

Full Length Research

Organization and Preservation of Government Publications in Benue State Legislative Library, Makurdi

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Accepted 10 July 2021

The study was carried out to examine the Organization and Preservation of Government Publications at the Benue State Legislative Library, Makurdi. The study adopted a descriptive survey design method. The population of the study comprises of eleven (11) staff. The total enumeration sampling technique was adopted for the study. The instrument used was structure questionnaire and the data collected was analyzed using SPSS to generate mean scores to answer the research questions. The findings of the study revealed that the types of government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi include annual reports, special reports, report of investigative panel, research report, serial document, information and publicity publications. The finding also revealed the organization of government publications which include cataloguing and classification, indexing and abstracting as well as bibliographic services. The study further revealed that the challenges of organization and preservation of government publications include lack of physical accessibility to government publications, lack of finance, lack of bibliographic control, varieties of classification scheme as well as unfavourable government policies and inadequate equipment/ materials. The study, therefore, recommended that the organisation and preservation of government publications should include establishment of Current Awareness Services (CAS) and Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) programme for easy accessibility of government publications; provision of annual budgetary allocation; inclusion of full bibliographic control; introduction of single classification scheme; recruitment of competent and qualified staff; a good policy should be formulated and provision of enough equipment/materials.

Key Words: Organization, Preservation, Government Publication, Legislative Library.

Cite This Article As: Idachaba, J. A., Vehe, E.T., Tyonun N.M., Columbus, U. ((2021). Organization and Preservation of Government Publications in Benue State Legislative Library, Makurdi. Inter. J. Acad. Lib. Info. Sci. 9(7): 364-370

INTRODUCTION

The library is a mirror for reshaping the deformed to become informed. Librarians and books are unique in nature. They provide access and services for the seeker of information. Having considered library as an antidote

for societal ill-health, Mohaammed (2010), defined library as a collection of records of human culture in diverse formats and languages preserved, organized and interpreted to meet broad and varying needs of individuals for information, knowledge, recreation and aesthetic enjoyment. Uganneya & Agoh (2015) view

library as a social institution for the exploitation of knowledge contained in published matters. In the same vein, Udofot (2018) agrees with the definition of library by stating that the library is an institution that propagates knowledge in all fields of study through a rich stock of variety of readable materials.

With the understanding of how knowledge became essential ingredient for use as a natural resource and a commodity of value as well as being able to mediate relationship for personal and national development, there is need for every information services hub to apply theories of supply and demand in information resources development. According to Ogbodo (2016), library materials acquired must be useful to somebody who needs it from the community while the demand theory says that every document acquired must be demanded by somebody otherwise books themselves are nothing; they have no meaning until they are made serviceable by demand. So, much attention should be giving to demand and selection should be based on those books which are in demand by the users for their information need.

The gathering and publishing of data occurs at all levels of government: local, state, national, and international (Ohio State University, 2015). Government Publications are printed and published works, which contain information about the structure, policies and activities of government and its parastatals which bear emblem of the government or its agency that authorizes their production. For instance, most government publications carry the coat of arms, which is a form of government seal signifying authority of the government (Wombo, 2002).

Government Publications are significant in the provision and dissemination of information about the policies, plans and activities of the various governments. Information is vital for daily survival, not only for individual but also for the various countries of the world. The use of Government Publications (GP) as source of information cannot be overemphasized. Also, government publications contained educational value and usually constitute very useful primary sources of information for research and scholarship. Government Publications usually carry information of a statistical nature about the various countries of the world. Such statistical information includes population figures, economic data, educational data, health data, political data and social information (Popoola, 2015).

Similarly, government publications have political value as they serve as the chronicler of the activities of particular regimes of government. In this case they also serve as primary sources for those who wish to write books or other treaties. Government publications provide excellent source material in many areas, most of which concern our everyday life and they are particularly useful in the social science. According to Ogundana (2002), government Publications are fundamentally information resources generated by the different arms of government,

including ministries, parastatals and government agencies. Government Publications are publications that are issued or printed at government expense or published by authority of a government body.

