

PROMOTING THE USE OF LIBRARY COLLECTIONS THROUGH LIBRARY PUBLICITY.

By

YUSUF OLAREWaju IBRAHIM

*Kwara State College of Arabic and Islamic Legal Studies,
Department of Library Science, Ilorin.*

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is simple, it is a provocation. It discusses promoting the use of library collections through library publicity. This paper also shows that any library that is expected to be functioning effectively, the library publicity should not be left out. Because it promotes the use of library collections and projects the image of the library and also creates fruitful understanding between the library and users/expected users. The study was also conducted to intimate the readers on the role public relation has to play to boost library patronage. It dwells much on the ability of public relation to promote, inform and influence

INTRODUCTION

It is obviously through display and library publicity that the libraries attract more users and project the image of libraries. If any library wants to achieve its aims and objectives for its existence, a lot of library activities have to be their functions. Given the definition of library by different researchers, it is a belief that setting up library is also a great challenge and can be made to benefit many generations. Library provides access to information materials and it is a place where. Information is shared which makes the society to move from one level of development to another.

Library have considerable experience dealing with different user which provides the role in supporting efficient library services. This is in providing a trusted services authority based upon librarians making choices, evaluating information as a par collection development and with a thorough understanding of what users need.

**PROMOTING THE USE OF LIBRARY COLLECTIONS
THROUGH LIBRARY PUBLICITY.**

For libraries to achieve the set goals which among others are educating the people and transforming the society, a great function to exercise often is 'publicity'. So, therefore library publicity plays vital roles in promoting the use of library collections.

To make this discussion more comprehensive, the definitions of both terms 'library' and 'publicity' have to be given:

Nwalo, (2003)¹ gave the definition of library as an organization that is primarily set up to acquire, organize, store and make accessible to the users, within the quickest possible times all forms of information materials which they require while the definition of publicity is also given by different researchers. In their attempts, publicity also means public relation. Igbokwe (1997)² quoted Raw and Chandra (1993) defining public relation (publicity) in reporting the world conference of public relationship held in Mexico 1978, as having defined it as the art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting the consequences, counselling organization leaders and implementing planned programme of actions which serve both the organization and public interest.

The institute of public relation (UK) defined public relation as the deliberate planned and sustained efforts to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organization and its public (Raw and Chandra 1993), quoted by Ahmed (2003)³

With the understanding of the above definitions of publicity (public relation), publicity means public awareness in order to create understanding between an organization and public to project the image of an organization and to attract more customers.

Library publicity means the various activities put forward by the library collection. It can also be defined as any effort carried out to project the image of any given library.

Nwalo (2003) discussed as part of library publicity, all good libraries publish quarterly accessions list and news bulletin. According to him, this publication

*PROMOTING THE USE OF LIBRARY COLLECTIONS
THROUGH LIBRARY PUBLICITY.*

informs patrons of the latest addition to library stock and gives them general news about the library. The news can be transfers; new appointments; merging or demerging of departments; creation of new department: If service time has been extended; materials presentation; new policies and general staff welfare; new materials; etc.

Patrick (1977)⁴ noted in his public knowledge, private knowledge; Toward a library and information policy, libraries are an essential element in the educational system, which is the society's main arrangement for reducing costly ignorance. To those whose occupational function is the search for new knowledge or the application of exiting knowledge to the solution of society problems the library is an indispensable source of information, as they will have at their command a vast array of private, college, university national public school and special libraries.

The reduction of costly ignorance by libraries is achieved through the assistance they provide in the process of formal and non formal education and in the direct assistance they give to scholars and scientists in the extension of the frontiers of knowledge.

Marian (1980)⁵ also noted that the public relation officer stands a better chance of consulting with the best use of the various media for public relation effectiveness. The author stressed that the public relation officer in the library is expected to serve as liaison officer with the friend of the library, organization and the government at large.

Adekunle (1994)⁶ stated that planning is an exercise in scientific thinking and analysis, with particular reference to demands of the public relation profession and of the organization of its environment.

A separate office that holds the responsibility of publicity service should be set aside in library under the responsibility of library public relation officer (library P.R.O). If the responsibility of library publicity is not under a single person called Library P.R.O, then all the library staff should be performing the activities of the library publicity in the absence of an office for library publicity.

As it has been said earlier that publicity and public relation mean the same thing. Public relations is the group of activities or measure undertaken to promote in the public mind a favourable feeling towards a cooperation, institution, product or person.

The primary goal of public relations/publicity is to build and hold good will. The measuring scale of good will is public opinion i.e. the attitude and beliefs of any considerable number of people not necessarily a majority on specific event or issue.

Why Library Publicity: Public relation according to Betty (1982)⁷ "is a way of life. Any institution which hopes to achieve that degree of flexibility and responsiveness to public opinion which will ensure its survival finds public relation a necessity".

Dada (1979)⁸ gave the following reasons for library display;

- a. To inform the potential readers of the library holdings under each subject or discipline.
- b. To stimulate the full exploitation of books and other library materials
- c. To facilitate inter library cooperation by exposing the library stock.
- d. To increase the readership of the library as a way of actively decreasing the illiteracy rate in any given society.
- e. To sustain the interest of the users in the services rendered by the library.

The reasons why public relation/publicity is needed in library are numerous. These reasons are telling us the purposes of public relation/publicity in our libraries. The librarian as a manager of information and public relation officer tries to communicate the essence of the library to appropriate audience. He fight the anti-library in the minds of the public.

Furthermore, for a library to achieve or attain its objectives, it need to embark on certain efforts, endearvour or programme toward promoting the library image. These efforts and or programmes are known as public relation/publicity in library.

