Electronic Resources Acquisition Policies: Implementation in Some Selected University Libraries in Delta and Edo States, Nigeria

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Abstract - **The study is concerned with electronic resources acquisition policies: Implementation in some selected university libraries in Delta and Edo States Nigeria. Descriptive research was used for the study. Population of the study consists of all professional librarians in the libraries under study. Data was collected through structured questionnaire. Data analysis was done using frequency counts and percentages. Data collected were tabulated and analyzed using frequency distribution tables and simple percentage. The study was guided with four research questions. The findings of the study revealed that, acquisition policies were highly implemented in the university libraries; and librarians derived great satisfaction from it because it makes their job easy during acquisition. Copyright and lack of ICT skills by librarians are the major problems encountered in acquisition policies implementation. There is therefore, the need to constantly develop acquisition policies and provide up-to-date selection and acquisition that will assist librarians in the acquisition of e-resources.**
Keywords: **Acquisition, Policies, E-Resources, Implementation, Library, University**

I. INTRODUCTION

Acquisition is a process that involves selecting, ordering and receiving of library resources. The method of procurement could be through purchase, gift, exchange or donation. Vendors, publishers and dealers are some of the contacts through which discussions are carried out in procuring e-resources by the acquisition librarian. If the librarian decides to subscribe and obtain e-resources, the process is similar to that of print resources; however, an extra level of details is necessary, such as information about the warrant and the accessibility of the resource to diverse populations of patrons.

Acquisition mainly involves selection, evolution and preservation of materials in the library after assessing user's needs as observed by Sambo, Abu – Udenyi, Urhefe, and Yakubu, (2014). E-resources have changed the library environment. Librarians have abundant and more complete set of resources from which to choose and purchase. The plan of acquisition is to stock the library with information works (publications) and the ultimate reason is to support study, teaching and learning. It involves selection, acquiring, accession and safeguarding of resources after assessing users need (Golal & Motavar, 2012).

Shukla and Mishra (2011) explain electronic acquisition as electronic gadgets which are used mainly for electronic acquisitions (information resources). A well defined policy is necessary if acquisition is to be done correctly (Joshipura, 2008). Acquisition in library is about acquiring sound collections of organized, complete, fair and efficient documents to meet the patrons' information needs. Acquisition of information resources takes the same process as the traditional materials.

The purchase of off-line electronic resources should follow present collection polices whether general or subject specific policies. The general standard should be followed when buying off-line electronic resources as it relates to language, geographical and other subject specific policies. Fullness and reliability must be measured when dealing with off-line e-resources (University of Oregon Libraries, 2012).

The approach to acquisition of e-resources as recognized by Rao (2013) includes annual subscription method, by which the library users can have access to the content of the present year, plus the previous 10 years. We should remember that unless we renew the subscription every year, we have no right of ownership over the data, which is to say, we do not own the content unlike the printed documents. The copyright pertaining to the electronic data is with the publisher who provides only access to the substance on payment of a 'fee' on certain agreements and conditions agreed on. The second approach is total purchase of the electronic substance. This is a very stylish suggestion where the publisher provides the content to the subscriber (either in DVDs or Hard disk) to be hosted on their local server. Defense and commercial (R & D establishments prefer this system of content acquisition to sustain discretion of information use. The third process is constant right to use the e-resources through a one – time payment. This is a general process appropriate to e-books and the library has to make one-time payment to the publisher. The high price collected is for maintaining the enormous sum of data in a large cluster of high – end servers including electricity, staff salaries and hardware replacements.

The unwillingness of some libraries to subscribe to costly e-resources had prompted publishers to evolve newer models of subscription such as pay- per-view. Under this scheme,

the library has to pay only for the full journal articles it has downloaded from the publisher's website. This method is suitable for undersized libraries and R & D organizations with limited budgets. As stated earlier, e-resources acquisition presents different problems not associated with traditional library materials (Shukla & Mishra, 2011).

E-resources in libraries as observed by Golwal and Motewar (2012), have come to stay in Nigerian libraries, as the present trend in many libraries worldwide is the exploitation of ICT facilities. Teaching and research in higher institutions now require the use of concrete ICT infrastructure and services to keep abreast with current present information in all disciplines. However, because of inadequate materials, it is not possible for any library to provide all the materials required by their patrons, the library thus selects the most important resources that will contribute mostly and effectively to the success of the library. It is the duty of the acquisition librarian of any library to ensure that basic rules and procedures are followed in equipping the library with the most present information materials through diverse means. Libraries need a universal access policy for information.

