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THE READING OF BLACK SOUTH AFRICANS: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

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ABSTRACT

This paper, the second in a series dealing with black reading in Africa from historical perspective, concentrates upon South Africa. The influence of colonial policy of segregation and of Nationalist legislated apartheid, including the decline of educational standards and the decreasing literacy rate, are discussed. Contemporary initiatives which aim to alleviate the lack of access to reading material through the library are explored, taking into account the National Education Policy Investigation *Library and Information Science* report of 1992. Part I of this historical overview examined the generalization that "Africans don't read". Published in the October issue of this journal (Leach and Verbeek 1993), that paper focused on Anglophone sub-saharan Africa. This second paper traces the development in South Africa from the earliest colonial times.

THE ROLE OF THE MISSIONARIES IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF READING HABITS AMONGST BLACK SOUTH AFRICANS.

The roots of reading amongst black South Africans can be traced to the 19th Century missionaries. There is a parallel between the way reading developed in colonial Africa (Leach and Verbeek 1993), and the way it developed in South Africa before the institutionalization of apartheid. According to Ntuli (1982) "...[the missionaries] efforts became effective in the 19th century when they were writing grammar books, compiling dictionaries and making translations of the Bible." As early as 1801 two missionaries from the London Missionary Society had printed a spelling table and spelling book, probably in the Khoi language and also a catechism in Khoi. In the Eastern Cape missionaries from the Glasgow Missionary Society were printing in Xhosa as early as 1823 (Bradlow, 1987).

The missionary Robert Moffat and the "Kuruman Press" in the Northern Cape initiated the production of reading material in the black languages. During the period 1831 to 1870 this press produced some 103 items. Amongst these were spelling books, catechisms, scriptures, hymn books, tracts and periodicals (Bradlow, 1987). Bradlow (1987) considers Moffat's contribution to the spreading of

literacy in Africa as important; however, his role in producing readers should not be over-emphasised. The contribution of his press (and of other missionary presses such as the Morija Press in Lesotho) was limited simply in terms of the numbers of copies of titles produced. Under Moffat's supervision, for instance, only 50 copies of the New Testament were printed (Bradlow, 1987).

In other respects as well, the role of the missions as suppliers of reading material appears to have been far from ideal. Ferguson (1929), who investigated library services in Southern Africa for the Carnegie Corporation, identified some of the limitations of the mission publications:

Books in the vernacular are not numerous, nor are they easily obtainable. Most of them have been produced by missions, and from a bibliographic point of view are of poor quality. The missions unfortunately seem compelled to employ unbusinesslike financial methods. They are unable to supply enough of the books which would be used by the comparatively small number of natives who can and want to read. With the steady increase in the native schools, this body of readers will grow. It would be well, therefore, if one press might be aided in its attempt to cope with the problem.

Switzer and Switzer (1979) also suggests that the readership was small: "The potential reading audience was in Christian converts drawn from relatively isolated missionary stations and outstations scattered throughout Southern Africa".

PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND READING IN SOUTH AFRICA BEFORE 1948.

Libraries did not play a real role in the encouragement of reading because so few were open to black readers. In 1928 there were only seven libraries which had been established for blacks. These were largely associated with educational institutions (Manaka, 1972). The Molteno Regulations of 1874 had made it theoretically possible for blacks to use reference material and any other book they wished to consult in the public libraries in the Cape Colony (Peters, 1975). More over, South African libraries were subscription libraries and very few blacks could afford the subscriptions. Membership of libraries was racially restricted in practice even if public discussion of this fact was guarded. According to Minutes of the Natal Society (1904), the first time that the South African library world discussed the possibility of admitting black readers was in 1904. Responses to a questionnaire sent to libraries by Dyer, the librarian of the Kimberley Public Library, revealed that no library was prepared to admit blacks as full members.

It was the missionary institutions (q.v.) which were instrumental in providing the first libraries for blacks. An early 19th century example is that of Lovedale in the Eastern Cape (Manaka, 1972). The other meagre library services subsequently established for blacks helped to encourage reading to a limited extent.

Johnson, writing in 1941 (in Manaka, 1972), summed up the situation:

The progress so far achieved in providing a library service for Non-Whites in South Africa, when viewed as a whole, bears the mark of being haphazard and rather make-shift. There is much that doesn't seem to have any of the qualities of a genuine solution to the problem of providing adequate and suitable literature for the literate Non-European."

The Carnegie Corporation *Memorandum* which was presented in 1929, recognised that:

The South African is willing... for the native to cook his food, care for his children, keep his household in order, serve him in a personal way, carry his books to and from the library, but he would feel that the end of his regime were at hand if this same servant were permitted to open these books and read within.... The library, since few black people are capable of using it, is a symbol of the white man's superiority rather than a greatly desired privilege ruthlessly withheld from a fact-hungry, scantly clad race. Nevertheless, so far as the native is able to use books, they ought to be made available to him...

The commissioners failed to take a stand on the segregation of libraries and suggested that "no sane person would advocate the circulation of the same books to all" (Ferguson, 1929), thereby legitimising the status quo. It was suggested that a special department should be created to serve black adults and children (Ferguson, 1929).

The exclusion of blacks from libraries in South Africa was in sharp contrast to the accessibility of public libraries to Black Americans. R.V. Selope Thema drew attention to the politics and economics of reading during this period. He wrote in 1929 "The libraries of this country are closed against the African. He has no means of securing books; his earnings are scanty and therefore he cannot afford to spend money on books" (Couzens 1985).

Insufficient funding of libraries and an inadequate supply of reading material, rather than a lack of demand, appears to have been the issue. Borland (librarian and secretary of the Carnegie Non-European Library, Transvaal) noted in 1937 that the demand for books by the black subscribers far outstripped supply:

It is very interesting to see the eagerness with which these books are taken out and read by the native people... They simply thirst for the books and the knowledge they can extract from them. It is a pity that our resources are so limited. We could easily distribute ten times the number of books we possess and we could open up many new centres all over the Province (Transvaal). Our big problem is to restrict our activities within our financial resources (*South African Libraries*, 1937).

By 1948 there were 86 centres in the Transvaal Province serving approximately 11,000 readers. The annual circulation of books was 20,000 (Peters, 1975). These circulation figures are probably highly misleading if taken as an indication of the amount of reading taking place. An article in *South African Libraries* (1937) suggested this:

"It is impossible to say how many people benefit from the Non-European Library, for books are passed so much from hand to hand that it is impossible to keep track of them from headquarters."

Peters (1975), added "It is also necessary to bear in mind that at many, if not at the majority of centres, many readers preferred to read in the library and books not actually taken for home reading were not recorded as having been read."

It is probable that a great deal more reading was taking place than the statistics suggest, a phenomenon which is applicable elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa (Leach and Verbeek 1993).

The certification "sydrome" with regard to reading (noted in the Nigerian context by Leach and Verbeek 1993) was also prevalent during this period (Peters, 1975): "experience showed that most Africans were still regarding books as merely a means to an educational qualification...". However, the fact that the Carnegie Non-European Library "found only a very limited choice of books for recreational reading, and [that] no children's books were available which were not school readers" (Peters, 1975) goes some way toward explaining the lack of reading for recreational purposes.

Mphahlele (1984) has articulated black attitudes towards education during the 1930s and 1940s: "We had to pass exams; we had to succeed. Our parents had themselves little or no education: we had been told education was a key to a decent livelihood and respectability, and we wanted those — oh, how desperately we wanted them in order to rise spiritually above our sordid conditions."

According to Switzer and Switzer (1976), 19 African newspapers had been registered in South Africa by 1930, which were aimed at black readers. This was despite the very restrictive conditions under which the black press had to operate. While the purchasing power of black readers was low, the potential reading audience had increased from approximately 9.7% of the African population in 1921 to 21.3% by 1946 (Switzer and Switzer, 1979). As with the readership of books, how much reading was actually done is difficult to ascertain. In the 1940s the newspaper *Bantu World* had a circulation of 24,000. The actual readership, however, was far higher in that "it was estimated that each copy was read by at least five adult wage earners in addition to those who read to illiterate friends and members of the family" (Switzer and Switzer, 1979). In spite of the paucity of provision, black people were reading. Although much of this was in English, a small but increasing number of works in black languages were being published.

THE EFFECT OF LEGISLATED APARTHEID ON THE READING OF BLACK SOUTH AFRICANS.

The Nationalist Party came to power in South Africa in 1948. This placed political power in the hands of those who were committed to maintaining white supremacy and racial segregation. The pervasive legislation of apartheid would retard *inter alia* library development. Although the library system for whites was to grow with the development of the four Provincial Library Services, this growth would take place at the expense of facilities accessible to blacks. Thus libraries, along with education and other fundamental types of provision, was to be retarded and skewed in favour of whites.

The Verwoerdian philosophy that cast black people as hewers of wood and drawers of water meant that blacks were to be educated accordingly. The rapid decline in educational standards for black students and the closure of mission schools, coupled with a lack of exposure to books and libraries, brought a decline in the ability to read, particularly in English.

Commenting, Nkomo saw the South African library system as "designed to limit access to information. (Nkomo 1985) "Statistics from Bundy and Simmons (1986) reinforce this perception: each white public library served on average between 3.5 and 5.2 thousand population, whereas each black public library served between 30.8 and 49 thousand."

PUBLISHING OF BOOKS IN BLACK LANGUAGES. The fact that there were four main black languages meant that the resultant short publishing runs were uneconomical. What was published, was poor both in literary quality and by publication standards. The publisher Van Schaik (1971) contended nearly 20 years ago that "Apart from the educational market, there is hardly a Bantu reading public." His statement stands in contrast to the comments from Borland and others above, and perhaps a distinction is required between a materials reading and a materials purchasing public.

The 1988 edition of the *South African National Bibliography* provides a breakdown of both the number of titles and copies by subject published in each language in this country in that year. It reveals that the publications in Zulu (following English and Afrikaans, the most "published" language for the year) reflect the paucity of reading materials (that is books and pamphlets) in the African languages. The number of copies in these languages published was 2,801,872 representing 214 titles. (The comparative figures for Afrikaans were 9,938,008 and 2,061 respectively). The major subject groupings in terms of copies of Zulu publications were Linguistics, and Philology (929,885 copies) followed by Literature, Texts (886,591 copies) followed by Religion, Theology (759,836 copies) (*South African National Bibliography*, 1988:XX-XXII).

These three subject areas accounted for 92% of copies produced in Zulu. The figures bear witness to the lingering heritage of early missionary endeavour, further borne out by French's point (1989a) that "most African language publications are either didactic or religious". The paucity and types of materials produced in the black languages "can hardly be favourable" as he points out, "to the development of reading, considering that nearly 10 million black people (over 4 million of them adults) in South Africa know only their own language... and that very few black children grow up with any contact with English" (French, 1989a).

One could put forward the argument that there was only a very limited reading public in the black languages because, amongst other factors, neither sufficient nor suitable material existed. As French (1989b) pointed out, "one cannot attribute this [the small amount published] to low demand alone, for the low demand is exacerbated by the lack of appeal of what is available."

Ntuli (1982), reviewing literature in the black languages, suggested that there was a reluctance among black adults to read books in their own language. This is caused "by the assumption that the books published are not mature enough. Educated adults prefer to spend their money on romantic and detective novels written in English." In a study of Xhosa literature, Opland (1986) noted that the reading public comprised children almost exclusively and that "at best, with few exceptions, there exists an emasculated literature for adults." As Ntuli (1982) remarked, the "emphasis has all along been on publishing books for the school market." It is possible

that adults perceived books in the black languages as being suitable for children only and, as a consequence, avoided reading them.

Cope (1986) pointed out that "Zulu literature itself is only fifty years old — it is only fifty years since the first Zulu books by Zulu authors appeared". In contrast to this Vink and Frylinck (1983), after examining both the negative and positive factors concerning the publication and use of literature in the African languages, stated that "Even a pessimist would probably admit that there exists a considerable potential both for authors and publishers in the field of literature in the African mother tongues."

Black became information-hungry, attempting to overcome the chronic lack of access to information. According to Mokgokeng (1982): "Unless books are readily available and equally important, unless books impart knowledge that is desired, a reading public will not grow".

READING SURVEYS

A study done by Fouche (1980) in the Pretoria townships of Mamelodi and Atteridgeville found that 88% of a sample drawn from library members had read at least one book during the preceding month. The figure for a sample drawn from the general adult population was 28%. This should be seen in the context of his statement that "the book makes the highest demands on literacy, time and intellectual effort of all the media..." (Fouche, 1980). These figures are substantial and indicate that more book reading was taking place amongst black adults than one is often led to believe.

It was found that users of a library in a black hostel in Modderfontein showed an "enthusiastic interest" in books in the black languages, the problem being that there was simply not enough books available to satisfy the large numbers of readers (Abbot, 1988). In-house research done by the Natal Provincial Library Services indicate that Abbot's findings are valid: fiction is popular amongst black library users (Leach, 1993).

Studies of the reading habits of black adults were done by Nyongwana (1990) in the Durban township of Lamontville and Mini (1990) in the Greater Edendale area near Pietermaritzburg. These studies included only literates (100 subjects each). Despite the observation that reading is considered a socially desirable activity which thus tends to get over-reported, (Sudman & Bradburn, 1983), the results of both of these studies are illuminating. The reading of books is taking place and the extent of that readership is fairly wide. Nyongwana (1990) found that 87% of the sample read books. Furthermore, there was a clear indication of a regular reading pattern with 59% of the respondents reading a book in the week interviewed. This result should be compared to the survey of library users done by Fouche referred to above. In her study Mini (1990) found that 70% of the sample spent as much as 5 to 10 hours per week reading (not necessarily books). When asked if they had read a book or books in the past month only 6% reported not having done so.

These studies by Nyongwana and Mini both point to the extensive reading of newspapers and magazines by black adults. Mini (1990) found that 90% of the respondents read magazines while 81% read newspapers. Nyongwana (1990) found that magazines and newspapers were read by 77% and 87% of the respondents respectively.

Despite a lack of statistics, figures that are available indicate that readership of serial publications by blacks has increased and the reading of newspapers and magazines was (and is) the predominant type of reading which was taking place amongst black people.

Shepheard (1958) mentioned that the three monthly magazines *Zonk*, *Bona* and *Drum* had a circulation of an estimated quarter of a million. He also pointed to the wider reading of the magazines (as with newspapers above): "...research has shown that every copy is read by about six of the Bantus. This means that approximately one and half million read one or other of these periodicals each month." The Report of the Interdepartmental Committee of Investigation into Library Services for Non-Whites in South Africa (White 1965) found that:

- Daily newspapers directed at whites were read by 562,000 blacks.
- Sunday and weekly newspapers directed at whites were read by 668,000 blacks.
- Magazines directed at whites were read by 357,000 blacks.
- Newspapers directed at blacks were read by 1,503,000 people daily.
- Magazines directed at blacks were read by 2,109,000 people.

The study done by Fouche (1980) and by Nkabinde (1982-3) in Lesotho amongst library members also point to a similarly high readership of newspapers and magazines. Fouche (1980), for example, found that 52% of the sample drawn from the general adult population read a daily paper more than once a week while 34% read a periodical more than once a month. The corresponding figures for the sample drawn from library members were significantly higher, namely, 93% and 72% respectively.

According to French (1989a), "The most illuminating figures regarding black participation in the reading world are offered by the *All Media and Products Survey* (AMPS), an annual national survey of readership trends and their relationship to consumer choices." As part of the 1986/87 and 1988/89 surveys samples of 4,366 and 4,438 blacks aged sixteen and over representing an estimated population of 14,479,000 and 15,176,000 respectively were interviewed. The surveys covered the entire Republic including the homelands. The readership of newspapers and magazines were as follows:

READERSHIP OF NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES

	% of Total Black Adult			Number		
	Population (1000s)					
	87/88	88/89	92/93	87/88	88/89	92/93
Any English daily newspaper (including the Sowetan)	15.1	13.1	13.8	2,185	1,964	2,389
Any English weekly newspaper	14	9.2	9.7	2,020	1,382	1,681
Any Black weekly newspaper	17.1	11.8	17.3	2,472	1,769	2,987
Any weekly newspaper	25.6	18.2	22.5	3,706	2,732	3,893
Any English magazine	14.8	8.9	9.6	2,143	1,340	1,662
Any Black magazine	34.6	24.7	23.5	5,016	3,710	4,057
Any magazine	38.2	27.8	27.2	5,533	4,179	4,699

(AMPS, vols. B3, 1987/1988 & 1988/1989:1-2 vol. C, 1993:1)

While the percentages are relatively low, the numbers involved are substantial, in particular the numbers involved in the reading of magazines directed at a black audience. In his article on the role of newspapers and periodicals in the promotion of literature in the African languages, Molope (1982) states that "The first thing we should take note of is that the African community is not yet a reading community in the true sense of the word, and this notwithstanding the standard of literacy that has come about over the years." The above figures do tend to suggest that a large proportion of the African community has become a reading community albeit of periodicals and newspapers.

Interestingly, circulation figures for the daily newspaper the *Sowetan* (one of the largest South African dailies in terms of circulation) stood at 157,982 during the latter half of 1988 (*Official Yearbook of the RSA*, 1989-90). When divided by its readership, namely 1,268,000 (AMPS vol. B3, 1988/89:1), one gets a figure for the readership per copy of just over eight. The 1993 figures are 184,401 (*Official Yearbook of the RSA*, 1992-93) and the average number of readers per copy 8.8. While this figure is obviously not strictly accurate, it does support what has been stressed repeatedly above — that the readership of serials is far wider than circulation figures would suggest.

This period saw the start of publishing of serials aimed at the educated, professional black readership — thus *Ebony* was to become the equivalent of *Cosmopolitan* but aimed at the upper middle class black female readership. Switzer and Switzer (1979) point out that from the 1950s the composition of the potential audience of the Black Press underwent substantial changes. The traditional Christian elite who were the primary readers of reading material were replaced by a more diffuse elite with different needs and desires. The increase in literacy amongst blacks played a major role in these changes, standing, as the authors point out at 49.5% in 1970. "The mass reading audience", they contend, "had arrived." This contention is upheld by the circulation figures for the market leaders for 1992 (AMPS, 1993).

BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS, STUDENT REVOLT AND THEIR EFFECT UPON READING AND PUBLISHING.

The student uprising of 1976, was caused *inter alia* by the ideological pushing of Afrikaans in the schools at the expense of the black languages and English. Mzamane (1982) remembered the effect this was to have on the students: a rejection of Afrikaans as a literary medium and avid reading in search of truth... we threw ourselves into reading way beyond the prescribed texts. Our only cause for regret was that we couldn't lay our hands on many of the African writers... because they had been banned". The Black Consciousness Movement was to result in a new emphasis upon Africa and Africanism and this in turn encouraged the development of the alternative presses in South Africa, such as Ravan and Skotaville (Dubbeld, 1990).

The appallingly low level of adult literacy resulted in the emergence of adult first language (black) and second language (mainly English) literacy classes, with some accompanying publication of high interest low reading level publications. Most of these publications have come from non governmental organisations (NGOs),

publishers are afraid that the market is too small to be economically viable (van Heerden 1992). At present the distribution methods are in part to blame for the small market. Although these works are eagerly being purchased by libraries (Moran, 1993, Beacham, 1993) few are actually reaching the target group of new literates. New literates are not sufficiently confident to enter library premises where these books are to be found, nor are extant libraries physically readily accessible. This material must be taken to the factory workplace, to the literacy classes and to the farms, or it will remain grossly under-utilised (Leach, 1992). Innovative distribution methods must also be developed by the book trade, such as the Congress of South African Writers "suitcase" libraries, and supermarket and spaza selling points should be established.

A survey of COSATU shop-stewards (Pityana and Orkin, 1992) showed that nearly two-thirds (62%) of shop-stewards read one of the daily newspapers produced by the major groups daily. They are keen readers of a varied literature, including progressive journals and union journals. English predominates as the preferred language for reading, except in Natal where Zulu is preferred (see Pityana and Orkin, 1992, Figure 15). The graph suggests that a significant proportion (20%) of shop-stewards do not read English at all. Of these nearly half only have some degree of primary education (Pityana and Orkin, 1992).

