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## Public Libraries in Africa: A Critical Assessment

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### Abstract

*The growth of public libraries in the 1960s and early 1970s was very impressive. With the economic problems of the 1980s and 1990s in most African countries, public libraries started to deteriorate. Many scholars have assessed this situation and many suggestions ranging from government role to library's own initiatives have been suggested, yet the situation is far from improving. This paper examines this situation in the light of current economic, social, political and wider international situation. Relevant issues as discussed include, the situation after independence, economic factors, influence of politics, the role of printing and the resultant effects on public library performance in Africa. Suggestions ranging from government role, change in management styles of public libraries, change in information provision strategy and the role of external and internal factors in the development of these libraries are proffered.*

### Introduction

There is a general decline of public libraries in most African countries. This decline seems to defeat the traditional role of public libraries such as the provision of educational, informational and recreational services.

Traditional supporters of public libraries such as donor agencies are also shifting their support and interests to new areas such as environment, gender support, health etc. Also there has been a low support by African countries to their public libraries due to economic decline experienced by most countries from the 1970s onwards.

On the other hand, not much effort seems to come from either the governments or the libraries themselves to redress this situation. This paper argues that there is a need for



starting deliberate and strategic plans to alleviate the situation. The paper examines this situation drawing from the 1960s when the situation of most public libraries in Africa was good compared to today. Most of these libraries were then new, in the sense that they were part and parcel of institutions which received great attention after independence. Most African countries were emerging from the colonial past and their libraries enjoyed government support especially in terms of funding. International support was also provided in the areas of funding, book and equipment donations and human resources.

### **Public Libraries: Post Independence Era**

Public library development in Africa, except to some extent South Africa and North Africa, grew as part of many other institutions before and after independence. According to Mchombu (1991) libraries received as much priority as other essential services like hospitals and schools. One of the reasons for the growth in some countries was due to nationalism as libraries were developed to educate people on the importance of independence and how to maintain it. As a result of this, libraries received very good support from both governments and from their former colonial powers.

Government assistance was made possible by the fact that, at the time of independence, these countries had enough resources to maintain their institutions including libraries. The start of national libraries and their branches throughout most areas of these countries signify this development. In countries like Tanzania, for example, adult education and Universal Primary Education (UPE) programmes started and got full support from public library movement. This situation was sustained because as noted by Mchombu (1991):

*at independence there was hope that libraries would help to spread information and advance the pace of development. It was also believed that libraries would help to achieve the best education as it was the only hope for Africa.*

However, given the circumstances such as economic crisis, deterioration of donor support etc, since independence, the situation has changed greatly and in a negative direction.

### **The Influence of Politics on the Library Development in Africa**

Libraries as custodians of information (which is important in social, political and economic decisions) have become a focus of many countries in the world. According to Usherwood (1996):

*there is assumed to be a direct relationship between the political process and the information needs of civilians and ... at times, the public library has been seen and used as political instrument for political and social*



*change...Lenin put forward and grounded the principle of partisanship of libraries of their active participation in carrying out socialist transformation.*

In Africa, politics and development complement each other. Since independence, the policies of politicians have had either adverse or positive development on many institutions. This has been essentially so especially when it comes to distribution of resources. In many instances, such distribution is not based on sustainable and equitable growth, but rather on political interests of the government in power. At independence, public library development in most African countries was influenced to a large extent by political decisions rather than national plans or priorities. As a result of this, and coupled with resource availability at that time, there was reasonable growth of libraries in Africa. As pointed out by Neill, Havard-Williams and Mchombu (1992), this situation was possible:

*despite competition with other obvious and pressing concerns, legislations were enacted soon after independence in the majority of countries committing governments to a free public library service...unfortunately the services that developed failed to meet the expectations and match the information needs of Africa and its people ...apathy, grudging, tolerance and charitable indulgence are the ubiquitous reactions of Africa's governments and its people to libraries, librarianship and librarians.*

However, the economic crisis and change in leadership in the 1980s and 1990s in most African countries, changed most of this situation. Assessing the situation in Tanzania and Malawi, Membrey (1989) found that:

*neither Malawi nor Tanzania national library services have had enough foreign currency to be able to buy any books from overseas for over ten years so they have been entirely reliant on donations and their own publishing industries.*

As stated earlier, less resources were available for development of libraries, while the new leadership became more preoccupied with other economic and social problems and neglected the nationalistic tendencies of their predecessors. This marked a further deterioration of public libraries in Africa. The findings from the study on the book situation in Africa by World Bank as indicated by Raseroka (1994) showed that:



*public libraries are in the decline because of lack of government commitment towards their funding. Although public libraries have an important role in formal and non-formal public educational support, they are poorly supported.*

Such findings as noted above, must also be put within a context of economic problems which resulted in the shift of few resources and priorities by the governments of the day.

### **Economic Problems Versus Public Library Deterioration in Africa**

Economic crisis of the 1980s and 1990s in Africa, did not spare public libraries. This crisis has had dual implications on public libraries in the following manner. First, the crisis was followed by a number of structural economic adjustment programmes in some countries, like Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) and Economic Structural Adjustment Programmes (ESAP). Chanetsa (1995) in her study of the impact of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme on small and medium sized special libraries in Zimbabwe found out that the area which have been most adversely affected by the programme are inflation and the depreciation of Zimbabwean dollar. She noted further that 90% of the respondents showed concern about the cut down on the purchase of library materials and equipment. Similar results to that obtained in this study are likely to be found in most African public libraries today.

One important thing to note as far as public libraries are concerned in this case is that, implementation of such programmes (ERP, ESAP, SAP) gave no special preference to the development of public libraries. Instead public libraries have been left to struggle for the few resources available like any other institution. This situation has put public libraries in a very vulnerable situation. Secondly, this situation brought changes in leaders' attitude towards public libraries and their roles. While for example, they continue to acknowledge the importance and the role of public libraries, nevertheless, this commitment was no longer interpreted into terms of resource allocation to these institutions. This situation should not wholly be blamed on the leaders of this time because, most of the economic policies, were dictated and supervised directly by donor agencies, World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). These institutions had their own priorities of development which did not necessarily include institutions like public libraries. In African countries where IMF and World Bank have not been involved directly, harsh economic realities have reduced availability of resources to their institutions, including public libraries.

### **The Role of Foreign Countries and International Agencies**

Information is crucial to development all over the world, including Africa. Public libraries were therefore earmarked from the very beginning as institutions which could



facilitate development. Foreign countries and international organizations such as United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and others have pioneered library development. In the 1970s and 1980s, the idea of linking education with national development and developing national information services was forged. Despite many efforts related to this phase, it was met with failure. Bouri (1994), referring to the case of Egypt's public libraries decline, noted the remarkable growth up to the late 1960s when

*...dominant international discourse about development shifted under the influence of dependency theory to emphasize the need for developing countries to develop from within.*

Most of these theories have failed to yield any useful results in economic development of many African countries. The failure of libraries must partly be attributed to this.

### **The Role of Publishing**

During the colonial period, publishing was not established to cater for the poor and illiterate masses. It was established to cater for a few and to publish such materials that were of interest to colonialists. This trend changed with independence as emphasis in some countries was put more on eradicating illiteracy and promoting post independence policies. There were not many indigenous publishers that could promote publishing of locally sourced materials. So, most of the publishing was done by foreign publishers. As a way out, there was much reliance on imported reading materials. According to Chavaka (1993) the history of publishing in Africa is not a glowing one. Foreign publishers who came to invest were mainly interested in profit-making rather than responding to the needs of Africans.

It was as a result of such factors that dependence was perpetuated. All purchase of library materials imported required foreign currency which continue to diminish with the economic recession of the 1980s and 1990s. The issue here is that, if indigenous African publishing sector was developed enough, it would have been able to publish local materials which would have been bought by libraries thus reducing dependence on foreign currency.

In recent years, there has been an increase in indigenous publishing. Sturges and Neill (1990) have traced this development as far back as the 1950s,

*...when a number of aspiring young authors with manuscripts in the metropolitan languages began to be published with some frequency.*



However, public libraries do not yet seem to benefit from this growth because of two factors. First, the quality of the materials in terms of printing and relevance has kept many libraries away. In view of Sturges and Neill (1990) the patterns of publishing now to be found around the continent are still broadly similar with the international publishing houses maintaining the upper hand. They retain considerable ability to determine what ought to be published and ultimately what should be read about Africa. This situation has to change if a truly, competent African publishing industry is to emerge. Second, pricing mechanism seem to work against consumers because prices are put very high to cover for high import duties imposed by government on the imported materials. The Douglas Pearce's report on Children Book Publishing problems in Tanzania (1992), for example, found out that the price of paper was very high and tax exceptions on paper for educational books is not implemented because the procedure is too cumbersome. Also, the quality of books produced in Tanzania is very poor.

As a result of such problems and many other internal factors such as purchasing power, majority of the population cannot afford to buy books even when they are produced locally. This has made the book trade in Africa very precarious at the expense of libraries and its people. Msiska (1993) sees that financial constraints on the part of citizens affect publishing because

*... the few publishing houses that are established cannot be sustained because people are poor and therefore are not able to buy books.*

There is a need for African governments to look at these two factors more critically if publishing is to succeed. The need on the part of African governments to eliminate censorship is important in the development of public libraries. This has not been the case in many countries and this has resulted in the situation noted by Sturges and Neill (1990) who insisted that:

*Africa's famine of published information, however, is not only due to poverty which makes books unavailable but it is also caused by the propensity of some African governments to suppress information.*

### **What Should Be Done By Public Libraries ?**

It is rather difficult to say exactly what public libraries should have done or what they should do to redress the situation. Many suggestions have been given in many fora on this issue. However, there is a need for short and long term plans towards development of libraries in this part of the World. Short term plans should be able to deal with current problems with the intention of arriving at proper solutions. One area which has not been addressed thoroughly, is the management ability of public libraries to cope with change. This does not mean that managers of public libraries are incompetent, but rather, what



is been implied here is the style. It is important for public libraries to engage in strategic planning which would involve a complete change of the way they have been operating. This would involve among other things, change in the management style and adaptation of short and long term planning to development. Such changes must address areas like funding, staffing, acquisition and relation with donors and government.

Public libraries in Africa have over a period of time acquainted themselves with certain style of planning and working pattern. This pattern entails same way of doing things despite changes like allocation of funds, distribution of services, staffing, collection and sources of funds. The changes being advocated here are those that will be able to take into consideration each situation as it comes. This is strategic planning. Of course such plans have been advocated previously, but their appropriate application is what is still questionable. Such planning, can define clearly how to distribute few resources available and how to reduce unnecessary costs and duplication of roles in public libraries. Although this may not solve all the problems facing public libraries, it may help in the short run. In the long run, public libraries must look at their traditional sources of funding and how to improve, change or identify new ones. Kedem (1993) advocates more cost effective/cost benefit strategies in running public libraries as this would minimize wastage and duplication and would ultimately result into better services for users.

It is apparent in the current circumstances that public libraries may not continue to rely on their own resources for providing effective services now and in the future. Cooperation with other libraries and information providers is a necessity in this era. This cooperation must however be planned with users in mind. For example, among literate users, such cooperation may involve the already existing information infrastructures such as academic libraries, documentation and information centres. Media centres, extension services agencies and any other existing facilities could combine to provide information to illiterates and rural dwellers. Sturges and Chimseu (1996) found out that in the case of Malawi, the national library services could complement the existing rural programmes and especially the extension workers to become more effective as disseminators of information.

Kruth (1994), Tawete (1995) and Foutri (1996) suggest a joint school and public library service type of cooperation. Kruth (1994) stressed that,

*...when considering transformation in library mission and delivery systems, combined school and public libraries offer an alternative and innovative model.*

Although the combined school/public library service constitutes one of the alternatives to public library problems, it creates another problem. This is because most schools in Africa do not have proper libraries and majority do not have libraries at all. Putting this



cooperation in practice would mean more pressure on public libraries resources which are already few. The implementation and success of this type of cooperation require a properly worked out survey and arrangement before actual implementation.

### Conclusion

Despite many suggestions about how to solve the problems facing public libraries in this part of the world, librarians must come out with concrete solutions which would address in particular, the current sources of funding and alternative sources of information services. Essentially, ministries responsible for public libraries must realise that public libraries are part of the education process, especially in African countries where other sources of information are hardly available or completely non-existent. Public libraries must also make use of any opportunities available from donors in supporting their libraries. For example, libraries should explore initiatives of organizations such as the International Campus Book Link (ICBL) and others to supplement their resources. Initiatives of this kind and of other international organizations, must fully be explored and used effectively.

There is also a need for changing the way public libraries have been providing information. Emphasis should now be directed towards client oriented information provision strategy. Other emerging sources of information in Africa like public and private television and radio stations must also be used. Educational radio and television programmes must be prepared jointly by libraries and the relevant mass media houses. This may also be done in collaboration with ministries responsible for education and culture. Such programmes would supplement the gap that is being created by the lack of adequate reading materials in public libraries. It would also assist in areas that public library services are not available for the mass literacy programme.

Rationalization of resources which may involve cooperation between different types of libraries in a country must also be explored. In many parts of Africa for example, academic, public, non-governmental organisations libraries and documentation centres are located within the same locality. Arrangements must be made between libraries in close proximity for the use of their resources for the public. It must be noted that conditions in many African countries since independence have changed dramatically from situation immediately after independence. Illiteracy has decreased, urbanisation has increased and people have become more aware of the importance of libraries than before. This situation has increased pressure on public libraries at a time that resources are diminishing.

With this scenario in mind, public libraries must change the way they have been operating. Public libraries must start thinking seriously about reducing unnecessary costs in their operations. Cutting in staff ratio, improvement of acquisition policies and use



of locally printed materials, are some of the areas where costs may be recovered. Arrangements must be made between publishers, printers and public libraries to produce most of their materials locally. Dependency on foreign currency may greatly be reduced this way. Acquisition of materials from outside and within the country must be rationalized to include materials in high demand only. Each library must come out with a priority list that will include the most wanted materials. Countries that are still receiving donor support of new and used materials must, where possible, request that they be given a freedom to choose what they think is relevant for them. This will reduce duplication of materials from other sources.

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## **Justification for Setting Up an Archives at the University of Zambia: Problems and Prospects**

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### **Abstract**

*This article traces the genesis of records keeping at the University of Zambia. It contends that records keeping has been neglected, especially the less active ones. The paper observes that the University does not have a clear policy on records retention and redundancy. The paper highlights some of the roles archives play and explores the possibility of setting up an Archive at the University of Zambia. It also highlights anticipated problems and challenges.*

### **Introduction**

The origin of the University of Zambia could be traced to the establishment of Lockwood Commission in 1963 by the then Northern Rhodesian government to advise on the development of a university in Zambia. In their report the Commission recommended that a university be set up and started by offering such courses as Arts and Social Sciences and later Education, Agriculture and Administration.

In January 1964, the government accepted the Commission's report and appointed a provisional council, the body charged with bringing the University into being. In July of the same year, the provisional council brought the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, a research institute with international reputation dating to 1938, under its control (UNZA, 1985). The following year, the Oppenheimer College of Social Sciences was incorporated into the university. The University of Zambia legally came into being with an Act of Parliament no. 66 of 1966. The University has since grown from the first three schools of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences and Natural Sciences. Other faculties have since been added as follows: Law (1967), Engineering (1969), Medicine (1970), Agriculture (1971), Mines (1973), Business and Industrial Studies (1978, at Ndola Campus), Environmental Studies (1981, at Ndola Campus) and Veterinary Medicine (1983). The two campuses were split into University of Zambia, taking up the Lusaka campus and the Copperbelt University taking up the Ndola campus and Zambia



Institute of Technology where the Ndola Campus was squatting.

