# ACQUISITION AND ORGANISATION OF GREY LITERATURE IN NIGERIAN FEDERAL UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

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#### **ABSTRACT**

This study was undertaken to investigate the acquisition and organization of grey literature in Nigerian Federal university libraries. A multistage sampling technique was used in selecting fourteen federal universities which were adopted for the study. The types of grey literature studied were research reports, government documents, dissertations and proceedings of conferences, seminar and workshops. The Grey Literature Management Inventory (GLMI) was the research instrument used for data collection. The existing collection development policies of the libraries were examined. The acquisition and organization of grey literature for easy access were also examined. The results showed that there was poor acquisition and organization of grey literature in the university libraries. The study concluded that the acquisition and organization of grey literature in Nigerian university libraries need improvement to make it more accessible to users. It was recommended that university libraries should commit more resources to acquisition of grey literature.

Keywords: Acquisition, Organisation, Grey literature, Libraries, Nigeria.

#### Introduction

The basic purpose of an academic library is to provide sufficient information for making informed decision to users. Academic libraries normally provide for educational needs of students, support lecturers in their teaching role and provide for research activities of both students and lecturers. To meet the objectives of the university with its diverse fields of knowledge, all types of documents with appropriate information in variety of formats, should be acquired (Issa, 2003).

Grey literatures refer to publications in both print and electronic formats which cannot be readily acquired through normal book selling channels. The key difference between other sorts of publishing and grey literatures is that the latter is not produced as a commercial undertaking, but as a part of a communication process. Therefore, grey literature serves scholars and lay readers alike with data that offer a more comprehensive view of the topic of interest, and that lecturers and students embarking on research projects rely upon grey literatures to provide introduction and overview of the areas of interest (Weintraub, 2000)

If according to Ajibero (1998) by the 21st century, teaching and learning process in universities will have to be restructured away from textbooks and lecture - based works to one based on information resources for learning and problem solving, lecturers definitely need to use grey literatures more than before. Much of research information in Africa comes in form of grey literature. In fact, Osayande and Ukpebor (2012) viewed grey literature as main sources of indigenous information crucial to researchers, lecturers and students in tertiary institutions. Therefore, grey literature contains information that is likely to be of great value to a considerable number of people no matter the setting, library or discipline.

Grey literature include newsletters, annual reports, conference papers, research reports, theses, government documents, bulletins, patents, guidebooks, preprints, brochures, catalogues, standards, translations and web pages. Grey literature has some defining characteristics which are used by information professionals to qualify it. STS Subject and Bibliographic Committee (2003) described grey literature as publications that are not controlled by commercial publishing interest. They are issued by government, academia, business and industry in both print and electronic formats. This literature is often not readily available, cited properly or indexed comprehensively (Thompson, 2001). Mili (2000) in evaluating grey materials from the web sites of institutions found that they can be captured, saved, indexed and reproduced electronically which has aided the growth. Despite the evolution of the concept of grey literature, the internet has added new challenges of unavailability of "here today and gone tomorrow" nature of documents, limited access to certain users, deliberately to members of invisible colleges or unintentionally to technologically inadequate users (Alberani and De-Castro, 2001; Farace, 2000). Other challenges of digital grey literature as listed by Lawrence, et.al (2014) also include lack of infrastructural planning and management, difficulty of discovery and evaluation, lack of standards in product and cataloguing, and copyright.

In spite of the problems of bibliographic control and access associated with grey literature, it is essentially primary and precious semi-published materials which according to Okoroma (2012) might be unpopular and not considered too scholarly, but are important in research because they contain data and statistics. Mckimmie and Szurmak (2002) described grey literature as an important component of most disciplines and often raise "grey questions" that offer additional approaches to a research agenda and fills the information or knowledge gaps that readers do not get from a narrowly focused journal. Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) (2003) observed that everything people need outside of journals and books could be described as grey literature.

