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Awareness, Availability and Accessibility of Library Resources by Students of Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria

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Introduction

There has been growing concern about students' access and use of the library in higher education institutions in Nigeria, to attain a successful completion of their studies. Effective use of the library enhances the realization of these objectives. It is the library that provides numerous services to users, addressing their diverse needs, and interest (Andaleeb, 2001). Library is an institution that manages the intellectual products that individual can gain access to reality. Iyadave & Salawu (2006) described library as a public institution or an establishment charged with the responsibility for acquiring books, the duty of making them accessible to those who require them and the task of converting every person in its neighborhood into habitual library goers and readers of books. Therefore, the library must create a balance between specific research and information needs and a usable collection of information materials to meet the need of the institution's academic programmes (Oseghale, 2008). According to Mason (2010), an academic library has the mission to build and maintain a collection that will support and enhance the needs of the institution and provide access to all sources of information.

Adeoye and Popoola (2011) observed that in every society there are facilities other than classrooms that can contribute in no small measure to teaching and learning process. For learning to take place effectively, learners must have access to necessary information materials and resources. Therefore, accessibility of information sources is an important recurring theme in the literature. The more accessible information sources are, the more likely they will be used. Readers tend to use information sources that require the least effort to access. These observations have been validated by empirical studies. Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) noted that availability of an information source does not necessarily imply its accessibility, because the source may be available but access to it prevented for one reason or the other. Therefore, the objectives of this study include:-

- to identify information resources that are available in Kwara State University library;
- to find out the level of students' awareness of available information resources;
- to determine ease of accessibility of information resources to students of Kwara State University;
- find out the benefits of library information resources to the students and
- to identify the problems militating against the accessibility of library information resources by students of Kwara State University.

Literature review

Library resources are the information bearing materials that enable the library to fulfil its goals of meeting the information needs of its users. Therefore, it collects resources in various sizes and formats over a period of time. Library resources are many and varied, but they can be divided into two broad categories namely "printed and non-printed materials". The printed materials are books, pamphlets, periodicals, newspapers and reference resources. Non-print resources are however, often referred to as audio visual and electronic resources and generations of requisite equipment for accessing, viewing or listening to data stored in them. (Adeoye & Popoola, (2001); Adomi (2008); and Roa, (2005). Iyandave and Salawu (2006) stressed that the strength of every library lies in its resources and information services to the people. In other words, a library will be adjudged good or otherwise by its ability to meet, to a large extent, the information needs of its clientele. To this end, professional librarians continue to strive to collect, store, organize and disseminate all forms of recorded knowledge in order to satisfy both present and future information need of users.

A well-stocked academic library is a storehouse of information, or a record of human experience to which users may turn to for data or information. The effectiveness and efficiency of services provided in academic libraries are mainly determined by library users. Perera (2005) submitted that satisfying user needs is essential to the management of libraries. Therefore, carrying out regular surveys on user needs at regular intervals on various aspects of library usage will be an invaluable guide in determining what they should be aware of and how they could be available and accessible. This will improve the management strategies in the library.

Ansari (2008) revealed that a high percentage of library users in five academic libraries in New Delhi use OPAC as a search tool for retrieving documents. His study also showed that most of the users handled the OPAC themselves. One can conclude here that users of those five academic libraries have gone through the training offered by the libraries which help information searchers to use OPAC without requesting for the assistant of the library staff. Pradham (2004) declared that in spite of the internet, the library will continue to be relevant as the internet has missed a very significant societal role in the preservation and diffusion of human knowledge through ages and generations, asserting that the library profession is complementing the internet with the introduction of metadata which is defined as "data about data" or information about information."

