

Acquisition and management of serials in selected academic libraries in Edo state of Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated acquisition and management of serials in academic libraries in Edo State of Nigeria. Four (4) research objectives were formulated for this study. These were to: determine how serial collections are acquired in the selected academic libraries in Edo State of Nigeria; investigate how serials are organized for easy retrieval in the selected academic libraries in Edo State of Nigeria; find out how serials are preserved in the selected academic libraries in Edo State of Nigeria; and solicit solutions for improving the management of serials in the selected academic libraries in Edo State of Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The study targeted a total of 14 (fourteen) academic libraries in Edo State from which a sample of 173 respondents was generated using a total enumeration sampling technique. The study used a structured questionnaire; the copies were completed and returned by 57.8% of the respondents. Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages (%), mean (\bar{X}), and standard deviation (SD) to meet the study's objectives. The study's results have revealed that academic libraries in the study area acquire serials through various methods and use various means to organize them for easy retrieval. The libraries also use various methods to preserve their serials. Regarding improving serial management, the study findings have come up with a number of ways to do so. Based on the findings, the study recommends among others that academic curriculum should be enriched with serial skill acquisition and management contents; and academic libraries should consider acquiring more e-serials because it is very easy to manage and do not get damaged.

Key Words: Acquisition, Management, Serials, Academic Libraries

Introduction

Serials acquisition is the physical process of purchasing serial materials that have been selected by a library. Acquisition is also the means of obtaining library materials which make up a library collection. Acquisition is usually made after selection; meaning that libraries cannot acquire

what they have not selected. Therefore, for acquisition to be effective, selection must be effective enough to identify materials to be acquired. Furthermore, Nwalo (2003) posits that acquisition has to do with purchasing expeditiously and from the most advantageous vendors the materials chosen by selection officers. The role of serials in dissemination of current information in academic libraries cannot be overemphasized. Serials are the backbone of any academic library or research library because of the currency of the information they carry. Information explosion has necessitated an improvement in the gathering, processing, acquisition, and dissemination of these information resources in libraries. The use of serials in academic research has continued to rise in recent times hence further necessitating their effective development and management.

The terms serials and periodicals are synonymous. The terms are used interchangeably to refer to publications in any medium (print and non-print) that are published serially or periodically. Similarly, Rogers (2011) cited Osborn (1980) to describe serials as publications in any medium issued in successive parts at regular or irregular intervals, usually having numerical or chronological designation and intended to continue indefinitely. Serials include both periodicals and non-periodicals. A periodical is a serial with a distinctive title, issued more frequently; that is daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly, yearly, and so on; usually at regular intervals with each issue containing articles by several contributors, examples are journals, newspaper and magazines (Nwalo, 2003). In contrast, non-periodicals are serials issued at irregular interval such as yearbook, annuals, proceedings of societies, and monographic series. Parts of serial publications may be published at different intervals such as daily, weekly, monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly, annually, bi-annually and so on by an academic society, a research institution, a learned society, a reputable publishing organization, or a professional body. On the other hand, some serials are published on subject basis while some are published on general topic. It is frequency that distinguishes serial publications from books and monographs and it is the periodicity that dictates their format and price.

Furthermore, acquisition and management of serials is a core activity of academic libraries. University libraries, as well as other academic libraries all over the world still acquire and maintain massive book collections while integrating other formats such as electronic books, electronic journals, and so on. Despite the fact that libraries are moving from their conventional method of operation to virtual method in terms of acquiring and maintaining electronic resources, printed books still have a central role in libraries and publishing industries (Kanwel, 2005; Carr, 2007). Serials acquisition and management in Nigerian university libraries can be viewed as the nerve centre because the resources contain the most current information of research knowledge. Nwalo (2003) states that the success of every library's programme, therefore, could be easily measured in terms of its effort in acquiring and managing relevant serials. Similarly, Woodward (2004) opines that acquisition and management of serials need skills as in any successfully managed business. The author went further to say that serials acquisition and management comprises all activities needed to facilitate and implement efficient and effective transfer of information to the potential users and thereby meet the objectives a library wishes to achieve. Like any other concept, management evolves diverse memories in a variety ways.

