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PRESERVATION OF INFORMATION RESOURCES IN SELECTED SCHOOL LIBRARIES IN IBADAN NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated the preservation of information resources in selected school libraries in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. The study examined the existence of preservation of information policies in school libraries, preservation measures in place, preservation equipment and materials available in school libraries, level of support given to preservation by the school management, level of training given to library staff on preservation in school libraries and barriers to effective preservation of information resources in school libraries.

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and the instruments used were structured questionnaire administered to the school principals, vice-principals and school librarians and observational checklist which required a visit to those selected schools and observed some available information resources and existence of preservation on those materials. Ten (10) government secondary schools were randomly selected in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria while one hundred and forty five (145) respondents participated. Descriptive statistics methods were used to analyse the collected data.

Findings from the study revealed that school libraries based its acquisitions on textbooks, reference resources and fiction materials with 145(100%), 143(98.6%) and 136(93.8%) respectively without considering other vital information resources such as serials and electronic resources. There was an existence of preservation policies on information resources in selected school libraries with 96(66.2%) but the usage of the policies was very low with 44(30.3%). Therefore the low use of preservation policies in school libraries had affected the positive enhancement of the existing preservation policies in school libraries with 58(40.0%). Dusting and regular floor mopping were the available preservation measures put in place with 145(100%); fans with 98(67.6%) were the available preservation equipment and materials; the level of school management support to preservation was very high with 90(62.1%) and the level of staff training given on preservation of information resources based on school orientation programme with 124(85.5%). The results also showed that lack of fund and inadequate

infrastructure on the aspects of preservation of information resources were the major confrontations in selected school libraries with 134(92.4%) and 109(74.8%) respectively.

It can be concluded that preservation of information resources in selected school libraries in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria was given priorities as level of school management supports for preservation of information resources was very high. It is therefore recommended that school libraries should be adequately funded by all tiers of governments and the existing preservation policies on information resources in school libraries should be reviewed.

Key words: Preservation, Preservation policies, Information resources, School libraries, Nigeria

Words count: 423

Introduction

Library is an indispensable facility of any educational institution. A well equipped school library is therefore very crucial to the education and general information needs of teachers, students and its community. This is why the thought of stocking library with adequate information resources readily comes to mind when an institution is to be established (Akporhonor, 2005). A library is one of the social institutions that have the primary role of acquiring, processing, organizing, preserving as well as conserving the print and non-print information resources for users. School library is one of the types of libraries that play all the primary role of acquisition, organization, processing (cataloguing and classification), storing, preservation and dissemination of information resources to students, staff and its community users.

A library is a collection of books and other forms of recorded information purposefully selected and systematically organized and preserved by qualified library personnel for use by either the public or a target group (Oluwaniyi, 2010). Library and education are two vital institutions of socialization and perpetuation of the human race. The two cannot be separated in an all-around development of human race. The provision of library services is therefore crucial and indispensable to both the primary and post primary educational system. Every school needs a library; teachers and students need to use library information materials in the teaching and learning process. The achievement of a qualitative school's education program depends, to a great extent, on quick access to library information resources (Adeniji, 2006).

A school library is a place where teachers and students have access to a variety of information resources. It is a library established and attached to both primary and secondary schools for teaching and learning processes. Kolade (2001) stated that “the school library is the heart of the school with a wide variety of education media. These media include books, magazines, newspapers, recordings, maps, films, photographs and paintings, computer systems and audio and visual information materials such as television, video tape, camera, slide, transparency, microforms (microfilms, microfiches, microcards) and tape recorders for school projects”.

Elaturoti (2006) defined the school library as “the heart of the school around which all school programmes revolve “. As an integral part of the educational system, the school library has the following objectives:

- i. Through its information resources, school library functions to achieve greater growth and development of every child/students
- ii. It provides a wide range of information resources for individual differences taking each students where he is and helping him to grow;
- iii. Through its resources, print non-print, it provides experiences for the children so that they might appreciate the past, comprehend the world today and intelligently prepare for tomorrow;
- iv. The school library by teaching the use of information resources provides the opportunity for students to help themselves;
- v. Uses of up-to-date information resources available to supplement and enrich the teaching and learning situation among others.

According to Kolade (2001) school library is seen as a tool of excellence for life-long learning for all citizens. Libraries are established to advance the course of education. He further stated that “familiarity with libraries and consuming interest in private studies will enable students have smooth pursuit studies at the higher institution”. The school library contributes to the total development of its users by broadening their intellectual horizons and inculcating in students a lasting desire to read and learn.

However, all these could be possible if the necessary information resources are present in the school library. School library collections are those materials which enable libraries to carry out their functions effectively. School library information resources are made up of print, non-

print and a wide variety of their information bearing materials. Therefore, school library information resources can be divided into three (3) broad categories which are:

- Print resources
- Non-print resources and
- Electronic resources

Print Resources: - These are materials which have gone through the technical process of printing. They are sub divided into reference and non-reference information resources. Examples of reference books being found in school libraries are dictionaries, encyclopedia, colorful atlases, almanac, dictionaries etc. while example of non-reference books are fiction books, periodicals, newspapers and magazines etc.