The more accessible information sources are, the more likely they are to be used. Readers tend to use information sources that require the least effort to access. The principle of library services centres on information exploitation. This principle emphasizes maximum utilization of library resources and services. For a library to worth its salt, the resources and services it renders must strive to meet and satisfy the needs of its users. However, users' perception, which is a way a user form impression of and make references about library resources, services and personnel in terms of how far they meet their expectation should be used to measure library performance. (Oladije & Fabunmi, 2011). According to Aina (2004) user is critical to the practice of librarianship and that all processes revolve round the users. User is the focal point of all libraries or information centres since the primary objectives of the library is to satisfy its users. Ifijeh (2011) asserted that the academic productivity of any student depends on his access to quality information resources for learning. The place of library in providing these resources cannot be overemphasized. Similarly, Obiozor and Ogbonna (2007) observed that the entire human and material resources in a library are put in place at considerable expense for the overall purpose of providing effective service to the library user.

According to Ogbebor (2011) information resources help students in planning and implemening of learning programs that will equip students with the skills necessary to succeed in a constantly changing social and economic environment. Also resource-based programs help students in acquiring skills to collect, critically analyze, organize information, solve problems and communicate their understandings. Access to information provides and promotes quality fiction to develop and sustain students' habit and enjoyment of reading for pleasure and to enrich students' intellectual, aesthetic, cultural and emotional growth. Kumar, Singh and Yadave (2011) asserted that "access to the right information is a difficult task because information is abundant, but users do not know whether it is available and where to locate it". Therefore, librarians must ensure maximum utilization of the few resources the library acquires to justify the cost in acquiring them.

Fagbola, Uzoigwe and Ajegbomogun (2011) identified the following challenges to access of information in Nigerian colleges of education libraries, inadequate operational human resources, library staff apathy towards work, poor funding, poor/unreliable public power supply and lack of maintenance culture. Adeoye and Popoola (2011) indicated that a library user may encounter five possible types of inaccessible problems. These are conceptual, linguistic, critical,

bibliographic and physical inaccessibility. Olowu (2004) identified natural and artificial barriers to free access to information. The library's poor reputation was attributed to lack of accessibility of information sources. In a similar study by Oyediran-Tidings (2004) at Yaba College of technology, Lagos, low use of the library by student were observed. This was attributed to expressed accessibility problems. This study also addressed the problem holistically by investigating problems associated with awareness, availability and accessibility.

Research Methodology

This study utilized the descriptive survey method of research design. The questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. The population consisted of all the students in Kwara State University, Malete. A sample of 240 students was drawn from the six colleges in the university using the purposive sampling technique. 240 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to students. Of these numbers, 210 were duly completed and retrieved and found usable.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Results and Discussion

Figure 1 shows the respondents according to the Colleges in the university.

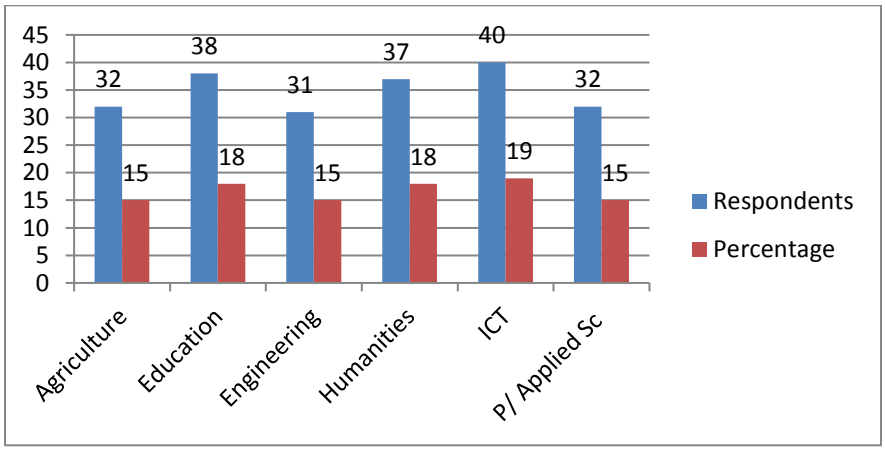
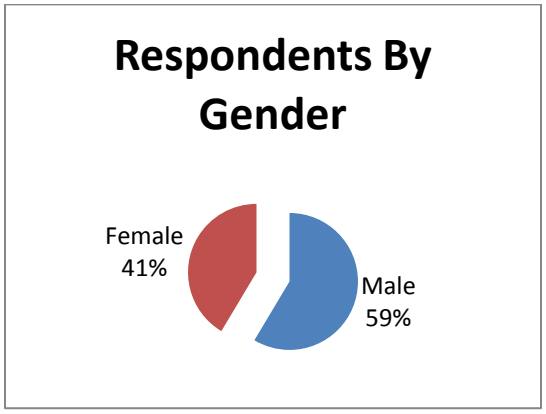


