

Acquisition of Serial Publications in Academic Libraries in Zamfara State

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ABSTRACT

Serial publications in academic contribute immensely to the fundamental of teaching, learning, leisure and research as well as community development. The study was conducted to investigate Acquisition as well as problems associated with acquisition of Serial Publications in Academic Libraries in Zamfara State. The study was carried out specifically to find out the procedure used in acquisition, sources as well as problems associated with the acquisition of serial publications. Quantitative research method was used for the study. The population of the study was thirty five (35) serial librarians in nine (9) academic libraries. The findings reveal among others that; There is the need to form a standard selection team which will constitutes different members such as Academic staff, students and some members of the faculty so that needed serial can be brought in to the section. The management should make sure that, adequate funding of serial section is made , and there is the need for transparency in funding of serial section so that, the librarians knows the amount stated in the purchased of serial publications. Management of the libraries should formulate a standard device which will carter for the problems faced by the librarians in the process of purchasing the needed serial publications.

KEYWORDS: Acquisition, Serial Publications, Serial Librarians, Academic Libraries.

INTRODUCTION

Serial publications have been universally found to be very vital sources of information. Aina (2004) stated that serials include journals, Magazines, Newspapers, Newsletters, accession reports, memoirs, proceedings and transactions of societies and other periodicals like abstract and indexes. Serials are often thought of a distinct format, they are in print, non – print or in electronic format. A serial is therefore, regarded as material that is in a tangible format that is recorded on paper microform, magnetic media or optical disk and retrievable formats.

Besides, Akinbode (2011) acknowledge that serial publications form the backbone of any academic library because of the nature of their informational value (current and up- datedness). Serial publications are known to keep professionals up-to-date on current information and trends in their disciplines. Also contributing to the importance of serials, Elauroti, D.F.(2000) affirmed that, “serials are the most up- to- date resource in the library and the article written in serial are often written by experts in their fields.”

In another development, Elauroti (2000) stated that, serials are an important part of the academic library collection because the information contained in them is more current than those in published books. Evans and Carter (2009) described Serial publications as one of the higher interest and valuable primary source of new ideas, finding and development which people use as a source of learning while using books as secondary source to gain broader or deeper knowledge of a subject and which according to Anunobi, Nwakwo and Ezejifor (2010) majority of texts/ monographs produced for knowledge have their contents derived from serials. Serial publications generally are useful source of current information in different field of knowledge. i.e. they provide the latest development in any field of endeavor. For instance, information contained in journals may take many years before appearing in a book format, in some case may not even appear at all. The most important aspect of Serial publications is that, they keeps researchers and teaching staff abreast of knowledge in their area of investigation and also contribute immensely to the dissemination of knowledge.

Apart from the confirmation that scholarly journals are the principal medium for reporting research findings, there are other serials that keep their audience informed about the day to day activities and life in general, that is magazine, newspaper, news bulletins and reports. From the above concepts one can conveniently deduce serial as an all-inclusive term encompassing the notion of publications in various forms; content, purpose and meaning.

Therefore no academic library can discharge its duties and functions successfully unless it has relevant, current as well as back issues of serials because no meaningful research can be accomplished without serial publications. Acquisition of serial publications in libraries generally acquire serial publications from local and foreign sources. Serial publications are acquired through outright purchase; the purchase can be by direct subscription from the publisher (local and foreign); by membership of association, institution or societies. However, the major source of acquisition is through agents. The agents usually demand up front or advance payments. In others, the Serial section send the subscription order to the publisher or business manager or as may be instructed by the editorial of Serial publications in question. Vendors are engaged to supply newspaper and magazines also.

Moreover, different studies have shown that serial publications are more expensive and difficult in their acquisition as they come daily; weekly, monthly, quarterly etc. for instance Woodward (1999) explained that Serials are expensive and difficult to acquire. Their acquisition needs special skills and experience from the serial librarian. Also, Mullis (1992); Dole and Change (1996) and Garson(1998) in their respective studies confirmed that lack of current selection tools such as Ulrich’s international periodical directory, Ulrich’s on Microfiche and Ulrich’s plus caused the difficulties encountered in the acquisition of important serial in academic libraries.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Serial publications have been universally found to be very vital sources of information. Aina (2004) stated that, kinds of serials include journals, Magazines, Newspapers, Newsletters, accession reports, Memories, proceedings and transactions of societies and other periodicals like abstract and indexes. Serial are often thought of a distinct format, they are in print, non – print or in electronic format. A serial is therefore, regarded as materials that is in a tangible format that is recorded on paper microform, magnetic media or optical disk and retrievable formats..