The University of Zambia was set up with specific objectives which have been consistent over the years. According to the University's strategic plan (1993), the University's main objectives are:

- to fulfil the historical purpose of a University through the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research and scholarship;
- to advance national development through the application of teaching and research;
- to promote learning by offering opportunities for advanced education to all suitably qualified persons, without distinction of race, gender, religion or political affiliation;
- to enhance Zambia's potential to promote the goals of the wider African and international communities;
- to marshal and efficiently manage the necessary resources.

The University records reflect the University's efforts and activities as it endeavours to meet the above objectives. Competent handling, classification, and filing of official records is the foundation of any efficient organisation. Officers in any organisation at all levels require that records relating to their duties are available to them when they are wanted. The authorities recognised this in the University Act section 10(2) of 1992 when it stated that:

*The registrar shall be responsible for the custody of the seal of the Council and records of the property of the University (GRZ, 1992)*

For this reason the Central Registry directly falls under the office of the Registrar, through the Assistant Registrar (Administration).

The Central Registry is being administered by a senior administrative officer. There are other various registries in the University which fall under the various schools, departments, and divisions which are not directly administered by the Central Registry. This has led to some carelessness in the handling of records as standards fall away as one moves from the Central Registry. It is for this reason that the records system in the university is so important that if not properly managed the memory of what has been done and what the University intend to do can be lost to present and future generations.



### **A Brief Historical Background of the University of Zambia's Central Registry**

There is very scanty literature on the University of Zambia record keeping and the central registry, the department that is in charge of keeping the University records.

In the circumstances one relies on physical evidence and personal accounts from the people who have worked there before and are working there now. The author sought for permission from the registrar's office to interview registry personnel especially those who have worked for the registry since inception. The author has also checked physically the information given with the various authorities on the registry.

The Central Registry was established at the inception of the university in 1966. Initially it was situated in what is now the Information Centre or Public Relations department of the University of Zambia. In 1982 it was moved to a back room in the School of Education which has since been turned into part of the UNZA Press. It operated from there for some time until 1996 when the bulk of the records in the central registry found themselves in the open behind the old lecture theatre. For about three months or so the registry operated under a tree. These records were then moved into one of the basement rooms in the lecture theatre building.

Since then, the registry offices have been scattered due to lack of office space. Some of the records especially the inactive ones are packed in a container at the transport yard. The physical condition of the records leaves much to be desired. However the central administration is trying to relocate the various parts of the central registry in one central place.

### **The Role of the Central Registry in the University**

The registry is the nerve centre for receipt, classification, and circulation of all correspondence and records in the University. Every organisation, however large or small, needs to retain its letters, invoices, reports, wage sheets, circulars, statistics, cheques, vouchers, tax records, price lists, personnel records, contracts and other vital records reflecting the activities of the organisation.

The role of the Central Registry is to supply officers who need information with relevant facts and figures to enable them make right and informed decisions. Basic functions of the University of Zambia registry system are;



- classify, record and file incoming mail
- maintain University records
- pass on files for appropriate action
- receive, record and pass files circulating between officers
- circulate files as appropriately required (UNZA, 1977)

In organising its records for storage and retrieval, the Central Registry uses a number of filing systems. But the main system used is the alpha- numerical filing system. The central registry uses the first name of the file and a number allocation. Subject files are according to school /department/units and then placed in alphabetical order. Confidential files and open files are filed using service numbers. These filing systems have index books that are irregularly updated .

As stated above, the Central Registry does not directly manage all the registry systems in the University. This has created problems as records are not properly managed. This is because staff of registry cadres in most cases are not properly trained in registry work. There is also lack of proper records disposal for dead or redundant files.

There are a number of factors the University Central Registry usually considers when deciding to retire a document from active service. These include :

- Space limits
- Frequency of reference
- Legal requirements

Because of inadequate space, invoices could be kept for at least six years and then destroyed. For frequency of reference, the minimum is six years but contracts under seal are to be kept for twelve years. The University decides on the retention period depending on the importance and frequency of use of the files.

Since inception, the Central Registry has not destroyed files or documents and it has made no definite plans to deal with the increasing number of files and documents that are getting redundant. In the meantime the Central Registry has stored documents from 1966 to 1985 in a storage container that is not suitable for preserving such records . This is the main thrust of this paper; the lack of concern for university records and the lack of proper policy as regards records management.

### **The Need for a University Archives**

R. Schellenberg(1956) defines archives as those records of any public or private institution which are adjudged worth of permanent preservation for reference and research purposes and which have been deposited in an archival institution. While Maher (1992)



defines a University Archive as:

*...a program consisting of policy, personnel, holdings, and facilities structured to preserve and make accessible the documentary heritage of an institution of higher education. The documents are handled in a systematic way based on archival theory and technique.*

Others may argue that archives are just old pieces of documents which add nothing to the well-being of the university. The money that could be spent on setting up and maintaining the program is a waste of resources. Contrary to this belief, archives do aid institutions in their survival and growth, especially by making sure that institutions roots in the past, are not severed. At the same time, academic archives contribute to the institution's educational mission by enriching the lives of the campus community. The archives support teaching, learning and assist scholars and general public to understand and explain the past.

Indeed archives are documents that are no longer active and are rarely referred to, in day to day operations of the organisation. But this is not to imply that these documents should be discarded or misplaced as if they are of no value to the organisation.

The University of Zambia has a lot of property and land in and around Lusaka. Most of the transactions concerning this property and land are among old records that are rarely used but could be handy one day in case of a land dispute. The Kalinga linga community on the southern border with the University is slowly crawling on and taking up University land and if records which show the extent of University land on the southern border are not properly kept in the next fifty years, it will be difficult to tell where Kalinga linga ends and the University begins.

The University has closed a number of departments and programmes since 1990. In future they might need to re-open these and would need to revisit their operational structure and other operational information. This paper has in mind programmes like: Diploma in Librarianship, the Directorate of Human Relations and the Directorate of Rural Development Research. A properly maintained archives will make it easy to answer questions about staff appointment, pension right, building plans, university property and job/contract evaluation.

Some records document the monetary value of property held, the receipt of or disbursement of funds, or the delivery of goods or services in exchange for funds. These records have fiscal value if they are necessary to account for property, receipts and expenditure and if they permit later audits to demonstrate that funds were actually disbursed properly, transactions were made in an orderly way and services were actually rendered.



Under the circumstances it is imperative that the University, as a matter of urgency sets up an archives. But before it does so, it needs to answer the following questions: what will be the mission of this archive, who will use it, how is it going to be managed and housed?

### Suggestions for Managing University of Zambia Archives

1. *Mission statement* As Maher (1992) says, *the first and most fundamental element of a university archive is a clear statement of its purpose*. From the University's mission statement already noted above, the purpose of the university archive would be

- to appraise, collect, organise, describe, make available and preserve records of historical, legal, fiscal and administrative value to the university
- to provide adequate facilities for the retention and preservation of such records
- to provide information services that will assist the operations of the university
- to serve as a learning laboratory for the Department of Library and Information Studies, especially to the students doing Records Management and Archives Administration courses
- to serve researchers and scholars
- to promote knowledge and understanding of the origins, aims, programs and goals of the University of Zambia
- to facilitate efficient records management in the institution

2. *Official Designation* After the mission statement is clearly spelt out, what constitute an archive should be properly defined. As indicated above, the archive is not only the records but should be -- *a program consisting of policy, personnel, holding and facilities structured to preserve and make accessible the documentary evidence of an institution* -- So there should be a clear statement on what records, personnel, structures and facilities constitute the university archives.

The following should constitute the University Archives

- the University archivist and personnel under him/her
- the building housing the records
- the University records that have been so deemed as deserving to be kept in perpetuity



- the equipment meant for use either in the preservation or management of the records so deemed as archives
- any other facility, process affiliated to the archives meant to facilitate the preservation of University documents.

This statement should, if possible, be in the University Act or should be a decision passed by the University Council.

3. *Users* the statement should clearly define who should use the Archives, how it should be used and when it should be used. This can be derived from the mission statement of the archive. It is important to define the users to avoid future problems that usually affect institutions with an open door policy. Problems that can be expected range from deliberate sabotage, pilfering, mutilation, greasing, wearing out and abuse of facilities.

With the current financial problems the university may not be able to set up its own archives. Thus, the University is left, for the time being, with two viable options: *collaboration with the National Archives of Zambia*. This institution has been in existence since 1938. The policy of the National Archives of Zambia, as a national institution, is to be as much as possible a memory of the nation. It accepts records from all institutions in Zambia, especially those funded or grant aided by government. Over the years it has developed a tradition and expertise in records keeping and Archives management; or *the University* could have an arrangement with the National Archives. But unfortunately, as pointed above, the University does not have a policy to deal with the problem, hence the present situation.

Since 1990, the National Archives has been building a bigger structure to accommodate the increased volume of records than previously anticipated. It is hoped that funds permitting, this new facility will be ready for occupation within next year. Despite this development, the National Archives does not have the capacity to take additional records in the foreseeable future. This is because of the avalanche of records mainly from the liquidated and privatised companies.

Since the National Archives has no capacity to deal with all the institutional records covered in the categories above, it encourages institutions to set up their own archives and records centres. The Bank of Zambia, Zambia National Provident Fund, Zambia National Building Society and Zambia Telecommunications Company are some of the institutions which have since set up their own archives.

However, before an institution sets up an archive, it has to get authorisation from the National Archives, who by law are mandated to inspect, regulate and approve the management of archives in the country. If satisfied with the structure and furniture, the



National Archives then makes recommendations to the Minister of Home Affairs (the parent ministry for National Archives) to gazette the place as a place of deposit.

2. *Another alternative is for the University of Zambia Library* to incorporate archives into its activities. The main Library at the University of Zambia has a section called special collection section. This section collects, keeps and, manages government publications, publications by Zambians, publications on most of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) countries and publications on the University Community. The special Collection can be adjusted, with minor costs, by annexing adjacent rooms in the basement which belong to the Library but being used by other departments.

The concentrated stack area has the basic storage equipment that could be shared in the event that the University used the library option.

The Library also has, among its staff, some members who did archives administration and records management at undergraduate and diploma levels. These would need minimum training and job orientation and can form the core staff in the archives program.

This paper advises that the University Archives be set up within the University because the National Archives at the moment lacks the capacity (both human and infrastructural) to handle the documents it should have been handling.

## Conclusion

Proposing and implementing a project of this magnitude meets a lot of problems and challenges. In an environment and institution like the University of Zambia, one should expect resistance to the idea. The following though not conclusive are some of the anticipated hurdles.

*Administrative* At the moment the bulk of the records in the University are scattered under the Registrar's department through various schools and departments and the storage container at the transport yard while some records are in the library. But as the law stands now the office that is charged with the management of University records and property is the office of the Registrar. So, legally the Archives should be under the Registrar and the University Archivist should be reporting to the Deputy Registrar (Administration).

The University is automating functions in all departments. This would minimise paper inter office communication. The University is now encouraging more reliance on e-mail, telephones and other forms of inter office communication. This is a challenge to the archives program for there is less justification now for paper records and much less for paper archives.



However, it should be agreed that with the available technology, not all records in the University can be kept electronically. This is due to various reasons some of which were advanced above. Moreover, information kept in electronic form, with the available technology, poses some operational and utility problems. Computer hardware and software quickly become obsolete. There is danger that information kept in this form might not be readily accessible in future. It's vulnerability to shocks and mechanical damage mitigate against the use of this technology to keep important records in this form at the moment. The solution to this problem as Choongo (1996) shows, in the case of Zambia Privatisation Agency, is to have a policy that every important document made electronically should have a hard copy kept for archives until the University acquires appropriate computer technology to permanently archive information in electronic format.

*Selection and organisation of materials* The University's records have not been properly managed for some time. It has been fragmented in schools and departments most of which have no trained personnel in registry work. Due to lack of policy on retention and redundancy, these records are just packed in one small store room and others in the container. This poses organisational problems in harmonising the records system. Furthermore selection of records for retention would prove to be long, painstaking and complicated due to lack of policy on how and what should have been retired and retained.

The main thrust of this article was that the university has existed for about thirty one years now along with the central registry which has not got the attention it deserves in spite of the important role it plays in the university. The registry has been moved too often which has now ended up being fragmented with some documents being placed in a storeroom that is not suitable for keeping records.

The idea of archives in the University is not even on the drawing board and is not a priority at the moment. With the advent of computerisation and Internet the authorities are not concerned with this idea.

However the Archives program is very important and whatever choices the University makes, it has to take into account setting up a permanent program. This program if done will also solve the management of active records which have been neglected. This paper suggests that the University can cheaply convert some part of the Library structure and staff to the Archives program at minimal cost. However, the running of the Archives should fall under the office of the Registrar who is the custodian of University records.



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#### Abstract

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*These claims in the light of facilities available to the librarian and the teaching staff and concludes that educational preparation rather than the above claims is the root cause of the problem. The paper further seeks to establish the way forward for these librarians caught in the "publish or perish" web.*

#### Introduction

Technically, the 1993 Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASU) (Nigeria) Federal Government's agreement which gave librarians in Nigerian universities the right to enjoy the same privileges with their faculty counterparts brought to an end decades of struggle by librarians in the universities and other higher educational institutions for academic status. Some colleagues would therefore disagree with a view of the kind, the necessity for re-visiting what they would call "an over-beaten track", as of now a not-issuance. To confirm their assertion, the more faculty and research oriented colleagues would quickly draw the students' attention to a recently published news item in the *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science* and report that if librarians were not academics what with such news headline:

*Another University Librarian becomes Professor - Mr. John Nkwana, Director of Library Services at the University of Tanzania has been appointed a professor at the University of Tanzania. He is the second Librarian to be appointed a professor. It will be recalled that*



## **Publications Output of Librarians: The Search for Alternative Justification**

**Adakole Ochai**

and

**Peter S. Nedosa**

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*Jos, Nigeria*

### **Abstract**

*Caught by the "publish or perish" syndrome in our universities, librarians have rationalized on inflexible work hours, lack of time, dedication to duty, heavy workload, among others, to justify their relatively low publications output. The paper examines these claims in the light of facilities available to both the librarian and the teaching staff and concludes that educational preparation rather than the above claims is the root cause of the problem. The paper further seeks to establish the way forward for those librarians caught in the "publish or perish" web.*

### **Introduction**

Technically, the 1993 Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)/Nigeria Federal Government's agreement which gave librarians in Nigerian universities the right to enjoy the same privileges with their faculty counterparts brought to an end decades of struggle by librarians in the universities and other higher educational institutions for academic status. Some colleagues would therefore dismiss with a wave of the hand, the necessity for re-visiting what they would call "an over-beaten track", as of now a non-issue. To confirm their assertion, the more resourceful and research oriented colleagues would quickly draw the authors' attention to a recently published news item in the *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science* and argue that if Librarians were not academics what with such news headline:

*Another University Librarian becomes Professor ...Mr. John Nawa, Director of Library Services at the University of Tanzania has been appointed a professor at the University of Tanzania. He is the second Librarian to be appointed a professor... It will be recalled that*



*Professor Lundu of Copperbelt University Library, Kitwe, Zambia was appointed in 1995 (AJLAIS, 1996).*

That librarians in the universities are generally regarded as academics is therefore no longer in doubt. What is however not so certain is their ability to demonstrate, and in fact, convince the academic community in which they operate the justification for the academic status so accorded them by way of research and publications. One does not need to go very far in seeking answers to librarians' academic status question. "By their fruits you know them", says the scriptures. The fruits of research and scholarship are new knowledge or facts and these are disseminated to the academic community through publications and seminars among others. It would follow that the academic would have to show a substantial evidence of sustained productive scholarship to be so regarded. Do librarians have such track records? If no, could one seriously accept some of the arguments always advanced by librarians to support their shortcomings?

