

INFLUENCE OF CIRCULATION STAFF IN PROMOTING LIBRARY USE AMONG STUDENTS IN FEDERAL POLYTECHNIC LIBRARY, ADO EKITI

BY

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Abstract

Library is meant to be used by students of any higher institution of learning. Librarians help them to find the resources and they teach them library research techniques. This paper investigated the readiness to use, frequency of use and the purpose of use of library by the HND I students in Office Technology and Managements Department of The Federal Polytechnic Ado Ekiti. The population under Study was One hundred and fifty three (153) students. Survey method was used and total enumeration was adopted for the population of one hundred and fifty three students of the above mentioned department. Simple Percentage was used to analyze the data obtained from the students. Ninety percent (90 %) of the respondents agreed that they were enticed to use the library based on the users' friendliness of the new Staff in circulation unit of the library. Eighty nine percent (89%) of the population agreed that the new staff members of circulation unit are always polite to patrons. The whole respondents which amount to one hundred percent (100%) agreed that they love to visit the library and also use the library information resources. It was observed that the head of the library needs to put a committed librarian in the reader service as the head of the unit, put library assistants who are polite and friendly in the circulation unit and from time to time change the staff from various units to the others by way of internal transfer.

Key Words: Library- Use, Friendliness, Politeness

Introduction

Reader Service librarian is to provide consistent, gracious and friendly service to internal and external customers. He understands and enforces the library policies and procedures while safeguarding confidential and restricted information. He is a librarian among the peers that possess good communication skills, a strong attention to detail and a passion for learning. These traits help a librarian provide clear recommendations, organize materials and stay up to date on new resources and technology. He is the one who evaluates

readers' requests to consult the collections, acting as a liaison between readers and circulation staff; coordinates appointments and processes applications.

Parts of the functions of a reader service librarian is that he performs reference desk duties as required and monitors researchers on-site on proper handling of rare collections and reference materials. Retrieves and reshelves rare and reference materials from the vault and reference collection closed stacks; identifies materials for conservation treatment and routes as appropriate. He conducts in-depth research to provide detailed responses via e-mail and telephone to a range of reference inquiries. Instructs readers and staff with the use of the online catalogue, finding aids, microfilm scanners, and other equipment; answers questions regarding requests for digital images and orders for photocopies; participate in shifting and other stacks maintenance tasks. He maintains statistical data related to the use of the collections and creates graphs, charts, and/or other visualizations of that data.

For any library that wants its users to utilize its library stocks, effective services have to be given to its patrons. The effective services will only be provided through a qualified staff. Many libraries manage their circulation using library assistants and library attendants. Part of the job of the Reader Service Librarian is constant evaluation of the services rendered by the Staff he puts in the circulation desk. This will enable the library to know its strengths and weaknesses. Library is an organization that its activities has to be evaluated especially circulation department. The activities of circulation department has to be evaluated this will enable the department to serve and solve the problem of their users.

Circulation officers in any library are the ones that ensure user's satisfaction of library service. Okhakhu etal (2019) viewed satisfaction of users which is given by circulation officers as a function of three main sources— quality of the information product, the information system and the services that make the information product available. These three

levels of measure of satisfaction are defined by the information resources, facilities and services. These sources of satisfaction, when properly harnessed may contribute to users' overall satisfaction.

Salama et al (2015) maintained that circulation services are the backbone of any library, failure to provide effective service will discourage users from the use of library because circulation is the first area of contact of both new and returning users.

A person's attitude is a form of expression of himself. He can choose to be happy, positive and optimistic, or he can choose to be pessimistic and critical, with a negative outlook on his workday. A positive attitude helps one cope better under stressful situations at work. Workplace attitudes have an effect on every person in the organisation, from the employees to the clients and even the company owner. Attitudes help to develop the prevailing workplace environment that determines employee morale, productivity and team building abilities. A negative attitude in the workplace creates an atmosphere of distrust among employees and causes employees to attempt to achieve success at the expense of each other. On the other hand, in a workplace with a positive attitude, competition is seen as a motivator that inspires employees to perform at their best to improve productivity, and encourages creativity so they feel that their ideas will contribute to the success of the organisation. This paper investigated how attitude of circulation unit staff influences the students' use of library and how Reader services librarian influences circulation staff in putting up positive attitude.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the critical role libraries play in supporting academic success, research and lifelong learning, many individuals particularly students refuse to utilize library resources.

