COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN SELECTED ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

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ABSTRACT

The paper examines collection development activities in selected academic libraries in Nigeria. Data was assembled through a combination of questionnaire and survey of documentary sources. Six (6) of the ten (10) questionnaires (60%) given to academic libraries were completed and returned in usable form. The findings show that academic libraries adopt different strategies in their bid to develop and, thus, enrich their information offerings. However, this important exercise is fraught with problems, especially insufficient book vote, high cost of materials and incompetent vendors. This situation is, however, not beyond redemption. A brief catalogue of pragmatic but cost-effective recommendations were provided to assist libraries in Nigeria and, by extension, other developing countries to expand, update and deepen their collections.

INTRODUCTION.

Libraries, generally, are institutions established for the procurement, organization, presentation, dissemination and utilization of humanity's information and communication productions. The ability of the library to meet the diverse information needs of its clientele depends on, among other things, the availability of an array of documentary and non-book materials. The sum total of these information sources, therefore, constitutes the collection of the library. According to Ifidon (1997), excellent library and information services cannot be given without life collection. The assemblage of book and non-book information purveyors in the required quantity and quality depends on collection development activities.

Collection development, as one of the core functions of the library's Technical Services Division, has attracted diverse interpretations from librarians and other information professionals. However, in the contest of this study, collection development is defined as the activities that

enhance the assemblage, and provision of a variety of information materials to meet the disparate needs of library users. It comprises specific library operations like selection, acquisition, receiving, bibliographic checking, record keeping, reservation, weeding and collection evaluation.

This study evaluates aspects of collection development in selected academic libraries in Imo State, which is one of the 36 states that constitute the second tier of government in the Nigerian Federation. There is a suffuse of tertiary institutions of learning in the State. These include the Federal University of Technology, Owerri (FUTO); Imo State University [IMSU] Owerri; Federal Polytechnic, Nekede, (FPN); Alvan Ikoku College of Education [AICE], Owerri; Michael Okpara College of Agriculture and Technology (MOCAT), Umuagwo; Federal College of Land Resources Technology (FECOLAT), Egbeada, and Technical Skill Acquisition Centre (TESAC) Orlu. There are also a number of schools of nursing and midwifery scattered in different parts of the state. These tertiary institutions have academic libraries. As can be inferred from their names, all the institutions covered in this study are founded and sponsored by either Federal or Imo State Government.

The primary objectives of this study are:

- 1. To identify the factors that influence acquisition of materials in academic libraries.
- 2. To ascertain participants in the selection of materials in these libraries.
- 3. To establish the methods of collection development adopted by libraries under study.
- 4. To highlight the frequency of acquisition of materials.
- 5. To indicate the donors of materials to academic libraries.
- 6. To identify the problems militating against regular acquisition of information materials in the libraries under study.

Based on the objectives outlined above, the following research questions have been formulated to guide this study:

- i. What are the factors that influence acquisition of materials?
- ii. Who recommends materials to be acquired?
- iii. What are the methods of collection development used by libraries under study?

- iv. What is the frequency of acquisition in these libraries?
- v. What are the sources of materials in the academic libraries under study?
- vi. What problems impede acquisition of materials in academic libraries?

DELIMITATION

The study covers only the Imo State of Nigeria. It is further limited to collection development in academic libraries within the state. Except TESAC and the Schools of Nursing and Midwifery, all other government approved tertiary institutions are included in this survey. The target respondents were the various Collection Development/Acquisitions Librarians. However, where these calibre of librarians were not available, the Head Librarians, or any staff recommended by them, provided the required data. Non-governmental tertiary institutions did not participate in this study, because there is, as yet, no privately owned tertiary institutions in Imo State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

"A collection of books" was identified by Jolley (1978) as the most important of "three distinguished marks of a university." Though Apeji (1991) reported the predictions made by scholars like Eugene Garfield and F. W. Lancester about the likely demise of book by the year 2000 AD, the book has survived as a major carrier of information in contemporary academic and other libraries. Pradham (2004) submitted that the library would continue to play a significant societal role in the preservation and diffusion of human knowledge in spite of the introduction of the Internet and virtual libraries.

