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**Electronic Resources Collection Development Practices in University libraries: A
Conceptual framework Perspective**

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Abstract

The study looked at the development of electronic resources collections in university libraries from a conceptual standpoint. It makes use of schema to show how the principles of electronic resources collection development practices in university libraries are related. In order to gain a clearer understanding of the relationships between the concepts in electronic resources collection creation practices in university libraries, an author-designed conceptual diagram was used. The study concluded that the activities were enunciated in the conceptual context and schema created for the study, and that in order to achieve a balanced set of electronic tools, one must grasp all of the concepts and put them to good use.

Keywords: Electronic Resources, Collection Development, Practices, University Libraries, Conceptual framework.

Introduction

Reitz (2004) defines a university library as one that is founded, managed, and funded by a university to satisfy the content, science, and curriculum needs of its students, faculty, and staff. Libraries, according to Okogwu (2017), are the focal point of concern in all institutions of learning around the world, without which the institutions will not be able to function. University libraries are commonly regarded as essential knowledge sources and the 'heart' of the university community. It may be argued that establishing a university system without a library is a vain endeavor, provided that the mission and vision of education would be a long way off and elusive.

The primary goal of university libraries is to aid the university by collecting, preserving, and disseminating information materials to users for the purposes of teaching, study, and learning. In addition to the university's traditional roles of teaching, research, and learning, Okogwu (2017) noted that it also has functions such as knowledge gathering, dissemination, and promotion; intellectual leadership; manpower development; social and economic modernization; and promotion of intra- and inter-continental and international understanding. The university libraries were founded to provide information materials to support the university's aforementioned functions. Members of the university library include university staff and students—undergraduate students (full-time and part-time) and postgraduate students—as well as those users from outside the university community who have been given access to the library.

Electronic services are materials that need internet access, whether by a personal computer, mainframe, or portable mobile devices, according to the International Federation of Library Association (IFLA) (2012). They can be accessed locally or remotely through the internet. E-zine, e-text or e-book, abstracting and indexing databases like MEDLINE, e-journal, locally loaded databases, e-library, CD-ROMs, and websites are all examples of

electronic services. An e-resource, according to Sadeh and Ellingsen (2005), is a collection of electronic journals or a database of abstracts and indexes that includes the full text of some or all of the papers cited in the indexes. A-Z lists, Open URL, servers, federated search engines, tools that include full-text content such as publishers' electronic journal content, journal content networks like Project Muse or JSTER, content aggregators like EBSCOHOST's Academic Search Premier, and proxy servers or other authentication methods are all examples of electronic resources, (Bothmann & Holmberg, 2008). Users may provide multiple connections to an electronic resource at the same time with electronic resources. References can be cross-referenced between different publications, and information resources can be browsed, extracted, and inserted into other content.

Mansur (2012) stressed the value of electronic tools because of their ease of use, readability, cost-effectiveness, fast accessibility, and convenient access to back data. Electronic services have also become increasingly relevant in recent years because they are up-to-date, multi-dimensional, and directional in nature, and they can be accessed and used from anywhere, regardless of territorial boundaries. Such tools add value to a wide range of human endeavors. According to Sharma (2009), the value of electronic resources has persuaded many libraries to migrate to digital electronic resources, which are less costly and more convenient for easy access. Electronic resources have made a significant contribution to research activities, and several scholars have praised the benefits of electronic resources over other information formats. These benefits also prompted the adoption of electronic collection production activities.

Collection development is a term used by the library community to refer to the selection and procurement of materials for an expanding collection, as well as decisions about which materials to include in that collection, according to Law (1991) and Hunter and Day as cited in Aiyebilehin (2012). Mansur (2012) defines collection development as the selection,

procurement, and processing of library materials in various formats for users' current and future needs. The author went on to describe electronic resources collection development as "the process of preparing, choosing, and obtaining a balanced collection of library materials in a variety of electronic formats such as e-books, e-journals, media, and online resources in a variety of electronic formats.

These processes, according to Mansur (2012), include selection and deselection of current and retrospective e-resources based on user needs; preparation strategies for continuing acquisition of electronic resources while considering financial constraints and usage; and assessment of e-resource collections to assess how well they represent users' needs. The development of a collection in a university library exhibits a broad range of development trends (Madeleine and Stephen, 2003). To make this a reality, university libraries will need a forward-thinking planning document (or documents), such as a collection creation policy, that outlines the mission and vision of the electronic resources in their institutional repositories, as well as the rules and regulations that govern patrons and service providers.