The authors' combined experiences in a number of university libraries in Nigeria have shown that librarians have always "wobbled" through promotion exercises to get to their next grade. The whole scene has been shrouded in inconsistencies, uncertainties and even confusion. While in some of the institutions, librarians are regarded as administrators and their performances measured by the criteria used in measuring administrators, in some other cases they are academics and are so measured in terms of the quantity and quality of publications output.

The application of the publications criteria on librarians is premeditated on some assumptions namely:

- i. that librarians are academics
- ii. that as academics the necessary facilities for research are open to them
- iii. that librarians have the training, competence and discipline for research.

#### **The Problem**

In university environments the world over, recognition and advancement of an individual academic staff rests largely on the quality and often, the quantity of his research output in form of books, journal articles, technical reports etc. The emphasis on research is such that the faculty career tends to depend more on it than on the quality of professional duties. The typical faculty member's attitude towards librarians have been something like, "since they say they are academics, librarians would have to be measured with the same parameters that are used for assessing other academics for promotion", a stand that is becoming increasingly popular in Nigerian universities. This is evidenced by the insistence, in some cases, by the various appraisal or promotion



committees that librarians as academics require a Ph.D to advance beyond certain salary grade levels, and a prescribed number of publications to be able to advance on the academic ladder. Publications would also have to be sent for external assessment to enable librarians gain promotion to the rank of a deputy university librarian and above.

In many instances librarians fall victims of such policies either because their total publications output fall short of the prescribed number or they have not acquired a higher qualification. It is common knowledge that some librarians have stayed on one position for upwards of ten years because of their inability to meet these criteria. Unfortunately, this is happening at a time when librarians are under pressure, just as their teaching counterparts, to prove their worth by doing research to justify their academic status. Librarians have consistently found an alibi for their deficiencies in publications output.

The question is: how authentic are these claims? Should academia be defined in less rigorous sense so as to accommodate librarians who do not show any evidence of research and publications? Can there not be found reasons to support these excuses other than the usual lack of time, working conditions etc that are always advanced?

The issue is not whether librarians have problems peculiar to them which impede their progress towards meeting their institutional requirements for publications, but rather whether these claims are excusable given the facilities available to them. After all, who says the teaching staff whose publications output is generally higher than that of the librarian does not have similar problems?

Are librarians hiding behind a "smoke-screen" to cover up their inadequacies? Why are they not seeking beyond these often orchestrated reasons to explain away their low publications output? Has librarians' attitude towards publications got anything to do with their personality?

### **The Zeal to Publish**

The eagerness or enthusiasm to publish is an interplay of many intervening variables. While a conducive work environment may be a motivating factor, other variables such as the perception of the individual librarian as to what he thinks of his roles are equally important. So also is the individual librarian's will power to succeed and the determination not to "perish" in the academic high seas. If librarians are oblivious of the "publish or perish" syndrome in the academic world generally, the teaching faculty is not.



Could one not partly attribute the drastic differences, both in numbers of staff publishing and individual productivity between faculty and librarians to their attitude towards the "publish or perish" syndrome? The facts of the realization of the importance of research in the university environment should in itself be a motivating factor to publish. Black and Leysen (1994), put it more succinctly when they maintained that: "research often sharpens skills and broadens perspectives for the daily services provided."

According to Dwight & Repp (1992)

*Research can provide a sense of self-satisfaction that comes from communicating one's ideas to a broader audience, building an area of expertise, and receiving recognition within and outside promotion, tenure or salary allocation. It can promote strong relationships with teaching faculty... fosters a broad perspective of the field, strengthens librarian's knowledge of current issues.*

Would it not be right to say at this point that those few librarians and the teaching faculty who have taken advantage of the above facts are those that are actually publishing? This would be in line with Watsons' (1977) finding that 3.6% of his sample of librarians was responsible for 25% of the published output. It also agrees with Lotka's law of distribution of scientific publications.

On the other hand, failure to embark on research would result in stunted career movement. Do librarians need any other thing to propel them to doing research?

### Obstacles to Librarians Publications Output

We would at this point attempt to capture the main points of librarians' "defence" against their relatively low publications output. A few excerpts from the professional literature may suffice: (Black & Leysen (1994) provided three reasons.

1. There is a conflict between service to users and research expectations. If librarians are required to perform research, the quality of library service could diminish
2. Most academic librarians work under twelve months contracts, do not receive salaries equal to those of teaching faculty with the same rank, do not enjoy a flexible work day and week and are not provided with compensatory release time necessary for them to make scholarly contributions to their field.
3. Librarians working within the academic model will often ask, how am I going to accomplish all my reference work, carry out my committee assignments as expected,



and participate in the profession, and perform research when I am required to work everyday, twelve months a year?

A professional colleague provided another reason:

The teacher has a research interest and he builds this into his teaching programmes...the librarian does not have this type of opportunity. While one is in sympathy with the fortunes or misfortunes(?) of those colleagues, the point must be stressed that those reasons often cited in support of librarian's low publications output are not peculiar to them. Both the librarian and the teaching faculty have professional ethics which must be observed in the execution of their professional duties. As of now there is no empirical evidence to prove that librarians are more committed to their professional calling than the teaching academic staff. Why should it therefore be librarians and not the teaching staff who attribute their low publications output on commitment to professionalism? Even among the teaching staff are also fears that those among them who publish do so to the detriment of their teaching jobs. This was certainly the undertone of an outburst by a former Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission when he frowned at the "over-emphasis on research output at the expense of quantity and quality of teaching". He must be a very dutiful librarian who sacrifices individual promotion for professionalism.

Equally, to attribute the teacher's higher publications output to his ability to build his research interest to his teaching programmes thereby collecting data that is relevant to both teaching and publication output is to deny that research is an integral rather than a different component of librarianship. Sewell (1983) says it all when he stated that: "since research, along with other professional activities, is considered part of the job, one does not need to be released from one's duties to pursue research".

*Research must blend into a cohesive whole with each of the activities of the librarian such as reference work, committee work, participation in committee meetings.*

While one sympathises with librarians caught in the publish or perish web due to inflexible work schedule, release time, research leave among others, it must also be stressed that these are not always the case in Nigeria as librarians in majority of the university libraries enjoy sabbatical leave, research leave, utilize university research grant, and benefit from other academic allowances as their teaching counterparts. If the daily routine is so inflexible as to allow time for research, what about these other leaves mentioned above?



It would be expected that where librarians enjoy the above facilities, their publications output would be comparable to those of the teaching staff, but this is not the case. Librarians' publications output are still significantly lower than those of the teaching staff when compared. Even when publications standards in terms of quantity of papers for promotions are lowered just to accommodate them, many librarians still fall short of the requirements. The result is what we see in many of the libraries today: stagnation, frustration, disappointment and a feeling of hopelessness and helplessness among librarians. Should librarians continue to blame the system for their plight? Is it not time they searched for the panacea to these problems? The enemy, we believe, is the librarian himself.

### **Possible Factors Affecting Librarians' Publications Output**

The present authors are of the opinion that the genesis of the librarians' low publications output may be found in his educational preparation. Quite often people have entered librarianship with hardly any academic background beyond undergraduate diploma, while others became librarians after the acquisition of a first degree. In either case majority do not advance beyond the acquisition of a masters degree. It must be pointed out that the masters degree is not necessarily a research degree.

The academic faculty on the other hand, while he may have the same entry requirements with the librarian, aims at the acquisition of higher degrees particularly the doctorate degree. Whereas the attainment of higher degrees particularly at the Ph.D. level requires working knowledge of research methodology and techniques, educational preparation at the lower levels lacks this emphasis. Should this not explain the differences in publications output between librarians and the teaching staff?

In research libraries today, we need people who have been trained to question assumptions, who are able to collect data and make informed judgements (Battin, 1983). Could we honestly say that the first degree holders, who have been found, in a fairly recent study, (Ochai, 1991) to form the majority of librarians in Nigeria country have received this type of training that is essential for research and publications? Any wonder at the low-level of publications output as compared with the teaching staff, majority of who have been trained for research?

Getting published does not only depend on the writer's ability to display a considerable knowledge of the subject matter, but also his ability to interpret, using appropriate statistical tools, where applicable, the data collected. Could the predominance of the use of averages and percentages over and above other forms of statistical analysis in theses emanating from our library schools not be indicative of inadequate preparation of the products of our library schools and hence, librarians for research? Do we need to search any much further reason(s) for the inability of the librarian to research and publish?



That training in research methodology as a major factor in research and publications output is supported by research findings elsewhere. Watson's (1977) research findings indicate that there is a strong relationship between subject expertise and publications output. Thus in his survey, almost 60% of all articles published are by authors who have a subject masters or a Ph.D., or other higher degrees. Unarguably, faculty members fall within the above description more than library staff. Expectedly, those with Ph.D. degrees (who are better equipped in research methodology) publish heavily in relation to their numbers, Watson concludes.

### Which Way Forward?

If the foregoing does not clearly establish the reasons for librarians' low publications output, it points, at least, to the probable root of the problem. The authors have tried to establish that the lack of grooming in research methodology and statistical analysis at the educational level where majority of our librarians stopped is a major hindrance to publications output; that as those of our colleagues who opt for teaching and who, therefore, must necessarily acquire higher degrees in order to earn promotion are not found lacking in publications output as those working in libraries, supports the claim.

Research findings of this type recommends two possible approaches in resolving the problem. First, for those already on the job without higher degrees and therefore without knowledge of research methodology, they should make efforts to acquire them. Second, current research trends generally which tend to support intra and interdisciplinary collaborative approach to research should be encouraged among librarians. This "tutelaging" approach for the younger ones, helps to develop the requisite skills to conduct library research, gain knowledge of research methodology and statistical analysis.

On the larger scene, it brings to mind the over-beaten issue of the appropriate level of training for librarians. While the postgraduate/undergraduate level of training is not the contention here, the profession cannot run away from it very much longer if we are not to be saddled with an ever growing number of frustrated professionals due to their inability to publish in sufficient quantity/quality to earn them promotion.



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Dr. A. OCHAI



## **A Survey of the Effectiveness and Coverage of Indexing of Nigerian Publications From 1986 to 1996**

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### **Abstract**

*The article examines the coverage and effectiveness of Nigerian publications indexed within a ten year period. The authors provide a brief overview of indexing in the Nigerian environment. The article identifies the materials covered in terms of subject areas, categories of publishers - multinational and indigenous and tries to see if there are differences in the indexing of publications issued in the 1980s and 1990s. The multinational companies fared better than the indigenous ones. More science and technology publications were indexed than other subject areas. The authors implore publishers to give more attention to indexing their works so as to make the contents of their publications more accessible to readers.*

### **Introduction**

The purpose of indexing books and monographs is to make the information in them readily available to users. This would no doubt facilitate the use of the materials and reduce frustration which is associated with books which have no indexes. Indexes are compiled to aid potential users of the works and save their time in looking for information. The best book in the world owes a lot to a good index while the worst book, if it has a single good thought in it, can be kept alive by the index (Collinson 1959).

An index has been defined as a guide to the contents of a given document, book or treatise. The Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science (Rothman, 1974) defines it as:



*a systematic guide to items contained in or concept derived from a collection. These items or derived concepts are represented by entries arranged in a known or stated searchable order such as alphabetical, chronological or numerical.*

Thus, an index is an indispensable part of a book. It is also an indicator of its contents and location. The salient transferable skills (Golden, 1991) that librarians possess include the following:

- (1) knowledge of information sources and how to use them.
- (2) Information data organisation which include skills for organizing data and making them accessible to library patrons.

Cataloguing and indexing form an integral part of this. Electronic databases have become popular and standard abstracting and indexing services from a variety of sources like ERIC, Engineering Index, Readers Guide and others provide a variety of information to users in libraries and research centres.

Books require indexes to facilitate their use. Thus each book or monograph has to be indexed to assist the reader in making use of it. The study carried out by Bertrand and Cellier (1995) shows significant variation in the indexing terms chosen by several indexers to represent the same document. They found that the factors which influence the indexing were expertise in the indexing task, expertise in the use of indexing language and familiarity with the subject domain. Whatever the quality of an index, its relevance and importance to a book cannot be over emphasized. A poor or inadequate index is better than no index at all.

### **Index and Indexing: The Nigerian Environment**

Very few books are published yearly in Nigeria because of several factors. Statistics on books published is hard to come by. The economic depression has had a very adverse effect on publishing. Publishing is capital intensive and returns on capital is low compared with other sectors of the economy. A great proportion of books published are text materials mostly for primary and secondary schools. General and tertiary books are usually few. Most of these materials need indexing. But in spite of the usefulness of indexing for books and monographs in providing quick information to readers, many Nigerian publishers still regard indexing of their publications as unnecessary. Some publishers just go ahead to publish without bothering whether their readers would find their works easy to use or not. *National Bibliography of Nigeria* published by the National Library of Nigeria contains books received under the legal deposit. The last issue published was in 1987. Commenting on the status of indexing on the Nigerian



scene (Banjo 1987) made the following observation:

*It is not uncommon to find serious books without any indexes whatever. More serious cases of reference books which also have no indexes and whose table of contents are even incomplete and totally unhelpful. An example that readily comes to mind is the annual publication of the Daily Times group "Nigerian Yearbook".*

Several publications from reputable organisations like the Daily Times pay little attention to indexing their publications. A welcome development is the publication of (Akindele, 1989) *Nigerian Index to Federal Establishment Circulars 1974 to 1987*. This index is arranged alphabetically according to the title of the circulars. Circulars with similar titles published at different times are arranged chronologically. This particular index will help to reduce the problem of tracking Federal establishment circulars. While the work of Akindele would reduce the headache of users of government documents, a holistic approach to indexing each government publication would go a long way in making it more accessible to users and save their time. A tool like that of Akindele could then provide a useful guide to some of them.

Indexers are required to possess common sense, insight into the thinking and meaning of the author and power of analysis (Ugonna, 1987). They are supposed to have an orderly mind, patience and ability to work from the reader's angle. In addition, an indexer could possess the following attributes:

- i. An ability to sort and clarify
- ii. Wide general knowledge
- iii. A passion for accuracy
- iv. A good memory
- v. Ability to read rapidly
- vi. Legible handwriting.

While most of the points raised above can be relevant, the use of modern technology may render the issue of legible handwriting redundant. There is no doubt that the index is a tool, it is a sort of link between the source of information and the people who use it. This paper will focus on the indexing coverage of Nigerian publications from 1986 to 1996. *The National Bibliography of Nigeria* which is expected to ensure the bibliographic control of Nigerian publications has not been published in the last ten years.



## Methodology

A random sampling of books, monographs and documents published in Nigeria from 1986 to 1996, which were available in the University of Lagos library was carried out. Primary and secondary school texts acquired by the library which could be of research interest but which were not usually indexed were not considered in this study. The population of the locally published titles for the period is about 2500. A random sample of 170 titles was done to cover the various groups in the publishing environment. The following points were given attention in the study:

1. Identification of books, monographs and reports.
2. Subject areas covered by the publications indexed.
3. Publications by multinational and scholarly publishers.
4. Identification of difference between the works published in the late 1980s and the early 1990s.
5. Publications by indigenous publishers.