Fig. 1: Respondents according to Colleges

Figure 1 shows the number of students used in the six colleges of the institution. It indicates that majority of the respondents (19%) are from the college of Information Communication Technology, 18% from the college of Education, 18% from the college of Humanities, 15% from the college of Agriculture, 15% from the college of Pure and Applied Sciences, while 15%

came from the college of Engineering. The table shows that the sampling is representative of the six colleges that made up of the university.

Figure 2 reveals that 59% and 41% males and females respectively constitute the gender distribution for the respondents. It is evident from the above that majority of the respondents were males. Figure 3 reveals that majority of the respondents (64%) were between the ages of 21- 30, 34% were between15-20, while 2% were between 30-35 years



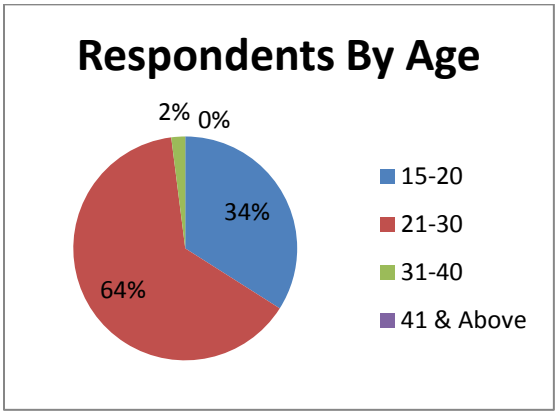


Figure 2: Gender distribution of the respondents **Figure 3: Age distribution of the respondents**

The available information resources in Kwara State University library are depicted in Table 1. The table is compiled from the response of the students and confirmed from the Library staff by the authors.

Table 1: Available information resources at Kwara State University library

1	Text books	11	Bibliographies
2	Journals	12	Biographies
3	Dictionaries	13	Almanacs
4	Encyclopedias	14	Computer
5	Handbooks	15	Gazettes
6	Newspapers/magazines	16	Abstracts/index
7	Manuals	17	Internet facilities
8	Reports	18	CD-ROM facilities
9	Atlases/map	19	Online Databases
10	Directories		

The list of resources on table 1 is in conformity with Mason 2010 who stated that an academic library has the mission to build and maintain a collection that will support and enhance the needs of the institution. It also agrees with Rao 2005 who argued that in a library's effort to provide a broad array of resources to meet the needs of their users, it collects resources in various sizes and formats over a period of time. These resources can include manifestation of the printed word, audio and video recordings, microforms, visual and electronic resources, and generations of requisite equipment for accessing, viewing or listening to data stored in them.

Table 2: Awareness of available information resources in Kwara State University library

Available information resources at Kwara State University library	**Agree**		**Disagree**		**Total**
	No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**%**
Text books	200	95	10	5	100
Journals	177	84	33	16	100
Dictionaries	188	90	22	10	100
Encyclopedias	159	76	51	24	100
Handbooks	154	73	56	27	100
Newspapers/magazines	180	86	30	14	100
Manuals	121	58	89	42	100
Reports	125	60	85	40	100
Atlases/map	116	55	94	45	100
Directories	120	57	90	43	100
Bibliographies	127	60	83	40	100
Biographies	125	60	85	40	100
Almanacs	88	42	122	58	100
Computer	159	76	51	24	100
Gazettes	97	46	113	54	100
Abstracts/index	132	63	78	37	100
Internet facilities	146	70	64	30	100
CD-ROM facilities	107	51	103	49	100
Online Databases	134	64	76	36	100