According to Singh (2004), acquisition cannot be done appropriately if the acquisition policy is not modified to meet the library's goal. Acquisition policy must be related very closely to the general and specific programme of the organization and be accountable to the information needs of users. In any library, no matter how simple or complex, there has to be a laid down policy that would guide the acquisition of information materials. This will ensure that all information materials acquired are relevant to the users of the library, and the programmes in the institution, thus ensuring that the materials acquired are effectively used. This is called Collection Development Policy. Collection Development Policy is a written document or prepared plan of action to be adopted.

For printed resources, the acquisition librarian makes the resolution to acquire and meet its departmental needs. Stages and procedures concerned in acquisition of e-resources are more difficult when compared with print resources. The issue of pricing, licensing and ownership are essential. For example, acquisition librarian cannot buy a database without consulting with important factors in the library environment. The librarian must closely with various departments to assess the appropriateness of a resource preceding before making decision to acquire it (Rao, 2013).

This study investigates how acquisition policies are being implemented in Nigerian university libraries. It is a written information and code of conduct that guide the librarians in selecting resources for a collection. In view of the importance of acquisition policy, a library without acquisition policy is like a driver driving a vehicle without a steering (Ode & Omokaro, 2007). In general, policy statements are crucial in every organization because it enhances focus and greater reliability in carrying out activities to achieve the laid down objectives. This provides important information during budgetary allocations.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are
1. To Determine the Extent of Acquisition Policies and Implementation of e-resources in University Libraries
2. To Ascertain the Satisfaction Derived in Implementing the Acquisition Policies
3. To Identify the Constraints Encountered in Implementing Acquisition Policies of e-resources in Libraries.
4. To Provide Solution to the Constraints

III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following are the Research Questions
1. What are the Extents of Acquisition Policies Implementation of e-resources in University Libraries?
2. What is the Satisfaction Derived in Implementing the Acquisition Policies?
3. What are the Constraints Encountered in Implementing Acquisition Policies of e-resources in Libraries?
4. What are the possible solutions to the constraints?

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

Acquisition policies are like bills that are always being challenged, revised and updated according to the changing situation. In an electronic and knowledge-based situation, patrons' expectations are very special. It is obligatory that the guides for acquisition policies must be mindful of users anticipation, publishing trends and socio-economic development. Library acquisition of e--resources affords patrons the opportunities to access pertinent and current information from different subject areas. Socio-economic growth could be enhanced when libraries acquire electronic resources that are supportive in teaching and research activities. Information in the electronic resources is updated often and students are given the chance of multiple file searches which cannot be done with printed tools (Ekenna & Ukpebor, 2012).

An open acquisition policy will at least protect the library from being gritty by actions or by individual enthusiasms and from acquiring haphazard set of resources that cannot support library mission (Breaks, 2012). Also, Joshipura (2008) stated that there are diverse mechanisms to be considered in embryonic acquisition policy for electronic resources, this include articulating the institutional goals of the library, the use of the policy and the audience for whom it is developed; and should describe the community served including users, academic programmes, off-campus users and their needs among others. Furthermore, Mary and Jeff Bell Library (2006) posited that the purpose of the e-resources acquisition policy is to deal with electronic addition and preservation. Consequently, Bothmann and

Holmberg (2006) opined that expansion and use of policies is crucial in e-resource organization and for communicating a library's goals. Policies set procedure of practice that supports electronic materials management. Apart from collection development policies, libraries need policies that tackle issues such as types of materials to support the library acquisition, licensing issues and users access. Other policy topics include how and which materials should be catalogued, placed in a content management system directly or added to an ERM (Electronic Resource Management) system.

According to IFLA (2001) policy statement is planned at preventing prejudice during selection and acquiring of information materials which are not required. Electronic information materials are very important and are consuming significant part of the library vote. Therefore, collection development should be done by sternly applying acquisition policy.

Acquisition policy singles out the materials to select and the characteristics which must be considered before acquisition. It serves as a basic document for the direction of archival staff and organizations and persons involved in depositing their records or papers (Winconsin Historical Records Advisory Board, 1998).

The Guide for written acquisition policy by the American Library Association (1996) clearly describes various items of information that are to be included in acquisition policy. These include introduction to policy statement; general purpose; brief note about the library; general subject areas. Acquisition policy must be linked to a library's goals, community evaluation and long-range plan.

