

Challenges in the Selection and Acquisition of Grey Literature in Nigerian Libraries

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ABSTRACT: *This study investigated the challenges in the selection and acquisition of grey literature in Nigerian Libraries. Survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study consist of 17 staff working in Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Library, Igbariam Campus. There was no sampling because the population of the study was small and manageable. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. Mean and frequency tables were used to analyse the research questions. The major findings of the study included that all categories of grey literature resources are available in the library studied, grey literature is acquired through purchase, donation and exchange, cataloguing and classification is a means of processing grey literature resources, and the most challenge libraries face in acquiring grey literature is lack of fund. Based on the findings, it was recommended that government should make provision for adequate funds for acquisition of grey literature in University libraries, the library management should embark on regular review and supply of new and more grey materials, library management should employ subject specialists that can assist in the selection acquisition of grey materials, and the library management should create proper awareness to both teachers and students on the role of grey literature.*

KEYWORDS: challenges, selection, acquisition, grey literature, Nigerian libraries

INTRODUCTION

The term "grey literature" is used to describe publications not published commercially or indexed by major database vendors. It is occasionally the sole source for specific research questions. Grey literature brings connotations of bleakness, apathy, indifference, and questionable authority to mind (Ukpebor, 2017, Mason, 2009). Grey literature has some connection to the brain's "grey

matter" since so much of it seems highly intellectual and is significant for research and development in many subject areas. Grey literature publications are important materials that libraries, must acquire

Grey literatures are not rigorously peer reviewed, they contribute greatly to national development, since they sometimes originate from scholars. Grey literature materials do not have any ISBN or ISSN and so cannot be easily tracked down or accessed by a large group of clients except some concerted efforts are made. This explains the reason why it is called grey. Grey is used to connote something that is not clear, wholly, that is different, while literature in this context means publications. This view was strongly supported by Mason (2012) who wrote that grey literature brings connotation of bleakness, apathy, indifference and questionable authority to mind. They are not controlled by commercial publishing interests because they are usually issued by government, academia, pressure groups, trade unions, industries etc. Grey literature materials are publications without commercial purpose; articles and information published especially on the Internet, without a commercial purpose or the mediation of a commercial publisher. Generally, they are materials which are not attainable through the conventional channels and not available through normal book selling channels used for research (Okoroma 2012; Towolawi, 2017, Weintraub, 2000).

Grey literature includes scientific, technical, economic, social, and other reports developed in national and private institutions, unpublished conference materials, standards/patents/technical specifications and recommendations, statistical resources, discussion/working papers, factsheets, promotion/advertising/commercial documentation, preprints, preliminary progress and advanced reports, research memoranda, posters, unpublished translations, and unpublished bibliographies (Muokebe, & Anaehobi, 2021). Rucinski, 2015; Nahotko, 2014; Fatokun & Amusa, 2014; and Siegel, 2010).

Grey literature publications are important materials that libraries, must acquire to support research. Although not rigorously peer reviewed, they contribute greatly to national development since they sometimes originate from scholars. Grey literature materials do not have any ISBN or ISSN and so cannot be easily tracked down or accessed by a large group of clients except some concerted efforts are made. This explains the reason why it is called grey. Grey is used to connote something that is not clear, wholly, that is different, while literature in this context means publications. This view was strongly supported by Osayand & Ukpebor, 2012 and Mason (2009) who wrote that the term grey literature brings connotation of bleakness, apathy, indifference and questionable authority to mind. They are not controlled by commercial publishing interests because they are usually issued by government, academia, pressure groups, trade unions, industries etc. Grey literature materials are publications without commercial purpose; articles and information published especially on the Internet, without a commercial purpose or the mediation of a commercial publisher. Generally, they are materials which are not attainable through the conventional channels and not available through normal book selling channels. Grey literature publications are important materials that libraries, must select, and acquire. (Upev, Terna, & Beetsch, 2018).

Selection is the process of choosing library materials to satisfy the needs for inclusion in a library with a view to providing a balanced increase to the stock (Anyanwu, Amadi and Zander, 2006). According to Nwalo, (2003) book selection is the art of choosing items to be acquired from a list of publication in every library of any university, there should be a specific policy with regard to selection of materials. This policy should specify the type and range of items to be selected and acquired and reflect the objectives of the parent's institution. Moreover, the essence of selection and acquisition of library materials in academic libraries is to know the materials relevant to them. Selection of library materials is important because of literature explosion, reduction in library budget, reduction in income of library users. Good selectors should aim, at satisfying existing demand, anticipate future needs by users and ensure that good quality materials are provided, avoid bias in selection and ensure that the right kind of materials are provided at the right time. In selecting/acquisition of materials for academic libraries you must consider the aims and objectives of the institution, the number of department and subject areas. Library information resources must be selected before they are acquired.