## Results and Findings

Table 1: Books Monographs and Technical Reports Indexed

| Type                                  | Total | Titles Indexed | Not Indexed | % Indexed | % Not Indexed |
|---------------------------------------|-------|----------------|-------------|-----------|---------------|
| Books                                 | 130   | 80             | 50          | 62        | 38            |
| Monographs                            | 17    | 11             | 6           | 65        | 35            |
| Technical reports & Govt. Publication | 23    | 5              | 18          | 22        | 78            |
| Total                                 | 170   | 96             | 74          | 48        | 52            |

A total of 170 publications were covered in the study, 62% of these were indexed while 38% were not. For monographs, 65% were indexed while 35% were not. Technical reports and government publications score the lowest percentage for materials indexed. Only 48% were indexed.



Table 2: Publications By Subject

| Subject           | No. of Titles | Indexed | Not Indexed | % Indexed | % Not Indexed |
|-------------------|---------------|---------|-------------|-----------|---------------|
| Science & Tech.   | 18            | 13      | 5           | 72        | 28            |
| Humanities        | 43            | 22      | 21          | 51        | 49            |
| Social Sciences   | 69            | 35      | 34          | 51        | 49            |
| Education         | 17            | 9       | 8           | 53        | 47            |
| Law               | 11            | 6       | 5           | 55        | 45            |
| Medicine          | 3             | 2       | 1           | 67        | 33            |
| General Reference | 9             | 1       | 8           | 10        | 90            |
| Total             | 170           | 88      | 82          | 52        | 48            |

More science and technology publications were indexed than other subjects. General and reference works scored lowest.

Table 3: Publications by Multinational and Scholarly publishers

| Publishers         | No. of titles | Indexed | Not Indexed | % Indexed | % Not Indexed |
|--------------------|---------------|---------|-------------|-----------|---------------|
| University Presses | 16            | 9       | 7           | 56        | 44            |
| Spectrum           | 10            | 7       | 3           | 70        | 30            |
| Heinemann          | 24            | 20      | 4           | 83        | 17            |
| Others             | 9             | 2       | 7           | 22        | 78            |
| Total              | 59            | 38      | 21          | 64        | 36            |



There seems to be great awareness on the part of the multinational and scholarly publishers to index their publications. About 72% of their works were indexed while less than one quarter were left without index.

Table 4: Publications issued in the 1980's

| Total No of titles | Indexed | Not Indexed | % Indexed | % No Indexed |
|--------------------|---------|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| 45                 | 15      | 30          | 33        | 67           |

Only thirty three percent of the publications of the 1980s covered in the study were indexed; a great majority of the works were without index. There seems to be more awareness about indexing publications during the 1990s as about 52% of the publications were indexed. This contrasts sharply with those of the 1980s when only 33% were indexed.

Table 5 :Publications issued in the 1990s

| Total No. of Titles | Indexed | Not Indexed | % Indexed | % Not Indexed |
|---------------------|---------|-------------|-----------|---------------|
| 125                 | 65      | 60          | 52        | 48            |

Table 6: Publications by Indigenous Publishers

| Publishers  | Total | Indexed | Not Indexed | % Indexed | % Not Indexed |
|-------------|-------|---------|-------------|-----------|---------------|
| Joja        | 11    | 2       | 9           | 18        | 82            |
| African Fep | 4     | 2       | 2           | 50        | 50            |
| Agbo Areo   | 4     | 3       | 1           | 75        | 25            |
| Others      | 67    | 39      | 28          | 58        | 42            |
| Total       | 86    | 46      | 40          | 49        | 51            |



The findings show that Joja, an educational publishing company performed poorly with regards to the indexing of their publications. African FEP did better than the others. Other publishers produced over fifty per cent of the publications. These are author/publishers. This group performed better in indexing their publications. Some of the author/publishers were aware of the importance of the index to their publications so more than half provided this.

### Conclusion

Indexes provide a guide to the contents of texts, monographs and articles. The multinational and scholarly publishers have tried to live up to expectation by ensuring that most of their publications were indexed. They have developed a culture of providing index to their publications which all Nigerian publishers should emulate. Books and monographs received more attention according to the findings of this study than technical reports and government publications. Less than 25% of the technical reports and government publications were indexed. For subjects covered in the study, science and technology, humanities, social sciences, education, law and medicine scored over fifty per cent for the works indexed while general and reference publications performed poorly. Multinational and scholarly publishers performed fairly well with about 72% of their publications indexed. This may be due to the sophistication of their readers.

As far as publications issued in the 1980s were concerned only 33% of those covered in this study were indexed. This contrasts sharply with those issued in the 1990s where over fifty per cent were indexed. Indigenous or local publishers with no foreign links performed poorly. Joja an educational outfit scored only 18%. Author/publishers among the indigenous publishers scored 50% for works indexed. This may be due to the awareness by the individual authors of the importance of indexes.

There is need to emphasise this even in library schools to trainees. There is need to emphasise this to booksellers and the publishers so that their authors can communicate with their readers with relative ease. The need for comprehensive and carefully prepared indexes cannot be over-emphasised.



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## **Author and Journal Citation Patterns of Agricultural Communication Researchers at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria.**

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### **Abstract**

*This paper examined the author and journal citation patterns of theses on agricultural communication at the Department of Agricultural Extension Services, University of Ibadan. The bibliographical references of 37 theses were examined and authors of cited references were classified into two viz - Nigerian and non-Nigerian authors. Journals cited were categorised into three - national, regional and international journals. The citation analysis indicated a very significant difference in the citation of national and non-national authors. Non Nigerian authors were cited more than Nigerian authors. The study also revealed no significant difference between the citation of regional and international journal sources, but a very significant difference when compared with the citation of national journal sources.*

### **Introduction**

Journals are perhaps the most current vehicles of new ideas, knowledge and breakthrough in scientific development. As primary sources of information, they are popular with researchers and scholars. Journal sources are most likely the first to be consulted by the scientist or scholar who is eager to know contemporary trends in his or her areas of research interest. They are also the ready channels that scientists and scholars use in the communication of their findings. In dealing with the records of



human communications Rawski (1971) suggests two levels - the subject and meta levels. While the subject level focuses on ideas, concepts and terminologies of the subject field, the meta level's domain is the conventional structure and processes of that field's records, including such aspects as their physical format, language and bibliographical apparatus. According to Donolve (1973) the physical correlate and literature statics consist of studies pertaining to literature authorship while literature dynamic studies changes in literature over time. If both literature statics and physical correlate pertain to literature authorship, then national authorship as it is used in this paper delineates cited publications which are authored by Nigerians while non-national authorship describes cited publications which are authored by non-Nigerians. In the context of this paper, national journals are those which mainly focus on Nigeria. Regional journals are those which cover a sub-region or a continent and international. International journals are those which cut across national and regional boundaries.

Lancaster et al (1990) suggest that the place of publication could exert some influence on citation behaviour. According to them scientists are more likely to cite domestic sources when publishing in national journals than when doing so in international journals. Garfield and Welljam-Dorof (1990) indicate in their study of Latin American researchers, an obvious pattern of high national self-citation. Liu (1993) reviews the complexities of citation practice. Liu (1997) further dichotomises citation studies into the normative and microscopic schools of thought. While the microscopic perspective views citation as a complex process, the normative school sees citation as a *merit-granting process* and therefore citation can be employed as quality indicators for evaluating the influence of an individual researcher, academic institution, or publication. Lawani (1976) agrees with the normative school that a method of evaluating the quality of a given publication, the work of a researcher or groups of researchers based on citation analysis is gradually gaining ground. According to him, to assess the quality of a given publication, the number of times the paper is cited is counted and the quality of an author's work is determined by the number of times he is cited. But why some publications or authors are cited more than others still appears unsubstantiated by empirical research evidence. Hooten (1991) contends that not even frequently cited authors could say why people cite some of their works more than others. Aina (1993) compares the author characteristics of local and foreign-based journals with reference to the periodic literature in librarianship. His study reveals no significant difference with respect to the quality between the two categories. The paper clearly shows that time citation of papers published in Nigeria is not inferior to those published in foreign-based journals. Rather papers published locally seem to have more up-to-date references than those appearing in foreign-based journals. The study therefore concludes that refereed journals published in Nigeria are not inferior to those published abroad.



### Background of the Study

In 1975, the University of Ibadan started the Department of Agricultural Extension Services. The Department was designed to make a vital contribution to the structural transformation of agriculture in Nigeria through the development and provision of adequate information, rural guidance and extension services to practising and would be farmers. Between 1975 and 1991, the Department has graduated high calibre agricultural professionals of the first, master and doctoral degree categories. However, a vital condition for graduation and award of all degrees is the submission of a project, thesis or dissertation. Hundreds of such works have been submitted to the Department since inception.

### Purpose of the Study

In the research process, the consultation of related literature becomes imperative, both to enable the researcher define appropriately the frontiers of knowledge of the field and determine whether his undertaking would add to the body of knowledge in the field or not. More importantly, this prevents the unintended replication of previous research efforts. The consultation of journal sources becomes crucial for the research scholar who wants to obtain current information on research trends in the topic of his interest. These journal sources carry information of national, regional, or international significance depending on the scope of coverage, although material contained in a national journal may sometimes be of regional or international relevance. A significant aspect of this study is to examine the researchers' journal citation emphasis with regards to the journals' geographical coverage. The other purpose of this study is to probe into the authorship of cited sources of information - whether national or non-national. The study assumed that the nationality of authorship of cited sources could be a significant factor in the research process because it could reflect (a) whether ideas that sharpened the work are more foreign than national or vice versa and (b) whether the researchers reflect a balanced understanding of diverse sources of information.

### Study Objectives

The general objective of this study was to examine the author and journal citation patterns of agricultural communication researchers at undergraduate and post-graduate levels.

Specifically, the study compared:

- (i) Nigerian and non-Nigerian authorship citation of the researchers.
- (ii) the citation patterns of national, regional and international journals.



### Hypotheses of the Study

The study was based on two fundamental hypotheses:

- (1) There is no significant difference in the agricultural communication researchers' citation of national, regional and international journals as primary sources of information in the research process.
- (2) There is no significant difference in their citation of Nigerian and non-Nigerian authors as sources of information.

### Limitation of the Study

In view of the objectives, purpose and hypotheses specifically postulated for this study, it was beyond the immediate scope of the study to explore the characteristics of the journals in terms of their place of publication, impact factor in the discipline or other citation analysis methodologies. These are hopefully grey areas for further research initiatives.

### Methodology

To generate data for the study, 37 theses were purposively selected. To qualify for selection, the thesis must

- (i) deal with agricultural communication, and
- (ii) have been submitted to the Department of Agricultural Extension, University of Ibadan between 1975 and 1991.

The theses room, the offices of the Head of Department and lecturers were visited to select theses that met the above selection criteria. Authors of all cited references were categorised into Nigerians (identified through names, institutional affiliation and titles of articles) and non-Nigerian authors. Journals were categorised into three classes - national (Nigeria), regional and international. Data generated was subjected to descriptive statistics. Analysis of variance was used to test whether there was any significant difference between means in respect of the citation of authors and journal sources by the researchers. The level of significance was further determined by Duncan Multiple Range Test of means separation.



## Results

### Agricultural Communication Researchers' Citation Patterns of National, Regional and International Journal Sources

Raw data in Table 1 indicate the citation intensity of the agricultural communication researchers with reference to national, regional and international journal sources. The mean score of 0.486 of national journal sources shows that many of the researchers (more than half) did not cite national journal sources at all.

Table 1 : Distribution of Citations according to the origin of publication

| Origin        | Frequency | Percentage | Mean   |
|---------------|-----------|------------|--------|
| National      | 18        | 7.0        | 0.486  |
| Regional      | 91        | 35.6       | 2.459  |
| International | 147       | 57.4       | 3.973  |
| Total         | 256       | 100.00     | 100.00 |

Table 2: Distribution of Nigerian and Non- Nigerian authorship of publications cited

| Nationality  | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Nigerian     | 351       | 28.8       |
| Non-Nigerian | 866       | 71.2       |
| Total        | 1217      | 100.00     |

### Determination of Level of Citation: National, Regional and International Journals as Primary Information Sources

A further analysis was made to determine the level of difference in the researchers' citation of national, regional and international journals as primary sources of information. Duncan Multiple Range of means separation was used in this regard. Table 3 shows that the researchers depended more on international and regional journals as sources of information in the communication research process and less on national journals.



Table 3: Duncan's multiple range test for level of citation of national, regional and international journals as primary sources of information to communication researchers

| Journal Source | Mean  | N  | Duncan Grouping |
|----------------|-------|----|-----------------|
| International  | 3.946 | 37 | A*              |
| Regional       | 2.486 | 37 | A*              |
| National       | 0.486 | 37 | B*              |

\*Mean with the same grouping letters are not significantly different.

Alpha = 0.05; df 107, MSE = 11.92997

#### Analysis of communication researchers' citation of national and non-national authors as information sources

The paired t-test in Table 4 indicates a significant difference in the researchers' citation pattern of Nigerian and Non-Nigerian authors.

Table 4: Paired-comparison T-test Of Citation Behavior With Reference To Nigerian And Non-Nigerian Authors Of Cited Publications

| No. of Observation | Mean Citation | Computed T | Probability T. Tabulated |
|--------------------|---------------|------------|--------------------------|
| 37                 | 14            | 3.746      | 0.0006                   |

## Discussions

### Citation of National, Regional and International Journals as Information Sources

The results in Tables 1 and 3 indicate a citation preference (by communication researchers) of international and regional journals over those journals published in Nigeria. Irvine and Martin (1985) and Murugesan and Moravcsik (1978) have also shown that there were large differences in citation behaviour based on country of journal publication. The reason for more citation of international and regional journals may be that these are published more frequently and in greater number than national ones. The danger however, is that the researchers may be more aware of agricultural



communication development outside their country than those that take place within the context of their own environment.

#### Author-Source Citation

If the researchers were to cite more national authors of publications that are published outside the country, the case could have been made that Nigerian authors failing to find enough national publication outlets decided to publish in international journals. But Tables 2 and 4 reveal a wide disparity between the Non-Nigerian and Nigerian authors of sources cited by the communication researchers. Perhaps this is an indication that agricultural communication in the country is still under-researched and under-published. It could as well mean that the researchers are not aware of relevant publications by Nigerian authors.

#### Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has utilised the meta-level approach to analyse agricultural communication researchers' citation of regional, national and international journal sources. Their citation behaviour with reference to national and non-national authors of consulted sources has also been analysed. These are the areas that this study has contributed to the body of knowledge in citation analysis.

In view of the findings of this study, there is the need to increase the research students' awareness of information sources authored by Nigerians, especially those published by the academic staff of tertiary institutions. These staff should make their own published and unpublished works available and accessible to research students. Secondly, the teaching of research methods should include detailed topics on review of related literature. Thirdly, it is recommended that supervisors of research students should provide catalytic guidance that will assist the growing researchers to consult and cite in a balanced way, relevant literature and leading Nigerian authors in the field of agricultural communication.

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MORAYO I. Atinmo



## **Information Support in the Formulation of Policies by Agricultural Policy Makers and Managers in Ghana**

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### **Abstract**

*One hundred and fifty eight agricultural policy makers and managers in Ghana were surveyed with a view to determining the level of information support in decision making process. The study revealed that information is used mainly in the areas of planning and ideas formation. Also majority of the respondents based decision on job experience rather than intuition.*

### **Introduction**

Agriculture has not only been the largest but also the most important sector in the Ghanaian economy. The sector's importance is by virtue of its contribution to several important economic variables. For the sector to continue with its leading role, there is the need to equip the policy makers and managers with the necessary information support.