Despite the importance of serial publication in academic libraries, it was observed that no academic library can discharge its duties and functions successfully unless it acquire, relevant and current as well as back issues of serials because no meaningful research can be accomplished without serial publications. However, preliminary study conducted in Hassan Usman Katsina Polytechnic has shown that the serial librarians are facing a lot of challenges with regards to Acquisition of serial in their library such as lack of written acquisition policy, lack of selection team, purchase of single copy, lack of knowledge of library funding, in-adequate funding to the library and many more. It is against this study that, the study wishes to find out if such problems exist in libraries under study.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the procedures used by librarian in different institution under study in relation to Acquisition of serial publications to their respective libraries.
2. To find out the sources of funds for serial publications in the study area.
3. To find out the problems encounter by the serial librarians with regard to Acquisition of serial publications in their libraries.

RESEARCH QUESTION

1. What are the procedures followed in Acquisition of serial publications in the libraries under study
2. What are the sources of funds for serial publications
3. What are the problems encounter in acquiring serial publications in your libraries

LITERATURE REVIEW

Acquisition of Serial Publications in Academic Library

Serial management comprises all activities needed in facilitating and implementing efficient and effective transfer of information to the potential users and thereby fulfils the aims and objectives of library. The elements of serials management according to Akinbode (2011) are serial collections which involve selections, Acquisition, organization, maintenance which involves updating, filling the gap. Preservation, binding of back issues and repairs of damaged ones and provision of facilities like finding aids reading areas equipped with tables, chair and air condition; as well as provision of service such as current awareness service, photocopy, exhibition, translation of foreign language like French and Arabic to the English language understood by the users. Evans and Carter (2009) posited serial acquisition of serial publications as part of management of serials in the library. Mullis (1992) grouped acquisition, cataloguing, classification, retrieval, accessibility use and preservation as part of management of serial publication. Despite the potential and values of serials in academic libraries, different researcher have identified lack

of selection tool, in adequate funds for the purchase of the serials as the major constrains affecting the acquisition of serial publications in academic libraries. Confirming the findings of Millis (1992), Dole and Changa (1996), Garson (1998) asserted that, lack of current selection tools caused the difficulties in the acquisition of the needed serial publications in the academic libraries. Tools such as Ulrich's plus are all published and acquired from overseas. Acquisition of serials in Nigerian academic libraries according to Anunobi, Nwakwuo and Ezejiofor (2010) is also been signed related to cost of serials selection tools, nature of serial and subscription decision. Mason (2007) pointed out that the problems faced by academic librarians in effort to maintain their serial collection presently include explosion in academic research, budgeting cut back, exchange rate as a result, librarians find it difficult to maintain subscription to all journals that their scholars want to have access to.

The term serials include all periodicals, newspapers, annual, numbered monographic series and proceedings, transactions and memos of societies etc. Equally serials or periodicals constitute a vital part of academic library resource. Serial Publications on the other hand has been systematically acquired by the libraries because they serve a very useful purpose and their importance is glaring. Edeka (2000) agreed and states that "acquisition of serials involves deciding which titles should be added to the library stock, placing or renewing orders and making arrangement for checking their periodic receipt"

In conclusion, based on the above discussion, it can be understood that acquisitions of serial publications required all the processes needed in acquiring its book counterpart. The acquisition of serial in the library involves selection of title, checking in of material, claiming and renewal of subscription and cancellation of order. The source where serial can be obtained according to Evans (2009) includes Ulrich's international periodical Directory, Ulrich on microfiche, local list and also periodical literature. Some of the other source as stated by IFIDON (1997) includes; catalogues weekly national bibliographies, review journals, request card and announcement.

