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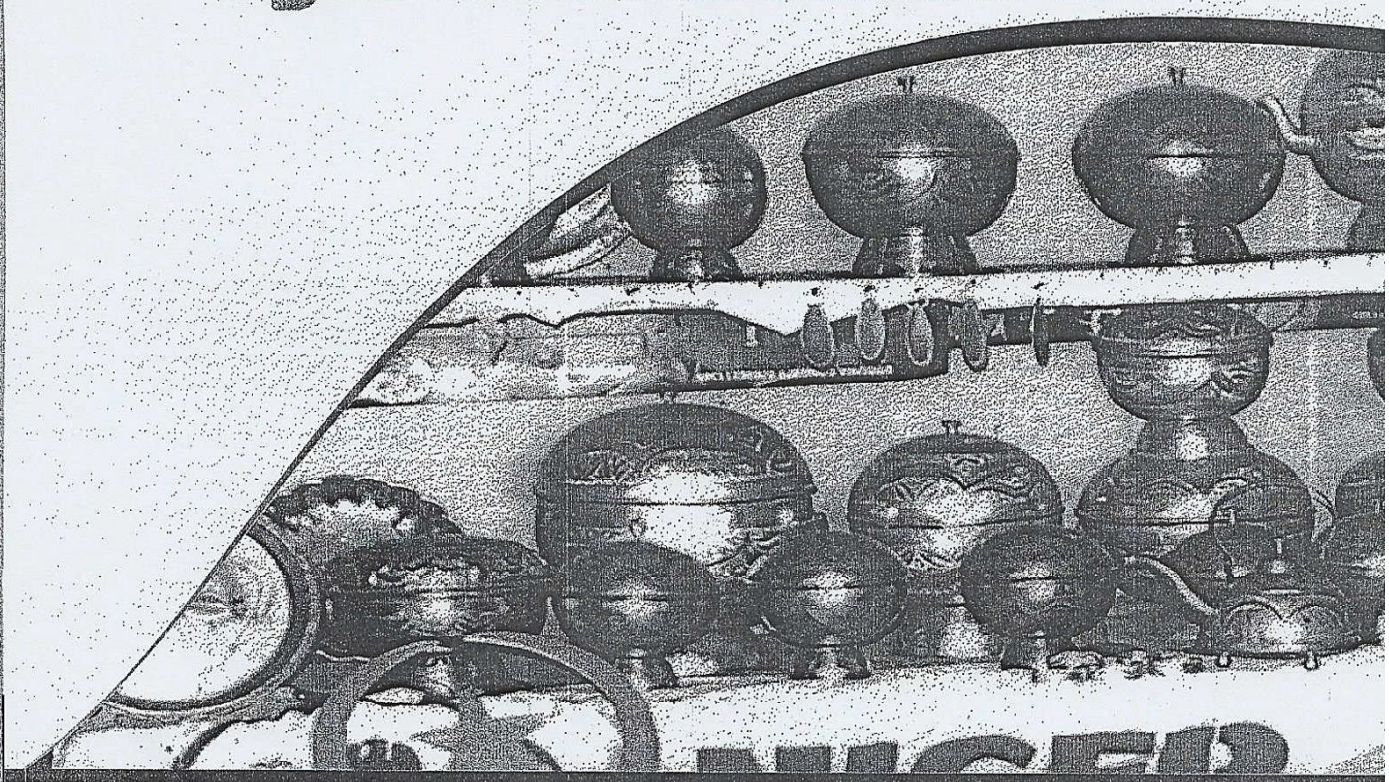
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THEME

**“GLOBAL ISSUES IN THE 21ST
CENTURY LIBRARIANSHIP”**



VENUE: Twin Theatre, Federal Polytechnic, Bida
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial Team
Preface
Foreword
List of Contributors

