Information Resources Acquisition and Utilization at Arewa House Kaduna, Nigeria

Jibril Attahiru Alhassan, PhD[1] & Victoria Lawi Makama[2]
Department of Library and Information TechnologyFederal University of Technology, Minna, Nigeria[1,2]
j.alhassan@futminna.edu.ng[1]victoriaarmstrong63@yahoo.com[2]

Abstract

Purpose: *The purpose of the study were to determine the acquisition procedures of information resources, the nature and forms of information resources and the extent of use of information resources in Arewa House Kaduna among others.*

Methodology: *Case study was used for the study. The population of the study comprised of the heads of the four units of Arewa House Kaduna, thus total enumeration of the four heads of units was done. Data collected was analysed using frequency count and simple percentage.*

Findings: *Findings show that resources are acquired through legal deposit by the library/archives and the museum and through gifts and donations by all the departments. Further findings also show that resources were purchased especially by the library/archive and the book centre. With regard to artifacts collection, noncooperation from local communities was found to be a challenge and for the archival collections, non-submission of archival materials by offices was a challenge.*

Implications: *Arewa House Kaduna need to be more proactive in its publicity so that it can accomplish its mandate.*

Originality: *The study recommended among others that the Arewa house management should meet the local communities and sensitize them on the need to cooperate with their officials when they come for acquisition of artifacts*

Keywords: Information resources; Arewa house; Libraries; Archives; Museums; Information utilisation

Introduction

Information is a commodity that everyone requires for survival just like air and water. Organizations and institutions created and developed by man cannot subsist without necessary information which propels it. It is through information that man becomes knowledgeable and it is through knowledge that development came to be and is through development that society continues to change and transform. That suggests why Aina (2004) stated that information transforms the environment usually through appropriate research. No wonder research workers are beginning to regard information as the fourth economic resource after land, labour and capital. Stonier (1991) highlighted the importance of information when he stated that information was the most important factor in the modern production system as opposed to land, labour and capital because if one possessed enough information one could reduce the requirement of land, labour and capital.

According to Alhassan (2011) information can be seen as communicated knowledge of man. Information can be documented and thus exchangeable. Information documentation is as old as human civilization and it comes in different formats such as prints, images or electronic. Aina (2004) stated that the clay tablets of cuneiform signs and characters were used to record the activities of the government, temple and business in the ancient Mesopotamia. Later, rolls made of papyrus were used as medium of recorded information in Egypt, and in China, animal bones and tortoise shells were used as a medium of recorded knowledge. The discovery of the print media revolutionized the recording of information and modern libraries.

As stated by Edoka (2000), libraries are repositories of recorded knowledge. This implies that when recorded knowledge of mankind is collected and organized for use then, a library

arose. However, certain records of human activities are collected for their historical and evidential values and such collection is referred to as archives. According to Aina (2004) Archives and records management centres are institutions responsible for the collection and preservation of public and historical records for the use of historians and researchers. The archives are concerned mainly with the management and preservation of non-current records in an organization. Information is sometimes carried in artifacts of historical importance the collection of which is referred to as museum. According to Aina (2004) a museum is an institution that collects, conserves, researches, communicates, and exhibits arts, audio-visual materials, biological specimens, archaeological links etc. for the purpose of study, education, research, and enjoyment. They are concerned mainly with the collection and preservation of artifacts. Library collections, archival collections and museum artifacts are information resources that are of significance in research, especially historical research for which Arewa House is known for.

Historical Background of Arewa House

According to Ikara (1988) the history of Arewa House as a center for research and historical documentation dates back to 1970 when the 'History of Northern Nigeria Committee' was given the responsibility of writing a book on the history of northern Nigeria. This was after the dissolution of the three regional governments in the country and the creation of twelve states, which led to the enactment of the Joint Interim Common Services Agency (ICSA) to oversee the joint assets and liabilities of the northern region. The house of the late Premier, Sir Ahmadu Bello, and the Sardauna of Sokoto was formally approved to serve as an office for this project with the name Arewa House.

