

*Full Length Research*

## Acquisition and Preservation of Serial Resources of Libraries in Higher Institutions in Benue State

<sup>1</sup>Upev, Michael Terver (CLN), <sup>2</sup>Ilo, Hajaratu M. and <sup>3</sup>Orga, Lovette

<sup>1</sup>Library Department Federal University of Agriculture PMB 2373, Makurdi Benue State-Nigeria  
michaelupev@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>Library Department Federal University of Agriculture PMB Makurdi, 2373 Benue State-Nigeria

<sup>3</sup>Department of Library and Information Science, Faculty of Education, Benue State University, Makurdi.

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This paper discusses the acquisition and preservation of Serial Resources in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture, Makurdi Nigeria. The population for this study comprised of all library staff of Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture, Makurdi and College of Advanced and Professional Studies (CAPS) Makurdi. The sample size for the study was 150. Data was collected and analysed using descriptive statistics. Major findings for the study revealed that there are problems affecting acquisition and preservation of serial resources in libraries. The common types of serial resources used in libraries in the study area were: journals, newspapers, magazines, newsletters, abstracts and indexes, almanac and year books and annuals and reviews. The study also revealed strategies that could be used to solve the problems affecting acquisition and preservation of serial resources in libraries. The study concluded that sources and methods of acquisition of library materials in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba and College of Advanced and Professional Studies have become quite necessary if the institutions actually intent to make progress in library activities. It was recommended that the institutions should subscribe to many types of serial resources that will improve students' academic performance.

**Keywords:** Acquisitions, Preservation and Serial Resources

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### INTRODUCTION

The issue of preservation is as old as invention of writing, thus man in quest to maintain records has devised places to preserve such records for future use. The most difficult problem that has pressured the minds of librarians from time immemorial till date is the ability to ensure that safety of library information resources against threats such as floods, fire, mutilation, rodents, insects and so on

are taken care of. According to Bamigboye and Burriamo (2008), libraries acquire and preserve resources like books, periodicals, maps etc to meet potential information or recreational need. They further stated that it is the responsibility of the library staff to maintain these materials in good physical condition so that they can be readily available for use at all times.

The academic library is a key focal point for teaching, learning and research activities. According to Hayles (2003), University libraries are established to serve as support to faculties in their teaching, research and learning activities. Libraries are repositories of information and knowledge from all kinds of fields of learning to the academic communities. Miracle Eka Njeze (2012), opined that library materials consists of media, non-book and non –print resources. She gave examples on media resources which includes computer hardware drive, data bases, library software, non book materials which include CD ROMS, audio and video tape, while print materials include pictures, newspapers, magazines, books, maps and photographic materials. Library materials therefore must last as long as possible and be preserved for active use for posterity.

Preservation of deteriorating information resources in libraries has become a global phenomenon to which libraries must aggressively respond if their mission of providing information needs of their patrons would be met (Ovowoh, et al 2010). Libraries acquire material to meet the informational or recreational needs of its clientele. When the material in one's care is allowed to deteriorate unchecked or become damaged in anyway, it may be difficult and may be ultimately difficult or the information it embodies available for use. It is the responsibility of the library staff to keep these materials in good physical condition so that they are available for users at all times. Materials in many libraries and archives throughout the country are still housed in conditions that leave much to be desired (Olatokun, 2008).

Preservation has been defined as Principles for the Care and Handling of Library Material to include "all the managerial and financial considerations including storage and accommodation provisions, staffing levels, policies, techniques, and methods involved in preserving library and archival material and the information contained in them.". While conservation is direct physical intervention arresting or slowing down deterioration of library materials, preservation involves both the direct and indirect action. In preservation consideration is given to every element that promotes the protection of the materials including the housing, storage system and security against such threats as theft, mutilation and poor handling. Preservation is, therefore, a more embracing concept and it includes conservation.

## STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS

The statement of the problems are the issues that make us go into the study for instance, in the olden days most libraries do not acquire Serial resources rather they depend on gifts, but some gifts given to them does not reflect the need of the institution.

Moreover, most of the staff employed are not qualified

librarians and thereby cannot carry out the smooth operation of acquisition and classification.

Also, in some cases some acquisition librarians do not consult the entire library committee before acquiring serial resources.

This study is therefore to investigate the acquisition and preservation of Serial Resources in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi and College of Advance and Professional Studies Makurdi, Benue State-Nigeria.

## OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are listed and follow:

1. To identify the problems affecting acquisition of serial resources FSI/CAPS library.
2. To identify the types of serials resources available for use in FSI/CAPS library
3. To identify reasons why serial resources are not used in FSI/CAPS library.
4. To suggest solutions to the problems of acquisition of serial resources in FSI/CAPS library.

## Research Questions

The following are the research questions:

1. What are the problems affecting acquisition of serial resources in FSI /CAPS library?
1. What are the types of serials resources available for use in FSI /CAPS library?
2. Are reasons why serial resources are not used in FSI/CAPS library?
3. How can the problems of acquisition be solved in FSI/CAPS library?

