

*Full Length Research*

# **Strategic collection development and management for information services in the institutions of higher learning**

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The paper examined some basic concepts, objectives and theoretical framework of collection development. It highlighted various strategies by which collection development and management can be actualized and utilized. Challenges affecting effective management and utilization of information services were also considered. The paper made some recommendations such as materials resources should be ordered for library without waiting for accreditation exercise before embarking on acquisitions; Education Trust Fund (ETF) for book intervention should not be divested and should be timely accessed; and librarians in the institutions of higher learning should insist on having a written and functional policy to collection development of information resources. It was also recommended that librarians in the institutions of higher learning should be encouraged to attend professional programmes such as seminars, workshops, and conferences to increase their knowledge on collection development and management towards information resources delivery. Equally, it was also recommended that proper keeping of statistical data of librarians and students will enhance the management of information resources. The preservation and conservation of library resources were discussed and the summary of the study were also provided.

**Keywords:** Strategic, Management, Collection Development, Collection Management and Information Services.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Different libraries have different objectives, but all focus to provide the services which users are in needs for. Library operates to meet users' needs which may include usefulness and comprehensiveness, currency, speed, validity and effectiveness (Bakewell, 1997). Libraries acquire and preserve the knowledge that is available in different documentary formats-printed and electronic forms. Modern libraries are concerned with provision of information to satisfy the demands of users (Adomi, 2008).

Library resources, information services, and operations have been greatly influenced by rapid advanced technological innovations over the years by the western countries. However, the way information is disseminated, captured, collected, stored and transferred has provided a new impetus to library functions and services (Saddiqui, 2003; Adomi 2008). The wide adoption of computers and internet facilities for communication requires libraries to adapt with the new demands from their users to make collection accessible from within and outside the Library

building (Mutula and Makando, 2003). With the effects of developments in Information Technology (IT), Libraries can now provide broad access to global information and become less dependent on printed collections (Kiondo, 2004; Adomi, 2008). Kiondo (2004) posited that Libraries must be able to become an “access organization” providing access to an array of information resources in the institutions of higher learning. This means having access as the right to utilized it and not ownership of the resources.

## **DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS**

### **Concept of Strategy**

Strategy has to do with the formulation of basic organizational missions, purposes and objectives; policies and programme to achieve; and the methods needed to ensure effective implemented of organizational goals. To Robson (1997) it is the pattern or plan that integrates an organization’s major goals, policies and actions sequences into a cohesive whole.

### **Concept of Management and Information Services**

Management is the act of getting people together to accomplish desirable goals. It comprises planning, organizing, resourcing, directing, and controlling an organization, institution or effort for the purpose of accomplishing the set objectives. Resourcing encompasses the deployment and manipulation of human resources, financial resources, technological resources, material resources and natural resources. Some scholars (Charles, 1990; Kanwal, 2005) see management as a group of people or individuals in an organization. The authors further posited management as a process that demand for the performance of a specific function. Paul (2009) maintained that management is the process of planning and organizing the efforts of organizational or institutional members and using all other organizational resources to achieve its set goals”. However, the foregoing definitions of management are in compatibility with Uloma (2011) which the author refers as the process of organizing and coordinating people to achieve the desired goals and objectives with the available resources. For the purpose of this paper, the concept of management can be defined as a process by which an institution can adapt to achieve desirable results through efficient utilization of human and information resources”. Also, in the context of this study, management of information resources can be refers as the process that has to do with planning, organizing, creating, maintaining, stimulating, controlling and unifying information resources in order to achieve predetermined

educational objectives in the institutions libraries. Looking at the overview of the concept of management, the researcher is of the viewed that there is need for proper management and utilization of information resources in the institutions of higher learning in order to achieve the educational goals and objectives for which they were set for. Information services in this study has to do with the management of extensive library collections that can support teaching, learning and research needs of the staff and students in the institutions of higher learning.

### **Concept of Collection Development**

Collection development is the process of building and maintaining the library’s entire materials collection, encompassing print, non-print, electronic and remote formats. Print and audio-visual resources purchased with library funds are for the library circulating and non-circulating collection only. It includes the formulation of guidelines and procedures, coordination of acquisition activities, budget formulation and allocation, needs assessments, collection evaluations, selection, resource sharing and de-selection. According to Aina (2004) it is one of the fundamental functions of the Library and Information Profession. It involves selection and acquisition of information resources that will enable Library and Information practitioners to perform their myriad functions to the users effectively. In a similar study, To Olajo and Akewukereke (2006) and Aina (2004), averred that collection development includes everything that goes into acquiring materials which includes selection, ordering and payment. Collection development serves as a foundation upon which other Library services are built. Akewukereke (2006) further explained that it is a planned, systematic development of a collection based on the objectives of the Library. Collection development and collection management are terms that have often been used almost synonymously though they differ.