Table of Contents

1. Global Issues In The 21st Century Librarianship: A General Perspective by **Abduldayan, Fatimah Jibril** 1
2. Entrepreneurship Education in Library And Information Science (LIS) Schools: A Panacea For Sustainable Development In Nigeria by **Bappah Magaji Abubakar (Ph.D) & Firdausi Abdullahi** 7
3. Nature, Growth and Efficiency of Journals in the Literature on Health Sciences: Retroactive Searching by **Yahya Ibrahim Harande** 15
4. Development Of A Library Circulation System for The Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida Library, Federal University Of Technology, Minna Using Java and MYSQL by **Abduldayan, Fatimah Jibril ,Ibrahim, Muhammed Rabi, Jibril, Attahiru Alhassan (Ph.D) and Fasola P. Abifarin (Ph.D)** 23
5. Classification in the 21st Century Librarianship: Challenges of Classifying Information Resources in Nigerian Native Languages Using Class DT 515 of the Library of Congress Classification Schemes by **Joel J. Kolo & Abubakar N. Usman (Ph.D)** 36
6. Use of Web 2.0 Tools as Panacea to Effective Service Delivery in the 21st Century Librarianship by **Abedoh, Godwin Onimisi, Oyedum, Georgina Uchey (Ph.D), Abifarin, Fashola Petuola (Ph.D)** 46
7. Influence of ICT Facilities Usage on Teaching in Library and Information Science Schools in Northern Nigeria by **Katamba A. Saka (Ph.D), Salimatu K. Garba (Ph.D), Mohammed A. Abdullahi** 56
8. Leveraging on University's Electronic Mailing System for Effective Provision of Selective Dissemination of Information in Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida Library FUT, Minna, Niger State by **Abduldayan, Fatimah Jibril, Galadima, Jude Hope & Abdulrazak, Shamsudeen Jimoh** 65
9. Information Technology (IT) an Imperative Working Tool for Students and Lecturers in Nigerian Universities: A Case Study of Federal University of Technology Minna by **Chuks-Ibe, P.O., Oyedum G.U. (Ph.D) & Imavah S.A.** 77
10. Knowledge Sharing Skills, Strategies as Tools in Public Libraries for Enhancing National Development by **Ibrahim, Haruna, Aliyu, Ibn Muhammed & Abubakar Alh. Mohammed** 87
11. Significance of the Five Laws of Library Science in Reference and Information Service Delivery in the 21st Century, Nigeria by **Umar G. Gama (Ph.D)** 97

12. Tourism Information Documentation For Sustainable Tourism Development in Niger State, Nigeria by **Ariyo, Isaac Babatola (CLN), Ogbu, Edigbo Sunday (CLN), Kayode, Ojo James & Kolawole, Thaddeus Gbemiga** 104
13. Meeting the Information Needs for Agricultural Research in Nigeria in the 21st Century Using Online Databases in Research Institutes by **Hauwa Mohammed Kandi, Jibril Attahiru Alhassan & Abdulganiy Okanla Ahmed** 112
14. Influence of Serials Acquisition on Provision Of Library Services in Federal University Libraries In North Central Nigeria by **Haruna, Joshua, E.C. Madu (Ph.D) & G.U. Oyedum (Ph.D).** 119
15. Library and Information Science Education with an Infopreneural Touch: A Needful Fusion for A 21st Century Librarianship in Nigeria by **Kamaluddeen Isa El-Kalash, Samaila B. Mohammed & Maimuna M. Ahmed** 129
16. E-Library Resources and Services in the 21st Century Librarianship: An Overview by **Musa Yusuf, Mohammed Baba Isah & Ahmed Yabagi** 137
17. Principles of Cataloguing and Classification in the 21st Century: Advantages, Approaches and Challenges of Retrospective Catalogue Conversion in Library by **Adamu, Mohammed Saba, Dogara, Ladan, Edimeh, Augustine, Garba, Shambo Mohammed** 145
18. Effect of Information Literacy Skills on Use Of Electronic Information Resources in the 21st Century Among Academic Staff of Federal College of Education Kano by **N. M. Lawan, A.O. Ahmed & G.A. Babalola** 157
19. Challenges of Information Accessibility and Utilisation in the 21st Century: The Case of Disadvantaged Students in Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo, Nigeria by **Adekoya, Olayinka Mary, Udensi J. N. (Prof) and Udoh Udoh S. J (Ph.D)** 166
20. Polytechnic Libraries and the Challenges of the 21st Century in Information Service Provision in Nigeria by **Idris Umar, & Abdullahi, Abubakar Ibrahim** 173
21. Factors Enhancing the Research Productivity of Librarians Through Information and Communication Science in the 21st Century Librarianship by **Saidu Nda Abubakar Ibrahim, Lubabatu & Aliyu Ibn Muhammad** 181
22. Effect of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on Collection Development Processes in Librarianship by **Adamu, Mohammed Saba, Kasim, Muhammad Bala, Dogara, Ladan & Edimeh, Augustine** 187
23. Effect of Collection Development Practice on Programme Accreditation In Federal University of Technology, Minna by **Abiori, Olabisi Abidemi & Obaje, Alfred Michael (PhD)** 194
24. Academic Libraries in the 21st Century: The Integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Library Operations for Effective Library Services by **Amina Aminu Raji** 206
25. Evaluating the Usage and Obstacles in Accessing Resources in Niger State Polytechnic, Zungeru Library by **Mahmud A. Mustapha, Audu Makada, Imam Bello, & Adamu A. Zakari** 214