Arewa House is a centre affiliated to the Department of History of the Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) Zaria, Nigeria. The centre is concerned, not only with research and documentation of the history and culture of the people of northern Nigeria but also with current studies on policy, peace and leadership (Ikara1988). As a center for historical documentation and research, Arewa house is primarily concerned with procuring, preserving, analyzing and discussing issues of national and

international interest and particularly the issues of specific interest to the development of Northern Nigeria. It is today one of the few reputable research centers with an enviable core collection of books and manuscripts including higher degree dissertation from various universities in Nigeria and abroad. These dissertations cut across different fields of study most particularly humanities and social sciences and many of them are of thematic interest to the study of Northern Nigeria.

Arewa House has rare collections of Arabic manuscripts, the late premier's office records, Government publications, newspapers, Gifts and donations from Central Bank of Nigeria, individuals and other serial publications which are housed in the Archives. The centre accepts research students, scholars and researchers. It provides research affiliation to students from all parts of the world conducting research on any aspects of the state and society in Northern Nigeria. It is designed to provide documentation and research facilities in the field of Nigeria history and culture particularly in field of traditional institution and intellectual history such provided by institutions in Nigeria or elsewhere .

Statement of the problem

Arewa House is structured into four departments for effective management and these are Research, Archives, Library, and Museum. The mandate of Arewa House Kaduna is to collect various historical documentations of northern origin, and this definitely is not easy in view of the fact that some remote areas may not even be aware of their mandate thus limiting the exhaustiveness of their acquisition. Furthermore, visit to the centre does not immediately reveal the presence of researchers, as scanty scholars are noticed thereby probing thoughts of people's awareness about the activities of the centre, the proper organization of the resources, and the forms of resources acquired and perhaps people having challenges in utilizing the resources. These and other issues agitated the mind of the researchers. It is against this back drop that this study investigates the acquisition procedure and utilization of information resources in Arewa House.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to critically examine the nature of information resources acquired in to Arewa house, Kaduna, the

procedures for acquisition and utilization of acquired resources. The specific objectives of the study are:

1   To determine the acquisition procedures of information resource in Arewa House Kaduna.
2   To find out the nature and forms of information resources acquired by Arewa House Kaduna.
3   To determine the extent of use of information resources acquired in Arewa House.
4   To determine the challenges of resource acquisition in Arewa House Kaduna.
5   To determine the problems of using information resources in Arewa House Kaduna.

Literature Review

Libraries are repositories of information in whatever format it may appear. A library is primarily set up to acquire, organize, store and make accessible to users within the quickest possible time all forms of information materials which they require (Nwalo,2003). According to Ifidon (1999), in the university, the library plays a major role in making the university achieve its objectives of teaching, research, and community service through the provision of information resources for undergraduate instruction as well as postgraduate research needs.

Cunningham and Philips (2005) defined record as information created, received and maintained as evidence and information by an organization or person, in pursuance of legal obligation or business." According to Maidabino (2010) "archival records are non-current records of an organization, individuals or families created, received and preserved (by public archives agency) because of their administrative, historical, legal, cultural, or other values." He stated further that Public archival agencies play a vital role to the community because they promote reliable archival records keeping and maintain a visible, accessible and known collection.

The nature and coverage of archival resources according to Evborokhai (1990) include books, paper, maps, photographs, machine readable materials either documentary materials regardless of physical form or characteristics generated or received by a department or organization in connection with the transaction of its business and preserved as evidence of its functions, policies, decision, operations or

activities or because of the information value in them

Maidabino (2010) submitted that access and use of such records can have a significant value to individuals, institutions and society in general. He stressed further that the accessibility and use of records of human knowledge, their preservation and passages or communication among successive generations no doubt constitute the greatest single treasure of the human heritage. This is because they provide opportunities for maintaining the legal integrity of the individual, organization, and families including entitlements as well as the use of the archival information for administrative actions

As opined by Jimerson (2003) public archival clienteles include administrative staff of the institution, scholars, genealogists, local historians, legal researchers, specialists in one or more professional disciplines, college or school students and hobbyists. These clienteles are mostly researchers who recognize the values of these information sources.