Collection development policy, according to Retiz (2004), is a systematic written statement of the principles governing a library's material selection, including the guidelines used in making selection and deselection decisions, as well as policies about gifts and exchange. A written collection development plan is a valuable tool in any university library for directing all activities related to preparing, constructing, selecting, and obtaining library materials (Magrill and Hickey, 1984) A collection development strategy, according to Kumar, Hassan, and Singh (2008), is essential for a balanced and robust collection. It defines the collection's scope, selection authority, criteria for allocating funds and selecting different types of materials, preferences in selection, and criteria for canceling a database or e-resource

subscription after a thorough evaluation. It is the policy that directs the creation of e-resources collection activities.

The collection of electronic tools begins with considerations of the user community, as well as the library's and its parent body's long-term mission, goals, and priorities (Johnson 2009). Knowing the collection and knowing the group are two ideas for laying a strong foundation for good collection growth. Selection, according to Reitz (2004), is the method of determining which materials should be added to a library's collection. The selection process can be thought of as a four-step process that involves identifying relevant tools, evaluating (is the item worthy of selection and assessment?) and assessing (is the item worthy of selection and assessment?) (Does the item belong in the collection?) purchase judgment, order plans, and occasionally placement (Johnson 2009). Librarians appointed as selectors in particular subject areas, based on their preferences and fields of expertise, typically make selection decisions based on evaluations and standard collection creation tools. It is at the center of the collection creation process, and the primary aim of any format selection decision is to meet the needs of the users. Selectors' job roles have changed dramatically with the introduction of electronic services. When electronic resources are chosen without the direction of a collection development strategy, haphazard, unfocused groupings of resources result, which may or may not help the library's purpose. Selectors used to make individual recommendations for new titles based on conventional selection criteria including consistency, importance, use, and cost, as observed (Welch 2002).

Furthermore, according to Davis (1997), the most basic criteria in conventional selection are designed to assess the authors' and publishers' reputations, decide the level and breadth of the content, and recognize any unique format or features that add value to the title. In the case of electronic tools, these requirements rapidly extend to include an assessment of other parties involved in the product's production, assurance that the correct content is

available, and confirmation that the product works as anticipated. In order to achieve a qualitative range for acquisition, many libraries now employ a team strategy. Intellectual material has characteristics, according to Edgar (2003), and these characteristics can be used to direct selection. Because of their technological nature, electronic resources are not selected in isolation. Many libraries now use a collaborative approach to procure high-quality materials. The method of obtaining an electronic resource is identical to that of acquiring a print resource, but it varies slightly from conventional print acquisition. Since no single resource is owned by or stored at the library, electronic resources acquisition applies to the purchase of access rights. Instead, these are obtained via a remote database. Other electronic tools, such as open source and online resources, are available for free. Following the selection of a resource for the library's collection by an individual selector or selection committee, the normal procurement method of identifying and obtaining the resource begins. After the selector discovers a new product, Yu and Breivold (2008) described a four-step procedure. It involves checking the product's bibliographic details, deciding different pricing options, reviewing the license and business agreements, and finally ordering and purchasing the product for the library's collection.

The process of collecting and presenting valuable information for decision-making is referred to as evaluation. Gesinde, Adejumobi, and Komolafe define it as "the process of making value judgments about the possession of desirable attributes observed" (2007). The primary objective of assessment is to help in decision-making. Bennett endorsed this claim in Idiegbeyan-ose and Osazuwa (2014), stating that assessment is a method of collecting knowledge for decision-making, and that it aids in determining whether a new program is successful or not (e-resources). According to Ugodulunwa, as cited by Idiegbeyan-ose and Osazuwa (2014), evaluation is the method of determining a thing's worth. It involves collecting data in order to determine the importance of a program, product, process, or

educational target. The selectors may use evaluation to evaluate the cost, the content provider's reliability, and, most importantly, the resource's authoritativeness. A selection method such as a provider's trial or presentation of the product, as well as feedback in print and electronic sources, aids in product evaluation and contributes to sound decisions.

To ensure that the library's goal of promoting teaching, research, and learning opportunities is met, the library must assess the services' efficacy through library users. The library will cancel or discontinue the access to the resources if this is not the case.