Organization is the systematic arrangement of resources both print and non-print materials, according to their subject discipline. Ode & Omokaro (2007) notes that organization of information resources is pivotal for the success of operation in any library that is worth its onus. Commenting further, they listed the significance and rationale for organization of information resources to include uniformity, consistency, accessibility, easy retrieval, orderliness, convenience and security. According to Ogbonna (2009) organizing a library means arranging or grouping as well as departmentalizing people and materials (resources).

Aina (2003) posited that preservation is the maintenance of library information materials so that they can be closed to the original condition as much as possible. He further explained many preservation methods such as eliminating or reducing the factors that accelerate deterioration of information resources especially paper-based materials such as high temperature, relative humidity and long exposure to sun rays. Singh & Kaur (2009) opined that preservation and access to knowledge and information resources are the main mandate of school libraries alongside supporting the mission of its establishment which is teaching and learning. Preservation as a collection management strategy has been relegated if not totally neglected by librarians and documentalists for a very long time in Africa, especially in Nigeria. Therefore, knowledge of the causes of deterioration of library information resources is very essential for librarians and others who are concerned about the preservation of information stored in books and non-book formats (Varlamoff, 2005).

According to Anasi (2010) preservation is defined as all managerial and financial considerations, including storage and accommodation provisions, staffing levels, policies, techniques and methods involved in preserving library and archive material and information contained in them. The benefits of preservation according to Lene (2014) include the following;

- Preservation promotes green culture by allowing each item to be used and to remain in circulation for as long as it is needed – thus extending its life and eliminating the need for replacement.
- Preservation enables the library to buy more new materials by cutting replacement costs of old materials.
- Preserving the unique and original materials in the library guarantee the safekeeping and continuation of our cultural heritage.
- Preserving current and future library collections increases the visibility of the university and helps attract quality students and staff.

- Preserving library collection promotes democracy.
- Preserving library collection protects and chronicles the past, communicates the present and helps shape the future.
- When books go out of print quickly and replacement is difficult or impossible, their preservation increases the depth of the collection and improves access to a vast array of subjects (Pg. 40).

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to examine the organization and preservation of government publication. The specific purposes of the study are:

- To find out the types of government publications made available in Benue State Legislative Library, Makurdi.
- To find out the methods used in the organization of government publication in Benue State Legislative Library, Makurdi.
- To identify the methods of preserving government publication in the area under study.
- To identify factors that constitutes challenges in organization and preservation of government publication in the area under study.
- To identify the strategies that will overcome the challenges in organization and preservation of government publication.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions.

- What are the types of government Publications made

available in Benue State Legislative Library, Makurdi?

- What are the methods used in the organization of government publication in the area under study?
- What are the methods of preserving government publication in the area under study?
- What are the challenges confronting the organization and preservation of government publication in the area under study?
- What are the strategies that will overcome the challenges in organization and preservation of government publication in the area under study?

METHODOLOGY

The study examined organization and preservation of government publications in Benue state legislative library, Makurdi. The research adopted a descriptive survey design. The researchers' choice of a descriptive survey research design is because descriptive survey design is only interested in describing certain variables in relation to the population. Area of the study is Benue State House of Assembly Legislative Library, Makurdi. The population of the study comprises of eleven (11) staff. The researchers decided that there was no need for sampling since the population is manageable. As such, the entire population of eleven (11) staff was used to represent the sample size for the study. The instrument used for this study was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire is titled "Organization and Preservation of Government Publications Questionnaire (OPGPQ). The instrument was administered personally to the respondents by the researchers. In other to minimize loss of questionnaires, all completed questionnaires were collected on the spot. The data collected for this study was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to generate mean scores.

Result and Discussion of Findings

Questions 1: What are the types of government Publications made available in Benue State Legislative Library?

Table 1. Responses of respondents on the types of government Publications made available.