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The design for this study was survey research design. The research covers three higher situations in Makurdi, the Benue state Headquarters. The population for the study was 188 comprising of 122 library staff in University of Agriculture Makurdi, and 66 from College of Advanced and Professional Studies (CAPS) Makurdi.

A sample size of 150 respondents was drawn for the study using proportionate random sampling technique. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire titled "Acquisition and Preservation of Serial Resources in Library". The questionnaire was divided into two parts; 1 and 2. Part 1 deals with demographic data of respondents. Part 2 has 4 sections and was used to elicit

information on the impact marketing resources on higher institutions. The questionnaire was an open-ended-structured with restricted responses options of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) with corresponding values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

The instrument was validated by 3 experts in Library science in University of Agriculture and Benue State University Makurdi. In order to ensure the reliability of the instrument, a sample size of 20 library staff of the Benue State University Makurdi who were not included in the sample for the main study were used. The purpose of this was to test-try the instruments that will be used in the study. A reliability coefficient of 0.89 was found ideal for the study.

Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics; precisely arithmetic mean. Bench mark for decision making was 2.50 ( $(4+3+2+1=10/4=2.50)$ ).

## RESULT PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Results in table 1 shows that out of 9 items, 7 had mean ratings above 2.50 which is the bench mark while 2 items had mean ratings below 2.50. This is an indication that 7 items were problems affecting acquisition of serial resources in Francis Suleman Idachaba, University of Agriculture and College of Advanced and Professional Studies Makurdi libraries. The study confirming the findings of Fackler (2000). This study revealed that lack of current selection tools indicated problems that impede serials acquisition could be explained by the difficulties encountered in the acquisition of the important serials selection tools such as Ulrich's International Periodical Directory, Ulrich's on Microfiche and Ulrich's Plus. They are all published and acquired from overseas. In some of the libraries visited, the selection tools are missing and where available, are as old as 1980s and early 1990s edition. Though efforts have been made by individuals and groups to have a local serials vendor or subscription agency, non-is available now. Consequently there is no proper documentation to help in the acquisition of local serials. The finding is also consistent with the findings of Edeka and Anunobi (2008) which also identified the nature of serials as a problem to its processing operations. Nature of serials as a factor is not restricted to federal universities in southern Nigerian but concerns all the stakeholders in serials: the publisher, subscription agents/vendors, libraries and serials users. They confirmed that serials are characterized by their bibliographic instability.

Such instability could hinder visibility and accessibility which are important factors for acquisition. Change in the

nature of serials from print to electronic form may not be considered a problem since some libraries may decide to acquire and use both or opt for one.

Table 2 shows that respondents rated all items with mean above 2.50. This means that the 4 items were reasons why serial resources in Francis Suleman Idacha library, University of Agriculture and College of Advanced and Professional Studies Makurdi libraries are not used. This finding confirms the study conducted by Ogunniyi, Akerele and Afolabi (2003) on Use of Serial Publications by the Academic Staff of School of Arts and Social Sciences in Adeyemi College of Education Ondo State, Nigeria. In the study wrote on the reasons why students staff do not use of serials which include: elusiveness, as most of them are not published by commercial organizations, the tendency of serials to change name, divide into two or three separate publications, die or lay dormant for several years, the difficulties in being aware of which issues have not yet been received, possible changes of publisher, the fact that some serial, especially in research libraries, are not bought but are gifts or exchange, the physical problems of storing and circulating individual issues, and being aware of when all the issues of a volume have been received and so ready to be sent to the binders. This finding is similar to a study carried out by Akporhonor and Azonobi (2015). The study investigated the deterioration of serial materials in university libraries in South-South, Nigeria. From its finding, the study revealed that serials that the type of serial materials that are commonly used in Nigeria are newspapers, magazines, newsletters Journals, Abstracts and indexes, Almanac and year books, Annuals and Reviews and Directories.

Table 3 shows 8 types of serial resources commonly used. Out of 8 items, 7 had mean ratings ranged from 2.50 to 2.91. Only 1 item had a mean rating below 2.50. This implies that 7 types of serial resources are commonly used in Francis Suleman Idachaba, University of Agriculture and College of Advanced and Professional Studies Makurdi libraries.

Result in table revealed 4 items had mean ratings ranged from 2.50 to 3.09. This indicates that the items were suggestions to problems of serial acquisition in Francis Suleman Idachaba, University of Agriculture and College of Advanced and Professional Studies Makurdi libraries. The finding agreed with a study carried out by Sunil (2009). The study revealed that there are three general strategies for providing access to commercially available electronic resources: local loading by an individual library, loading by a consortium, and relying on vendor sites. Individual libraries have generally been moving away from the local load strategy because of its cost. Consortia have done likewise, although there are notable exceptions. Whether reliance on publisher and vendor services is truly the most cost-effective strategy is an interesting question, since an argument can be made

