

Acquisition and Use of Library Resources in the Transition from a College to a University: A Statistical Record Assessment

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Introduction

Many fields, organizations, and projects collect data and use it for decision-making. Many organizations rely on data-driven decisions to evaluate and improve. Tanur, Mosteller and Pieters (1989) suggest that data is a guide to the unknown. McClave and Sincich (2000), emphasize the numerical character of statistics. The library relies on numerical data to understand the present and make corrections and improvements in the future. In many libraries, statistics are compiled on daily, weekly, monthly and annual basis through recording information about activities and services the library provides for its users. Library statistics include: traffic, registered users, materials consulted, and materials loaned which Sokoya (2002), describes as derived records of library use.

Tai Solarin University of Education (TASUED) formerly Tai Solarin College of Education (TASCE) was upgraded into the first university of education in Nigeria in 2005, its certificate of recognition as the 76th University in Nigeria was issued specifically in November, 2005 by the National Universities Commission (NUC). The institution commenced its Bachelors in Education programme in 1998, in affiliation with the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. After becoming a university, it retained its National Certificate in Education (NCE) programme. The NCE programme is sub-degree training in colleges of education in Nigeria, and is the lowest recognized qualification for teaching in Nigeria. The University library, established in 1978 along with the Ogun State College of Education (later renamed Tai Solarin College of Education), is located within the main campus at Ijagun, with a seating capacity of 1,000 users and about 15,457 volumes of books and 1,589 journal titles. In view of the urgent need for a university library to meet the challenges of its new status, this study assesses book and journal acquisitions and use, using statistics compiled over a five-year period.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to analyse the acquisition and use of library books and journals for the last five years in a college of education before its transformation to a University.

The specific objectives are:

- To determine the number of books and journals acquired during the period under study.
- To ascertain the number of books and journals consulted by different categories of users during the period under study.
- To assess traffic levels and the number of registered users during the period under study.
- To determine the number of loans issued to users during the period under study.

The Research Problem

This study was necessitated by the need for TASCE library to evaluate its collections with the aim of identifying its weaknesses and make amendments to adjust to the challenges of its new status as a University Library. The library books and journals collection at TASUED library are presumed to be inadequate to cope with the increasing population of students and the university status.

Literature Review

Afonja (1982), discusses statistics as a method of data collection and analysis that minimizes uncertainty in the conclusions drawn. Lind, Mason, and Marchal (2000) remark that “data are everywhere,” and “no matter what your line of work is, you will make decisions that involve data.”

Library activities can be expressed in statistical form, which is why librarians have compiled statistics for evaluating the library. Statistics are an effective tool for management appraisal of a library (Hameed, 2004). Comparing statistics from several years can be useful in planning (Kumar, 2001). In recent times, it has become necessary for libraries to compile daily, weekly, and monthly acquisitions and use statistics. This has facilitated annual compilations and requests for data from external, independent, and corporate sources and bodies such as scholars, National library of Nigeria, National Universities Commission, etc. (Akintunde 1994). According to Nwalo (2001), one of the best ways to determine library effectiveness is the use of library statistics, while Ifidon (1983), observes that library statistics are the basis for the establishment of standards. The most common among these are statistics on size of collection, volumes added annually, circulation, reference questions answered and unanswered, inter-library loan requests and expenditure (Ifidon, 1983). The documentation of facts about individual library's history, resources, clientele, organization, administration, and management also has relevance in the conduct of research by librarians. This, in the view of Onye (1998), will lay the foundation for further, future critical interpretations and solutions to problems for the overall improvement of library operations and services. Nwalo (2001), citing Fowowe (1989), posits that “the library can fulfill its functions best by pursuing a policy of constant self-evaluation in order to be alert to the changing needs of its users.”

Methodology

The descriptive survey design was used for the study. Data was obtained from the library statistics which had been compiled over a five year period covering 2001/2002 – 2004-2005, just before the transformation of the college of education to a university of education. The data were compiled and collated by the staff in the readers' services department, which includes circulation, reference, and serials. The data were analyzed using frequencies, bar charts, and percentages.