Despite the advantages of subscription by agent, a number of problems have been discovered by Evans (2009) use of foreign agents creates serious problem; there is the considerable delay in getting the material acquired due to the vast distance barriers and the difficulties of the postal system within the developing countries themselves. According to Evans (2009), the acquisition of serial through gift and exchange pose a special kind of problems.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study considered using quantitative research design and employed survey research method using questionnaire as instrument for data collection The study covers Federal University Gusau, Federal Polytechnic Kauran Namoda, Federal College of Education Technical Gusau, College of Education Maru, Abdu Gusau Polytechnic Talatan Mafara, Health Technology Tsafe, School of Agriculture and Animal Science Bakura, Zamfara College of Arts and Science, School of Nursing Gusau. The population for this research covers all serial librarians of nine (9) academic libraries of zamfara state with a total number of (35) thirty five Respondents. The reason for their selection was they are the one that associated with the acquisition of serial publications. Nevertheless all staff in the serials section was considered as serial librarians.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population of this study comprises of all academic libraries in Zamfara state, which consists of nine (9) academic libraries which consist of thirty five (35) Serial Librarians as shown in the table below:

TABLE 1: POPULATION OF THE STUDY

S/N	Name of the Institutions	Year established	Institution Types	No. of Serial Librarians
1	Federal University Gusau	2011	University	5
2	Federal Polytechnic KauranNamoda	1983	Polytechnic	7
3	Federal College of Education Technical Gusau	1989	College	5
4	College of Education Maru	2000	College	3
5	Health Technology Tsafe	2000	Monotechnic	3
6	School of Agric and Animal Science Bakura	2000	Monotechnic	3
7	School of Nursing Gusau	2011	Monotechnic	2
8	Abdu Gusau polytechnic TalataMafara	1996	Polytechnic	4
9	Zamfara College of Arts and Science	2000	College	3
	TOTAL			35

Table above is the list of academic libraries in Zamfara state. The table also indicates the names of institutions, year of establishment and type of Institution and the number of respondents from each section in each institution under study.

RESULT AND FINDINGS

The respondents are serial librarians of the institutions under study; the reason for their selection was that, they are the staff working in the section of the serial. Thirty five (35) copies of the questionnaires were administered to them and all 35 copies (100%) were retrieved. The response rate could be as a result of the personal administration of the instrument to the serial librarians directly by the researcher.

TABLE 2: RESPONSE RATE TABLE

S/N	Institutions	Questionnaires		
		Distributed	Returned	Percentage %
1.	Federal University Gusau	5	5	14.2%
2.	Federal Polytechnic Kauran Namoda	7	7	20%
3.	Federal College of Education Technical Gusau	5	5	14.2%
4.	College of Education Maru	3	3	8.6%
5.	Health Technology Tsafe	3	3	8.6%
6.	School of Agriculture and Animal Science Bakura	3	3	8.6%
7.	School of Nursing Gusau.	2	2	5.7%

8.	Abdu Gusau Polytechnic TalatanMafara.	4	4	11.5%
9.	Zamfara College of Art and Science.	3	3	8.6%
	TOTAL	35	35	100%

The table above shows the response rate of respondent's base on their institutions. As it can be seen clearly the number of respondents depends on the institution because the institutions varies; Federal University Gusau takes 5(14.2%),Federal Polytechnic Kauran Namoda7(20%),Federal College of Education Technical Gusau 5(14.2%), College of Education Maru 3(8.6%),Health Technology Tsafe 3(8.6%),School of Nursing Gusau 2(5.7%), Abdu Gusau Polytechnic Talatan Mafara 4(11.5%), Zamfara College of Art and Science 3(8.6%) respectively.

TABLE3: PROCEDURE FOR ACQUIRING SERIAL PUBLICATIONS

S/NO	Acquisition of Serial Publications	Respondents				
		Freq.	%	Freq	%	Total
1.	Witten acquisition	20	57.1%	15	42.9%	35(100%)
		15	42.9%	20	57.1%	35(100%)
2.	Unwritten acquisition	15	42.9%	20	57.1%	35(100%)
3.	Selection Team	10	28.6%	25	71.4%	35(100%)
4.	Direct Purchase	30	85.7%	5	14.5%	35(100%)
5.	Multiple Copies	30	85.7%	5	14.3%	35(100%)
6.	One Copy	5	14.3%	30	85.7%	35(100%)
7.	Do you have knowledge of library finance	30	85.7%	5	14.3%	35(100%)
8.	How adequate is the library funding to serial acquisition	3	8.6%	32	91.4%	35(100%)
9.	Exchange	17	48.6%	18	51.4%	35(100%)

