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J. I. Adeyomoye
Caleb University

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Adeyomoye, J. I., "An Assessment of the Impact of Nigerian Book Foundation (NBF) on the Development of Library Collections in Private University Libraries in South-West Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria" (2011). *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. 647.
<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/647>



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Library Philosophy and Practice 2011

An Assessment of the Impact of Nigerian Book Foundation (NBF) on the Development of Library Collections in Private University Libraries in South-West Geo-political Zone of Nigeria

J. I. Adeyomoye

Principal Librarian & Head of Library Services
Caleb University
Imota, Lagos, Nigeria

Introduction

Library collection development is the process of planning and acquiring a library materials. It happens over a period of years and is based on ongoing assessment of the information needs of the library's users. Acquisition of materials for the library is the basic foundation for collection development.

In view of the huge financial requirement for collection development, Shad (1992) outlines a seven part agenda for rethinking priorities for the acquisition of materials to the library. These agenda are planning, allocating, faculty liaison, cooperative collection development, evaluating, acquisition alternatives and selection efficiency. The agenda is geared towards responding to the overriding issue of the changing philosophy from ownership to access.

Collection development in the university library is focused on the literature and information needs of the university community. Specifically, the library aims to provide from within its own resources, the literature and information resources to support undergraduate and postgraduate studies and the research activities of the university. Emphasis is placed on the selection of broad based research materials of multidisciplinary interest, including official publication, standards and statistics. The primary selection criteria of any information resource are the value and relevance of the content.

Bloomfield (1988) described what are considered the major issues in library collection development. These are; identifying with the mission of the parent institution, formulating appropriate library policies and measures for the implementation of collection policy statement, the division of the budget and the resulting problems, monitoring various collection development strategies and resource sharing among sister institutions. This is based on the fact that libraries usually didn't have sufficient funds. This necessitates the need to manage effectively available fund for the growth of library collection.

Gyeszly (1990), Harrel (1990) and Smith (1990) compared statistically the library collections and its growth for sterling C. Evans library, Texas A & M University. They relate the number of students in the university, faculty life, materials and available fund to the growth of the collection. Libraries that are actively involved in the development of the collection are in a dilemma with increasing in the price of library materials in this period of global economic meltdown. In such situation, collection development policy must be carefully written and reviewed to address the needs of different department of the university. Unfortunately many libraries don't operate with any policy. Kelly (1991) drew attention to the funding patterns in academic libraries and library funding methods. Over the years, available funds for collection development has been dwindling, hence the need for librarians to develop alternative collection development strategies other than direct purchase from vendors. Soliciting for donations, involving in gifts and exchanges are possible ways of developing the collections. Coupled with this, is the need for Librarians to have clearly established collection development policy.

Cabytey- Adodoadgi (1998) on the development of libraries, concentrated on a developing country like Ghana. He asserted that the poor and imbalanced collection is due to the inability of the librarians to operate a clearly established policy. He said further, that the idea is to have a collection development policy which will be based on key factors such as library budget, selectivity, users needs assessment and development.

Lundu (1989) and Lungu (1989) noted that, the fundamental problem in relation to the acquisition of scientific literature in Zambia was the absence of clear collection development policy. Apart from the University of Zambia Library, other libraries in the country lack clear collection development policy. The need for the development of library collection is closely related to the operation of a well established policy

Collection development is the ultimate responsibility of the university librarians. They have to ensure the availability of proper and balanced collection that meets the needs of the university. In this regard, the professional librarians have the responsibility of planning and monitoring the growth of the collections and to provide resources that support the mission of the university.

Nigerian Book Foundation (NBF)

NBF is a non-governmental, non-profit book development organization registered as an affiliate member of African Publisher's Network (APNET), with an irrevocable commitment to indigenous book development enclosed in the conviction that books build the nation.