This phenomenon poses significant concerns as it may lead to becoming half-baked as a result of missed opportunities for personal and professional development. Unwelcoming atmosphere such as staff rudeness or indifference can create an unwelcoming environment, deterring students from visiting the library; students may share experience of negative word-of-mouth in the library with peers, perpetuating a negative library image. All these call for investigation.

Research Questions

1. What are the perceptions of students on use of library in the Federal Polytechnic Ado Ekiti
2. What efforts the reader service librarian puts in place that improves the rate of use of library?
3. What are the influence of circulation staff that attracted users to the library?

Review of related literature

Adebowale et al (2013) submitted that the circulation desk, as the public relation section of the Library, plays a frontline and pivotal role in promoting its image. Through this section, Library operations are made accessible to the general public. It therefore follows that the sensitive nature of this section requires competent man power to operate it. The need to equip it adequately need not be overemphasized. Nevertheless, the available facilities at the circulation desk of the College Library have to a very large extent enable the staff attends to the clientele adequately. It is often said that Oliver Twist is never satisfied, which accounts for saying that there are still lots to put in place to take the circulation desk to the higher level, particularly in the area of electronics, exemplified by the presence of functional Information and Communication Technology equipment.

Oden and Owolabi 2021 examined Staff Attitude and Service Delivery in University Libraries in Ogun State, Nigeria using survey method therefore concluded that staff attitude had a significant influence on service delivery in university libraries in Ogun State, Nigeria. The study recommends that university library board and administrators should employ qualified library staff with the right disposition that can evaluation and assessment users need regularly, be compassionate to users need and display right disposition in any condition to users in order to increase patronage.

Adebowale, Okiki and Yakubu (2013) opined that the beauty of Library operations is not only in the ability to provide needed and useful materials containing information for the community, but also to be able to make them accessible to the clientele as and when needed, which is what circulation is all about. Anunobi and Moneke (2008) expressed the opinion that when the needed resources are provided, it is necessary that they are fully exploited through effective use within or outside the library. They went further to say that the effective use outside the Library requires an acceptable lending arrangement. They referred to the publication of the Library Association of 1992 which emphasized that academic Library services should be designed in a way that the bulk of the resources should be available for loan to staff and students in quantity and for the period commensurate with their different needs. Though circulation section is the first port of call in any Library, there has been no detailed publication about the transactions that transpire therein. It is as a result of this absence of adequate documented record that ignited the desire for this paper to serve a reference for practicing and up-and-coming Librarians and the general public.

Chegwe and Anaehobi (2015) examined academic librarian's perception and attitude towards marketing of library services in Delta State, Nigeria. The design of the study is descriptive survey. The population consists of 146 academic librarians in Delta State,

Nigeria. Four research questions guided the study. The research instrument for the study was questionnaire. Out of 146 questionnaires administered, 138 were retrieved and analyzed using arithmetic mean, simple percentage. They found that though academic librarians have positive perception and positive attitude towards marketing of library services; yet, academic librarians are faced with some challenges such as casual approach of some librarians in supplying information to potential users, absence of marketing as a subject field in course of training and lack of support from library management. The study implies that academic librarians' sources of knowledge and information in marketing like workshop, conferences, seminars, short courses should be encouraged to improve their performance in rendering library services to users, maintain a positive attitude towards marketing of library services as well as compete with other information providers.

Gudi and Paradkar (2024). investigated user satisfaction with Circulation service provided in engineering college libraries of Pune city. Need: Although studies are available on user satisfaction with library circulation service very few of them are directly focussed on Pune City Engineering Colleges. Objectives: The main objective of this study is to measure user satisfaction level with circulation service provided to students and faculty members of Engineering colleges located in Pune city area. Research methodology: This study is based on survey with simple random sampling method to collect comprehensive data from users. Questionnaire method was used as a tool for collecting data. . Population: Final year students of BE/B Tech, ME/M Tech and regular faculty members of engineering colleges located in Pune city constitute the population for this study. Findings: It was found as respondents are moderately satisfied with two aspects of Circulation service Viz. Online Renewal/Reservation of Books system and getting overdue reminders for issued books. Further study: Further similar studies are suggested for other

type of technical oriented courses like management, pharmacy, architecture etc. Based on different demographic structure, it is essential to provide the online reservation and renewal facility and forward periodical reminders to students and faculty members to avoid penalty.