Table 2 depicts the opinion of respondents on the awareness and availability of information resources in Kwara State University library. Majority of the respondents claimed that they are aware of the available resources in table 1. This result aligns with Perera (2005) and

Aina (2004) who submitted that satisfying user needs is essential to the management of libraries. Worthy of note on table 2 is the number/percentage of those who claimed that they are not aware of some of the resources. This is an indication that there are some students who do not visit the library because table 1 showed that these resources are available in the library of the institution. Of interest and concern is that over 40% of the respondents are not aware of the availability of resources such as manual, report, Atlases/maps, directories, bibliographies, biographies, almanacs and gazettes. The implication of this is that the students may not know that these resources are quick reference tool. Lecturers should endevour to give assignments which will make the students use these resources. This is evident from the fact that those they know their usefulness have high percentage of awareness, such as books, journals, dictionaries, encyclopedias, handbooks and newspaper. In the past lecturers draw the attention of students to these resources for assignment but it is doubtful if this is the practice today. Therefore, this result has thrown a challenge to the Library and those teaching library use for the need to make their lesson highly practical explaining the nature and use of these resources which abound in the library. Most of the resources which they claimed they are not aware of are quick reference tools.

Table 3 shows that some of the available information resources in Kwara State University Library were accessible to students. This finding is in agreement with Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) who noted that the more accessible information sources are, the more likely they are to be used. Readers tend to use information sources that require the least effort to access. It also corresponds with Opara (2001) who posited that the library stands in the same relationship to the society as the memory of an individual by making available and accessible to its users information required for teaching and independent study. Afebende and Ebaye (2008) argued that the effectiveness of a library does not depend on only its collection/resources and other facilities per see, but also on the success of its exploitation and use. Iyoro (2004) examined the contribution of accessibility to learning processes and reported that respondents made use of the library when information is easily and conveniently accessible to them. According to Aina (2004), user is critical to the practice of librarianship and that all processes revolve round the users. User is a focal point of all libraries or information centres since the primary objectives of library's existence is to satisfy its users.

Data regarding the level of accessibility of available information resources in Kwara State University Library are as shown in Table 3. It is true that majority of the students say the

resources are accessible, the percentages of those who said the resources are not accessible are of great concern. Under no circumstance should 30% and 37% of the respondents say they do not have access to internet facilities when there is no restriction to the E-library where there are about 150 computers with internet facilities access to the various databases subscribed to by the library. Comparison between tables 2 and 3 shows clearly that there is correlation between awareness and accessibility as reflected in some resources evaluated. Resources they know their usefulness have high percentage of awareness, availability and accessibility such as books, journals, dictionaries encyclopedias, newspaper etc, whereas those they are not conversant with neither know their usefulness, have low rate of awareness, availability and accessibility, such as reports, atlases, maps. Directories, bibliographies, almanacs, gazettes etc.

Table 3: Ease of accessibility of information resources in Kwara State University Library.

Level of accessibility of information resources to KWASU students	**Very easily accessible**		**Easily accessible**		**Accessible**		**Not accessible**		**Total**
	No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	
Books	65	31	35	17	93	44	17	8	100
Journals	34	17	45	21	111	53	20	10	100
Dictionaries	47	22	45	21	100	48	18	9	100
Encyclopedias	34	16	41	20	95	45	40	19	100
Handbooks	21	10	43	20	93	45	52	25	100
Newspapers/magazines	43	20	54	26	93	44	20	10	100
Manuals	11	5	33	16	97	46	69	33	100
Reports	10	5	26	13	86	41	87	41	100
Atlases/map	15	7	24	11	83	40	88	42	100
Directories	13	6	20	10	95	45	82	39	100
Bibliographies	11	5	37	18	81	39	81	39	100
Biographies	14	7	35	17	80	38	81	39	100
Almanacs	8	4	19	9	83	40	100	48	100
Computer	25	12	45	21	92	44	48	23	100
Gazettes	8	4	24	11	79	38	99	47	100
Abstracts/index	7	3	27	13	71	34	105	50	100

