



Application of Collection Development Policies in documenting Religious Conflict without sustaining Resentment in Nigerian Universities

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Abstract:

The prevalence of religious conflict in the world and particularly in the Nigerian society has been a major source of concern to individuals, families and the society at large. Libraries serve as a collection point for all kinds of resources and they also render services irrespective of religion, colour or social status. In doing this, the libraries are guided by collection development policies. This study investigated the application of collection development policies in documenting religious conflicts without sustaining resentment in selected Nigerian Universities. The study adopted a survey research design. The population for the study comprises 20 university librarians and deputy university librarians in 10 selected Nigerian universities. Eight (8) university librarians and deputy university librarians in four randomly selected universities were composed for the study. Instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers and validated by experts. Data collected for the study was analyzed using Frequency Counts, Percentages, Mean and Standard Deviation. Findings of the study revealed that collection development policies applied in Nigerian Universities in documenting religious conflicts without sustaining resentment include selection, selection criteria, selection procedure statement, collection evaluation methods, donation/free materials and resource sharing. The finding also revealed that collection development policies such as selection and selection criteria are to a very great extent applied while selection procedure statement and resource sharing policies are applied to a great extent. Finally, the finding revealed that the constraints to the application of collection development policies in Nigerian Universities include, lack of cooperation from parent institution, lack of revision policy, administrative bottlenecks to policy implementation and maintenance, lack of skills/training of information professionals in processing and disseminating indigenous information/knowledge for conflict resolution and breakdown in communication of information due to high illiteracy level of the grassroots community members and inadequate technological infrastructure and knowledge among others. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that, or

application of collection development policies to be effective and successful particularly in documenting religious conflicts without sustaining resentment in university libraries, there is the need for professional librarians to be well equipped with the knowledge of library systems and how to run and manage its activities and adequate funds should be made available to university libraries to facilitate application of collection development policies particularly in documenting religious conflicts in Nigeria.

Keywords: University Libraries, Library Collections, Collection Development Policies and Religious Conflicts.

Introduction

University libraries are established to support all academic work in a university and provide adequate information resources for teaching, learning and researches for all users. The central function of the library is to support the teaching, learning and research programmes of the institution by acquiring adequate print and non-print information resources and audio-visual materials, and make them available for use by students, faculty members and researchers in general. These libraries are charged with the responsibility of providing adequate information materials to satisfy the needs of well defined specialized users, who are lecturers, researchers, administrators, or students of a particular academic institution. Hence these materials to be provided should be varied enough, to meet the functions of teaching, research and development, publication and community services particularly, of the lecturers and students, and library users in general. These materials are provided through library collections.

Library collections constitute the bedrock of service provided to the community and serve as important assets to the library. The entire information resources or, library holdings are known as the library collection. Library collections are very important in meeting the academic libraries objectives of teaching, learning and research of a particular institution. Ifidon (1999) as cited in Agbo (2014) defined library collection as information bearing materials which enable the library to fulfill its goal of meeting the information needs of its users. The extent, to which a library collection is utilized, depends upon the quality and relevance of the collection itself and the size, nature and contents of the library collection depend upon the objective of the institution and needs of the community it serves. Chukwu cited in Owolabi and Akintola (2010) observed that the major indicator of a good library is the quality and quantity of its collections. The quality and value of library collection is the outcome of the collection development activity due to its critical function in any library since it determines to a large extent, the usability or otherwise of its collection.