The NBF came into being in 1991 with its mission being the development of a vibrant indigenous book industry in Nigeria. To achieve this, it adopts a holistic approach to national book development in order to ensure that all stakeholders in the book industry function maximally and that the state provides a good environment for books to flourish.

The birth of the foundation was propelled by the urge to save the book from going into extinction in Nigeria. Having realized the crisis facing the book industry in Nigeria and the often counter-productive fire-bridge methods adopted as remedial measures, the founding fathers concluded that, the crisis stood their chance of resolution without the emergence of a non-governmental, non-profit organization committed to indigenous book development that would bring together practitioners of the industry and adopt a holistic approach to indigenous book development. Approval was given for the existence of the foundation in 1991, but cannot function until 1993 when the president of the Foundation received a grant as seed money. Immediate and judicious investment of the entire amount enables the foundation to commence skeletal

activities in 1993 and full operation in 1994.

Major activities and projects of the NBF includes; organization of International Book Fair, establishment of Book Data Centre which serves as data bank for book related matters; promotion of reading culture of Nigerian populace and the establishment of Book Aid Nigeria (BAN) project which is aimed at receiving free donations of a wide range of new books for distribution to public, institutional, community and other libraries, organization and (in approved cases) individuals to facilitate access to books. Others include sourcing and dissemination of indigenous knowledge; establishing National Book Distribution Organization; engaging in pertinent literature relating to the book industry and running a modest Resource centre for both staff of the foundation and outsiders.

South-West Geo-Political Zone.

During the military rule of Late Gen. Sanni Abacha, (1993-1998) the entire nation was categorized into six Geo-Political Zones. Every state of the nation fall into these categories. Although, the categorization of the entire nation into Geo-Political Zones did not come as an official pronouncement from the government, by 1997 this had gained prevalence in the Political language of the nation. The six Geo-Political Zones are South-West; South-East; South-South; North-East; North-West and North Central. The South-West Geo-Political Zone where the private Universities under study are located comprises of six (6) states namely; Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo and Ekiti States.

Building the Library Collection

Libraries adopt various strategies for acquiring books to build their collections. Basically, there are three ways by which books are acquired to the library, vis-à-vis. Direct Purchase from Vendors; Gift & Exchanges and Donations.

Direct Purchase from Vendor:

This practice requires that books are selected from publishers catalogues.

Book selection is a collective responsibility of the faculties/colleges and the library. Hence, the librarian obtains catalogues from vendors and sends them to the faculties/colleges to enable the academic staff select relevant titles for their programmes. The catalogues are returned to the library for the librarian to collate the selected titles and vet them considering their currency. Proforma invoices are received from vendors for the supply of the books. The lowest bidder among the vendors is given the order to supply the books.

Gift & Exchanges:

Gifts could be solicited or unsolicited. Because of the huge sum of money required to build the library collection, it is not a task that can be achieved from the library budget alone. Thus, the librarian compliments his acquisitions by soliciting for gifts from both individual and corporate authors and publishers. Corporate organizations, Government and non-government agencies are the main targets from whom gifts are solicited. Librarians request for the publications of such organization. Publications like, Annual Reports, Newsletters, Monographic Series, technical Reports etc are added to the library collection in this way. On the other hand gifts can be unsolicited. The Librarian preserve the right to accept, reject or dispose of unsolicited gifts in compliance with the mission of the Library or availability of space. Gifts are accepted provided there is no restriction from the giver as to readership or perseveration conditions or any demand that contradict intellectual freedom.

The Library can be involved in exchange programme with other institutions/organizations. Publications of the concerned libraries are exchanged with those of the organizations. The parties involved keep each other on their

mailing list. If needed, exchange agreement can exist between concerned institutions.

Donations: This is another vibrant way of building the library collections. Publications of both Governmental and Non-governmental organizations are donated to interested libraries. Books received from NBF, Book for Africa International (BAI) etc., fall into this category.

