

AWARENESS AND USE OF SPECIAL COLLECTION SERVICES BY POST GRADUATE STUDENTS IN DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY, ABRAKA

Akporido, C.

Special Collection Division Librarian,
Delta State University Library, Abraka
Email: samvosi@yahoo.com

Ikolo, V.E.

Librarian II, Special Collection Division,
Delta State University Library, Abraka
Email: violet.ikolo@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the awareness and use of Special Collection Services by post graduate students at Delta State University, Abraka. The study population consisted of the postgraduate students in the faculties of Education and Social Sciences of Delta State University, Abraka. The accidental sampling technique was employed. Results revealed that most postgraduate students are not aware of some of the information resources available in Special Collection Division. Dissertations, theses, books and dictionaries are the most used of all the information sources available in the division; also the study showed that although information sources such as reports, maps, manuals and gazettes always contain current and relevant data suitable for research, most postgraduate students do not make use of them, only a few of the postgraduate students under study make use of Special Collection Division. Of the postgraduate students that make use of Special Collection Division, only a few are satisfied with the services that are offered in the division.

Keywords: Awareness, Use, Special Collection Division, Delta State University Library

INTRODUCTION

One of the main objectives of having libraries in universities is to provide effective information services that would enhance teaching, learning and research of not only undergraduate students but also postgraduate students. Recently, as stated by Oredein (2013) there has been a noticeable rise in the number of students gaining admission to do their Postgraduate Diplomas, Masters Programmes, M. Phil and PhD Programmes. In the 80s, there were only about 15 Nigerian Universities doing research and postgraduate studies, but by 2005, the numbers have risen to about 45 universities involved in postgraduate programmes.

For postgraduate students to successfully carry out their researches there is the need for ready and steady supply of information resources that are not only relevant but also current. The

information resources available in special collections division are collected because of their special nature, rarity, type, focus, subject, and origin and they always serve as very good sources of research materials for postgraduate students. Personal communications and observations reveal that most postgraduate students undergoing their programmes in Delta State University show that the students hardly use the collection. Most evaluative studies on library use have always concentrated on undergraduate students' use of academic libraries. No study has been conducted on the awareness and use of the library resources by post graduate students in Special Collection Division, in Delta State. It is on the basis of this that the present study seeks to investigate the level of awareness of postgraduate students of the services of the Special Collection Division of the Delta State University Library Abraka, their usage of the information resources available in the division as well as their satisfaction with the services offered in the division.

SPECIAL COLLECTION DIVISION, DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, ABRKA.

This is one of the major divisions within the Delta State University main Library, Abraka. According to Onohwakpor (2004) the division is on the east wing of the first floor of the library building, and it comprises of different compartments- the special collection division librarian's office, the collection room which houses the information materials and the reading space which has a seating capacity of 89. The division is responsible for attending to the research needs of postgraduate students of the university, staff of the university as well as researchers from other universities who are properly identified. The division collects and processes for use special materials and they are grouped into different categories for easy retrieval.

Ogunmodede, Adio and Odunola (2011) stated that library resources are those materials which enable libraries to carry out their functions effectively. They are made up of books and other information bearing media. In Special Collection Division, information resources are categorized to include Africana, Nigeriana, Deltana, Delta State University Publications, Central Bank of Nigeria Publications, World Bank Publications, Government Publications, National Universities Commission Publications, United Nations Publications and Publications from different Oil Companies. Others are dissertations of Masters and Post Graduate Diplomas in Education students and theses of Ph.D students. The services the division offers to users include lending services, reference and referral services, abstracting services, reprographic services as well as instruction sessions that teach postgraduate students how to use information retrieval facilities in the division.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Love and Feather (1998) described special collections as materials which are distinguished by their age, rarity, provenance, subject, or some other defining characteristic. Echezona (2010) pointed out that it often includes United Nations publications, Africana, Archives, and Government publications. Focusing on the use of its resources by patrons is of importance to libraries; as a result, Reitz (2004) described library use as the extent to which the facilities and resources of a library are actually used by its clientele.

Oyewusi and Oyeboade (2009) observed that the university library is the academic heart of the university system and its basic purpose is to provide university staff, students, and other researchers with materials and an enabling environment that would facilitate teaching, learning

and research. According to Whitmire (2002) academic library resources are considered a good measure of an institution's excellence and quality. Also, Popoola (2008) affirmed that the information resources and services available in institutional information systems must be capable of supporting research activities among the students and faculty members.

