

by which libraries are funded in Nigeria, are as diverse as the number of libraries - University, College, Special, Public etc. Even, in the Ministry/Departmental libraries, library budgets are rarely controlled and expended by the librarian.

The final authorisation on acquisition is given not by the librarian but by the chief executive or his representative. The university libraries may have to seek clearance from the Senate or even the University council before they could transfer money to the centre.

The practice that is common in the public service in this country is that every organization goes on a "spending spree" towards the end of the financial year.

The implication of this is that sufficient funds might not have been committed to the centre at the beginning of the financial year, and so, a huge surplus is left in the hands of participating libraries from January to March.

If this problem can be satisfactorily resolved, the centre would be able to order materials throughout the year and so avoid inefficiencies caused by peak periods of activity and valleys of inactivity.

The most effective method would be to allow the centre to carry over unspent book funds into the subsequent financial year.

- c) Product diversity: The centre established should order and catalogue books. The orders will have to be bulk-purchased, which would undoubtedly reduce cost to each of the participating libraries because of the large discount rates that would accrue.

There is also the fact that physical handling of books purchased locally will prove to be more efficient in a local library than at the centre. For example, Ibadan University Library's purchases from the University Bookshops Limited in Ibadan fall into this category.

In this case the centre can serve as a distributor of bibliographic information. If a library notifies the centre when it has received "on approval" books, the centre should initiate card reproduction procedures.

d. Standardization of Processing Specifications: Agreements on processing specifications should be agreed upon by participating libraries before the operations commence.

- e. Production Problems: As it was mentioned above, production delays caused by bottlenecks and peak periods of activity are not new to library technical processing. However, it is one matter to tolerate such delays in one's own system, while it is quite another matter to tolerate the same delays when they occur at an outside centre.

The peak periods at the centre are likely to be January to March of every year towards the end of the financial year of the public service. If the unspent sum could be carried over, the peak period could be avoided and the materials distributed throughout the year i.e. both the ordering and processing of books.

- f) Use of Specialists in Centralized Processing: One advantage of centralized processing is that it enables a group of libraries to concentrate its scarce human resources. The most obvious example is cataloguers who possess specialized subject and language qualifications.

And they are difficult to come by, to hire and retain. Certainly, it is more economical for one large centre to employ the services of these specialized individuals.

6. Original cataloguing of books: Role of the National Library

Both the L.C. and the B.N.B. provide original cataloguing for books published in the U.S. and the U.K. respectively. At present, the National Library of Nigeria produces the National Bibliography of Nigeria from the stock received on legal deposit.

One would surmise that the National Bibliography of Nigeria is accepted by other libraries as authoritative both within and outside Nigeria. One should not overlook the fact that acceptability is a crowning glory of the services provided by the Library in this regard.

It would therefore be necessary to have well trained staff to man the production of the N.B.N. Thus, further formal education, and intensive training of the staff con-

Related to what is written above is the fact that the National Library of Nigeria has produced a "home-made scheme" for the cataloguing and classification of Nigeria government publications.

The need for a concerted effort, joint committees with other libraries to offer criticism and advise on the classification scheme produced, with a view to introducing it to all libraries, will not be a misplaced idea.

We are all aware of the inadequacies of the Library of Congress classification scheme in its treatment of "Africana." Other classification schemes are, perhaps, not much better in this respect.

While one is not necessarily advocating a completely new scheme it could also be suggested that soundings of well informed opinion be made as to how to solve the problem of "Africana" in the Library of Congress.

Most academic libraries in Nigeria use the scheme for classifying materials. Ibadan University Library is reputed for the richest collection of "Africana materials" in the country. It should have come to our notice that this library which was the only one which used the Bliss scheme is now classifying its stock by L.C.

The question that arises is how did Ibadan treat its rich "Africana?" If it has a "home-made scheme" for this special collection, the scheme may be used as a basis of study by other libraries.

Workshops, conferences, seminars could be sponsored to find lasting solution as to improvements that could be made on such a scheme. The two points raised above - National Library scheme for classifying government publications and the Ibadan scheme for Africana could be taken up.

REFERENCE SERVICES:

Great Britain affords us, it appears, the best example of co-operation in reference and information services. We are not, here concerned with the ongoing struggle between librarians and the information scientists on the definition of reference and information service, and as such; we would use the term reference service, to cover all

types of services rendered in the field of information.

a) SINTO: The Sheffield Interchange Organization was established in 1953 when the pressing need for quick information was felt especially in the technical and commercial fields. Thus, this organization caters for all industrial firms in the area of Sheffield.