Acquisition can be defined as the process of obtaining library materials to satisfy the needs of library users. It is a means by which books and non-books materials are added to the library. Acquisition is the process of obtaining library information resources either print or non-print. Acquisition is carried out through purchase, gift, exchange and legal deposit. It involves the provision of current information which supports the curriculum of the parent institution.

From the understanding of various definitions of grey literature, the selection and acquisition of grey literature in Nigerian libraries becomes an issue the librarian must exploit. Most importantly, the acquisition librarian needs to know what kind of information their clientele want. The key point here is that since grey literature is not well-covered by conventional book trade channels, the acquisition librarian is faced with such difficulties as to: identify, acquire, process and access these literatures than the conventional literatures (Kwaghga, Precious, Gabriel, & Chukwuka, 2019). Hence, libraries desiring to use grey literature as a source of information must be prepared to accept challenges and decide on their collection due to the ever dwindling fund allocation.

Libraries and information centres acquire a wide range of information resources to satisfy the information needs of their clientele. These resources are both in print and non-print format. They are organized to meet users' needs at all levels of education and professional practices. However, acquisitions of grey literature are not given prominence in libraries in Nigeria. Acquisition and integration of grey literature are often neglected in most Nigerian academic libraries, despite their inherent benefits to research and knowledge development. It is against this background that that this study seeks to investigate the possible challenges in the selection and acquisition of grey literature in Nigerian libraries.

Statement of problems

The dangers of poor selection and acquisition of grey literature resources is felt from its importance as a medium of complementing and communicating research

findings to a wider audience. Reading and research activities may be hampered as a result of poor selection and acquisition of these important resources. Regrettably, poor collection of grey resources in the libraries in Nigeria has created an information gap between the researchers and other end users thereby limiting the communication and use of research findings. Similarly, loss of primary sources of information, a break in interconnection of material publication, loss of history of production that cannot be encompassed in the published copy, denying of social interactions and academic exchange of ideas are likely dangers posed by poor management of grey literature.

Regrettably, a study that investigates this situation in libraries in Nigeria has not been carried out at this particular period as it was done in other geographical areas of the world. It is in this regard, that the study intends to investigate the selection and acquisition of grey literature in libraries in Nigeria.

Research questions

1. What types of grey literature are available in Nigerian Libraries?
2. What are the methods of selecting grey literature in Nigerian libraries?
3. What are the methods of acquisition of grey literature in Nigerian Libraries?
4. What are the methods of processing of grey literature in Nigerian libraries?
5. What strategies can be used for the improvement on the selection and acquisition of grey literature?

METHOD

The research design was descriptive survey. This study was conducted in Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Anambra state which is in South East Geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The population of the study consists of 17 staff working in Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Library, Igbariam Campus. There was no sampling. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire. All the 17 copies of questionnaire distributed were returned in good condition. The data obtained through the questionnaire was analysed using mean scores and frequency table. Scores from 2.50 and above was accepted, while below 2.50 was not accepted.

Presentation of data

Research Question 1: What are types of grey literature provided in libraries in Anambra State?

Table 1: Staff responses on the types of grey literature available in Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Library.

SN	ITEM	MEAN	DECISION
1.	Calendars	3.00	Accepted
2.	Students projects	2.90	Accepted
3.	Clippings	2.85	Accepted
4.	Conference Proceedings	3.50	Accepted
5.	Newsletters	3.40	Accepted
6.	Advertising Leaflets	2.00	Rejected
7.	Newspapers	3.20	Accepted

The result in Table 1 shows that the respondents accepted all the items in this table except item 6 which was rejected. Item 5 (Newsletters) got the highest acceptance with the mean score of 3.40. Item 2 (Clippings) has the lowest acceptance with the mean score of 2.85.

Research Question 2: What are the methods of Acquiring Grey Literature Resources?

Table 2: Responses on methods of Acquiring Grey Literature Resources in COOU library.

SN	ITEM	MEAN	DECISION
1.	Purchase	3.41	Accepted
2.	Donations and gifts	3.30	Accepted
3.	Exchanges with other libraries	2.50	Accepted
4.	Standing order deposit for staff.	2.85	Accepted

All the 4 items in Table 2 were accepted by the respondents. The highest acceptance was accorded to item 1 (Purchase) with the mean score of 3.41.

Research Question 3: What are the methods of processing grey literature in your library?

Table 3: Mean responses on method of processing grey literature.

SN	ITEM	MEAN	DECISION
1.	Classification	2.55	Accepted
2.	Cataloguing	3.15	Accepted
3.	Indexing and abstracting	2.50	Accepted
4.	Others	3.00	Accepted

The result in Table 3 shows that the respondents accepted that all the items listed. The highest acceptance goes to item 2 (Cataloguing) with the mean score of 3.15, while the lowest acceptance goes to item 3 (Indexing and abstracting) with the mean score of 2.50.

Research Question 4: What are the challenges of acquisition and selection of grey literature?