According to World Bank (2012), management is the planning and integration of effort, judicious use of resources, motivation of people, and provision of leadership in order to guide an organization towards its goal and objectives in the most efficient manner. More so, in carrying out the above functions, managers are engaged in a continuous process of decision making. Acquisition and management beef up library stocks and properly organize and preserve various

information materials. The goal of serial acquisition and management is promptly to deliver serial literatures to meet users' needs. Librarians serving in academic libraries should realize that their clients (researchers and users) require a wide range of knowledge.

Serials are the backbone of every academic library because of their peculiar nature of being carriers of current information in all fields of human endeavours. Serials are usually expensive both in terms of acquisition and management. As such, academic libraries commit substantial percentages of their annual budgets to serial acquisition. Despite the unique value of serials and the very important roles they play in the operation of academic libraries, their management has not enjoyed corresponding attention from library managers as well as writers in the various fields of higher institution of learning. This often results in poor management of serial publications. Furthermore, most researchers are of the view that serials are not well managed in academic libraries while others are of the view that academic libraries in Nigeria manage these resources well. Regarding this, Nwalo (2003) is of the view that serials pose multifaceted problems in terms of management because they take up much of libraries' space. It is not unusual to witness scenarios where library patrons are unable to access serials subscribed to by their libraries. In the same line, Ogunnuga (2013) contends that serials management is probably the most important and most challenging of library functions. The author opines that interest in serials management has increased in recent years due to such factors as escalating costs of serials in the face of stagnant or decreasing library budget, the emergence of new electronic formats, and an increased emphasis on access rather than ownership. The main objective of this study is to investigate acquisition and management of serials in academic libraries in Edo State of Nigeria. Under this objective, the study specifically intends to:

1. Determine how serial collections are acquired in the selected academic libraries in Edo State of Nigeria;
2. Investigate how serials are organised for easy retrieval in the selected academic libraries in Edo State of Nigeria;
3. Find out how serials are preserved in the selected academic libraries in Edo State of Nigeria and;
4. Solicit suggestions on ways to improving the management of serials in the selected academic libraries in Edo State of Nigeria.

Literature review

Once a serial has been selected, the next step in its management is to purchase a subscription; to acquire it. In simple terms, an order for a new subscription is placed by the library with the publisher; the publisher is paid for the subscription and subsequently begins delivery of issues to the library. At the end of the subscription period, the subscription is either renewed or cancelled.

Management and organization of serials in academic libraries

Akinbode (2008) in his study on "serials management in the university libraries of developing nations" opined that serials collections require careful maintenance to ensure that the library holdings of any particular journals are properly arranged and kept for the use of the reader. Journals not received in the library are noted and claims are sent to the publisher to send the missing issues to the library. Akinbode (2008) further stressed that issue parts of journals in the

library are sent to a local book binder to bind them together in a book form for preservation purpose. A record is therefore kept for all journals sent out for binding. After binding, they are arranged according to classmarks on book shelves set aside for bound volumes of journals.

The emergence of serials as an effective tool in modern information and research has called for serials managers with indepth knowledge of their peculiarity and techniques for controlling them (Adubika, 2007). A comprehensive serials management practice is concerned with everything that happens to serials throughout their life cycle. Serials management practices separate with many concepts. There are various views on the concepts and elements of serials management. Serials management practices deal with selection and de-selection, liaison with users, collection analysis, user survey (Ogunrombi, 2007), financial control and budgeting, price list checking, fund allocation, invoice checking, invoice payment, and receipt checkin (Ford, 2009). They also deal with subscription methods, and direct ordering and subscription agent (Cowley, 2010). House-keeping routines deal with tamping; and recording in statistics files, kardex card, visible index, and serials lists (Tipple, 2010).

Cataloging and classification deal with the provision of bibliographic description for each serial title and provision of access to serials represented in the catalogue (Adeyemi, 2011; Komolafe, 2011). In contrast, organization deals with cataloguing, classification, and display of serials on the rack to facilitate easy access (Law, 2009). According to Elkington (2009), storage, preservation, and binding deal with the protection of serials from damage and prolonging their shelf life while direct services to the users deal with circulation, indexing, abstracting, current awareness, translation, photocopying, and interlibrary lending services, (Clark & O'Dridcoll, 2011). On the other hand, serials automation deals with the application of modern information and communication technologies in carrying out serials processes (Woodward and Graham, 2010). Taiwo (2013) revealed that serial publications are being cleared regularly at short intervals to prevent destruction by insects, moulds, and others alike. After normal processing in academic libraries, serials are separated, arranged, and organized accordingly. After that, they are arranged chronologically in cartons and kept in the store.