Shop-stewards read to an impressive extent. In the week preceding the survey, 43% had seen a journal, 58% a magazine and 66% a pamphlet (the latter obtained mainly from their trade union) and 64% were reading a book. The figures were significantly lower in Natal (Pityana and Orkin, 1992).

Although the Union provides reading material, some 65% of shop-stewards buy the magazines they read; 55% buy their books and 30% their journals (37% get their journals from their union). This commitment to purchasing tends to confirm the strong culture of reading among shop-stewards. The survey demonstrates that women shop-stewards spend much of their time at home performing household chores and child care tasks. As reading requires time it is no surprise that women tend to read magazines (which have shorter articles) more, and books less, than their male counterparts. In addition, being clustered in low income categories, women shop-stewards rely more than men on friends and libraries to get reading matter (Pityana and Orkin, 1992).

CONCLUSIONS

Appropriate publishing and distribution need addressing, as does the high rate of illiteracy. The latter will take years of painstaking literacy classes and support work to overcome. The former can be more readily rectified.

In spite of the abolition of the apartheid laws — public libraries have managed to keep black readers out of the "white libraries" (Didcott 1992). Change is not achieved through public pronouncements by Prime Ministers. It is wrought by soul searching attempts to find direction, by policy decisions, but above all by the implementation of the necessary changes by bureaucracy, whether reluctant or enthusiastic.

Until recently, the future direction libraries should take was unclear. The Neli Library and Information Services (LIS) report (NECC, 1992a & b) has been evaluated by Lor. In spite of some limitations it is "a milestone in the literature of South

African librarianship and information work." It has contributed, according to Lor, a critical analysis of the implicit philosophy underlying current library practice; a placing of library and information issues firmly within the South African political context; an illuminating juxtaposition of library and information services both informal and formal, and identification of the key elements of policy that have to be addressed in planning the transformation of library and information services to serve a democratic, non-racial South Africa. In his opinion it brings us closer than we have ever been to a paradigm shift in library and information work. For this reason "it is likely to be uncomfortable reading for many" (Lor 1993). In spite of limitations mentioned above, at last some grassroots opinion was being taken, attempts were being made to understand people's perceptions of library services, and the true role of the library as a provider of educational and recreational reading material has been debated. Perhaps the Nepi LIS group's greatest contribution lies in its identification of library and information services with the interests and concerns of civil society- that is with the domain of organised special interests such as trade unions, community-based organizations, private sector organizations, the civic associations and a host of special interest groups (NEC, 1992(a)). The LIS group's investigation was not directed towards the state. It articulated views and policy options that recognized that the state's policies themselves represented the views of a powerful set of interests. It is possibly within this factor that the potential for Lor's paradigm shift lies.

An initiative which is likely to be significant in taking library and information work further, particularly as it continues the fragile and hard-won unity of the seven library and information work constituencies, is TRANSLIS, Transforming our library and information services. It is a research initiative which aims to: popularise the research done by Nepi; initiate and co-ordinate further research; formulate policy options; lobby for change and formulate regional library and information services strategies and facilitate regional networking. Perhaps Translis's most important function will be providing a strong and united lobby for a central place for library and information provision amongst the priorities of a new government.

IFLA believes that "despite clean constraints [noted in their report] there is encouraging evidence of a growing number of initiatives designed to address specifically the historical imbalances, and to respond with greater sensitivity to newly articulated needs (IFLA, 1993:18)." In addition to the initiatives noted by IFLA, the authors wish to give example of the Natal Provincial Library Services. The formulation of new policy by the Natal Provincial Library Service reveals considerable potential for support for a wider range of library initiatives than was previously the case. The new policy document has amongst its guidelines the redress of historical inequity in the provision of library services to the people of Natal and that "consultation with the local community [is] to take place during the planning stages of a new public library". The library service is no longer bound to serve only communities under the control of established government structures but may recognise "bona fide community organisations of a public nature approved by the province". Furthermore communities with acceptable accommodation or facilities may qualify for affiliation and may be entitled

to a subsidy to equip the accommodation for use of a library (Omar, 1992). While some of the phrasing may seem to be open to a range of interpretations, it would appear that the spirit of the document is genuinely inclined towards redress. The potential of this new policy needs to be made known to grass roots community people so that they can present their cases for support. If this is done the possibilities for enhancing library and information use are considerable.

After April 1994 when the country is under new government there will be many petitioners for better provision for health, housing and education. The apartheid years of unwise spending have left the country with few reserves. Where will the money be obtained to subsidise publishing and library distribution points for *all* the people? Library and information workers will have to have a very clear picture of their goals so that they can put these services alongside the others on the agenda of a new government.

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THE VIENNA CONVENTION ON SUCCESSION OF STATES AND ITS APPLICATION TO THE MANAGEMENT OF THE RECORDS OF THE FORMER EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

The paper discusses the records of the defunct East African Community comprising Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The failure of the "Vienna Convention of Succession of State Property, Archives and Debts" in making records of former colonies kept in Great Britain available to successor countries is examined. In addition, the non-provision for the management of records of the defunct East African Community when it broke up is highlighted. Thus access to records of the respective countries making up the community is almost impossible. The paper finally recommends that all the successor organisations of the defunct community should manage and provide access to records within their organisations, with the assistance of the respective country's national archives. All records of the defunct community should be microfilmed and made available to the former partners.

INTRODUCTION

Since the break up of East African Community in 1977, the question of its records has been a rather sensitive issue within the East African region. Few archivists in this region are able to discuss this matter openly without raising nationalistic feelings on how the assets and liabilities of the community were distributed. It has often been felt that Kenya inherited a much larger share of the assets of the former community. Whether this is true or not, one fact remains true. Due to historical reasons, many of the institutions making up the former East African Community were based or had their headquarters in Kenya, and with the collapse of the community it was only natural that Kenya became a successor to many of these institutions. As a corollary to this, Kenya also inherited a large quantity of records from these same organisations. In order to appreciate the importance of the East African community records, a detailed study of the community from its inception to its final demise in 1977, is necessary.

On several occasions dissatisfaction and apprehension has been expressed on the manner in which these records are being preserved. The importance of these records cannot be overstated and it is the responsibility of the three partner states namely; Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania to see to it that these records are preserved and made accessible to the research community both locally and internationally. Very often we hear stories regarding the appalling situation in which these records are. We would have failed posterity if these records were to be totally lost when we already have a very strong team of competent records managers and archivists in this region. In a recent seminar held at the Kenya National Archives in Nairobi the issue of these records was discussed but no definite proposals were put forward. That the question of these records was raised at all in such a forum, gives the impression that archivists are now ready to deal with this problem and to find some lasting solutions. These solutions are two fold:- the preservation of these records for posterity and the provision of access to them. If these two goals can be achieved, then it would be a remarkable achievement. But first, how can these records be managed in the light of the failed Vienna Convention on succession of states in respect of state property archivists and debts?

THE VIENNA CONVENTION ON STATE ARCHIVES

The events leading to the Vienna Convention on the succession of State Property, Archives and Debts can only be understood through studies involving the transfer of power from one state to another. In simple terms, the convention sought to lay guidelines on the procedures to be followed in settling issues resulting from the emergence of new state either through decolonisation or through other forms of transfer of power. Many Third World countries had hoped that the convention would provide them with a legal instrument through which many of their archival claims could be settled. But the western powers viewed the convention differently. To them the convention was never intended to be retrospective in any way- that is, it was never intended to be used for solving existing claims but as an instrument for future use. In the end, the convention that was adopted on 7th April 1983 in Vienna was not ratified by most of the western powers who in fact continue to hold many valuable records from Third World countries.

The question of archival claims began to receive international attention in 1974 when UNESCO adopted resolution 4:212 in which it invited member states "to give favourable consideration to the possibility of transferring documents from archives constituted within the territory of other countries or relating to their history within the framework of bilateral agreements, (Borsa, 1981). The issue of archival claims was further discussed at International Council of Archive's (ICA's) International Round Table Conference held at Cagliari in 1977. During that meeting, it was generally felt that archival claims could be resolved through the use of photo-reproductions such as microfilms as opposed to direct transfer of the records. It was, therefore, recommended that a study be undertaken to explore the possibility of establishing a special fund which could assist member states in microfilming records held outside their territories, (Kecskemeti, 1986). Another study was commissioned by UNESCO

to develop model bilateral and multilateral agreements and conventions concerning the transfer of archives. ICA undertook this later study and perhaps their findings and recommendations remain much more meaningful to Third World countries than the Vienna Convention which was drafted by the International Law Commission, (Keckskemeti, 1981).

As noted above, the Vienna Convention was not ratified by all the western powers. Charles Kecskemeti, the Executive Secretary of ICA argues that the convention failed because it "was compiled without taking into account some basic archival principles and issues and therefore it is not and will never be applicable." This is rather a narrow view of a very complicated issue. In the first instance, there is no way in which western powers could have accepted an instrument which would have authorised the physical transfer of original records from their record offices to Third World countries even if that instrument itself had been prepared by professional archivists. This is where the problem lies and it is hard to foresee a situation in which Western powers will ever agree to return records to their countries of origin. Secondly, the International Law Commission took over five years to prepare the draft convention. The Secretary of ICA was in a position to advise ICA member states on the looming dangers that were likely to befall the draft convention. In the end, the convention though acceptable to all the Third World countries (or the Group of 77) as is commonly known was rejected by all the Western powers.

Before looking at the East African scene, it would be appropriate to clarify the whole issue of archival claims better known as migrated archives. In the past, failure to distinguish the various categories of records involved in archival claims has led to misunderstanding between several states including Kenya and Britain. When we talk of archival claims we are really talking of three different categories of records.

In the first place there are those records which were created in metropolitan countries as a result of regular correspondence between officials working in the colonies and those based at home. In the case of Kenya this would include records that were created in both the Foreign and Colonial Office in London. Unfortunately most of the early correspondence in Kenya was gutted down by a fire in the secretariat in 1939. Taking the East African Community as an example, records falling into this category would include all the records which were created at the Community's headquarters in Arusha as well as those created by various common services organisations. Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania had representatives working at the Community's headquarters and they maintained regular correspondence with various departments in their own countries.

The second category includes all those records that were created by non-governmental bodies, religious bodies, professional organisations, private businesses, individuals etc. Many of these organisations submitted regular reports and maintained regular correspondence with their parent organisations. In the case of East African community records we have no records that fall into this second category.

The third category of records are those which were removed from one territory to another. Many of these records were removed out of the countries of origin during the colonial period but the bulk of the records were mostly removed on

the eve of independence. Again community records do not include this third category of archival claims for there is no evidence to suggest that records relating to the East African Community or any of its departments have been removed from one East African state to another.

The Genesis and Demise of East African Community

To enable us appreciate the vital importance of community records, it would be appropriate to give a brief outline of the history of the East African Community. The concept of territorial co-operation in East Africa can be traced back to 1893 when Sir Fredrick Lugard expressed his idea of administration in East Africa saying:-

In the future the Governor of East Africa ought to, I think to have his headquarters in the healthy and bracing uplands of Kikuyu or on the Mau Plateau about half way between Uganda and the Coast. These two centres should be the location of two separate centres of administration, subordinate to the headquarters government situated half way between them, but furnished with executive powers of considerable latitude. (Lugard, 1893).

When Sir Harry Johnstone was appointed special Commissioner to Uganda, he was requested to bear in mind the possibility of a closer administrative unit between the East African Protectorate and Uganda. However, on his return to England, Sir Harry Johnstone proposed that the union should be extended to Zanzibar and British Somali land. Sir Harry Johnstone had observed that "East Africa Protectorate [Kenya] is mainly valuable as furnishing the best sea port for the outlet of the products of Uganda." He went further to say that "the Postal services are already fused and it is difficult to see why the fusion of the other services could be delayed." (Hughes, 1963).

After his retirement as Commissioner of East Africa Protectorate, Sir Charle Elliot wrote in support of administrative union of the two British Protectorates saying;

It is, however, generally agreed that it would be advisable to amalgamate the two protectorates and if this is to be done, it certainly ought to be done soon for the longer they remain apart, the more they tend to be different in their administrative system and regulations which is what should be avoided. (Elliot, 1966).

The earliest links between Kenya and Uganda had been opened through the construction of a railway line running from Mombasa to Lake Vistoria. Further co-ordination of services came about in 1905 when an East African Currency Board was established to issue bank notes to Kenya and Uganda. Then in 1911 Kenya and Uganda were brought together under one postal union. This was followed by the amalgamation of Customs Department in 1917, (De-Delups, 1969). The need for greater co-operation was perhaps more felt during the First World War. The War clearly demonstrated the need for a regional approach to economic development, research, and communication. The defeat of the Germans led to the placing of Tanganyika Territory under the United Nations to be administered by Britain as a mandated territory. This opened the possibility of bringing Tanganyika into closer economic co-operation with the rest of East Africa.

In order to forge a closer union between the countries, the yearly Governors' Conference was began in 1926.

But despite the achievements made during the 2nd World War, the Governor's conferences lacked any juridical or constitutional basis, and it became the target of criticism both in East Africa and in Britain. As a result, it was decided that consideration should be given to the future method of dealing with economic co-ordination and the undertaking of common services on an East African basis. At the end of 1945, a Colonial Office publication No. 191 was released as a basis for discussion. The paper was subsequently revised and re-issued as Colonial Paper No. 210. In its introductory statement it was pointed out that:-

...as a result of twenty years collaboration in the Governor's conference, and the developments which have been brought about by the war, it is necessary to establish a constitutional and juridical framework for the inter-territorial services, including a joint legislature in order to provide for an effective means of doing what needs to be done. (Gt. Britain Colonial Office, 1947).

Between 1946 and 1947 negotiations were undertaken on the basis of Colonial Paper 210 which culminated in the issuing of an Order in Council which established the East African High Commission on 1st January 1948. The Order in Council abolished the Governors Conference and made provision for the establishment of the East African High Commission with a Legislative Assembly as the highest governing body. The Commission consisted of the Governors of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika, with Governor of Kenya serving as its chairman. The Commission was to exercise the usual powers of the Colonial Government in respect of the common services entrusted to it.

The East African High Commission was entrusted with the 31 services and organisations (see Appendix 1). Later on in 1948, the Kenya and Uganda Railways and Harbours were amalgamated with the Tanganyika Railways and Port Services to form the East African Railways and Harbours this organisation was also placed under the East African High Commission.

As Tanganyika headed towards self government in 1961, the future of the East African High Commission Services became a subject of discussion in a meeting in London. During that meeting it was agreed that it would be in the interest of all the East African States to ensure that whatever constitutional changes might take place in the future common services hitherto provided by the East African High Commission should continue to be provided on a regional basis. It was also agreed that the organizations services could be made available to Zanzibar if the government of Zanzibar paid an appropriate share of the cost of services it used.

Thus it was out of the London meeting that a new body — The — East African Common Services Organization was born. This new organization took over all the services hitherto provided by the East African High Commission. These common services were grouped into four namely (a) Communications, (b) Finance, (c) Commercial and Industrial Co-ordination and (d) Social and Research Services.

In 1964 it became necessary to examine the functions of the East African Common Services Organization and a Commission under the Chairmanship of Professor

Kjeld Philip of Denmark was appointed to lead this inquiry. The Commission submitted its report in 1966 and a year later the three Heads of State signed the Treaty for East African Co-operation at Kampala. The Kampala treaty of 1967 thus established the East African Community.

The East African Community as an Organization had a fairly short period of existence, for ten years later it had collapsed and all the common services decentralised. The events leading to the final collapse of the Community were clearly summarised by *The Weekly Review* issue of 15 November 1977. It has even been argued that, the collapse of regional co-operation in East Africa began soon after Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika gained independence. Those in support of this line of reasoning argue that "whereas during the colonial period there was an integrating force — the common colonial administration — the post-colonial era shows no driving force of a similar magnitude." (Proctor and Krishna, 1965).

Perhaps the first blow to the community was delivered in 1971 when General Idi Amin overthrew President Milton Obote of Uganda. As a result of events in Uganda, President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania refused to meet Idi Amin and the East African Authority which was the governing body of the Community was unable to meet. Although a mini-summit was later held between President Idi Amin and President Nyerere in October 1973, this did little to reduce tension between the two heads of state. Accusations and counter accusations became a common feature amongst the three East African states, leading to the collapse of East African Airways in February 1977. Kenya impounded all the aeroplanes which belong to the community. In retaliation, Tanzania impounded tourist vehicles and banned the entry of tourists by road from Kenya. Tanzania also closed its border with Kenya. Then in March 1977 the East African Directorate of Civil Aviation and the East African Railways collapsed too.

Following the collapse of the East African Community, Dr. Victor Umbricht an economist from the World Bank was appointed to mediate in the division of the assets and liabilities of the defunct Community. It was not until 1983 that the East African Heads of State met in Arusha and agreed on the distribution of the East African Community assets and its liabilities and on the re-opening of the Tanzania — Kenya border.

In keeping with the spirit of East African Co-operation the three heads of state agreed that certain services should continue to operate as joint institutions or common services. These included:- (i) Soroti Flying School, (ii) East African Development Bank (iii) East Africa Inter-University Committee, (iv) Eastern and Southern Africa Training Institute at Arusha and (v) the East Africa Literature Bureau.

EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AND ITS RECORDS

Apparently the report of the mediator, Dr. Victor Umbricht, made no mention at all of the archives of the community. The issue of Community records was either deliberately ignored or perhaps the records were considered to be of no immediate financial value to any of the three partner states.

Yet of all the Community's assets perhaps the greatest of them all are its archives. This is the only valuable asset which we can offer future East African generations. It is through these archives that the successes and failures of the Community will be assessed. For this reason we ought all the more to give greater attention to the preservation of these records.

As can be seen from the above analysis, efforts towards closer union in East Africa led to the establishment of several record creating institutions. Some of these institutions were created in order to achieve specific objectives and were disbanded as soon as those objectives were achieved, while others were merged to form newer record creating bodies. Yet others have maintained their original identities. It is of paramount importance that as archivists we not only know the whereabouts of these records but also be concerned about their storage conditions and their utilisation. In a discussion of this nature it is virtually impossible to trace the administrative histories of each of the departments which made the East African Community. These are areas which others can pursue.

As noted above, the collapse of East Africa Community was followed by the creation of several public corporations as successor organisations. These organisations inherited the functions of their predecessor organisations as well as their records. But what is of interest is the fact that, the East African authority with its headquarters in Arusha had no successor organisation and its records were passed over to the Tanzania Government. Had the headquarters been in Kenya or Uganda the records would have remained there.

The question which we ought to ask ourselves is to whom do these records belong? The assets as well as the liabilities of the defunct East African Community were distributed, but why was the issue of the records not raised at all? Is it because they were considered to have had no monetary value at the time when the assets were being shared or were the records merely neglected? Certainly we cannot assume that the mediator was unaware of these records for he must have used some of them to unravel the financial commitments which the community had entered into. And where were the archivists when the settlements were being made? Did they make any effort to ensure that the records were not forgotten while distributing the assets?

It has been assumed that the new corporations and departments which were created following the collapse of the East African Community became the legitimate successors of all the records belonging to related predecessor organisations. This assumption is in line with accepted archival principles. But a detailed survey is required in order to establish that this is exactly what happened in all the three member states. How certain are we that all functions and services that were provided by the East Africa Community have survived in one form or the other?

In the case of Kenya Musembi (1988) provides us with a rather misleading picture with regard to the former East African Community Archives. In his paper, he states that "the Kenya National Archives on its part has taken firm measures to ensure that former East African Community archives are properly preserved by the successor departments or in the Kenya National Archives. This is partly true, for most of these

records are still unaccessible to the general public including those of Kenya Railways which he cites as an example. What Kenya National Archives has done is to conduct records surveys of these records but as far as I know most of these records are yet to be sorted, appraised, listed and be made available to the administrators and the general public.

THE WAY FORWARD

A solution to the many aspects raised in this paper is necessary. As the Vienna Convention was a failure, we can not use it as a basis for any negotiated settlement with regard to managing community records. Whatever options we might choose for managing these records, they must be in line with accepted archival principles as well as principles that are internationally acceptable. For this reason I would urge that the following steps be taken by East African member states in order to ensure that these records are preserved.