Non-print Resources: - They are resources which depend on the senses of sight or/and hearing to convey meaning. They are also divided into audio visual software and hardware. The audio resource presents information through the sense of hearing e.g. audio recordings, tapes. The visual resources present information through the sense of sight as in visual materials like posters, charts, photographs, etc. In case of audio-visual resources, it presents information using a combination of both senses (senses of sight and hearing) e.g. films, home video, television. All these are audio-visual software. The audio-visual hardware are the machineries or gadgets for using the software,. They include record player, projectors and video recorders.

Electronic Resources: - These are computer based information resources in the school libraries .e.g. Microcomputer with a Compact Disk -Read Only Memory (CD-ROM), computer with internet connectivity. Computer literacy is very important for school children and students in both primary and secondary schools especially in the 21st century. Library information resources are very essential because they are librarian's stock in trade; there is no way a library can offer any meaningful services without these library resources.

Aina (2003) posited that preservation is the maintenance of library information materials so that they can be closed to the original condition as much as possible. He further explained many preservation methods such as eliminating or reducing the factors that accelerate deterioration information resources especially paper- based materials such as high temperature, relative humidity and long exposure of sunlight rays. Singh and Kaur (2009) opined that preservation and access to knowledge and information resources are the main mandate of school libraries alongside supporting the mission of its establishment which is teaching and learning.

Preservation as a collection management strategy has been relegated if not totally neglected by librarians and documentalists for a very long time in Africa, especially in Nigeria. Therefore, knowledge of the causes of deterioration of library information resources is very essential for librarians and others who are concerned about the preservation of information stored in books and non-book formats (Varlamoff, 2005).

Statement of the Problem

Library is a repository of information resources for the educational development of human-beings at all levels with its significant contributions to the academic achievement of teachers and students in schools. It has been observed that preservation of information resources in the school libraries has been neglected by the school management, state and local government.

Information resources in school libraries are mostly print materials that can deteriorate due to several factors and this can hinder the long term access to them when they are needed by users. Acid paper-based information resources, poor storage environment, stealing, mutilation of information resources in school libraries has affected information resources and learning in many primary and post primary schools. These problems have been aged-long problem that seem to be without solution. Therefore, it becomes a researchable point of interest. This study therefore intends to find out the preservation practices and essential ingredients of preservation put in place in selected secondary schools in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this paper will:

1. examine the available information resources in the school library
2. ascertain the existence of preservation policies in school libraries in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State;
3. identify the level of support given to preservation by the school management;
4. find out the level of training for library staff in preservation of school library resources and
5. ascertain the barriers to effective preservation of information resources in the school libraries.

Research Questions

The following research questions are formulated in line with the main objectives:

1. What are the available information resources in the school library?
2. What policies exist on preservation of information resources in the school libraries?
3. What is the level of support given by the school management for the preservation of information resources in the school libraries?
4. What is the level of training for library staff in preservation of information resources in the school libraries?
5. What are the barriers to effective preservation of information resources in school libraries?

Significance of the Study

School libraries are expected to provide adequate information resources including print, non-print and electronic materials to teachers, students and its community. Therefore, the outcome of this study will assist and sensitize the school management on the need to have functional school library that will cater for the academic needs of both teachers and students.

The findings of this study will be very valuable in charting the way forward for the improved preservation of information resources in school libraries. Likewise the study will raise awareness on the preservation of information resources in school libraries in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of preservation

Preservation is defined as everything which contributes to the physical well being of information resources and it includes the protection, maintenance and restoration of library and archive information resources. The term preservation also includes all the managerial and financial considerations such as storage, accommodation provision, staffing levels, policies, techniques and methods involved in preserving library and archives information resources and

the information contained in them. Preservation is an aspect of the management of the library. Its objective is to ensure that information resources of any kind or form survive in an accessible and useable form for as long as it is wanted (Popoola, 2003).

Preservation is applied to safeguard the library information resources from decay and deterioration. Preservation is the process in which all actions are taken to check and retard deterioration of information resources in the library. Preservation is a pressing concern for librarians/information professionals in all parts of the world. From time immemorial librarians have seen the need to preserve their information resources. The preservation of information resources has engaged the thoughts and actions of many librarians from the earliest times. They realized that they need to preserve the world's memories.

According to Isah (2003) no librarian of today can shy away from the fact that "Information world" stands the imminent risk of losing so much of its valuable written heritage through the over increasing deterioration of information resources. The researcher also investigates that the situation is more alarming in secondary schools in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State. Nwiyenwa (2000) did not mince words when he stressed the great need for a well established document repair and conservation units in Africa because in his view with the exception of air pollution all agents which cause paper damage such as acid, heat, humidity, light, fungi, insects, pests, rodents, normal wear and tear and people are more pronounceable in the continent than elsewhere.