It is perhaps worth mentioning that Sheffield is an industrial city, famous for its steel and other subsidiary industries. The need for technical and quick information in manufacture cannot be over-emphasised.

It is this special need that led to the rise of SINTO. Of interest to Nigeria, is the fact that SINTO is located in City Library, Sheffield which serves as a clearing house.

It is a subscription type of reference co-operation in that the requesting library pays for the services rendered to it. The success of SINTO blazed the trail followed by others like HULTIS and LAD SIRLAC.

b) THE HULTIS also has its headquarters at the Hull City Library. Libraries pay membership fees which could be increased, even arbitrarily i.e. without notice. Costing is based on the length of time it entails to get the information required besides the membership rate.

Only librarians with the right type of subject background engage in the search. Inference from this is the fact that cost of information depends on the level of the economy, rising cost of books, personnel tele-communications etc.

c) LADSIRLAC: is an agglomeration of several interests coming together to found the organisation. It is centred at the Liverpool City Library. The two types of services rendered by this organization are labelled (i) minimal and (ii) maximum services.

The minimal service leads the enquirer to further searches while the maximum service gives a comprehensive answer, or call it, in-depth research. The cost however varies as to the type of service requested and rendered.

INTER LOANS: It appears that the most extensively used form of library co-operation is inter-loans. This may be formal or informal. It is, however, necessary to consider a formalised system rather than the haphazard informal one used at present.

The two basic tools in inter loans are - (a) National Union Catalogue of Books and (b) National Union List of Serials. All others are adjuncts to these basic tools. The second step in this direction is budgeting and formulation or regulations governing the system.

It is usual to have a switching centre either in a nation or in a region. For example, with the operations of the defunct National Central Library in London, the country was divided into eleven regions with the above named library serving as the national centre.

The other ten sub-centres had union catalogues covering the holdings of their respective regions. Searches are made first within the region, and then in the country as a whole through the instrumentality of the national centre.

Regulations: These are bound to vary from one participating library to the other. They should, however, be known as regards restrictions and limitations. There used to be problems as regards loan of journals. Instead, some libraries make available, photo-copies of their materials.

This problem was solved with the founding of the National Lending Library for Science and technology in 1957 which has become the British Library Lending Division. It makes available on inter-library loans, hard copies of both books and journals to libraries within Great Britain and the world at large.

The rise of the BLLD seems to defeat our argument as to self-sufficiency of a single library in the provision of materials for its clientele. It should however not be forgotten that the BLLD is a lending library, with primary responsibility to other libraries within the U.K. and secondly, to other libraries abroad.

Coupled with this is the fact, that, though, the BLLD has no clearly defined clientele as say, the Bodleian Library, yet, it makes use of other Libraries to complete its services.

Furthermore this dinosaur has up to date not been able to satisfy all

requests directed to it from both Britain and other parts of the world. Its 84% success rate reinforces the need for library co-operation as the remaining 16% unanswered questions need be answered by some other libraries.

At the present stage of library development in Nigeria, it is not possible for a single library to undertake the responsibilities now performed by most of the rich and well established libraries of the world.

Nigeria: Except the academic and some special libraries, library development in Nigeria is in its infancy. Co-operation is therefore vital in order to harness the resources available. The National Library, the College, (Polytechnics) University, and special libraries at present serve the elites produced by our educational system.

The school library system is still in the womb, the Federal School Service-turned-Lagos State School Library Service notwithstanding. The public library system is not strong enough in spite of spasmodic ventures in different parts of the country. The public library system could be indicted for lack of support for adult education programmes, and hence for neo-literates.

If the above observations are well taken, it is suggested that the National Library of Nigeria, in its role as the avant-garde of library development in the country, should forcibly bring it home to the existing library authorities a blue print by which all the gaps mentioned could be filled.

Thus, public libraries would not only provide reference and information for the society, serve recreational needs, have collections to enrich cultural outlook as well as serve as centres for continuing formal and informal education; while the school library system would function in its traditional role of providing materials for the curriculum, to cater for pupils and teachers' needs widen the horizons of both which would eventually lead them to the use of the public, academic and special libraries.

In Technical Services, there is scarcely any co-operation among Nigerian libraries. The country cannot, as yet, operate on the scale of SCOLMA, SCANDIA or FARMINGTON. Many factors are responsible for this state of affairs. Poor finances under which the various libraries operate restrict their activities.

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