In the first instance, we must accept and recognise the fact that some of the public corporations that were created following the demise of the East African Community are reasonably large organisations creating vast quantities of records. Organisations such as the Kenya Railways, the Kenya Posts and Telecommunications, Kenya Airways, Kenya Ports Authority and several others are capable of establishing and managing their own separate archival services. As far as I know, with a little pressure from the National Archives, these institutions have the capacity of providing adequate storage facilities as well as appointing professional archivists. Let us face it, at the moment our National Archives are not in a position to accept any large consignment of records from central government departments let alone public corporations. Our neighbour Uganda is yet to establish a national institution. The time has come for the Directors of Kenya and Tanzania National Archives to use the powers at their disposal to cause these institutions to wake up from their deep sleep.

In the case of Kenya, the Public Archives Act as well as the recent circulars from the Office of the President are sufficient enough to cause the Director to initiate certain improvements towards managing these records. Why can't we declare the Kenya Railways an official repository for all Railway records and tighten our inspection procedures? Why not attach one professional archivist there for a period of one year with a request that he assists in the establishment of a records centre? The Office of the Presidents circular requires the Director of the National Archives to assist Government departments and public corporations in the establishment of link centres? Why hasn't Kenya National Archives assisted some of these corporations in the establishment of such centres? What else does Kenya National Archives need? It has all the legal provisions necessary for establishing link centres which to me are information centres. If Kenya is to make maximum use of all the provisions of the Act as well as the Office of the President circular then it must move away from its narrow view of archives and records management to the broader area of managing the entire life cycle of records.

Secondly, we must accept the fact that even though efforts are being made to revive regional co-operation there is very little chance of these corporations being

merged again. Therefore, we must not only find a solution to managing the vast quantities of records inherited from the East African Community but also provide a means of access to them to all citizens of the three East African States. For this reason we must accept the recommendation that was made by UNESCO's Director General when in 1979 he wrote stating:

where an archives group or body of archives results from the activity of an administration where succession is shared between the predecessor state and two or more successor states— i.e. where the archives form part of the national heritage of two or more states but can not be divided without destroying its juridical, administrative and historical value — as a realistic solution recourse should be had to the concept of joint heritage. The practical result of the application of this concept is that the archive group is left physically intact in one of the countries concerned, where it is treated as part of the national archival heritage with all the responsibilities with regard to the security and handling implied thereby for the state acting as the owner and the custodian of that heritage. The states sharing this joint heritage should then be given rights equal to those of the custodial state. (Unesco, 1980).

To what extent are we willing to accept this concept of joint heritage? If we are really interested in the records that are held in Uganda and in Tanzania (and I hope we do) then I propose that subject to certain modification on the above statement we accept the concept of joint heritage. In this way we shall ensure that archival principles of provenance and respecting the integrity of archives are observed. The only condition which we would have to undertake is to guarantee our neighbours the right of access to these records. They too would have to guarantee that Kenyans would be granted access to Community records held in their respective countries.

Another option which might be considered is an elaborate microfilming programme of the Community records. Although this option was attempted with considerable success in Zimbabwe, it might be difficult to adopt it in East Africa at the moment. In the first instance, this option is dependent on the fact that records must first be arranged in order before microfilming can begin. And secondly considerable large sums of money would have to be set aside for purchasing microfilming equipment and the purchase of microfilming storage cabinets and readers. At the moment, our three partner states are experiencing considerable financial problems that it would be virtually impossible for them to enter into any meaningful microfilming exchange programme. Thirdly, except for Kenya, both Tanzania and Uganda lack professional expertise to undertake such an extensive microfilming exercise. At this stage of development it might be advisable to allow them time to organise their own national archives before embarking on such an elaborate mission.

Despite these limitations some corporations and particularly the Railways have made a beginning. Several requests have been made by Railway authorities in Dar es Salaam for records relating specifically to railways in Tanzania, to be repatriated back to Tanzania. Kenya has also made similar requests to Railway authorities in Dar es Salaam. An exchange of records has taken place between these two countries, but apparently the archivists were not involved in this deal. No evidence is available

to indicate that a similar exchange of records has taken place between Uganda and the other two member states.

Recently, Kenya and Tanzania entered into a cultural agreement which makes provision for archivists from the two countries to have regular consultative meetings and also to develop common strategies for managing community records. Preliminary meetings have been held between Kenya National Archives and Tanzania National Archives but it might be too early now to predict the impact that this cultural agreement will have on the management of community records.

CONCLUSIONS

Perhaps this paper has raised more issues than proposing definite solutions for managing the records of the defunct East African Community. The paper has attempted to illustrate the fact that the Vienna Convention on the Succession of States with regard to State Property, Archives and Debts can not be used as an instrument for settling archival claims. The paper has also illustrated the fact that more research is required in order to understand the nature and content of the records of the defunct East African Community. The paper has reiterated the urgent need for the Kenya National Archives to take meaningful steps towards the establishment of repositories for managing these records. And finally but not the least, this paper has illustrated the need for providing access to information created by the defunct East African Community.

While professional archivists have remained silent on how best to deal with the records of the former East African Community, there is strong evidence to suggest that bureaucrats are already involved in the transfer of records from one state to another. Archivists have assumed that only personnel records and those specifically relating to individual states are actually being transferred. Whether this is the case or not, the dangers might only become apparent when the damage has already been done. So archivists from East Africa, wake up!

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APPENDIX I :

1. The East African Agricultural and Forestry Research Organisation.
2. The East Africa Tse-tse and Trypanosomiasis Research and Reclamation Centre
3. The East African Fisheries Research Organization.
4. The East African Industrial Research Board.
5. The East African Statistical Department.
6. The East African Meteorological Department.
7. The Desert Locust Survey.
8. The Lake Victoria Fisheries Services.
9. The East African Bureau of Research in Medicine and Hygiene.
10. The Filariasis Research Unit.
11. The East African Medical Survey.
12. The Relapsing Fever Research Unit.
13. The East African Malaria Unit.
14. The East African Leprosy Research Centre.
15. The East African Marine Research Organization.
16. The East African Regional Geological Survey.
17. The East African Regional Topographical Survey.
18. The East Africa Virus Research Institute.
19. The East Africa Currency Board.
20. The East Africa Information Office.

21. The East Africa Office in London.
22. The East Africa Refugee Administration.
23. The East Africa Publicity Committee.
24. The East Africa Production and Supply Council.
25. The East Africa Posts and Telegraph Department.
26. The East Africa Radio Communication Service.
27. The East Africa Anti-Locust Directorate.
28. The East Africa Customs and Excise Department.
29. The East African Directorate of Training.
30. The East Africa Income Tax Department.
31. The East Africa Industrial Council.

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PUBLIC LIBRARIANSHIP IN NORTHERN NIGERIA: LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

Public Library Services in Northern Nigeria is elitist in nature, urban in location and concentration and (even) the library's "Public" is constituted by only a few of the general public. These are what constitute the limitations to the extent and role the public Library can play in the development of rural and urban persons in particular and the nation in general.

These should be seen to mean more than just the influence of elitism on public library services, but should be seen to include the cumulative consequences of socio-economic, political and educational policies. This is best understood if discussed in its proper historical perspectives, that is pre-colonial, colonial and post colonial period.

INTRODUCTION

The Public library primarily exists to serve the entire members of its locality referred to as its general public. It functions by acquiring (selecting), organizing and making information available in the form of printed and non-printed book and non-book, published and unpublished for use. These Wheeler (1962) observed, are needed for the conduct of individual and group life of the library's public. It is thus "a resource for scholars, centre of information and aid for students, a means for self education and also a centre of amusement." (Onadiran, 1989).

In Nigeria, too, the public library has the same universal objective of serving the general public, towards the educational up-liftment and awareness of rural and urban persons, to enhance and develop their potentialities. These functions and responsibilities are continuously articulated and executed by the respective library boards in most states of Northern Nigeria.

PUBLIC LIBRARIANSHIP IN PRE-COLONIAL NORTHERN NIGERIA.

Public Library Services typical to the one introduced by the British did not exist in Northern Nigeria prior to the period of World War II.

The pre-colonial Northern Nigeria was historically the geographical area that witnessed "the rise and collapse of the various communities, empires and kingdoms, such as the Habe (Hausa) - Emirates or Daura, Argungu, and Abuja, and the Nupe, Igala, Bornu and Jukun Kingdom" (Ankpe, 1985), with such traditional urban towns of commercial importance such as Kano, Kaduna and Zaria among others.

These kingdoms and empires developed an elaborate system of administration, so also a system of information service. Said (1988) observed that, such systems could easily be seen in pre-colonial towns of Zaria, Kano, Daura, Katsina and Bornu among others. At the head of administration is the SARKI, with palace officials in charge of Districts. The Districts were run by DOGARIs on behalf of the title holder who resides in the Palace. Information reaches the subjects through the title holders, where "necessary important information is passed to the ruled through the use of MAI SHAILA or Information Officers."

The coming and spread of Islam in Northern Nigeria witnessed the establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate. Islamic education and Koranic Schools led to the development of more elaborate and improved information services, "although without such formal advanced, complexed and sophisticated library system of today" (Balarabe, 1984). Such pre-colonial information service was by its nature, at the level of preaching, public sermon, answers to individual and collective inquiries of religious importance, intellectual debate, with numerous scholarly writings in form of leaflets and books, poems and letters with so many translations.

All these were performed by the leading founders of the Sokoto Caliphate, like Usman Danfodiyo, his brother Abdullahi and Muhammad Bello his son, other muslim scholars (Mallams) also travelled to towns and cities where the Caliphate spread, as this information service was not limited to Sokoto alone.

Public libraries therefore, did not exist. What existed were private libraries, palace libraries and the mosque libraries found in most of the emirates covered by the Jihad, with an elaborate information service similar to the information service system of modern librarianship.

COLONIALISM AND THE EDUCATED ELITES

Modern type of education in Nigeria started with missionary incursion 'whose main aim was to evangelise through the reading and writing of the Bible" (Adesina, 1988). The British administration of indirect rule system did not allow the Missionaries to spread and establish missionary schools deep in Northern Nigeria, as it was then avoiding an impending — conflict and confrontation with the established Islamic schools and traditions in the area.

The British was not also ready to financially invest in education, rather its objective was the proper exploitation of the resources of the area. Nevertheless missionary settlements and schools were established in some places like Zaria, Jos, Lokoja, Malumfashi and Kaduna.

These schools were so few relative to the size and population of the area and thus the beginning of the emergence of the educated elites in Northern Nigeria "as any one who went to school in the colonial period eventually entered the elite, because the number enjoying that privilege even at the primary level was so small" (Walter 1984).

Thus, the emergence of these indigenous educated elites here referred to as those who have attended (or are schooling) the Western type of primary and post primary institutions of learning in Northern Nigeria.

This system no doubt affected the region later. As was rightly observed by Amuchiazi, (1980), both the educated elites and the library services among others were products of the socio-economic and political problems emanating from colonial education.

Colonial Rural and Urban Infrastructures

The Social policies and colonialism were such that they facilitated economic exploitation of Northern Nigeria. Facilities such as roads, hospitals, railways at first went to white's urban settlement, and urban towns of commercial and administrative importance.

Jos, Kano and Gusau where items of trade and exploitation existed were quick to develop as urban towns, and did enjoy social infrastructural facilities like roads and rail roads and clinics. Others like Kaduna and Lokoja also did enjoy such facilities because they were the administrative bases of the colonial administrators. They also developed as urban towns. The development of such urban towns in Northern Nigeria marked the beginning of the neglect of the rural majority, as only towns with economic importance were infrastructurally developed.

Colonial Library Services

Modern public library services in Northern Nigeria were no doubt a colonial creation, over 40 years after the fall of the Sokoto Caliphate in 1903, as the modern method of information dissemination was to be introduced. With not much regards to the importance of pre-colonial system of information service, "which was far reaching to the rural grassroots, reading rooms were established in most of the urban towns of Northern Nigeria to serve as information centre" (Nnaji, 1984). What was disseminated "was characterised by propaganda, information for total mobilisation and indoctrination" (Said, 1983). The establishment of reading rooms was thus what one can refer to as the beginning of the public library system in Northern Nigeria.

The year 1952 was the development and location of regional (Public) Library at Kaduna, another colonial administrative Town.

The trend has been consistent, every socio-economic, political and educational policy of colonialism was just for the British, then for the indigenous educated elites in the urban towns. This, the reading rooms were all concentrated in the urban towns of Kano, Katsina, Zaria, Kaduna etc. completely neglecting the rural people.

ELITES AND POST COLONIAL LIBRARY SERVICE.

When states were created, the period witnessed the emergence of more state libraries in the urban towns of Jos (Plateau State), Ilorin (Kwara State). Others to follow were the state Libraries established in state capital cities in Makurdi (Benue State), Minna (Niger State), Yola (Adamawa State) and recently Sokoto (Sokoto State).

From the 1970's to-date, the spread in the establishment of public libraries in Northern Nigeria could be attributed to the efforts of State library boards, in their struggle to bring public libraries closer to the grassroots.

The history of these Boards began with the emergence of the Kaduna State Library Board in Northern Nigeria. To Nnaji (1983), this was necessitated by calls from

individuals and members of the Nigerian Library Association who criticised the report submitted to the then Northern Nigerian Governments on the Library needs of Northern Nigeria by Mr. and Mrs. Sharp. The Report had recommended for the establishment of provincial libraries in the thirteen provincial towns, but failed to recommend for a Library Board to run these libraries.

The Kaduna State Library Board was the first to be established in 1976 in Northern Nigeria, when the government decided to ensure the development of effective library service under an autonomous statutory body. Others to follow included the Library Boards of Bauchi, Benue, Gongola, Bornu, Niger, Kano, Kwara and recently Sokoto States.

The public libraries have therefore historically developed to become elitist in nature and urban based in concentration and location, while fundamentally they have not transformed themselves but only developed and gained independence from a colonial status. The users of the public libraries, constitute a negligible proportion of the population of the area to be served.

Adesina (1988) equally observed that, post colonial development plans, educational plans and of course products of education have shown such urban bias too. The school enrolment relative to the population of Northern Nigeria is also low. These elites now occupy the position left by the British in politics, industry and the educational affairs of the region. The same tiny group – the educated elites who up till now constitute the library's "Public" is a tiny proportion of the population of Northern Nigeria. Whereas Famoriyo (1981) had stated that infrastructural facilities including the library in the rural areas were seriously under developed, and neglected also. It is no doubt correct in Northern Nigeria to observe that as library services are reasonably good in small towns simply non-existent in the rural areas (Onadiran, 1981).

The crux of the matter is, whether in the urban or rural areas, if they exist they serve the educated elites and their children only. Nuhu (1993) observed that even in such urban towns as Katsina, Kaduna and Sokoto among others, only a few of specialised urban occupational groups are among their publics. Butchers, brick-layers, carpenters, drivers and mechanics who are to a greater extent unaware of the library, hardly utilise it. The services, as can be seen in most urban public libraries in Northern Nigeria include provision of reading facilities, books and journals mostly written in English Language. Moreover, these services are greatly under utilized, as users do go to use their own books and materials in the library. Thus the characteristics of its users and the services are what constitute the elitist nature of the public library in Northern Nigeria.

The public library, whether in the rural or urban towns can no doubt help in advancing the aspirations of both the rural and urban persons, to further develop their potentialities. Wheeler (1962) observed that, potentialities are better developed through educational awareness, through (education) formal and informal process of acquiring new skills for advancement to cope with today's society. It develops individual abilities and interests enabling one to partake fully in all activities. As regards the East African example, Matago (1977) observed that, the British trans-

planted and imposed on its people just the British traditions with few changes here and there, decades after colonialism. The same trend existed in Northern Nigeria, as the reading rooms were developed to bigger libraries, and to what is now public or State Libraries under the Library Boards first in the regions, State Capital cities and in some cases local government (areas) headquarters.

The Northern Region witnessed the springing up of provincial libraries between 1963 — 1968 at Maiduguri (Borno State), Sokoto (Sokoto State) and Bida in Niger State.

The basic questions: Are Public Library Services going to continue to serve the tiny educated elites and their children or would they be used to ensure the survival of the majority urban and rural persons, through the development of their potentialities?

ROLES OF STATE LIBRARY BOARDS

The Library Boards have the responsibility of identifying the needs of both the rural and urban persons, and to design a programme of acquiring, organizing and disseminating information particularly information for the eradication of illiteracy and ignorance, diseases and poor health conditions, political conflicts, religious disturbances, and collapse of local industries.

The roles of these Boards as prescribed by their statutory provision include among others the:

1. establishment of control and maintenance of a state wide public service;
2. establishment and maintenance of branch libraries;
3. provision of library facilities to the general public;
4. acting as an advisory body and consultant to the body responsible for the school library services and other organisations in need or operating such services;
5. encouragement and participation in the development of local books production industry; and
6. setting standards and policy in the establishment and maintenance of school library system within the State". Kaduna State Library Board (1990).

Though the various Library Boards are expected to play a significant role in bringing library services to the grass-roots, the branch libraries also play important roles among others by:-

- (i) the provision of general library services;
- (ii) recommending to the Board(s) for purchase of books suitable to the respective localities;
- (iii) the development of local history collection; and
- (iv) the provision of extension services".

The Kaduna State Library Board (1990).

In addition to the book materials, it is the responsibility of public libraries to acquire the non-conventional audio-visual materials and to serve information on the very many laudable programmes launched by government aimed at raising the standard of lives of both the rural and urban persons. These should include for instance MAMSER (Mass Mobilization for Economic and Self Reliance), E.P.I. (Expanded Programme on Immunization), PBN (Peoples Bank of Nigeria), NBC (National Board

for Community Banks) among other programmes all as recent developments in Nigerian history.

Thus the majority of the public should become literate, politically conscious, religiously tolerant, healthy, and more aware of economic and industrial development programmes for the rural and urban areas.

Efforts by the Library Boards in Northern Nigeria towards bringing public libraries to the grassroots have not been easy. Few branch libraries have so far been established relative to population and land area. In Kaduna State for instance, the Library Board has succeeded in establishing seven branch Libraries only. These are at Birnin Gwari, Ikara, Kachia, Funtua and recently Giwa. In other states, few such libraries are established and they are yet to reach the grass-root target.

It is not only the establishment of branch libraries by these Boards that matters, the provision and utilization of the public library collection also constitute a problem in their performance. This is manifested in the smallness or inadequacy of the collection, the non-native language in which they are written and relevant lack of coverage of the socio-cultural setting. It is therefore not surprising that there is heavy reliance on books materials as opposed to audio-visual materials, hence the poor perception of the public library by both the urban and rural masses resulting to under-utilization by the public. Mohammed (1983) has attributed the factors listed above, as revolving around the fact that public libraries do not receive the necessary attention over the years from the State Governments.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The extent to which the library and librarians can go in terms of the nature, operation, functions and services can not go beyond the boundaries of the urban elites from where it started during the colonial period. These constitute the limitations to the public library services in Northern Nigeria. However, it is a challenge to librarians to bow out of these limitations. The fundamental issue is, we have to choose between public library service for the educated elite or for the general rural and urban public. This is a challenge to the Library Boards and librarians in particular and to the educational planners and government in general. It is recommended however, that public librarians should first view the general public in mind and not just the educated elite, and map out strategies to serve them all, articulate their needs and advise their respective library boards. This will be in line with suggestions by Kaniki (1992) that there is the need for practising (academic) librarians and students in the departments and institutions offering library science to liaise with educators and directors of respective library Boards to venture into researching the library needs of the rural and urban people, to articulate and formulate curricular plan strategies for the training of librarians to run the branch libraries.

The State library boards should venture into massive purchase of more books and other materials relevant to the socio-cultural settings, and in languages spoken and understood by the natives, i.e. Kanuri, Hausa, Fulfulde, Yoruba and Tiv among others, so as to serve the non-education elites thus the entire public. Translations, if embarked upon, will also help in this respect, and emphasis should be on the purchase of non-placed

book materials, especially audio-visual materials to further attract the non-educated people. Films, plays and lectures would contribute greatly in educating, entertaining and informing the generality of the public, not just the elites.

The State governments should be encouraged by the Library Boards to build more branch libraries in all local government areas, at least in every local government head-quarter. This should be further re-inforced by the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) State chapters. They are expected to advise the various state governments and to embark on campaign to educate these librarians on their expected roles, particularly of identifying the needs of their general and immediate public on the ways and means to go about organizing and disseminating information to the level and format they will comprehend. These can be in form of seminars, workshops, or tours organized by the N.L.A. Finally, the library schools on their part, should orientate their curricula to incorporate elements of rural librarianship.