Many development plans of developing countries have not succeeded because these plans were not based on relevant information. Even if the information exists it is not used or it is grossly underutilized (Kedem, 1993). Good information improves decision making, enhances efficiency and provides a competitive edge to the organisation which knows more than the competitor (Kaye, 1995). It is, therefore, imperative that policy makers and managers of agriculture in Ghana should have a solid information support base in formulating policies. An effective information support system can therefore be relied upon to increase productivity in the agricultural sector of the Ghanaian economy.

### **Policy Making and Policy Formulation**

Policy making encompasses a pattern of action that extends over time and includes many decisions, some routine and some not so routine. Rarely will a policy be synonymous with a single decision. Policy formulation in recent decades has emerged



as a subject or field of study in its own right. It constitutes more than just a study of general management principles or the functionings of the administrative process. It is the focal point and initiating force of all management activity. It is an elite function reserved to the hierarchy of management, the chief executive officers and their counterparts, who define the mission, purpose, and major objectives which direct and guide the total enterprise over a long time horizon (McNichols, 1977).

Policy making is viewed as a sequential pattern of activities or functions that can readily be distinguished analytically although they may be empirically more difficult to pull apart. These stages are: problem identification and agenda setting which focuses on how the problems that may become the targets of public policies are identified and specified; formulation which encompasses the creation, identification, or borrowing of proposed courses of actions; adoption which involves deciding which proposed alternative, including taking no action will be used to handle a problem; implementation in which attention is on what is done to carry into effect or apply adopted policies. Often further development or elaboration of policies will occur at this stage and finally, evaluation which entails activities intended to determine what a policy is accomplishing, whether it is achieving its goals, or whether it has other consequences (Anderson, 1994).

### **Objectives of Study**

The objectives were to:

- \* find out at which stage in a four-tier scale, (that is, ideas formulation/ rejection stage, the planning stage, execution stage and the evaluation stage) in policy formulation, agricultural policy makers and managers in Ghana require maximum information support;
- \* find out the extent to which information is utilized in analyzing a decision situation;
- \* find out the extent to which educational background influences the need for information support in policy formulation.

Information was to be gathered regarding:

- \* the categories and characteristics of agricultural policy makers and managers in Ghana;
- \* the extent to which information is used by policy makers and managers in analyzing a decision situation;



- \* the particular stage in policy formulation that policy makers and managers require maximum information support.

### Methodology

The study took the form of a descriptive survey and data was collected from members of the professional class of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, research staff of the agriculture-related institutes of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), and lecturers in the agriculture faculties of the universities in selected regions of the country.

Policy makers and managers of agriculture in three public sector institutions in Ghana—namely, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA), the Universities (University of Ghana and University of Science and Technology), and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) could be said to constitute the population. This is because they share a common characteristic, that is, to formulate, plan, execute/monitor and evaluate public policies for the attainment of food self-sufficiency in Ghana. Each segment of the study population identified had the following which fall within the definition given to policy makers and managers.

At the time the study was carried out there were 1201 researchers in MOFA, 235 in CSIR and 136 in the universities which gives a study population (1572), a sample figure of 158 was chosen being approximately 10% of the total population of policy makers and managers.

A questionnaire was therefore designed to collect data from 158 policy-makers and managers of agriculture in Ghana out of which 136 responded representing 86 percent response rate.

Table 1: Distribution and Response Rate by Institutions Surveyed

| Institution  | Distributed | No. Completed and Returned | % of Total | No. Not Returned | % Response | % Non Response |
|--------------|-------------|----------------------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|
| MOFA         | 121         | 99                         | 73         | 22               | 82         | 18             |
| CSIR         | 23          | 23                         | 17         | -                | 100        | -              |
| Universities | 14          | 14                         | 10         | -                | 100        | -              |
| TOTAL        | 158         | 136                        | 100        | 22               | 86         | 14             |



Table 1 indicates that the Ministry of Food and Agriculture recorded 99 respondents out of 121 representing 82% of the questionnaires to the MOFA staff. In the case of the CSIR, 23 questionnaires were retrieved representing 100% response rate. The Universities also recorded a 100% response rate as all the copies of the questionnaire distributed (14) were returned duly completed.

## Findings and Discussions

### Educational Background of Respondents

In order to establish the educational level of respondents, they were asked to indicate their highest qualification(s). Table 2 shows the highest qualifications of the respondents.

Table 2: Educational Background of Respondents

| Qualification    | Absolute Frequency | %    | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative % |
|------------------|--------------------|------|----------------------|--------------|
| PhD              | 21                 | 15.4 | 21                   | 15.4         |
| Second degree    | 69                 | 50.7 | 90                   | 66.1         |
| First degree     | 28                 | 20.6 | 118                  | 86.7         |
| Diploma & Others | 18                 | 13.2 | 136                  | 99.9         |

Table 2 is very revealing as far as the educational background of the respondents are concerned. All the four categories are fairly represented, but a greater proportion (118) had first degree and above representing 86.7% of the respondents, with only 18 respondents representing 13.2% of the total with diplomas. This result was expected because to enter into the policy making class of the institutions under study, an entrant should have at least a first degree. In fact, the CSIR and the Universities insist on a two-year researched Masters degree. The MOFA being the foremost policy making institution in the agricultural sector in Ghana also attracts a lot of high calibre staff. It is the institution that absorbs most of the trained personnel in the agricultural sector of the economy.



### Status of the Respondents

The study required respondents to indicate their job titles/designations. This was to help in the categorisation of the respondents into senior policy makers and managers and junior ones. This is reflected in table 3.

Table 3: Categorisation of Respondents by Job Title/Designation

| Job Title                                    | Frequency | %    | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative % |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------|------|----------------------|--------------|
| Assistant Agricultural Officers & Equivalent | 24        | 17.6 | 24                   | 17.6         |
| Agricultural Officer & Equivalent            | 57        | 41.9 | 81                   | 59.5         |
| Senior Agricultural Officer & Equivalent     | 22        | 16.2 | 103                  | 75.7         |
| Principal Agricultural Officer & Equivalent  | 4         | 2.9  | 107                  | 78.6         |
| Assistant Director                           | 12        | 8.8  | 119                  | 87.4         |
| Deputy Director                              | 13        | 9.6  | 132                  | 97.0         |
| Director                                     | 2         | 1.5  | 134                  | 98.5         |
| Chief Director                               | 1         | 0.7  | 135                  | 99.2         |
| Director-General                             | 1         | 0.7  | 136                  | 99.9         |

As revealed by table 3, the respondents were categorized into nine groups to reflect the analogous grades in the various organisations. These were further subdivided into middle level policy-makers and managers (Assistant Agricultural Officer - Senior Agricultural Officer) and the high level policy-makers and managers (Principal Agricultural Officer - Director-General).



### Duties and Responsibilities of Respondents

One hundred and thirty one (131) respondents representing 96.3% indicated their duties and responsibilities whilst 5 (3.7%) did not. A summary of the duties and responsibilities indicate that the respondents are engaged in teaching, research, extension activities, consultancy, policy formulation, policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation. They are also engaged in general administration and supervision of subordinate staff. They act as Advisors to government on science and technology issues, coordinators of projects and programmes and providers of advisory services to various agricultural agencies. Given the variety of tasks the respondents perform, it may be assumed that they will have to rely on a considerable amount of information in order to perform their duties efficiently.

### Information Support in Policy Formulation

The respondents were required to indicate at which stages in the formulation of policy they require maximum information support. Four stages of policy formulation were identified for the study. These included: ideas formulation/rejection stage, the planning stage, execution stage and the evaluation stage.

Policy makers in Africa recognize the need for information at every stage of the decision making process. Respondents were therefore required to rank the stages of information policy formulation at which they require maximum information support with '1' being highest and '4' being the least.

Table 4: Ranking of Maximum Information Support

| Stage                           | Absolute Frequency | %     |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|-------|
| Ideas Formation/Rejection Stage | 59                 | 31.1  |
| Planning Stage                  | 89                 | 46.8  |
| Execution/Monitoring Stage      | 22                 | 11.6  |
| Evaluation Stage                | 20                 | 10.5  |
| Total                           | 190*               | 100.0 |

\*This figure is more than 136 because computational adjustments are not reflected



A large proportion of the respondents reported that they needed maximum information at the "planning" stage (46.8%) more than at the "ideas formation" stage (31.1%) of policy formulation. The impression one gets from these findings is that though the respondents require maximum information support at all the four stages of policy formulation, the "planning" and the "ideas formation" stages were ranked higher. This finding, is similar to Nigeria where 73.4% of respondents ranked the "planning" stage of policy formulation on a four-tier scale very high (Aiyepoku, 1982). However, whilst in the Ghanaian situation "ideas formation" stage and "execution/monitoring" stage came second and third respectively, the reverse was the case in Nigeria. The important issue here is that they all attached a high premium to the "planning" stage. This is an issue that librarians and information specialists have to take very seriously in order to meet the information needs of policy-makers at this stage promptly.

#### Effect of Educational Background on the Need for Information Support in Policy Formulation

The respondents had indicated earlier on at which of a four-tier stage in policy formulation that they require maximum information support. These stages were next cross-tabulated with respondents' educational background to determine the effect of educational attainment on the need for information support at various stages of policy formulation.

Table 5: Relationship between Educational Background and the various Stages in Decision making

| Stage      | Ph.D (%) | M.Sc. (%) | B.Sc. (%) | Diploma (%) |
|------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Idea       | 71.43    | 38.24     | 42.86     | 35.29       |
| Planning   | 47.62    | 72.46     | 60.71     | 70.59       |
| Execution  | 14.29    | 19.12     | 14.81     | 11.11       |
| Evaluation | 4.76     | 17.65     | 22.22     | 5.88        |

It was established that irrespective of the educational background of respondents, "ideas formation/rejection" stage as a basis for information support in decision tasks and responsibilities was rated highly. ( $\chi^2 = 9.149$   $p > 0.05$ ). Nearly half (44.03%) of respondents ranked it higher than the other stages. However, Ph.D holders ranked "ideas formation" higher than all the others. This is exemplified by the fact that 71.4% of all Ph.D holders ranked it higher. There was no marked variation among diploma and other



certificate holders. This is an indication that irrespective of educational level, policy makers and managers attach importance to ideas formation in decision tasks.

The study revealed also that there is a strong relationship between the need for information support at the planning stage of decision tasks and one's level of education. It is significant to note that the  $\chi^2$  analysis of  $\chi^2_9 = 7.743$   $p > 0.05$  shows that irrespective of the educational background, respondents attach importance to the planning stage in decision tasks. However, out of 136 respondents surveyed, 72.46% of second degree holders and 60.71% of first degree holders ranked it highly. Curiously, only 47.62% of the Ph.D holders rated it highly. This may be due to the fact that some of the respondents may not be involved much at the planning stage in decision tasks. It is significant to note that 70.59% of the diploma and other certificate holders ranked it highly. It must be pointed out that by virtue of long service some of the diploma holders have reached the top level in their career and may be involved in planning. The conclusion which may be drawn from the above is that generally irrespective of one's educational background, information support is needed at the planning stage in decision tasks.

The respondents' educational background was cross-tabulated with their need for information support at the execution stage in decision tasks. All categories of respondents irrespective of educational background ranked information support needed at the execution stage in decision tasks low. This is an indication that they do not need much information to execute or monitor policies. This, however, is an anomaly since at execution or implementation level information is needed for the right thing to be done. People need to know how others have been able to execute decisions. The chi-square analysis demonstrated that there were no significant differences between educational background and the execution stage of decision tasks ( $\chi^2_9 = 5.945$   $p > 0.05$ ).

The implication here is that executors of tasks take it for granted that implementing decisions is easy, therefore they do not need information. Information providers, need to draw the attention of executors of decisions to the fact that information for implementing decisions is necessary and can be provided by library and information specialists.

Three-quarters of the respondents (84.96%) do not need maximum information support at the stage of evaluation. A significant feature of the data is the reduction in information need as one moves up the educational ladder. For instance, first degree (22.22%), second degree (17.65%) and Ph.D (4.76%). It can, therefore, be suggested that the higher one's educational qualification in the agricultural sector, the least information one needs at the evaluation stage of decision tasks. There is, however, a deviation from this general assertion as the diploma and other certificate holders also ranked it low (5.8%). It shows that there is no significant difference between educational qualification and information need at the evaluation stage. ( $\chi^2_9 = 10.35$   $p > 0.05$ ) Evaluation is very necessary to the policy maker. It is therefore surprising that people in high ranking policy categories and



with higher educational qualifications were disinterested in knowing about issues relating to evaluation. If everybody, in terms of categories or educational status ranked it low then obviously there is a pervasive problem. Could it be that very little premium is put on evaluation which may be the explanation for numerous failed development projects and plans over the years? Information workers have the responsibility of bringing it to the notice of policy makers the need for information at every stage of policy and decision making process.

In the light of these findings, the conclusion may be drawn that the level of education has no significant effect on the need for information for policy formulation, the only exception being the evaluation stage where the relationship is significant.

### **Information Component in Analysing a Decision Situation**

The study further analysed how policy makers and managers relate to information components in analysing a decision situation. The idea was to find out how they analyse decision situations and whether this influences them to seek relevant information sources available or otherwise.

Respondents were required to indicate whether or not as policy makers and managers they analyse every (new) decision situation as a matter of habit. A large proportion of the respondents (94.1%) indicated that they do that as a matter of habit whilst 5.9% do not. The respondents who answered that they analyse a decision situation as a matter of habit were asked to indicate how this is done. Respondents were given three possible options to choose from. In addition, they were given the opportunity to indicate other reasons not listed in the questionnaire for analysing a decision situation as a matter of habit. Respondents indicated more than one reason or response to this question. The three options were: 'resort to standard operating procedures on the job'; 'application of accumulated years of experience on the job'; and 'intuition'. The results are presented in Table 6.



Table 6: Procedures for Analysing a Decision Situation

| Procedures                                                | Total Responses | Frequency | %  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|----|
| Resort to standard operating procedures on the job        | 128             | 93        | 74 |
| Application of accumulated years of experience on the job | 128             | 103       | 80 |
| Intuitively                                               | 128             | 50        | 39 |
| Others                                                    | 128             | 21        | 16 |

The results, as depicted by Table 6 indicate that in analysing a decision situation, 80% of the respondents depend on their 'past job experience', whilst 73% 'resort to standard operating procedures on the job' and 39% use their 'intuition'. The low response given to 'intuition' in comparison with the other reasons as the basis for analysing a new decision situation is very significant. This is an indication that the respondents to a large extent depend on available information either gathered as a result of a long period of time on the job or resort to certain procedures laid down by the employers. Another implication is that respondents resort to stereotype ways of doing things. Therefore there is no innovativeness. Perhaps this may account for the low regard for information in some stages of the policy making process.

Respondents further indicated that when analysing a decision situation, they consult other colleagues and make reference to international standards (16%). Another question put to the respondents required them to indicate whether their analysis of a new decision situation leads to a clear 'identification of information sources available', 'information sources not available'; 'possible sources of action or goal of decision making'. The responses indicated that 68.4% of respondents 'identify relevant information sources available' when they analyse a new decision situation; 54.4% 'identify relevant information sources not available' and 73.5% of them 'identify alternative possible sources of action'. The results are very significant in the sense that a greater proportion of the respondents 'identify information sources' but still the information is not available for use. Again respondents look at alternatives in arriving at decision situations in formulating policies. The implication is that a great deal of information is used. Information therefore forms the basis for policy making.