According to Ifidon and Ifidon (2007), research is man's systematic and empirical investigation into existing but hidden elements in nature with a view to unearthing, restructuring, and explaining such elements for the purpose of development. For the success of any research, there is the need for adequate and accurate information obtainable from reliable and dependable sources. These information sources can come from the library, archives or museum and they have to be carefully acquired through appropriate selection procedures to meet the needs of the users. Edoka (2000) affirmed that there are several ways of acquiring library resources which include purchase, exchange and gift. According to Eguavoen (2002) acquisition involves selection, ordering, purchase, soliciting for gifts or exchange. That is, all processes by which books are acquired in the library as well as maintaining appropriate records.

Research Methodology

This research is a case study. The population of the study comprised of the heads of the four departments of Arewa House Kaduna. The total population is thus 4 and total enumeration of the four heads of departments was done. Therefore all heads of the four departments were used for the study. The instrument used for data collection is a structured questionnaire. Data

Jibril Attahiru Alhassan, PhD[1] & Victoria Lawi Makama[2]

collected were analyzed using frequency count and simple percentage.

Data Analysis and interpretation

Four numbers of the questionnaire were distributed and all were completed and returned. The data collected were analysed based on the stated objectives of the study. The respondents were the head of the four departments of the centre.

Respondents were asked to provide a **"yes"** or "no" response on some items about the acquisition procedures in their various units. Their responses are shown in table 1 below

Table 1: Acquisition procedure of information resources.

Items	Yes	No
Does the organization have any acquisition policy for their archives/documents?	4(100%)	0(0%)
You acquire your resources by the following methods:		
Legal deposit	2(50%)	2(50%)
Gift and donation	4(100%)	0(0%)
Purchase	2(50%)	2(50%)
Others	1(25%)	3(75%)
Effectiveness of the method of acquisition of information resource:	Effective	4(100%)
	Ineffective	0(0%)

Table1 shows that there is acquisition policy by the four departments, as indicated by the yes response of the four (100%) respondents. The table also shows that 50% of the respondents agreed that they acquire the resources through legal deposit; these are the Library/Archives and the Museum while 2(50%), that is the Book Centre and Administration do not acquire resources through legal deposit. However, all the respondents affirmed that they acquire resources through gifts and donations. The Library/Archive and the Book Centre agreed that they purchase resources, Administration and Museum do not. Administration) attested that they acquire their resources by other methods not specified but the other three Departments do not acquire outside the listed items. All the respondents agreed that the methods of acquisition of information resource are effective. The analysis from the table implies that there is an effective method of acquisition of information resources in to the Arewa house because the two key Centres of acquisition, the Library and Archives believed it is effective. The study considered it of great importance to know the nature and forms of information resources acquired into the centre. Their responses on some of the information materials are shown in table2 below:

Table 2: Nature and forms of information resources acquired

ITEMS	Yes	No
Theses and dissertation	4(100%)	0(0%)
Government information.	4(100%)	0(0%)
Academic/scholarly information	4(100%)	0(0%)
General information.	4(100%)	0(0%)
Academic journals.	4(100%)	0(0%)
Archives.	4(100%)	0(0%)
Artifact.	4(100%)	0(0%)
paintings	4(100%)	0(0%)
Do you acquire these resources regularly	Yes	3(75%)
	No	1(25%)

Table 2 shows that all the listed items are acquired in to Arewa house as evident by the 100% affirmation by all the respondents that they acquire theses/dissertations, government information sources, academic/scholarly journals, general information sources, archives, artifacts and paintings. On the regularity of acquisition of these information materials, 75% of the respondents were affirmative while 25% which is the archive indicated materials were not acquired regularly. When information resources are acquired into the Centre, they are not just for keep. Thus, respondents provided answers to the

category of users of these resources acquired in the Centre as shown in table 3 below.

