

National Digest Of Library Statistics 1977/78 & 1978/79 - A Preliminary Report On The Survey Of Nigerian Libraries

by
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The National Library of Nigeria conducted a survey of Statistics in Nigerian Libraries covering the period of 1977/78 and 1978/79 financial years. The data obtained will be used for the publication of the *National Digest of Library Statistics 1977/78 and 1978/79* and also for the national records. This type of survey was last conducted in 1974.

Three copies of questionnaires on Library Statistics for 1977/78 and 1978/79 were mailed to every library in the country requesting them to complete and return them to the National Library of Nigeria before 30th September, 1979. The third copy was for the file of each library for future reference. Copies of questionnaires were also expected to follow up the survey in their respective areas of operation to ensure reasonable response and early returns of questionnaires.

RETURNS

The returns of the survey did not reach any level of significance for adequate statistical analysis as at December, 1979. 28 out of 80 Ministry and Special Libraries (35%) completed the questionnaires, 5 out of 60 States and Public Libraries (8%) responded and 9 out of 55 Academic Libraries (16%) responded. In order to increase the response rate, a written reminder was sent to all the Libraries that have not responded on 4th January, 1980 and the response rate still remained low. Thereafter, another reminder was sent on 1st August, 1980 to all those libraries that have not responded. The response rate increased by 8% making the overall response rate of 30%.

Since the goal was to improve the response rate, active personal visits were made by two Senior Officers of this Library to many important libraries that had not responded in order to retrieve completed questionnaires. Those states visited included Oyo, Ondo, Bendel, Kaduna and Kano. From these active personal visits, reasonable success was achieved. 50 out of 72 Ministry and Special Libraries 70% returned completed questionnaires. 33 out of 53 Academic libraries 62% responded while 24 out of 60 State, Public and Cultural libraries 46% responded.

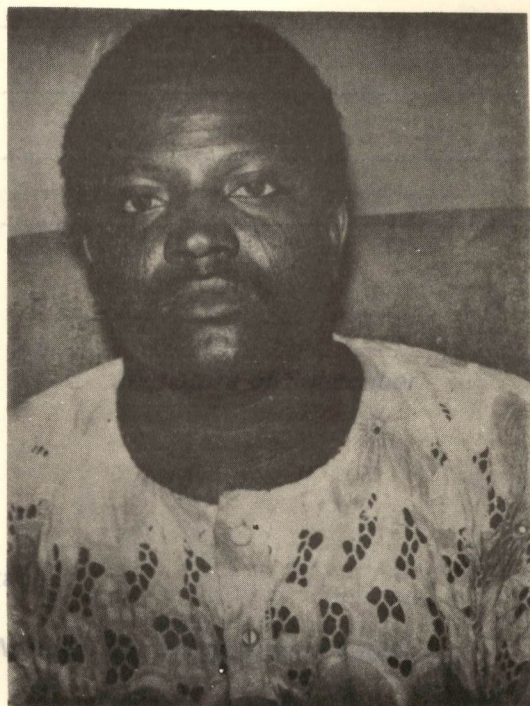
Although the overall percentage of returns for the public library is 46%. It should be borne in mind that the small and many in-active libraries that constitute the bulk of non-response are in some states namely; Oyo, Ondo and Kwara. 23 out of 28 libraries that did not respond in public libraries are Libraries run by local council.

On the whole, 107 libraries out of a total of 177 libraries completed and returned their questionnaires (61%). This response rate is considered reasonable and on the basis of the available data, statistical analysis was made as described below.

ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION

The final draft of the "*National Digest of Library Statistics*" contains about 7 different tables namely, Library Services, Library Collection - Book materials and Non-Book materials, Library Staffing Strength, Library Operating Expenditure, Library Physical Facilities, Library Co-operation and Library Equipment. Data were extracted from the completed returned questionnaires on Library Statistics and organised into the seven tables. From the tables drawn, it is very easy to see at a glance those libraries that have responded and those that have not. One will also be able to compare the activities of Libraries within Nigeria and also with others abroad.

Judging from the information contained in the tables, it would be observed that details like library collection, space available for library purpose, current periodicals and titles held etc. which should be at the finger tips of Librarians are not properly kept. These are the normal data that are expected to be given out to visitors of the Library.



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It would be observed that many libraries do not have records of the length of shelves (linear metre) and the number currently in use and some do not even keep records of their book stack, periodicals, etc; and some

who keep cannot differentiate whether the figures are for 1977/78 or 1978/79. Total book stack held by various categories of libraries are shown on the tables. From this analysis, Academic libraries held 58%, Public libraries 19%. Ministry and Special libraries 16% while the National Library held 9%.

Records of the population served i.e. (Library users) are hardly accurately kept by most libraries especially the public libraries. For example, one State Library expected to serve a population of 2,427,017 gave 43 as the number of readers who made use of the Library during 1978/79 financial year and another State Library expected to serve a population of 10,000,000 gave 1,663 as the number of its readers during 1978/79 financial year.

With regards to library staffing strength in all types of libraries, professional staff are more in the employment of Academic libraries. For example, out of a total of 601 staff employed in academic libraries 172 are professionals (ratio 1:3). Ministry and Special libraries have 112 professionals out of 429 staff (ratio 1:4). National Library have 46 professionals out of 338 staff (ratio 1:7) - while Public libraries have 107 professionals out of 971 staff (ratio 1:8).

On library operating expenditure, giving 1978/79 as an example, out of a total expenditure of N4,884,938.29 expended on salaries and wages by libraries, Academic libraries had the highest 52% while Ministry and Special libraries had the lowest 19%.

Out of a total expenditure of N3,467,717.27 expended on acquisition of library materials, Academic libraries had the highest (62%) while the National

Library had the lowest (6%). On the training of staff, National Library had the highest. Out of a total expenditure of N94,192 expended on training of staff National Library had (48%) while Academic Libraries had the lowest (16%).

SUGGESTIONS

1. Librarians should be able to make time available to complete the questionnaires.
2. Libraries are advised to keep proper records of their inventories and such records should be properly kept for future reference so that this exercise would be easily carried out every year.
3. Librarians should constantly realise the importance of library statistics in library development.
4. Arrangement should be made by state library services to include school libraries not included in this exercise by obtaining an up to date list of schools from the Ministry of Education within their areas of authority.
5. Libraries should redouble their efforts in keeping proper records of all the activities going on in the Reference Department/Section most especially, the records of population served, information services rendered and library co-operation i.e. loans to and from other libraries at local and international level.
6. With regards to the "Physical Facilities" such as length of shelves in linear metre, an acceptable formula should now be proposed as standard to resolve the problem of measuring.



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