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THE MANAGEMENT OF MICROFORMS IN THE BALME LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON

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ABSTRACT

The paper discusses the various factors affecting the management of microforms at the Balme Library, University of Ghana. These include the lack of proper record keeping, lack of adequate organisation of microforms (they are not accessioned, classified nor catalogued), inadequate packaging and storage, lack of proper preservation procedures and malfunctioning of equipment. These factors have resulted in making access to microforms in the library virtually impossible. The paper concludes that a comprehensive policy on management of microforms in the library should be formulated. The needs of the users, the stock and the aims of the library should be taken into considerations.

INTRODUCTION

Since the invention of the flow or rotary camera in the 1920s, microforms have progressively gained much popularity as means of documentation in many fields including librarianship. As rightly indicated by New (1975) "...there is now a great wealth of material in this form much of it otherwise quite unobtainable or obtainable only with great difficulty and at a high price." Computer capability, dimensional, uniformity and durability are among the qualities of microforms in the opinion of Krevolin (1986). Nonetheless, like any other form of documentation, microforms must be managed in order to derive the maximum benefit from their use. Managing microforms is not easy, especially in tropical countries where apart from the very high levels of humidity and temperature, the high potency of other deteriorative agents is not at all in doubt.

This article examines the microform collection of the Balme Library (main Library of the University of Ghana, Legon). It focuses on the intellectual value and the processes of their management from acquisition through their preservation and storage.

Leisinger (1968) defines microforms as "reduced photographic images of documents that must be magnified on a reader or viewer in order to be read." Klaus (1976) on the other hand views the term microform as a "generic term for all information carriers which use microfilm or similar optical media including paper for high density recording and storage of optically encoded information in the form of micro-images of printed documents, bit patterns and holograms." In more simple terms, microforms

can be thought of as products of the microphotographic process — the technique of photographing documents on reduced scales which can be read only with the aid of optical devices. These among others include microfilms, the different shades of microfiches, microprints, micro-cards, aperture cards etc.

The Balme Library Stock

The microform collection of the Balme Library comprises microfiches, micro-cards and microfilms (16mm and 35mm). The informational content of the stock cuts across many disciplines. Kafe (1971) listed among others, agriculture, law, history, religion, medicine, biology and pharmacy as some of the disciplines covered. The stock is made up of academic theses on topics relating to Ghana accepted by institutions of higher learning outside Ghana (particularly Britain and America). Most of these are donations from the various universities who hold the originals in their libraries. In addition to these are conference and seminar papers, prominent among which are the series of seminar papers from Berlin University and the annual conference papers of the African Studies Association (ASA).

An appreciable proportion of the stock of microcopies hold the records of the Basel Mission and the Society of the Propagation of the Gospel. In addition, there are American Church records. The stock has as well as rich collection of both local and foreign newspapers among which are: The Pioneer, Ghanaian Times, Daily Graphic, Morning telegraph, The Gold Coast Observer, New York Times, Lagos Standard, The African Interpreter and the Advocate from Sierra Leone. While the local papers were microcopied by the technical service department of the Library, copies of the foreign newspapers were donated to the library.

Very conspicuous among the collection of microforms in the Balme Library are the copies of documentation on Atomic Energy. These are donations from the Atomic Energy Research Institute of Japan and the United States of America's Atomic Energy Commission on the peaceful application of atomic energy. This sub-set of the collection which forms part of the Atom for Peace Collection, were deposited in the library because at a point in time, the library served as a depository for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in its networking operations with the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission.

ACQUISITION AND USE OF MICROFORMS IN THE BALME LIBRARY

The acquisition and use of microforms in the library is not a recent venture. According to Gyimah (1981), microfilms were first used in the Balme Library in October 1965. Mention was also made of microreaders and a stock of microforms in the Library Planning Report by Fairhurst and Amedekey (1970). Balme Library's move in this direction was in conformity with professional trends since it had long before then been accepted that the use of microforms in libraries is not a luxury but a necessity particularly in libraries with large collections of newspapers.

There are various reasons for which the use of microforms may be introduced in libraries. Among others they may basically be used to update stock and to enhance reference services. They could be used for the preservation and security of documents,

to maximise the utility of space and to improve information retrieval and dissemination.

In the Balme Library, the situation regarding use is no deviation from the standard applications of the technology. Micro-copies of monographs, theses, missionary records and newspapers among others were acquired to update stock by filling in the gaps in the library's paper-base material stock. Back issues of serials and some rare books are acquired in microforms. In other situations, local microfilming programmes were undertaken to release space occupied by the ever mounting bulk of local newspapers; as well as preserving their information content against the rapid rate of deterioration due to the poor quality of the paper used for their publication. The library is yet to venture into the automated microform systems like the Computer Input, Output Microfilm and the Computer assisted retrieval systems.

Management Practices

Any form of documentation, however valuable, if not well managed is bound to lose its value through inaccessibility or outright deterioration. Film-base documents just as those on other media should be properly processed and preserved in order to enhance their intellectual exploitation and to ensure their longevity. The physical miniaturization of documentation does not by itself ensure efficient and economic operations in libraries. The best means of deriving these benefits is the effective management of the system.

Among others, proper record keeping is an effective tool in the management of microforms. According to Teague (1977), libraries applying microform technology must maintain accurate records such as equipment inventory, stock records of microforms and a reference record. Contrary to expectations, there is a complete absence of any such record keeping in the Balme Library. This makes it difficult for any member of staff to ascertain the exact bulk or size of the collection, and their rate of use.

Stock Processing

The standard practice in processing microforms in order to ensure enhanced information retrieval is to organize them into groups according to their forms or types (micro-fiches, microfilms, micro-cards etc). Serials are to be separated from non-serials to ensure continuity within each group. The microforms are then given numbers in accession order and then assigned class numbers. These location marks are labelled on the micro-copies. Catalogues are prepared bearing in mind the principle that a microcopy must always have a uniform entry with its hard copy. Catalogues for microforms must have additional notes which clearly portray the values and formats to clients.

Majority of the stock of microforms in the Balme Library have not been processed (neither accessioned, classified nor catalogued). Only a proportion of the 35mm roll microfilms had been processed as at 1992. The classification is based on the Library of Congress Scheme, while the second edition of the "Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules" (AACR2) is followed in the cataloguing process. All the processed copies bear location marks and have catalogue cards with relevant notes. The non-processing of

the bulk of microforms is blamed on the lack of appropriate and functional equipment for viewing the various microforms. The situation has however reduced the micro-copies to a "valueless" collection occupying "precious space" since intellectual access to them is virtually impossible.

Packaging and Storage

The packaging and storage of microforms is determined by the format of the micro-copy. The roll of microfilms according to Cruset (1963) is wound on reels and packaged best in acid free boxes or cans and filed vertically in suitable drawers. Strip microfilms are on the other hand inserted in transparent jackets while microfiches are kept in acid-free paper envelopes labelled and filed in appropriate drawers. Micro-cards need no enclosures and are therefore filed in drawers similar to those used for catalogue cards. Horder (1990) also proposes the use of hermetically sealed pouches in use in Canada as a cheaper means of storage.

In the Balme Library, majority of the microforms are encased in appropriate enclosures but are not filed in cabinets or drawers. They are stored on open wooden and steel shelves. Others are stored in large paper cartons at the basement of the library and left to the vagaries of the environment. In this state, access is very difficult and exploitation virtually impossible.

Preservation

Microforms are more prone to deterioration by environmental agents than documents on paper medium. Hendricks (1984) states that microforms are best stored in conditions with temperatures below 21°C with relative humidities of between 30-40%. Atmospheric pollutants such as dust, gaseous materials and light must be kept away from the storage area. To create such standard storage environment, with consistent temperatures and relative humidity, one needs such facilities as air conditioners, hygrothermographs and air filtering devices.

The preservation practices in relation to the microform stock of the Balme Library falls below acceptable standards. The bulk of the stock is stored in the basement of the library which is liable to flooding (flooding experienced in the 1970s). More also the air conditioner for the basement has been out of function for some years with no temperature and humidity monitoring devices available. This leaves the collection at the mercy of the potential agents of deterioration particularly fluctuating temperature and relative humidity. The state of the microfilm reading room where some of the micro-copies are kept is no better. The only difference is the erratic air conditioned environment, which makes it even worse for the documents.

Except for reference purposes (limited to only the processed films) the microcopies are not screened periodically as a matter of routine to ascertain their state. When a sample of the 35mm microfilms were screened, some were found out to be having water marks, spots and scratches. These are all indications of deterioration due to unconducive storage environment and use. What is more, the library has no disaster preparedness plan to be put in place, should there occur any disaster. The only available equipment for fighting fire for example are five (5) fire extinguishers and a few

buckets of sand. The functionality of the fire extinguishers could not even be ascertained by any member of staff of the library. In the absence of security copies, therefore, the probability of the library losing the collection in the face of a serious disaster is great.

Equipment

Any library stocking an appreciable bulk of microforms must possess adequate functioning micro-readers to match user demands. Teague (1977) stressed that "the minimum equipment necessary in setting up the library microtext reading room is that which will enable the efficient and comfortable reading of each type of microform likely to be acquired." It is thus imperative for libraries to have micro-readers for both transparent films and micro-opaques.

In the Balme Library, only two micro-readers are functioning (microfiche and film readers). This is rather surprising because as far back as 1970 Fairhurst and Amedekey in a library planning report recommended the acquisition of all types of micro-readers for all the categories of microtexts available in the library. Given that the clientele of the library is above 7,000 users, the two microfiche and film readers are woefully inadequate and for that matter limits intellectual access. The situation is blamed on the ever dwindling financial resources of the library in the face of mounting responsibilities.

Conclusion

It is obvious that the Balme Library has a large collection of microforms which constitutes an appreciable proportion of its stock. This collection is valuable and more prone to deterioration than the paper materials and for that reason needs a more critical attention. Contrary to expectations however, the microcopies are not accorded any special attention. They are managed just as the paper materials and this does not augur well for their longevity.

It is further clear that the Balme Library does not have a policy embracing micro-copying programmes, equipment, and use. There is even no clear policy on their acquisition. This has resulted in the dumping of a lot of microtexts on the library which the library is finding difficult to process. Apart from the inadequacy of micro-reading equipment, very few clients are aware of the existence of the collection.

There is no doubt therefore that there is the need for a comprehensive policy which should cater for the whole range of the management of micro-documentation and use in the library. As rightly stressed by Chapman (1990) such a policy must take into consideration the value of the stock, user needs and the aims of the library.

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A PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO JOURNAL SELECTION FOR AFRICAN MEDICAL LIBRARIES

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ABSTRACT

A survey to generate a list of twenty-two most frequently consulted medical journals in Nigerian medical school libraries is reported. This included the five most successful titles in similar ranked lists compiled in many other countries and reported widely in literature. Medical scientists and students are concerned more about a few of the titles in their collection than with the entire stock. It is speculated that this type of survey might provide information in policy decision making in allocating resources and to collection development librarians for the selection of journals for their libraries.

INTRODUCTION

Journal selection is a challenging task, particularly for African universities with developing medical school libraries. Most often, they engage in this process with a paucity of funds and with something less than an abundance of practical guidelines for the job. But they know that each decision to purchase implies commitment to subscription renewal, processing work loads on a continuous basis, long-term storage requirements through binding or microforms, expanding shelf space, and all the ever increasing costs associated with these activities. Medical school libraries endeavour to develop tightly-knit collections to meet immediate information needs and depend more on larger and sophisticated information systems external to their collections in handling information problems of more extensive nature.

Medical school libraries develop collections in a variety of ways. Delman (1982) lists two of the most commonly used methods.

(a) One is by simply relying on one of several published core lists of journals prescribed by subject experts or library and information science professionals. These lists of periodicals tend to provide basic and equal coverage for all fields of medicine. Even at that, prevailing difference in library allocations in various countries will create disparity from one library to another on how many items on such list each of them could actually buy and place on its shelves. And assuming it were possible for every library to take everything on the standard lists, obviously, an unquestioned use of core lists could result in the same set of titles appearing in an urban New York medical school library probably catering for a sponsored international programme in cancer research as well as in one located in rural section of Burkina Faso where the medical research and training priority is in primary health care delivery. The suggested lists are

meant to be adapted to local needs but the criteria for adapting them are left much in the hands of the individual medical librarian.

(b) The other is by utilizing a number of relatively objective factors in making selection decisions. These factors include cost, usage, availability and relevance. Relevance is no doubt the most important element although it is also the most difficult to define since the medical librarian cannot rely on the academic or abstract definitions of the word. Rather, we must approach the problem in operational term: the scope of information problems, needs, and interest of the user population.

Some experienced librarians are able to do this because they know their users. Others use circulation or inter-library loans (ILL) to provide objective user information, while others still make use of user request or to provide interest surveys to obtain worthwhile subjective report. Such user-oriented data, both objective or subjective, can help the librarian to define what is relevant for a collection. User-based data, however, have certain limits because they depend on users. There is no input from the nonuser who may not use the library because he feels it does not respond to his needs.

RELATED STUDIES

Various studies aimed at investigating the use of library materials have been conducted, but few of them were focused on journal use patterns in medical school libraries. Fewer still, in this respect have been carried out in Nigeria. Some of the major works in medical journal usage shall be reviewed. Kovacs (1966) working at Downstate Medical Centre Library of State University of New York (SUNY) looked at the dates of most heavily used medical journals while two follow-up studies of Stangl and Kilgour (1967) and Raisig (1967) analysed circulation records at Yale Medical Library. Stangl and Kilgour attempted to establish the subject and user relation of the circulating serials while Raisig was concerned with just how much of the materials picked up by the library users were intellectually used. He also sought to know which of the materials on loan were single issues, bound volumes or merely photocopied for in-house and home uses. A complimentary British study was that undertaken by Wood and Bower (1969). The two workers who did a study of what was then called the British Lending Library (now the British Library Documentation Supply Centre) were among other things interested in the language distribution of journal articles requested on inter-library loans by users. Wender (1970) demonstrated how table counts could be employed as a methodology to determine journal title usage in a health centre library.

In Nigeria, the most significant user study to be ever set up was that of Ifidon (1977) in which he set out to answer the question: Will a larger library in terms of its number of books and journals correlate positively with a larger support for post-graduate studies in the humanities and social sciences? Clearly, the main thrust of the study was not in anyway related to the use of medical literature in Nigerian higher institutions of learning. Consequently, the objective of this report, which is a first instalment of a larger study on the utilization of medical information in African universities with Nigeria as a case study, will be to identify the collection of journal

titles which would be most useful to medical libraries in a given country and a future possible national medical information database. Specifically, this aspect of the report relates to how individuals involved in journal selection can undertake the process of defining journal relevance by relating journal relevance to in-house use in the medical library.

METHODOLOGY

Between November 1991 and February 1992, a survey was carried out in six Nigerian universities selected purposively to cover the widest diversity in ownership, age and geographical location. Collection of the pertinent data was carried out over a period of 30 working days in the selected medical school libraries. Within each library, every journal literature consulted by the readers and left behind on the tables was surveyed, sorted out into title lots and counted. Countings were done only at fixed times during the day. These times were fixed at 10.00am, 3.00pm and 6.00pm to coincide with the observed peak library visiting periods by the preponderance of users. Once the counts were determined and recorded by title, the journals were immediately put back on the shelves. Daily averages were calculated per title and the cumulative number of consultations from daily aggregates for individual titles throughout the period of study was obtained. Simple percentages of medical school libraries in the sample finding a particular title relatively popular was computed.

RESULTS

The most important outcome of the study was the compilation of 22 most frequently used journal titles in Nigerian medical schools libraries, as shown in the Table.

It should however be stressed that in order to raise the credibility of such lists, the time of survey should be long enough for periods of peak use and slumps in use to be levelled out. The Table of the result highlights the national coverage of most of the frequently used medical journal titles. The country is divided into East, West and North. Each of this region has two universities represented in the survey:

East: UCAL, NAU

North: ABU, UJOS

West: U.I., OSU.

Twenty-two Periodical Titles Consulted Most Frequently in Nigerian Medical School Libraries.

No.	Titles	Relevance indicator in individual libraries						National total consultations (Intensive use)
		UCAL	U.I.	UJOS	OSU	ABU	NAU	
1	British Medical Journal (BMJ)	36	83	1	—	—	57	177
2	The Lancet	32	59	35	—	—	1	127
3	Nigerian Journal of Paediatrics	27	—	88	—	—	—	115

No.	Titles	Relevance indicator in individual libraries						National total consultations (Intensive use)
		UCAL	U.I.	UJOS	OSU	ABU	NAU	
4	The New England Journal of Medicine	1	62	—	—	40	—	103
5	The Nigerian Medical Practitioner	10	—	68	—	10	1	89
6	Medicine Digest	—	—	—	36	44	—	80
7	Annals of Internal Medicine	13	53	3	—	9	—	78
8	Journal of American Medical Association (JAMA)	29	—	—	47	—	—	76
9	Bulletin of World Health Organization	9	19	45	—	—	—	73
10	American Journal of Cardiology	—	36	—	—	7	—	43
11	Clinical Paediatrics	—	9	32	—	—	—	41
12	Social Science and Medicine	—	19	20	—	—	—	39
13	West African Journal of Medicine	1	—	4	—	33	—	38
14	Annals of Tropical Medicine and Parasitology	—	18	14	—	6	—	38
15	Paediatrics	1	26	4	—	—	—	31
16	Archives of Diseases in childhood	—	8	1	21	—	—	30
17	American Heart Journal	—	16	—	—	9	—	25
18	Tropical Doctor	—	15	5	—	—	—	20
19	Obstetrics and Gynaecology	—	—	—	—	7	—	7
20	World Health Forum	6	13	13	—	—	—	32
21	American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene	—	—	10	—	7	—	17
22	British Journal of Industrial Medicine	—	11	—	—	6	—	17

KEY:

UCAL: University of Calabar, Calabar (Federal owned/2nd generation)

U.I.: University of Ibadan, Ibadan (Federal owned/1st generation)

UJOS: University of Jos, Jos (Federal owned/2nd generation)

OSU: Ogun State University (State owned/3rd generation)

ABU: Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (Federal owned/1st generation)

NAU: Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Nnewi (State owned/3rd generation)

DISCUSSION

The practical utility of such ratings above could be readily appreciated in more ways than one. Apart from guiding choice in the management of funds and in assisting the librarian to determine titles of high relevance to the users, the list would also be valuable in other ways.

When all the uses were considered together, the list of the most consulted journals in Nigerian medical school libraries was found to include the following five titles:- *British Medical Journal (BMJ)*, *The Lancet*, *The New England Journal of Medicine*, *Bulletin of World Health Organisation* and *Journal of American Medical Association (JAMA)*. The reports of Kovacs (1966), Stangl and Kilgour (1967) both confirm these five titles to be very successful, and always coming within the first twenty titles of various ranked list of most heavily used medical journal titles in various parts of the English speaking world. What may account for their high acceptance and use, apart from the excellent quality of their articles, production and distribution is the added advantage of their carrying general clinical research reporting from all disciplines without restricting coverage to any particular field. They experience a convergence of readership from every medical specialty, thus introducing the factor of economy. There is then little wonder in discovering that these titles are ubiquitous in many African libraries which are operating under budgeting constraints because their acquisition is seen as being cost effective.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above findings and discussion, it might be suggested that each library should strive to discover what periodical titles are most frequently consulted by its primary clientele. Journals got this way will represent a significant addition to the collection. As the serials collection development librarian or personnel in the university medical school library determines the utility index and relevance of the journal titles on the current subscription lists, those that score an intolerably low value may be dropped in an effort to maximise the use of funds, space and labour. It should be pointed out that the assessment of title relevance ought to be done continuously, say every other year, as users and their needs change with time, Ephraim (1991) has opined that in many African countries most particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, lack of hard currency has prevented scholars from subscribing to journals individually. In the light of this, the little foreign exchange made available to academic libraries in Africa needs to be skillfully expended in order to build a dynamic and responsive medical journal collection.

