ELECTRONIC RESOURCES COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES IN LIBRARIES IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

sesse, 2000). The information sector is challenged by information explosion coupled with the dynamism and rapid changing form of information sources and services in the digital era particularly the e-collection and services of libraries. Meeting up with this trend can only be guaranteed by efficient ad effective policy or strategy. This study investigates the e-collection development practices in libraries in Nigeria. The research method adopted for the study was social survey and the research instrument was questionnaire. The outcome of the study reveals that many libraries do not have a written e-collection development policy; a committee for planning and evaluation of e-collection management; and no e-collection selection criteria. This situation can be traced to the poor knowledge and skill of librarians on e-resource management. Training and retraining of librarians on e-collection development and management, formulation and development of e-collection policy, the constitution of e-collection management committee among others were recommended.

1. INTRODUCTION

In this era of information age where digital information and knowledge dominates, users' expectations and information sources are different from the past. These changes or development affects library services across the world. A very important aspect of library services influenced by the advent of Information Technology (IT) is the collection development. Collection development primarily involves selection, acquisition, evaluation and preservation of materials in the library after assessing users' needs. Electronic resources have caused a change or review of the collect development and management practices of libraries. IFLA, (2012) described electronic resources as those materials that require computer access, whether through a personal computer, mainframe, or handheld mobile devises. They are increasingly important component of collection-building activities of libraries and may be accessed remotely via the internet or locally. Libraries are now being described as traditional, hybrid, digital or electronic. Traditional libraries are turning into hybrid, digital and many to digital libraries (Yeow-fei, 2012). This description is basically from the format of the collection of the library that is the adoption of e-resources. Part of the challenges of the digital era is how to integrate electronic resources with print resources on a finite or dwindling budget without reducing the

services of libraries (Ges With the digitalization of library resources, there is need for policy change. The entire philosophy of collection development needs to be changed, technology related factors have to be incorporated, budgeting has to be modified to include hardware and software costs, collection development librarian has a large and more complete set of resources from which to select (Golwal and Moltewar, 2012).

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The advent of IT has resulted in information explosion. The amount of information resources in digital form is daily on the increase and in different form. The proliferation of e-resources has become a challenge to libraries as a lot of information are now available to people without having to use the library. The need for libraries to use e-resources to the advantage of the library as well as the users is crucial. As a result, there is need to change and adopt policies and resources that will promote the better management of digital resources.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are:
  (I)   To investigate the current electronic resources collection development practices in Nigeria.
  (ii)   To determine the challenges to identify the tools and techniques for collection development.
  (iii) The challenges against electronic resources management in Nigerian libraries.
  (iv)   To make appropriate recommendation on e-resources collection development and management in libraries.

1.4   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

  I.   Do libraries have e-collection development policy?
  ii.   Is there e-collection development evaluation committee/team in libraries in Nigeria?
  iii. Are there selection and evaluation criteria for e-collection of libraries in Nigeria?
  iv.   Do librarians in Nigeria have training in e-resources management?
  v.   Do libraries in Nigeria have specific budget for the management of e-collections?

1.5 METHODOLOGY

The research method adopted for the study was social survey method and the research instrument was questionnaire. The population of the study was the third batch 948 inducted professional librarians by the Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN). They represent professional librarians from the various types of

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Collection development is the systematic building of a library collection based on meaningful data rather than subjective choice. It is the process of assessing the strength and weakness in a collection and then creating plan to correct the weakness and maintain the strength. The process of collection building includes selection of current as well as retrospective material and the evaluation of the existing collection (**Kumbar and Hadagali, 2005**)

Collection development as defined by Seetharama and Ambuja (2000) is a communication tool for management, librarians, users and other libraries; a detail outline of collecting levels; a description of collection development responsibilities; and budgeting tool that helps librarians decide where to place resources. Collection development (CD) is a well planned activity for which a well defined policy is essential; it is a vital process in creating and building a library collection. It is applicable to all types of library (Barik and Shethy, 2009). CD in libraries means rich and sound collections of systematic, comprehensive, balanced and updated documents to meet the users' information needs. It comprises planning, goal-setting, decision making, budgeting and acquiring materials and evaluating them (Balaque, 2012). The development of electronic resources takes the same process as the traditional materials. Traditional collection development criteria apply to most electronic titles in the library (IFLA, 2012). Collection development is a process of systematically building library collections to serve study, teaching, research, recreational and other needs of library users. It involves selection, acquisition, evaluation and preservation of materials after assessing user needs (Golwal and Motewar, 2012).

2.2 ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

Shukla and Mishra (2011) described electronic collection as the collection of information which can be accessed only by the use of electronic gadgets. IFLA (2012) refer to electronic resources as those materials that require computer access through personal computer or mobile devises.   Frequently used electronic resources in libraries include:

- E-Books: books in electronic format
- E-Journals: publication issued at regular interval and available electronically
- E-Reference Books/database: electronic reference books or materials like biographies, dictionaries, directories, encyclopedias, etc
- E-audio/visual resources, E-images, Numerical and statistical databases, indexing and abstracting databases, etc (IFLA 2012, and Shukla &Mishra, 2011).