The researcher wanted to find out the procedures followed in the acquisition of serial publications in the libraries under study. The information on the acquisition of the serial publications where presented on the table above. The researcher wanted to find out whether the academic libraries under study have written acquisition policy when acquiring their serial publications the result shows that, 20(57.1%) of the serial librarians said they have written acquisition policy that guide them, while 15(42.9%) of the serial librarians said they don't have written acquisition. 15(42.8%) of the serial librarians says they use un written acquisition in acquiring serial publications where as 20(57.1%) of the serial librarians says they don't use the policy. When the librarians where asks whether they have selection team in selection serial publications, the result shows that 25(71.4%) of the serial librarians said they don't use selection team in acquiring serial publications, only 10 (28.6%) of serial librarians that have selection team in

acquisition of serial publications. 30(85.7%) of the serial librarians shows that they purchase their serial publications directly from publishers. When the librarians where asked how many copies do they purchase, the responses shows that 30(85.7%) responses shows that they purchase multiple copies, where as only 5(14.3%) purchase single copy. When the librarians where ask whether they have knowledge of library finance 30(85.7%) of the respondents say they don't have knowledge of library finance only 5(14.3%) of the respondents have knowledge of library finance. The librarians where ask how adequate was the funding to serial acquisition 32(91.4%) response that the funding is in- adequate, while 3(8.6%) responses shows that the funding is adequate. With regards to exchange of serials the result shows that the libraries under study use exchange as their sources of acquiring serial publications because the result shows 17(48.6%) use exchange while 18(51.4%) don't use exchange.

TABLE 4: PROBLEMS IN ACQUIRING SERIAL PUBLICATIONS

S/NO	Problems of acquiring serials publications	Respondents				
		Freq.	%	Freq	%	Total
1.	Use of Foreign Agent	25	71.4%	10	28.6%	30(100%)
2.	Change of Frequency and name	27	77.1%	8	22.9%	35(100%)
3.	Lack of current selection tool	30	85.7%	5	14.3%	35(100%)
4.	Discontinuation and merger	32	91.4%	3	8.6%	35(100%)

It was observe that, there are a lot of problems related to acquisition of serial publications. Use of foreign agent is one of the problem associated with serial acquisition therefore the researcher want find out whether use of foreign agent cause problem the responses shows that 25(71.4%) of the serial librarians shows that they have problem in using foreign agent, while only 10(28.6%) don't face such problem. On the question whether change of frequency and name cause problem in acquiring serial publications the responses shows that 27(77.1%) of the responses are having problem with change of frequency and name of serial publications while 8(22.9%) don't have such problem. Lack of current selection tool also cause problem of acquiring serial publications because the result shows that, 30(85.4%) of the respondents where having problem with lack of standard and current selection tool, only 5(14.5%) of the respondents that don't have such problem. The respondents were asked whether they have problem with discontinuation and merger of some serials in the process of acquiring serial publications the result shows that, 32(91.4%) of the respondents faced the problem of discontinuation and merger of some serials only 3(8.6%) of the respondents that don't faced such problem.

DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

Based on the data gathered and analyzed, the findings revealed that, the librarians knows and aware of the existence of serial publications and where to find them when the need arise, because the result shows that, based on the sources forced to serial librarians, it shows that, they were aware of serials in catalogue, weekly national bibliographies, Request Card and Announcement. The result also shows that, serial librarians use different procedures in acquiring serial publications and acquire multiple copies of needed serial publications. The findings

revealed low funding in libraries, it also shows that, serial librarians were not aware of the library funding and majority of the serial librarians were not included in selection team when selecting needed serial for the library. It also revealed that, the funding of library is in-adequate. The finding also reveals major problems associated with acquisition of serial publications in the libraries under study.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on data gathered and analyzed, the researcher recommends the followings:

Libraries under study should put more effort in providing the serial librarians with enough training so that they can have more knowledge on accessibility of sources of serial publications, so that they can know the number of serial publications based on their demands which are to be published in nearby.

There is the need to form a standard selection team which will constitutes different members such as Academic members, students and faculty members so that needed serials can be brought in to the section.

Management should make sure that, adequate funding of serial section is made, and there is the need for transparency in funding of serial section so that the librarians knows the amount stated in the purchased of serial publications.

Management of the libraries should formulate a standard device which will carter for the problems faced by the librarians in the process of purchasing the needed serial publications.

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