Collection development is the aspect of the library and information work that is responsible for selecting and acquiring information resources that will enable library and information practitioners to perform their myriad functions to the users effectively. Omagbemi (2003) defined collection development as a planned continuous, cost effective and preferential acquisition of qualitative, relevant materials to meet the needs of users and the objectives of the library. It is sufficed to state that collection development is not only viewed from the angle of growth in volumes and titles, but in the quality of acquired materials in enhancing effective information delivery and the usage of such to reduce user frustration. In order to achieve a balanced collection of information resources in all areas of the library's specialization, a collection development policy is designed to guide the selection of library materials. Collection development policy is a library's written plan, aimed at correcting the weakness of the collection and maintaining inherent strength. Ozioko and Ekere (2011) asserted that collection

development policy is a written document representing a plan of action and information during selection and acquisition of library materials and which proves very useful in pointing out subject areas that need emphasis. Fombad and Mutala (2003) asserts that that a collection development policy and its application is one of the first piece of evidence in determining whether a library is engaged in a true collection development. This implies that collection development policy guides the library personnel's thinking and decision making regarding library resources. Hence a policy which gives clear but simple guidelines in the selection of material would clearly be of benefit to bibliographers and would lead to them making more consistent and informed decisions.

From the foregoing therefore, it is necessary for academic libraries like those of the university in Nigeria to acquire current and relevant information resources necessary for sustaining the challenges of the country at hand. Today, Nigeria is laced with some of the most obstinate conflicts, most of them constructed from differences in religious identities. Historically, Nigeria has been engulfed in numerous religious crises and/or conflicts. The fact that an average Nigerian is very religious was observed by some sources (Oluduro, 2010; Ekundayo, 2013 as cited in Agbo, 2014). Religion plays a critical role in Nigerian society and has expressed itself as a potent force in the geopolitical development of the country. This force which has been used to unite Nigerians is the same force that has led to numerous conflicts in the country. The prevalence of religious conflict in the world and particularly in the Nigerian society has been a major source of concern to individuals, families and the society at large. This prevalence has become a major concern for the well-meaning Nigerians considering the impact on the peace, security as well as the economy of the nation (Tinuade & Fadekemi, 2015). Destruction of lives and properties has almost become an everyday affair as a result of these conflicts.

One factor that has been found common in a conflict situation is the absence of the right information or breach of communication between the parties involved. Provision of the right information has been seen as the Panacea for conflict resolution. According to Gisesa (2008), researches regarding religious conflict and peace have revealed that conflicts are based on deficiency of information, stressing that cases of misinformation, wrong information or missing information enhance disparity in opinions and social differences which may lead to as well as heighten conflicts. Against this backdrop, the university library and other academic libraries are seen as a very important system that provides the relevant information that helps society to understand the realities of any conflict situation. In addition to providing information for resolving conflicts, libraries can as well help in preventing conflicts by documenting conflict related materials without sustaining resentments.

Echezona (2001) citing Ogunkelu asserts that libraries equip researchers with techniques of identifying and preventing conflicts at an early stage, which could be by inviting discussions and brainstorming from experts on conflict resolution in workshops and seminars, and documenting the information so generated for users to learn the art of resolving and managing conflicts, thereby increasing the value of human intellectual output. Though the public library has been conceived by many as being better situated to reach out to the society for conflict resolution, the university library through the community service aspect of its function is also in a very good position to offer conflict resolution services. Perhaps, the realization of the potential roles of the university libraries in offering congenial services for conflict which is now seen as a global problem has prompted some universities to introduce the course "Peace and conflict resolution" as general studies course. Thus, the academic library is expected to offer conflict resolution services by making materials available both for teaching and learning as well as for community out-reach programmes.

Libraries serve as a collection point for all kinds of resources and also render services irrespective of religion, color or social status. Hence, the roles of librarians are crucial in this era of fading service personnel. They provide help and ensure the library functions effectively; they are also a part of the community who utilizes available resources within the four walls and outside in the whole world in meeting the information needs of the community. Librarians know their communities firsthand, and are often the first to recognize a pressing local need, owing to their interaction on a daily basis with patrons from all walks of life. In helping ameliorate religious crises in Nigeria, the libraries are guided by development policies in documenting religious conflicts in Nigeria without sustaining resentment. Adherence to these policies can lead to development of strategies to promote inter-religious dialogue and collaboration among users; resulting in conflict resolution and sustenance of peace. According to Ukejiana (2007), collection developments consist of five identifiable processes and criteria for selection, which are: Community Analysis, Selection policies, Acquisition, Weeding and Evaluation. Collection development policy guides libraries on issues and processes in selecting information materials to satisfy needs of the users, as it spells out issues related to content and format of the collection, to the authorities responsible for selecting and acquiring library information resources. Due to the strategic importance of collection development in academic libraries, it is glaring that a policy document is expected, in order to guide the operations of the library activities and act as a buffer against unjust complaints from critics. This study therefore is an attempt to assess the application of development policies and the extent of its application in documenting religious conflicts without sustaining resentment in selected universities in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The following objectives were raised to guide the study