## Conclusions

A number of conclusions may be drawn from the findings above:

1. Information support for policy makers and managers of agriculture was basically in the area of planning and ideas formation. It was surprising that such managers were not interested in evaluation of their programmes and their performance. The low level of support in relation to execution may stem from the fact that they are not related to a large extent with policy implementation.
2. The study found out that educational background was not in any way related to ideas formation/rejection stage for decision tasks. The conclusion drawn here is that policy makers and managers at whatever level need to formulate ideas, hence its essentiality.
3. Again policy makers and managers were interested in information related to planning rather than execution irrespective of educational background once they are in managerial positions.
4. Finally, job experience rather than intuition, was a focus for analysing decisions. This is expected as years of accumulated experience bring into play various issues and problems that had carried over the years and how they were discussed. At the same time over reliance on past experience and standard practices kills initiative. We are in a complex world with changes occurring every minute and rendering the world more complex. Thus a situation that existed a year or even a month ago may not hold true today. It is (new) information constantly sought for and given that will give rise to innovations in decision and policy formulation.

## Implications for Libraries

The findings of this study have some implications for libraries which must be brought to the notice of librarians and information scientists. The low level of regard for information at certain stages of the policy formulation process places an obligation on librarians and information specialists to be a beacon to lead people into the light. Specifically, information providers need to do more by way of impressing on policy makers and managers the essence of information at every stage of the policy making process. To this end seminars and workshops on the essence of information in policy formulation should be organized frequently by librarians and information scientists to sensitize policy makers and managers. Follow-up activities should also be undertaken to ensure that policy makers are in fact utilizing information in their work.



There is the need for policy makers to be interested in information relating to evaluation. Librarians should be able to provide access to information at the various stages of decision/policy formulation. When information is readily available and the users do not have to go to great lengths to get it, it is more likely that information may be used more often at every stage of policy formulation and implementation. This will only be possible through the provision of up to date information technology facilities.

There is also the need for policy makers to look into the future and to read about issues that cut across what they previously know. They can take advantage of the resources available on the Internet for instance. The librarian will need to be well trained in the profession to be able to provide services that will assist decision makers in their work.

Current Awareness Services and SDI services are all geared towards proactive information provision services. In other words, librarians and information scientists do not have to wait for user needs to be stated before providing information. They should provide information in anticipation of need. That way, the impact of the library or information centre may be felt more.

On a broader note, librarians and information specialists should be involved more at the highest management level of the organisation if they should be able to impress on policy makers the essence of information in policy formulation. Ideally, librarians and information scientists should be directly responsible to the Chief Executive of the organisation or institution, and the library or information centre should be a department on its own rather than a section of another department where the librarian or information scientist is responsible to the head of that department rather than to the Chief Executive. Such an arrangement will ensure that the Chief Executive is in a better position to appreciate the effects and importance of the library/information centre. That way the library/information centre may get the necessary attention it deserves.

Information/documentation centres need to be given a high profile in the activities of the organisations. This means that they should have priority status in terms of finance, human resource and equipment. This will not be achieved on a silver platter. There is therefore the need for librarians and information scientists to work efficiently such that policy makers will appreciate their contribution to the development of the organisation. Once this is done, it is more likely that the necessary support will be forthcoming.



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## **Health Information Provision to Semi-urban People in Oyo State, Nigeria: What Role for Library and Information Centres?**

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### **Abstract**

*The paper examines the health information needs of adults living in semi-urban areas of Oyo State, Nigeria. For the case study, two locations were selected from two local governments. The survey sample comprises students, artisans, farmers and salaried workers of both sexes and between the 20-45 age bracket. The survey instrument was the questionnaire. There were 179 respondents. The paper also highlights the role of health institutions, government agencies, library and information centres and their shortfalls in meeting the health information needs of the people.*

### **Introduction**

Health has been defined as a state of complete physical and mental well-being and not just the absence of disease or infirmity. Health is wealth, so every human being wants to enjoy good health. In order to enjoy good health certain precautions have to be taken by every individual just as the government also has to provide some services and facilities to the effect. Previous studies have shown that man is desirous of information on food, health, housing, prevention of diseases, drug use, hygiene, child and maternal care, family planning and other social needs.

How can people go about obtaining health information? Are there notable sources that can be consulted? Who are the information providers? Does availability of and access to information improve the health status of community members? What can be done to improve the provision of health information to the populace? The objectives of this study are to identify the health information needs of semi-urban dwellers in some parts of south-western Nigeria; to determine the role of health institutions in provision of information and to highlight the contribution of library and information centres in this regard.



### Review of the Literature

Health information includes those facts, materials or news communicated to people, which help in the attainment of complete physical, mental and social well-being. It is everyone's right. The Federal Ministry of Health (1988) and WHO have at varying times re-echoed these views. Many people need health information for survival but do not know how to obtain it. The acquisition of health related information is not easy either. A survey carried out by McDaniel et al (1995) to determine how willingly patients reveal personal health information on dental history shows that a significant number of patients provide inaccurate or incomplete information to the questions asked. Sometimes, this is due to the fact that they do not even know their problems or can not articulate their needs.

Apart from information transferred on interpersonal basis, there is the need for health information systems and network to be put in place. This is still lacking in some African countries. Reed-Fourquet et al (1994) opined that establishing a private health care network with a single entry point to the Internet should be adopted. Mitchell (1994) advocated for an information therapy for supplying patients with health information that will enable them to make informed decisions about their health and well-being and thus decrease the utilization of health care resources.

It is important to identify the health-related needs of people before appropriate information is given because the information provided may not be the required information. The information need of the individual exists in the mind of the user, it is a psychological state. It may not be completely and accurately described to others. Most of the health information needs could be grouped under the headings: food and nutrition, environmental care, housing, family planning, preventive and curative measures, maternal health and child care. Health is an essential tool for national development. Expectedly, governments usually streamline the delivery of some health programmes. The state and local governments are involved to ensure effective monitoring, delivery and evaluation of programmes to the masses.

The link between the government and the people are the various information sources. These include health workers like nurses, doctors etc, the mass media (radio, television, newspapers etc), agencies (private and non-governmental), interpersonal communication, the printed media like books and magazines. Traditional healers and hospitals are important sources of health information in African countries. Over the years, reliance on herbs and traditional medicine has increased, contrary to expectation. Tape recordings, videos, filmstrips, slides, pictures, exhibitions, posters and bill boards have been excellent tools for transferring and reinforcing messages, including health related information in both the urban and rural areas. In Nigeria, government agencies



and international organizations such as the Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (PPFN), Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) have good health and information dissemination programmes for the people.

This study intends to explore the interaction between the existing health infrastructures in Nigeria, the health information needs of the ordinary people and the sources available for obtaining information in semi-urban areas. The interaction of these will reveal the adequacy or shortfalls of the health information delivery systems in Nigeria.

#### **Method of Research**

For the study, some locations in Oyo State have been selected. Oyo State is located in the south-western part of Nigeria. It has a population of 3,488,789 people (1991 census). There were at the time of this study, (1996) 33 local governments. Out of this number, two were selected for this study. Akinyele local government in Oyo central has a population of about 140,000 and Ibarapa local government situated in Oyo west, has a population of about 57,000. The responsibility of providing health services is shared by the Federal, State and Local governments. Private individuals and statutory corporations, commercial and industrial firms also provide medical services but at relatively higher costs. The two locations are semi-urban, and have secondary and tertiary institutions. Many students as well as various categories of workers reside in these areas.

From these two local governments, one hundred and seventy nine (179) subjects were purposely selected for the study. A self constructed questionnaire was distributed early in 1996 to the respondents. The questionnaire was divided into three sections to obtain information on the biodata of the respondents, their health information needs, sources consulted and their general views on health information management. Interviews were conducted on some respondents to ensure correctness of the information provided. Most of the respondents could read and understand elementary English especially the students and traders. This is characteristic of most urban areas of the south western Nigeria. The respondents were purposely selected to ensure the participation of the various groups in a semi-urban setting viz farmers, salaried workers, tradesmen, artisans and students. Both sexes were evenly represented in the sample. Randomisation was done within the groupings.

Another set of questionnaire was distributed to health workers and medical personnel in the health centres found in these local government areas. They include doctors, nurses mostly family planners and other workers. They were 21 in all. The questions asked were to investigate the services rendered, procedures, financial and other



administrative set up and problems encountered in the process of disseminating health information.

### Findings of the Study

There were 179 respondents from the two local governments selected for this study - 84 from Ibarapa and 95 from Akinyele. There were 90 males and 89 females. The age distribution of the respondents places the majority at 21-40 age bracket. The respondents were purposely selected to include students (40), farmers/traders/artisans (65), salaried workers/government employees (74). Among those who were married, the sizes of their families were between 2-6, with the 4-6 family size constituting the majority. Eighty-four (84) respondents were single, ninety-one (91) married and four (4) were widowed/divorced. Students constitute the majority of the single respondents.

### Health Information Needs

The health information needs of the respondents are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Health Information Needs

| Information Needs       | Ibarapa<br>N = 84 | %    | Akinyele<br>N = 95 | %     | Total<br>N = 179 | %    |
|-------------------------|-------------------|------|--------------------|-------|------------------|------|
| Personal Hygiene        | 59                | 70   | 56                 | 52.63 | 115              | 60.8 |
| Food and Nutrition      | 61                | 72.6 | 53                 | 55.78 | 114              | 63.6 |
| Family Planning         | 42                | 50   | 37                 | 38.94 | 79               | 44.1 |
| Child & Maternal Health | 43                | 51.1 | 46                 | 48.42 | 89               | 49.7 |
| Environmental           | 49                | 58.3 | 39                 | 41.05 | 88               | 49.1 |
| Housing                 | 36                | 42.8 | 31                 | 32.63 | 67               | 37.4 |
| Information on diseases | 49                | 58.3 | 37                 | 38.94 | 86               | 48   |
| Treatment and Curative  | 52                | 61.9 | 43                 | 45.26 | 95               | 53   |
| Preventive Medicine     | 46                | 54.7 | 40                 | 42.1  | 86               | 48   |
| Drug Use                | 49                | 58.3 | 44                 | 46.31 | 93               | 51.9 |



The respondents expressed that they often wanted information on how to balance their diets, in view of the economic hardship in Nigeria; they need information on how to protect themselves from contracting AIDS and other HIV diseases. Information on child spacing, breast feeding, drug use was also required. Across the various categories of respondents, there is not much difference in demands for other types of information. Religion, investment, transport, job and education related information ranked lowest.

### Sources of Health Information

In a previous study, Lettenmaier et al (1993) found that the radio was one of the most popular sources of information because of its ability to reach more people in the rural (and suburban) areas. Besides, battery operated transistor radios are quite reliable as there is no reliance on electricity supply.

The sources of health information identified are listed in table 3. At Akinyele Local government, the radio, television and newspapers were the most popular. At Ibarapa local government, the radio, medical institutions, newspapers and television were listed, in that order of importance. The disparity and more reliance on television by respondents in Akinyele was quite visible. This was probably because of the level of social awareness and enlightenment of the people in this area which is very close to Ibadan the second largest city in the country.

All the respondents considered interpersonal communication as valuable. They expressed that information received from their friends and relatives was usually relevant to their needs. The print and non-print materials were the least consulted. This is particularly true of the traders and farmers. Most of the respondents do not read newspapers and informative materials on a regular basis. Also, there were no public libraries or information centres situated on these locations and reading for leisure was not being promoted in any way. Most of the people relied on oral information through interpersonal communication and the mass media.

It is disturbing to note that hospitals, health centres, medical workers, library and information centres were not considered by the respondents as vital sources to consult for information. There seems to be little or no encouragement for people to consult these sources. A visit to the Health Centres is usually a cumbersome and time consuming experience while libraries and information centres, where they exist, they do not have public enlightenment programmes and no directly coordinated programmes with health officials.



Table 3: Sources of Health Information

|                                   | Akinyele<br>N = 95    % |       | Ibarapa<br>N = 84    % |      | Total<br>N = 179    % |      |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------|------------------------|------|-----------------------|------|
| Interpersonal                     | 51                      | 53.68 | 52                     | 61.9 | 103                   | 57.5 |
| Television                        | 70                      | 73.68 | 50                     | 59.5 | 120                   | 67   |
| Radio                             | 78                      | 82.1  | 68                     | 80.9 | 146                   | 81.5 |
| Newspapers                        | 53                      | 55.78 | 54                     | 64.2 | 107                   | 59.7 |
| Health Centres                    | 35                      | 36.84 | 55                     | 65.4 | 90                    | 50.2 |
| Medical Workers                   | 46                      | 48.42 | 55                     | 65.4 | 101                   | 56.4 |
| Library and Information           | 18                      | 18.94 | 21                     | 25   | 39                    | 21.7 |
| Government/International Agencies | 17                      | 17.89 | 41                     | 48.8 | 58                    | 32.4 |
| Physicians                        | 41                      | 43.15 | 59                     | 70.2 | 100                   | 55.8 |
| Traditional Healers               | 6                       | 6.31  | 21                     | 25   | 27                    | 15.0 |
| Hospitals                         | 47                      | 49.47 | 63                     | 75   | 110                   | 61.4 |
| Print/Non-print                   | 18                      | 18.94 | 20                     | 23.8 | 38                    | 21.2 |
| Public display                    | 47                      | 49.47 | 48                     | 57.1 | 95                    | 53   |

Consultations with medical doctors and nurses are undoubtedly very useful information sources. The study found that at Ibarapa Local Government (which is less cosmopolitan than Akinyele) 70.2% of the respondents consulted doctors and other medical workers for health information and medical help. Traditional healers were also consulted for advice and treatments. Traditional medicine men and women were accessible and provide consultations at cheaper fees.



### The Role of Medical Workers in Information Provision

The medical personnel identified in this study are doctors, nurses, family planning officials and health workers in non-governmental agencies. The places for interaction are medical centres and clinics, when people go to obtain medical care. Medical workers in government health centres visit people at home when possible. They give medical advice, organise seminars, workshops and also use interpersonal and verbal communication to enlighten the people. The instructional materials they use are radio, audio and video tape recordings, television, newspapers, posters, demonstrations, photographs, models and realia.

There are some constraints that hinder information provision by the medical workers. Notable among them is the inadequate funding to carry out the various functions. Some health centres are located in very remote places often inaccessible to the people. There is often shortage of staff, drugs, transportation, electricity supply, public address system and other essential facilities. Therefore, many people have lost confidence in the government's health delivery system. They often have to wait for a long time even to consult any of the workers. What is more, the graphic materials, handbills and other informative materials that were available in large quantity in the past were no longer there to facilitate communication.

The resultant effect is that the respondents made very little use of hospitals and clinics. Unfortunately, the health workers do not visit homes as regularly as is done in the developed countries. Respondents expressed that they often encountered difficulties in the process of obtaining information from medical workers. A list of some of the problems encountered have been tabulated in Table 4.



