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Inhibiting Factors of Selection and Acquisition of Grey Literature in Universities Libraries

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Abstract

The study investigated the inhibiting factors of selection and acquisition of grey literature in universities libraries. In carrying out this study four research questions were posed. The study employed a descriptive research design with a questionnaire as the research instrument. The study was carried out using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) application software. The findings of this study show that, grey literature contributed greatly to national development since they sometimes originate from scholars and grey literature are publications which served as important materials to users of academic libraries, among others. It also show that libraries select and acquire grey literature for academics research purposes, such as civil society or non-governmental organizations reports, academic works, research records, project, research reports, conference papers, and theses, dissertation and government documents, government reports, white papers, memoranda, conference proceedings, technical specifications, bibliographies and maps and evaluations, among others. The findings indicates that, academics libraries were facing numerous obstacles in selection and acquisition of grey literature such as grey literature is not accessible through the normal distribution channels, and grey literatures are hard to locate but which in most cases contain relevant and important data. Recommendations were proffered.

Keywords: Selections, Acquisitions, Grey literature, Academic Library, Information materials

Introduction

Grey literature includes both published and unpublished academic works that are not offered for sale. It frequently has a scientific or technical focus and cannot be found in the standard bibliographic sources like databases or indexes. Government agencies, divisions, colleges, businesses, companies, societies, and trade associations all contribute to its creation. In order to obtain library items, the phrases selection and acquisition are utilized. Acquisition is the action of getting library items, whereas selection is the act of choosing (Anyanwu, et al, 2005). Selection must come before acquisition, and what to choose relies on the sort of library involved because that clientele may be homogeneous or heterogeneous depending on the library (Oduagwu, 2002). The word "book selection" is a general one that refers to the choosing of library materials, including both books and non-books. The process of acquiring books and other items for the library, documentation center, or archives is known as acquisition (Harrods, 2000). The methods of acquisition are purchase, gift, exchange, and legal deposit. Selection and acquisition in academic libraries result in the provision of current material that complements the curriculum of the parent institution. When choosing items for academic libraries, the following considerations are taken into account: The institution's goals and objectives, the number of faculty members, the number of departments and subject areas, the requirements for research and instruction, and the types of materials (both written and oral) that must be provided. The type and scope of objects to be chosen and acquired are specified in a specific library acquisition policy. The acquisition policy's goal is to provide the library staff with a guide to use when evaluating potential purchases for the library collections, which include print and non-print materials, electronic resources, and other types of resources.

Anyanwu et al. (2005) stated that selection is crucial due to the expansion of literature, the shrinking library budget, the decline in library patronage, and pressure from both publishers and library patrons. The acquisition process, according to Akanbi and Sambo (2022), is how libraries obtain or protect their information resources through a purchase, trade, gift, or charitable donation. Given the foregoing, this study will examine the factors that prevent the selection and acquisition of grey literature in university libraries with preference to Nigeria universities.

Statement of the Problems

The overview summary of grey literature has always been problematic. As Augur(1989) points out in his book, the core reason for difficulties in identifying and acquiring this kinds of literature are due to its :poor bibliographic information and control, non-professional layout and, low print runs” . The implementation of bibliographic control through ISBN, ISSN and report number has been somewhat helpful, but also disorganized. For instance, reports which makes up the lion’s share of grey literature do not use ISBN as a rule. Instead, reports numbering was integrated as a means to introduce standardization. The problem is that, these numbers were designed to include subject matter, date, form, agency, section, and additional data and consequently are quite long and confusing. In addition some categories of this kind of literature do contain security restrictions. M.C Debachere points out those problems arise in libraries when a patron request a particular document and it is not apparent where to begin the search. (Debachere, 1995, 95).

Research Questions

This study will make use of the following research questions.

- i. Is there need for grey literature in the academic libraries?
- ii. Does your library select and acquire grey literature?
- iii. If it does, what kind of grey literature does it acquire?
- iv. Does your library encounter any challenges in acquiring the grey literature?