Table 3: category of users of information resources at Arewa House

Users	Yes	No
Historians	4(100%)	0(0%)
Librarians	4(100%)	0(0%)
Government officials	4(100%)	0(0%)
International organization	4(100%)	0(0%)
Foreign researchers.	4(100%)	0(0%)
Local researchers	4(100%)	0(0%)
Post graduate student.	4(100%)	0(0%)
Undergraduate.	4(100%)	0(0%)
Users usually register their satisfaction with your resources?	4(100%)	0(0%)

Table 3 shows that various categories of people use the facilities of Arewa house. All (100%) of the respondents attested that Historians, Librarians, Government officials, International organizations, foreign researchers, postgraduate students and undergraduates use the facilities at Arewa House. To assess the level of satisfaction by patrons, respondents affirmed that users always register their satisfaction after use of facilities. However, it was considered important to determine the extent of use of these information resources and responses by users is presented in Table 4 below:

Table 4- extent of use of information resources at Arewa house

Highly used resources	Yes	No
Library collection	4(100%)	0(0%)
Archives collection	4(100%)	0(0%)
Museum collection	4(100%)	0(0%)
Administrative documents	0(0%)	4(100%)

Table 4 shows that the 4(100%) of the respondents were unanimous that Library collections, archival collections and museum collections are highly used by patrons while the administrative documents were not in high demand as attested to by all (100%) the respondents. This could be due to the fact that administrative documents are still in the active stage and used for decision making. If resources are well utilized, they must have been acquired through a process and not without some challenges. These challenges as provided by respondents are shown in table 5.

Table 5: Challenges in acquiring information resource.

Items	Yes	No
➢ Poor funding	2(50%)	2(50%)
➢ Low local content.	2(50%)	2(50%)
➢ With regard to artifacts, non-co-operation from local communities.	2(50%)	2(50%)
➢ With regard to archives, offices do not submit their archival material.	2(50%)	2(50%)

Table 5 shows that 50% of the respondents considered poor funding as a major challenge of resource acquisition while 50% did not consider it as a challenge to resource acquisition. Similarly, 50% of respondents are of the opinion that low local content is a challenge to resource acquisition but 50% do not consider it a challenge. With regard to artifacts collection, non-cooperation from local communities was seen as a challenge by 50% of the respondents but not by the other 50%. As for the archival collections, 50% of the respondents believe that non- submission of archival materials by offices was a challenge, but this is not considered a challenge by 50%.

The study also try to determine the methods of preserving the information resources, as such six preservative methods were advanced for the

respondents; these are microfilming, digitization, binding, fumigation, and photocopying and storage space. Their responses are shown in table 6.

Table 6: Methods of preservation of information resources

Items	Yes	No
You use the following methods to preserve your collections:		
➢ Microfilming materials.	2(50%)	2(50%)
➢ Digitization	2(50%)	2(50%)
➢ Binding	2(50%)	2(50%)
➢ Fumigation.	2(50%)	2(50%)
➢ Photocopying.	2(50%)	2(50%)
➢ Storage space.	2(50%)	2(50%)

Table 6 shows that in all cases, 2(50%) agreed to using all the six methods, while 2(50%) disagreed. This implies that some departments use some methods while some use other methods. The study then to seek the problems of using the information resources from respondents and their responses are shown in table 7.

Table 7: Problems of using information resources

Items	Yes	No	Missing item
You are able to meet all the need of your patrons	0(0%)	4(100%)	
Sometimes you request for some resources for your patrons else where?	2(50%)	1(25%)	1(25%)
You sometimes refer your patrons to other places for information	4(100%)	0(0%)	

Table7 Shows that the problem of using information resources by the four departments, four (100%) respondents opined that they are not able meet all the needs of their patrons. The table also shows that 2 (50%) of the respondents agreed that they sometimes request for resource for their Patrons elsewhere, 1(25%) of the respondent does not request for materials elsewhere for their patrons while 1(25%) did not respond to the question. Referring patrons to other places for information was attested to by all the 4(100%) respondents and they consider a problem of using information resources. This implies that the non-availability of some resources which warrant requesting or referring patrons was a problem of use of information resources.