Internet facilities	29	14	50	24	67	32	64	30	100
CD-ROM facilities	17	8	30	14	65	31	98	47	100
Online Databases	24	11	36	17	73	35	77	37	100

Data pertaining to the benefits of accessing information resources in Kwara State University are revealed in Table 4.

Table 4: Benefits derived from accessing information resources

Benefits derived from accessing information resources	**Strongly agree**		**Agree**		**Strongly disagree**		**Disagree**		**Total**
	No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	
For enhancing academic knowledge	91	43	81	39	22	10	16	8	100
Accessing informational resources for recreational purpose	35	17	107	51	19	9	49	23	100
For entertainment reasons	31	15	100	48	29	14	50	24	100
To help in passing examination	61	29	103	49	21	10	25	12	100
For Leisure	27	13	98	47	30	14	55	26	100
For lifelong learning	53	25	103	49	25	12	29	14	100
Enhance quality of research	62	30	103	49	16	8	29	14	100
Fulfillment of instinct of Competitiveness	33	16	105	50	20	10	52	25	100
Updating knowledge and learning skills	60	29	106	50	17	8	27	13	100
Conservation of knowledge	49	23	113	54	15	7	33	16	100

Table 4 shows an evaluation of some of the benefits derived by students from accessing information resources. It revealed that 82% of the respondents used information resources to acquire academic knowledge, 78% for passing examination and 79% for research. This finding conforms with that of Ifijeh (2011) who asserted that the academic productivity of any student in colleges of education depends on his access to quality information resources for learning. Bhati (2010) revealed that students of Islamia University, Pakistan use information resources for

learning, gaining subject knowledge, research, leisure, sports, entertainment, and for receiving news. Highly revealing is the fact that students' benefits are academic related. It is observed from this study that students have no desire for recreational, entertainment and leisure reading. These are some probable reasons for low standard of education in Nigeria, because all round education calls for recreational, entertainment and leisure reading.

Data pertaining to the problems militating against the access to library information resources are identified in Table 5

Table 5: Challenges militating against the access to library information resources

Challenges militating against the access to library information resources	**Strongly agree**		**Agree**		**Strongly disagree**		**Disagree**		**Total**
	No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	100
Unfriendliness of some library staff	23	11	82	39	42	20	63	30	100
Non availability of materials	17	8	82	39	38	18	73	35	100
Unclassified nature of the resources	150	71	20	10	33	16	7	3	100
Low financial support	22	11	79	38	40	19	68	32	100
Non-functional catalogue	16	8	72	34	40	19	82	39	100
Unawareness of available information resources	13	11	80	38	30	14	77	37	100
Not a strong user of the library	16	8	66	31	38	18	90	43	100
Lack of in-depth orientation on library usage with respect to the use of catalogue and online services	26	12	75	36	41	20	68	32	100

Table 5 reveals the challenges militating against the access to library information resources in Kwara State University. The result in the table shows that unfriendliness of some library staff 50%, unclassified nature of information resources 81%, and lack of in-depth orientation on library usage with respect to the use of catalogue and the library online services 48%, as the major problems militating against access to information resources. This finding aligns with Kumar, Singh and Yadave (2011) who asserted that access to the right information is a difficult task because information is abundant, but users do not know whether it is available and where to locate it. Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) noted that availability of information source does not

necessarily imply its accessibility, because the source may be available but access to it prevented for one reason or the other. However, Ibeun (2011) observed that the use of modern communication technologies will create awareness, visibility and accessibility for library resources in the 21st Century.