Review of related literature

The acquisition of grey literature articles is crucial for libraries, especially university libraries, to support research. Despite not being fully peer reviewed, they have a significant impact on national growth because they occasionally come from academics. Grey literature is so-called because the most, if not all, of its materials lack an international standard book number (ISBN) or international standard serial number (ISSN), making it difficult for a large number of customers to locate or access it without special effort. While literature in this sense refers to publications, the color grey is used to denote something that is unclear, completely distinct, or both. Mason (2007), who claimed that the word "grey literature" connotes gloom, apathy, indifference, and dubious authority, wrote that this viewpoint was well supported. Since they are typically published by the government, university, pressure groups, trade unions, industries, etc., they are not under the influence of commercial publishing interests. Publications without a profit-making intent are referred to as "grey literatures." This includes information and articles published, particularly online, without a profit-making intent or

through the intermediary of a for-profit publisher. Typically, they consist of material that cannot be acquired by customary means or found through regular book distribution methods. In defining grey literature, there are some disputes over its borders, but differences of opinion on which documents may or may not be classified as grey literature are not really significant, as these definitions differ very little in their essence (IFLA, 2001). Wood, defined the literature as "material that is not available through sale". For the "Interagency Grey Literature Working Group", as noted in the Grey Information Functional Plan dated January 18, 1995, "Grey literature is domestic or foreign ostensive matter that is usually available through specialized channels and that cannot enter the normal channels of publication and distribution systems, nor fall under bibliographic controls or acquisition schemes by book-sellers or subscription agents". Moreover, these are documents of many different types ranging from unrevised pre-prints through to documents with very concrete content. Población, (1995) asserts that grey literature documents are fleeting and transparent (not seen in publishers' catalogs, bookshops, libraries, etc.) that are hard to locate but which in most cases contain relevant and important data. The fact that grey literature is not created by nor disseminated through retail channels is clearly the characteristic that unites these definitions. Academic works, pre-prints (research records shared among scientists prior to formal publication), committee reports, commission reports, technical reports, government reports, research reports, travel reports, conference papers, technical standards, dissertations, theses, non-commercial translations, market surveys, news bulletins, company documents, working documents, web sites, virtual discussions, data sets, e-mail, and electronic communications are among these (Altmeyer, 2000). Other types include memos, conference materials, technical details, bibliographies, and maps (McGlamery, 2000).

It is crucial to take into account library to library in Africa when managing grey literature through classification, upkeep, and preservation. Even while it seems that special libraries are more interested in this material, academic libraries will also hold some, depending on their academic focus. Contrary to tiny libraries, which may opt to not catalog at all and instead choose to file them in a pamphlet or vertical collection, libraries must catalog and provide access to this literature (Augur, 1989). All the standard practices for handling library items are adhered to while managing the grey literature materials. This implies that they have to be stamped, accessioned, catalogued and classified. However, with regards to the nature of this literature, they are expected to be filed on separate shelves to enhance greater accessibility

and retrieval process. According to Salanje (2007), In some African academic libraries like that of Malawi, efforts aimed at managing grey literature is through digitization so as to:

- To have the information accessible widely
- To increase local content available online
- To preserve/save the documents.

Inhibiting factors of Selection and Acquisition of Grey Literatures in Libraries

For a number of reasons, academic librarians and other information professionals have trouble locating and acquiring grey literature. The main drawbacks of this literature are its inadequate bibliographic information and control, amateurish layout and structure, and limited print runs (Augur, 1989). The lack of clarity in grey literature makes it harder to find and evaluate them (Austen Rainer 2017). Implementation of bibliographic controls has had a significant impact on open source content, but little to no impact on grey literature. This is because the reports making up the lion's share of grey literature, do not as a rule use ISBN, which requires a depository. In reducing these challenges, report numbering was initiated to enable standardization. The problem is that this numbers is designed to include subject matter, date, form, agency, security classification, location and additional data which eventually make the numbering too long and confusing. In addition, non-availability may be due to incomplete or incorrect identification, since accession or report numbers must be correct to attain access. Dabechere (1995) points out that problem arise in libraries when a patron requests a particular document, and it is not apparent on where to begin the search. Librarians and institutions in the western world have made many attempts to provide sourcing for grey literature. This includes the Griseli Project in France, the Russian union catalogue of grey literature and system for information on grey literature which is managed under the auspices of European Association for Grey Literature (EAGLE). Despite these efforts put by the European communities, very few documents are found in this databases up to date (Mason, 2009). African research outputs are usually disseminated through two broad categories: research outputs published in the world scientific peer reviewed learned journal and research output published as grey literature which are mostly generated by research and academic institutions (IAALD, 2009). Although, some are communication their work directly in the web through blog, wikis, etc. incidentally, much of the scientific research outputs from Africa is in form of grey literature document which are