Results

Table I: Acquisition of Library Books and Journals

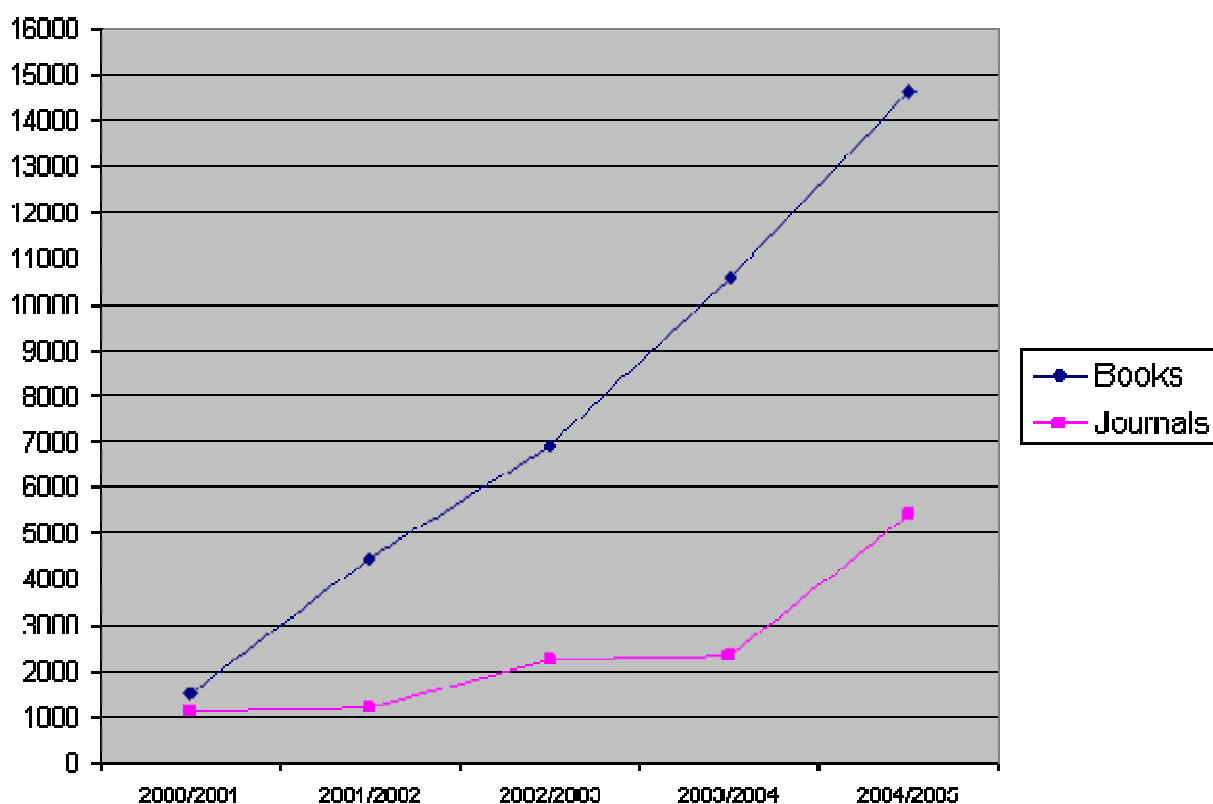
Year	Size of collection	Books added	Gifts	Purchased	Journal titles	Journal Volumes	Journal titles added	Journal gifts	Purchased journals
2000/2001	11,240	433	65	368	42	230	42	22	20
2001/2002	13,153	913	891	42	60	356	20	5	15
2002/2003	13,019	866	630	236	79	1,392	19	5	14
2003/2004	13,647	628	480	148	106	1,431	27	6	21
2004/2005	15,457	1,810	279	1,531	233	1,589	125	11	114
Total	15,457	4,650	2,325	2,325	233	1,589	233	49	184

The number of books and journals increased during the period under study, even though the rate of increase is low. A total of 4,650 volumes of books were added to stock during the period under study, about half of which were gifts. Journals added for the five year period were 233 titles or 1,589 volumes, of which about 20 to 25 percent were gifts.