From the forgoing, it is expected that grey literature especially the locally produced would be available in most Nigerian university libraries. It is also expected that university libraries would have them in sizeable quantity proportionate to the other information materials. But this is not the case because from literature, there is lack of human, institutional, national and regional capacity for its management (Chisenga, 2006; Osayande and Ukpebor, 2012). The methods of acquiring grey literature are by purchase, exchange, legal deposit and gifts. Most categories of grey literature do not come under legal deposit because of their short print runs. Acquisition of grey literature published in Japan by JICST is made almost entirely through gifts (Ogawa, 1996), while only theses are put under legal deposit legislation by some European countries (Vitiello, 1995). But the selection and acquisition would have to be as laid down in the collection development policy and judicious selection has to be made as in the case of monographs and journals. This should be jointly done by libraries and lecturers.

The ultimate value of any information should be thought of in terms of the users, so the organization and storage should be planned to optimize retrieval. Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) opined that when information resources are available in the library, the user could be confronted with five possible types of inaccessibility (conceptual, linguistic, critical, bibliographic and physical. Hutchinson (2001) also suggested that a library could be truly accessible only if people are able to get in and use the resources.

For the organization of grey literature for accessibility, measurement could be by the type of catalogue, classification scheme, indexing system and shelving system and publicizing. But the attendant problems of grey literature make most university libraries keep them as separate collections. In size, they range from pamphlet to voluminous volumes, the authors change, the titles change, the contents vary, and series appear and vanish or merge with other series. Cumming (1996) pointed out that even the World Bank did not include grey literature in its index of publications.

The peculiar nature of some grey literatures makes most university libraries not to follow any known pattern. Each library decides on how to classify, catalogue, index and shelve the materials (Osaniyi, 1996; Fatokun and Amusa, 2014)

### Statement of the Problem

Existing literature has shown that university libraries in developing countries, Nigeria inclusive are not doing enough to promote the exploitation of grey literature by their clients who are mainly lecturers and students. Though acquisition of grey literature worldwide has not been satisfactory, it is worse in developing countries due to its accentuation by local circumstances. Alemna (2001) described how attempts made by libraries in Ghana (also a developing country like Nigeria) in acquiring and organizing grey literature failed due to lack of National library, poor staffing and funding, harsh tropical weather conditions, flagrance and flimsy conditions.

Nigerian university libraries do not have grey literature in sizeable quantity, proportionate to other information materials. Grey literature is also usually placed in obscure places within the library. The limited availability and access would affect the utilization and perception of its usefulness in enhancing teaching and research activities. Grey literature as a form has not been extensively researched in Nigeria and investigation of the acquisition and organization in Nigeria university libraries has not been done. This study is meant to fill this gap. The study therefore examined the acquisition and organization of grey literature in Nigerian federal university libraries.

# Objectives of the study

This study aimed at:

1. Investigating the pattern of acquisition of grey literature in Nigerian University libraries

Investigating the organization of grey literature in Nigerian university libraries

# Research questions:

Based on the stated objectives, the study sought to provide answers to the following research questions.

- i. How do the existing collection management policies influence the acquisition of grey literature in Nigerian university libraries
- ii. What implication do the methods of acquisition have on collection management of grey literature in Nigerian libraries?

# Methodology

The survey research design was used. The study population was made up of Nigerian Federal university libraries and librarians. 14 Out of 40 Federal universities were selected through multi-stage sampling. Stratified random sampling based on year of establishment of the university, geographic representation and the type i.e. whether it is conventional or specialized. 60% was selected from first generation, 50% from second generation and 50% from third generation universities. There are three strata according to the year of establishment. The first generation universities were established before 1970, the second between 1970 – 1975 and the third between 1982 – 1992. The year of establishment is relevant because it may be related to the quality of grey literature and volume of library stock.

The purposive sampling method was used to get the sample of the librarians. Only librarians involved in collection development were relevant to the research purpose. Also only librarians working in the main libraries were included because most of the collection development activities were carried out in main libraries. Figures obtained showed there was an average of two librarians in this section of each university library. The total number of Librarians came to twenty-eight (28).