produced in limited numbers, limited circulation and visibility even within the parent institution of the academic library where they are produced.

Consequently, such literature is not only inadequately documented in Africa institutions, but also there are no national or regional databases that academic libraries can use to have access to them. The result is that the inability to identify and acquire them makes the technical/research information and knowledge remains unexploited and in some cases, lost forever. The situation is worse regarding digital born research outputs. Many research/academic libraries do not have policies and strategies to facilitate the capture of digital grey literature, their management, storage and dissemination. In Africa, the development of consortium among academic libraries with a formidable ICT infrastructure can enhance accessibility to these resources for the benefit of the users as well as facilitating the knowledge by scholars and scientist in the continent with the global academic community.

Grey literature is challenging to find, recognize, and acquire during selection and acquisition. This considerably increases the workload on the academic library's usual "collection" stage. For instance, you must attend the events where they are distributed in order to hear about or obtain some trade literature unpublished conference papers. Prior to the event, collection networks in the academic library must identify it and arrange attendance and the purchase of literature for the event. Second, there are already relatively few information nuggets that can be extracted from a big body of open source information due to the issue of a poor signal-to-noise ratio. This problem is exacerbated in the grey literature domain because thousands of organizations generate literature, while only a fraction of these producers and their products are of interest to the academic libraries. The situation worsens daily as the availability of information from myriad Internet sites increases.

Grey literature's predominately nonstandard forms make it more challenging to process than other open source varieties. For instance, it is uncommon for product brochures to have enough details to make them easy to catalog or retrieve. Other forms of grey literature frequently lack crucial details such the publisher, author, title, place, and date of publication. Additionally, a lot of gray material is still only available in paper copy. It will be challenging to obtain content on this electronic forum with anything other than direct character matches, despite the fact that this is changing as Internet dissemination grows. Fourth, because grey literature is frequently unreformed, its quality varies greatly. Since electronic data are simple to tamper with, integrity is a problem with Internet data as well. One of the key challenges to

a successful program of acquisition is how difficult it is for an academic library to obtain grey literature. The skill needed to find grey literature emphasizes the need of having citations in one location. Even after grey literature is located, it can still be expensive to get the materials because of subpar distribution methods rather than outrageous membership fees. The troubling outcome is that a lot of worthwhile research becomes comparatively difficult to access. In addition, finding and identifying grey literature requires not only staff time and effort, but also a high level of topic expertise, professional abilities, and personal commitment. These skills are not common among academic libraries or librarians, and if they are, they will be used for tasks other than acquisition. Grey literature frequently has a loose leaf format or is only a collection of stapled pages, which presents a preservation problem for libraries. Nothing on the library shelf degrades or disappears more quickly than unbound items that don't stand upright properly. Lack of agreement among librarians over what constitutes "grey literature" presents another significant obstacle.

Methodology

Introduction

This section involves discussions on the research methodological approach to use in the study. Sub topics that will be discussed include research design, the population of the study, sampling and sample size, methods of data collection, the procedure for data collection, the validity of data collection instruments, as well as techniques of data analysis.

Research Design

The topic adopt a descriptive survey research design. The methods is aimed at collecting comprehensive and systematic data about the opinion and views of academic librarians and on challenges of selection and acquisition of grey literature in academic libraries in universities.

Population of the study

The target population for this study is all academics librarians in government, state and private universities libraries in Kwara State. The population of the study are 100 respondents of 8 universities academic libraries. The population of the academic librarians are as follows: University of Ilorin -13; Kwara State University-15; National Open University-9; Landmark University-15; Al-Hikmah University-12; Crown hill University-13; Summit University-10; University of Offa-15.