All over the world, nations are increasingly becoming aware of the role played by information resources. The value of information resources was perhaps clearly stated by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (2003) when it stated:

In no circumstances should information resources be regarded as additional luxury materials but rather they should be considered as necessary components in a fully integrated library services...In developed countries the provision of information resources and their associated equipments might be regarded as of greater importance than any other things because the level of literacy, oral and visual communication is essential.

Despite the fact that school libraries play a vital role in promoting students' education and preservation of cultural heritage, they were very often neglected (Matangira, 2003). However, the major objective of school libraries is to facilitate access to collections there in so that the collections are accessible for teaching and learning purposes. A second and also very important objective of school libraries is the preservation of information resources there in so that they could be available to future generations. Strategies to attain these two objectives often conflict with one another as there is no way collections could be used by users without being damaged either accidentally or intentionally during use.

Necessity for Preservation of Information Resources

Mnjama (2010) opined that the documentary heritage which the school libraries housed provides the raw materials that allow us to understand, explain order and enjoy the visible and invisible world. Access to the past information resources enable us to understand and locate ourselves in the present and give us the opportunity to inform the future. In preserving our shared past, we are preserving the collective memory for future generations.” In school libraries if past information resources were being preserved, it will, of course, be of great benefits for new generations in having deep knowledge of what had happened in the past. ”. The importance of preserving library information resources was even summed up by Cloonan (2001) when he stated “that preservation allows for the continuity of the past with the present and the future”.

According to the National Preservation Office (2001) “libraries and archives contain an irreplaceable accumulation of human knowledge and experience”. Nevertheless, it would be a waste of resources if after institutions such as school libraries have devoted considerable sums of money in acquiring and processing information resources and these valuable resources remain inaccessible to scholars and other bona fide users especially teachers, students and school alumni. Therefore the cause and effect of information resources on users necessitate its preservation measures.

Preservation challenges were known throughout the world, many experts in the field have gradually began to realize that there were specific problems faced by conservators in different parts of the world. Therefore, with this reason there should be a necessity for preserving information resources for at all types of libraries, archives, documentation centers in order to face off the preservation challenges in Africa and in Nigeria particularly. Teygeler et al. (2001)

posited that the problems encountered by conservationists in many developing countries are often more complex than those in developed countries. Therefore, there is need to undertake studies that relate to specific area and suggest solutions that address these issues. A preservation strategy involves three aspects: assessment, planning and action. A preservation assessment is usually undertaken to determine the preservation requirements for the collection and to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the building, policies and guidelines, storage environment, and archives holding (information resources), maintenance and disaster management.

Popoola (2003) also summed it up that there are reasons and necessities for preservation of library information resources and he stated that:

1. The society expects school libraries to collect and preserve records of the past (such as paper based-material and other information carriers) in order to learn from them;
2. Library information resources are expensive to acquire, process and organize for use than to allow them to be deteriorated;
3. Annual library and archive budgetary provisions especially for library resources management have decreased;
4. Library information resources are essential ingredient of teaching and learning in all educational institutions;
5. The valuable information resources contained in library and archive are very useful for development of a country;
6. They are stock in trade and assets of libraries and archives.

He further explained that the library management must embark on preservation and conservation programmes that will safeguard their information resources from partial and total deterioration and destruction in order to meet the ever increasing information demands of their users. The legal and social responsibilities of libraries worldwide make it comparative for them to preserving their information resources.

Agents of deterioration of information resources

Deterioration is defined in this study as a loss of quality in library information resources, which decreases its ability to carry out its function. Agents of deterioration to library information resources could be categorized into two actions: those caused by some inherent instability of the materials otherwise known as internal factors and those caused by external factors.

Deterioration Caused by the Inherent Instability of the Material/Internal Factors

The use of highly acidic paper for information resources especially print materials since the middle of the last century is one of the major internal factors causing materials deterioration. It was of the opinion that almost all the eighteenth century, manuscripts were brittle and unusable. The reason for this was not because the information materials were so old but the deteriorated documents were highly acidic with PH values ranging from 3.0 to 3.5 while conversely, order documents that are still in good condition were of low acid content or even some what alkaline with PH values of 6.0 or above. The contents of the acidic components can cause paper-based information resources to be deteriorated and decay.

Deterioration Caused by External Factors

The main elements of this type of deterioration are the actions of moisture, heat, light, photocopying, pollution, relative humidity, temperature, poor handling of information resources and biological agents such as insects, rodents, moulds, bacteria, fungi, natural disaster such as water, fire, earthquake, man such as theft, poor handling and storage. Apart from poor handling of information resources in perfect bindings in some libraries and archives, other factors include dust, light, rain, and flood.