Preservative measures for serial collections

The issue of preservation is as old as invention of writing, thus, in attempt to maintain records, man has devised places to preserve such records for future use. According to Sunil & Mkumar (2009), the most difficult problem that has pressured librarians' minds from time immemorial till date is the ability to ensure safety of library information materials against threats such as floods, fire, mutilation, rodents, insects, and so on. Raina (2016) stated that libraries acquire and preserve information materials like books, serials, maps etcetera to meet potential information or recreational needs of their users. The author further stated that it is the responsibility of library staff to maintain these materials in good physical condition so that they can be readily available for use at all times. Furthermore, Ovowoh & Iwhiwhu (2010) stated that preservation of deteriorating information materials in a library has become a global phenomenon to which libraries must aggressively respond if their mission of meeting information needs of their patrons is to be met.

However, preservation can be seen as principles for caring and handling of library materials to include all the management and financial considerations such as storage and accommodation provision, staffing levels, policies, techniques, and methods involved in preserving library materials and the information contained in them. According to a Glossary of Archives and

Records terminology (2007), preservation can be referred to as a set of activities that aim to prolong the life of a record with as little changes to its original state as possible.

Print serials have long been preserved by binding loose issues in hard cover or by replacing print issues with microform (which has the advantage of saving shelf space). Preservation is particularly important for print serials, which are subject to loss or damage because of their size and shape, in order to provide continuing access to their contents. Binding may be accomplished by a professional bindery or in-house. Professional binding is usually preferred since it generally ensures a more durable unit than what in-house binding can produce (Akinbode, 2011).

Possible solutions for improving the management of serials in academic libraries

Academic curriculum should have an enriched serial acquisition and management skills related programmes that will expose librarians to the skills required for effective management of serials in academic libraries. This will prepare them for the effective acquisition and management of serial materials in their libraries. The programmes should put emphasis on competencies needed in brokering and enhancing digital information, especially for academic librarians. Shibanda, (2011) and Rosenberg (2010) also suggest that a balance between theory and practice should be considered the best approach because it enables curriculum to respond to the need for exclusive knowledge in the management of serials in academic libraries while also addressing market needs for practical skills. The authors therefore recommend LIS schools to ensure that there is hands-on practice when teaching skills relating to the management of serials in academic libraries. This will help to enhance effectiveness and efficiency in the acquisition and management of serials in these libraries.

On his part, Stublely (2016) stresses the importance of allowing adequate time for participants to learn and practice new skills, and follow-up training in serial management. It is imperative that participants are able to quickly implement aspects of their training on their return home. Larzen (2016) recommends that at least 10% of staff working hours should be set aside as a minimum for training and professional development (External + Internal activities). In terms of budget, the author recommends that 25%-30% of the total library budget should be allocated as a minimum for training. Similarly, Gill (2007) suggests that in large university libraries, the post of training officer should be created to plan and implement training programmes. On this, it is recommended that 0.5% - 1% of a library's total budget should be earmarked for training libraries to enhance effective management of serials in academic libraries. This level of funding should be maintained even at times of budget reduction; as the need for a well trained staff stands even in such circumstances.

Akitunde (2014) believes that professional bodies have a major role to play in helping staff working in libraries to develop competencies in the management of serials in academic libraries so as to enhance services. The author therefore calls on the Nigerian Library Association to take up a leadership role and provide direction for constituent members. The association should be very much involved in training and setting standards for library operations. It should be involved in training and retraining of heads of libraries as well as other library staff, and also have an influence on library schools to make sure their curriculum reflect trends in the market. In line with this, Ochogwo (2007) recommends government participation in skill development of library staff by increasing library budgets to make more funds available for training of staff.

Methodology

In this study, a descriptive survey method was employed. This research is a survey because it made use of written questionnaire to obtain information from the targeted population which was made of professional and para-professional librarians. A sample size of one hundred and seventy three (173) people was generated for the study using a total enumeration sampling technique. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools. Descriptive statistics of percentages, mean scores (\bar{X}), and standard deviation (SD) were used to meet the study's objectives. The average number of responses on a 4 point type scale was 2.50. Any mean that rank from 2.50 and above was accepted whereas 2.49 and below was rejected. Mean values of 1.00 – 1.49 range indicated strongly disagreement, the mean values within the 1.50 – 2.49 range indicated disagreement, those within the 2.50 – 3.49 range indicated agreement, while those in the 3.50 – 4.00 range indicated strongly agreement.