Acquisition policy works as a guide for the collection of e-resources which allows a library to make competent use of the acquisition budget. In other to write the library's policy, it is necessary to gather some of the following information: the community evaluation, library mission statement, circulation and interlibrary loan statistics usually asked for by patrons, and the collection's strengths and weakness (Grijalva, 2013).

As noted by Sambo, Abu- Udenyi, Urhefe and Yakubu (2014) policy is a codified plan of action for developing the collection. It seems many libraries do not have an e-acquisition policy. We are in an information management era where the form and stages to information management particularly electronic information sources, are dynamic.

Acquisition policy is an objective selection guide intended at meeting information and academic needs of patrons (Veeranjaneyulu, 2013). Acquisition policy consists of planning, goal setting, decision-making, budgeting and acquiring resources and evaluating them (Gessesse, 2000). Acquisition policy is a guiding principle, set of laws or printed statements that considers what to acquire and how to obtain information resources. Acquisition policies set standards and erases selectors bias in collection development (Ikem, 1995). The health of a library's collection revolves around the acquisition policies. Consequently, it has very important impact on the confidence of the librarians providing information to meet users needs. A staff will be contented when his activities meets patron's information needs (Kumbar & Hadagali, 2005). Reader services aims may not be achieved without policies. Patron's information needs cannot be satisfied without sufficient policies together with suitable budget. Cautious implementation of budget plans could go a long way in civilizing library services activities. From time to time library tasks must be appraised using policy guidelines as standard. With this, the strengths and weakness of the resources will be used as bases for action.

Acquisition policy is the vehicle through which the library achieves the goals of its readers' services. "Proper budgeting (in line with the acquisition policy) and its strict implementation are vital to the success of library service activities", says Ikem (1995). It must be used as a planning and monitoring device. Just as no part of library can go well without a good planning, so the activities of meeting information needs of users cannot succeed without adequate policies and monitoring.

For purpose of growth and development, the performance of library activities should be evaluated over certain periods. Strengths, and weaknesses in services, can be used as origin for procedures and future plans.

To fulfill the goals of a library, the policy should be seen to be addressing to the letter, all that it contains. For any acquisition policy to be suitable it must reflect the following three vital rudiments recognized by Singh (2004), which are: the values of the library, aims of management and appraisal. The purpose of e-resource acquisition policy is to address electronic addition or removal of e-resource and for communicating a library's goals. Acquisition could be lopsided, hence the study tries to examine acquisition policy as it relates to e-resource acquisition and organization.

V. METHODOLOGY

The study examined electronic resources acquisition policies: implementation in some selected university libraries in Delta and Edo States Nigeria. The university libraries are Delta State University Library, Abraka, (18) John Harries Library, University of Benin, Benin City (35), Ambrose Alli, University Library, Ekpoma (15) and University of Petroleum Resources Library, Effurun (12). The questionnaire was used to gather data. A total of 80 copies of the questionnaire were dispersed with the help of research assistants. Only 57 copies of the questionnaire were found usable. Data analysis was done using mean and standard deviation, frequency counts and percentages. The population of the study consists of all professional librarians in the libraries under study.

TABLE I QUESTIONNAIRE DISTRIBUTION

Sl. No.	Library	No. of Questionnaire	No. of Questionnaire Retrieved	Percentage
1	Delta State University Library, Abaka	18	10	17.5
2	John Harris Library, Benin City	35	25	43.8
3	Federal University of Petroleum Resources Library, Effurun	12	10	17.5
4	Ambrose Alli University Library, Ekpoma	15	12	21.0

Table I shows the number of usable questionnaire returned from the eighty (80) copies of the questionnaire distributed. Fifty-seven (57) copies were returned and used for the analysis. This represents 71.25% of questionnaire returned.

TABLE II GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	19	33.3
Female	38	66.6
Total	57	100

Majority of the respondents are female, probably because women have more interest in working in library, than men.

TABLE III EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Ph.D	8	14.0
M.Sc	23	40.3
BLS	15	26.3
Diploma	11	19.2
Total	57	100

Majority of the respondents possess M.Sc degree. This could be as a result of management encouraging staff to further their education in order to perform better in their job.