12. Tourism Information Documentation For Sustainable Tourism Development in Niger State, Nigeria by Ariyo, Isaac Babatola (CLN), Ogbu, Edigbo Sunday (CLN), Kayode, Ojo James & Kolawole, Thaddeus Gbemiga 104
13. Meeting the Information Needs for Agricultural Research in Nigeria in the 21st Century Using Online Databases in Research Institutes by Hauwa Mohammed Kandi, Jibril Attahiru Alhassan & Abdulganiy Okanla Ahmed 112
14. Influence of Serials Acquisition on Provision Of Library Services in Federal University Libraries In North Central Nigeria by Haruna, Joshua, E.C. Madu (Ph.D) & G.U. Oyedum (Ph.D). 119
15. Library and Information Science Education with an Infopreneural Touch: A Needful Fusion for A 21st Century Librarianship in Nigeria by Kamaluddeen Isa El-Kalash, Samaila B. Mohammed & Maimuna M. Ahmed 129
16. E-Library Resources and Services in the 21st Century Librarianship: An Overview by Musa Yusuf, Mohammed Baba Isah & Ahmed Yabagi 137
17. Principles of Cataloguing and Classification in the 21st Century: Advantages, Approaches and Challenges of Retrospective Catalogue Conversion in Library by Adamu, Mohammed Saba, Dogara, Ladan, Edimeh, Augustine, Garba, Shambo Mohammed 145
18. Effect of Information Literacy Skills on Use Of Electronic Information Resources in the 21st Century Among Academic Staff of Federal College of Education Kano by N. M. Lawan, A.O. Ahmed & G.A. Babalola 157
19. Challenges of Information Accessibility and Utilisation in the 21st Century: The Case of Disadvantaged Students in Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo, Nigeria by Adekoya, Olayinka Mary, Udensi J. N. (Prof) and Udoh Udoh S. J (Ph.D) 166
20. Polytechnic Libraries and the Challenges of the 21st Century in Information Service Provision in Nigeria by Idris Umar, & Abdullahi, Abubakar Ibrahim 173
21. Factors Enhancing the Research Productivity of Librarians Through Information and Communication Science in the 21st Century Librarianship by Saidu Nda Abubakar Ibrahim, Lubabatu & Aliyu Ibn Muhammad 181
22. Effect of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on Collection Development Processes in Librarianship by Adamu, Mohammed Saba, Kasim, Muhammad Bala, Dogara, Ladan & Edimeh, Augustine 187
23. Effect of Collection Development Practice on Programme Accreditation In Federal University of Technology, Minna by Abiori, Olabisi Abidemi & Obaje, Alfred Michael (PhD) 194
24. Academic Libraries in the 21st Century: The Integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Library Operations for Effective Library Services by Amina Aminu Raji 206
25. Evaluating the Usage and Obstacles in Accessing Resources in Niger State Polytechnic, Zungeru Library by Mahmud A. Mustapha, Audu Makada, Imam Bello, & Adamu A. Zakari 214

26. School Library as a Tool for Educational Development: A Case Study of School Libraries in Katcha Local Government Area, Niger State by **Baba Aliyu, Audu Ya'aba, Akudili Omelebele & Isa Iruka Chilota** 224
27. The Role of Plagiarism and Anti-Plagiarism Checks Software on Library and Information Technology Postgraduate Students Research Activities in Federal University of Technology Minna by **Ismail, Safiya, S.J. Udoudoh (Ph.D) & Alhassan, Jibril Atahiru (Ph.D)** 228
28. The Role of Library Orientation of Patrons in the 21st Century Librarianship in Federal Polytechnic Bida, Niger State by **Abdullahi, Maryam Lami, Mohammed, Musa Saba, Gomna, Mary A., Baba, Aliyu & Mohammed, Aminu Lawal** 238
29. Assessment of Information Flow Among Engineering Lecturers in Kano State University of Science and Technology, Wudil, Kano State in 21st Century by **Sanusi, Maryam Bako, Alhassan, Jibril Attahiru (Ph.D), & Akor, Philip Usman (Ph.D)** 243
30. Influence of Information and Communication Technology on Research by Postgraduate Students in Federal University of Technology Minna Library by **Yisadoko Samuel, Udensi, J.N (Prof.) & Akor, P.U. (Ph.D)** 252
31. Reference Services in the 21st Century Academic Libraries: Old Wine in A New Bottle by **Rita Otibhor Salami, Lami Akawu & Katamba Abubakar Saka** 262
32. Approach to Archival Organization and Preservation in Nigeria by **Muhammad N. Saba** 268