S/No	Item	Responses				\bar{X}	Decision
		SA	A	D	SD		
1	Annual report	6	3	2	-	2.75	Agree
2	Special Report	6	4	-	-	2.50	Agree
3	Report of investigative panel	7	4	-	-	2.75	Agree
4	Research report	4	4	2	-	2.50	Agree
5	Serial documents	6	4	-	-	2.50	Agree
6	Information and publicity publications	5	4	2	-	2.75	Agree

Table 1 above shows the mean of response of the type of government publication made available in the Benue State House of Assembly, Makurdi. From the table, the library staff accepted that annual report is a type of government publication made available with a mean score of 2.75. Special report is also another type of government publication at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.50. The respondents also agree that report of investigative panel is a type of government publication at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.75. Research report is also another type of government publication at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi. The respondents further agree that serial document is the type of government publication at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.50. The respondents finally agree that information and publicity publication is another type of government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.75.

Question 2: What are the methods used in the organization of government publication?

Table 2. Responses of respondents on the methods used in the organization of government publication

S/No	Item	Responses				\bar{X}	Decision
		SA	A	D	SD		
7	Cataloguing & Classification	5	5	1	-	2.75	Agree
8	Indexing	3	4	2	1	2.50	Agree
9	Abstracting	2	4	2	2	2.50	Agree
10	Indexing	3	4	2	1	2.50	Agree
11	Bibliographic services	2	3	4	1	2.50	Agree

Table 2 above shows the method used in the organization of government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi. From the table, the library staff agree that cataloguing and classification is a method used in the organization of government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.75. The respondents also agree that indexing is another method used in the organization of government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.50. Abstracting is also another method used in the organization of government publication at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.50. Finally, the respondents agreed that bibliographic service is another method used in the organization of government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.50.

Question 3: What are the methods used in preserving government publications?

Table 3. Responses of respondents on the methods of preserving government publications

S/No	Item	Responses				\bar{X}	Decision
		SA	A	D	SD		
12	Care and handling	5	6	-	-	2.75	Agree
13	Environmental method	5	5	1	-	2.75	Agree
14	Security method	6	5	-	-	2.75	Agree
15	Reformative method	5	5	-	-	2.50	Agree
16	Biological method	4	5	1	-	2.50	Agree
17	Chemical method	4	5	1	-	2.50	Agree

Table 3 shows the method of preserving government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi. From the table, the respondents agreed that care and handling is a method of preserving government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.75. The respondents also agreed that environmental method is another method of preserving government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.75. The respondents also agreed that security method is a method of preserving government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.75. Reformative method is also a method of preserving government publications as agreed to by the respondents at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.50. The respondents further agreed that biological method is a method for preserving government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.50. Finally, the respondents agreed that Chemical method is another method for preserving government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.50.

Question 4: What are the factors that constitute challenges in organization and preservation of government publication?

Table 4. Responses of respondents on the factors that constitute challenges in organization and preservation of government publication

S/No	Item	Responses				\bar{X}	Decision
		SA	A	D	SD		
18	Lack of physical accessibility to government publications	5	5	1	-	2.75	Agree
19	Lack of finance	6	5	-	-	2.75	Agree
20	Lack of bibliographic control	5	5	-	-	2.50	Agree
21	Varieties of classification scheme	4	4	2	-	2.50	Agree
22	Lack Of Qualified Manpower	5	6	-	-	2.75	Agree
23	Unfavourable Government Policies	4	4	2	-	2.50	Agree
24	Inadequate of Equipment/Materials.	4	6	1	-	2.75	Agree

Table 4 shows mean responses on the challenges confronting the organization and preservation of government publications. From the table, the respondents agreed that lack of physical accessibility to government publication is one of the challenges in the organization and preservation of government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.75. The respondents also agreed that lack of finance constitute another challenge in the organization and preservation of government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.75. The respondents further agreed that lack of bibliographic control is another challenge facing the organization and preservation of government publication at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.50. The respondents also agreed that varieties of classification scheme constitute a challenge in the organization and preservation of government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.50. Lack of qualified manpower is one of the biggest challenges as agreed by the respondents at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.75. The respondents further agreed that unfavourable government policies also constitute another major challenge in the organization and preservation of government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.50. Finally, the respondents agreed that inadequate equipment/material is another challenge facing the organization and preservation of government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.75.