2.3 ADVANTAGES OF ELECTRONIC RESOURCES IN LIBRARIES

The adoption of electronic resources in libraries continues to grow because of the advantages attached to their use. These may be attributed to the following advantages:

- It is the quickest method of access of information in comparism to other traditional methods
- Its updating is easy for the producers and beneficial to users
- It is economical compare to traditional collection
- It is also economical in terms of space; it require no physical space
- It is flexible and can be formatted to suite users
- Its access and use may not be location or time specific
- It is easily searchable (Shukla and Mishra 2011, and Balanque, 2012)

2.4 CHALLENGES OF ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

Kumbar and Hadagali (2005) identified providing access that matches the technological capabilities of both library professionals and users; providing access that satisfies the profit motive of commercial e-publications; and collection development that require knowledge of the electronic delivery mechanisms as some of the challenges militating against the efficient and effective use of e-resources in libraries.

The challenges of electronic resources collection and management in libraries are the problem of user training, technological up-grading, financial constraint, IT skill manpower, perisherible citation: once online, if website changes, URLs citations disappear, authentication, etc (Behera & Singh 2011, Balangue 2012).

2.5 COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

A policy is a guide to the successful implementation of a process. Gessesse (2000) stated that the activities of librarians should be guided by a written collection development policy. The library collection development policy must be written or revised to include electronic resources. According to Barik and Sethy (2009) collection development is a set of rules or norm adopted for developing the collection or stock in library. A collection development policy is a printed statement of a library's intention for building its collection. It considers the collection's strength and weaknesses and provides guidelines for staff (Golwal and Motewar, 2012). Collection development policy:

- Helps assure that the library will commit itself to serving all parts of the community, both present and future
- Helps demonstrate that the library is running a business-like operation
- Helps set standards for the selection and weeding of materials
- Serves as an in-service training tool for new staff.

- Helps minimize personal bias by selectors and to highlight imbalances in selection criteria
- Helps assure continuity in collections of any size and provides a pattern and framework to ease transition from one librarian to the next.
- Serves as a tool of complaint handling with regard to inclusions or exclusions
- Provides a means of staff self-evaluation, or for evaluation by outsiders
- Contributes to operational efficiency in terms of routine decisions (Gardner, 1981 in Golwal and Motewar, 2012).

Collection development has a direct effect on access to library and information resources in a library, it determines whether the collection contains the kinds of materials that are needed or not. Collection development policy boost the library staff for better performance and also facilitates a continuous, consistent and balanced growth of library collection. It has a great impact on all the activities of the library (**Kumbar and Hadagali, 2005).**

2.6 INTERNET AND COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Wakhare and Abdul (1997) describe the internet as a cooperative effort; a network of networks providing access to the remote databases (full text or bibliographic) housed elsewhere. Many activities such as online searching of other libraries catalogues, publishers' catalogue, verifying bibliographic data or looking for reviews of a work can now be done in a more timely fashion with the aid of the internet. Consultation with colleagues at other institutions has also become easy as a result of the internet through email and other social media like listserv, face book, twitter etc (Yochels etal, 1997). Some of the advantages of internet includes instantaneous access to the large volumes of textual, non-textual information, both in the bibliographic and full text form; negligible cost of access; and possibility of repackaging information (Wakhare and Abdul, 1997).

With the aid of the internet, social networking or communication has had a growing influence on a number of activities and processes in organizations including the libraries. Discussion in social media or network can help in providing support when recommendation is to be made about the collection of a library. Some of the benefits of social media in collection development in libraries include:
- Identifying and reviewing new sources
- Getting recommendations for works on a particular topic
- Finding experts on subject
- Gaining knowledge about new trend in a field
- Learning about new electronic sources on the internet
- Allowing librarians to consult with colleagues in the same fields
- Provide extensive bibliographies
- Discuss collection policy issues
- Compare electronic products and materials

Another advantage offered by the internet for collection development in libraries is access to and use of online catalogue which is important to compare bibliographic citations, very holdings, build regional collection cooperation, and identifying newly published volumes (HKU Library, 2012).

The internet has also greatly influenced the process of ordering materials to be acquired into the library. Online ordering is the process of doing orders via the web, buying books and paying bills (Balangue, 2012).

3. Data Analysis and Discussion

A total of 300 questionnaires were administered to respondents. Duely completed and returned instruments were 220 representing 73% response rate. Collated data were analysed using simple frequency analysis with the aid of computer application: Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Simple frequency percentages were computed.

Table 1 & 2: Distribution of respondents

Type of Library	f	%
Academic	119	54
School	24	11
Special/Research	22	10
Public	25	11
Corporate/Private	30	14
Total	220	100

Respondents in the survey cut across the different types of libraries that are available in Nigeria. A larger percentage (54%) is academic librarians while other categories were equally represented. This includes school librarians (11%), public librarians (11%), special/research librarians (10%), and private/corporate (14%) librarians in Nigeria.