INFLUENCE OF SERIALS ACQUISITION ON PROVISION OF LIBRARY SERVICES IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of acquisition of serials on provision of library services in federal university libraries in North Central zone of Nigeria. It sought to find out the availability of serial materials in federal university libraries, methods of acquisition of serials in federal university libraries and tools for selection. Five research questions were formulated. One null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. Related literatures were reviewed in relation to the objectives of the study. Descriptive survey design was used for the study with a population of 278 librarians and library officers. Total enumeration was used for the study. The instruments for data collection were structured questionnaire and observation checklist. A total number of 278 copies of questionnaire were administered, out of which 261 copies were filled and returned correctly representing 94.0% response rate. Percentages, mean scores, frequency tables were used to analyse data in respect of the six research questions formulated. The result obtained from the findings revealed that seven out of all the listed serials, which includes: journals, newspapers, magazine, annuals, proceedings, etc. were available in all federal university libraries studied, while memoirs were available in Federal University of Technology Minna, library and University of Agriculture Makurdi, library, monographies were available only in Federal University of Technology Minna. It was also discovered from the findings that the methods of acquisition include; subscription, exchange and consortia. The study also revealed that publisher catalogue, ulrich's international periodical and ulrich's microfiche were use for serial titles selection. The null hypothesis tested showed significant relationship between the acquisition of serials with the provision of library services in federal university libraries in North Central, Nigeria. Drawn from the findings, it was recommended among others that there should be an effective written serial acquisition policy in the university libraries and should be made available to library staff.

Keywords: Library, Serials, Acquisition, Library Services and North Central Nigeria

Introduction

University libraries generally, are universally accepted as the central focus of any university enterprise. They are usually regarded to as the "centre" of information. This universal characterisation is borne out of the pride of place and the important roles they play in the lives of their parent institutions. Adubika (2007) posited that university libraries are the heart and aorta of university. The author stated further that the health, intellectual vitality and the effectiveness of any educational institution depends on the state of health and excellence of its library, which is its very lifeblood. He opines further that an inert and moribund library, will ultimately translate into an inert and moribund institution. Therefore a well-stocked and organised university library is the pride of parent institution which will definitely help in meeting its teaching, learning and

research needs. To this end, this could be best achieved with the proper acquisition of serial materials which usually contain such information.

In the 21st century, library services have shifted from the traditional and routine activities to a more lively, dynamic, and challenging system. More practical and user-friendly services such as Current Awareness Services (CAS), Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), Literature Searching (LS), Indexing and Abstracting etc. Ishola (2014) posited that libraries and other information related institutions provide a variety of information to society in different physical formats. These range from printed sources such as audio-visual materials, film, computerised/machine readable materials, etc.

Serial publications are to contain current information, serve as backbone of university and research libraries and are very important for studying, teaching, learning and research purposes. Serial publications include journals, magazines, newspapers, bulletins, newsletters, reports, yearbooks, and directories to mention but few; and they are inevitably accorded prominence in libraries. Aduhika (2007) stressed that, serials are categorised into periodicals and non-periodicals based on intended frequency of publication. A periodical serial is intended to appear regularly and more often than once a year. This includes journals, newspapers and magazines. Non-periodicals are usually dated or numbered, published either regularly or irregularly and not usually paid for in advance of publications. They include annuals, conference proceeding, monographic series e.t.c.

The role of serials in information dissemination in academic libraries cannot be over emphasised. It is like stomach and food; serials are the backbone of any academic libraries or research libraries due to the nature of information they contain. They contain current information which aid dissemination of current information. Serial publications represent a most vital reference source not only because of their sizes but also because they contained other numerous values, which the book material do not contained. Moreover their greatest value lies in the fact that they contained the newest and most up to dateness information. Apart from presenting scientific discoveries and serving as means for the publication of scientific research, it helps the researchers in selecting relevant materials for their research work. Where currency of information is of primarily important, serials publications have a distinct advantage over the book (Aduhika, 2007).

Acquisition involves the process through which libraries make an addition to the existing collection or subscribed to materials needed by their clientele to meet their current and future information needs. Serials acquisition in university libraries involves selection of titles, pre-order checking, preparation of final list for order and ordering, verification of receipt, checking-in of materials, claiming and renewal of subscription, and cancellation of order (Anunobi et al, 2010). The goal of serial acquisition is to deliver promptly that serial literature which the user needs. Realising the complexity of situation as well as the increasing trend towards publications in serial form, the selection and acquisition of serials should be done on those information needs of the organisation/users.