Question 5: What are the strategies that will overcome the challenges in organization and preservation of government publication?

Table 5. Responses of respondents on the strategies that will overcome the challenges in organization and preservation of government publication

S/No	Item	Responses				\bar{X}	Decision
		SA	A	D	SD		
25	Establishment of CAS and SDI programme for easy accessibility of government publications.	5	5	1	-	2.75	Agree
26	Provision of annual budgetary allocation	6	5	-	-	2.75	Agree
27	Inclusion of full bibliographic control	5	5	-	-	2.50	Agree
28	Introduction of single classification scheme	5	5	-	-	2.50	Agree
29	Recruitment of competent and qualified staff	5	6	-	-	2.75	Agree
30	A good policy should be formulated.	6	5	-	-	2.75	Agree
31	Provision of enough Equipment/Materials	5	5	1	-	2.75	Agree

Table five shows the strategies to overcome the challenges in the organization and preservation of government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi. From the table, the respondents agree that establishment of CAS and SDI programme for easy accessibility of government publications is a strategy to overcome the challenges in the organization and preservation of government publications at the

Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.75. The respondents also agree that provision of annual budgetary allocation is another strategy that can overcome the challenges in the organization and preservation of government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.75. The respondents further agree that inclusion of full bibliographical control can help overcome the challenge

in the organization and preservation of government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.75. The respondents also agree that introduction of single classification scheme will also help overcome the challenges in the organization and preservation of government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.75. The respondents further agree that recruitment of competent and qualified staff will also overcome major challenges in the organization and preservation of government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.75. The respondents also agreed that a good policy should be formulated in order to overcome the challenge in the organization and preservation of government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.75. The respondents finally agreed that provision of enough equipment/materials is another strategy that can overcome the challenges in the organization and preservation of government publications at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi with a mean score of 2.50.

Summary and Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study and the purposes for which the study was carried out, the researchers discovered that the types of government publication available at the Benue State House of Assembly Makurdi include annual reports, special reports, report of investigative panel, research report, serial document, and information and publicity publications. This agrees with Asamoah (2000) who submitted that it is not uncommon for legislative libraries to stock reports of investigations, annual reports as well as publicity publications.

Also, the researchers discovered that the tools used in the organization of government publication include cataloguing and classification, indexing and abstracting as well as bibliographic services. This is in line with Ekere (2006) findings which indicated that the principal tools for library information organization are the cataloguing and classification schemes.

The finding also reveals that the method of preserving government publications include care and handling, environmental method, biological method and chemical method. This is the position of Gelfand (2000) who posited that information materials can be preserved using biological, environmental and chemical methods.

Finally, the researchers discovered that there are challenges confronting the organization and preservation of government publication which include lack of physical accessibility to government publications, lack of finance, and lack of bibliographic control, varieties of classification scheme as well as unfavourable government policies and inadequate equipment / materials. This is the view of

Anasi (2010) when he submitted that there are various challenges facing the organization and preservation of information material amongst which are lack of finance, inadequate equipment and unfavourable government policies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- Full bibliographic details should be included in the government publications to enhance easy organization of information materials.
- Competent staff should be recruited, trained and retraining programme should be well established. This will enhance the effective and efficient performance of their duties on organization and preservation of government publications.
- Professionally trained preservationist should be recruited; training and retraining of library staff should be encouraged to enable them carry out preservation activities effectively and efficiently.
- There should be an annual budget allocation for preservation of information materials. This will enable the preservationist have enough fund to run preservation activities. This will also curb the challenges of inadequate finance.
- An improved level of funding that will enable and encourage the librarians of the government libraries to go out and source for publications emanating from government agencies, departments, offices and so on, should be put in place.
- Long term preservation methods such as digitization should be embarked upon to enable permanent storage and accessibility to the country's government documents for generations.

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