In a related research on Harrods Librarians Glossary and Reference Book, Prytherch (2000), posited collection development as the process of planning a stock acquisition programme not simply to cater for immediate needs but to build a coherent and reliable collection over a number of years; to meet the objectives of the services; the term demands a depth and quality of stock and includes related activity towards exploitation of the collection through publicity. Emphasizing the exploitation of Library stock, Adewuyi (2005), posited that while collection development places emphasis on just ownership of information material, collection management goes beyond that by placing emphasis on effective exploitation of information materials. In a similar study carried out Peggy (2009) cited collection development as a term that represent the process of

systematically building of library collections to serve study, teaching, research, recreational, and other needs of library users. The process includes selection and de-selection of current and retrospective materials, planning of coherent strategies for continuing acquisition, and evaluation of collections to ascertain how well they serve user needs. The author further stipulated that the goal of any collection development organization must be provide the library with a collection that meets the appropriate needs of its client population within the limits of its fiscal and personnel resources (Peggy, 2009). To reach this goal as suggested by the author (Peggy, 2009), the researcher is of the view that each segment of the collection must be developed with an application of resources consistent with its relative importance to the mission of the library and the needs of its patrons.

For the purpose of this study, collection development can be defined as part of collection management that primarily deals with decisions about the acquisition of information resources. Also, the looking at the various definitions cited above by scholars, the researcher is of the opinion that those who practice collection development and management can be known as selectors, bibliographers, collections librarians, subject specialists, subject liaisons, collection development librarians, collection managers, and collection developers. While the primary purpose of collection development and management is to meet the informational needs of learners in the institutions of the higher learning. It is also important to note that the processes of collection development must include selection and de-selection of current and retrospective materials, including gifts-in-kind; planning of coherent strategies for continuing acquisitions; input into preservation decisions; evaluation of collections to ascertain how well they serve user needs. These processes are guided by a Collection Development Policy which establishes priorities, supports efforts, and facilitates decisions.

### **Concept of Collection Management**

Collection management is the systemic, efficient and economic stewardship of library resources. To Peggy (2009) defined collection management as a process of information gathering, communication, coordination, policy formulation, evaluation, and planning. These processes, in turn, influence decisions about the acquisition, retention, and provision of access to information sources in support of the intellectual needs of a given library community. Singh (2004) stated the difference between collection development and collection management. The author suggested that collection development involves the selection and acquisition of library materials while collection management is much

more than collection building. It also involves managing the use of the collection, its storage, organization and making it accessible to library users.

It is clear from the foregoing concepts that collection management is more embracing than collection development. Collection development is concerned with planning for acquisition through user's assessment and design of collection development policy, selection and acquisition of information resources to meet the needs of the user's community, while collection management incorporates these activities of collection development and includes also the organization and maintenance of library information resources, keeping the needs of the users a prime objective (Singh, 2004). From the above difference, it is therefore more appropriate to use the terms collection development and management together.

Ogunrombi (2005) suggested that collection development and management involves development policies, users' needs assessment, selection of information materials, acquisition, collection evaluation and assessment, de-selection or weeding, intellectual freedom, conservation and preservation of library and information resources. Basically, this paper will focus on these issues in discussing Strategic for collection development and Management for effective Information service in the institutions of higher learning.

## **Theoretical Framework for Collection Development**

### **Ranganathan Law's of Theory**

This theory was propounded by Ranganathan in 1967. Ranganathan theory was proposed to detailing the principles of operating a library system. Therefore, the theoretical framework for collection development in Libraries of institutions of higher learning would be based on Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science, namely:

- Books are for use.
- Every book its reader.
- Every reader his (or her) book
- Save the time of the reader.
- The library is a growing organism

### **First Law: Books are for use**

The First Law emphasizes use and access – not materials for their own sake. Of course, Ranganathan believed in preservation and conservation but the focus in this Law is use. Ranganathan observed that books were often chained to prevent their removal and that the emphasis was on storage and preservation rather than use. He did not reject the notion that preservation and storage were important, but he asserted that the purpose

of such activities was to promote the use of them. On the other hand, it also means that books in libraries are not meant to be shut away from its users (Noruzi, 2004; Koehler, Wallace, Jitka, Wanda, and Joanna, 2000).