Statement of the problem

Providing information materials a user wants regardless of its format or location is the main reason for the existence of libraries and the relevance of services rendered by librarians. Various efforts have being made by university libraries in Nigeria to acquired information materials such as serials and textbooks that will meet the desired needs of users. In spite of the unequalled value of serials and important roles they play in the effective delivery of library services in university libraries, observation by the researcher shows that available serial publications were not adequate because most of the important acquisition activities expected to be carry out by the

university libraries may not be properly done and this could lead to limited quality and quantity of serial publications as well as access to current information by the users of university libraries. This study therefore investigated how federal university libraries in North Central Nigeria acquired serials and provided library services to the greatest benefit of her clientele both now and in the future.

Objectives of the study

The overall objective of study is to ascertain the influence of serials acquisition on the provision of library services in federal university libraries in North Central Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- (1) find out the types of serials available in the federal university libraries studied;
- (2) identify criteria and tools for selection of serial titles in the serial sections of the studied university libraries;
- (3) ascertain the method of serials acquisition in university libraries studied;
- (4) find out the role of serial publications in the provision of library services in university libraries studied;
- (5) find out constraints and way forward to effective acquisition of serials on provision of library services in university libraries studied.

Research questions

The following research questions guided the study.

- (1) What are the types of serials available in federal university libraries studied?
- (2) What are the criteria and tools for selecting serial titles in serial sections of federal university libraries studied?
- (3) How are serials acquired in federal university libraries studied?
- (4) What are the roles of serial publications in the provision of library services in federal university libraries studied?
- (5) What are the constraints and way forward to effective acquisition of serials on provision of library services in federal university libraries studied?

Methodology

Research design

Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The design was considered appropriate since the study sought opinion of the respondents as measure for investigating the influence of acquisition and management of serials on the provision of library services in federal university libraries in North Central Nigeria. A survey research was defined by Ibrahim (2013) as a way of collecting information about the opinion, attitude, feeling, belief, and behavior of people where each member of the population has equal chance of being selected. This study used 278 library staff that is, (151) library officers and (127) librarians in federal university libraries studied, seeking their opinion regarding acquisition of serials.

All the (278) librarians and library officers in federal university libraries studied were used. This is due to the fact that the population of the study is not large; thereby allowing the researcher to provide treatment to each of the staff. This is called complete enumeration or census. Ibrahim (2013) stated that when the population is not too large and the researcher can manage it, the entire population should be adopted. Checklist and questionnaire were instruments used for data collection. To collect the data the researcher visited the institutions to administer copies of questionnaire which lasted for four weeks. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analysed the data.

Results and Discussion

Response rate

From the study 278 copies of the questionnaire were distributed out of which 261 copies were duly filled and returned representing 94% response rate. The high response rate is attributed to the fact that the respondents were duly followed up by the researcher and the research assistants. The response rate of the respondents according to their university libraries is shown in Table 4.1 below:

Table 1: Response rate of universities under study

Name of the institution	Distributed Copies	Returned Copies	Percentage
Federal University Lokoja, Lokoja	25	24	9%
Federal University Lafia, Lafia	21	20	8%
Federal University of Technology Minna, Minna	47	45	17%
University of Jos, Jos	55	51	20%
University of Agriculture Makurdi, Makurdi	47	45	17%
University of Ilorin, Ilorin	45	42	16%
University of Abuja, Abuja	38	34	13%
Total	278	261	100%

Table: 1 shows that the University of Jos library recorded the highest number of respondents with the score of 51 (20%), followed closely by the University of Makurdi library and Federal University of Technology Minna, library with a score of 45 (17%) respondents. The universities with the least respondents were the University of Lafia library with the score of 20 (8%) respondents and the University of Lokoja with the score of 24 (9%), while 17(7%) copies of the questionnaire were not returned. The differences in the response rates are mainly due to the population size of the respondents of the university libraries, since responses were from the population of the libraries and were used in generalising the result.

Table 2: Respondents by Rank

Category of respondents	Frequency	Percentage%
Librarian	115	44
Library Officer	146	56
Total	261	100%

Table: 2 showed that 115(44%) of the respondents were librarians, while 146(56%) were library officers. This implies that the larger respondents were library officers and that large number of library staff lack formal professional development.

Research question one: What are the types of serials available in federal university libraries in North Central Nigeria?