1. Identify collection development policies applied in documenting religious conflict in Nigerian University libraries
2. Determine the extent of application of the collection development policies in documenting religious conflicts in Nigerian University Libraries
3. Find out the constraints that affect the application of Collection Development Policies in documenting religious conflicts in Nigerian Universities

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study

1. What are the collection development policies applied in documenting religious conflict in Nigerian University libraries?
2. What is the extent of application of the collection development policies in documenting religious conflicts in Nigerian University Libraries?
3. What are the constraints that affect the application of Collection of Development Policies in documenting religious conflicts in Nigerian University Libraries?

Literature Review

Studies have been conducted by researchers in relation to collection development policies in academic libraries. Nnamdi Azikiwe Library and University of Nigeria Nsukka, library website shows that their collection development policies consist of: Selection, Selection Criteria, Donations/Free Materials, Selection Procedure Statements, De-Selection / Weeding, and Collection Evaluation Methods. Chukwusa (2012) examined the extent of implementation of CDP's by public university libraries in the Niger Delta Area. Employing a descriptive survey design and questionnaire as data gathering instrument, the author discovered that most of the surveyed libraries had unwritten CDP's. The study also established that there was a relationship

between types of collection development policies and extent of implementation of the policies in the libraries. In a similar study conducted in North Central Nigeria, Abalaka (2010) found that collection development was fraught with problems which included lack of adequate funds, non-existence of written acquisition policy, lack of skilled acquisition librarian, lack of book trade, absence of staff motivation. The researcher recommended an increase in government allocation, proper formulation of written acquisition policies, training and re-training of staff, recruitment of skilled professional librarians to enable the state university libraries and similar libraries overcome the problems associated with acquisition practices among others. In another study of collection development policy, the case of university of Ilorin library, conducted by Adedibu (2006), the purpose of the study was to examine the acquisition policy. Findings reveal that there were no written collection development policies but librarians make use of alternative guidelines. The researcher recommended urgent need for a written collection development policy: institutions should have a collection development planners consisting of Academic Librarians of branch institutions and collection development librarians. In a similar vein, Futas (1984) conducted a survey of academic and public libraries policies in relation to collection development in Bauchi, North East. From the findings, ten academic library collection development policies as well as several selected portions of library policies like goals and objectives, selection, collection maintenance, and intellectual freedom are outlined. The findings pointed out that, finance is and has always been an issue of concern in the policies. The author noted that policies do not have to change every year with a new budget.

A number of problems have been identified by researchers as hindrances to the achievement of the aims of the libraries in conflict resolution. Such problems were highlighted by Thairu (2008) and Malesi (2008) which include: inadequate technological infrastructure and knowledge, lack of government support in the generation of vital information related to social cohesiveness, lack of skills/training of information professionals in processing and disseminating indigenous information/knowledge for conflict resolution and breakdown in communication of information due to high illiteracy level of the grassroots community members. These findings show that lack of established library policy conflict management information and inadequate funding of information services were identified as major problems confronting libraries regarding conflict resolution information services. Hazen (1995) suggested that not all academic libraries have collection development policies, because they are not all that important. Thus, to the author, policies are not worth having in libraries because: they are not realistic; they prevent librarians from responding to changes or campus needs; they are time-consuming; they are difficult to compile and review; and they impose unneeded limitations on the acquisition of materials

The difference that exist between these scholarly works reviewed and this study is that, none of the reviewed studies focused on the role of collection development policies in documenting religious conflict without sustaining resentment in Nigerian Universities. Hence a gap this study intends to fill considering the lingering religious conflict which has over the years been a security concern for the country.

Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design. The population for the study comprises 20 university librarians and deputy university librarians in 10 selected universities considered to be the first generation universities in Nigeria. These universities include University of Ibadan, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Efe, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, University of Lagos, Lagos, University of Benin, University of Maiduguri, Borno, University of Calabar, Cross River, University of Jos, Plateau and University of Illorin,

Kwara State. Eight (8) university librarians and deputy university librarians in four Universities, (University of Ibadan, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Efe, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria) were randomly selected for the study. Instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers and validated by experts. Data collected was analyzed using Frequency Counts, Percentages, Mean and Standard Deviation. A benchmark of 50% was used to answer research question 1 while 2.50 was used to answer research question 2 and 3.

Results

Research Question One: What are the collection development policies applied in documenting religious conflict in Nigerian University libraries?

Table1: Collection development policies applied in university libraries in documenting religious conflict in Nigerian University libraries

S/N	Development Policies	Applied	% Applied	Not Applied	% Not Applied	Decision
1	Selection	8	100.0	0	0.0	Applied
2	Selection Criteria	8	100.0	0	0.0	Applied
3	Selection Procedure Statement	6	75.0	2	15.0	Applied
4	De-Selection/Weeding	2	15.0	6	75.0	Not Applied
5	Donation/Free Materials	6	75.0	4	15.0	Applied
6	Collection Evaluation Methods	6	75.0	2	15.0	Applied
7	Resource Sharing	8	100	0	0.0	Applied
8	Routine de-accessioning	2	15.0	6	75.0	Not Applied

Table 1 as presented shows the collection development policies applied in documenting religious conflicts in Nigerian University Libraries. As revealed on the table, items 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7 (selection, selection criteria, selection procedure statement, collection evaluation methods, donation/ free materials and resource sharing) with percentage values above 50% are considered applied while item 4 (De-Selection/Weeding and routine de-accessioning) with a percentage value less than 50% is considered not applied.

Research Question Two: What is the extent of application of the collection development policies in documenting religious conflicts in Nigerian University Libraries?

Table2: Extent of application of collection development policies in university libraries in documenting religious conflict in Nigerian University libraries

S/N	Development Policies	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	Selection	3.33	.81	Very Great Extent
2	Selection Criteria	3.12	.87	Very Great Extent
3	Selection Procedure Statement	2.70	.77	Great Extent
4	De-Selection/Weeding	1.10	.68	No Extent
5	Donation/Free Materials	2.37	.79	Low Extent
6	Collection Evaluation Methods	2.39	.80	Low Extent
7	Resource Sharing	2.98	1.00	Great Extent
8	Routine de-accessioning	2.44	.87	Low Extent

Table 2 as presented shows the extent of application of collection development policies applied in university libraries in Nigerian. As revealed on the table, items 1, 2 (selection and selection criteria) are applied to a very great extent; items 3 and t (selection procedure statement and resource sharing) great extent; item 4 (de-selection/weeding), no extent; items 5, 6 and 8 (donation/free materials, collection evaluation methods and routine de-accessioning) low extent.

Research Question Three: What are the constraints to the application of Collection of Development Policy in Nigerian University Libraries?

Table 3: Constraints that affect the application of Collection Development Policies in documenting religious conflict in Nigerian Universities

S/N	Development Policies	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	Inadequate professional library staff	2.73	.98	Constraint
2	Lack of cooperation from parent Institution	2.82	.82	Constraint
3	Lack of revision policy	3.00	.87	Constraint
4	Administrative bottlenecks to policy implementation and maintenance	2.80	.77	Constraint
5	Lack of commitment to work	2.38	.69	Not Constraint
6	Negative staff attitudes/ Indifference	2.17	.75	Not Constraint
7	Problem of Funds	3.22	.81	Constraint
8	Lack of government support in the generation of vital information related to social cohesiveness	2.98	.90	Constraint
9	Lack of skills/training of information professionals in processing and disseminating indigenous information/knowledge for conflict resolution	2.41	.88	Constraint
10	Breakdown in communication of information due to high illiteracy level of the grassroots community members	3.18	.92	Constraint
11	Inadequate technological infrastructure and knowledge	2.91	.87	Constraint