**Table 1:** Mean ratings on the problems affecting acquisition of serial resources in FSI/CAPS library

S/N	Item	SD	D	A	SA	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remarks
1	The price of serials continues to increase	20	31	69	30	150	2.72	0.93	Agree
2	There is continuous devaluation of the nation's currency	10	24	77	39	150	2.97	0.83	Agree
3	There is lack of current selection tools	13	34	69	34	150	2.83	0.88	Agree
4	There is lack of locally published serials catalogues	44	60	32	14	150	2.10	0.93	Agree
5	Continuous increase in titles and fragmentation of serials hinders adequate provision of serials	12	22	73	43	150	2.98	0.87	Agree
6	Cessation of publication of serials does not allow for continuity in the library	16	32	68	34	150	2.80	0.91	Agree
7	Changes in serials to electronic or CD has made the acquisition of print forms difficult	20	30	65	35	150	2.77	0.96	Agree
8	Universities have not agreed on who does the final selection of serials, thereby delaying decision for subscription	36	45	49	20	150	2.35	0.99	Agree
9	There is difficulty in deciding the best subscription agent to work with in order to get prompt renewal	25	42	60	23	150	2.54	0.94	Agree

**Source:** Field survey, 2016

**Table 2:** Mean ratings on the reasons for not using serial resources

S/N	Item	SD	D	A	SA	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remarks
1	There are no recent journals in my area of interest	20	20	70	40	150	2.87	0.960	Agree
2	I am not aware of the availability of journals in the library	16	32	68	34	150	2.80	0.91	Agree
3	I have enough journals in my area of interest	20	30	65	35	150	2.77	0.96	Agree
4	There is no professional staff to assist me	24	30	52	44	150	2.77	1.04	Agree

**Source:** Field survey, 2016

that it entails a range of hidden costs. Local loading provides some important advantages, including control over the number and functioning of user interfaces and normalization of usage measurement.

Presenting electronic resources effectively to users poses challenges for collections of locally digitized,

commercially available, and "free" Web resources, and each type of resource has its own distinctive issues and complications. The role online catalogs should play in providing access to these resources is controversial because users accustomed to the Web expect to be able to locate resources through just a few mouse clicks. This

**Table 3:** Mean ratings on the types of serial resources available for use in FSI/CAPS library

S/N	Item	SD	D	A	SA	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remarks
1	Journals	22	28	71	29	150	2.71	0.94	AV
2	Newspapers	19	53	60	18	150	2.51	0.86	AV
3	Magazines	25	42	65	18	150	2.50	0.91	AV
4	Newsletters	48	46	36	20	150	2.91	1.03	AV
5	Abstracts and indexes	24	30	52	44	150	2.77	1.04	AV
6	Almanac and year books	23	24	60	43	150	2.82	1.02	AV
7	Annuals and Reviews	25	42	65	18	150	2.50	0.91	AV
8	Directories	32	62	27	29	150	2.35	1.02	NA

\*AV-available and NA=not available

**Source:** Field survey, 2016

**Table 4:** Mean ratings on the suggestions to problems of serial resources in FSI /CAPS library

S/N	Item	SD	D	A	SA	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remarks
1	Proper orientation on use of library to students	7	15	85	43	150	3.09	0.75	Agree
2	Provision of library resources	22	28	71	29	150	2.71	0.94	Agree
3	Increase of library hour	19	53	60	18	150	2.51	0.86	Agree
4	Punishment of library defaulters	25	42	65	18	150	2.50	0.91	Agree

**Source:** Field survey, 2016

is especially true of students who, without a quick means of retrieval, will tend to rely even more extensively on Web search engines than they currently do. A number of institutions have observed that the use of specific resources jumps or declines quickly on the basis of their gateway placement and visibility, and this phenomenon has recently been documented.

Large libraries appear to follow a strategy in which resources are presented both through catalogs and e-resource gateways. These gateways typically provide alphabetical or subject lists of databases or electronic journals, along with an effective gateway search tool. Providing such multiple paths to resources in a cost-effective manner requires establishing synergy between cataloging and the methods used to generate lists, which can be accomplished by systematically deriving metadata from an online catalog system and using it to create a separate database from which resource lists are generated. The practice of highlighting and making new resources more visible has also been reflected in the

Web pages of a number of libraries.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is obvious that sources and method of acquisition of library materials in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba and College of Advanced and Professional Studies has become quite necessary for any institution that has a purpose built library. In the course of the research work, the researcher found out that the acquisition librarians in academic libraries have various methods and sources of acquiring library materials which include gift, exchange professional associate etc. (in terms of method) while publishers wholesalers, bookstores etc(in terms of sources). It is observed that the only department that is responsible for the acquisition of the library materials is acquisition department.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The acquisition librarian should be in the position to identify the best materials to serve the broad objectives of the academic libraries.
2. The institutions should subscribe to many serial resources that will improve students' academic performance.
3. The suggested strategies made in the study should be adopted by higher institutions of learning in Benue state.
4. Qualified library staff that could effectively handle and manage serial resources should be employed in the higher institutions in Benue state
5. Finally, the higher institutions should make it a point of duty by maintaining the selection and acquisition serial resources in libraries.

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