TABLE IV YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

Years	Frequency	Percentage
5 - 10 years	18	31.5
11 – 20 years	28	49.1
20 – 3- years	11	19.2
Total	57	100

Majority of the respondents have worked between eleven to twenty years; this could be the reason why they perform better in the job than those of them who have just worked between 5 to 10 years.

Table V shows the extent of implementation of acquisition policies of e-resources in university libraries. The following are the most accepted policies in the libraries studied. Acquisition policy provides criteria and guidelines for the selectors 57 (100%); guidelines for weeding, cancellation, retention, preservation and replacement of resources 47 (82.5%) and general guidelines for licensing requirements for e-resources such as the number of authorized users at a time, remote access availability and whether it allows for various library services such as interlibrary loans and digital reserves.

TABLE V ACQUISITION POLICIES IMPLEMENTATION IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN SOUTH-SOUTH NIGERIA

Policies Implemented in your Library	Frequency	Percentage
Specification of the content and the format for databases to be acquired information for weeding and replacement of e-resources	38	66.7
Information for annulment, maintenance and preservation of e-resources	29	50.9
Detail information on whether to allow various library services such as interlibrary loans and digital reserve	31	54.4
Information on currency of e-resources to be acquired	36	63.2
Information on depth/breath of information resources to be acquired	29	50.9
Information on e-resources with respect to authority of the author(s)	32	56.1
Information on ease of navigation on materials to be acquired	35	61.4
Acquisition policy provides criteria and guidelines for the selector	57	100
General guidelines for licensing requirements for e-resources such as the number of authorized users at a time, remote access availability and whether it allows for various library services such as interlibrary loans and digital reserves	38	66.7
Guidelines for weeding, cancellation, retention, preservation and replacement of resources	47	82.5

The study concluded that even though acquisition policy provides criteria and guidelines for the selectors, 57(100%), other items listed as policies implemented were equally used to a high extent.

TABLE VI SATISFACTION DERIVED FROM IMPLEMENTATION OF ACQUISITION POLICIES OF E-RESOURCES

Satisfaction of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Satisfied	37	64.9
Not satisfied	20	35.0
Total	57	100

Table VI shows that over 64% of the respondents derived satisfaction from acquisition policies implementation due to the fact that it makes the job of librarians very easy during acquisition by equipping them with necessary information materials. While 20 (35) of them said they do not derive any satisfaction from the implementation of acquisition policies. This could be as a result of nonchalant attitude of some librarians who never see anything good in what others are doing.

TABLE VII CONSTRAINTS TO ACQUISITION POLICIES IMPLEMENTATION

Problem	Frequency	Percentage
Copyright issues	38	66.7
Lack of ICT skills by librarians	24	42.1
Lack of written policies	5	8.77

Table VII shows that 38 (66.7%) of the respondents opined that copy-right issue is the major constraint faced in acquisition policies implementation in the university libraries. Twenty four (42.1%) of the respondents agreed that lack of ICT skills by librarians is the problem they encountered. The study found that the services are there but not adequate.

TABLE VIII SOLUTION TO THE CONSTRAINTS

Ways of Improvement	Frequency	Percentage
Provision of up-to-date selection and acquisition policy	45	78.9
Constant evaluation of e-resources to avoid acquiring materials that are not usable	35	61.4

Result of ways to improvement on implementation of acquisition policy. Table VIII shows that over 78% of the respondents stated that provision of up-to-date selection and acquisition policy will improve the implementation of acquisition policies in libraries. While 35% of them are of the view that constant evaluation of e-resources to avoid acquiring materials that are not usable is the way to improve the implementation of acquisition policy in the university libraries. This means that both ways could be used to improve implementation of acquisition policy in libraries.

VI. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings were discussed based on the following sub-headings: acquisition policies implementation of e-resources in university libraries, satisfaction derived from implementation of acquisition policies, constraints to acquisition policies implementation and solution to the constraints

A. Electronic Resources Acquisition Policies Implementation in University Libraries

The study revealed that the most accepted electronic resources acquisition policies are those acquisition polices that provide criteria and guidelines for the selectors. The findings are in line with those of Agim (2015) who opined that collection development of e-resources go with a lot of problems not encountered with the development of printed resources and it is better for the library to develop clear policies and processes for the collection development of such resources. The study is also in agreement with that of Fasola (2013) who carried out a study on constraints to acquisition of information resources in university libraries in Southwest Nigeria, and found out that 20 (90.9%) of the respondents agreed that they stick strictly to acquisition policy while acquiring information resources. Acquisitions policy means the guidelines of the library with regard to the building of the collection as a whole. The materials and services of the libraries have been gathered to meet the exact needs of the members of the University community. The duty of the Libraries is based on the double goals of providing right of entry to information while assuring protection of library materials and collections. In achieving these goals, the libraries will guarantee access for all patrons who require information while implementing suitable principles to provide for the conservation of library resources. In a library where policies are well defined and strictly adhered to, things will be more organized and more achievement will be made than those without policies.