Table 3 shows the constraints that affect the application of Collection of Development Policies in documenting religious conflict in Nigerian University Libraries. As revealed on the table, items 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 with mean values above 2.50 are considered constraints while items 5 and 6 with mean vales below 2.50 are considered not constraints

Discussions of Findings

Findings of the study as shown on table 1 revealed that collection development policies such as selection, selection criteria, selection procedure statement, collection evaluation methods, donation/ free materials and resource sharing are the policies applied in documenting religious conflict in Nigerian University libraries. This is in line with Nnamdi Azikiwe library, University of Nigeria Nsukka, library website (2013), shows that their collection development policies consist of: Selection, Selection Criteria, Donations/Free Materials, Selection Procedure Statements and Collection Evaluation Methods. In order to develop a balanced, user-oriented and active collection in documenting religious conflicts without sustaining resentment in Nigerian universities, a well planned system has to be evolved by the library and information managers in close association with the representatives of various user constituencies, to help develop need based collections to save both money, time and space that would, otherwise, be wasted on developing irrelevant, outdated, and passive collections.

Findings of the study as shown on table 2 revealed that collection development policies such as selection and selection criteria are to a very great extent applied in documenting religious conflicts in Nigerian university libraries. Further, the finding revealed that selection procedure statement and resource sharing policies are applied to a great extent. This finding is in line with what was shown as the need to understand the extent of collection development policies as was buttressed by Fombad and Mutala (2003) that a collection development policy and its application is one of the first piece of evidence in determining whether a library is engaged in a true collection development. It can be onferred from this finding therefore that, the extent, to which these library collections are utilized, depends upon the quality and relevance of the collections on religious conflicts in Nigeria.

Finally, findings of the study revealed that the constraints that affect the application of Collection of Development Policy in Nigerian Universities include inadequate professional library staff, lack of cooperation from parent institution, lack of revision policy, administrative bottlenecks to policy implementation and maintenance, lack of government support in the generation of vital information related to social cohesiveness, lack of skills/training of information professionals in processing and disseminating indigenous information/knowledge for conflict resolution, breakdown in communication of information due to high illiteracy level of the grassroots community members and inadequate technological infrastructure and knowledge. This finding corroborate with that of Thairu (2008) and Malesi (2008) who reported the constraints to collection and development policies to include: inadequate technological infrastructure and knowledge, lack of government support in the generation of vital information related to social cohesiveness, lack of skills/training of information professionals in processing and disseminating indigenous information/knowledge for conflict resolution and breakdown in communication of information due to high illiteracy level of the grassroots community members.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that importance and application of collection development policy is widely appreciated in documenting religious conflict in Nigerian Universities; the problems in its application are however enormous which needs to be properly handled in order not to undermine its importance in librarianship. Hence, recommendations were made that:

1. For application of collection development policies to be effective and successful particularly in documenting religious conflicts without sustaining resentment in university libraries, there is the need for professional librarians to be well equipped with the knowledge of library systems and how to run and manage its activities. Librarians must be learned to a certain level, and the training of student librarians' must include management and budgeting as core courses as these help in understanding policies in administration.
2. Adequate funds should be made available to university libraries to facilitate application of collection development policies particularly in documenting religious conflicts in Nigeria
3. The Nigerian Library Association (NLA) should create a standard policy for academic libraries' on their material collection development particularly in documenting religious conflicts, and ensure compliance by all academic libraries for them to be of a standard and enjoy increased funding.
4. University administrations should sponsor the training of academic librarians in the new- fangled aspect of librarianship dealing with services related to peace and conflict resolution, the human angle that touches on global peace and stability.

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