Table II: Books and Journals Consulted

Sessions	Books				Journals			
	NCE Students	Undergraduates	Staff	Total	NCE Students	Undergraduates	Staff	Total
2000/2001	797	565	151	1513	525	381	212	1118
2001/2002	855	3457	145	4457	259	577	381	1217
2002/2003	3881	2820	201	6902	828	997	425	2250
2003/2004	3680	6554	332	10566	650	1411	287	2348
2004/2005	4661	9210	802	14673	1409	3018	1025	5452

Fig I: Line Chart Showing Books and Journals Consulted



The total number of consulted books during the period under study rose sharply and reached its peak during the 2004/2005 session, with 14,673 books, while the consulted journals also rose gradually reaching its peak in 2004/2005 session with 5,452 journals. The highest number of books consulted by NCE students, undergraduates, and staff was recorded in the 2004/2005 session with 4,661, 9,210, and

802 books respectively. The highest number of journals consulted by NCE students, undergraduates, and staff was also recorded in the 2004/2005 session with 1,409, 3,019, and 1,025 journals respectively.

Table III: Readers Attendance and Registered Users

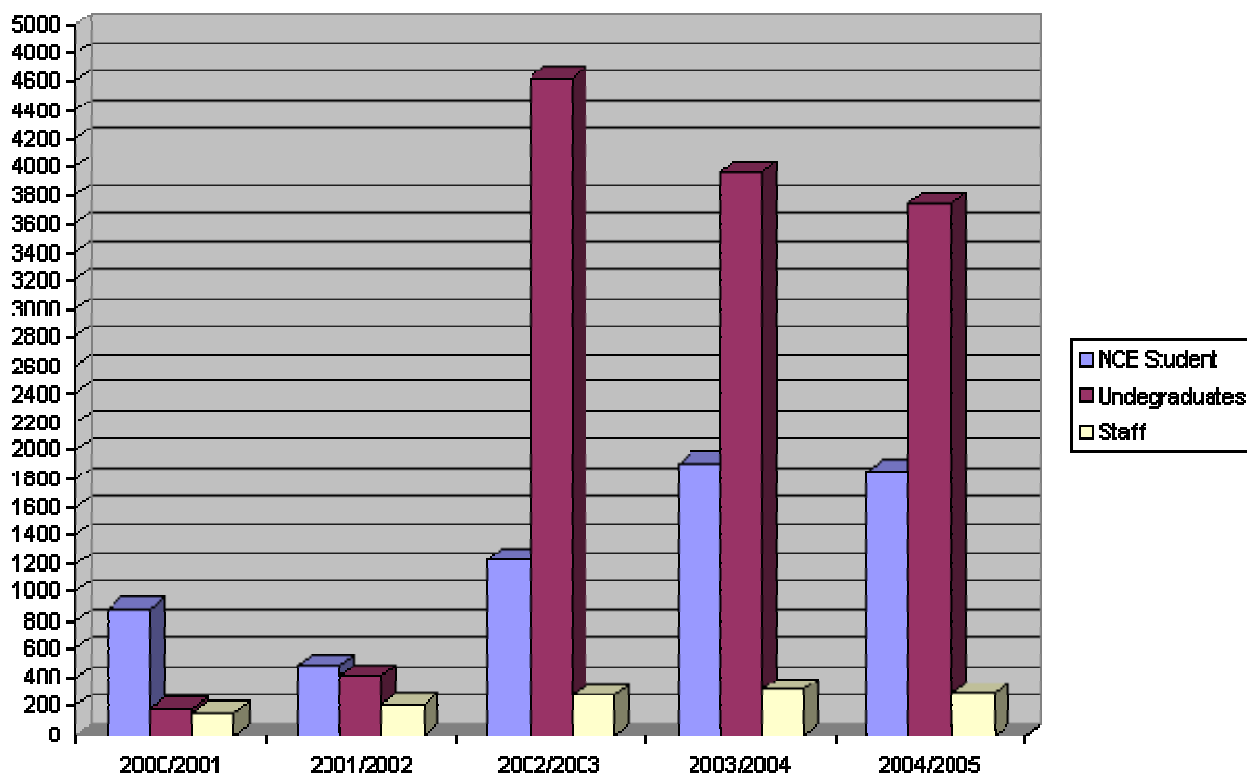
Sessions	Readers Attendance			Registered Users		
	NCE Students	Undergraduates	Staff	NCE Students	Under- graduates	Staff
2000/2001	3,065	700	407	559	204	135
2001/2002	1,223	7,471	405	688	637	144
2002/2003	7,271	19,057	490	1,304	867	179
2003/2004	8,237	21,201	557	801	2,433	210
2004/2005	26,221	59,270	1,509	641	1,340	216