Postgraduate students are those that are building an academic career path after their Higher National Degree or Bachelor Degree. The training and preparation at this level are of vital importance (Oredein, 2013). Most postgraduate students are also workers in different organizations leaving them very little time to dedicate to their research work. Research at the graduate level therefore requires the sophisticated use of specialized information sources, and involves synthesis of information from various stages of the scholarly communication process, that is, from primary, secondary, and tertiary sources. Hoffmann, Antwi-Nsiah, Feng and Stanley (2008).

Onuoha, Ikonne and Madukoma (2013) stated that having obtained a first degree, it will not be out of place to assume that postgraduate students are not novices when it comes to using the library as many of them would have used the library at one time or the other in the course of obtaining a first degree. This allows one to assume that postgraduate students are not new to the library environments and its services.

However, most postgraduate students are not fully aware of the services and resources offered by their libraries Hoffmann, Antwi-Nsiah, Feng and Stanley (2008). Recent studies conducted on postgraduate student's satisfaction with library collections and services, found that postgraduate students do not come to the library as their first source of information, but rather they consult with their advisors or professors (George, 2006; Stein, 2006). Ajibero (1998), and Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) explained that Nigerian university libraries do not meet user expectations. As a result, most students do not learn how to use the library and are not aware of the relationship of the library to their studies. Other researchers like Ogunmodede Adio and Odunola (2011) in their work revealed that of all the library resources examined, books were the most widely consulted. 89.3% of the sampled population used books, while thesis, dissertation, abstract and indexes recorded very low percentages.

Echezona, Okafor and Ukwoma (2011) pointed out that researchers need access to many different kinds and formats of information, including books, journals, etc. The type of information sources used and their currency are necessary for both research and for national development. In the study of Oyewusi and Oyeboade (2009) they concentrated on the use of library resources by undergraduate students; here they found that more students indicated using the library on a monthly basis. Also, Liu and Allmang (2008) results revealed that library services have an impact on research of their respondents.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To investigate if postgraduate students are aware of information sources available in special collection division
- To determine the information resources that is mostly used in the division by postgraduate students.
- To determine the frequency of special collection division use by the postgraduate students
- To determine the students' satisfaction based on information sources used

MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

The descriptive research approach was used for the study. The study population consisted of the postgraduate students in the faculties of Education and Social Sciences of Delta State University, Abraka. The accidental sampling technique was employed. This is because lectures for the various departments are held differently and it was particularly difficult to get the students together at a place, so the researchers administered the instrument to respondents wherever they came in contact with them. A questionnaire titled "Awareness and Use of Special Collection Services Questionnaire (AUSCSQ)" was used for data collection. The instrument was divided into five parts. Section A dealt with the bio-data of the postgraduate students. Section B included items that elicited information on awareness of information sources available in special collection division. Section C included items on the frequency of library use by postgraduate students, section D had items that had to do with information sources mostly used by postgraduate students while section E looked at their satisfaction with the services offered by special collection division. 259 copies of the questionnaire were given out, 252 were found usable for the study. Descriptive statistics was employed to analysis the data using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis included the use of frequencies, tables and percentages.

RESULTS

Table 1: Distribution of the Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	89	35.3
Female	163	64.7
Total	252	100

Table 1 above shows that 89 respondents which represented 35.3% of the total sample were males. While 163 64.7% were females. The implication of this is that there are more females undergoing their postgraduate programmes at the Delta State University.

Table 2: Distribution of the Respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20-29	45	17.9
30-39	91	36.1
40-49	63	25
50-59	34	13.5
60-69	19	7.5
Total	252	100

In table 2, is the distribution of respondents by their ages. 45 (17.9%) are between the ages of 20-29, 91 respondents which make up (36.1%) are between the ages of 30-39 years. 40-40 recorded 63 (25%), 50-59 had 34 (13.5%) and 60-69 had 19 (7.5%). This report shows that more postgraduate students are between the ages of 30-39, while ages 60-69 recorded the lowest age group.

Table 3: Distribution of the respondents by Level

Level	Frequency	Percentage
700	42	16.7
800	123	48.8
900	87	34.5
Total	252	100

Table 3 provided data on the respondent's level. 42 (16.7%) respondents were in 700 level, 123 students were in 800 level and 87 (34.5%) were in 900 level. This implies that there are more students doing their masters programme at the Delta State University.