Table 6: Usage of awareness media created by the library

Usage of awareness media created by the library	**Strongly agree**		**Agree**		**Strongly disagree**		**Disagree**		**Total**
	No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	100
Catalogue cards/OPAC	21	10	81	39	64	30	44	21	100
Accession list/recent addition	16	8	73	35	49	23	72	34	100
Displaying new titles	11	5	77	37	44	21	78	37	100
Selective Dissemination of Information	8	3	78	37	44	21	80	38	100
Advertisement blurbs	12	6	63	30	39	18	96	46	100
Abstracts	12	6	68	32	37	18	93	44	100
Bibliographies	13	6	84	40	32	15	81	39	100
Reference list	11	5	84	40	36	17	79	38	100
Indexes	7	3	93	44	39	19	71	34	100
Publishers catalogues	13	6	79	38	44	21	74	35	100
Current awareness services	19	9	82	39	38	18	71	34	100

Table 6 reveals that the usage of awareness media created by the library is very low because in all the resources evaluated higher percentage of the respondents claim they are not aware of some of the resources. This finding contradicts Ansari (2008) who revealed that a high percentage of library users in five academic libraries in New Delhi use OPAC as a search tool for retrieving documents. His study also showed that most of the users handled the OPAC themselves. One can conclude here that users of those five academic libraries have gone through the training offered by the libraries which help information searchers to use OPAC without requesting for the assistant of the library staff. Similarly, Mulla and Chandrashekara (2009) investigated the reason for users not using the library OPAC services. His work showed that 91.06% complained of the shortage of system terminals put in place by the Library; 55.69% attributed it to lack of awareness of the OPAC services while 52.03% linked it to the improper

working of OPAC module; 20.33% stated that the system is far from stack area; 15.85% attributed it to lack of orientation from library staff and 10.98% stated that they cannot locate the books they need through the OPAC.

The level of awareness of the catalogue cards/OPAC in this study shows that only 49% of the respondents agreed that they are aware of OPAC as a means of creating awareness. This could be improved upon if more system terminals are available in the library, since the e-library where they have access to the OPAC is distantly located from the main library.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has shown that the principle of information usage is on the premise that there is awareness for the existence of a particular information material and that the material is available and accessible. This responsibility rest first and foremost on the producer of the information and the book seller. However, in academic setting, this responsibility rest squarely on the librarian. Thus the response and analysis of the returned questionnaire drew out a pattern of information generation, dissemination and usage in a university setting. As rightly observed by Masango (2008), access to information is a complex concept which involves chain of activities. Thus, result from this study has shown systematic procedure for creating awareness, making available for accessibility of library resources (figure 4). Figure 4 shows the sequence of activities of the librarian in the process of creating awareness, making available and accessible library resources. Analysis on tables 2 and 3 show clearly a correlation between awareness and accessibility. The correlation is that what you are not aware of is hardly desired and once something is not desired it will not be needed and once it is not needed it will not be sought for and once it is not sought for, it will not be available and accessible for use. Figure 4 shows that there is distinction between awareness, availability, and accessibility. For effective information provision librarians must clearly understand these distinctions in the different stages. The desired awareness can be achieved through the media listed in the figure. Awareness in turn provokes the desire for accessibility and accessibility provokes availability for usage. The user is further equipped with bibliographic details of what is aware of through the media listed under availability in the figure. At the level of accessibility, the user can now lay his or her hands on the real document/information through the means listed under accessibility in fig 4. A librarian should be able to distinguish between these systematic stages and perform the expected services in each of the stages, if library users must be aware, know of available resources and have access to them

for use. The level at which the different activities in the figure are performed the librarian will determine the level of awareness, availability and accessibility of library resources.