B. Satisfaction Derived from Implementation of Acquisition Policies

Findings show that majority of the respondents' derived satisfaction from electronic resources acquisition policies implementation due to the fact that it makes the job of librarians very easy. With the introduction of Internet, it has become probable to offer electronic materials to users straight at their desktops. The communication between librarians and vendors, and the process of seeking answers to queries, or sending orders has become quicker and easier. Therefore, it has made the method of acquisition faster. Services to the clients of the library have considerably improved due to these developments. This could also be attributed to the way acquisition policies are spelled out to meet library objectives and as well to achieve a common goal that has been set to satisfy their users. The study corroborates the work of Fasola (2013) who posits that the majority of the respondents were pleased with the implementation of acquisition policies because individual jobs are clearly defined. The study is also in line with that of Demekaa (2013) that majority of the users were contented with the quality of text books collection, and that overall satisfaction levels were based on proper implementation of acquisition policies and quality of library holdings.

C. Constraints to Acquisition Policies Implementation

The study revealed that copyright issues and lack of ICT skills by librarians are the major constraints militating against electronic resources acquisition policies implementation in the university libraries. This could be due to stress involved in renewing the subscription and the difficulty faced by librarians to have right of ownership over the data in order to meet the information needs of their users. This finding is similar to that of Yu and Breivold (2008), that majority of e-resources is licensed for a limited time. Hence, at the end of the license period, if the selector decides to cancel the subscription, it results in a loss of access to the content. It is critical to check access to the resource on regular basis and follow up with the provider in the case of loss of access, which requires special staff having technical skills and knowledge. This is also in agreement with the study of Benny (2015) who posits that the problems of electronic resources collection and management in libraries are the problem of client training, technological improvement, financial constraint and IT skill manpower,

D. Solution to the Constraints

The result of the study indicated that majority of the respondents agreed that, developing acquisition policies will assist librarians to improve electronic resources acquisition policies implementation in their libraries, because acquisition policies make an individual librarian to know what he/she is do at the right time, and this makes the work to be well organized and as such, they are able to provide adequate services to their users at the right time. The finding collaborates the work of Sejane (2017) which revealed that the organization of e-collection expansion policies, collections preservation, assessment and resource distribution formulated to be implemented, are used to improve the well-organized administration of e-resource collection by providing selection procedures, values and condition in terms of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) infrastructure. The results of the study is also similar to that of Okogwu and Achebe (2018) who opined that to ensure constancy of approach it is a good practice to create comprehensible guiding principle and processes for the selection of electronic resources. These may include the development of a checklist for selection and assessment and the organization of an e-resource evaluation section which could be composed of a group of e-resource stakeholders from different departments in the institution.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Copy right issues should be well addressed as this has caused a lot of problem in the organization and management of e-resources in libraries.
2. Librarians should find a way of developing themselves in ICTs skills to enable them fit in for the present day librarianship.

3. Electronic resources acquisition policies should be developed in such a way that will make the work of librarians very easy and help librarians to improve acquisition policies implementation in their libraries.
4. Each library should have a written policy that will guide in the acquisition of resources.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The study covered Electronic Resources Acquisition Polices: Implementation in University Libraries. The focus of the study was to decide the extent of acquisition policies implementation of e-resources in university libraries. The constraints encountered in implementing acquisition policies as regards e-resources in university libraries were identified. Also, the satisfaction derived in implementing the acquisition policies was ascertained and recommendations for improvement were also made. Implementation of acquisition policies in the university libraries was to a high extent. Respondents avowed that they derived satisfaction as the policies equip them with essential information and guidelines about acquisition. Also, it was discovered that copyright and lack of ICT skills by librarians are the main obstacles militating against acquisition policies implementation in the university libraries. The study concluded that developing acquisition policies by library management and up-to-dating it regularly are some of the ways in which librarians could improve electronic resources acquisition policies implementation in libraries.

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