Types of Serials Available	FUT Minna		UNI JOS		UNI LAFIA		UNI ILORIN		UNI MARKUDI		UNI ABUJA		UNI LOKOJA		TOTAL
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Journals	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		7
Newspapers	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		7
Magazines	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		7
Annuals	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		7
Memoirs	✓			✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	2
Proceedings	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		7
Transactions of societies	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		6
Monographs	✓			✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	1
Reports	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		7
Total	9		7		7		7		8		7		6		51

FUT= Federal University of Technology, Minna; UNIJOS= University of Jos; FUL=Federal University Lafia; UNILORIN= University of Ilorin; UAM=University of Agriculture Makurdi; UNIABUJA=University of Abuja; FULK= Federal University Lokoja.

In Table 3 it is noticeable that Federal University of Technology, Minna has the highest type of the serial publications. All the nine types of serials listed in the checklist were found in the library, followed by University of Agriculture, Makurdi with eight types while the rest university libraries have seven each.

It was also established in Table 3 that the serial publications available in all the university libraries studied were journals, newspapers, magazines, annuals, proceedings and reports. Other materials such as memoirs were available in Federal University of Technology, Minna and University of Agriculture, Makurdi, while it is only Federal University of Technology, Minna that has monographies.

Research question Two: What are the criteria and tools for selecting serial titles in serial sections of the federal university libraries in North Central Nigeria?

Table 4: Criteria for selecting serial titles in serial sections

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	STD
1	Based on their currency/up-to datedness	45(17%)	13(5%)	98(38%)	105(40%)	2.02	1.058
2	Based on frequency of publication	14(5%)	41(16%)	101(39%)	105(40%)	1.88	.864
3	Relevance to the curricula of the university	56(21%)	112(43%)	22(8%)	71(27%)	2.77	.881
4	Based on authority directive	62(24%)	164(63%)	7(3%)	28(11%)	3.08	.669

Table 4 indicated that majority of the respondents agreed with acquiring of serial titles based on relevance to the curricula of the university with ($\bar{x}=2.77$, $\bar{u}=.881$) and authority directive with ($\bar{x}=3.08$, $\bar{u}=.669$) which is accepted following the criteria of 2.5 mean score set. Also, in Table 4 majority of the respondents indicated currency/up-to datedness with ($\bar{x}=2.02$, $\bar{u}=.1.058$) and frequency of publication with ($\bar{x}=1.88$, $\bar{u}=.864$), which was below the mean score set. The results therefore imply that acquisition of serials is mostly based on relevance to the curricula of the university and authority directive. The implication of the finding is that failure to make use of other options such as currency/up-to datedness serial publications and frequency of the publications would have effect on library services provided by these libraries.

Table 5: Tools used for selecting serial titles in serial sections

S/N	Tools for Selection	Yes	No
1	Publisher Catalogue	196(75.0%)	65(25.0%)
2	Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory	224(86.0%)	37(14.0%)
3	Ulrich's on Microfiche	233(89.0%)	28(11.0%)
4	Local List of Serials.	40(15.0%)	221(85.0%)

Table 5 revealed that tools used for selecting serial titles in serial sections of the federal university libraries in North Central Nigeria were Ulrich's on microfiche with 233(89.0%), Ulrich's international periodical with 224(86.0%) and publisher catalogue, while local list of serials with 40(15.0%) which is less than 50% indicated that it is not majorly used. To this end, some of the local serial publications that would meet information needs of the users may be missed out from

the acquisition lists of these libraries which may have bad effect on the library services provided by them.

Research question three: How are serials acquired in the selected federal university libraries in North Central Nigeria?

Table 6: Methods of Acquiring Serials

S/N	ITEMS	YES	NO
1	Subscription	155(59.0%)	106(41.0%)
2	Through gifts/donations	35(13.0%)	226(87.0%)
3	By exchange with other libraries & organization	203(78.0%)	58(22.0%)
4	Through consortia	230(88.0%)	31(12.0%)

Table 6 showed yes or no ratings of the respondents on methods employed in acquisition of serials in federal university libraries studied. The results in Table 6 revealed that consortia has the highest scores with 230(88.0%), followed by exchange with other libraries 203(78.0%) and subscription with 155(59.0%) on the yes agreement of the majority, while gifts/donations has 35(13.0%). Using the above information, it is evident that the respondents agreed that consortia, exchange with other libraries and subscription are the major methods employed in acquisition of serials in federal university libraries studied.

Research question four: What are the roles of serial publications in the provision of library services in the federal university libraries in North Central Nigeria?