Ezema (2004:32) explained that stock or collection refers to the size of materials in terms of volumes a library has in its possession at a time noting that the collection may include books in various subjects and recreationary reading, reference books, periodicals, pamphlets, documents and manuscripts, and archival materials. Ononogbo and Akanwa (2004:3) added that "…non-phonographic records and computer diskettes are essential components of library collection". In a study conducted in Pakistan, Khurshid (1990) compared some university libraries and reported that of the twenty-two current universities, six have passed the six-figure

marks in collection size and rank among the top-ten libraries in the country. Saur (1998) analyzed and reported the size of collection of three university libraries in Nigeria which revealed that the libraries of University of Nigeria, Nsukka has a combined stock of 584,000 volumes and 13,381 theses, followed by Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife Library with 326,000 volumes and 1,000 theses while the University of Jos has a stock of 163,780 volumes and 3,899 theses.

Ray Prytherch (2000:163) defined collection development as: "the process of planning a stock acquisition programme not simply to cater for the immediate needs, but to build a coherent and reliable collection over a number of years to meet the objectives of services". Librarians usually build or assemble their collections through a combination of strategies. Ifidon (2006); Anyanwu, Zander and Amadi (2006) recorded that direct purchase, legal deposit, exchange of publications, donations, bequeaths and photocopying are the most popular strategies adopted by Nigerian libraries to develop their collection.

Several research findings have established that the academic library is an important facility in tertiary institutions of learning. Perhaps, the most popular and oft-quoted of these reports is that of the Universities Grant Committee of United Kingdom which revealed in 1921 that "...an adequate library is not only the basis of all teaching and study, it is the essential condition of research without which additions cannot be made to the sum of human knowledge. Nwalo, (2004:43) posited, "the polytechnic or college of technology library has the primary objectives of providing literature support for the entire academic, research and extension programmes of the parent institutions". This is a clear reaffirmation of earlier findings about the relevant objectives of polytechnic libraries by Lyle (1967) and Ita (1980).

Collection development is acknowledged as a purely professional and academic activity. This explains why Lungu (1995:176) reported that "academic routine such as collection development can be more progressionally organized with the active participation of the teaching staff." Various regulatory and accrediting bodies for tertiary education in Nigeria have standards for assessing the collection and other resources of various cadres of academic libraries. According to Ifidon (1997:185), "the ultimate size of a university library collection as recommended by

the National Universities Commission (NUC) is 500,000 volumes. "Wombo's (1993) survey of the patterns of collection growth in Nigerian university libraries revealed that the total library collection of universities established before the 1970s and 1980s in Nigeria was 948,632 volumes. Ozoma and Sule (1997) argued that this findings, when judged by library collection standards, including that of the Committee of University Librarians of Nigerian Universities (CULNU) shows that the collection growth rate of Nigerian university libraries is not impressive.

Ehikhamenor (1983) observed that there are shortfalls and paucity in the resources of Nigerian libraries pointing out the deterioration in the quality and adequacy of various collections. Two decades later, the situation has not improved as a study by Attama (2005) showed that contemporary Nigerian libraries are bereft of the latest intellectual output. This disappointing picture accounts for the prediction that no Nigerian university library is likely to attain the status of a "self-renewing library" in the nearest future. (Ozowa, 1992).

Ajulo (1992) and Ogunronbi (1997) presented a gloomy description of collection development activities in many library and information service centers in Nigeria. Omolayole (2004:4) explained that "this situation is as a result of inadequate funding, rising cost of library materials and high exchange rate of local currency'. The aftermath of this unfortunate situation is hydra-headed including the "unavailability syndrome in academic libraries" (Unomah, 1987), and the preponderance of "...outdated books, which are no longer relevant to the information needs of their users" (Omolayole, 2004). Though an increasing number of students in Nigerian tertiary institutions seek information through the web (Adedeji, 2002), research findings show that "even in this new millennium, most Nigerian libraries do not have resources in formats other than books. Many have since stopped subscriptions to journals while some have drastically cut down on theirs" (Omolayole, 2004:4).

METHODOLOGY

This paper is a survey. The target population was Collection Development/Acquisitions Librarians. Data was collected through a combination of questionnaires and documentary sources. The questionnaire, which was structured and self-developed-cum-validated,

comprised ten items.

A total of ten (10) questionnaires were either personally administered by the researcher during the March, 2006 quarterly general meeting of Imo State Chapter of NLA or sent to respondents through volunteer research assistants. Curiously, the instruments administered through proxies were not returned. However, the six (6) questionnaires personally administered were completed and returned and were found usable for analysis. The interpretation is presented in frequency tables numbered 1-7.