Table 4: Awareness of Information Sources in Special Collections Division

Information Sources	Aware	%	Not Aware	%
Books	149	59.1	103	40.9
Biographies	41	16.3	211	83.7
Dictionaries	70	27.8	182	72.2
Gazettes	93	37	159	63
Maps	64	25.3	188	74.6
Thesis	213	84.5	39	15.5
Dissertations	221	87.7	31	12.3
Reports	58	23	194	77
Manuals	30	12	222	88
Abstracts	16	6.3	236	93.6

From table 4 it is obvious that most of the postgraduate students are not aware of the information sources available in the Special Collection Division. For instance, only 6.3% (16) of the students are aware of Abstracts as an information source in the division, Manuals 30(12%), Biographies 41(16.3%) and Reports 58 (23%). Dissertations, Theses and Books recorded the highest level of awareness of 87.7%, 84.5% and 59.1 % respectively.

Table 5: Use of Information Sources in Special Collections Division

	Information Sources	Highly Used	%	Rarely Used	%	Never Used	%
1.	Books	106	42.6	37	14.6	109	43.2
2.	Biographies	23	9.1	30	12	199	79.0
3.	Dictionaries	201	79.8	3	1.2	48	19
4.	Gazettes	7	2.8	18	7.1	227	90
5.	Maps	0	0	0	0	252	100
6.	Thesis	224	89	11	4.3	17	6.7
7.	Dissertations	200	79.3	45	18	7	2.8
8.	Reports	87	34.5	2	0.8	163	64.7
9.	Manuals	0	0	3	1.2	249	99
10.	Abstracts	14	5.5	0	0	238	94.4

Table 5 reveals that of all the information sources available in the division, thesis (89%) and dissertations were the most widely consulted. Maps (100%), Manuals (99%), abstracts (94.4%),

gazettes (90%) and biographies (79%) recorded the lowest level of usage. The result from this study is not in line with the study carried out by Ogunmodede, Adio and Odunola [2011]. In their study, books had the highest level of use with 89.3%, while theses and dissertations had very low levels of consultations of 20.1% and 16.4% respectively. Also, the results are not in line with the study of Onuoha, Ikonne and Madukoma (2013) revealed that books are still highly used more than any other information sources by postgraduate students. Again Sam (2008) reported that a majority of the items used by doctoral students were journals (44.5%), while books accounted for 32.5%.

Table 6: Frequency of Use

	Frequency	%
Daily	11	4.4
Once a Week	7	2.7
Once a Month	13	5.2
Once a Semester	24	9.5
Once a Session	69	27.4
Rarely	72	28.6
Not at all	56	22.2

Table 6 shows that only 11(4.4%) use the division every day. This percentage reveals that a good majority of the postgraduate students don't use the library. This is mainly attributed to the fact that they are not always on ground for their programmes. Also some of them are undergoing part-time programmes, which mean that they can only come to school only on preplanned days to either attend lectures or see their supervisors. Those that use the library once weekly are 7(2.7%), while those who use the library rarely was 72(28.6%) and not at all recorded 56(22.2%). The result of this study is at tallies with the study carried out by OCLC (2005) on college students. The study was conducted in five countries where 65% of the students used their college/university library at least monthly, with 14% using it daily. This result reveals low level of patronage of the division. When asked for their reasons for not using the library, some respondents answered that they find it difficult to get time off work to be in the campus so as to enable them use the library all the time, other responded that the library don't have the information resources they need.

Table 7: Satisfaction with Services

Items	Very Satisfied	%	Satisfied	%	Not Satisfied	%
I am satisfied with the information sources I find in the division	31	12.3	90	35.7	131	52
I am satisfied with the reprographic services provided by the division	95	37.6	42	16.6	115	45.6
I am satisfied with the reference services I find in the division	41	16.3	25	10	186	73.8
I am satisfied with the lending services I find in the division	105	41.6	48	19	99	39.2
I am satisfied with the help offered to users by staff of the division	46	18.2	100	39.6	106	42

Table 7 shows the responses of users satisfaction with the services provided by the Special Collection Division. On satisfaction with information sources, it revealed that 131 (52%) were

not happy with the information sources available in the division, on reprographic services, a total of 137 (54.3%) of the respondents claimed to be satisfied with reprographic services offered by the division while 146(58%) of the respondents were satisfied with the help offered by the staff of the division when they need materials.

CONCLUSION

This study has being able to establish that:

- Most postgraduate students are not aware of some of the information resources available in Special Collection Division of the Delta State University Library, Abraka.
- Dissertations, theses, books and dictionaries are the most used of all the information sources available in the division.
- That although information sources such as reports, maps, manuals and gazettes always contain current and relevant data suitable for research, most postgraduate students do not make use of them,
- Only a few of the postgraduate students under study make use of Special Collection Division.
- Of the postgraduate students that make use of Special Collection Division, only a few are satisfied with the services that are offered in the division.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The essence of having a collection is so that it can be put to good use by the audience it is intended for. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- The library page on the school portal should be updated to showcase the information resources available, notification of opening and closing hours as well as the services that Special Collection Division offer to post graduate users.
- Also, the university library should endeavour to provide stable internet facility in the division to enhance research for postgraduate students as well as to enable the staff of the division be of better help to their users.
- The division can be involved in selective dissemination of information to its users as many postgraduate students are always busy and always seem to have very little time to spend when they are on campus.
- The library should organize orientation and information literacy programmes for postgraduate students as it done for undergraduates, this will help to inform new students of services available and teach them of basic information search skills.