Conceptual Framework

In accessing the electronic resources collection development practices in university libraries, a conceptual framework developed by Okogwu (2017) and applied to describe the kind of relationships that exist among variables for better understanding of the concepts of electronic resources collection development practices. It also explains how the research was carried out by projecting the relationship among the variables of the study. See below fig. 1

SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

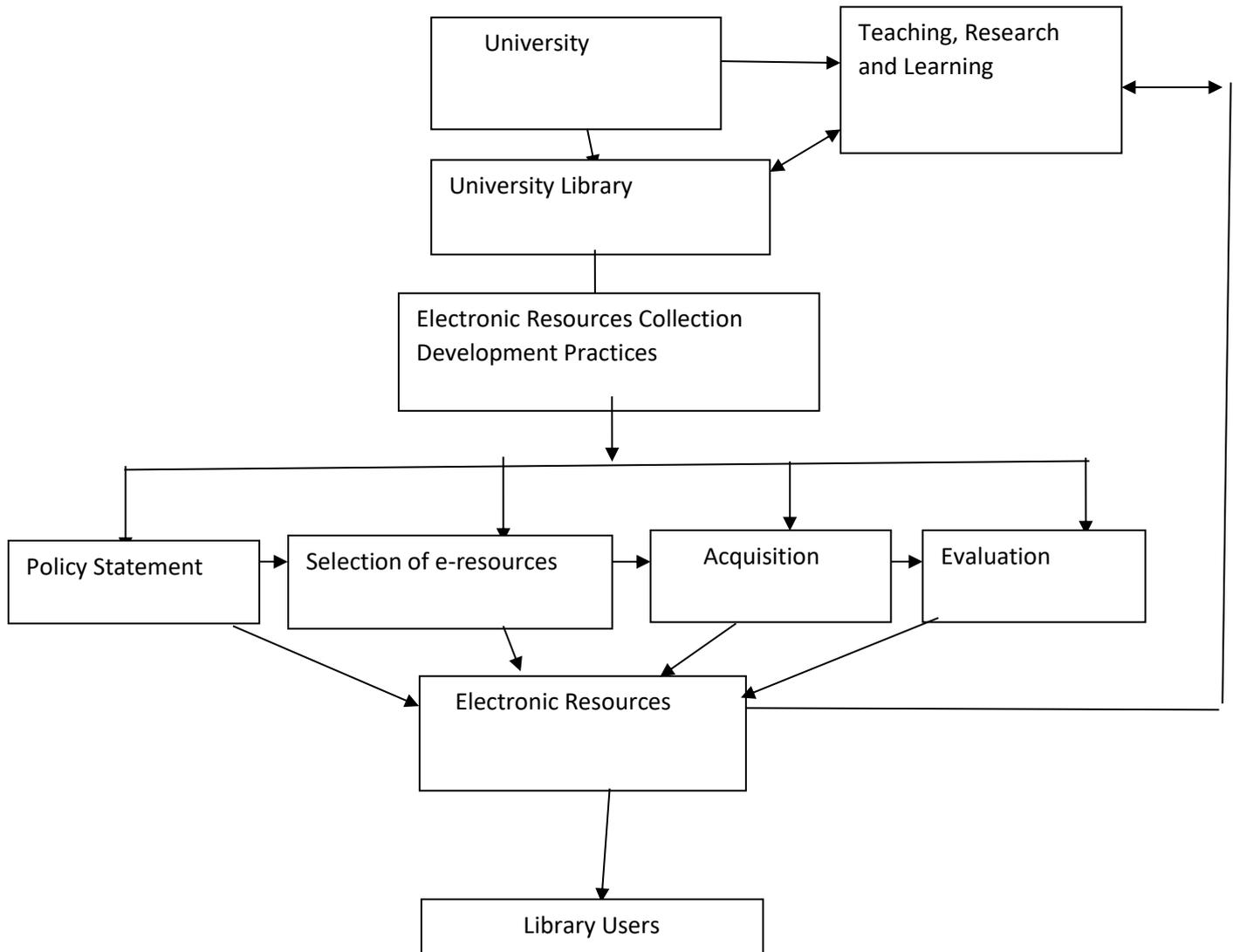


Figure 1: A Schematic Diagram showing the Electronic resources collection development practices in university libraries (Source: Okogwu, 2017)

The above diagram depicts how university libraries build their electronic resources collections. In the university, the objectives of teaching, research and learning can only be achieved through the support of the university library by the provision of electronic resources. To achieve these objectives by university libraries, there are practices that support the development of electronic resources called electronic resources collection development practices. A well-defined policy statement guides these activities. As a result, the correct

resources are chosen, electronic resources are subscribed, and the acquired resources are evaluated for continuity and/or cancellation. All of this contributes to the growth of electronic resources in university libraries.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The objectives of teaching, research and learning in the university can only be achieved through the sole support of the library in the provision of electronic resources especially in this technology dispensation. Prints only cannot achieve that since a lot of information has been transformed to electronic in this era.

And a policy that is well defined is needed in the university library to achieve a balanced collection that will cover all the programmes of the university. For a balanced collection of electronic resources to be achieved, one needs to understand all the concepts and put them into good use. In the light of the present study, the study recommended that librarians are encouraged to apply judiciously the necessary processes in building electronic resources for a balance collection.

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