Summary of findings

The study found that there is acquisition policy by the four departments, as indicated by the respondents. Findings also show that resources are acquired through legal deposit by the Library/Archives and the Museum and through gifts and donations by all the departments. Further findings also show that resources are purchased especially by the Library/Archive and the Book Centre. Findings show the effectiveness of the acquisition methods to all the departments. The study show that theses/dissertations, government information sources, academic/scholarly journals, general information sources, archives, artifacts and paintings are acquired and regularly too. The study found that various categories of people use the facilities of Arewa House. These include mainly historians, librarians, government officials, international organisations, foreign researchers, postgraduate students and undergraduates. Findings also show that the major resources used by patrons are library collections, archival collections and museum collections with affirmation that user always register their satisfaction after use of facilities.

The main challenges of resource acquisition as found by the study are poor funding and low local content. With regard to artifacts collection, non-cooperation from local communities was found to be a challenge and for the archival collections, non-submission of archival materials by offices was a challenge. The study also found that six preservative methods microfilming,

digitization, binding, fumigation, and photocopying and storage space are used for preservation of information resources. Findings also show that inability to meet all the needs of the patrons is a major problem. Other problems from the findings of the study are that they sometimes request for resources for their Patrons elsewhere, and referring patrons to other places for information.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the study concludes that, there are effective methods of acquisition of information resources at Arewa House, Kaduna. Collections include theses/dissertations, government information sources, academic/scholarly journals, general information sources, archives, artifacts and paintings. The major patrons of Arewa House Kaduna are historians, librarians, government officials, international organizations, foreign researchers, postgraduate students and undergraduates. The major resources used by patrons in Arewa House, Kaduna are library collections, archival collections and museum collections. The main challenges of resource acquisition in Arewa House, Kaduna are poor funding, low local content, noncooperation from local communities and non-submission of archival materials by offices. Six preservative methods microfilming, digitization, binding, fumigation, and photocopying were used for preservation of information resources. Non-availability of some resources which warrant requesting or referring patrons was a problem of use of information resources in Arewa house, Kaduna.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and conclusions reached, the following recommendations are made:

1. The Arewa House Management should meet the local communities and sensitize them on the need to cooperate with their officials when they come for acquisition of artifacts;

2. Arewa House should go on media publicity to create awareness about their activities;

3. The nineteen northern states of Nigeria should collaborate with Arewa house to increase funding; and

4. The Arewa house should organize seminars and enlightenment lectures for youths of northern Nigerian origin to create in them the awareness and love of unity of the region.

References

Aina, L.O (2002) Introduction to research. In Aina, L.O (Ed) *Research in Information sciences: an African perspective* Ibadan: Stirling-Horden publishers (Nig.) Ltd.

Aina, L. O. (2004) *Library and Information Science Text for Africa*. Ibadan: Third World Information Service Limited Publication

Alhassan, J.A. (2011) *Academic Staff Variables and ICT use for Agricultural Research in Nigeria Federal Universities.* PhD thesis submitted to Department of Library and Information Science, University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Cunningham, A., & Philips, M. (2005). Accountability and accessibility: Ensuring the evidence of e-governance in Australia. *Aslib Proceedings 57* (4)

Edoka, B.E. (2000) *Introduction to Library Science* Onitsha: Palma publishing and Links Company

Evborokhai, A.O. (1990). *The future of records management in Nigeria: An intervention.* Ibadan: Society of Nigerian Archivists, Sterling Publishing Company

Ifidon, S.E (1999) *Essentials of African university library management.* Lagos: National Library of Nigeria.

Ifidon, S.E and Ifidon, E.I (2007) *Basic principles of research methods.* Benin City: Good News Express Communications

Ikara, B. (1988) *A Synopsis of Research Promotion and Development in the Centre for Research and Historical Documentation, Ahmadu Bello University, Kaduna.*

Jimerson, R.C. (2003). Archives and manuscripts: Reference, access, and use. *OCLC System and Services 19* (1

Maidabino, A.A. (2010) The Availability, Organization, and Use of Archival Records: A Study of Public Archives Agencies in the Northwestern States of Nigeria *Library Philosophy and Practice*

Nwalo, K.I.N (2003) *Fundamentals of Library Practice: A manual of Library routines.* Ibadan: Stirling-Horden Publishers (Nig) Ltd.

Stonier, T. (1991) towards a new theory of information: *Journal of Information Science, 17(5)*