### **Second Law: Every reader his/her book**

This law suggests that every member of the community should be able to obtain materials needed. Ranganathan felt that all individuals from all social environments were entitled to library service, and that the basis of library use was education, to which all were entitled. These entitlements were not without some important obligations for both libraries/librarians and library patrons. Librarians should have excellent first-hand knowledge of the people to be served.

### **Third Law: Every book its reader**

This principle is closely related to the second law, but it focuses on the item itself, suggesting that each item in a library has an individual or individuals who would find that item useful. Ranganathan argued that the library could devise many methods to ensure that each item finds its appropriate reader. The third law also means that a library's books have a place in the library even if a smaller demographic might choose to read it (Noruzi, 2004; Koehler, Wallace, Jitka, Wanda, and Joanna, 2000).

### **Fourth Law: Save the time of the reader**

This law is recognition that part of the excellence of library service is its ability to meet the needs of the library user efficiently. To this end, Ranganathan recommended the use of appropriate business methods to improve library management. He observed that centralizing the library collection in one location provided distinct advantages. The fourth law of library science explained that all patrons should be able to easily locate the material they desire quickly and efficiently.

### **Fifth Law: The library is a growing organism**

This law focused more on the need for internal change than on changes in the environment itself. Ranganathan argued that library organizations must accommodate growth in staff, the physical collection, and patron use.

However, the above Laws have been applied to different aspects of library services in the institutions of higher learning such as: web resources are for use; every user has his or her web resource; every web resource its

user; save the time of the user; and the web is a growing organism (Noruzi, 2004; Ogunrombi, 2005).

### **Objectives of Collection Development Process**

To determine the quality standard of collection development and management of information resources in the institutions of higher learning, Michael (1995) highlighted some of the basic objectives to enhance effective implementation of collection development process, such as follows:

- To provide bibliographic control over print and non-print materials using accepted standards and practices;
- To organize print and non-print materials into collections cataloged according to the Library of Congress Classification System;
- To acquire and organize materials that support a diverse community, encourage academic achievement, student success, lifelong learning, and enhance teaching excellence;
- To evaluate, select, acquire and organize print materials, audiovisual materials, serials, electronic resources, and information technologies as appropriate for classroom and research support;
- To select and deselect materials considering, as appropriate, course assignments, faculty recommendations, standard lists, publishers' catalogs, student requests and review journals;
- To promote literacy and the enjoyment of reading; and
- To maintain adequate and appropriate materials for programme accreditation requirements (Michael, 1995; College Learning Council, 2010).

### **Suggested Strategies for Actualizing Virile Collection Development and Management**

#### **Collection Development Policy**

A collection development policy establishes ground rules for planning, budgeting, selection, and acquiring library materials. These documents provide a framework for coordinated collection development programme in libraries. Collection development policy helps the library to serve the user community better (Olaajo and Akewukereke, 2006). Collection development policy explains the content and intent of collection development

which include the definition of the scope of a library's existing collections, plan for the continuing development of resources, identify collection strengths, weaknesses, and outline the relationship between selection philosophy and the institution's goals, general selection criteria, and intellectual freedom (IFLA, 2001; Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records, 2003 and The American Library Association, 1987), According to Kiodo (2004) and Adomi (2008), collection development policy guides libraries on issues and processes of selecting information materials to satisfy users needs. It also provides criteria for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of a developed collection, in meeting the needs of the library patron. It spells out issues related to content of the collection, format, responsibility for selection and acquisition of library information resources.

A collection development policy should not only concern itself with selection; planning, public relations and cooperation and resource sharing (consortia); it should address the following elements to be effective:

- Community profile
- Community Needs Assessment
- Collection Goals
- Selection Responsibility
- Selection Criteria
- Acquisitions
- Collection Evaluation and Assessment.

It is imperative to have a written policy. A clear acquisition policy should be formulated in line with the objectives of the library and needs of the users.