The data was collected through the use of a questionnaire and observation at the study locations. The questionnaire which was designed by the researcher was labelled "Grey Literature Management Inventory in Nigeria universities" (GLMi).

Section A of the questionnaire sought demographic information, Section B sought information on the acquisition and availability of grey literature and Section C sought information on the organisation of grey literature for accessibility. Personal observation of the resources available in some libraries was made to obtain relevant information not included in, and to ascertain the truth of information indicated in the questionnaires. Permission of the librarian in charge of the grey literature was sought to find out where and how the materials were kept and preserved.

The validity of the questionnaire was ensured through expert opinion from the Library School and Educational Measurement Department of the University of Ibadan. A pilot test on librarians in the university library was carried out. The reliability was ensured by applying the Cronbach Alpha Method on the scores of the pilot test, it came to 0.666. Copies of the questionnaires were distributed personally by the researcher and through contact persons in some libraries. The data were analysed through descriptive statistics using percentages, frequency counts and mean scores.

# **RESULTS OF THE ANALYSIS**

From the data analysed, it was evident that a high percentage (78.6%) of the university libraries had written collection development policies, and to a large extent, most of them followed the policies. But the collection development policies on grey literature, whether written or informal, had little influence on the acquisition. Many materials came in through depositories while many were also gifts. It might therefore not be convenient to apply strict policy measures to the acquisition of these materials.

The analysis indicated that in library budget, not much fund was allocated to the acquisition of grey literature. Seven university libraries representing 50% were unwilling to disclose the vote for grey literature for their libraries. From preliminary observations, the same attitude was observed. Of the seven libraries, five spent less than 5% of their budget and two, about 5-10% on grey literature.

Most (78.6%) of the university libraries had written collection development policies; only three libraries indicated that they did not have. Also the

policies were not strictly adhered to, because only nine representing 64.4% indicated than they followed the policies. It meant that not all that have written policies follow them strictly. The methods of acquiring grey literature materials into the library were mainly four – purchase, depository, gifts and by exchange. The grey literature was also acquired through these methods, though they might not necessarily be acquired the same way. Most of the government documents came in through purchase and depository methods. Few came in by exchange and gifts. Research reports came in depository mostly through deposits; few came through purchase. Most of the dissertations, (85.7%) came through legal deposit and none by purchase; exchange and gifts method claimed one (7.1%) respectively. The conference and seminar papers were acquired by gifts and deposits, none came in by exchange, only 2 (14.3%) came in by purchase. (See Table 1).

Item No	Grey Literature	Libraries method of acquisition								
		Purchase %		Exchange %		Gifts %		Depository %		
1.	Government documents	6	42.9	1	7.1	1	7.1	6	42.9	
2.	Research Reports	i	7.i	3	21.4	7	21.4	7	50.0	
3.	Dissertations	ped		1	7.1	1	7.1	12	85.7	
4.	Conference and seminar papers	2	14.3	510	19THUR	6	42.6	6	42.9	

N = 14

The librarians in the university libraries indicated that they involved the lecturers in the selection of grey literature acquired into the libraries. Eleven libraries involved lecturers and only three did not involve their lecturers. Eight (57.1%) libraries asked recommendations from these lecturers; three (21.4%) requested for their personal publications, which were meant to be submitted to the librarians. Four (28.6%) Libraries used a combination of the above to get their lecturers involved in the selection process. The three (21.4%) that did not involve the lecturers in the selection process indicated that the libraries were satisfied with professional librarians' recommendations. As for how the quantity of the grey literature could be increased, all the university libraries indicated that extra copies should be acquired.