Methodology

Survey method was used and total enumeration was adopted for the population of one hundred and fifty three (153) HND 1 students of Office Technology and Managements Department. Questionnaires were distributed to the one hundred and fifty three students who filled and submitted immediately. Simple Percentage was used to analyze the data obtained from the students.

Data Analysis

Research Question 1: What are the perceptions of students on use of library in the Federal Polytechnic Ado Ekiti?

S/N	ITEMS	AGRE E	%	DISAG REE	%	TOT AL
1	I believe that library can assist me to perform better	136	90	14	10	100
2	Library in my school is accessible all the time	136	90	14	10	100
3	Anytime I enter library I feel at home	134	89	16	11	100
4	Actions of the library head are felt	120	80	30	20	100
5	Users are allowed to lodge their complaints through the complaint box in the library	150	100	-	-	100
6	Officers in the circulation unit are friendly to users	134	89	16	11	100

The table above shows 90% of the respondents who believe that library can assist them to perform better and that library is accessible all the time. Eighty nine 89% agree that they feel at home any time they enter library because officers in circulation units are friendly to them. Eighty percent 80% agreed that they feel the positive actions of the head of the library and one hundred percent 100% of the respondents agreed that users are allowed to

lodge their complaints through the complaint box in the library. These submissions indicate that the students are willing to use the library and that the library head is ready to listen to users' complaints.

Research Question 2

What efforts the reader service librarian puts in place that improves the rate of use of library?

S/N	ITEMS	AGREE	%	DISAGREE	%	TOTAL
1	Reader Service Librarian usually opens the complaint box and attend to the complaints	145	96	5	4	100
2	Reader Service Librarian always gives order to the officers in the circulation unit	140	93	10	7	100
3	Some officers in the circulation are good while some are bad	75	50	75	50	100
4	Officers in the circulation during our first Semester are no more there	150	100	--	--	100
5	I lodged complaints on those officers because their attitude discouraged me to use library	148	98	2	2	100

The table above shows ninety six percent 96 %who agreed that reader service librarian opens the compliant box and attend to the complaints; ninety three percent 93 % who agreed that reader service librarian gives orders to officers in circulation unit, fifty percent 50% agreed that some officers in circulation unit are good and some are bad. One hundred percent 100 % agreed that the officers in the circulation unit had been changed and ninety eight percent 98% agreed that they had complained on those officers in circulation last semester that their attitudes discouraged them to use library. These submissions indicate that reader service librarian performs his supervisory role and having discovered the staff in the circulation unit were not representing the library well, he changed them.

Reasearch Question 3

What are the influence of circulation staff that attracted users to the library?

S/N	ITEMS	AGREE	%	DISAGREE	%	TOTAL
1	The officers who are now in the circulation are ready to attend to users	148	98	2	2	100
2	One can because of the new officers in the circulation decide to use library regularly	145	96	5	4	100
3	At least this semester I have visited the library more than thirty times	136	90	14	10	100

This table explains that the officers in the circulation unit are new and are ready to attend to users. That means they were carefully selected. The users agreed that they can decide to use library always because of the new officers' attitudes. Larger percentage of the users claimed that they have visited the library more than thirty times this semester. The table indicates that the reader service librarian with combine efforts of the head of the library are performing their duties by responding to the complaints of the library users that led to changing those who were in circulation unit who could not market the library service well. It is also discovered from the table that the users are very conscious of what is happening in the library. They are aware that presently the staff in circulation are new faces who are ready to attend to the users and who command regular use of the library with their good attitude.

Conclusion

Library users may have intention of using library if they are given cordial reception by the circulation unit staff into the library. It is the duty of the reader service librarian to carefully select staff that have human relation character into the unit so that the library will be portrayed with positive outlook and users would be attracted to the library. The concern of the reader service librarian for the patrons was felt in this research. He performed his supervisory roles and ensured that the library's image was redeemed.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are hereby made:

1. Heads of library should keep eagle eyes on their staff performance.
2. Staff members are to be changed at certain intervals from one unit to another.
3. Complaints of users are to be listened to and reacted to immediately.
4. Staff in the Circulation unit of library should be given special orientation.
5. Self Assessment on interaction with users should be introduced to staff in circulation unit.
6. Feedback should be regularly solicited from users to identify areas for improvement.
7. Circulation Data should be used to inform collection development, programming and service decisions.
8. Circulation services should be evaluated to identify areas for improvement and optimize workflows.

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