Moisture

Moisture works for and against the preservation of library information resources. A certain amount of moisture is necessary for flexibility in paper and vellum. For example too little moisture makes paper brittle while excess encourage mould growth. High humidity and temperature accelerates the failure of adhesives. Mould spores are in the air, and can only establish colonies on a surface when moisture is present. The naturally high humidity in tropical and subtropical regions of the world is of the greatest concern to librarians. Though fungi can be destroyed by high temperature e.g. the oven, heat and fungicides, the most effective treatment is to control the moisture, which is necessary for their growth.

Heat/temperature

Heat, food and moisture are the three conditions for microbial growth and these accelerate the chemical derioration of paper, leather, iron and textiles materials (Madu and

Adeniran, 2002). Cellulose fibers are deteriorated by hydrolysis i.e. decomposition by chemical reaction with water, oxidation and photosynthesis and each of the processes is accelerated by heat in the presence of minute quantities of iron, copper and other impurities, which are always found in paper. However, low temperature and low humidity decreases the rate of deterioration. This implies that low temperature area in the library prolong the life span of library information resources. Moreover, Unomah (2008) posited that most libraries in Nigeria have no air conditioners or fans to regulate the optimum temperature needed for proper preservation of library information resources.

Light

Materials, such as books and other paper-based information resources are light sensitive. Madu and Adeniran (2002) opined in their publication that ultraviolet radiation and visible light cause fading, dislocation and embrittlement to library information resources. While incandescent light is least destructive, artificial light takes a little longer to deteriorate paper materials. While sunlight damages are minimized by reducing the quality of light falling on any of these information resources. The simplest way to block daylight is to block all windows with wood or masonry and resort to artificial light which is not always desirable. The quality of light transmitted by windows is controllable with tinted glass, curtains, shades and louvers.

Pollutions

Dust usually encourages the growth of micro-organisms on most library information resources especially books formats. However, Singh (2004) asserted that the most roads are not tarred and the situation is pathetic as most libraries are located in towns. While almost school libraries were situated where dust prevailing. This without doubt allows dust to enter the libraries through doors and windows, which in turn aid fast deterioration of library information resources.

The Human Factor

Improper handling and storage practices are major preservation menace of information resources in school libraries. This is so because of the inexperience of the major users in school libraries. Students/ pupils need a continuous orientation exercise on library information resources handling to avoid poor handling and shelving, mutilation and defacing of these vital information resources in the libraries. Adejube (2012) cited Adams, opined that the greatest enemy of library information resources is the librarian (or archivist) who neglects his/her information resources in the quest for ever more efficient management systems.

Therefore, handlers of library information resources such as librarians/information professionals, archivists and library patrons (teachers, students/pupils in case of school libraries) were also constitute to prime destruction of library materials. This is, of course, a very true statement. It is not uncommon to see members of school library users visit acts of vandalism on library information resources, especially paper-based materials tearing pages out them either knowingly or unknowingly, defacing and other anti-library practices. The users of information resources in school libraries should be properly oriented because of their age and little knowledge they have about the significance of information resources to avoid loss or deterioration of valuable resources in school libraries.

Preservation of Information Resources in School Libraries

Preservation is a crucial element in the process of managing information resources in the library. The aim of preservation is to prolong the life span of information resources. Yet several factors are responsible for the quick deterioration and decay of information resources in school libraries. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the school librarians/teacher librarians to see that their information resources are preserved for the maximal use of teachers, students and its communities. Those likely factors that are responsible for the loss of information resources in school libraries include environmental condition (atmospheric pollution, dust), high temperature, relative humidity, biological agents (sunlight, heat, ultraviolet rays), human agents (library staff and the users) and both natural and artificial disaster (flood, fire, earthquakes, war, tornadoes, bomb blast, hurricane).

In the light of this, preventive measures should be put in place for the preservation of information resources in school libraries. Jyotshina (2005) opined that preservation of information resources in school libraries is divided into two (2) aspects:-

1. The preventive measures
2. The curative measures

The preventive measures: - These include all forms of indirect actions aimed at prolonging the life span of library information resources. It comprises all the methods of good house-keeping, caretaking, dusting, installation of thermometer and fire extinguisher on the school library walls, use of humidifiers, periodical supervision and prevention of any possibility of damage by physical, chemical, biological and human factors.

The curative measures: - These include all forms of direct actions aimed at prolonging the life span of library information resources. It includes repairing, mending, fumigation, de-acidification of information resources in school libraries.

Aspect of Preservation

However, there are dos and don'ts which the school librarians/teacher librarians and the library users should follow to increase the longevity of information resources in school libraries.