REFERENCES

1. Agboola, ID & Bamigboye, OB (2011). Students' level of study and user of library resources in Nigerian universities: a comparative study. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. Retrieved May 14, 2013, from <http://unllib.unl.edu/LPP/>.
2. Aguolu, CC & Aguolu, IE (2002). *Libraries and information management in Nigeria*. Ed-Linform Services, Maiduguri.
3. Ajibero, MI (1998). User expectation of Nigerian university library services in the 21st century, in Taofiq M. Salisu & S. Olajire Olanlokun, (eds.), *proceedings of CULNU seminars 1992 and 1994 held in Ekpoma and Ibadan*.
4. Echezona, RI (2010). Supervision of special collections in Federal and State University Libraries

- in Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. Retrieved May 9, 2013, from <http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu>.
5. Echezona, RI, Okafor, VN & Ukwoma, SC (2011). Information sources used by postgraduate students in library and information science: a citation analysis of dissertations. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. Retrieved May 10, 2013, from <http://unllib.unl.edu/LPP/>.
 6. George, C (2006). Scholarly use of information: graduate students' information seeking behavior. *Information Research*. May 11, 2013, from <http://informationr.net/ir/11-4/paper272.html>.
 7. Hoffmann, K, Antwi-Nsiah, F, Feng, V, & Stanley, M (2008). Library research skills: a needs assessment for graduate student workshops. *Science and Technology Librarianship*. Retrieved May 10, 2013, from <http://www.istl.org/08-winter/refereed1.html>.
 8. Liu, R & Allmang, N (2008). Assessing Customer Satisfaction at the NIST Research Library: essential tool for future planning. *Issues in Science and Technology Librarianship*. Retrieved May 10, 2013, from <http://www.library.ucsb.edu/istl/08-summer/article3.html>.
 9. Love, C & Feather, J (1998). Special collections on the World Wide Web: a survey and evaluation and information science. *Journal of Librarianship and Information science*. 30(4), 273-275. Retrieved May 11, 2013, <http://Lis.sagepubcom/content/vol30/issue4>.
 10. Ogunmodede, TA, Adio, G & Odunola, OA (2011). Library use education as a correlate of use of library resources in a Nigerian university. *Journal of Research and Method in Education (IOSR-JRME)*. 1(1), 11-16. Retrieved May 10, 2013, from www.iosrjournals.org.
 11. Onohwakpor, JE (2004). The survey of user's level of satisfaction with special collection services at Delta State University Library Abraka. *Communicate: Journal of Library Information Science*. 6(1), 51-61.
 12. Onuoha, UD, Ikonne, CN & Madukoma, E (2013). Perceived Impact of Library use on the Research Productivity of Postgraduate Students at Babcock University Nigeria. *Journal of Research & Method in Education*. 1(1), 11-16. Retrieved May 11, 2013, from www.iosrjournals.org.
 13. Oredein, AO (2013). Postgraduate students' supervision and training in Nigerian tertiary institutions: a comparative study. *Towards Quality in African Higher Education*. 319-329, retrieved May 9, 2013, from <http://www.academia.edu/...utions>
 14. Oyewusi, FO & Oyeboade, SA (2009). An empirical study of accessibility and use of library resources by undergraduates in a Nigerian State University of Technology. *Library Philosophy and Practice*.
 15. Popoola, SO (2008). The use of information sources and services and its effect on the research output of social scientists in Nigerian universities. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. Retrieved May 10, 2013, from <http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/~mbolin/popoola.htm>.
 16. Reitz, JM (2004). *Dictionary for Library and Information Science*. Libraries unlimited, Westport.
 17. Sam, J (2008). An analysis of papers published in the Ghana Library journal: a bibliometric study. *African Journal of Library, Archives & Information Science*. 18 (1), 55.
 18. Stein, J (2006). In their own words: a preliminary report on the value of the Internet and the library in graduate student research. *Performance Measurement and Metrics*. 7(2), 107-115.
 19. Whitmire, E (2002). Academic library performance measures and undergraduates library use and educational outcomes. *Library & Information Science Research*. 24 (2), 107-128.