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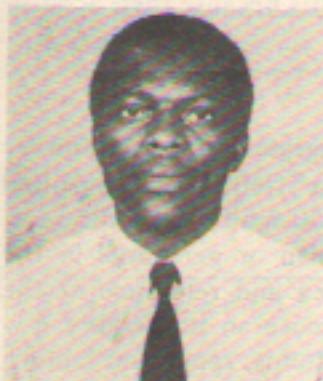
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NOTES

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COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRES AND RESOURCE CENTRE FORUMS IN THE TRANSFORMATION AND POST-TRANSFORMATION ERA IN SOUTH AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

The paper discusses the role of Community Information Resource Centres and Resource Centre Forums in the transformation and post transformation era in South Africa. The paper discusses the concept of a resource centre and then presents the case for the continued existence and strengthening of community resource centres and forums in South Africa. Also discussed in this paper are some of challenging issues, such as, training and staffing for resource centres, funding, development of necessary resources, operating resource centres and relations with other interest groups and existing professional organizations which Resource Centre Forums will have to seriously address.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years there has been a mushrooming of resource centres in South Africa. There has also been a recognition among resource centre workers and those interested in resource centre work the need to organize themselves locally, regionally and nationally in order to coordinate resource centre work. As at 1993 there have already been established the Transkei Fieldworkers' Network Resource Centre (1990), Natal Resource Centre Forum (1988), Cape Town Inter-Resource Centre (1988) and the Sekhukhuneland Educational Project Forum (1991) to mention but a few, (Stilwell 1992). The Transvaal recently re-launched its resource centre forum, after having briefly operated in 1988/1989 and then "dying a natural death" because "... nobody was sure as to what the forum was supposed to accomplish". (Ntabeni, 1993).

It is this author's view that as more resource centres and resource centre forums are developed and organized which appears very likely, in a country such as South Africa, a paper such as this one is important. It is even more important that this paper and indeed the launching of forums such as the Transvaal Resource Centre forum should come at a time and perhaps in response to the political and social transformation of South Africa. In other words, this author and indeed many South African information workers realize that they need to contribute positively to the process of transformation of the country and prepare for the post transformation era.

This paper is therefore, an intension by the author to present some views on the role of resource centres, particularly community resource centres and resource centre

forums in the transformation and post-transformation era of South Africa. The paper is deliberately not intended to be prescriptive but more of a discussion springboard for some of the major issues which resource centre forums that are already in existence and those springing up should address themselves to.

One can strongly argue that the very fact that there has been a mushrooming of resource centres in South Africa in recent years means that there has been and will in the new South Africa, continue to be a need for them. There will also be, more than ever before, the need for resource centre forums through which ideas about the provision of information services among information resource centre workers can be shared and exchanged.

To adequately discuss the role of resource centres and resource centre forums the author deals firstly with the definition of a resource centre. The author then presents a case for the continued existence, strengthening, and participation of community resource centres both in the transformation and post transformation era of South Africa.

It should be noted from the outset that by limiting the discussion in this paper to community resource centres, the author does not imply that other types of resource centres namely, specialized resource centres either serving special groups or dealing with a specific subject or dealing with specific media form, are not important. Rather the community resource centre concept is used as a focal point of the discussion and to illustrate the point of its role in the transformation and post transformation era of a country like South Africa.

After looking at the definition and purpose of resource centres, the author also discusses the concept of resource centre forum. More specifically, what role resource centre forums such as the Transvaal Resource Centre Forum, should play in the current and future South Africa, so as to avoid "dying a natural death"?

It is evident from the literature that in the earlier years of the development of the resource centre concept there were some difficulties in precisely defining it. In fact, as Bunch (1982) initially argued, the attempt to define resource centres concisely was more of an attempt to show the differences between resource centres and main-stream or traditional information systems such as public libraries, special libraries etc.

It is evident from the more recent literature however, that there are now much widely accepted parameters for defining resource centres. It is therefore, this author's feeling that a detailed discussion of the evolution of the definition of the resource centre concept would merely be academic, requiring a different paper and unnecessary for the parameters of this paper.

One of the most concise definitions of resource centres is the one used by the Natal Resource Centre Forum. This definition is used here and it is this author's belief that in fact resource centres established elsewhere fit in well with this whole-embracing definition. A resource centre is therefore, defined as:

A space or building in which human and other [information] resources in a variety of media such as, books, journals, newspapers, films, slides, video and audio cassettes, three dimensional objects etc., and [also] equipment such as, recorders, cameras, computers, photocopiers, printers, fax machines etc., are

arranged or made accessible in appropriate manner for empowering people through information dissemination, production, skills and resource sharing. ...[it] incorporates community involvement and participation at all levels. Learning and interaction occur directly with the resources. (Natal Resource Centre Forum; 1992).

PURPOSE OF COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRES

From this definition it is clear that one of the main goals of resource centres, in this case a community resource centre, is to empower people of a given community. Such empowerment can and should be achieved through the involvement of the community itself in the process of developing and locating such a resource centre in an appropriate place. Furthermore, empowerment means involving the community in developing a collection of appropriate information resources based upon the community's needs, imparting information skills and involving the community itself in the running of such a resource centre. The community information centre need not necessarily be housed in a plush building but more so in a place which is easily accessible and preferably the centre of activity within the community such as a community centre.

Karlsson (1993) best summarized the goals of resource centres by stating that they "...facilitate the process of empowerment, social change and transformation". She further proposed how resource centres can achieve this. That is, by:

- developing a democratic style
- making information accessible and appropriate to users
- adapting cataloguing and classification systems
- developing collections relevant to interests and needs of users
- repackaging information
- developing services appropriate to the needs of users
- empowering users by transferring skills through training and workshops

(Karlsson 1993).

It is necessary at this stage to illustrate and amplify on some of these objectives which Karlsson identified. It will also be meaningful in this paper to put some of these goals into the perspective of South African transformation.

The basis upon which community resource centres have been developed has been the realization and recognition that a particular part of a society is unserved by the main-stream information systems such as, public libraries. Such persons have often been those that are either disadvantaged in some way or under-privileged. Martin (1984) writing about the potentials of community resource centres in developing countries and Stilwell (1991) writing specifically on South Africa, both agreed with the notion that in the history of the development of community resource centres there has been a direct correlation between the disadvantaged and community information.

This still remains the true basis upon which many community information resource centres are developed today. It has often been argued by advocates of community resources centres, even in the developed countries such as the United States and United Kingdom, that the "sophisticated, for-literates-only" public libraries have often failed to provide "survival information" services required mostly by the disadvantaged, and

illiterate underclass in some communities. This is because it is argued, public libraries have often been far removed from the needs of a particular disadvantaged group or groups, who may in fact be non-rate payers within a given society or community, and therefore "ignored".

In South Africa, as Stilwell has pointed out, "...community resource centres have been [established in] an attempt to address needs of the communities deprived as a result of apartheid" (1992). In a paper delivered at the recent Info Africa Nova conference in Pretoria, Vienings (1993) showed that resource centres have played a role in building a vibrant non-formal education tradition in South Africa. In several "information needs" papers presented by students in the author's Information Studies department for the Readership course, one recurring key recommendation suggested for meeting information needs of such groups as squatters whether in Ivory Park (Nombe 1991) or Umtata Refuse Dump (Duli 1992) has been "...establishment of community information services... information to cope with problems in their daily living ...and information to participate effectively in society".

Most often the persons intended to be catered for by community information resource centres are those who have had no access to main-stream library services, people who have and continue to experience information problems that are unsatisfactorily met by public libraries. It is this author's view however, that even with the removal of apartheid laws such as the Group Areas Act and the Separate Amenities Act in South Africa, the currently disadvantaged will for sometime to come not be well served by the main-stream library services. This is because of the culture which the libraries have developed in the past, the way communities have perceived these libraries, and the ethos upon which these libraries have functioned. Furthermore, it is this author's view therefore, that community resource centres will and need to continue to be established to bridge the gap between what the nature of the main-stream libraries have been and services to the disadvantaged in the new South Africa ought to be.

Another aspect of the concept of community resource centres which is also a solution to the problem of alienation between existing libraries and under-served groups is the emphasis on involvement of the community in the design and location of community information resource centres. One of the key aspects of the functioning of community information resource centres is the strong dependence or emphasis on the involvement of the community in the establishment of needs, setting priorities, and developing on the basis of the identified needs, appropriate information services. The involvement of a community and its local leadership, or the bottom-up approach in the development of a service, creates a positive feeling among members of a community towards such a service. On the other hand the provision of simple day-to-day information to serve all groups of persons with daily information problems is essentially what this author views as the empowering of the people within the community.

One of the key problems of the provision of information services to the disadvantaged by traditional public library systems has been the bias towards the print format of information delivery and the culture of libraries themselves. Generally, most disadvantaged people feel that the main-stream library systems are neither intended for

them nor capable of "solving" their problems. Although one of the research studies, conducted by the author in Zambia was in the rural areas, many respondents' answers to the question of library non-use can be generalized to most disadvantaged people in rural and urban areas of many countries including South Africa. The responses by most rural people interviewed in Zambia as to why they do not use libraries included: "...can not read or write in any language", "libraries are for school children and not for parents and non-students", "don't see what one can benefit from the library" and "library does not have the information [and information resources] specific to my needs". (Kaniki, 1989).

When one looks at some of the information-related problems that most of these rural persons identified, it is amazing to find that they were such issues of day-to-day "survival information" needed by rural people anywhere. These included problems such as: "lack of and inadequate supplies of fertilizers" [and therefore need to know sources of fertilizers and/or available government subsidies on fertilizer purchases], "where to seek assistance on farmland disputes [arbitration]", "sources of agricultural loans and how to obtain them", "the identification and eradication of pests".

It was evident from the results of the Zambian study and looking at the problems faced by the respondents that libraries may well in fact have had the information to resolve such problems. However, the format and state of information available may have required repackaging to fit the levels of need of the disadvantaged persons of the community. Furthermore, the culture that libraries had developed had been such that the disadvantaged part of the community felt, and rightly so, that they could not be served by them.

Although community information resource centres are by nature different, it is important that the provision of information community resource centres involves a variety of "light" every-day and "heavy-duty" information, in varying levels, formats and media. They should also provide varied information services. As a country like South Africa goes through the process of social and political transformation various facets (communities) of society are facing and will continue to face "new" problems. Most of these problems will relate to coping with the transformation process and post transformation era. It is partly the duty of community information resource centres to help people cope with these situations by imparting information skills to them. Such information skills or media skills as Fairer-Wessels (1991) terms them are varied but include; communication, reading, learning and study skills; skills which give one the ability to perform such tasks as locating, retrieving, selecting, organizing; and communicating information. All of these skills are necessary for an individual to effectively participate in civic duties and personal advancement.

Most of the existing community resource centres in South Africa were developed as a reaction to the apartheid system — a system of segregated services. At this stage of transformation, community information resource centres should, as was argued earlier, adapt to the challenges of information provision of their communities. They should, through providing specific information and other information services create a democratic environment for their communities' participation in civic activities. Such democratic process may include consulting the community when employing resource centre

staff, who in fact should as much as possible be from the same community. The community resource centres will have to change the culture established by main-stream libraries. They will have to be very innovative in the provision of services to their communities.

RESOURCE CENTRE FORUMS

The mushrooming of a "new" type of information system in form of resource centres in South Africa necessarily means that new problems of running such systems are and will continue to be experienced. Furthermore, resource centres that have been in existence during the apartheid era will like their communities, face new challenges in the transformation and indeed post-transformation era of the country.

Some of the questions one would ask of resource centres are: How will they justify their existence now that the country is moving away from the old system? Will they not be considered another form of segregated services based upon communities? How will they adapt to new expectations?

It is this author's firm belief that if resource centres in South Africa truly follow the ethos upon which they are established and function, they indeed should meet part of these challenges. That is, they should be able to adapt, if they are really democratic, in the way they were established and function. However, the other part of the challenge should be met by Resource Centre Forums such as those established in Natal, Cape provinces, Transkei and more recently, Transvaal.

As noted earlier, community information resource centres are inherently different. However, this does not mean that they do not face familiar problems and concerns. Some of the immediate concerns that resource centres are facing and will continue to face include:

The training and staffing of personnel for resource centres. Currently, there is no standardised training and certification for resource centre staff in South Africa. At the same-time the kind of resource centre staff one expects in the light of the functions of the resource centre will definitely be a different "breed" from that of a main-stream public library. Certain issues emerge which need to be resolved. These are:

Funding of community information resource centres. With the expected varied, often free services and different information resources, resource centres will need adequate and steady funding.

The development of an adequate collection of information resources (some of which need not necessarily be within the same location but shared) for meeting the identified and newer needs within a given community.

Establishment of an alternative and easy-to-follow organization and arrangement (i.e., cataloguing and classification system) of a variety of information resources found in resource centres.

The need to change with the challenges offered by the traditional structures of library and information services.

With these very broad but important continuing issues, the key role for Resource Centre Forums is evident. They should act as networking forums for sharing experiences, "standardize" procedures and guiding the development of resource centres. Forums should bring together a cadre of experts with their own unique experiences for identifying problem issues within resource centres and suggesting solutions to them. Forums such as the one recently launched in the Transvaal should also operate as lobby groups in the establishment of other community based information resources centres where such need is identified. They should join forces with other forums nationally to push forward the case for appropriate library and information service infrastructure, funds and representation in the new South Africa. Resource Centre Forums should not be seen as splinter groups to other information workers associations and organizations in South Africa, but simply as an interest group similar to children's librarians, librarians for young adults, special librarians, etc. Forums should be viewed as groups of persons coming together to work on one part of the information service programme in South Africa!

Through consultations between resource centres staff under the aegis of forums, resource centre operating manuals can be generated. While recognizing the variant nature of resource centres, it would definitely be helpful to communities who intend to establish community information resource centres if forums developed guides on how to establish resource centres. These could be extensions of the already existing *Ulwazi for power and courage: a guide to starting a resource centre* prepared by Dreyer and Karlsson (1991).

Resource centre forums can also develop simple standardized instruments for assessing community information needs. One of the most difficult activities in community information is the assessment of information needs, which must be done regularly, if established resource centres are to continue to be relevant in any given community. This author is of the view that having a readily available, reliable and valid but simple data collecting instrument is half the job done in community information needs assessment. Currently this author is in the process of testing one potential instrument through a community information needs assessment in Kwa-Ngwanase (Natal) and Qumbu (Transkei). It is hoped that this instrument will be refined and shared with interested community information resource centre workers in South Africa and elsewhere.

CONCLUSION

One of the challenges facing resource centres and their coordinating forums in transformation and post-transformation era in South Africa is one of adapting to change and at the same time facilitating the change through empowering their communities. The empowerment of person most of whom have been disadvantaged has to take the form of imparting information skills and providing information services. Skills which will give them the ability to perform tasks such as locate, retrieve, select, organize and communicate information for their survival and effective participation in society. It is this author's strong belief that how well this is achieved depends on the resource centres and resource centre forums currently in existence and those being established in South Africa. It is also this author's view that many countries particularly those in the politically changing Africa can learn from the South African experience.

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ANDREW M. KANIKI

BOOK SCARCITY IN NIGERIA – CAUSES AND SOLUTIONS

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ABSTRACT

In the education sector, the year 2000 AD has been regarded as a watershed in the sense that in that year, all Nigerians are expected to be literate and all children of school age to be at school. This is a very noble objective. But the order is too tall and lofty to be realised. For one of the ingredients essential for the success of the programme is absent. This ingredient is books. The causes of book scarcity in Nigeria are examined. These include faulty planning, retrogressive economic policies, the underdeveloped state of paper mills in Nigeria, authors' frustrations which make the writing of books uninviting and the nature of Nigerian society. In order to ameliorate this unfortunate situation. The following are recommended that government, individuals and relevant organisations should invest massively in book production, organisation of existing paper mills, encouragement of and incentive to authors buying of publishing rights and reprinting more text books and relaxation of fiscal policies on educational materials.

INTRODUCTION

Since Nigeria became a sovereign and independent nation in 1960, the governments – both Federal and Regional and later State – have always considered education and the training of the individual in every development plan. This is because they (that is, the governments) recognise the fact that education and manpower training are valuable sources of national wealth. The current national slogan and radio and television jingle is that there should be education for all in the year 2000A.D. when illiteracy in Nigeria must be completely eradicated. To this end, the Federal government has set up a National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education. On the occasion of the celebration of International Literacy Day, the Executive Secretary of the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education announced at a press conference that the commission would make about 20million illiterate Nigerians to be able to read and write in 1992. Many of the State Military Governors have given the tall order that every gardener, cleaner and messenger in the civil service should be literate by 1992 or find their way out.

But these laudable efforts can hardly yield significant results without books. And yet, there isn't much visible evidence that in making their plans for education for all by the year 2000A.D. the governments are sufficiently thinking of the place of books. The author is using the term *books* in this paper in generic sense to include not only

monographs but also audio-visual materials, any printed matter that has a message to convey and other teaching, learning and research resources. For, an effective educational system requires systematic use of reading and reading requires books. Without books there can be no good primary schools, no effective secondary school, no efficient university nor can life-long continuing adult education be encouraged. Ironically this paper, will examine in greater detail government investment in education and books, in the major causes of book scarcity will be considered, some solutions to book scarcity will be proffered.

GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION AND BOOKS

An examination of Nigeria's various Development plans shows the degree of importance which the governments attach to education. For the first two decades after Nigeria's independence (1960-1980) there is ample information about government investment in Nigeria as stated below:

In the first National Development plan (1962-1968 later extended to 1970) education was allocated 10.3% of the gross sector investment of about ₦1.4billion, thus placing fifth in the sector investment. Its priority rating improved to a position second only to transport in the second National Development Plan (1970-1974), with 13.5% of a total of gross sector investment of about ₦2billion. Its percentage allocation dropped some-what in the Third National Development Plan (1975-1980), having received an allocation of ₦3.2billion or 12% of the original total public sector programme of ₦26.5billion, later revised to ₦43.3billion, which brought the percentage down to 7.4% (Akinyotu, 1988).

Fafunwa (1984) reinforced Akinyotu's finding when he stated that:

The various states of the Federation as well as the Federal Government spent between 30 and 40 percent of their annual recurrent budgets on education at the four levels — primary, secondary, higher and adult education — during the first decade of independence.

Even with this generous investment in education during Nigeria's economically prosperous days, information is scanty about the amount that was set aside for books. Akinyotu (1988) also expressed disappointment at this:

However, it must be realised that neither can any meaningful re-orientation take place nor any educational system succeed appreciably without adequate library and information back-up at every level. Uptill now most of our governments and educational authorities appear to be apathetic to the fact that libraries are an essential component of the school system and that books, pamphlets, periodicals, audio-visual and other non-print materials are indispensable tools to all levels of education, from training in literacy to university education and continuing adult education.

By the beginning of the third decade after Nigeria's independence, global economic recession began to set in. Investment in Education was still reasonably adequate and more information was available about allocation to books. Table 1 below gives an overview of the ten-year period (1981-1990) in this regard. Ifidon (1985, 1990) corroborate this poor funding although he did not dwell on the causes or and solutions to the problem of book scarcity in Nigeria.

Actual Expenditure on Education and Books at all Levels During the Decade 1981–1990

Year	Total Recurrent Budget ₦ billion	Allocation to Education ₦ billion	Percentage of Total Recurrent Budget Allocated to Education	Allocation to Libraries and Books ₦million	Percentage of Education Budget Allocated to Libraries and Books
1981	19 billion	2 billion	10.52	8 million	0.4
1982	20.5	2.1	10.24	6.72	0.32
1983	18	1.35	7.5	4.05	0.3
1984	19	1.19	6	3.57	0.3
1985	19.2	1.092	6	4	0.37
1986	20.8	1.352	6.5	5.41	0.4
1987	19.6	1.372	7	4.8	0.35
1988	19.3	1.197	6.2	4.5	0.38
1989	20.2	1.37	6.8	4.8	0.35
1990	18.4	1.37	7.1	5.4	0.41
TOTAL	₦193.8 billion	₦14.33 billion	Average 7.37	₦51.25 million	Average 0.36

The above table shows that for a ten-year period 1981–1990, there was a total of ₦193.8 billion recurrent expenditure. Of this amount ₦14.33 million was allocated to education. This worked out averagely as 7.37% of the total recurrent budget. Of the education recurrent budget for the same period, ₦51.25 million or an average of 0.36 was spent on books. While the total recurrent budget allocation to education was adequate, the expenditure on books was rather poor: it fluctuated ranging between 0.03% and 0.4% per annum. (from 1981–1986 ₦1 was almost equivalent to £1 but from 1986–1990 ₦1 was equivalent to £0.1).