Table 4: Mean responses on challenges of acquisition and selection of grey literature.

SN	ITEM	MEAN	DECISION
1.	Inadequate fund	4.00	Accepted
2.	Absence of acquisition policy	3.00	Accepted
3.	Insufficient bibliographic details	3.10	Accepted
4.	Lack of commercial publishers to contact	3.45	Accepted
5.	Wrong perception of librarians on grey literature	2.50	Accepted
6.	Non-advertisement of .resources.	2.80	Accepted
7.	Hard to find and access	2.50	Accepted

The result in Table 4 shows that the respondents accepted that all the items listed. The highest acceptance goes to item 1 (Inadequate funding) with the mean score of 4.00, while the lowest acceptance goes to items 5(wrong perception of librarians on grey literature) and 7(Hard to find and access) with the mean scores of 2.50 respectively.

Research Question 5: What are the ways of improving acquisition and selection of grey literature resources?

Table 5: Mean responses the ways to improve acquisition and selection of grey literature resources.

SN	ITEM	MEAN	DECISION
1.	Provision of adequate fund to sponsor acquisition and management	3.00	Accepted
2.	Formulation of firm acquisition policy	3.00	Accepted
3.	Establishment of depository centers.	3.00	Accepted
4.	Filling of conference papers in pamphlet boxes and vertical file collection	2.80	Accepted
5.	Proper labeling of storage facilities	2.90	Accepted
6.	Provision of national bibliography for grey literature resources.	3.10	Accepted
7.	Employment of subject specialist with IT knowledge	3.50	Accepted
8.	Production of in-house bulletins	2.60	Accepted

The result in Table 5 shows that the respondents accepted that all the items listed. The highest acceptance goes to item 7 (Employment of subject specialist with IT knowledge) with the mean

score of 3.50, while the lowest acceptance goes to item 8(Production of in-house bulletin) with the mean score of 2.60.

DISCUSSION

From the study, it was revealed that all the grey literature items identified in the study are available in the libraries except one item which is advertising leaflets. The available grey literature materials include calendar, students projects, clippings, conference proceedings, newsletters and newspapers. This finding is in agreement with the finding of Muokebe and Aniehobi (2021), who disclosed that grey literature materials are readily available in all Nigerian libraries.

The study shows that the respondents agree that the process of selecting grey literatures include purchase, donations, exchange with other libraries, and standing order deposit for staff. This finding agrees with the findings of Towolawi, (2017), who stated that grey literature resources can be made available in the library through donations, purchase, and exchange.

The study shows that the respondents agree that the methods of processing grey literatures include cataloguing, classification, indexing and abstracting. This finding is in agreement with the finding of Aina, (2000) who stated that grey literature resources can as well be processed after being acquired into the library.

The study accepted insufficient fund, Absence of acquisition policy, Insufficient bibliographic details, Lack of commercial publishers to contact, Wrong perception of librarians on grey literature, Non-advertisement of resources, Hard to find and access as the main challenges faced by libraries in acquiring grey literature. This finding agrees with the assertion of Osayande, & Ukpebor, (2012) that librarians face some challenges such as lack of fund, difficulty in finding it among others.

The study reveals some strategies for the improvement of selection and acquisition of grey literature resources as Provision of adequate fund to sponsor acquisition and management, Formulation of firm acquisition policy, Establishment of depository centers, Filling of conference papers in pamphlet boxes and vertical file collection, Proper labeling of storage facilities, Provision of national bibliography for grey literature resources, Employment of subject specialist with IT knowledge, Production of in-house bulletins. This finding agrees with the finding of Upev, Terna, & Beetseh (2018) that employment of subject specialist with IT knowledge will go a long way in improving the process of selection and acquisition of grey literature in libraries.

CONCLUSION

The increasing demands on published material occasioned by the rapid rate of student's enrolment in universities calls for a change from the self-centered acquisition of conventional published materials to acquisition of grey literature especially the literature produced/circulated within the locality of the users. This is to augment the costly, scarcely and sparsely distributed published

materials that are really seen in localities. This shift demands for efficient and effective management of grey literature resources to facilitate usage. Hence the study investigated the challenges of selection, acquisition and use of this important resource in academic libraries of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The research discovered fair treatment of grey literature resources in the library studied and emphasises where the library still needs to pay a closer attention to, as well as suggestions, with a view of improving selection and acquisition of grey literature. Implementation of these suggestions is timely, to harness the values of grey literature in libraries. The study concludes that strategies could be adopted for improving the selection and acquisition of grey literature in Nigerian Libraries.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The government should make provision for adequate funds for acquisition of grey literature in University libraries
2. The library management should embark on regular review and supply of new and more grey materials
3. Library management should employ subject specialists that can assist in the selection acquisition of grey materials.
4. Library management should create proper awareness to both teachers and students on the role of grey literature

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