Results

Socio-demographic characteristics

This part deals with the presentation and analysis of the data collected from respondents. A total of one hundred and seventy three (173) copies of questionnaire were administered but one hundred (100) copies were duly completed and used for the analysis which represents 57.8% of the entire sample under study.

Table 1: Respondents' Institutions

| Institutions (n = 100) | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------------------|------------|------------|
| University of Benin | 40 | 40 |
| Ambrose Alli University | 30 | 30 |
| Edo State University (Iyamo) | 3 | 3 |
| Benson Idahosa University | 14 | 14 |
| Igbenedion University | 7 | 7 |
| Well Spring University | 2 | 2 |
| Samuel Adegboyega University | 4 | 4 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

Table 1 shows the numbers of respondents that participated in this study at various institutions. Based on the table, 40 (40%) respondents were staff of University of Benin Library, 30 (30%) were staff of Ambrose Alli University Library, 3 (3%) were staff of Edo State University (Iyamo) Library, and 14 (14%) were staff of Benson Idahosa University Library. The table further shows that 7 (7%) of the respondents were staff of Igbenedion University Library while 4 (4%) worked for the Samuel Adegboyega University Library.

Table 2: Staff status

| Status (n=100) | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Professional | 33 | 33 |
| Para-professional | 67 | 67 |

Total **100** **100**

Table 2 shows that 33 (33%) of the respondents are professional staff while 67 (67%) of them are para-professional staff. This seems to imply that there are more para-professionals working for academic libraries in the study area than there are professional librarians. This is likely to have a bearing on the acquisition and management of serials in the libraries.

Acquisition of serial in academic libraries in Edo state of Nigeria

The study was interested in establishing how academic libraries in the study created their serials collections. To find that out, respondents were asked to indicate the methods their libraries used to acquire these resources into their collections. Table 3 shows a summary of the responses received:

Table 3: Academic libraries' methods of serials acquisition

| Acquisition methods (n=100) | SA | A | D | SD | \bar{X} | SD |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| Manual purchase | 68 68% | 32 32% | - - | - - | 3.68 | 0.92 |
| Online subscription | 50 50.6% | 35 35% | 10 10% | 5 5% | 3.3 | 0.83 |
| Gift | 32 32% | 56 56% | 10 10.3% | 2 2% | 3.17 | 0.79 |
| Donation | 34 34% | 58 58% | 3 3% | 5 5% | 3.21 | 0.80 |
| Direct ordering | 68 68.6% | 22 17.1% | 2 2.9% | 8 11.4% | 3.5 | 0.88 |
| Exchange | 5 7.1% | 5 7.1% | 69 55.7% | 21 30% | 1.75 | 0.44 |
| Institutional membership of the association | 15 15% | 9 9% | 45 45% | 31 31% | 2.08 | 0.52 |
| Grand Mean | | | | | 2.96 | 0.74 |

Table 3 indicates the means and standard deviations of responses on the various ways of acquiring serials in the selected academic libraries in Edo state of Nigeria. The results show that (\bar{X} = 3.68%, SD=0.92%) of the respondents acquire their serial collections through manual purchase, (\bar{X} =3.3%, SD = 0.83%) acquire theirs through online subscription, (\bar{X} = 3.17%, SD=0.79%) acquire through gifts, (\bar{X} =3.21%, SD,0.80%) do so through donations, and (\bar{X} =3.5%, SD=0.88%) acquire theirs through direct ordering. The results further show that (\bar{X} =1.75%, SD = 0.44%) acquire their serials through exchanges while the other (\bar{X} =2.08%, SD=0.52%) of the respondents acquire theirs through institutional membership to associations. On the whole, the ground mean score (\bar{X} 2.96%, SD= 0.74%) shows that serials are acquired through various methods.