### **Budgeting/Collection Development**

Collection development is a function of funds. This means that library can only build its collection to the extent that funds are available. According to Stacey (1993), strategy implementation is held to depend upon an effective budgeting system. The budget converts strategy into a set of short-term action plans and sets out the financial consequences of those action plans for the year ahead. For a library budget especially in relation to collection development to be successful, it must be directional and must be based on a plan so that there is value for the money spent. Money available for collection development is always limited and heads of libraries go cap in hand to the chief executives of their institution or establishment, almost on their knees to ask for more funds. Acquisitions! Collection Development should not be at the mercy of heads of institution. Therefore realistic budget should be made for collection development in libraries if they (libraries) must procure, organize and make available to their numerous users both current and

adequate information resources.

### **Selection of library Information Resources**

The selection of library stock should obviously reflect and be geared to the needs of the users of the library/information service-be they the general public, the staff and student of an academic institution, the members of the professional body etc. Bakewell (1997) opines that in order to qualify for purchase, a book must (a) be relevant to the organization's interest, (b) fill a gap in coverage or provide a significant extension of current knowledge (c) justify its cost, bearing in mind such matters as the importance of the item, size, price, state of the budget etc. According to Bakewell (1997) those who select should consider such criteria of expression, board coverage and appeal when evaluating those materials. In the case of academic libraries, selection should be based on institution and the needs of staff and student, not forgetting part-time students.

### **Acquisitions of Information Materials**

Acquisition is the implementation of selection decisions: ordering, receipt, and payment. These must be done according to a procedure that is guarded by the collection development policy (Olaajo and Akewukereke, 2006). Acquisition forms a vital link in the circle of publishing, selection, request and providing materials for use. The imperatives for acquisitions staff are to acquire information materials as quickly and as economically as possible, while offering an efficient and responsive service.

Acquisition and collection development focuses on methodical and topical themes pertaining to the acquisition, purchase, de-selection of print, other traditional format of library materials (by purchase, gift, exchange, legal deposit), and electronic information resources. Specialized interest include collection development policies, collection development methods, techniques and practices for collection assessment, usage statistics, and pricing ownership vs. access issues, the open access, format duplication, scholarly communication and librarian relations with publishers and vendors. As access to materials becomes an increasingly viable, alternative to ownership, acquisition staff should work closely with serials, cataloguing and circulation section, and any advisory committees that facilitate discussions between libraries and publishers and/producers of electronic resources. Of critical importance to acquisition department should be cooperative collection development (consortia) and application of information technology (IT) to acquisition and collection development process. In formulating its

goals, the acquisition section should be flexible and responsive to changing condition in the professional environment as well as in the information industry (IFLANET, 2006).

### **The Internet and Acquisition in Libraries**

The internet, especially its graphical world wide web (www) has become one of the most potent tools of information storage, retrieval and dissemination of information in the contemporary society (Adomi, 2008). Access to internet include electronic mail (email), UseNet, www, remote login (telnet), file transfer protocol (FTP), online chat and e-conferencing, provide those connected to it with an unprecedented amount of information that can be used to their advantages. The information on the net is seemingly limitless as massive volume of information is added to it every day. As information providers, libraries of all types, and documentation and information centers should be the main beneficiaries of the massive amount of internet resource that can be used to noticeably enhance the quality of services and at the same time to save time and money. Internet enhances library cooperation's and services, especially when budget cut by many parent bodies or institutions, fluctuations in exchange rate of currencies, and rapidly growing cost of periodicals; and on the contrary, information needs of users are increasing and diversified. In addition, information explosion has become a dilemma for libraries as they need to be more selection than to be comprehensive when acquiring library resources (Adomi, 2008; Hundie, 2003).

The Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) that is gradually replacing the traditional Card Catalogue has been appreciated as the easiest and most effective way of communicating Library stocks to users. Researchers (Webb and Grimwood, 2004; Adewuyi 2005), state that if "Information is to be a widely available resource, it must be organized so that it is easily accessible physically without too many imposed restraints". Ifidon (1997) earlier postulated that "beautiful buildings, well trained staff and modern information storage and retrieval system can only be appreciated if excellent services are given to users. These services cannot be given without live collections". This means that a live collection is the one that has been procured, processed, organized and maintained.

### **Collection Assessment, Preservation and Conservation**

It is not enough to procure, process and organize information resources for the purpose of meeting the

needs of users, it is imperative to periodically assess library resources to determine their relevance and utility at the moment. According to the Arizona State Library, Archives and Public (2003), collection assessment (also known as collection evaluation) is an organized process of analyzing and describing a library's collection systematically. It is the assessment of the extent to which a collection meets the library's objectives. As professionals, librarians should try to build and maintain collection development goals that are appropriate for their information seekers. Agee (2005) sees collection assessment as one important measure of collection development and management. As important as this function is in libraries, Librarians are hardly engaged in it. How else do librarians ensure that they are building useful collection that will provide a good return on their financial investments? (Adomi, 2008).