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FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Types of Academic Libraries.

The three (3) cadres of academic libraries in Nigeria were covered in this survey. These academic libraries are those attached to 2 universities (33.3%), 1 polytechnic (16.7%) and 3 colleges (50%). Though libraries at TESAC, and Schools of Nursing and Midwifery are academic by virtue of the fact that their parent bodies are post-secondary institutions, they were not covered in this analysis because the research instruments sent to them were not returned.

Factors that Influence Acquisition of Materials.

Table 1: Determinant of Acquisition

Factors	Libraries	Total	Percentage
Affordability	MOCAT, FECOLAT	2	33.3%
Authors' (inventors') credibility	FPN, AICE, IMSU	3	50%
Publishers' competence	FPN, IMSU, AICE	3	50%
Currency of material	FPN, AICE, FUTO	3	50%
Desire to stock materials in school subjects	FPN, FECOLAT	3	33.3%

A question on issues that influence the acquisition of information materials in academic libraries was posed to the respondents. The responses, which turned out to be a mixed grill, are presented in Table 1. Availability of materials at affordable prices was an influence in MOCAT and FECOLAT (33.3%). Qualification, competence and experience of the authors, creators and investors were considered and influential in FPN, AICE and IMSU, respectively (50%). Also in, FPN, IMSU and AICE,

(50%), the competence and track record of publishers and producers influence the acquisition of needed materials while desire to stock materials in school subjects was considered in FECOLAT and FPN (33.3%). On the other hand, currency of materials influenced the procurement of materials at FPN, AICE and FUTO (50%). This approximates the reports in *World Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science* (1993) and Anyanwu, Zander and Amadi (2006) wherein the main issues that influence acquisition of materials in most libraries were summarized as relevance, timeliness (currency), budgetary allocation, curriculum and renewal of stock.

PARTICIPANTS IN SELECTION OF MATERIALS IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Responses on the participants in the selection of materials for inclusion in the libraries' collection are shown in Table 2. All the respondents affirmed that lecturers are actively involved in selection of materials. Only FPN indicated that students of the institution make input in the selection of materials through their various representatives. Also, the Head Librarians at FPN, AICE, FUTO, FECOLAT, IMSU and MOCAT are actively involved in the selection of materials. However, Collection Development/Acquisitions Librarians are involved in the selection of information materials at AICE, FPB, FUTO and MOCAT. The participation of management of parent institutions was noticeable at FECOLAT, MOCAT, IMSU and FPN. This finding is in tandem with professional practice, which recommends the involvement of stakeholders and interested parties in the selection of library materials. It is, however, curious that with the exception of FPN, students of other tertiary institutions did not participate in the selection of information resources.

Table 2: Selectors of Material

Selectors	Libraries	Total	Percentage
Head Librarians	FPN, AICE, FUTO, FECOLAT,		
	MOCAT, IMSU	6	100%
Collection dev. Librarian	AICE, FPN, FUTO, MOCAT	4	66.7%
Lecturers/subject specialists	FPN, IMSU, AICE, FUTO, FECOLAT, MOCAT	6	100%

Students' representatives	FPN		16.7%
Management of parent institutions	FECOLAT, MOCAT, IMSU, FPN	4	66.7%

PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR PROCUREMENT OF INFORMATION MATERIALS.

Having ascertained the participants in the identification and selection of materials to be added to the academic libraries, the researcher sought to establish who actually acquires these materials. The result is shown in Table 3:

Table 3: Procurer of Library Materials.

Procurer	Libraries	Total	Percentage
Head Librarian	AICE, FUTO	2	33.3%
Acquisitions Librarian	FPN, IMSU, FUTO	3	50%
Management of the Parent institutions	IMSU, MOCAT, FECOLAT	3	50%
Serendipity	MOCAT, FECOLAT	3	33.3%

Table 3 shows that several people purchase materials for libraries. Head Librarians of AICE and FUTO (33.3%) are responsible for the procurement of materials for their libraries, while at IMSU, FPN and FUTO this assignment is left for the Acquisitions Librarian. At IMSU, MOCAT, FECOLAT and FPN, management of these institutions provide materials for inclusion in the collections. The libraries of MOCAT and FECOLAT have no specific staff designated to acquire materials. Rather, any staff who has access to them and who feels capable of obtaining payment or refund for the service and/or expenses collects library materials.

