage of non-printed materials of this library.

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