Objective of the Study

The study is aimed at assessing the impact of NBF on the collection development of private universities in the South-West Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria. Particularly, it intends to find out the contribution of the NBF to the acquisition of current and relevant books to build the library collection of the universities. Also, it will elicit responses from the university librarians on the extent to which they rely on donations to build their library collection. It is also aimed at creating awareness among university librarians in particular and the public in general, the existence of the NBF and the benefit that can be derived from her.

Research Design

The survey research design was adopted in the study, using the questionnaire method.

The questionnaires were distributed among 15 private university librarians in the South-West Geo-Political Zone. They constitute the study group because they are directly responsible for the acquisition of library materials to build the collection of their libraries. Not only this, they are also responsible for the management of the library collections. They develop the acquisition policy, coordinate book selection exercise, evaluate the collections from time to time for relevance, currency and adequacy. 12 librarians returned the completed questionnaire. This is 80% response rate, which makes the study valid.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1. Acquisition Methods

Rating	Frequency	Percentage %
By purchase	3	25
By Donation	3	25
By Gift & Exchange	0	0
by A, B, & C	9	75

Table 1.

The conventional way of acquiring publications to build library collections are; purchase from book vendors, sourcing for donations and engaging in gifts and exchanges with other organizations. This study confirms this assertion as 75% of the respondents adopted this methods in the acquisitions of publications to build their library collections. Other 25% respondent probably don't engage in gift and exchanges with other organizations, as their responses indicate that they rely mostly on purchase from vendors and soliciting for donations. Gift and exchanges is also a viable way of acquiring publications to the library.

Table 2: Library Holdings to Date

Rating	Frequency	Percentage %
100 – 1000 vols.	2	16,67
1000 – 2000 vols.	2	16,67
2000 – 5000 vols.	1	8.33
Over 5000 vols.	7	58.33

Table 2

Building library collection is a gradual and continuous process. The growth of the library collection is synonymous with the growth of the University. This is evident from the data in table 2, where 58.33% of the respondents have over 5000 volumes of books in their collection. This category of respondents has their University established between 1996 and 2005. Those established after 2005, have between 1000 and 2000 volumes in their library collection. They represent 41.67% of the respondents.

Table 3: Collection Development Fund.

Rating	Frequency	Percentage %
Adequate	1	8.33
Inadequate	11	91.67
Grossly inadequate	0	0
Zero book fund	0	0

Table 3.

91.67% of the respondents claimed that the fund available for collection development in their libraries is inadequate, while only 8.33% said the book fund in his library is adequate.

Kelly (1991) reported that, over the years, available fund for collection development has been dwindling, thus advised librarians to develop alternative collection development strategies other than direct purchase from vendors. Evident from this study, is the fact that book fund is usually inadequate. Thus librarians especially from private Universities should develop alternative collection development strategies.

Table 4: Existence of NBF

Rating	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	7	58.33

No	5	41.67
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Soliciting for donations is a very important way for building library collection. Such a place like NBF should be very popular among librarians; but this is not the case, as only 58.33% of the respondents are aware that NBF exists, while 41.67% haven't heard about the foundation at all.

Table 5: Awareness of NBF

Rating	Frequency	Percentage %
Through collection	2	16.67
Through Invitations	4	33.33
Through literature	1	8.33
Not Aware	5	41.67

Considering source of awareness of the NBF, 41.67% of the respondents are completely ignorant of its existence, while 16.67%, 33.33% and 8.33% claimed to know the Foundation through colleagues, invitations from the foundation, and literature respectively.

Table 6: Frequency of Visit

Rating	Frequency	Percentage %
Annual	0	0
On invitation	1	8.33
Availability of new consignment of books	3	25
Never visited the NBF	8	66.67

None of the respondents visit the NBF annually, while 8.33% and 25.00% visit on invitation or when the foundation has new publications. These seem to be synonymous, because the NBF usually invites libraries/librarians whenever they have new consignment of books. However 66.67% of the respondents never visited the NBF

Table 7: Numbers of Books Received

Rating	Frequency	Percentage %
50 – 100	0	0
100 – 300	1	8.33

Above 300	3	25
Have not received donation from the NBF	8	66.67

25.00% of the respondents received above 300 volumes of books from the NBF while 8.33% received between 100 and 300 volumes. 66.67% never visited the foundation and so have not received publications from her.