MAJOR CAUSES OF BOOK SCARCITY

While there has been massive financial investment in education, the same cannot be said of books. In the Nigerian Fourth National Development Plan (1981–1985) government envisaged a 100% local production of all primary and secondary school textbooks, and 50% of all educational materials at the tertiary and professional levels. In a *Situation Report on Libraries in Nigerian Federal Universities* Commissioned by the National Universities Commission it was discovered that:

The bookstock of Nigerian university libraries is in a deplorable state. The university libraries can no longer support the academic programmes of their institutions . . . About 90% of the book collections of universities studied are foreign materials. (National University Commission 1990).

The report then went on to recommend the provision of funds for current book acquisitions to enable the libraries keep abreast of publishing in their respective fields for five years. It also recommended a block grant for retrospective book purchasing to enable each of the libraries to acquire at least 10,000 volumes of missed books per year for a period of five years.

— A second major cause of book scarcity in Nigeria is the frustration of authors. There are, of course, many good writers at all levels. But the prevalent social conditions are discouraging. On the successful completion of his manuscript the author finds it difficult to get a publisher especially if it is a tertiary — level material. This is not because the quality of the book is in doubt but because the few available local publishers prefer sensational materials whose market potentials are higher. Sending the manuscript overseas poses foreign exchange problem and import duty when the finished product re-enters the country. The final production cost is also higher and this equally influences the fixing of the selling price. The author's frustrations are even greater after the book has been published. For, some unscrupulous publishers may not declare the total number of copies sold and this naturally affects the royalties due to the author. Book pirates constitute another menace to the author. Pirated books which are very cheap reduce the sale of the original books and the author's royalties. Due to the biting effect of book scarcity, library users now resort to illicit photocopying. Whole books can be photocopied in complete defiance of copyright laws.. All these frustrating experiences make writing unproductive and unattractive.

Thirdly, high cost has placed books beyond the reach of the common man. Most authors lack investment finance and if they are to borrow their capital from finance houses, the interest is prohibitive. For books published overseas, the selling prices will certainly be higher. Postal rates have risen enormously over the last ten years by as much as 1000%. Moreover, the deterioration of postal services has made it necessary to abandon the use of ordinary mail and to request that all book consignments should be sent by air, registered mail or accelerated surface post, all of which are built into the selling prices and passed on to the ultimate consumer

Harsh economic policies is the fourth cause of book scarcity in Nigeria. The high rate of currency exchange complicates import transactions by making it necessary to acquire foreign exchange at Bureaux de change. This places books and paper needed to print them in competition with other imported products. This, coupled with the high inflation rate inflates the selling prices of books.

Paper manufacture plays such an important role in book scarcity or book availability that something must be said about Nigerian paper Industry. At the moment there are three paper manufacturing organizations in Nigeria. The Nigerian Paper Mill at Jebba, the Nigerian Newsprint Manufacturing Company, Oku-Iboku and the Nigerian National Paper Manufacturing Company at Iwopin. The paper Mill at Jebba produces industries paper and not paper for printing books. The Newsprint Manufacturing Company at Oku-Iboku is designed to produce newsprint for publishing newspaper and magazines. Efforts are being made to have the Company produce bleached newsprint which is good for printing books. But according to the panel on National Book Policy for Nigeria (1987), Nigerian newsprint consumption was about 150,000 metric tonnes per annum while the Company's maximum capacity was 100,000 tones per annum. There is no evidence that the situation has changed for better. As at the time of the Panel's report, the Iwopin National Paper Manufacturing Company had not yet taken off. When operational, it is expected that it will be capable of producing 65,000 metric tonnes of fine printing and writing paper per

annum and 100,000 tonnes of bleached pulp per annum which was exactly the country's estimated annual consumption rate. Thus, apart from the fact that the paper manufacturing industries are just too few for the size of Nigeria, their production capacity is too small. Is there any wonder then that the problem of book scarcity in Nigeria is so acute?

The final major cause of book scarcity in Nigeria is the lack of cooperation among the professional bodies in the book industry. These professional bodies include the Nigerian Library Association, the Nigeria Bookseller Association, the Nigerian Publishers Association and the Nigeria Printers Association. If these bodies made a joint case the result would be formidable. But there is no evidence that they have ever presented a united front. Each of them makes its case separately and in such a case no appreciable impact can be made on government. According to Nwankwo (1991) the president of the Nigeria Publishers Association, some efforts have been made but there is a limit to which that Association alone can push.

SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

It can be inferred from the series of educational policies that have been initiated that the Nigerian government and individuals are aware of the hydra-headed problem of book scarcity in Nigeria and that they are in search of solutions. Between 1979 and 1983 the government of the defunct Bendel State ordered books worth millions of naira with a view to distributing them free to children in the state schools. Many of these books ended in the trays of hawkers who offered them for sale at give-away prices even with the stamp "NOT FOR SALE" on them. Between 1985 and 1987 the Lagos state government set up a Task Force on books. The aim was to purchase books at source and re-sell them cheaply and directly to school children in the state. Bashorun M.K.O. Abiola (a wealthy businessman) established Abiola Bookshops with the primary purpose of selling directly to users: no buyer is allowed to acquire more than one copy of any title. In 1987 the Federal Ministry of Education set up a Committee to formulate a National Book Policy. The draft of this document which was ready a few months later is yet to see the light of day. In 1989 the National Universities commission inaugurated a Committee whose main term of reference was to prepare a project document to justify the request for assistance from UNESCO for the procurement of books, journals and equipment and for the general refurbishment of Nigerian Federal University Libraries. This was closely followed by another commissioned study of Federal University Libraries in 1990. The situation report that emerged from this study played no small part in winning for Nigerian Federal Universities a £120million World Bank credit facility, part of which was to be spent on the acquisition of books and journals for the libraries. The credit facility is repayable in 25 years after an initial 10 years moratorium. Thereafter the credit facility will attract half percent service charge. Also in 1990, there was a conference on the Nigerian Books Sector Study. This was arranged by the Federal Ministry of Education, funded by the World Bank and Overseas Development Administration and carried out by the British Council and the Book Development Council. In 1991 General Ibrahim B. Babangida, the former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria announced a grant of ₦20million to each Nigerian Federal University. The grant was to be used

by each university to improve its academic facilities including the provision of books and journals.

All these attempts at resolving the problem of book scarcity in Nigeria are well meaning and laudable. But they are too ad-hoc and simplistic to produce any significant results. If they had been regarded as short term solutions and complemented by long-term solutions, they would have been very welcome. The bull should be siezed by the horns and bold realistic solutions offered for serious consideration. The first recommendation is the identification and assemblage of different authors in their respective areas of specialization. The point has already been made in the preceding section of this paper that Nigeria does not lack good qualified authors. But because of their frustrations, they look elsewhere rather than to writing. Thus, books should be commissioned by government and the authors should be adequately remunerated in addition to their legitimate royalties. If this is done serious textbooks at all levels will flood the market at affordable prices.

A group of university lecturers had attempted to come together to produce a series of textbooks in different subject areas. But book publishing is capital intensive. Bank loans are now available at between 30 and 40 percent interest. Even if a committed author were prepared to pay the high interest rate, the bank authorities would still have to decide whether or not the project is a viable one. It is the strong position of the present writer that government should liberalise conditions for loans and make the book industry a priority area so that small-scale local publishers can be granted loans.

A third practical recommendation is that the existing paper mills should be re-organised and privatised while new ones should be established. As a matter of national book policy -- therefore, cheap publishing, based on newsprint should be adopted. China, India, Japan and even a world power such as former Union of Soviet Socialist Republic adopted this policy and Nigeria is nowhere near them in terms of educational development. Nigerians will certainly opt for the intellectual content in cheap books rather than prohibitively expensive books on glossy bond paper.

Another secret of success by such countries as India is the buying up of publishing rights. Thus, if some core textbooks especially in the science-based disciplines can be identified, the publishing rights can be bought over and as many copies as are locally required can be reprinted.

Since over 90% of tertiary books come from Overseas, generous foreign exchange allocations should be made available for at least the next five years. This will ease the problems which Nigerian booksellers and publishers and overseas partners are currently encountering. Similarly, if so much money is being invested on education, a little more should be set aside for books. It does not sound reasonable to provide expensive buildings and furniture and employ staff without the necessary teaching, learning and research resources. Hence, book allocations should not be the first to be reduced any time there is a financial crisis.

All these recommendations are likely to fall flat if the government does not re-orientate its attitude to the role of books in education. The general low priority given to book procurement in fund allocation must change and government has to

phase the development of the book trade in Nigeria (i.e. solve the problem in stages). The government only needs to develop a strong will which should be backed up by funds. This just has to be done if Nigeria is not to continue to be a developing country. For it does not require another thesis to prove that there is a positive relationship between book availability or unavailability and the level of national development. This is why books are abundant in the developed parts of the world and scarce in the third world countries.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In the Education sector in Nigeria, the year 2000AD has been regarded as a watershed in the sense that in that year all Nigerians are expected to be literate and all children of school age to be at school. This is a very noble objective.

But the order is too tall and lofty to be realised within a short period of six years. For one, the ingredient essential for the success of the programme is absent. That ingredient is books. Hardly a day passes without a feature article or the other on book famine in the national daily newspapers. It is true that the Nigerian governments both Federal and State – have been initiating various educational programmes, investing massively on education and taking steps to show their concern for the provision of books. But these efforts are largely uncoordinated; the financial support for books is too inadequate and the steps being taken to resolve the problem of book scarcity are too ad-hoc to yield any positive results. Individuals, organisations and professional associations such as the Nigerian Library Association, the Publishers Association, the Booksellers Association and the Printers Association have left no stone unturned in pointing out to government the causes of book scarcity, therefore, the government cannot pretend that it is unaware of them. These causes include lack of systematic planning for a book industry, frustrations encountered by Nigerian authors, capital intensive nature of book production, Counter productive and repressive economic policies, inadequacy of the number of paper mills, constant reduction in book budgets and lack of sufficient cooperation among the professional bodies that have to do with book production and book trade.

Inspite of these numerous causes of book scarcity in Nigeria, the problem is not insurmountable. The solutions lie in the willingness of the government to recognise the role of books in education and fund it generously, encouragement of and incentives to authors, commissioning of books, re-organisation of existing paper mills and the establishment of new ones, buying up of publishing rights and reprinting core textbooks and relaxation of fiscal policies as far as educational materials are concerned.

Thus, the problem has been identified, the causes are now known and realistic solutions have been proffered for consideration. What is now required are action, effective implementation, political will and adequate financial support.

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BETTY I. IFIDON

SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

RESPONDING TO INFORMATION NEEDS OF NIGERIA'S UNIVERSITY COMMUNITIES IN THE 1990s

INTRODUCTION

Information needs in the 1990s would not be very different from those of the 1980s because both decades are very close and interdependent; but the disparity would lie in the fact that the university system is not static but undergoes changes from time to time either in the form of introduction of new programmes or the reactivation of obsolete ones. So, it would not be wrong to visualise new dimensions in response to information needs of university libraries within a decade.

Most university libraries have developed from institutions with few departments and small student population to large ones with high increase in students staff and equipment. For example, in 1973 when the University of Calabar started, it had only seven departments, a student enrolment of one hundred and fifty six (156) and only seven hundred and fifty six (756) volumes in its library (Bankole and Odeinde, 1985); but by 1992, the departments had risen to thirty seven (37), student enrolment to seven thousand one hundred and ninety six (7196) and the library stock to one hundred thousand volumes. This shows that the University has been undergoing steady growth in all its sectors. Such growth in library resources usually generate problems of organisation and consequently accessibility to readers' information needs.

1. ACCESSIBILITY TO INFORMATION:

For the University library and her librarians to respond squarely to the information needs of the university community which includes students, staff and researchers, the focal point should be maximum accessibility to information. There has to be proper organisation of the library materials before there can be adequate accessibility. If the materials are not well organised, it would be difficult to retrieve the information in them. In the 1990s, therefore, there would be more emphasis on the accessibility of information to readers rather than large stock of resources which fail to meet the needs of users. Gone are the days when librarians boasted of their large collections which were largely irrelevant. But these days, the consideration is on how far readers' needs are satisfied with the existing stock.

The problem of inaccessibility to library materials is not a myth because many studies have shown that readers can actually be frustrated at certain points of their search for information. Murfin (1980) categorieses accessibility problems into four, namely, acquisition failure— where the needed materials are not acquired; circulation

failure — where the materials are already checked out of the library; library operation failure — where the materials are mutilated, damaged or lost; and user error — where the materials are in the library but readers fail to retrieve them. This categorisation cuts across the full length and breadth of library operations showing that even though inaccessibility is a problem specifically associated with the public services section of the library, its cause can be traced to the entire library system. There seems to be a very wrong assumption that once library materials are acquired, they automatically become accessible to readers. But this is a false assumption. Efforts must be put in to achieve effective use of the acquired materials.

With acquisition failure, the services of subject specialists should be employed to assist in acquiring basic materials needed by users. Efforts should also be made in compiling directories, indexes and abstracts to assist users of periodical literature because accessibility problem is most glaring in this field, (Michalak, 1976). So, in the 1990s, there would be more concerted effort in working towards satisfying readers needs through better co-ordination, planning arrangements, procedures and practices in the library.

2. SUBJECT SPECIALISATION:

Subject specialisation among the university library staff is yet an important response to library work of the 1990s because it makes for expert approach in solving readers' problems. For a librarian to qualify as a subject specialist, he must have received relevant academic training usually at a graduate level in the discipline represented by the academic departments in his charge. This arms him well enough to become capable of liaising with these departments in book selection and collection development, reference services, bibliographic control, instruction in the utilisation of library resources and the development of current awareness. Perhaps his main duty lies in communication. He should possess enough communication skills to enable him to contribute adequately towards the research and teaching objectives of the departments.

Subject specialisation amongst librarians had triggered off much debate in the past as some people feel that it disrupts the normal process of library activities. But experience has shown that it rather enhances librarians' work as they act not only as experts in their fields, but at the same time achieve maximum inter-relationship with the rest of the academic community. This system of utilising all members of the senior library staff as subject specialists is currently being practised at the University of Botswana Library (Reseroka, 1993).

In his communication ventures, the subject specialist initiates contact with members of the faculty, undergraduates and researcher. He is aware of new members of the faculty and initiates contact accordingly. This does not reduce him to an errand boy, in any way, but it challenges his initiative in disseminating information.

He should be assigned to a particular section of the library where he participates in public services or in the technical section where he utilises his technical skill in preservation activities. Weeding is best done by a subject specialist who knows which materials have become obsolete and should be weeded. An ignorant person in the field might weed materials that are still very useful to users. Conversion of library materials

into other formats such as microfiche, cassettes, films etc. are best handled by subject specialists who would better understand the essence of preservation in different formats of particular information. As a specialist in a field, the subject specialist would ensure that vital information in the field are kept intact for users by sending torn and worn-out books frequently to the bindery for repairs and by replacing missing materials. He would also facilitate inter-library loan and exchange of materials if they are needed by the faculty.

The subject specialist would be most useful to the faculty or department in assisting students with their final year projects in their search for bibliographic tools. He should have profound interest in research techniques and be prepared to impart these to the users in his subject area. Above all, information materials in the discipline should be controlled by the specialist. This means that he should not only become aware of the relevant materials in his subject area, but he should also document them as a form of bibliographic control. To be able to achieve this, he should constantly examine the circulation and reserve lists and review the collections, identifying the strengths, weaknesses and gaps in the collection and give advice where necessary. This is the best way through which he can identify the needs of users in his discipline. In addition to these, he should ensure that current journals and newsletters are identified and procured for the department to keep abreast of changes and new directions in the field. This is very necessary in the sciences where currency is the watchword of all information.

A subject specialist must work very hard to acquaint himself with as much information as possible in his subject field so as to give adequate interpretative assistance to readers. In other words, he should be an avid reader himself in the field to avoid having a passive relationship with the materials in his subject area.

Considering all these, one would assert that subject specialisation is highly demanding as a concept in library management and this situation leads Michalak (1976) to describe such a specialist as an Ombudsman depicting that his functions cut across all sections of the library. In addition to all-embracing nature, it has profound advantages especially in this age of low library budgets, and inadequate staffing. With it, the university library can survive satisfactorily during times of austerity or drastic retrenchment because there is a contraction of duties within subject fields thereby controlling the management and organisation of the libraries' resources. More importantly, subject specialisation which is a diversion from the usual organisation of the library makes for a serious revitalisation and overhauling of library services and operations. It also succeeds in bringing together more closely the library and the different faculties of the university, a cohesion that makes for better appreciation, co-existence and better understanding of one another's objectives and meaningful academic survival for all. Definitely, when a university library has top-rate expertise, research and knowledge-generation capabilities, library services would be facilitated and users would be satisfied.

RESOURCE SHARING:

Yet another response to information needs of university communities in the 1990s is resource sharing in terms of human and material aspects. Librarians are skilled in many

into other formats such as microfiche, cassettes, films etc. are best handled by subject specialists who would better understand the essence of preservation in different formats of particular information. As a specialist in a field, the subject specialist would ensure that vital information in the field are kept intact for users by sending torn and worn-out books frequently to the bindery for repairs and by replacing missing materials. He would also facilitate inter-library loan and exchange of materials if they are needed by the faculty.

The subject specialist would be most useful to the faculty or department in assisting students with their final year projects in their search for bibliographic tools. He should have profound interest in research techniques and be prepared to impart these to the users in his subject area. Above all, information materials in the discipline should be controlled by the specialist. This means that he should not only become aware of the relevant materials in his subject area, but he should also document them as a form of bibliographic control. To be able to achieve this, he should constantly examine the circulation and reserve lists and review the collections, identifying the strengths, weaknesses and gaps in the collection and give advice where necessary. This is the best way through which he can identify the needs of users in his discipline. In addition to these, he should ensure that current journals and newsletters are identified and procured for the department to keep abreast of changes and new directions in the field. This is very necessary in the sciences where currency is the watchword of all information.

A subject specialist must work very hard to acquaint himself with as much information as possible in his subject field so as to give adequate interpretative assistance to readers. In other words, he should be an avid reader himself in the field to avoid having a passive relationship with the materials in his subject area.

Considering all these, one would assert that subject specialisation is highly demanding as a concept in library management and this situation leads Michalak (1976) to describe such a specialist as an Ombudsman depicting that his functions cut across all sections of the library. In addition to all-embracing nature, it has profound advantages especially in this age of low library budgets, and inadequate staffing. With it, the university library can survive satisfactorily during times of austerity or drastic retrenchment because there is a contraction of duties within subject fields thereby controlling the management and organisation of the libraries' resources. More importantly, subject specialisation which is a diversion from the usual organisation of the library makes for a serious revitalisation and overhauling of library services and operations. It also succeeds in bringing together more closely the library and the different faculties of the university, a cohesion that makes for better appreciation, co-existence and better understanding of one another's objectives and meaningful academic survival for all. Definitely, when a university library has top-rate expertise, research and knowledge-generation capabilities, library services would be facilitated and users would be satisfied.

RESOURCE SHARING:

Yet another response to information needs of university communities in the 1990s is resource sharing in terms of human and material aspects. Librarians are skilled in many

fields of knowledge and the term, human resources, in the library, can refer to professionally trained librarians as well as technical staff like binders, reprographers, computer experts etc. With such diverse personnel in diverse sectors of the library, human resource sharing can also take different forms. It could take the form of exchange programmes either within the country, region or on international basis. It could also take the form of conferences, seminars and workshops. Here, Librarians share their knowledge in current developments in librarianship. They could also identify their common as well as peculiar problems and find ways of solving them. These workshops seminars and conferences constitute pertinent responses to information needs in university libraries as they create forums for exchange of ideas at different levels.