The above table shows that the readers' attendance and the number of registered users increased gradually during the period under study. In 2002/2001, library visits by NCE students was 3,065, and by 2004/2005 session it had risen to 26,221. Undergraduate attendance rose from 700 in 2000/2001 to 59,270 by the end of 2004/2005, while staff attendance also rose from 467 in 2000/2001 session to 1,509 by the end of 2004/2005. User's registration expectedly increased generally during the period under study. Registered NCE students in 2000/2001 totaled 559 by the end of 2004/2005; the number of registered NCE students was 641. The highest number of registered NCE students for a session was 1,304, recorded during the 2001/2002 session. Two hundred and four undergraduates registered in 2000/2001. By 2004/2005, the number was 1,340, though 2,433 undergraduates had registered a year before. Registered staff as at 2004/2005 was 216, while 135 staff had registered during 2000/2001.

Table IV: Loans to Users

Year	NCE Students	Undergraduate	Staff
2000/2001	880	182	154
2001/2002	484	412	211
2002/2003	1,229	4,625	268
2003/2004	1,912	3,954	312
2004/2005	1,852	3,743	283
Total	6,357	12,916	1,228

Fig 2: Multiple Bar Chart showing Loans Issued to Users



Loans to undergraduates were initially low during 2000/2001, because the Bachelors degree had only been created in 1998. As the population of undergraduates rose, the number of loans to undergraduates jumped from a mere 182 in 2000/2001 to 3,954 loans in 2003/2004 session. Loans to NCE students were reduced in 2001/2002 but thereafter witnessed a steady increase, reaching its highest point in the 2003/2004 session with 1,912 loans. Loans to staff have been relatively low. The institution has staff strength of about 600 and the loans to staff reached their highest point of 312 in 2003/2004.

Summary of Findings

The total book collection, i.e., 15,457 volumes, and journals, i.e., 233 titles is small, especially considering the new university status of the institution.

- At total of 4,650 book volumes and 233 journal titles were added to the collection during the five year period.
- Books and journals consulted in the library by all categories of users had a steady increase during the five-year period.
- Reader's attendance for all categories of users increased gradually during the period with a sharp increase in the 2004/2005 session.
- The highest number of registered NCE students (1304) was recorded in 2002/2003 session; the highest number of undergraduates (2,133) was achieved in 2004/2005 session while the highest number of staff (216) was also registered in 2004/2005 session.

- Loans issued to NCE students totaled 6,357. Total loans to undergraduates was 12,916, while 1,228 loans went to staff.

Recommendations

In view of the findings, it is therefore recommended that:

- The new University status should propel the library into creating a proactive acquisition policy and the purchase of relevant books and journals in appreciable quantity and quality.
- There is the need for an improved and comprehensive user education programme for staff and new students as well as members of staff of the university.
- Priority should be given to the purchase of journals (local and international)
- Users must be promptly informed of the presence of these journals.
- There is the need for further investigation into the analysis of loans and consulted materials by subject and gender.
- The reasons for low patronage by staff should also be investigated.

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