The distribution of procurers of library materials in the academic libraries studied is both revealing and worrisome. A glance at Table 3 shows that non-librarians buy books for many academic libraries. The only explanation for this unprofessional practice is a combination of lack of understanding of the uniqueness of the library and the desire of some chief executives of tertiary institutions to directly control and spend the library's budget. It is, therefore, not surprising that irrelevant materials Nigerbiblios Vol. 17 Nos. 1 & 2, Jan. - Dec., 2006 29

constitute a greater proportion of the collection of most academic libraries.

METHODS/STRATEGIES OF COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Response on the methods of collection development practiced in the libraries under study was analyzed. Table 4 presents the summary of the findings.

Table 4: Methods of Collection Development

Methods	Libraries	Total	Percentage
Purchase	IMSU, FPN AICE, FUTO,		
	MOCAT, FECOLAT	6	100%
Exchange of Mats.	FPN, IMSU, AICE	3	50%
Gifts/Donations	FPN, IMSU, AICE, FUTO	4	66.7%
Bequeaths	AICE	thur Lying	167.7%
Legal deposits	AICE	1	16.7%
Photocopying	FPN	1	16.7%

It can be seen in Table 4 that most academic libraries adopt a combination of different collection development methods. For instance, IMSU library adds to her collection through purchase, exchange of materials and gifts/donations while FPN library uses purchase, exchange, gifts/donations and photocopying. MOCAT and FECOLAT rely solely on purchase. On the other hand, AICE uses purchase, exchange and gift/donation to expand and enrich her collection. It is also interesting to observe that only AICE received information materials through bequeaths and legal deposit just as photocopies, as a system of collection development, was practiced by FPB only. It is clear from Table 4 that most academic libraries have not adequately exploited the potentials of bequeath, legal deposit and photocopying in collection development.

FREQUENCY OF ACQUISITION.

On the frequency of acquisition of book and non-book information sources, the respondents were non-committal in respect of the periodicity. Rather, purchases and other methods of acquisition take place "whenever the need arises" or occasion presents itself. Of course, it is not easy to place this practice within a specific time frame. Ideally, addition of

relevant materials to the collection should be an on-going exercise depending on availability of funds, donors, and depositors.

INFORMATION SOURCES ACQUIRED.

The researcher sought to know the type of information sources acquired by academic libraries. This will give a clear idea of the components of the collection. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Information Materials Acquired.

Items	Libraries	Total	Percentage
Textbooks/monographs	FUTO, AICE, FPN, IMSU,		
	FECOLAT, MOCAT,	6	100%
Periodicals	FUTO, AICE, FPN, IMSU,		
	FECOLAT, MOCAT	6	100%
Pamphlets	FUTO, MOCAT, FPN, FECOLAT	4	66%
Reference Materials	FUTO, AICE, FPN, IMSU,		
	MOCAT, FECOLAT	6	100%
Archival materials/			
ephemera	FUTO	1	16.7%
Non-book materials	FUTO, FPN	2	33.3%

Table 5 shows that all academic libraries studied acquired basic textbooks, newspapers, journals and other periodicals, and basic reference materials. FUTO, FPN, MOCAT and FECOLAT acquired pamphlets while only FUTO and FPN acquired non-book materials, respectively. Only FUTO acquired archival sources. A closer scrutiny of Table 5 shows that documentary sources dominate the collection of academic libraries in spite of Adedeji's (2002) revelation that students in Nigerian tertiary institutions seek information through the internet. Additionally, the potentials of archival materials and other ephemera are yet to be appreciated in most academic libraries.

MAJOR DONORS OF MATERIALS TO ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

The respondents were required to indicate the donors of various documentary and non-book materials found in their collections. The analysis of responses is shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Donors of Information Materials

Donor	Libraries	Total	Percentage
Alumni Associations	SOURCES ACQUIRED/97		16.7%
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E.T.F. / P.T.F.	FPN, AICE, FUTO, IMSU	4	66.7%
Book Aid/Ranfurly	AICE, IMSU, FUTO, FPN, MOCAT	5	83.3%
British Council	AICE, IMSU, FUTO	3	50%
U.S.I.S.	FECOLAT, MOCAT, FPN	3	50%
	FUTO, FECOLAT, IMSU	3	50%

Table 6 presents a summary of donors of information materials to academic libraries. It shows that Book Aid/Ranfurly made donation to 5 out of the 6 libraries (83.3%) while the Education Tax Fund (E.T.F) and Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF) donated to 4 libraries (66.7%). The British Council, United States Information Service (U.S.I.S) and various individuals and associations each donated materials to three different tertiary institutions. Only one institution (FPN) received donation of information materials from Alumni Association. However, neither Parents' Teachers Associations nor Students' Union governments gave information sources to any of the institutions under study.