These are among others:-

1. Installation of thermometer at the wall of school libraries to regulate the temperature as at when necessary;
2. Rare information resources and manuscripts should be kept in specially prepared containers;
3. The use of humidifier to regulate the atmospheric moisture;
4. Installation of fire extinguisher in case of fire outbreak;
5. Regular dusting of shelves and information resources available in the school libraries by using vacuum cleaner or fine brush;
6. Maintenance of optimum storage condition is necessary to control the propagation of biological agents of deterioration such as insects, rodents, moulds;
7. Provision of photocopying machine to reproduce rare information resources so as to keep the original copy;
8. Care should be taken while photocopying any information bearing materials, because as at that time stress is imposed on such material. The binding and the spine may damage;
9. Fumigation and constant mopping of floor of the school libraries to prevent any destructive microorganisms that are threat to information resources;
10. All library staff should be trained on how to handle information resources and likewise the library users;
11. A disaster plan for the school library should be prepared and reviewed at regular intervals;
12. When information resources is displayed open, never use metal clips or pins to hold book pages open;

13. Do not deface the information resources either by biro or any other writing material;
14. Preservation policies for the school libraries should be adhered to at all time;
15. The school libraries should ensure that food items and water are prohibited in the school library premises to avoid ants and other agents of destruction and
16. Air conditioning system and fans for cooling the library information resources and the users are very essential in school libraries for preservation as well.

Library Environment

School libraries environment is very worthy to be studied when discussing preservation of information resources. Management of schools has a lot to do with environmental studies. A good site must be selected in order to have a better library environment, as well as the planning the construction of the library building. In constructing the school library's building within the school premises, it is very important to choose the best architectural design for the library, having cross ventilation facilities for free air circulation within the building. In case, if there is need to use wooden materials for the construction of shelves, table and chairs, the wood selected should be well seasoned and must be treated chemically to avoid insects and termites destruction.

Growth of giant plants near the library building at times is very fair and conducive for reading. But in order way round it should be avoided in school libraries because of the level, age and thinking faculty of the students/pupils in the school environment, as also the roots of the plant may damage the building foundation. School libraries are far better if they could be constructed away from the traffic to avoid dust and dirt which served as agents of deterioration to information resources. Provision of adequate number of electric fans in absence of air conditioners will facilitate air circulation inside the school libraries. Sunlight should be prevented from falling directly on paper-based information resources in school libraries because the sun is a great emitter of ultraviolet rays that gradually deteriorate information resources in school libraries.

Essential Ingredients for Preservation of Information Resources

- **Preservation Policy**

Akande (2010) asserted that there can be no serious commitment to preservation programme without a policy, which will guide effort at solving identified preservation problems.

According to Ngulube (2005) he described preservation policies for information resources as indispensable tools for organizations that are committed to facilitating the survival of information materials in their custody. Policies, therefore, is very crucial to facilitate survival of information resources in school libraries. Policies are important because they set out goals to be achieved as well as guidelines for implementing them. Policies also facilitate a creative allocation of funds and staff, and specify other aspects of implementation and monitoring.

Most African countries do not have a National Information Policy (NIP) which makes the formulation of preservation policies in library and information centers (Wamukoya and Mutula, 2005). For example, the Pan-African Conference (PAC) on preservation and conservation of library and archival information materials strongly recommended that “each country should establish a committee to develop a national preservation policy for implementation by government (Recommendation 1995)”. Granted without funding and personnel with expertise, the implementation of preservation policies would be extremely difficult, but all the same, efforts must be made to formulate policies that encompass all activities that are fundamental to the effective preservation policies on information resources.

- **Training of Library Staff on Preservation**

Ekwelem (2011) defined training as” a process of altering the behaviour and /or attitudes of employees in a direction to increase organisational goal. Training of school librarians/ teacher librarians on the area of information resources preservation is very imperative if the society really wants to safeguard the present information resources for the prosperity usage. Training has long been regarded as the bedrock of achieving quality productivity in any profession.

However, Ajidahun (2007) argued most convincingly that there are professional librarians in the university libraries in Nigeria whose knowledge of library automation has been rendered obsolete owing to lack of training and re-training courses; which development poses challenges to their coping with modern library practices. This fact must not how greatly affect the set standard of school libraries in Nigeria especially in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State. Ngulube (2005) also opined that for any preservation programme to succeed in libraries and archives there must be adequate and well trained manpower. This is because preservation and conservation of information resources is a specialized field of knowledge that

requires information professionals who understand the physical and chemical nature of the materials in their library and archive holdings.

- **Funding of Preservation**

Finance is an essential ingredient for the preservation of information resources in school libraries. After acquiring information resources in the library, the next step of thought should be on how these acquired information resources would be preserved for the needed users. Finance is an important resource necessary for the provision of information resources and likewise the preservation of all these information resources is very imperative. It has been observed that there is need to pump more money on aspect of preservation of information resources so that all the necessary equipment and materials required such as fumigator, fire extinguisher, air conditioners and fans, adequate shelves, good lightning condition, and likewise personnel trainings and good library environment will be attended to at appropriate time.

Barriers to effective preservation of information resources in school libraries

It could not be a surprise issue that school libraries in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria confronting lots of problems in effecting preservation of information resources. Notwithstanding, information managers in African countries especially librarians/information professionals, records managers and archivists are currently facing the problem of effective preservation of information resources in distinguished libraries and archives. There were real challenges faced by East and South African countries in the capture and preservation of information resources (Mnjama and Wamukoya, 2004).