### **Weeding of Resources**

Weeding has to do with the process of removing unwanted materials form the shelves either for discard or relegation to remote storage. This is an important element of collection management that ensure that library resources are useful considering the fact that community needs and goals change, institution's curriculum or the faculty changes and large parts of the collection may fall into the seldom used category (Adomi, 2008). The analysis and evaluation of the collection as a whole emphasizes the necessity of weeding the collection systematically to keep it responsive to patron's need (Buckingham, 1994). Librarians should weed their collection frequently, if the library will not soon become the burial ground for old textbooks, and other items patrons' no longer find useful. Chikezie (2003) identifies problems of collection development in libraries to be poor funding, the tyranny of distances, high prices of library materials, poor accommodation facilities, negative actions of readers, and high illiteracy rate.

### **Intellectual Freedom and Access**

Hannabuss and Allard (2003) assert that the wider issue is that of intellectual freedom and access, and the role of information work and of libraries. The American Library Association (ALA) (2005) states that freedom of expression is an inalienable human right and the function for self government, freedom of expression encompasses the freedom of speech and corollary right to receive information, that libraries and librarians protect and promote these rights by selecting, producing, providing access to, identifying, receiving, organizing, providing instruction in the use to and preserving recorded expression irrespective of the format or technology (IFLA,

2003). Major challenge for the libraries and information profession is commitment to intellectual freedom and adherence to the principles of intellectual freedom, unrestricted access to information and freedom of expression and to recognize the privacy of library user. Any attempt by a member of the community to remove resources from the library's collection or restrict access to the materials is a challenge to intellectual freedom which the library should vehemently discourage

### Preservation and Conservation of Library Resources

The very core aspect of collection development and management is conservation of preservation of information resources. Library and Information resource are undoubtedly very expensive, thus, there is need to ensure that they are always in good condition (Aina, 2004, Adomi 2008). Otherwise, it will be a great waste of time and fund to select and acquire materials without taking adequate and proper steps to ensure their longevity. Researchers, (Trinity College Dublin, 2007; Chester Beatty Library, 2007 and Adomi, 2008), posit that preservation activities are those aimed to minimize deterioration of prevent changes to the collection. This includes buildings maintenance, environmental control, providing safe storage, security, handling skills training, exhibition conditions, and disaster preparedness planning. One of the main goals of the library is to make its collections available for use by eligible users. This must be balanced at all times with the need to ensure the preservation of the resources.

### CONCLUSION

The following conclusions have been drawn from the research of the study; collection development and management is not an adhoc activity, rather it is a planned, continuous, and cost-effective acquisition of quality, relevant materials to meet the information needs of users and the corporate objectives of libraries and their parent institutions. Collection development is not only growth in volumes and titles but in the quality of acquired materials in enhancing effective information delivery in the institutions of higher learning. It is only from this perspective that the word 'development' could be meaningful in relation to collection development to have live, virile and responsive collection.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have been made based on the research of this paper:

- Librarians in the institutions of higher learning should be encouraged to attend professional development programmes such as seminars, workshops, conferences to increase their knowledge on collection development and management towards information resources.
- Materials should be ordered for library continuously without necessarily waiting for accreditation exercise to embark on fire brigade approach to acquisitions.
- Efforts should be made by heads of library to refuse to be intimidated by overcoming any social, political, economic and environmental factors.
- Librarians should observe due process principles in relation to collection development to avoid unnecessary bottle necks and delays.
- Library automation and internet connectivity should be of high priority for all types of libraries in the institutions of higher learning.
- Librarians should insist on having a written and functional policy to guide information recourses.
- Nigeria Library Association (NLA) should formulate a standard policy and ensure compliance by all academic libraries to enjoy increased findings.
- Library Development Funds (LDF) in academic libraries should be resuscitated.
- Education Trust Fund (ETF) for book intervention should not be divested and should be timely accessed;
- High proficiency in acquisition processes and collection development management can improve the status of an academic library.
- Institutions libraries should have proper keeping of statistical data of librarians and students to enhance the management of information resources in their various institutions.

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