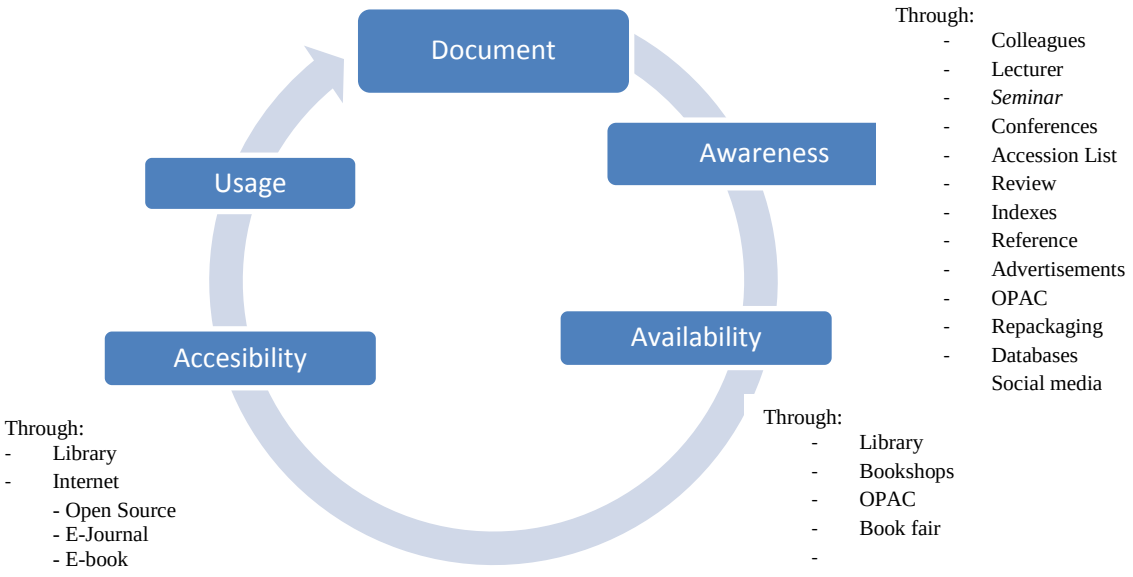


Fig 4: [Systematic steps for effective Information Delivery]. (© [2017], [Eiriemiokhale and Ibeun].

The finding from this study shows that information resources are available in Kwara State University Library, and a good percentage of the students have easy access to the library resources. It further revealed that students do not use the awareness creation media provided by the library. As expected the students use the library for learning, doing assignment and for passing examination. Reasonable number of the students does not visit the library to use the available resources as shown in most of the tables. Some of the students have problem in differentiating the different resources and their usefulness. On the part of the library, the study revealed that the awareness media created by the library was very low. Further finding shows that some of the library staff are unfriendly. Some resources are unclassified and lack of in-depth orientation on library usage in respect of the catalogue or library online services.

The researchers provided the following recommendations:-

- library orientation on library use with regard to the use of the catalogue/OPAC and online resources should be intensified and made compulsory for all year one students. This should be practical in nature where students should be able to identify the different resources;
- the library should create time to explain the usefulness of some of the resources which students show ignorance of, such as manuals, reports, atlases, almanacs, gazettes etc. these are quick sources of information if students know their usefulness and usage. This can be achieved by display at the entrance where knowledgeable staff stands by to explain to in coming users;
- the library should improve awareness for its resources through different media of dissemination, such as hand bill which library users can pick at the entrance on their way out. Such method will surely have multiplier effect because it can be handed over to students who do not frequently use the library. Such hand bill could contain list of new books, table of content of journals received in the library within a given period which could be photocopied and staple for take away;
- the library should be liberal in allowing students to have access to library resources in terms of borrowing;
- library staff should be friendly, there should be channel of identifying unfriendly staff and any staff found misbehaving to library users should be sanctioned. Therefore the ethics of the profession should be brought to the notice of the staff during staff meetings. This is necessary bearing in mind that many non-professionals who find themselves working in the library are their because they have no alternative job;
- Students should create interest in their work and develop positive attitude towards the use of the library knowing fully well that the library is the bedrock of their academic achievement and
- The new library under construction should make provision for computer terminals to enhance the usage of the OPAC.

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