Table1: Population of the study

Name of university	Population
University of Ilorin	13
Kwara State University	15
National Open University	9
Landmark University	13
Al-Hikmah University	12
Crown hill University	13
Summit University	10
University of Offa	15
Total	100

Sources Field Survey (2021)

Instrument for Data collection

The questionnaire was designed and used for data collection. It was designed based on the objectives of this study. The questionnaire was in three parts, the first part was designed to gather personal and demographic information of the respondents while the second part of the questionnaire was designed to collect information on inhibiting factor of selection and acquisition of grey literature in universities libraries. The researchers employ the use of the 20.0 SPSS package to analyze the data. The instrument was given to three experts whose research areas of interest include reference services collection, administration of academics libraries and collection development of grey literature for scrutiny and expert judgment. This was done to check the appropriateness of the instrument. The test and retest method was used to measure the performance of the instrument and it provided a reliability coefficient of 0.85.

Data presentation and analysis

All the questionnaires administered were completed and returned and were found usable for analysis. 100 (100%). Data were presented for analysis using descriptive statistics which include, frequency count and percentages.

Demographic of Respondents

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by gender

Frequency	Percentage
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Valid	Male	54	54%
	Female	46	46%
	Total	100	100.0

. Sources: Generated by Researcher using SPSS 20.0 from questionnaire response.

Table 2 reveals that 54 (54%) were male while 46(46%) were female. This indicates that there are more male academics librarians in universities in Kwara State.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents by working experience

	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 years old	25	25%
6-10 years old	23	23%
11-15 years old	31	31%
above 16 years	21	21%
Total	100	100%

Sources: Generated by Researcher using SPSS 20.0 from questionnaire response

Table 3 shows working experiences of the respondents involved in the survey. 25(25%) were between 1- 5 years experiences while 23(23%) were between 6- 10 years experiences whereas 31(31%) were between 11-15 years experiences and 21(21%) were over 16 years experiences in service.

Distributions of respondents by age

	Frequency	Percentage
21-24 years old	15	15%
25-26 years old	28	28%
27-30 years old	25	25%

above years	31	32	32%
Total	100		100%

Sources: Generated by Researcher using SPSS 20.0 from questionnaire response.

Table 4 shows age distribution of respondents 15(15%) were between ages of 21-24 years while 28(28%) were between age range of 25 -26 years whereas 25(25%) were between ages of 27-30 years old and 32(32%) were over 31 years above.

Research Question 1: Is there need for grey literature in the academic libraries?

Table 5: Grey literature in the academics libraries

Items	A	D	UD
Is grey literatures are publications which serve as important materials to users of academic libraries?	93 93%	6 6%	1 1%
Does an academic library acquire grey literature in order to support research?	87 87%	10 10%	3 3%
Is grey literature contributed greatly to national development since they sometimes originate from scholars?	95 95%	4 4%	1 1%
Does a grey literature involve published and unpublished research materials which are not available commercially, hence needed in academic libraries?	76 76%	14 14%	10 10%
Did grey literature includes annual reports, research, technical, project and working papers which is necessary for academic and research purposes?	98 98%	1 1%	1 1%

Sources: Generated by Researcher using SPSS 20.0 from questionnaire response

Table 5 shows the respondents' response on whether there need for grey literature in the academic libraries. Outcomes from survey shows that 93(93%) agree that grey literatures are publications which serve as important materials to users of academic libraries while 6(6%) disagree whereas 1(1%) were undecided. More so, results revealed that 87(87%) of the respondents agree that an academic library acquire grey literature in order to support research while 10(6%) disagree whereas 3(3%) were undecided. It also, shows that 95(95%) agree that grey literature contributed greatly to national development since they sometimes originate from scholars while 4(4%) disagree and 1(1%) were undecided. The results further shows that

76(76%) agree that a grey literature involve published and unpublished research materials which are not available commercially, hence needed in academic libraries while 14(14%) disagree and 10(10%) were undecided. Results revealed that 98(98%) agree that grey literature includes annual reports, research, technical, project and working papers which is necessary for academic and research purposes whereas 1(1%) disagree and 1(1%) were undecided.