TABLE 2: Proportion of Grey Literature versus Other Resources in University Libraries

S/No.	University	Books	Journals	<b>Grey Literature</b>
1	Ibadan	98.0	1.1	0.9
2	OAU (Ife)	96.8	1.7	1.5
3	Lagos	97.8	1.2	1.0
4	Benin	98.3	0.1	1.6
5	Ilorin	98.4	0.2	1.4
6	Port Harcourt	95.4	0.5	4.1
7	Maiduguri	97.1	0.3	2.6
8	Jos	95.0	3.0	2.0
9	Bauchi	94.6	3.2	2.2
10	Akure	95.1	1.3	3.6
11	Abeokuta	94.6	2.2	3.2
12	Markurdi	91.4	2.1	6.5
13	Uyo	96.7	1.2	2.1
.14	Awka	98.1	0.1	1.8

It is seen from Table 2 that the quantity of grey literature in university libraries was comparatively small to that of books and journals. The gap was particularly wide in first generation universities, such as, university of Ibadan with 98% being volumes of books and 0.9% being volumes of grey literature.

In rating the library's collection of grey literature, only three libraries – Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife, Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi and University of Maiduguri, Maiduguri rated their grey literature collections as adequate.

In considering the factors militating against the acquisition of grey literature, funds was rated as the most important factor by most libraries, lack of access (unavailability) of the grey literature was the second most important factor. Growth of publications was rated as the third and government policies, such as important factor. Incidentally only Bauchi rated funds, growth of publication and government policies as equally important. This could be an indication that the reduced financial commitment by the federal government to the university libraries was also important factors militating against library acquisition of grey materials.

After the selection as indicated earlier which involved lecturers and librarians and acquisition of the grey literature, making them available for use should be the next action. All the types of the grey literature were available for use in the university libraries. Some libraries indicated always available for use; some libraries indicated often available for use; and some indicated occasionally. The study found that there was not a time that the grey literature was not available for use when needed (See Table 3). The reasons why the grey literature might not have been available at the time of use were that the materials were in the bindery, they were in use, or the copies were missing.

TABLE 3: Availability of Grey Literature Collections in University Libraries

Item No	Item Description	Ava	ibraries				
		Alwa	ays (%)	Oft	en (%)	Occasi	onally (%)
1.	Government Documents	7	50	. 4	28.6	3	21.4
2.	Research Reports	6	42.9	4	28.6	4	28.6
3.	Dissertations	7	50	5	35.7	2	14.3
4.	Conference and Seminar Papers	5	35.7	5	35.7	4	28.6

N= 14

#### ORGANIZATION OF GREY LITERATURE

The organization of the grey literature for easy accessibility in the study was by the classification scheme, type of catalogue, indexing system and shelving system.

From the information collected from the university libraries and analysed, few of the libraries used electronic indexing. Thus, the catalogues used were mostly printed or card catalogues. Some libraries had their grey literature collection under closed access, so the library staff had to bring them out from the shelves. This was not likely to encourage the lecturers to use grey literature. In this electronic age, users are likely to prefer using online catalogues, or at least to browse through the shelves on their own if the materials were on open access.

Classification of Grey Literature:

Four of the libraries used internally generated schemes to organize their grey literature. These are Ibadan, Ife, Ilorin and Markudi. All others used the Library of Congress Classification Scheme (Awka, Abeokuta, Jos, Akure, Port Harcourt and Lagos), which they also used for other types of library materials. In addition to Library of Congress Scheme, Bauchi, Maiduguri and Benin also used some in-house scheme (See Table 4)

Type of Catalogue for Grey Literature

The physical form of the catalogues for grey literature and by the majority of the libraries was the card catalogue. The universities of Jos, Uyo, Makurdi, Ibadan and Lagos favoured printed catalogues. Only Abeokuta used Online catalogue, which it combined with card catalogue.