Akotia (2000) in the Ministry of Finance in Uganda opined that the management of information resources and records in government establishment throughout the tenure of the government of Uganda considered Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as an indispensable tool for enhancing productivity and preservation of information resources. Yet little attention was paid to the information management issues and to understanding the forces of change that affect the form and integrity of information resources created within an IT environment. It also revealed that the prominent inhibitors to effective and efficient preservation of information materials in African libraries, archives and record centres include the following:

i. ***Inadequate Finance:*** Almost all African libraries, archives and information centres do not allocate adequate funds in their annual budget for the preservation of information resources in their holdings. This has really caused the low priority or lack of desired attention given to the preservation of information resources by the management of such libraries and archives.

ii. ***Inadequate of Equipments/Materials:*** Lack of suitable or inadequate equipments and materials contributes significantly to the present poor status of preservation of information resources in African libraries, archives and information centres. Some of the essential materials and equipment required for setting up functional conservation and restoration laboratories in African libraries and archives are not available locally (ESARBICA,2002).

iii. ***Problem of Infrastructural Facilities:*** Preservation in African countries is facing the problem of infrastructural facilities such as inappropriate library buildings, erratic power supply, and lack of good site to establish libraries. Many so call libraries in Africa especially school libraries are not adequately reliable for protection of information resources. Some of these libraries could not provide for any sudden disaster, loss, decay and unforeseen circumstances of excessive temperature, humidity, light, theft, fire or even war.

iv. ***Unfavorable Government Economic policies:*** The economic policies of most African governments do not favour library and archival services, so preservation activities are not given the priority attention they deserved. Such economic policies include those concerning high duties and tariffs charged on imports of preservation equipments.

v. ***Tropic Climatic Condition:*** The effects of tropical climate of excessive temperature, high relative humidity, dust and rodents that feed on paper-based resources cause rapid deterioration and decay of information resources in African libraries and archives. These agents of rapid deterioration and decay of information materials add more to the costs association with conservation and restoration of information resources in African libraries, archive and records offices (UNESCO, 2000). Popoola (2003) opined that while stressing the great need for a well established document repair and conservation units in Africa, observed that with the exception of air, fungi, insect and pest are more pronounced in the continent than elsewhere.

vi. ***Quality of paper and Ink:*** The low quality of paper and ink used in the production of information materials especially library books and other paper-based information

resources in libraries pose serious danger to preservation and conservation of information resources in African countries (Popoola, 2003).

vii. ***Lack of preservation and conservation knowledge:*** Akussah (2006) cited in Darling asserted that “until the preservation field researches the point at which most people know what ought to be done, the lack of money to do it on a scale appropriate to the need is not terribly significant”. This submission attests to the fact that knowledge plays a key role in preservation practices. In the same vein, Ngulube (2005) is of the opinion that the real impediment to having viable preservation programmes is not entirely resources-based, but lack of preservation knowledge.

viii. ***Lack of commitment of librarians:*** Among the problems confronting preservation is lack of commitment by the available human resources, particularly, educating librarians about preservation is now widely recognized as an essential element of any plan to address the preservation problems. According to Harvey (1993), preservation education courses for library professionals are typically in one of three formats: as a part of compulsory courses such as library administration in a first professional qualification; an optional course of about one semester; or a separate qualification, for example one or two-year courses in preservation administration. He further argued that it is also essential to offer continuing education opportunities in resources’ preservation for those whose qualifications need updating or those who wish to build on their existing knowledge.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The research instruments used for the study were structured questionnaire tagged ‘Preservation of Information Resources in School Library Questionnaire (PIRSLQ)’ and observation checklist. Observation Checklist was another measuring instrument used for this study to collaborate with the structured questionnaire. This was to observe the available information resources, storage condition of information resources, shelves, library building structures, handling of information resources by the staff and users in the selected government school libraries in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. The population of the study is one-hundred and forty nine (149) being randomly selected from the sampled schools in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. Respondents were made up of the school librarians/teacher librarians, school principals and the vice-principals of the ten (10) selected government secondary schools in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. They were chosen because they would be in the best position to give all the necessary information concerning the issue to be considered in the study. Meanwhile, out of one hundred and forty nine (149) questionnaires administered to the

selected government school libraries, only one hundred and five (145) questionnaires were filled and collected for analysis.

Data Analysis

Data were analysed as they related to the specific areas of the study using descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions, percentages and cross tabulation.