Research Question 2: Does your library select and acquire grey literature?

Table 6: Selection and acquisition of grey literature

Items	Freq.	Percentage
Agree	84	84%
Disagree	15	15%
Undecided	1	1%

Sources: Generated by Researcher using SPSS 20.0 from questionnaire response

Table 6 shows response on whether library select and acquire grey literature. Results shows that 84(84%) agree that library select and acquire grey literature while 15(15%) disagree whereas 1(1%) were undecided whether library select and acquire grey literature.

Research Question 3: If it does what kind of grey literature does it acquire?

Table 7: Kind of grey literature acquire

Items	A	D	UD
Annual and technical Reports, working papers, committees ‘reports, commission reports, technical standards.	68 68%	20 20%	12 12%
Academic works, research records, project, research reports, conference papers, theses, Dissertation.	72 72%	18 18%	10 10%
Non-commercial translations, market surveys, news bulletins, company documents working documents, newsletters.	64 64%	27 27%	9 9%
Travel reports are kind of grey literature acquire in my library.	75 75%	19 19%	6 6%

Government documents, government reports, white papers, memoranda, conference proceedings, technical specifications, bibliographies and maps and evaluations.	83	9	8
	83%	9%	8%
Civil society or non-governmental organisations reports.	94	4	2
	94%	4%	2%
Web sites, virtual discussions, data sets, e-mail and electronic simulations.	77	18	5
	77%	18%	5%

Sources: Generated by Researcher using SPSS 20.0 from questionnaire response.

Table 7, shows response on what kind of grey literature does it acquire. Results indicates that 68(68%) agree that annual and technical reports, working papers, committees reports, commission reports, technical standards were kinds of grey literature they acquired while 20(20%) disagree whereas 12(12%) were undecided. It further shows that 72(72.0%) agree that academic works, research records, project, research reports, conference papers, and theses, dissertation kind of grey literature their library acquired while 18(18%) disagree whereas 10(10%) were undecided. More so, 64(64%) agree that non-commercial translations, market surveys, news bulletins, company documents working documents, newsletters while 27(27%) disagree and 9(9%) were undecided. The result shows that 75(75%) agree that travel reports are kind of grey literature acquire in my library while 19(19%) disagree whereas 6(6%) were undecided. Results reveals that 83(83%) agree that government documents, government reports, white papers, memoranda, conference proceedings, technical specifications, bibliographies and maps and evaluations while 9(9%) disagree and 8(8%) were undecided. It further shows that 94(94%) agree that civil society or non-governmental organizations reports were kind of literature acquired while 4(4%) disagree whereas 2(2%) were undecided. Results reveals that 77(77%) agree that web sites, virtual discussions, data sets, e-mail and electronic simulations were kind of grey literature acquired while 18(18%) disagree and 5(5%) were undecided.

Research Question 4: Does your library encounter any challenges in acquiring the grey literature?

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	86	86%
Disagree	9	9%
Undecided	5	5%

Sources: Generated by Researcher using SPSS 20.0 from questionnaire response

Table 8, shows the respondents' response on whether libraries encounter any challenges in acquiring the grey literature. Outcomes revealed that 86(86%) agree that library encounter challenges in acquiring the grey literature while 9(9%) disagree and 5 (5%) were undecided.

Research Question 5: If yes, what challenges does it encounter?

Table: 9: Challenges encountered

Items	A	D	UD
Grey literatures are difficult to acquire.	93 93%	4 4%	3 3%
Grey literatures are not seen in publishers' catalogs, book shops and libraries.	87 87%	7 7%	6 6%
Grey is used to connote something that is not clear, wholly, that is different.	92 92%	5 5%	3 3%
They are hard to locate but which in most cases contain relevant and important data.	79 79%	14 14%	7 7%
It is not accessible through the normal distribution channels	98 98%	1 1%	1 1%
Grey literature lack ISBN or ISSN	87 87%	10 10%	3 3%