Indexing:

The subject approach was the most popular indexing mode used by the libraries. However some of the libraries used mixed pattern, such as Ife, which used both the author and source approaches, Uyo used subject and author approach, Abeokuta used subject, author and title approach, while Bauchi used subject, author and source approach. Only Abeokuta had the indexing done electronically, all others used manual method. After indexing, only Uyo did full abstracting, Ife abstracted only the disserations, and Jos abstracted only a few materials. The indexes and abstracts were not stored in databases, since most of the libraries did not do them electronically. Only three libraries namely, Lagos, Bauchi and Abeokuta have started computerization of their grey literature holdings. All others were still using manual procedures. (See Table 4)

Shelving of Grey Literature:

Eight libraries (57.1%) had closed access and others open access system. Some of the grey literatures were arranged on open shelves, some in steel cabinets and some in pamphlets boxes. A few of the libraries had special environment for preservation of the grey literature. For example, llorin kept the grey literature in special rooms which were air-conditioned.

The Libraries of universities of Ife, Bauchi, and Maiduguri indicated satisfaction to user-access of the grey literature in their libraries. All others found the collections just satisfactory. Incidentally, the three libraries that rated the collection of grey literature adequate also found the accessibility to the materials in the library satisfactory.

TABLE 4: Organization of Grey Literature in University Libraries

lor	University	Scheme Used	Catalogue	Shelving Type	Electronic System	Indexing
l.	Ibadan	In- house	Printed/card	Close access	No	Subject
2.	Awka	LC	Card	Open access	No	Subject
3.	Abeokuta	LC	Card/on-line	Open access	Yes	Title/ Author
4.	Jos Janeu	LC	Printed	Close access	No	Title
5.	Akure	LC	Card	Open access	No	Title
6.	Port Harcourt	LC	Card	Close	No	Author
7.	Bauchi	LC/in-house	Card	Close access	No	Subject/Author/ Title/Source
8.	Lagos	LC	Printed	Open access	No	Subject
9.	Uyo	LC	Card/Printed	Open access	No	Subject/ Author
10.	Benin	LC/in-house	Card	Close	No	Subject/ Source
11.	Ilorin	In-house	Card	Close access	No	Subject/Author/ Source
12.	Ife	In-house	Card	Close access	No	Author/ Source
13.	Markudi	In-house	Printed	Open access	No	Source
14.	Maiduguri	LC/In- house	Card	Close access	No	Subject/Author/ Title

N = 14

#### Discussion of Results

Majority (78.6%) of the universities indicated that they had collection development policies, but only 64.3% adhered to the policies. This could mean that university librarians do not attach much importance to grey literature collection. This is a costly mistake, because following the policy would have ensured that librarians in charge of grey literature would be more aggressive in the collection. The non-inclusion in the collection development policies could also be due to the production, distribution and non-conventional nature of grey literature. These and many other factors are militating against grey literature acquisition as given by (Thompson, 2001).

The university libraries indication that they used to involve lecturers in acquiring grey literature into the libraries seems to be just lip-service. If lecturers were actually involved, the quantity of grey literature would not be so low to that of books and journals (See Table 2).

The methods of acquisition for grey literature were legal deposit, glfts and exchange. This being so, should be no reason why grey literature would not always be available when needed as indicated in Table 3. The non-availability at times could be due to the fact that the libraries were not enforcing the rights of legal deposits or going out of their way to source for grey literature through gifts and exchange. In fact, the least used method of acquisition for grey literature as seen from Table 3 was exchange. It could be explained that though the materials were free, the time and effort expended to get them could discourage the not-too determined Librarian. Indeed, Gelfand (1997) have suggested that libraries have not practised an aggressive approach to collecting grey literature. The response from some librarians that Nigerian university libraries have not cultivated the culture of resource sharing could be a contributing factor.

Fifty percent of the libraries did not disclose what they budgeted for grey literature. Even those who budgeted spent less than five percent of the book vote for grey literature. This could be a pointer to the fact that those libraries did not expect to expend any fund on grey literature. The results of this study should serve to disabuse the minds of libraries in universities that grey literature is meant to augment books and journals. Following the suggestion of Johnson (1989) that increased budget could be made for grey literature if they were integrated into the library's collection development policies by subject rather than as a format mend be helpful.