Table 4: Problems Respondents Encountered in the Process of Obtaining Information

| Problems                                                | Total no. of Respondents | %    |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|------|
| Lack of awareness about sources of health information   | 50                       | 28.7 |
| Non-availability of adequate health information systems | 54                       | 31   |
| Health centres are not easily accessible                | 43                       | 17.4 |
| Health workers are not helpful                          | 38                       | 21.8 |
| Lack of time to seek relevant information               | 58                       | 33.3 |
| Others                                                  | 2                        | 19.6 |

N = 174

Non-availability of required health information at the health centres/clinics and the lack of awareness about where to seek information were among the health problems identified in table 4. On the other hand, the health officers had expressed that they encountered problems in the process of information dissemination to the people. These include the level of literacy of the people, ignorance, inadequate staffing of clinics and hospitals. Also, patients often reject certain prescriptions/treatment like family planning methods, for reasons associated with social norms and culture. This attitude makes follow-up activities by the health personnel difficult, if not impossible.

#### The Role of Library and Information Centres

There are very few information centres in Nigeria, if any. In Oyo State for instance, the public library has no programme or direct interaction with the health programmes of the state government. Yet, public libraries have a role to play in health information dissemination. Librarians could cooperate with the health and social workers and the mass media by repackaging information received in the libraries and sending to these centres. If the message could be more valuable in any of the local languages, translation should be done. Illustrations on graphics and other visuals that are recognisable to the clients could be produced and distributed by libraries and information centres to the public.

Public lectures should be arranged on a regular basis. Oral information packaged on audio-tapes including the lectures, would go a long way in information provision to the people. Regular visits (possibly on a weekly basis) by library staff should be arranged as part of the outreach programme. Books, magazines and other light but informative



reading materials should be provided to the people. Finally, libraries should evolve closer cooperation with health institutions, medical and health officials and the mass media to facilitate health information provision to the people.

### Conclusion and Recommendation

From the data collected, it was found that many of the respondents were ignorant of their health information needs or at least, could not articulate them. They did not have clear understanding of what was needed for better living. The workers in the health sector were not fully recognised as information agents by most of the respondents because they were not there most of the time. Medical facilities, drugs, and counselling were inadequate in the local governments under study. Therefore, many respondents relied on self medication and consulting with friends, relatives and the traditional healers.

Constructive health education programmes were not visible in both local governments. The facilities for such were no longer there as they had been lost over time. Consequently, materials like posters, charts, audio and video recording that should normally be used for instructions in health clinics were not available. This was quite surprising, especially because some decades ago, all these were commonly found in government clinics all over the country (Mabawonku & Atinmo, 1980). But because of dwindling finances the old ones have worn out and they were not replaced. There is no doubt that more health workers should be employed and trained to be able to educate the people on their health needs. There should be vigorous and constructive health education programme for the people and this should include workshops, seminars, group discussions led by health workers. Most of the responding health workers expressed that the government should increase its health awareness programmes, provide more money for the programmes execution, and educate the populace. For instance, if there are more vehicles with public address systems and audiovisual instructional packages installed, more people (literate and non-literate) will benefit from the outreach/public enlightenment programmes.

Local governments need to provide money for these activities. In the past few years, the finances of the local governments have dwindled and they have become incapable of sustaining a number of their health programmes. Home visits by health workers should be encouraged and increased to once or twice a week. Transportation should be provided for the movement of health workers and resources.

The government, at the various levels should increase the number of health institutions, clinics and agencies so that they can be more accessible to the people. This was also suggested by over 70% of the respondents. Non-governmental organisations could be



encouraged to assist the government in health services provision. More health workers need to be trained locally within the next five years to work with the people in the health clinics and hospitals, providing information and guidance on health and social needs. Presently, the information activities of the department of health is little appreciated because it is not consistent and inadequate. In some cases, only skeletal services are provided in these places.

Public libraries have an important role to play as information providers. They should work closely with government information agencies, health institutions and the mass media. Repackaging of information, public lectures and workshops are some of the outreach activities that should be emphasized.

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## A Survey of Library Software in Use in Southern Africa

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### Abstract

*The aim of this study was to identify and analyse library software in use in the southern Africa sub-region. This is with a view to providing valuable data for libraries in Africa that may want to select a library package for use. Seven hundred copies of a questionnaire were sent out in November 1994 to most libraries involved in the regional interlending scheme in Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe. The study revealed that 72% of the libraries are automated, and identified 29 off-the-shelf library packages as being used in 112 sites in the region. These specialised packages make up 93% of software sites in the region with Inmagic Plus taking the lead with 25% of such sites. Other software in a ranked order are Erudite (13%), URICA(7.4%), BIBLIOS(7.4%), Micro CDS/ISIS(7.4%), SLS Plus(6.5%), and STYLIS(4.6%). Numeric ranking of software modules by implementation count are, cataloguing; circulation; acquisition; report generators; serials; OPAC; accounting; management information services; and SDI. This showed that the traditional functions of the library (first six modules) still take the lead even in an automation environment.*

### Introduction

Many automation efforts in Africa have been fraught with lack of comparative technical data for effective software selection in libraries. The result is that decisions by librarians are often based on what is read or heard about specific software with no details on the comparative advantages or limitations. A review of the literature and my personal experience has shown that surveys carried out on situations in advanced countries tend to give signals that may not be helpful to libraries in developing economies. A very important survey in this regard is the one published by Bridge (1992) on American library software marketplace. Of all the software listed in his survey, none of such (except Tinlib) was in use in southern Africa.



On the local scene however, little work in this area can be pointed out. In the proceedings of the first IFLA Africa Section meeting held in 1991, an attempt was made to record the automation scene in the East, Central and Southern Africa (*Library Automation in East, Central and Southern Africa*). A substantial portion of this work was devoted to the experience of the University of Botswana Library. Little or nothing was reported on other libraries in the region. Lodder (1971) carried out a survey of mechanised libraries in South Africa, Musiker and Liesel de Villiers also reported the South African situation as at 1985 and 1987 respectively. Lodder (1983) and Erasmus (1987) also did separate surveys on the microcomputer scene in South Africa. The work of Andersen (1992) was restricted to museums while Musiker (1985) surveyed hardware in use in South Africa. All the above work concentrated on automation in general. Only the work of Lodder (1983) dealt mainly on library software in South Africa. Her survey covered only nineteen libraries, excluding special libraries.

In order to update the work of Lodder (1983) and also cover the rest of the region, this survey was carried out to enable libraries to have a situation report of the software scene in the region. This survey covered Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe.

### Methodology

In November 1994, the first set of 728 copies of the questionnaire were sent to all libraries in the region. Unlike the case of Bridge (1992) who carried out a similar survey covering America by sending questionnaire to vendors, it was felt that responses from users of library packages were likely to be more reliable than those of vendors who may wish to push their products hence the survey was restricted to the users. The list of libraries was compiled mostly from *IL Manual for the Southern African Interlending Scheme*, published by The State Library in Pretoria, South Africa. By the middle of 1995 only very few returns, mainly from automated academic and public libraries in South Africa were received. The author also noticed that libraries that do not use commercially available software were not represented in the survey. So, another set of questionnaire was sent out. At the end of April 1997, more returns came in. In all, of the 191 returns, only 161 were found to be usable which represents 22.12% return rate.



Table 1: Distribution of Libraries according to country

| Country      | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| South Africa | 137       | 85.1       |
| Botswana     | 11        | 6.8        |
| Namibia      | 6         | 3.7        |
| Zimbabwe     | 5         | 3.1        |
| Lesotho      | 1         | 0.6        |
| Swaziland    | 1         | 0.6        |
| Mozambique   | -         | -          |
| TOTAL        | 161       | 99.9       |

From table 1, it is apparent that South Africa takes a lead among the six nation study spread. This seems to be very indicative of not just South Africa's computer technology supremacy, but also its economic development and size.

### Analysis and Discussion of Results

A total of 38 library software were in use in 112 libraries which gives a 72.26 % automation rate of libraries surveyed in this sample. Table 2 shows that 12 of the software were in use in 85.19% libraries.

The study of Musiker (1982, 1985) and Lodder (1981) of the South Africa situation suggested that although in-house developed applications were more common, libraries had realised that such are too cumbersome to manage and therefore would want to go for commercially available software in the nearest future. Of the 38 software listed in the appendix, only 2 (1.79%) of all software sites actually indicated that it was developed in-house. If all the dBASE sites are also included, this figure becomes 7.41%. This had more than confirmed that libraries did move away from in-house developed applications. The situation has greatly improved from the situation reported by Musiker (1982) in which 85.71% of the 21 software sites in South Africa were developed in-house.



Table 2 : Popular and Library software used in Southern Africa

| Software        | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------|-----------|------------|
| Inmagic Plus    | 27        | 25         |
| Erudite         | 14        | 12.96      |
| Micro CDS/ISIS  | 8         | 7.41       |
| URICA           | 8         | 7.41       |
| BIBLIOS         | 8         | 7.41       |
| SLS Plus        | 7         | 6.48       |
| dBASE           | 6         | 5.56       |
| STYLIS          | 5         | 4.63       |
| BookPlus        | 3         | 2.78       |
| Sabinet         | 2         | 1.85       |
| In-house system | 2         | 1.85       |
| Jutastat        | 2         | 1.85       |

N = 112

In the studies of Lodder (1981) and Musiker (1985), the most popular software in South Africa were DOBIS/LIBIS and URICA. The ranking of software done in the appendix shows that there now exist about 29 library off-the-shelf packages with Inmagic Plus taking a very comfortable lead of 25% of software sites in the region. Other software of note are Erudite (12.96%), URICA (7.41%), Biblios (7.41%), SLS Plus (6.48%), STYLIS (4.63%), and BookPlus (2.78%) in that order. The ranking of these leading software is reflected in Figure Two. These software (excluding dBASE) can be classified as the major software in the region.

#### Software Modules' Implementation Analysis

The study tried to find out the modules of each software that are available and compare them with the ones that have been implemented to date. This is with a view to knowing what modules are actually popular. A software may be generally popular, but a library may not know how strong or popular its modules are. A detailed comparative module by



module analysis of all major software in the region can be very instructive. Libraries can therefore have more data to rank software based on their priority ratings of these modules. The types of modules identified in the survey include acquisitions, cataloguing, OPAC, circulation, serials, SDI, accounting, and inter library loans (ILL). Other modules include management information, report generator, and other specialised information systems like compilation of research in progress and thesis.

Table 3 provides a list of modules implemented on each of the library packages as identified in this study. Quite a sizable number of software identified in this study have all the modules implemented. The software in question are Erudite, Inmagic Plus, Caudra Star, Integrated Tertiary, ACS/OPEN, URICA, and ILIS 3. One can also see the next set of leading software, by module implementation count, as Data Professional, BookPlus, PROLIB, and BIBLIOS. It is no surprise to note that among the two sets of software just listed, they form part of the first nine leading software as shown in Table Two. This tends to suggest that there is a direct correlation between the number of library software installations' sites and the popularity of its modules.



Table 3: Software Modules Available or in Use

| Software            | acq | cat | ser | circ | opac | sdi | MIS | rept | acc | others |
|---------------------|-----|-----|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|-----|--------|
| Erudite             | x   | x   | x   | x    | x    | x   | x   | x    | x   | ILL    |
| Data Professional   | x   | x   | x   | x    | x    | x   |     | x    | x   |        |
| DOBIS/LIBIS         | x   | x   |     | x    |      |     |     | x    | x   |        |
| Inmagic Plus        | x   | x   | x   | x    | x    | x   | x   | x    | x   | ILL    |
| Tinlib              | x   | x   | x   | x    | x    | *   |     | *    |     | ILL    |
| LIB 2000            | x   | x   | *   | *    |      |     |     | *    | *   |        |
| CDS/ISIS**          | x   | x   | x   | x    | x    | x   |     | x    |     |        |
| PALS                | x   | x   | x   | x    |      |     | x   | x    | x   |        |
| DBxL                |     |     |     |      |      |     |     |      |     |        |
| Caudra Star         | x   | x   | x   | x    | x    | x   | x   | x    | x   |        |
| ZUES                | x   | x   | x   | x    |      |     |     | x    |     |        |
| Integrated Tertiary | x   | x   | x   | x    | x    | x   | x   | x    | x   |        |
| BookPlus            | x   | x   | x   | x    | x    | x   | x   |      | x   |        |
| ACS/OPEN            | x   | x   | x   | x    | x    | x   | x   | x    | x   |        |
| URICA               | x   | x   | x   | x    | x    | x   | x   | x    | x   |        |
| SCIMATE             | x   | x   | x   | x    |      |     | x   |      |     |        |
| PROLIB              | x   | x   |     | x    | x    | x   | x   | x    | x   |        |
| BIBLIOS             | x   | x   | x   | x    | x    | x   |     | x    | x   |        |
| LIBRIS              | *   | x   | *   | x    | x    |     |     |      | *   |        |
| Pax PROCITE         |     | x   |     | x    |      |     | x   | x    |     |        |
| STYLIS              | x   | x   | x   | x    | x    |     |     | x    | x   |        |
| SLS Plus            | x   | x   | x   | x    | x    | *   | *   | x    |     |        |
| ILIS 2000           | x   | x   | *   | *    |      |     | *   | *    | *   |        |
| Book Finder         | *   | x   |     | x    | x    |     | x   | x    | x   |        |



|            |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |               |
|------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---------------|
| ILIS 3     | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | x  | Thesa<br>urus |
| QA         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |               |
| Bibelation |    | x  | x  | x  | x  |    | x  | x  |    |               |
| Mindex     | *  | x  | *  | x  |    | *  |    | *  | *  |               |
| Reflex     |    | x  |    |    |    |    |    |    | *  |               |
| TOTALS     | 21 | 27 | 18 | 24 | 18 | 12 | 14 | 19 | 15 |               |

x Modules available

\* Modules are available but not in use in any library yet.

\*\* Not all modules are in the version of software published by UNESCO.

As can be seen in the chart, the cataloguing module generally takes the lead across all software in the region. The relative ranking shows that cataloguing (16.1%), circulation (14.3), acquisitions (12.5%), report generators (11.3), serial (10.7), and OPAC (10.7%) are the leaders. Others are SDI (7.1%), accounting (6.9%), and MIS (6.3%). This seems to show that the traditional functions of the library still remain the most important issue in automation. Some of these modules include report generators and accounting modules. The former is a module that allows one to finetune the format or presentation of search hits in a given database. This would make such a compilation to meet the specific needs of different types of patrons. The accounting module is a segment that allows libraries to monitor votes assigned to specific book or journal accounts, and produce exemption reports on such votes or vendors for effective decision making by such libraries. The accounts module may just be a simple invoice or order monitoring system.

It would be worthwhile to carry out a separate study with a view to finding out the specifics on the strengths and weaknesses of all the modules of the software, especially emerging areas such as management information systems, compatibility with other systems like image and full text databases, and Internet. From Table 3 one can see that only three ILL modules are in use. This seems to suggest that members of the interlending scheme still depend largely on manual operated ILL systems.

## Conclusion

- Specialised library packages sites make up 94% of all software sites in libraries with Inmagic taking the lead of 25%. Other major software are Erudite(13%), URICA(7%), BIBLIOS(7%), Micro CDS/ISIS(7%), SLS Plus(6%), and STYLIS(5%). In all, there are 29 of such packages in the region. This is a major improvement from the situation between 1981-1985 when the South African



scene showed that 86% of automated libraries used in-house developed applications. Probably the same situation or no automation efforts were in place in libraries of other nations in the subregion at this time. Only two of such packages (URICA, DOBIS/LIBIS) existed in South Africa as reported in two separate studies carried out in 1981 and 1985.

- Modules ranking of all software are cataloguing, circulation, acquisition, report generators, serials, OPAC, accounting, management information services, SDL, and ILL. This may be the general pattern of module implementation of software in the region. The traditional functions in librarianship still remain very important even in an automation environment.