Table 8: Relevance of Books Received from the NBF

Rating	Frequency	Percentage %
Relevance	4	33.33
Irrelevant	0	0
Have not received books from the foundation	8	66.67

Librarians that have received publications from the NBF confirmed the relevance of the publications. They constitute 33.33% of the respondents. Those that have never visited the NBF i.e. 66.67% of the respondents could not assess the relevance of publications from the NBF.

Table 9: Currency of Books Obtained from the NBF

Rating	Frequency	Percentage %
Current	4	33.33
Outdated	0	0
Have not obtained books from the NBF	8	66.67

Librarians (66.67% of the respondents) who are ignorant of the existence of the NBF cannot assess the currency of what they have not received. However 33.33% of the respondents who have benefited from the NBF confirmed the currency of the books they received from the NBF.

Table 10: Assessment of Library Collections Prior to Visit/Visits to the NBF

Rating	Frequency	Percentage %
Adequate	7	58.33
Inadequate	4	16.33
Grossly inadequate	1	8.83

Some of the older Private Universities in the South-West Geo-Political Zone of

Nigeria claimed to have adequate library collections. 58.33% of the respondents fall into this category. However younger University libraries which constitute 16.33% of the respondents claimed to have inadequate collections, while 8.33% actually started the library with books obtained from NBF. Library collection development is a gradual and continuous process.

Table 11: Degree of Improvement of Library Collections

Rating	Frequency	Percentage %
Highly improved	4	33.33
Improved	1	8.33
Fairly improved	0	0
Not Applicable	7	58.33

58.33% of the respondents have not obtained any publication from the NBF, so this question is not applicable to them. The remaining respondents, (41.66%) who have really benefitted from the NBF are very pleased with the services rendered by the NBF because their library collection has improved tremendously.

Recommendation

Despite anticipated impact of international donor agencies, the usefulness of state or national local agencies should not be ignored. They would contribute financially to the common body, or embark on a project in a specific location. Locally-based intervention loaned help immediately in the provision and production of local literature.

Donor agencies, either local or international are partners in progress, but incorporating end-users, or at least their representative in planning will definitely yield greater resources. Organizations that are well disposed to information management will among other help attract donor agencies to library project.

Initiating new book aid projects by governmental, non-governmental, or philanthropic organization is crucial. Such ventures will improve the quality and quantity of collections and ensure the supply of a variety of resources in different formats. It could also form the basis for library cooperation for resources-sharing. The interventions of donor agencies could also improve library funding

Conclusion

It is imperative from the this study that librarians have to develop appropriate alternative strategies to develop the library collections in their various libraries, in the face of dwindling funds available for acquisition of books. Unlike public tertiary institutions, private universities are mostly concerned because they don't benefit from any financial assistance from the government. Federal government provides subvention to public tertiary institutions which is not available to private universities. The Education Trust Fund (ETF) supports a variety of programs and activities and finance infrastructural development in public tertiary institutions in the country. Also Federal government through the National University Commission (NUC) subsidizes the acquisition of e-resources in both federal and state universities. All these assistance is not available to private universities. This is why librarians in private university libraries should wake up to the problem of inadequate fund for book acquisition in their libraries. They

should explore possibilities for sourcing for donations, and engage in gifts and exchange with sister institutions, to build their collections. They should be well informed about various donor agencies that can assist them in their collection development efforts. NBF should be seen as a good source of book donation to libraries. Librarians, who are yet to benefit from the foundation, should now be well informed of the existence of the NBF.

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