Table 7: Roles of serials in provision of library services

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	STD
1	Provision of current awareness (specialized information) services to the users	110	45	14	92	2.7	1.33349
2	Guides the users on how to write journal articles	---	68	22	171	1.6	.87344
3	Provision of information on new trends in the field of science and technology	4	55	19	183	1.5	.87448
4	Provision of e -journal services to the users	122	52	21	66	2.9	1.24548
5	Provision of serial loan services to the users	114	48	26	73	2.8	1.26963

Table 7 shows that respondents agreed that three out of the five items identified as roles of serial on library services are provided. The result shows that provision of e-journal services has ($\bar{x}=2.9$, $\bar{u}=1.24548$), provision of serial loan services to the users has ($\bar{x}=2.8$, $\bar{u}=1.26963$) while provision of current awareness (specialised information) serial services has ($\bar{x}=2.7$, $\bar{u}=1.33349$) which are accepted because their mean scores are above 2.5 mean score. Table 7 also demonstrates that greater number of the respondents agreed that two roles of serials on library services are not available in the library. These are: guides the users on how to write journal articles with ($\bar{x}=1.6$, $\bar{u}=.87344$), and provision of information on new trends in the field of science and technology with ($\bar{x}=1.5$, $\bar{u}=.87448$). This implies that the acquisition of serials is affected by lack of currency and up-to-datedness due to inadequate fund which in return affect roles of serial services.

Research question five: What are the constraints to effective acquisition of serials on provision of library services in the federal university libraries in North Central Nigeria?

Table 8: Constraints to effective acquisition of serials

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	STD
1	Inadequate fund	137(52%)	120(46%)	4(2%)	---	3.5	.531
2	Lack of serials acquisition policy	100(38%)	152(58%)	9(3%)	---	3.3	.545
3	Some subscribed serials fail to arrive	94(36%)	159(61%)	7(3%)	1(0%)	3.3	.545
4	Foreign exchange restriction	146(63%)	103(39%)	12(5%)	---	3.5	.586
5	The escalating price of serials	164(63%)	95(36%)	2(1%)	---	3.6	.502
6	Lack of proper space for storage of serials back issues	168(64%)	80(31%)	13(5%)	---	3.4	.709
7	Lack of professional staff	105(40%)	148(57%)	6(2%)	2(1%)	3.1	.731

In Table 8 the cumulative mean value of all the items were above the criterion mean of 2.5. It is therefore agreed that all the seven items in Table 8 are the challenges encountered with acquisition of serial publications in federal university libraries in North Central Nigeria. The escalating prices of serial, inadequate fund, foreign exchange restriction, lack of proper space for storage of serials back issues, has 3.6, 3.5, 3.5, 3.4, 3.3 and 3.3 respectively, the escalating price of serials and lack of serials automated services topped the list.

Table 9: Strategies for effective acquisition and management of serials on provision of library services

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	STD
1	Through provision of adequate fund	130(50%)	129(49%)	1(0%)	1(0%)	3.5	.531
2	Through having a written serial acquisition policy	148(57%)	99(38%)	12(5%)	2(1%)	3.5	.624
3	Through management commitment in serial management	126(48%)	119(46%)	12(5%)	4(2%)	3.4	.653
4	Provision of standby generator for the library	154(59%)	91(35%)	12(5%)	4(2%)	3.5	.660
5	Through training and re-training of serial staff on serial management	128(49%)	120(46%)	9(3%)	4(2%)	3.4	.638
6	Government should encourage local researchers on local publication	129(49%)	115(44%)	12(5%)	5(2%)	3.4	.671
7	NUC should implement policy on full implementation of ICT facilities in libraries	188(72%)	57(22%)	9(3%)	7(3%)	3.6	.681

Table 9 showed the reactions by the respondents agreed with all measures that could be taken to bring about the effective acquisition and management of serials in federal university libraries in North Central Nigeria. Those statements are: NUC should implement policy on full implementation of ICT facilities in libraries with ($\bar{x}=3.6, \bar{u}=.681$), through provision of adequate fund with ($\bar{x}=3.5, \bar{u}=.531$), through having a written serial acquisition policy with ($\bar{x}=3.5, \bar{u}=.624$), provision of standby generator for the library with ($\bar{x}=3.5, \bar{u}=.660$) and through management commitment to serial management with ($\bar{x}=3.4, \bar{u}=.653$). Also indicated in Table 9 is through training and re-training of serial staff on serial management with ($\bar{x}=3.4, \bar{u}=.638$), and government should encourage local researchers on local publication with ($\bar{x}=3.4, \bar{u}=.671$). All the mean scores are accepted because they are greater than 2.5 criteria set for acceptance of mean.