- Software leaders in all modules identified in this study are Erudite, Inmagic Plus, Caudra Star, Integrated Tertiary, ACS/OPEN, URICA, and ILIS 3. These software ranking were based on the fact that they all have all the modules identified in this study implemented. It is not a surprise to note that three of these software are among the most popular software, by numeric site count, in the region.

### Recommendations

- This study has shown that 72.41% of the library packages identified by this study have only one site installation in the region. This seems not to be a healthy development. It is therefore suggested that professional, national or regional associations look into the possibility of "reducing" the list of software in the region to about ten. This can be done by encouraging libraries to switch to one of the top ten when the need and means to change their software arises.
- If the above is implemented, software user groups can then become strong to ensure vendors provide better customer service and regular updates of their products.
- A review of the ten "approved" software for the region can be done every five years with a view to "allowing" one or two new packages to replace the two least popular software among the initial ten. This way, vendors would be put on their toes and users would be better off.
- A professional association subcommittee can be formed to look into the modalities of carrying these suggestions out.



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# Appendix :General Software Ranking

|      |                        |
|------|------------------------|
| 1    | Inmagic Plus           |
| 2    | Erudite                |
| 4    | Micro CDS/ISIS         |
| 4    | URICA                  |
| 4    | BIBLIOS                |
| 6    | SLS Plus               |
| 7    | dBASE                  |
| 8    | STYLIS                 |
| 9    | BookPlus               |
| 11   | Sabinet                |
| 11   | In-house system        |
| 11   | Jutastat               |
| 25.5 | ILIS 2000              |
| 25.5 | ITS                    |
| 25.5 | Tinlib                 |
| 25.5 | Libris                 |
| 25.5 | PALS                   |
| 25.5 | Lib 2000               |
| 25.5 | SCIMATE                |
| 25.5 | Reflex                 |
| 25.5 | Cuadra Star            |
| 25.5 | Book Finder            |
| 25.5 | DOBIS/LIBIS            |
| 25.5 | Data Treh Professional |
| 25.5 | Pax Procite            |
| 25.5 | ACS/OPEN               |
| 25.5 | DBxL                   |
| 25.5 | ZUES                   |
| 25.5 | ILIS 3                 |
| 25.5 | QA                     |
| 25.5 | Bibilation             |
| 25.5 | PROLIB                 |
| 25.5 | Mindex                 |
| 25.5 | X-Talk                 |
| 25.5 | Medline                |
| 25.5 | Novel Network          |
| 25.5 | Special                |
| 25.5 | Not stated             |



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*Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science, 1991-1997*

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### Introduction

Effective resources management is of great concern to practitioners of library profession and the production of bibliographies in various fields of study is an attempt to achieve it in libraries. Basically, bibliographies are needed to aid identification and access to documents for the reader or the general public. The necessity to carry out a careful analysis of the contents of bibliographies informed this study. The primary focus was to document all the published articles in the *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science* between 1991 and 1997 as well as to carry out a detailed analysis of the publications.

### Previous Study

A bibliographic analysis of articles in *Nigerian Journal of Wood Science* (a journal of the Wood Society of Nigeria) was undertaken recently (Faleye, 1996). The author's study covered articles published in the journal (1984 - 1995). Aina and Mahawodu (1988) in a study gave a comprehensive account of the management of *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science* (AJLAFIS). The study outlined the mission, vision, and the goals of the journal. It discussed the planning and implementation processes and the distribution of manuscripts published according to editorial board decision, and country of submissions.

### The Present Study

Librarians, archivists and information scientists all over Africa have published articles in AJLAFIS over the years. It may be a claim that the journal being examined in this study is probably the only one that covers the whole of Africa on issues in the fields of library, archival and information science. The journal also represents a unifying point of discussion on issues that affect the profession in Africa. The objectives of the study were



## Short Communication

### **Bibliographic Analysis of Articles: A Study of African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science, 1991-1997**

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to:

- ▶ determine the number of empirical research, and theoretical articles, including short communications and research notes published in AJLAIS between 1991 and 1997.
- ▶ analyze the pattern of authorship, that is, single author or joint authors from volumes 1 to 7.
- ▶ to determine the specific subject areas covered by articles published in the journal since inception.

### Procedure

The study was conducted by consulting the issues of AJLAIS. The journal is a bi-annual publication, appearing in the months of April and October every year. The first volume appeared in 1991, and the journal now in its eighth volume. The study made use of the 14 issues that were published between 1991 and 1997. The total number of issues were assembled, and all the articles listed alphabetically by authors name. The list of articles was grouped into four - research, theoretical papers, short communications, and research notes.

As Aina and Mabawonku (1996) have pointed out, the mission of the journal was "to provide a forum for librarians, documentalists archivists, and other information specialists, for reporting empirical research findings, studies on highly theoretical aspects of the various disciplines in the information profession with emphasis on the African setting". It is important and useful to know the number of articles that have appeared on the various categories. The authors went through the articles to determine where each article belongs, as the journal only has sectional headings for short communications and research notes but not for research and theoretical studies. However, empirical studies are not difficult to discern. The articles were categorised into 18 broad areas. The pattern of authorship was done by counting the number of articles with single, and multiple authorship.

### Results and Discussion

A total of 112 articles were published from 1991 to 1997. Fifty-five or 49.11% were research articles, while 40 (35.71%) were theoretical articles. Sixteen were short communications and one research note.



Table 1: Classification of Articles by Subject Area

| Areas of Study                   | Total      | %          |
|----------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Collection Development           | 5          | 4.46       |
| Cataloguing and Classification   | 2          | 1.79       |
| Library Management               | 3          | 2.68       |
| Information Technology           | 19         | 16.96      |
| Information Services             | 22         | 19.64      |
| Library & Information Profession | 5          | 4.46       |
| Archival Studies                 | 8          | 7.14       |
| Academic Libraries               | 11         | 9.82       |
| Special Libraries                | 3          | 2.68       |
| Public Libraries                 | 7          | 6.25       |
| School Libraries                 | 5          | 4.46       |
| Medical Libraries                | 1          | 0.89       |
| Records Management               | 6          | 5.36       |
| Library and Reading Promotion    | 2          | 1.79       |
| Library & Literacy Programme     | 2          | 1.79       |
| Information Science              | 3          | 2.68       |
| Publishing                       | 6          | 5.36       |
| AV Resources                     | 2          | 1.79       |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                     | <b>112</b> | <b>100</b> |



Table 2 - Pattern of Authorship

| Authorship    | No  | %     |
|---------------|-----|-------|
| Single Author | 96  | 85.71 |
| Two Authors   | 11  | 9.82  |
| Three Authors | 3   | 2.68  |
| Four Authors  | 2   | 1.79  |
| Total         | 112 | 100   |

Out of the 18 subject areas covered, 19.64% was in the area of information services, followed by information technology - 16.96% (table 1). The focus on information technologies in libraries shows the present disposition of librarians and information professionals. A further analysis of the published articles shows that 85.71% of the articles were single authored, while 9.82% had two authors, 2.68% had three authors and 1.79% had four authors (table 2). This is in contrast to a study conducted on pattern of authorship in a science journal (Fadayomi, 1996). A large percent (43.3%) of the articles published in the volumes studied had two authors. This result lends credence to the fact that joint or multiple authorship is more prevalent in the science than humanities.

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## Book Review

**Basic Serials Management Handbook**, edited by Judith Szilvassy- Munchen: New Providence; 1996, 172p. (IFLA Publications ; 77) ISBN 3598218036.

For periodicals/serials librarians, and indeed other librarians in general, this is a valuable reference material. The book consists of six well written chapters and annexes.

The first chapter deals with the nature of serials or periodicals (for those comfortable with the latter). Here five issues are highlighted, one - the significance of serials, which include the history and number of serials publications; two - definition of a serial; three - categories of serials which include genuine serials and non-serials (quasi serials); four - complexities of serials which include among others continuous publication, problems in numbering of serials, variant titles and changes; five - how serials should be identified (identification of serials), background issues to serials, the international standard serials number (ISSN) and the key title.

The second chapter details the control of serials and this include organizational/functional aspects; acquisitions control which are principles of collection development and selection, co-operative acquisition (or resource sharing), procurement of serials, financial control, inventory (accessions register) and statistics; bibliographic control which covers the bibliographic record, descriptive cataloguing, subject cataloguing and catalogues and finally holding control, that is, stock-taking and weeding.

Chapter three builds on chapter two and touches on issues of collection maintenance and preservation. This covers storage which can be either open or closed stacks, allocation of call number, shelf-reading and shifting; co-operative storage; microforms; conservation and preservation.

Chapter four deals with the provision of service. Serving here include direct access to serials; readers' service which covers registration service, reading room, preference service, loan service, photocopying services, translation service; access to serials through secondary services which include current awareness service and abstracting and indexing services; access to serials through interlibrary loan (ILL) and lastly, access to serials through union catalogues.



Chapter five discusses international aspects of serials. Three issues are specifically dealt with here. The first is the importance and role of standards which covers the International Organization for Standards (ISO). Secondly the role and achievements of international organizations and bodies (like Unesco, IFLA and FID) and thirdly international information systems which are International Serial Data System (ISDS), AGRIS and CARIS.

The sixth and final chapter provides "the outlook to the future". This includes small-scale automation which covers online serials information registration and inquiry system (OSIRIS) and CD-ROM workstation. It also includes library education and training, which covers the local scene, regional achievements and international assistance.

The strength of this book lies in the fact that it is basic and very practical. Consequently, serials librarians in Africa and elsewhere will find it easy to read and apply. There are also references at the end of each chapter which will make for easy reference.

Some of its weaknesses lie in the fact that there are no successful case studies presented in the book. The book would have been strengthened by citing successful cases elsewhere around the world. Despite all that, the text remains a must read.

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## New Publications

**A Handbook of Good Practice in Journal Publishing** by Hans M. Zell. London: International African Institute, 1998. 240p. ISBN 0-85302-085 X.

The Handbook aims to assist journal editors in Africa to improve their publishing operation, and provides guidelines for good practice and good housekeeping, not only for those coming into journals publishing for the first time but also for those who already have some experience in academic serials publishing. Although designed especially for journal editors and publishers in Africa, it should also prove valuable to journal editors in other parts of the developing world as well as editors of African studies journals elsewhere. An index has also been added to facilitate access.

The Handbook covers most aspects of journals publishing and journals management but special emphasis is put on systems management, subscription fulfilment, financial control and effective marketing and distribution. There is a new chapter on journals marketing on the Internet. It also includes a series of model guidelines, model forms, and other documentation that provide illustrative examples of good practice. The resources section gives names and addresses of major subscription agents worldwide, resources for developing mailing lists, and details of major review and publicity outlets for African journals. An Annotated Bibliography provides details of books, manuals, and a number of relevant periodical articles which are recommended for further reading.

Two specially commissioned contributions included as appendixes cover (i) a chapter providing guidance and tips for those who are thinking of using a desk-top publishing system for the first time to assist them with journal editorial and publishing process; and (ii) a chapter on computerised subscription invoicing and fulfilment for small journal publishers. Another useful appendix in this new edition, "Professional editorial standards", reproduced by permission of the Editors Association of Canada, sets out the skills needed by all those editing in the English-language print media.

**Devindex Botswana: Index to Literature on Economic and Social Development in Botswana.** Edited by Stella B. Monageng. Gaborone: National Institute of Development Research and Documentation, 1997 (Devindex-Botswana Series, No. 7). 118p.

The Index contains an analysis of Botswana socio-economic development literature of the unconventional type that is often very difficult to locate which is generally referred to as grey literature. The index contains over two hundred entries with full



bibliographic details and abstracts. The entries are arranged alphabetically by author. There are author and subject indexes to the entries.

**The DDC, The Universe of Knowledge and the Post-Modern Library.** By Francis L. Miksa. Albany, New York: Forest Press, 1988. 99p. ISBN 0-910608 - 64 - 4

Dr. Miksa traces the history of classification theory from the 19th century through the modern era, describes its effect on the Dewey Decimal Classification and identifies the challenges that face classification systems in the post-modern era. He presents the various influences that shaped the DDC from its invention by Melvil Dewey in the late 19th century to its present-day format in an electronic environment.

The Handbook covers most aspects of journal publishing and journal management but special emphasis is put on systems management, subscription fulfilment, financial control and effective marketing and distribution. There is a new chapter on journals marketing on the Internet. It also includes a series of model guidelines, model forms and other documentation that provide illustrative examples of good practice. The resources section gives names and addresses of major subscription agents worldwide, resources for developing mailing lists, and details of major review and publicity outlets for African journals. An Annotated Bibliography provides details of books, manuals, and a number of relevant periodical articles which are recommended for further reading.

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## Professional News and Events

### Staff Development Programme in African Libraries

IFLA-Africa section has launched a staff development programme in African libraries called the Bart Nwafor Staff Development Programme. It is funded by NORAD and the Norwegian Library Association. The four-week training attachments are designed to (1) expose mid-career professional staff to obtain professional experience in a library environment which has well developed infrastructural facilities and/or services, (2) encourage practical competence (3) foster individually motivated professional growth through exposure to centres of excellence and (4) foster professional rewarding relationships among peers through professional practice.

Participants at this programme will be sponsored through a scholarship that will cover travel costs, health insurance, accommodation and subsistence costs, and literature support. For further information, contact Mr. Henri Sene, the Regional Director, Regional Office for Africa, c/o Bibliotheque Universitaire, B.P. 2006 - Dakar, Senegal. Tel. (221) 824-6981 Fax (221) 824-2379, e-mail: [hsene@ucad.sn](mailto:hsene@ucad.sn)

### Editor-in-chief becomes a full Professor

The Editor-in-chief of the African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science, Dr. L.O. Aina was recently promoted a full professor in the Department of Library and Information Studies, University of Botswana. He is the first professor to be promoted in the Department and third professor since the department was established in 1979. Other professors before him were late Professor S. Kotie of Ghana and Professor Peter. Havard-Williams of UK.

Prof. Aina holds B.Sc. (Hons) Chemistry, postgraduate diploma in librarianship, M.Phil. information science and Ph.D library studies. He attended the Universities of Lagos and Ibadan, both in Nigeria and The City University, London. He was an assistant librarian and later sub-librarian at the University of Ibadan Library, between 1976 and 1978. In 1978, he was appointed an assistant lecturer in the Department of Library Studies, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Between 1978 and 1989 he was promoted lecturer and senior lecturer. In 1989 he moved to the University of Botswana as a senior lecturer. He was promoted associate professor in 1992 and full professor in 1998. Prof. Aina has been involved in library education for the last twenty years. He has served as an



external examiner in library and information science in seven universities in Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Zambia. Prof. Aina has over 80 publications including 40 journal articles.

### Forthcoming Conferences

**Library and Information Association of South Africa First Annual Conference.** Bloemfontein, South Africa, 15-17 November 1998. Theme: Towards a Library and Information Renaissance in South Africa. For further information, contact Mercia Coetzee. E-mail: [mercia@dux.bfn.council.co.za](mailto:mercia@dux.bfn.council.co.za).

**6th International Conference on Interlending and Document Supply, Pretoria, South Africa 25-29 October 1999.** Theme: Empowering Society through the Global Flow of Information. For further information contact Barbara Kellermann, E-mail: [kellbc@statelib.pwu.gov.za](mailto:kellbc@statelib.pwu.gov.za)

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## 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.

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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, Prof. L.O. Aina. Department of Library and Information Studies, University of Botswana or to any member of the editorial board nearest to you. E-mail: ainalo @ noka.ub.bw.