Demographic Information of the Respondents

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by Length of Service

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
5 years and below	9	6.2
6-10 years	8	5.5
11-15 years	17	11.7
16-20 years	13	9.0
21-25 years	15	10.3
26-30 years	29	20.0
31-35 years	54	37.2
Total	145	100.0

Table 1 indicates that 9(6.2%) respondents were in service between 5years and below, 8(5.5%) respondents were in service between 6-10 years, 17(11.7%) respondents were in service between 11-15 years, 13(9.0%) respondents were in service between 16-20 years, 15(10.3%) respondents were in service between 21-25 years while 29(20.0%) and 54(37.2%) respondents were also in service between 26-30 years and 31-35 years respectively. It revealed that the highest respondents to the questions on preservation of information resources in selected school libraries in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria had spent up to or more than thirty (30) years in service as indicated by 54(37.2%) respondents.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: What are the available information resources in the school library?

Table 2: Available information resources in the school library

S/N	Variables	Yes	Percentage (%)	No	Percentage (%)
1.	Textbooks	145	100	-	-
2.	Fictions	136	93.8	9	6.2
3.	Journals	24	16.6	121	83.5
4.	Reference resources	143	98.6	2	1.4
5.	Audio-visual resources	14	9.7	131	90.3
6.	Newspapers	130	89.7	15	10.3
7.	E-Resources	2	1.4	143	98.6

Table 2 shows that 145(100%) respondents agreed that textbooks were the available information resources in the school library. This was followed by reference resources 143(98.6%) respondents, 136(93.8) respondents were of the view that fiction materials available, 130(89.7%) respondents were in support of newspaper information resources while 24(16.6%) respondents agreed with journals as the available information resources in the selected school libraries. However, the least available information resources in the selected school libraries were audio-visual and electronic resources with 4(9.7%) and 2(1.4%) respectively.

Research Question 2: What policies exist on preservation of information resources in the school libraries?

Table 3: Existence of preservation policies on information resources

S/N	Variables	Yes	Percentage (%)	No	Percentage (%)
1.	Existence of preservation policies	96	66.2	49	33.8
2.	Usage of preservation policies	44	30.3	101	69.7
3.	Positive enhancement of preservation policies	58	40.0	87	60.0

Table 3 reveals that there was an existence of preservation policies on information resources in selected school libraries with 96(66.2%) respondents, 44(30.3%) of the respondents indicated that the policies were in use while 58(40.0%) respondents agreed that preservation policies have positive enhancement on information resources.

Research Question 3: What is the level of support given by the school management for the Preservation of information resources in the school libraries?

Table 4: Level of school management support to preservation

S/N	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Very high	90	62.1
2.	High	35	24.1
3.	Average	11	7.6
4.	Very low	9	6.2
5.	Low	-	-
	Total	145	100

Table 4 reveals that the level of school management support to preservation of information resources in the selected school libraries was very high with 90(62.1%) respondents, 35(24.1%) respondents agreed that the level of school management support to preservation was high, 11(7.6%) respondents indicated that the level of school management support to preservation was average, 9(6.2%) respondents were of the opinion that the level of school management support was very low while none of the respondents indicated that the level of school management support to preservation of information was low.

Research Question 4: What is the level of training for library staff in preservation of information resources in the school libraries?

Table 5: Level of staff training on preservation.

S/N	Variables	Yes	Percentage (%)	No	Percentage (%)
1.	School-house training	78	53.8	67	46.2
2.	International Training	-	-	145	100
3.	School orientation programme	124	85.5	21	14.5
4.	Seminar /workshop/Conference outside the school	27	18.6	118	81.4
5.	Seminar /workshop/Conference within the school	99	68.3	46	31.7
6.	Intra-state training	2	1.4	143	98.6
7.	Inter-state training	-	-	145	100

Table 5 reveals that school orientation programme was the highest level of staff training given on preservation of information resources in the selected school libraries with 124(85.5%) respondents, followed by seminar/workshop/conference within the school with 99(68.3%) respondents, 78(53.8%) respondents were of the opinion for school house training, 27(18.6%) respondents were in support with seminar/workshop/conference outside the school, 2(1.4%) respondents agreed with intra-state training while none of the respondents indicated their opinion for both international and inter-state training of staff on preservation of information resources in the selected school libraries.

Research Question 5: What are the barriers to effective preservation of information resources in school libraries?

Table 6: Barriers to effective preservation of information resources

S/N	Variables	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Agree		Agree	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1.	Inadequate funding of the library	8	5.5	3	2.1	74	51.0	60	41.4
2.	Lack of preservation equipment	67	46.2	27	18.6	19	13.1	32	22.1
3.	School management attitude towards preservation	99	68.3	13	8.9	20	13.8	13	8.9
4.	Lack of competent manpower in preservation	85	57.4	29	20.0	14	9.7	17	11.7
5.	Harsh environmental condition	95	65.5	11	7.6	24	16.6	15	10.3
6.	Inadequate infrastructures	20	13.8	16	11.0	26	17.9	83	57.2
7.	Lack of preservation policy	84	57.9	26	17.9	19	13.1	16	11.0
8.	Absence of e-equipment for preservation e.g. computer system, scanning machine, photocopier etc.	12	8.3	32	22.1	47	32.4	54	37.2

The results presented in Table 6 reveal that inadequate funding of school libraries was the top of the problems facing effective preservation of information resources in selected school libraries as 134(92.4%) respondents strongly agreed and agreed. This was followed by absence of e-equipment for preservation with 101(69.6%) respondents while 109(74.8%) respondents were also agreed that inadequate infrastructures were also contributed as barriers to effective preservation of information resources in the selected school libraries. Meanwhile, other variables such as lack of preservation equipment with 51(35.2%), school management attitude towards preservation with 33(22.7%), lack of competent manpower in preservation with 31(21.4%), harsh environmental condition with 39(26.9%) and lack of preservation policies with 35(24.1%) respondents were not considered as barriers to effective preservation of information resources in the selected school libraries.