Hypotheses Testing

The null hypothesis was tested in the study at 0.05 level of significance. The results of the test are as follows:

H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between the acquisition of serials and the provision of library services in the university libraries under study.

This hypothesis determines whether there is any significant relationship between acquisition of serials and the provision of library services in the university libraries studied.

Table 10: There is no significant relationship between the acquisition of serials and the provision of library services in the federal university libraries studied.

Aggregate Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	r-value	Df	P
Acquisition of serials	2.44	0.598	0.237	0.510	259	0.000
Provision of library services	2.20	0.299	0.107			

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

From the output in Table 10, the result shows that acquisition of serials is significantly correlated with the provision of library services. The observed correlation coefficient (0.510) is higher than the critical value of 259 degree of freedom and at the probability level of 0.05. The p -value for two-tailed test of significance is less than 0.000. From these figures it could be concluded that there is a strong positive correlation between acquisition of serials and the provision of library services and that this correlation is significant at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) which stated that there is no significant relationship between the acquisition of serials and the provision of library services in the university libraries studied is rejected.

Discussion of Results

This study found that the common serial publications available in all the federal university libraries studied include reports, journals, newspapers, magazines, annual and proceedings. Other materials such as transactions of societies were also available in almost all institutions. Memoirs were available in only Federal University of Technology Minna, Library and University of Agriculture Makurdi, library, Benue State, while monographs were only available in Federal University of Technology Minna (Table 3). It is also noticeable that Federal University of Technology, Minna has highest information materials (9 types), followed by University of Agriculture, Makurdi, while others have equal. It was also observed that the differences in these libraries with regards to availability of information resources could be as a result of funding, connections, reach out of different libraries to donor agencies and commitment to duty in collections of in-house literature emanating from their locality.

Availability of information resources is necessary in Nigeria federal university libraries and this is probably why Bitagi (2013) stated that the availability of all types and forms of information resources in academic libraries is profoundly basic if these libraries are to information needs of patrons in their respective institutions. The study also revealed that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that Ulrich's on microfiche, Ulrich's international periodical directory and publisher catalogue were the three main selection tools used in the federal university libraries studied (Table 5), this may be that the studied university libraries believed that the above mentioned tools give them adequate information about serial titles than others. This is in line with Anunobi et al. (2010), who stated that sources of information for serials acquisition include Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory, Ulrich's on microfiche, publisher catalogue.

Furthermore, finding revealed that there is significant relationship between acquisition of serials and provision of library services in North Central Nigeria (Table 10). This could be because library users in the federal university libraries studied depend on information resources for positive academic performance and research output. This result is in agreement with that of Ugah (2011) who posited that, there is positive correlation between quality of available information resources and research output.

Summary of the major findings

1. The selection of materials is mostly based on relevance to the curricula of the university and authority directives.
2. The major tools used in selecting serials are publisher catalogue, Ulrich's international periodicals directory and Ulrich's on microfiche.
3. The major methods employed in acquisition of serial publications in federal university libraries in North Central Nigeria are subscription, exchange with other libraries and through consortia.
4. The major serial services are: provision of electronic journal services, provision of serial loan services and provision of current awareness (specialised information) services to the users.
5. The strategies identified for improving acquisition and management of serials as evidenced by the result in (Table 9) are; provision of adequate fund, written serial acquisition policy, management commitment to serial management, provision of standby generator, training and re-training of serial staff, encouraging local researchers by the government and implementation of full ICT facilities in federal university libraries.
6. The study revealed that there is significant relationship between the acquisition of serials and provision of library services in federal university libraries in North Central Nigeria.

Conclusion

In view of the revelation from the study one would conclude that, the place of serials in provision of library services and scholarly research visibility and communication has made it important information resources to be acquired by federal university libraries in North Central Nigeria. Thus, every federal university library that worth its name, makes effort to acquired serials for her users. Therefore, there is need to improve the level of serials acquisition in federal university libraries in North Central Nigeria.

Recommendations

In order to ensure the effective acquisition of serial publications in federal university libraries in North Central zone of Nigeria, the following recommendations are made:

1. The management of universities and libraries should ensure that written serial acquisition policy be put in place for the library and should be made available to library staff.

2. Government should encourage local researchers on publication of local serials.
3. Adequate funding should be provided for the federal university libraries and large percentage be ear-marked for the acquisition and management of serial publications.
4. The federal university libraries in the North Central Nigeria should draft a policy on serial acquisition and use.

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