Table 3: Availability of e-collection policy

Availability of E-Collection Policy	f	%		Type of Policy	f	%
Yes	104	47		Written	34	33
No	116	53		Unwritten	70	67
Total	220	100		Total	104	100

Average number (47%) of libraries has an e-collection development policy. Meanwhile, majority of them have an unwritten policy. A policy is a written statement of plan, procedure or processes to execute a particular task. It is obvious that many libraries do not have an e-collection development policy. We are in an information management era where the form and approaches to information management

particularly digital information sources are dynamic. An efficient and effective policy is necessary to meet up with the challenges of e-resources management in libraries. The policy is expected to tract the developments in information management and cause improved information services to the library clients. IFLA in 2012 developed and released a draft of e-collection development policy for libraries. This collection development policy is a comprehensive and effective instrument to facilitate the process of e-collection management and provide guide to libraries as well as librarians. In the same vein, the LRCN is working with relevant stakeholders in Nigeria to formulate and develop e-library standard for the LIS sector in the country. These are initiatives that libraries should take advantage of and render quality services to their clients.

Table 4: E-collection development tools

E-collection management tools	Yes	%	No	%	Total (F)	Total
E-collection Selection Criteria	84	38	136	62	220	100
E-collection committee	62	28	158	72	220	100
E-collection mgt training	108	49	111	51	219	100
E-collection budget	60	27	160	73	220	100
Availability of internet facilities	204	93	16	7	220	100

It is obvious form table 4 that 62%, 72%, and 73% of libraries do not have e-collection selection criteria, evaluation committee, and special budget for for e-collection development and management. These instruments are vital to the proper management of e-collection in libraries. A selection criteria though, a subset of the e-collection policy is a very import aspect of collection development and management. A committee to guide the process of selection and management of e-collection of libraries is also very important in e-collection management. "Two head is better than one", the decision of evaluation and selection committee is likely to facilitate better e-collection management. Budget is another crucial element in the execution of projects. This also applies to library projects; a good financial plan for e-collection will guide the direction for decision making, planning and execution of e-collection development projects. Within the overall budget for the library or organisation, a handsome specific budget should be made for e-collection development and management.

Average number (49%) of librarians had training related to e-resources management in libraries. This needed to be improved upon because a larger percentage of information sources are now in electronic form and librarians should not have excuse for poor management of these resources. The library materials both print and electronic are the libraries stock in trade; it is what we stock that our clients appreciate. Librarians in Nigeria should take full advantage of the capacity building for library and information managers in the country being undertaken by the LRCN to equip them with basic knowledge and skills to manage e-resources of the library.

LRCN organized e-library management training and has also lined up a series of training workshops majorly in ICT and e-resources management for library and information managers in the country.

A larger percentage (93%) of libraries had internet facility. This is a good development as internet is major to access and acquisition of electronic resources for libraries. Efforts should be made to take adequate advantage of this vital resource for efficient and effective information service delivery. It is not enough have internet facilities, librarians needed to be knowledge and skill to use them to package and repackage information sources and services for their clients.

Table 5: e-collection selection tools

E-Resources Selection Sources	F	%
E-Book Reviews	36	16
Publishers Catalogue	76	35
Library vendors	40	18
Book stores	56	26
Online catalogue	80	36
Social media	68	31

The e-collection and acquisition tools used in Nigerian libraries include book reviews, publishers' catalogue, e-resources vendors, OPAC, and the social media. Meanwhile, the one mostly used are however the publishers' catalogue (35%) and OPAC (36%).

Table 6: Form of e-collection

Forms of E-Resources	f	%
Book	132	60
Journals	128	58
Reference Sources	72	33
Abstract	48	22
Images	36	16
Audio/Visual	52	24
Documents	64	29

The forms of electronic resource available in the libraries are books, journals, reference sources, abstracts, audio/visual, and documents. But the major forms of e-collection are books (60%) and journals (58%).

CONCLUSION

The nature and form of e-resources are dynamic and flexible. This made it imperative for libraries and information centers to put measures in place to efficiently and effectively manage them for better service delivery. Libraries as well as librarians should live up to the challenge and make sure that e-resources are managed to the advantage of the users. They can render meaningful services from e-resources, provided they are well knowledgeable and skillful in handling of e-resources tools and techniques. The situation of lack of e-collection policy, committee and selection criteria can be traced to inadequate knowledge and skill of libraries and librarians in e-resources management.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Libraries should train and retrain information workers on the efficient and effective e-collection development and management

2. They need to formulate and develop e-collection development and management policy. This may be done by adopting the e-collection development policy of IFLA or having a home grown policy.

3. A good financial plan is also important for e-collection development and management strategy. Libraries or parent organisation should make adequate financial provision for e-resource management.

4. The task of e-collection development is not an individual one; libraries should ensure that they constitute an e-collection development and evaluation committee to guide the process of e-resources management.

5. LRCN as the regulatory body for the practice of librarianship in Nigeria should come with more digital resource management training for library and information managers in Nigeria cutting across the various geo-political zones of the country.

6. LRCN should also formulate and develop home grown standard for e-resource management in Nigerian libraries.

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