Organisation of serial in the selected academic libraries in Edo State of Nigeria

The study also sought responses on how serials offered by the libraries it involved were organized. The responses provided are as Table 4 shows:

Table 4: Organisation of serials in libraries

| How are serials organized for easy retrieval in your library (n=100) | SA | A | D | SD | \bar{X} | SD |
|--|-----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Cataloguing | 66 66% | 20 20% | 9 9% | 5 5% | 3.47 | 0.87 |
| Classification | 61 61% | 27 27% | 11 11% | 1 1% | 3.48 | 0.87 |
| Proper shelving and carding | 51 51% | 27 27% | 5 5% | 7 7% | 3.02 | 0.76 |
| Digitalizing of available serial materials through the use of OPAC | 50 50% | 43 43% | 5 5% | 2 2% | 3.41 | 0.85 |
| Indexing | 61 61% | 30 30% | 6 6% | 3 3% | 3.49 | 0.87 |
| Abstracting | 41 41% | 44 44% | 5 5% | 10 10% | 3.16 | 0.79 |
| Display of serials on rack | 65 65% | 30 30% | 3 3% | 2 2% | 3.58 | 0.90 |
| Display of passwords of library data base for users to access online serials | 50 50% | 30 30% | 12 12% | 8 8% | 3.22 | 0.81 |
| Bibliography compilations of serial materials and display on notice board | 49 49% | 29 29% | 17 17.3% | 5 5% | 3.22 | 0.81 |
| Grand Mean | | | | | 3.34 | 0.84 |

Table 4 shows the means and standard deviations of how serials are organized for easy retrieval in academic libraries in Edo state of Nigeria. The results reveal that ($\bar{X}=3.47\%$, $SD=0.87\%$) of the respondents catalogue their serial collections for easy retrieval, ($\bar{X}=3.48\%$, $SD=0.87\%$) classifying theirs while ($\bar{X}=3.02\%$, $SD=0.76\%$) said their serials are properly shelved and assigned cards. The results further show that ($\bar{X}=3.41\%$, $SD=0.85\%$) of the respondents said their serials are organized by digitalizing the available serial materials through the use of online public access cataloguing (OPAC), ($\bar{X}=3.49\%$, $SD=0.87\%$) said their serials are organized by indexing them for easy location and retrieval and carding.

Further, the results show that ($\bar{X}=3.16\%$, $SD=0.79\%$) of respondents said they organize their serials by indexing the respondents organizes serials by indexing them, and ($\bar{X}=3.58\%$, $SD=0.90\%$) said that serials are organized by being displayed on racks. In addition to that ($\bar{X}=3.22\%$, $SD=0.81\%$) of the respondents said that serials are organized for easy retrieval

through displaying passwords of library database for users to see while (\bar{X} =3.22%, SD=0.81%) of the respondents said serials were organized through compilation of their bibliographic information. Apart from that, the results indicate that the grand mean score (\bar{X} =3.34%, SD=0.84%) indicates that academic libraries in Edo state of Nigeria use various means to organize serials for easy retrieval.

Preservation measures of serial materials in academic libraries in Edo state of Nigeria

The study also sought to find out how serials in academic libraries' collection are taken care of to ensure they exist in usable conditions for as long as necessary. Based on the responses received from respondents it can be concluded that the libraries have various methods of preserving their resources. Table 5 shows the preservation methods used by the libraries:

Table 5: Means of preserving serials

| How libraries preserve their serials collections | SA | A | D | SD | \bar{X} | S.D |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------------|-------------|
| Binding of serials in hard cover | 70 | 20 | 7 | 3 | 3.4 | 0.87 |
| | 70% | 20% | 7% | 3% | | |
| Binding serials with flexible strong spine | 53 | 39 | 2 | 6 | 3.39 | 0.78 |
| | 53% | 39% | 2% | 6% | | |
| Digitalization of serial collections | 68 | 18 | 10 | 4 | 3.29 | 0.85 |
| | 68% | 18% | 10% | 4% | | |
| Careful handling of serials by staff | 60 | 36 | 1 | 3 | 3.47 | 0.87 |
| | 60% | 36% | 1% | 3% | | |
| Availability of fire extinguisher | 66 | 28 | 4 | 2 | 3.53 | 0.88 |
| | 66% | 28% | 4% | 2% | | |
| De-acidification of serials | 25 | 28 | 27 | 20 | 3.58 | 0.89 |
| | 25% | 28% | 27% | 20% | | |
| Grand Mean Score | | | | | 3.33 | 0.83 |