Results from Table 2 clearly revealed the low proportion of grey literature when compared to books and journals. This is a challenge to university libraries that there must have been misplaced priority in acquisition of materials. If according to Mckimmie and Szurmak (2002) grey literature contain primary information, that is usually new, detailed and sometimes the only source, then its acquisition should be assuredly done more than before. If the university libraries continue with poor acquisition of grey literature, the implication is that the importance will further be reduced.

The results showed that organization of grey literature in university libraries did not follow the same pattern (Table 4). Most of the libraries even kept them as separate collections. The views of authors like Fatokun and Amusa (2014)) indicated that most university libraries keep grey literature separate

due to their peculiar nature of size, context, title change and author change. Thirteen out if fourteen university libraries used card or printed catalogues and they did the indexing manually. This could mean that these libraries had not computerized their library collections. This is not good for users in this electronic age when everyone wants to access information quickly. The non-computerization of collections will deter users, which indeed the study found out it did. The benefits of electronic organization of grey literature in terms of faster communication of information, expanded contents and greater number of information sources are well known. In fact, it is suggested that libraries should be willing to use tools like the web to access grey literature and even try to create their own formats on the web. Farrace (2000) in an interview opined that information professionals who are concerned with grey literature in the future will have very little to do with cataloguing. This is because access to networked information will require more skills in conceptualization.

Grey Literature collections being under close access in eight of the university libraries could deter lecturers from regular patronage. Lecturers who have little time to spend in the libraries will dislike a situation in which they will not be able to get materials on their own but depend on library assistants to bring them out. To encourage lecturers, university libraries will have to keep grey literature collections on open access. Placing grey literature on closed access negates the suggestion by Hutchinson (2001) that a library is truly accessible only if people are able to get in and use the resources.

Fifty percent of responding university libraries used in-house classification schemes, some in addition to Library of Congress scheme. In-house schemes will likely present difficulties to users who were used to Library of Congress scheme. It will be more practical and easier for university libraries if lecturers were not put off by having to learn new notations in order to use grey literature.

The implication of differing patterns of organizing grey literature in university libraries is that accessibility will be poor. The results indicated that most of the libraries rated the accessibility to their grey literature collections unsatisfactory. As the results have revealed, if some libraries perceived user-access to grey literature not satisfactory, a drastic measure ought to be taken to organize the materials in a better way. In Osayande and Ukpebor's (2012) opinion, lecturers would use the grey literature if it was easily accessible because it is the main source of indigenous information. Librarians need to find a better way of organizing grey

literature in university libraries. If poor organization continues, it would exaggerate the difference between other materials and grey literature.

#### Conclusion

The summary of the first major finding of the study showed that the proportion of grey literature when compared to books and journal was extremely poor. Secondly, the organization of grey literature in university libraries studied did not follow the same pattern. Thirdly, accessibility to grey literature was poor.

The conclusions drawn from the study were that the acquisition of grey literature by libraries in Nigerian universities is poor. Also there are no standards in the organization of grey literature in the libraries.

The implications of the results were that the low level of acquisition of grey literature has and will continue to reduce its level of importance; the differing patterns of organization would exaggerate the difference between conventional and grey literature the more. These led to the low level of accessibility as found out in the study.

### Recommendation

It is therefore recommended that first, Nigerian university libraries should endeavour to include acquisition of grey literature in their collection management policies. The inclusion would enable libraries and administrations to commit some funds from the library budget to sourcing of grey literature. Second, Nigerian university libraries should standardize the organization of grey literature. The Committee of University Librarians of Nigerian universities (CULNU) could agree on this. Third, libraries in universities should identify, use and interact with initiatives like "greylit.org" and "grey net" on the internet to access grey literature.

They should also avail themselves of trading and re-training to get maximum information from the internet.

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