Co-operative cataloguing and acquisition are other human resource sharing activities in libraries even though communication problems and financial constraints prevent their being practised on a large scale in Third World Countries like Nigeria. However, no library can be self-sufficient in terms of human and material resources. This is the reason why inter-library loan and other forms of co-operation in libraries are encouraged. Different subjects could be assigned to different participating libraries to avoid duplication of materials, thereby conserving funds for other projects (Dipeolu, 1984). Photocopying which has become a very common exercise in universities could have been a way out of the material dearth that faces university libraries today, but it has become very expensive lately and if the cost continues to skyrocket, students may soon be in a dilemma as to what to do next. In any case, photocopying still remains a very dependable source of supplying readers' needs.

Resource sharing has never succeeded in Nigerian universities as one would wish it because of the two basic problems mentioned above, namely, communication and lack of funds, but it is believed that with the stand taken by the National Universities Commission on libraries, the problems would be surmounted to some extent, paving the way for expansive resource sharing activities.

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THE STRUCTURE OF THE PUBLISHING INDUSTRY IN KENYA

Gundu Shibanda
Moi University Library
Eldoret, Kenya

INTRODUCTION

Publishing is simply the process of turning a manuscript into a book for the purpose of reading. This may involve soliciting for an idea from notable and potential authors, quite often, after a publisher has identified a gap within the existing imprints. While filling such a gap, the publisher will obviously be motivated by factors such as the demand levels, potential market and the availability of renowned authors. In line with this assessment publishing is therefore a manufacturing entity which includes packaging and marketing.

This article aims to identify factors that influence publishing in Kenya.

PUBLISHING INDICATORS

There are several factors that come into play in the publishing industry. The prominent factors being availability of potential buyers which is linked to the population, information sources, booksellers, etc.

Population

According to Kenya Development Plan 1989/93 the population of Kenya in 1989 was 23,513,000 and it was projected to 27,214,000 in 1993. A breakdown of the age groups of the 1993 population was 0-14 (14,412,000) 15-49 (5,934,000) and 65+ (566,000).

This breakdown can be categorised into age groups (0-14) referred to as children readership, (15-49) age group would represent educational and school readership while (50-65+) age group indicates adult readership. Arising from this assumption, a market oriented publisher will easily fall in one or all of the above categories of readership levels. Yet the biggest volume of book supply per each category will be in the children readership with over 14 million heads, followed by school/educational book requirement with over 5 million heads. This leaves the adult readership in third position with approximately 500,000 volumes of book production for a similar number of heads per annum.

However, taking these figures on their face value will not provide a proper picture of some of the underlying problems that inhibit sound publishing in Kenya. Some of these problems as articulated by Gundu (1990) include high illiteracy level and lack of reading habits. Another dimension based on the population factor is the school going age which constitutes the school/academic publishing market. The school going group for 1993 is categorised below.

Age Group	1993
Pre-School age (0-5)	6,240,000
Primary School Age (6-13)	2,655,000
Secondary School age (14-17)	5,934,000
Old age (65+)	566,000

(Source — Development Plan 1989/93)

The School going age shows a staggering figure of about 14million heads by 1993. This is precisely over half of the Kenyan population in general. If one has to include the projected enrolment in colleges and universities, the following figures will have to be considered.

Level	1993
Universities	55,300
Teacher Training	29,600
Special Education	15,100
Vocational/Technical	22,900

(Source — Development — Plan 1989/93)

The educational consumers include school going pupils in primary and secondary to colleges and university students. This market accounts for approximately 90 per cent of the Kenyan book consumer market.

Information Sources

It is generally known that in developing countries, there are many other sources of information other than books. The prominent sources include government officials, neighbours, chiefs, radio etc. This has been reported in Kenya by Gundu (1990) and in Nigeria by Williams and Williams (1983). Publishing in a society hewed to the listed traditional norms will obviously affect marketing and sale of books.

Booksellers :

The existence of the Kenyan Booksellers and Stationers Association is an indication of bona fide book trade. So far Kenya has approximately 400 bookshops. A few notable characteristics concerning these bookshops are:—

- their concentration in urban centres only
- their seasonal tendencies of stocking books
- their poor knowledge of the booktrade

However, the activities of the Kenyan Booksellers and stationers Association, through frequent seminars aimed at educating members on booktrade issues, must be seen as an initiative in the right direction.

PUBLISHING PATTERN IN KENYA

A variety of organisations are involved in publishing in Kenya. Five categories can be easily identified. These are:

—The government or parastatal publishers. Under this category, we have Jomo Kenyatta Foundation first created in 1965 as a trust and the Kenya Literature Bureau which came into being from the fall of East African Literature Bureau. Commercial publishing forms the second category of publishing. Behind this active sector are Longmans, Macmillan, Oxford University Press, Phoenix, Heinemann, African Book Publishing, Evans Brothers, Gideon S. Were Press, and many others.

Evangelical or missionary publishers constitute the third category and mainly produce literature based on christian mission. Listed under this category are Evangel Publishing House, Baptist Publishers, Uzima Press and Bible Society of Kenya. These are the most renown but there are many others situated in most mission centres. Back-street publishing forms the fourth category of Kenyan Publishing sector. It is "back-street" by definition because the general belief is that they go about their business in an unethical character, and that they take advantage of publishing opportunities to produce untested and sub standard material particularly geared for examination classes. A more or less emerging fifth category of publishing is the academic or scholarly. This is confined to universities where desk-top publishing facilities are much on test. These include the university of Nairobi, Moi University, Kenyatta University and Egerton University.

Ratio of Kenyan and Foreign Imprint

It has been noted that over 85 per cent of the book market in Kenya is school/educational. It was also noted that 90 per cent of this school/educational market is foreign published. This leaves 10 per cent of the book market to local publishing industry. Looking further at details arising from a survey carried on Moi University Library (imprint) acquisitions, the following inferences can be drawn:

Out of the fifty recorded books in the accession register every year covering 1985/90, the range of acquisition showed 20 per cent highest and zero per cent lowest for local imprint, while overseas imprint acquisitions indicated 60 per cent lowest and 100 per cent highest.

According to the first fifty books on the shelf using the shelf list as per the subject category, local materials ranged from zero per cent to 24 per cent. While overseas materials stood at 74 per cent to 98 per cent. The overall percentages out of 450 books revealed 6.7 per cent (local) and 93.3 per cent (overseas).

An examination of the University Bookshop, students recommended books for purchase per department showed zero per cent to 26.3 per cent (local) against 73.7 to 100 per cent (overseas). Out of 107 books, only 7.5 per cent represented local material against 92.5 per cent (overseas).

In terms of subject coverage using the shelf list the proportion of books published on science locally is abusively low. While no book was published locally in physics, chemistry and medicine, only 14% and 2% were published in mathematics and Botany respectively. In the Humanities, religion is rated highest with 24% followed by geography (10%) and history (8%). There was no local publication in Philosophy

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BOOK REVIEW

Oral Literature In African Libraries : Implications For Ghana

By A. A. Alemna, Bloomington, Indiana,
Indiana University, 1993, 44p.

This is a monograph on that perennial subject for African librarians, *Oral Literature*, and its neglect by libraries in Africa. This modest work is divided into six chapters. Chapter one is an Introduction and research methodology, followed by the second chapter, titled Oral literature in Africa, and then 'oral literature in libraries'. The other chapters are on; Profiles of selected oral literature programmes in Africa; Data Presentation and Analysis, and finally, 'Conclusions and Recommendations' at the end.

The writer makes the point that oral literature, is the most important source of information for African libraries but has been neglected by librarians. Presumably, this study, which focuses on current oral literature programmes in Africa will identify the principal reasons for past neglect, and come up with some remedial recommendations. To be noted is that this study is on oral literature programmes in Africa, which are often not in libraries.

One positive aspect of the study is that it may help to focus the attention of librarians, and other scholars on what is undoubtedly still an important subject, with various unresolved issues.

The work, however, has at least three major shortcomings. First the literature review is not really related to the research topic. The literature reviewed is on all aspects of oral literature, rather than the literature which is relevant to oral literature programmes. No attempt is made to connect the various writers reviewed, each one is presented in isolation and often writers who hold contradictory views are placed one after the other without any comment.

A second short coming lies in the use of various terms which are not given operational definitions; e.g. oral literature, oral tradition, oral history, oral culture. At times, there is confusion because some of these terms appear to be used inter-changeably. A typical example is:

" before the formation of the Oral History Association in 1966, each person had been operating in a state of insularity . . . Yet it has been found that oral literature is an excellent tool, adaptable to every discipline,"

The issue of whether oral traditions are a source of information, or a channel of communication, or a part of historical records is never fully resolved. So when the writer suggests the "need to document oral traditions in African libraries..." (p21) it is unclear what he has in mind.

The third weak area is the research part of this work, reported in chapter five. The data presented deals with the following main issues: Personnel involved in the

oral programmes, source of funding, collection size, equipment, indexing and processing, and bibliographic accessibility, and preservation. The data presented, therefore, has very little to do with the issues raised in the literature review. There is a long list of recommendations, numbering 25 items, unfortunately few of these actually come from the research, itself, neither is the part titled "Implications for Ghana" based on the actual research".

Some basic assumptions of this study, and popular in writings from other African librarians, are of questionable validity e.g. 'Africans do not read, "oral traditions is the most important source of information for libraries in Africa" etc. There is need to be specific about context target group, and the type of library one has in mind. Few African academicians, undergraduates, or researchers would accept the stereotyped dating back to the 60s.

In conclusion, this monograph could have done with better organisation, and clearer objectives, however it is a useful addition to oral literature in Africa.

Kingo Michombu.

NEW PUBLICATION FROM IFLA

Survival under Adverse Conditions : Proceedings of the African Library Science Journals Workshop, Bayero University Kano, Nigeria, 29-30 January, 1992. Editor, Michael Wise. The Hague: IFLA, 1993. x, 120p.; ISBN; price.

The Workshop was the outcome of an IFLA sponsored investigation of the reasons why many African library science journals (and also those in other disciplines) have a precarious publishing pattern, sometimes falling years behind on publishing schedules.

The Editor is Chair of the Round Table of Editors of Library Journals; the twelve papers include contributions by journal editors and publishers in Botswana, Kenya, Nigeria and the United Kingdom. It includes the report of a continent-wide survey of active and dormant journals, and summarises the factors that inhibit regular journal publishing in many countries of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Main Contents:

Report on the IFLA/RTELJ Survey of Library Association and other professional journals in Sub-Saharan Africa, by Michael Wise.

Overview of the state of Nigerian journal publishing, by Sam E. Ifidon
Journal publishing in Nigeria: an editor's point of view, by Briggs C. Nzotta.

Organisation of Journal publishing: a publisher's viewpoint, by E. B. Bankole.

Prospects for reducing the high mortality rate of African library science journals, by L.O. Aina.

Measures at rehabilitating a library journal: the example of *Nigerian Libraries*, 1984-88, by A.O. Banjo.

What gets published overseas on Africa: articles in library journal compared and contrasted with academic books that win awards, by Anthony Olden.

Nigerian Periodicals Index: the struggle for survival, by M.A. Sadiq.

Publishing library science journals: the case of *Maktaba* and other Kenya Library Association Publications, by Symphrose Ouma.

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SPOTLIGHT ON PLAN — AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (PADIS) ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Africa's lack of development over the years is attributed principally to the information poverty that has characterised the socio-economic development planning efforts of many countries on the continent since the attainment of political independence. The prevailing situation is not because the planning mechanisms of these countries lack data to base various meaningful socio-economic planning exercises. Rather, the problem has been the inability of African countries to develop and maintain appropriate information infrastructure.

It is widely agreed that over the last years, social and economic conditions in the continent have deteriorated mainly because of adverse climatic conditions, deteriorating international economic relations, civil strife in many countries and in-apt economic management by governments. Both the understanding of African development problems, and implementing solutions, require substantial amounts of information input. But alterations in priorities cause corresponding changes in emphasis in information needs.

A review of the information infrastructure in Africa, and the appraisal of the application of information technologies by libraries, information, documentation and data centres established to meet the information needs of development planners in respective countries of Africa, highlight a number of inadequacies in these two areas. These shortcomings derive primarily from the lack of appreciation of the role of information in development by the political and planning officers of most countries in Africa. This lack of appreciation has resulted in a number of policy gaps in those areas which are vital to the acquisition and use of modern technology for implementing socio-economic development objectives.

The creation of the Pan African Development Information System (PADIS) in 1980, by the African countries, has brought some good prospects in the development of the African development information infrastructure. PADIS was created to assist African countries to develop or strengthen their information and documentation infrastructures. PADIS has several roles to play among the major ones being:

- (a) Standardization and harmonization of information systems and activities in Africa.
- (b) Acting as a prototype in the transfer of technology, particularly information technology to African countries.

ACTIVITIES OF PADIS

The role of the information sector and the number of national and multinational documentation programmes in Africa is rapidly increasing. In this process, the duplication of efforts to design and implement the tools and methods for each individual programme will be staggering and lead to waste of already scarce resources at all levels (human, financial and material). The harmonization of information programme in Africa by inter-alia, streamlining these undertakings, promoting resources sharing and introducing complementarity remains crucial to PADIS. Presently, PADIS is well suited to carry out responsibility in view of its mandate, corporate experience and capacities. Since the inception of PADIS, the development of tools and methods, including worksheets, indexing terminologies etc, for the processing of bibliographic information have always carried a high priority within PADIS.

With the continuous introduction of more sophisticated information technologies in the developed world, the trend towards the introduction of information technologies in Africa is fast gaining momentum. If Africa is not to be permanently denied access to the vast store houses of information that exist in the industrialized countries, and if it is going to share its own data within the continent, it must keep pace with these developments. However, the challenges African countries face to develop the capacity to choose, adapt and develop modern information technologies and support services are immense. PADIS is a use of information technologies (computer hardware and software, telecommunication systems, reprographic equipment etc) by virtue of which it has accumulated useful experience and know-how which it is sharing with the African countries. The careful selection, testing, adaptation and/or development of information technologies, including computer software at PADIS enables it to serve not only as a test bed but also a resource centre for all of Africa. The aims of PADIS to develop and replicate tools and methods are supportive of this role.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Meaningful socio-economic development and integration of Africa is almost impossible without a sound information base for planning. By far the major obstacle to information infrastructure building in Africa is the inadequacy of financial and material resources available for information activities. Given the predominant role African Governments play in social and economic life, the low priority they attach to information activities is the major cause of prevailing shortcoming. The situation has been exacerbated by austerity measures enacted as a result of the prevailing crisis in the continent and by the increasing difficulties in disbursing funds for activities not budgeted for in development plans.

African countries should give priority to policies in three major areas which have direct bearing on the capacity of countries to make use of appropriate information technology. These are the areas of computer acquisition and use, human resources development and communications. Human resources development in

particular should be given priority by training people in the use of information technology and the application of policies. With the development and advances in the application of new technologies for generating and disseminating socio-economic data/information, training in the use of appropriate information technology is becoming very crucial. However, the success in the implementation of the suggested policy guidelines depends significantly on the political will of each country in Africa, as well as of all of them as a collective entity, in pursuit of socio-economic development and integration of Africa.

Dr. Francis Ingaji

and in 1983 he was appointed to the staff of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, as a Lecturer in the Department of Library and Information Science. He was promoted to the rank of Associate Professor in 1988 and to the rank of Professor in 1990. He is currently the Director of the Africa Regional Centre for Information Science, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.



PROF. W. OLABODE AIYEPEKU

the information profession in 1965 when he was appointed a Temporary Library Assistant at Kashim Ibrahim Library, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. In 1967 he became Graduate Assistant Librarian Trainee in the same library. After completion of his postgraduate diploma programme in 1969, he was appointed an Assistant Lecturer in the then Department of Library Studies of the University of Ibadan, because of his outstanding performance. He has had a successful academic career at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria having held the positions of Lecturer II, Lecturer I and Senior Lecturer at various times. He became a Professor in October, 1983. In 1990, he was appointed the pioneer Director of Africa Regional Centre for Information Science, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Prior to this appointment, he had held various types of appointments at the University. He was Sub-Dean, Faculty of Education, 1975-1977; Acting Head

Our personality in this issue is one of the foremost information scientists in Africa, Professor Wilson Olabode Aiyepeku the pioneer Director of Africa Regional Centre for Information Science, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Prof. Aiyepeku was born on the 23rd of August, 1942. He obtained B.A. (Hons) Geography from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria in 1967, Post graduate Diploma in Librarianship and Ph.D. from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, in 1969 and 1973 respectively. He had a stint at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, United States of America. Prof. Aiyepeku

first got in contact with

of Department, 1983-85; and Substantive Head of Department, 1988-1990. He has served on a number of university committees including appointments and promotions, publication, computer, security, etc. He was a member of Council of the University, 1984-1988 and is currently a member of the University Senate. Professor Aiyepeku has served as external examiner to many universities in Nigeria and Ghana. He was Program Advisor at the International Development Research Council (IDRC) 1980-81 during his sabbatical leave. Prof. Aiyepeku is a distinguished scholar. He won IDRC Fellowship award (1980), Unesco Fellowship award (1974), Departmental prize, University of Ibadan (1969), Ford Foundation Scholarship (1969), Northern Regional Government of Nigeria Scholarship (1964) and Commonwealth Essay Competition, Junior First Prize (1961). He has done consultancy services for various international organisations, including IDRC, Unesco, International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). He has also consulted for several national institutions in Africa, Asia and Europe. Prof. Aiyepeku belongs to a number of learned and professional associations. He is a Fellow of the Institute of Information Scientists, London. He is also an active member of the Nigeria Library Association, The Nigeria Geographical Association and The Society for Social Studies of Science. He is a member of the Editorial Board of Journal of Information Science, Education for Information. He was at various times the Business Manager, Review Editor, Assistant Editor-in-Chief and Ag. Editor-in-Chief of Nigerian Libraries. Prof. Aiyepeku has supervised three completed doctoral theses and one M.Phil thesis. He has supervised several Masters' dissertations and he is currently supervising three doctoral candidates. Prof. Aiyepeku's teaching interests include bibliometrics, issues in librarianship, archives and information science, research methods, and literature of the social sciences. His areas of specialisation are Bibliometrics: theory and applications, Development of Information Systems (design and evaluation), Education for Information and Information in Public Policy. Prof. Aiyepeku has a distinguished academic career. He has over 80 publications to his credit.

Prof. Aiyepeku is a widely travelled man, having visited 16 African countries and 21 countries in Europe, Asia and North America. He is married to Margaret Omotayo Kikelomo. They are blessed with four children.

In the following interview, Prof. Aiyepeku shares his views on information profession in Africa, especially information science.

Q1. You entered the information profession in 1969. Can you compare the information profession then and now? Has there been any significant development on the African scene?

It would not be quite correct to say that I "entered the information profession in 1969". Although I qualified as a professional librarian in 1969, I had chalked up a total of 32 months as Library Assistant (8 months), Senior Library Assistant (9 months) and Graduate-Trainee Librarian (15 months) between 1963 and 1969 in a public library and a university library.

In 1969, the information profession was almost 100 percent librarianship; there were a handful of archivists and no information science specialists on the scene. The opportunities for the practice of the profession in 1969 were also quite limited: the preponderance of library school graduates worked in university and research libraries.

Of the exciting significant developments on the African scene since 1969, I would like to highlight just three:

- (a) enrichment of the curricula for professional education for information to include more and more elements of information science;
- (b) vast improvements in the quality of both academic staff and students in our professional programmes; and
- (c) the flowering of a research culture.

While individuals may claim specific contributions to the first and third developments, I believe the second is a reflection of the maturity of the information profession in Africa.

What motivated you to have a career in library and information studies?

I remember vividly the time of day, the location, and the context of my decision, in 1962, to become a librarian. That was my first year as a Higher School Certificate student, and I had gone to read at a public library in Kaduna. I was astonished at the obvious ease with which the Reference Librarian handled all manner of questions referred to him. "Surely, he must have mastered all of these subjects", I mused. And I concluded there and then that no other calling could possibly demand such varied and deep intellectual power as that displayed by the Reference Librarian whom I had watched for about an hour. I wanted a career like his, and I have never looked back since, despite the enormous stresses and strains that my decision was subsequently subjected to.

You are one of the first information professionals in Africa to obtain a Ph.D in Library and information studies. Why did you opt for it? Was there really a need for it in Africa at the time you embarked upon it?