Table 5 reveals the mean and standard deviation of how serial collections are preserved in academic libraries in Edo state of Nigeria. Specifically, the results show that (\bar{X} =3.4%, SD 0.87%) of the respondents preserve their serial collections through binding them with flexible strong spines while (\bar{X} = 3.39%, S.D= 0.85%) of the respondents preserve their by digitalization. According to the findings, (\bar{X} = 3.47%, S.D=0.87%) of the respondents revealed that serials are preserved by being carefully handled, (\bar{X} =3.53%, SD = 0.88%) respondents indicated that serials are preserved through the use of serials by staff. The results further show that (\bar{X} =3.58%, SD = 0.89%) of respondents said they use fire extinguishers to preserved serials while (\bar{X} =2.58%, S.D= 0.65%) of the respondents revealed that their serials are preserved by de-acidifying them. The grand mean score (\bar{X} 3.33%, S.D 0.83%) shows that academic libraries in Edo state of Nigeria use various preservation methods to preserve serial collections.

Ways to improve serial management in academic libraries in Edo State of Nigeria

The respondents of this study were also asked to suggest ways through which their libraries could improve the management of their serial collection. Table 6 presents the suggestions gathered from the responses received:

Table 6: Possible ways academic libraries can improve serial management

| Ways for improving the management of serials (n=100) | SA | A | D | SD | \bar{X} | S.D |
|--|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| Government increasing library budget to fund for library staff skills development | 74 74.1% | 16 16% | 2 2% | 8 8% | 3.56 | 0.89 |
| Inclusion of serial acquisition and management contents in curriculum | 68 68% | 27 27% | 2 2% | 3 3% | 3.45 | 0.86 |
| Exposing library staff to continuing education courses or conferences | 36 36% | 42 42% | 8 8% | 14 14% | 3 | 0.75 |
| Nigeria Library Association should be more involved in staff training and setting of library operational standards | 41 41% | 46 46% | 7 7% | 6 6% | 3.22 | 0.81 |
| Balancing theory and practical contents in librarianship education | 56 56% | 23 23% | 12 12% | 9 9% | 2.26 | 0.82 |
| Setting aside 10% of staff working hours for training and professional development | 50 50% | 33 33% | 7 7% | 10 10% | 2.23 | 0.81 |
| Improving internet connectivity and subscription to E-Serials | 71 71% | 11 11% | 15 15% | 3 3% | 3.5 | 0.88 |
| There should be proactive serial librarians | 49 49% | 28 28% | 17 17% | 6 6% | 3.2 | 0.8 |
| Serials should be well organized | 73 73% | 17 17% | 5 5% | 5 5% | 3.58 | 0.90 |
| Grand mean | | | | | 3.33 | 0.84 |

Table 6 shows the mean and standard deviation of possible ways to improve the management of serials in academic libraries in Edo state of Nigeria. The result shows that ($\bar{X}=3.56\%$, S.D = 0.89%) of the respondents suggested that the government should fund library staff skill development by increasing library budgets while ($\bar{X}=3.44\%$, S.D= 0.86%) of the respondents suggested that academic curriculum include contents on serial skill acquisition and management. Based on these findings, ($\bar{X}=3\%$, S.D =0.75%) of the respondents felt that library staff should be subjected to continuing education while ($\bar{X}= 3.22\%$, S.D = 0.81%) of the respondents suggested that the Nigerian Library Association should be involved in training library staff and setting of standards for library operations.

The results further show that ($\bar{X}=3.26\%$, S.D = 0.82%) of respondents felt the need for striking a balance between theoretical and practical approaches to teaching librarianship, and ($\bar{X}= 3.23\%$, S.D 0.81%) suggested dedicating 10% of staff working hours to training and professional development. Apart from that, ($\bar{X}=3.5\%$, S.D=0.88) of respondents indicated that there should be improvement of internet connectivity and subscription of electronic serials (E-

serials), (\bar{X} =3.2%, S.D=0.8%) said serial librarians should be proactive while (\bar{X} =3.58%, S.D=0.90%) said that serial materials should be well organized. The grand mean score (\bar{X} =3.33%, S.D= 0.84%) shows that there are various ways through which serial management in academic libraries can be improved.

Discussion of findings

Results on objective 1 show that serials are acquired through manual purchases, online subscription, gifts, donations, direct ordering, exchanges, and institutional membership of associations. The findings of this study agree with those of Akinbode (2008) who stated that serials can be acquired and maintained through gifts, exchanges, subscription, through direct ordering, subscription agent, and sometimes through institutional membership of associations.