Certain important conclusions can be drawn from the analysis in Table 6. The first is that Education Tax Fund and PTF are the highest local donors. Secondly, book Aid/Ranfurly is the highest donor among the international agencies. Thirdly, the aggregate of donations from foreign donors is more than that of local agencies. This is consistent with Ogunrombi's (1997) finding that over 80% of literary publications in Nigerian academic libraries are imported.

IMPEDIMENTS TO REGULAR ACQUISITION OF MATERIALS.

One of the objectives of this study is to ascertain the factors that frustrate regular acquisition, and thus, addition of materials to the collection of academic libraries. The experiences of the libraries studied as shown by respondents are summarized in Table 7. The table indicates that all the academic libraries covered in this survey suffer problems emanating from insufficient book vote. While 83.3% of these libraries encountered

problems due to "high cost of materials" and "incompetent vendors" respectively, other problems identified arise from 'distance' and "high import duties". militari kusuma roma ne er sa Lilita e sasar i

Table 7: Problems Militating Against Regular Acquisition of Materials.

Problems	Libraries	Total	Percentage
Inadequate book vote	FPN, FUTO, AICE, IMSU,		
	FECOLAT, MOCAT	6	100%
Scarcity of books			
High cost of materials	FPN, FUTO, MOCAT, AICE, IMSU	5	83.3%
Incompetent vendors	FPN, FUTO, AICE, MOCAT, IMSU	5	83.3%
High import duties	AICE, FPN	2	33.3%
Distance	IMSU, AICE, MOCAT	3	50%

If the picture in Table 7 is anything to go by, information materials are not actually scarce. The problem is that they are either expensive or the money to pay for them is insufficient. There is also the problem of incompetent vendors, which often leads to wastages. Competent publishers are found mostly in North America, Europe, India, and South East Asia, all of which are far flung places. This, perhaps, explains why distance was identified as a problem thereby buttressing Ogunrombi's (1997) observation that the collection of Nigerian academic libraries is replete with materials published in foreign countries.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This investigation yielded important findings from which the following conclusions have been drawn. Though price remains a factor, other major determinants of acquisition of materials in most academic libraries are relevance to school curriculum, currency of materials, competence of publishers and credibility of authors. A consortium of stakeholders make the selection of materials in the libraries studied, while procurement of selected materials is an all-comers affair. Most of the academic libraries studied concentrated on traditional methods of collection development like purchase, gift and exchange' leaving out potentially beneficial methods like bequeaths, legal deposits and photocopying. The above scenario is responsible for the situation in which the collection of book and nonbook materials of most academic libraries fell short of expectation.

The following recommendations would entrench qualitative and quantitative adequacies in the collections of academic libraries in Nigeria.

- i. There should be an improvement in the funding of academic libraries in Nigeria. One sure way of achieving this is by ensuring that a specified percentage of the entire budget of each tertiary institution is not only dedicated, but actually released, for running of its library. Adequate funding of academic libraries will undoubtedly free money for collection development.
- ii. Professionals, especially librarians, who are knowledgeable about the book trade, should be allowed to acquire materials for academic libraries. The job of collection development is crucial to the relevance of academic libraries and therefore should not be used to 'settle' or 'rehabilitate' cronies of the powers-that-be.
- iii. Academic libraries should embrace bequests, legal deposits and photocopying as methods of collection development. For instance, retiring senior academics should be encouraged to bequeath their private collections to their institutions' libraries. Tertiary institutions should device their own 'legal deposit provision' which would mandate lecturers to donate copies of their publications to their institutions' libraries, while rare books (out-of-prints or incunabula) which have research or historical value should be photocopied, bound and kept in academic libraries; the 'fair use clause' offers the necessary protection. Besides, alumni associations, PTAs and corporate organizations should be sensitized on the need to donate books and other information materials to academic libraries.
- iv. Non-book information materials especially computers and internet facilities should form integral components of the collection of academic libraries. This will attract and retain the attention and interest of most youths in library usage with the potential positive multiplier effect.

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