Sources: Generated by Researcher using SPSS 20.0 from questionnaire response

Table 9, shows the respondents' response on whether what challenges does grey library encounter. Outcomes shows that 93(93%), agree that grey literatures are difficult to acquire while 4(4%) disagree whereas 3(3%) were undecided. Results reveals that 87(87%) agree that grey literatures are not seen in publishers' catalogs. and bookshops while 7(7%) disagree and 6(6%) were undecided. It further shows that 92(92%) agree that grey is used to connote something that is not clear, wholly, that is different, while 5(5%) disagree whereas 3(3%) were undecided. Results indicates that 79(79%) agree that grey literatures are hard to locate but which in most cases contain relevant and important data while 14(14%) disagree and 7(7%) were undecided. Results reveals that 98(98%) agree that is not accessible through the normal distribution channels, while 1(1%) disagree and 1(1%) were undecided. It further reveals that 87(87%) agree that grey literature lack international standard book number (ISBN) or

international standard serial number (ISSN) whereas 10(10%) disagree and 3(3%) were undecided.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study discovered that, grey literature is needed in the academic libraries. Majority of the respondents opined that grey literatures are publications which serve as important materials to users of academic libraries. It also support research and contributed greatly to national development since they sometimes originate from scholars. This finding is in line with (<https://libguides.royalroads.ca/greylit>, 2020) who opined that grey literature is an important source of information due to the uniqueness of the content that gets published. Because commercial publishers are looking to make a profit on the materials they publish, they often overlook niche research areas that serve smaller populations. Grey literature is one way to search for information in emerging or less popular research areas. The findings revealed that academics libraries select and acquired different kind of grey literature such as, annual and technical reports, working papers, committees reports, commission reports, technical standards, academic works, research records, project, research reports, conference papers, and theses, dissertation, non-commercial translations, market surveys, news bulletins, company documents working documents, newsletters, travel reports, government documents, government reports, white papers, memoranda, conference proceedings, technical specifications, bibliographies and maps and evaluation, civil society or non-governmental organizations reports, web sites, virtual discussions, data sets, e-mail and electronic simulations. This finding was supported by the outcome of Arsenio (2017) who asserted that grey literature can include academic papers, including theses and dissertations, research and committee reports, government reports, conference papers, and ongoing research, among others. It may provide data not found within commercially published literature, providing an important forum for disseminating studies with null or negative results that might not otherwise be disseminated.

The findings revealed that libraries were facing numerous obstacles in selections and acquisitions of grey literature, such as grey literatures are difficult to acquire, grey literatures are not seen in publishers' catalogs and bookshops, grey is used to connote something that is not clear, grey literatures are hard to locate but which in most cases contain relevant and important data, grey literature is not accessible through the normal distribution channels, grey literature lack (ISBN) or (ISSN). This result correlated the opinion of Dabechere (1995) who

pointed out that problem arise in libraries when a patron requests a particular document, and it is not apparent on where to begin the search. Supported by Augur (1989) added that poor bibliographic information and control, non-professional layout and format as well as low print runs are the major setbacks of this literature. Also, supported by Austen Rainer (2017) who opined that grey literature is not well defined, making it difficult to retrieve and appraisal.

Conclusion

According to the study conclusions, respondents from the various universities libraries were agreed that academics library need grey literature in order to support research and different kinds of grey literature are acquired in academics library more so, majority of the universities faced challenges of selection and acquisition of grey literature in Nigeria. However, it was discovered that universities libraries were facing numerous obstacles in selections and acquisitions of grey literature, therefore, based on the findings, gaps identified and conclusion of this study the following recommendations are proffered.

1. Government should send a bill title selection and acquisition of grey literature bill 2021 to the National and States House of Assemblies for urgent action. Among the contents of the bill is to mandate all heads of government parastatals, agencies, ministries to release on request for grey library patrons without delay any government white papers, reports, documents, etc. When passed into law, it will help librarians or patrons in the selection and acquisition of recent government publications and make available to users in the grey libraries.
2. Government should allocate more funds for the grey library to enable them to select and acquire recent and current grey literatures as many grey materials require huge financial implication for processing especially from overseas.
3. University library management should make their selection and request of grey literatures on time so as be able to acquire up to date publications which may be needed in the academic libraries for research purposes.

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