Finding for objective 2 reveal that serials are organized for easy retrieval through cataloguing, classification, proper shelving and carding, digitalizing of available serial materials through the use of OPAC, indexing, abstracting, display of serials on racks, and display of passwords to library database. These findings are in line with those from a study by Law (2009) which revealed that organizations have to do with cataloguing, classification, and display of serials on the rack to facilitate easy access. Furthermore, Akinbode (2008) in his study on “serials management in the university libraries of developing nations” opined that serials collections require careful maintenance to ensure that the library holdings of any particular journals are properly arranged and kept for the use of the reader. Journals not received in the library are noted and claims are sent to the agent publisher to send the missing issues to the library. Akinbode (2008) further stressed that issue parts of journals in the library are sent to a local book binder to bind them together in a book form for preservative purpose. A record as kept for all journals sent out for binding. After binding, they are arranged on book-shelves set aside for bound volumes of journals. The bound volumes are also arranged on the book shelves according to classmarks.

Results on objective 3 show that serial materials are preserved through the following methods; binding of serials in hard cover, binding of serials with flexible strong spine, digitalization of serial collections, careful handling of serials by staff, availability of fire extinguishers, and through deacidification of serials. The findings of this study agree with a study by Falaiye (2014) who opined that an alternative to binding serials for purposes of preservation is replacing them in another, often more compact format, from which individual pages or issues can be less easily removed.

Results on objective 4 have revealed that the government should participate in the skill development of library staff by increasing the budget allocated to libraries, and that academic curriculum should have contents on serial acquisition and management. The results have also suggested that: library staff should be dispatched to continuing education courses or conferences, Nigerian Library Association should be more involved in training staff and setting standards for library operations, and that there should be a balance between theoretical and practical approaches to librarianship education. The findings have further suggested that ten percent of staff working hours should be set aside for training and professional development, there should be improvement of internet connectivity and subscription to electronic serials, and that serial materials should be well organized. In as much as there are factors that affect the management of

serials in academic libraries in Edo state, there will be solutions as well. The findings of this study agree with studies by Shibanda (2011) and Ted (2014) which suggested that a balance should be found between theory and practice when training librarians for the current market.

Summary of Findings

Based on the findings of the study, it has been revealed that:

1. Serials are acquired through various methods such as manual purchase and online subscription in academic libraries in Edo State of Nigeria.
2. Academic libraries in Edo State of Nigeria use various means like cataloguing, classification, proper shelving and Carding, indexing, abstracting, and display of serials on racks to organize serials for easy retrieval.
3. Academic libraries in Edo State of Nigeria use several methods in the preservation of their serials. These include binding of serials in hard cover, binding of serials with flexible strong spines, and careful handling of serials.
4. There are various ways through which academic libraries in Edo State of Nigeria can improve the management of their serials. These include government's participation in library staff skill development by increasing libraries' budgets, library staff being exposed to continuing education courses or conferences, and the Nigerian Library Association being more involved in training staff and setting of standards for library operations.

Conclusion and recommendations

Higher learning institution libraries in Edo state of Nigeria make themselves worth their name by making efforts to acquire and manage serial publications for their users. Serials operations in academic libraries in the state are in parts. A part of which involves the acquisition of serials. The part involves the following activities: selection of titles, record checking, preparation of final list for order, and ordering. Other activities of such an operation are verification of receipt, checking in of materials, claiming and renewing of subscription, and cancellation of order. The other part has to do with the management of serials. This involves careful maintenance of serials of any kind to ensure that they are properly arranged and kept for the use of the library patrons. Serials are managed by organizing them in such a way that they can be easily retrieved for use. However, cataloguing, classification, indexing, abstracting, and displaying of details on the rack have been considered best ways of managing and organizing serial publications for easy retrieval in academic libraries in Edo State of Nigeria. Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations are hereby made to help improve the management of serials in academic libraries in Edo state:

- (1) The government should participate in the skill development of library staff by increasing library budgets.
- (2) Academic curriculum should include contents on serials acquisition and management.
- (3) Academic libraries should consider focusing more on acquiring electronic serials because they are easier to manage and are less prone to destruction.
- (4) Adequate storage space should be considered when planning a serials collection department in academic libraries in Edo State of Nigeria.

- (5) Efforts should also be made to provide internet and information and communication technologies (ICTs) to increase the use of online serial publications and for effective management of serials in academic libraries in Edo state of Nigeria.

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