Discussion and Findings

The findings from the demographic information of respondents on preservation of information resources in selected school libraries in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria revealed that aged working class respondents responded to the questions on the questionnaires. This evidence was obvious as 54(37.2%) respondents which took the highest respondents had spent up to or more than thirty (30) years in school service.

The outcome of this study also revealed that the highest available information resources in selected school libraries were textbooks, followed by reference materials and fictions. The school libraries did not acquire other print and non-print resources such as journals, magazine, audio-visual and electronic resources. This finding was contrary to the opinion of Kolade (2001) who stated that “the school library is the heart of the school with a wide variety of education media. These media include books, magazines, newspapers, recordings, maps, films, photographs and paintings, computer systems and audio-visual information materials such as television, video tape, camera, slide, transparency, microforms (microfilms, microfiches, microcards) and tape recorders for school projects”.

The findings also revealed that there was an existence of preservation policies on information resources in selected school libraries. This finding was supported by Ngulube (2005) who described preservation policies for information resources as indispensable tools for organizations that are committed to facilitating the survival of information materials in their custody. But finding indicated that the existence of preservation policies in school libraries had nothing to do with use of the policies which resorted to negative enhancement of preservation policies on information resources in school libraries.

It was also revealed that preservation policy provision guidelines were not adequately addressed in the sense that school library management attended promptly to guidelines on security of information resources and photocopying of information resources without corresponding attention to the guidelines on funding of preservation programme/activities, training of library staff on preservation especially training outside school premises and international training, handling of information resources by users, guidelines on information resources disposal and disaster recovery procedure.

Furthermore, the level of school management support to preservation of information resources in school libraries was very high. The research further revealed that school

management based its full support on the area of formation of preservation policies on information resources whereas full attention to the provision of fund for the preservation of information resources was totally neglected. It was even revealed that the greatest barriers against effective preservation of information resources in school libraries were lack of fund, inadequate infrastructural facilities and absence of electronic equipment for preserving the available information resources in school libraries.

Ekwelem (2011) stated that training has been long regarded as the bedrock of achieving quality of productivity in any profession. The findings indicated that school libraries engaged their staff on job training on preservation of information resources based on school house training and school library orientation programme. But preservation activities should not be placed on local training alone but intra and inter- state training and if possible international training should be included for the school library staff in order to achieve a quality in preservation of information resources in school libraries.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that preservation of information resources in selected school libraries in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria was given priorities as level of school management supports for preservation of information resources was very high. The study also revealed that selected school libraries lack acquisition of journals and e-resources for the use of students while priorities were given to textbooks, fictions and encyclopedias.

The level of staff training on preservation of information resources in the selected school libraries could be concluded as local levels as the study revealed that school library staff were not given any opportunity for either inter-state training or international training on preservation of information resources in their different schools. There were also evidence of challenges facing the preservation of information resources in selected schools libraries such as inadequate infrastructures, absence of e-equipment for preservation e.g. computer system, scanning machine, photocopier etc. and inadequate funding of the library .

Recommendations

The research study had shown some shortcomings on preservation of information resources in selected school libraries in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. Therefore, the following recommendations were made:

1. School libraries should be adequately funded. It is when school libraries are given priorities in terms of fund that will be enabling to preserve its information resources from deterioration and sudden disasters. Therefore, governments at all levels are urged to provide enough funds for the preservation of information resources at primary and post primary school libraries.
2. Review of the existing preservation policies on information resources is recommended for the school libraries. If the preservation policies are reviewed, it would definitely help the school management, the library staff and the users. Everyone would easily read and it would enhance preservation of information resources positively. It is also being recommended that preservation policies on information resources should be reinforced in school libraries for an effect use.
3. Training of library staff on preservation of information resources is also recommended. Although the research result revealed that school libraries engaged their staff on school orientation programme and school-house training. Notwithstanding school library personnel could also be sent abroad on the aspect of preservation of information resources because preservation activities are specialised and required information professionals who understand the human, physical and chemical nature of information resources in their libraries.
4. Publications like journals and magazines were also recommended for the school libraries. These would eventually increase the knowledge and reading habit of pupils and students if acquired by the school libraries. As all these information resources are acquired, they must be preserved for long use.

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