The developments which led to that decision were not entirely of my own making. As you know, I took my bachelor's degree in geography in 1967. The fact that I was the only one in the Second Upper category of successful candidates in a class of 23 meant nothing to me. (After all, one candidate had a First Class.) I had already resumed my career as Graduate Trainee-Librarian at Ahmadu Bello University's Kashim Ibrahim Library when the results were announced.

Then the drama began. My class was the first 'honours class' that Ahmadu Bello University had produced in the field of geography. Unknown to me, the best in my class had been targetted for overseas training, up to Ph.D level, to replace two of our lecturers, both of whom were expatriate. My long-time schoolmate who took a first was a natural geomorphologist in the making; I was assigned to specialize in biogeography or climatology, and both of us would go to British universities from where our teachers had been seconded to Ahmadu Bello University.

You can imagine the reaction of the Head of the Dept. of Geography (who had carefully worked out this arrangement) and the university's Vice-Chancellor (who had been asked to intervene in the matter) when I turned down the offer out of hand. Both were convinced that I was out of my mind to have rejected an offer to study in Great Britain on a scholarship, but the University Librarian stood firmly in my support. Finally, during a critical stage in the week-long saga, it became necessary to prove that a career in librarianship was as challenging as one in geography . . . Calmly, the University Librarian produced a copy of *Dissertation Abstracts International* and showed his incredulous onlookers an entry in the name of Herman H Fussler: *Characteristics of the research literature used by chemists and physicists in the United States*, Ph.D, dissertation, University of Chicago, 1948. With a triumphant grin, he announced: "If it was done for chemistry and physics, it could be done for geography" Q.E.D.; no further convincing was necessary, and I was let off the hook, at last, to pursue my chosen profession to the highest possible level. I thank God that my career has fulfilled the high expectations of that University Librarian.

As regards the second part of your question, I believe that "the flowering of a research culture" in African library schools, which I cited earlier on in this interview, is a powerful illustration, especially since the 1970's, of the need for doctoral studies in our field, as in other disciplines.

As one of the pioneers of bibliometrics in Africa, do you agree with those who say that Bradford's law has been overflogged in the professional literature and there is nothing new any more?

I don't agree with those who say that Bradford's law has been overflogged in the professional literature. New insights and new applications of the basic principle of the law are regularly reported. The reports make exciting reading . . . up to a point. Having said that, I must admit that much of the literature increasingly appears to be pure mathematics for its own sake. Such a trend, if not checked, would be a disservice to both Dr Samuel Bradford and Professor Bertrand Brookes in particular, both of whom were always concerned to demonstrate, above everything else, the practical utility of the Bradford distribution principle in library and information situations.

I should also remind readers of AJLAIS that the principles of bibliometrics exhibit new and exciting dimensions in scientometrics and informetrics. The fourth in the biennial series of International Conferences on Bibliometrics, Scientometrics and Information was held in Berlin last September. The proceedings of the Conference, and of the previous three conferences, indicate quite clearly that continuing research and application is required to advance the frontiers of knowledge, based on the Bradford distribution law.

In one of our recent issues we spotlighted the Africa Regional Centre for Information Science (ARCIS). Could you expatiate on ARCIS, providing information on its establishment and its future role and development?

I believe that the answer to your question had already been published under the title "The Challenge of implementing an African programme in Information Science: TRARECON" in the *Journal of Information Science* (London), Vol. 17 (1991), pages 315 to 320. I have nothing to add to that article at the moment.

It is important to emphasize, however, that ARCIS is only three years old and, therefore, a little too early for anybody to start beating the chest about "achievements". We remain confident that, given adequate resources, ARCIS will continue to justify its establishment in the relevance and dynamism of its programmes.

How many graduates, on the average annually, are you expected to produce? Have you been monitoring the employment avenues of your graduates? What are the avenues like?

Of course, we had our registration projections for the first five years of its establishment — 20, 20, 30, 30, 30. In the first set of 20, two dropped out and 13 successfully graduated in May 1992. Out of the second set of 35 (including five from the first set) 28 graduated in November 1993 that is six months late due to severe disruptions to academic life in Nigeria during the 1992/93 session. There are also 30 students in the third set, and we hope to admit two or three students for our MPhil/PhD programme which was scheduled to take off at the beginning of the 1993/94 session last October. Thus, ARCIS would seem to be on target, more or less, in terms of the number of registered students. Perhaps I should add that student numbers are not likely to increase significantly over the next few years.

Concerning employment avenues, ARCIS is still too young to report confidently about the employment trends of its graduates. We do, however, have a fairly effective mechanism for monitoring the job placements of our graduates. What we would really love to see is the appointment of a Job Placement Officer who would, perhaps, combine the duties of such a position with those of Centre Librarian.

An interesting report was presented by our Student Adviser at a recent social gathering organized for our 1993 graduating class. We were fascinated to learn that several of our first set of graduates had snapped up jobs advertised specifically for computer scientists: that two or three of them were working in banks; that one was teaching information science in a library school; and that at least two were self-employed. The remainder simply returned to the jobs they held before coming to ARCIS. We are particularly excited about reports of self-employment by our graduates and the fact that they are accepted for jobs originally meant for computer scientists. We fully expect that future graduates of our MInfSc degree programme would be employed in even more diversified sectors of African economies — and to aspire to progressively join the ranks of employers of labour themselves.

How representative of African countries are your students?

It is important to bear in mind that ARCIS was established primarily for English-speaking West African countries, just as SISA in Ethiopia was founded to cater primarily for English-speaking Eastern and Southern Africa. The spread of the three

sets of MInfSc degree students admitted to ARCIS, so far, reflects this sub-regional bias with most students drawn from Nigeria, Ghana and Cameroon in descending order of numerical strength. We have not been able to attract students from Liberia due to the civil war that has ravaged the country for several years. The Gambia presents a different kind of challenge that is being addressed at the appropriate levels. Two Ugandans completed their MInfSc students at ARCIS in 1993 --- a pointer, we believe, to a healthy development in future when students can come to ARCIS from all of the geopolitical and linguistic constituencies of Africa.

ARCIS is very important in the development of the information profession in Africa. How do you hope to attract and retain staff, given the poor salaries paid to academic staff of Nigerian universities?

This is a very serious issue. ARCIS is fortunate to have, as its pioneer academic staff, brilliant, highly motivated and committed young men who were trained specifically for ARCIS. In other words, only the ARCIS Director had the option of not working for ARCIS at its inception --- a Hobson's choice, really, because for almost a decade before ARCIS took off in November 1990, the ARCIS Director was the ARCIS Project Coordinator.

The point being emphasized is at the heart of the answer to your question: Each of us at ARCIS has a deep and genuine commitment to the success of the ARCIS experiment. It means that each of us had been sacrificing that much fatter remuneration package in the Nigerian private sector, or outside Nigeria and Africa, which is there for the asking. I know that several tempting offers have been made to my colleagues, within and outside Africa, and that all of them have been turned down, so far ...

So far! Well, I can only hope that we all can remain committed to the ARCIS cause for a long, long time to come. The local situation is very depressing at the moment, especially with an uncontrollable inflation rate that eats up, literally overnight, every improved remuneration package for Nigerian university teachers. We all continue to do what we can to keep our heads above water; it is a real struggle indeed.

Attracting new academic staff is a different proposition altogether. The standards stipulated by the University of Ibadan and ARCIS are very high. We have, so far, neither been able to fill any of the two vacant academic positions nor the vacant position of technologist since 1990. And the prospects do not appear any brighter. This is one clear area where ARCIS needs external assistance in the form of salary supplementation, especially since ARCIS insists, rightly I believe, on attracting non-Nigerians to the ranks of its academic staff.

Both ARCIS and the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies are located at the University of Ibadan. What is the relationship like? Is there any overlap in both programmes? Are both schools completely autonomous?

Readers of AJLAIS are reassured that the relationship between the two professional schools has remained very cordial in all respects. The MInfSc curriculum is harmonized with the older MLS curriculum; our students take MLS courses, one of my PhD students is registered in the library school and occasional examiners for the library school's doctoral programme are drawn from ARCIS. Above all, the heads

of both schools consult regularly and endeavour to share their resources as much as possible to ensure that the two programmes continue to complement, rather than compete with, each other.

The two schools are "completely autonomous" in the sense that both are independent departments in the Faculty of Education. Lest some readers are tempted to take a dim view of this arrangement, I should remind them that the library and information field is expanding and adjusting all over the world to meet new challenges. We already have a University of Library and Information Sciences and the United Nations University's Department of Information Science, both in Japan. There is no reason why Africa should lag too far behind such progressive developments, as Morocco's Ecole des Sciences de l'Information and Moi University's Faculty of Information Sciences in Kenya seem to illustrate.

Can you give us background information on the proposed Consortium of African Information Science Schools? Given the objectives of the Consortium, don't you think the logistics involved will not make it work?

The idea of inaugurating a Consortium of African Schools of Information Science (CASIS) was discussed, formally, for the first time in 1992, although it had featured intermittently at professional meetings for some time before that date. The heads of three African schools: Addis Ababa University's School of Information Studies for Africa (SISA); the University of Botswana's Department of Library and Information Studies, and ARCIS met in Dakar, Senegal, in June 1992 to explore the desirability of constituting such a body. A consensus to go ahead was achieved at the meeting and definitive proposals were made for further discussion among all academic staff in the three schools, as a basis for subsequent meetings.

Three more meetings have since been held --- in Madrid, Spain, during the FID Congress and Conference in October 1992; in Addis Ababa in February 1993; and in Paris in July 1993 during another international conference. At the Paris meeting, it was agreed to explore the inclusion of Ecole des Sciences de l'Information (ESI) in Rabat, Morocco, as the fourth pioneer member of CASIS. A comprehensive instrument of association has been agreed and the objectives, programmes and a three-year budget of the proposed CASIS have been determined. Three things remain to be done: the formal launching of CASIS, a vigorous campaign of sourcing funds for its programmes, and the identification of a CASIS Secretariat.

The second part of your question reflects considerable scepticism about the probable success of CASIS. I do not share your pessimism nor do I think any of the pioneer members of CASIS is as sanguine as you are! Of course, there will be enormous challenges (some people choose to call them 'problems'), including logistical ones, that the implementation of CASIS programmes will throw up. But, I think it would be unacceptable to shy away from new ideas and new opportunities just because there might be 'problems' along the way. I have always believed that every 'problem' is a challenge; it all depends on how you look at it. I am confident that the rank and file of African educators for information science will work for the success of CASIS whenever it is launched.

What, in your opinion, is responsible for the dearth of active professional information journals in Africa? Besides this journal, there is no other active information professional journal in Africa today. What can be done to ameliorate this?

First of all, too many journals were started without much thought of their sustainability. National professional associations are founded with considerable ease all over Africa, and about the first 'project' that the newly-elected executive of a professional association thinks about is to start a national journal, usually with people who have not the foggiest idea of what it takes to run a professional journal. Quite often, members of the Editorial Board of many a national journal may never have done any research or published anything substantial themselves!

A related factor is that the number of professional journals in Africa has always far outstripped the quantum of publishable research done in the field of library and information science. A vicious cycle soon developed: the few research articles produced in Africa didn't quite fit into the fiercely nationalistic titles available and tended to be published in neutral, foreign-based journals. As a result, African titles became more and more parochial, sank deeper and deeper into mediocrity, and enjoyed fewer and fewer numbers of serious readers. The downward spiral of quality papers and numbers of readers accelerated over the years as the journals atrophied and died.

Your journal, AJLAIS, has managed to avoid virtually all of the pitfalls enumerated above. It has a proven, hardworking Editor-in-Chief, assisted by a competent Editorial Board; its title is sufficiently broad to attract manuscripts from all aspects of the profession; and it adopts a refereeing policy designed to ensure that poor papers will be weeded out and only the good ones will be published. Above all, AJLAIS is the first African journal in our field which cuts across national titles that are invariably too small to be sustained indefinitely, with the possible exception of one or two Nigerian and South African titles.

Let me make a few predictions, on the basis of what I have just said: (1) AJLAIS will have to go quarterly sooner than later; (2) The success of AJLAIS will lead to the founding of other neutral, more narrowly-focussed, high quality African titles; and (3) The cumulative expertise of AJLAIS will be expected to play a significant role in the founding and sustainability of such new titles. That seems to be the only logical way forward as Africa strives to become a significant player in the emerging global information society.

There are too few textbooks in the information profession that are devoted to the African setting. How do you think this problem could be solved?

Textbook writing is a long and tasking business. No author would like to embark upon it unless he had some assurance of a reasonable return on his investment of time, money, physical and mental energies. No publisher would touch a manuscript which can sell only a few hundred copies, unless the enterprise were heavily subsidized.

The truth of the matter is that the market for textbooks on library and information science is a relatively small one in every African country. If, however, an author or publisher were guaranteed the entire African market, then it begins to make econo-

mic sense. We will have to push for such a development, and this is one of the programme objectives of CASIS. Gradually, as the stature and public perception of our profession improves, the day will soon come when Library Studies and/or Information Science becomes a subject at the secondary or even primary level of African education. Then, textbook writing and publishing in our field will enjoy as lucrative a boom as we have witnessed in the older disciplines taught in primary and secondary schools. Until then, however, we will have to do more to pool our meagre resources to publish textbooks for readers at the tertiary level all over Africa.

What is your vision for the information profession in Africa?

All the signals point to the fact of the exponential growth of information as a tradeable commodity and the exciting implications. Thus, information, as a product, as a profession, and as a discipline will constitute the global industry of the 21st century and beyond. Africa contributes less than one percent of the industry as we approach the end of the second millennium. We cannot, must not, allow a perpetuation of the current situation! We must all work hard to attract a continuous stream of brilliant, young men and women, from all possible subject backgrounds, to inject greater dynamism and new insights into our profession. We need to evolve a more positively aggressive posture, based on sound and relevant knowledge, in order to stop the continuing marginalization of our calling in vast areas of African public affairs, and of Africa in the increasingly lucrative world of information.

Specifically, my vision for the information profession in Africa could be summarized as follows:

"The recognition, at every political, economic and social level of African societies, that investments in, and use of, appropriate data and information is at the heart of every aspect of Africa's development priorities".

I am convinced that the evolution of an information-conscious African society will become a reality only if every member of our profession, at whatever level, in whatever specialization, and in whichever African country, is prepared for the hard work and single-minded determination to make the relevance of our calling rank among those at the apex of the professions commonly associated with the socio-economic development of our continent.

(Interview recorded in November, 1993)

PROFESSIONAL NEWS AND EVENTS

NEWS

Healthnet in Botswana

Healthnet, a satellite based net work enabling communications of health related information between health professionals in Africa and the rest of the world is soon to be installed in Botswana. The healthnet ground station will be located at the University of Botswana. Linked by a "store and forward" satellite which transmits information between the various ground stations, healthnet provides access not only to current biomedical literature but also enables medical workers and researchers to communicate with each other. The Healthnet project is being co-ordinated by the Department of Library and Information Studies, University of Botswana. The project involves the Medical and Dental Association of Botswana and other relevant organisations.

(Culled from Information Trends and Newsletter, Vol.1, No. 1 1993.)

COMLA is 21

The Commonwealth Library Association (COMLA) celebrated its 21st Anniversary last November. It will be recalled that the first inaugural Meeting of the Association was held in Lagos, Nigeria in November, 1972.

Swaziland Library Association is Ten

The Swaziland Library Association (SWALA) will be celebrating its tenth anniversary on 4 June, 1994. According to the Chairperson, Nomsa Victoria Mkhwanazi, a conference workshop will be organised from 30 May – June 3 1994. The theme of the workshop is "Marketing and Public Relations".

Raseroka is the New IFLA (Africa) Boss

Mrs. H. Kay Raseroka, the University Librarian of the University of Botswana is the new Chairperson of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (Africa Section). She was elected at the last IFLA meeting held in Barcelona, Spain. She succeeds Mr. Gboyega Banjo of Nigeria. We wish Mrs. Raseroka a fruitful tenure.

FORTHCOMING INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES, SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS

May 16 – 20, 1994 Pretoria, South Africa. Info Africa Nova Conference. Theme: Innovation : Relevant Information Services for Sustainable Development of Southern Africa. The sub-themes are : Library and Information Services for Southern Africa, Information Technology, School Library/Media Centres, Community Information/Resource Centres, Human Resource/Education and Training, Publishing and Regional

and International Activities. For further information contact : Trudie Coetzer, P.O. Box 4649, Pretoria 0001 South Africa.

September 25 - 29, 1995 La Habana, Cuba. International Congress of Information. Theme: Information: A Factor for Success in Human Development. For further Information contact: President of the Organising Committee, *Internacional de Information* Apt. Postal 2019, Codigo Postal 10200 La Habana, Cuba.

REPORTS OF CONFERENCES, BOOK FAIRS, SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS

Zimbabwe International Book Fair, Harare, Zimbabwe 3-7 August, 1993. The theme of the Fair was "Reading is Development". There were 150 exhibitors representing 250 publishers from 35 countries including 20 African countries. The fair was well attended by librarians, book sellers and authors. The editor-in-chief, of this journal, Dr. L.O. Aina was also present at the Book fair. The special feature of the Book Fair was the African Periodicals Exhibit in which 44 African scholarly journals from 13 countries were displayed. *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science* was the only information professional journal displayed.

ABSTRACTS OF SELECTED PROFESSIONAL LITERATURE PUBLISHED IN AFRICA 1992-1993.

Community Librarianship

Dube, S.R. (1992) Community Libraries: A survey of the Current Status, Extent of Development Constraints and Impact on Rural Communities. *The Zimbabwe Librarian* 24 (1 & 2) 9 - 15. The paper traces community library development in Zimbabwe from the early century when subscription libraries, which later developed to public libraries, were established by the Rhodesian settler communities for the purpose of extending the reading culture, and up to the post independent era when government decided that libraries were expected to play a major role in non-formal education. As a result of the reports of two independent consultants at various times in the early 1980s, the concept of culture houses was adopted in which a community hall, a museum, arts and crafts workshop and a library will constitute the culture house. The culture houses are expected to be built in rural districts. The first culture house was established in Murewa in 1986 and the establishment of 54 more culture houses throughout the country is in the pipeline.

JOURNAL ABSTRACTED

The Zimbabwean Librarian (Editor: Sabelo Mapasure, P.O.Box 3133, Harare, Zimbabwe)

AIMS AND SCOPE

African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science is established mainly to provide a forum for librarians, archivists, documentalists, information scientists and other information related professionals in Africa to report their research findings but with emphasis on African setting. The Journal is refereed by distinguished scholars. Emphasis is on empirical research; however manuscripts of high quality on theoretical aspects of the three information related disciplines will be considered for publication.

NOTES TO CONTRIBUTORS

Three copies of the manuscripts typed double space on one side should be submitted. Ample margins should be provided. The title, author's name, position and place of work should appear on the first page, Subsequent pages of not more than 15, should include an informative abstract of not more than 100 words. Manuscript will be considered only if it has not been published elsewhere.

References and notes should be indicated in the text by names of authors and date of publication in brackets. The list of references should be listed at the end of the text.

References to journal articles should be in the following order: Author(s) date, title, journal's name, volume number, issue number and inclusive pagination e.g.

Mazikana, P.C. (1987) "Archives and Oral History: Overwhelming Lack of Resources" *Information Development*, 3 (1) 13 – 16.

References to books should be in the following order: Author(s), date, title, place of publication, publisher, pagination eg.

Aboyade, B. O. (1989) *The Provision of Information for Rural Development* Ibadan: Fountain Publications, 104p.

References to contributors in collected works should be in the following order: author(s), date, title of contribution, name of the editor, title of the collected works, place of publication, publisher and inclusive pagination e.g.

Neill, J. R. and Kotei, S. I. A. (1981) "Towards a National Information System for Botswana" in Inganji, Francis (ed.) *Use of Information and Documentation for Planning and Decision Making*. Gaborone : NIR, pp. 36 – 53.

No charge is made for publication. Twenty five copies of reprints of each major article will be supplied to the principal author.

Manuscripts and other editorial materials should be directed to the Editor in Chief, Dr. L. O. Aina, Department of Library and Information Studies, University of Botswana or to any member of the editorial board nearest to you.