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EFFECTS OF WEEDING STRATEGIES ON INFORMATION RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AMONG PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN NORTH-CENTRAL STATES OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated Effects of Weeding Strategies on Information Resources Management Among Public Libraries in North-Central States of Nigeria, the researcher observed that Every library's print collection is limited by the space available, and collections must change over time to reflect changes in the community and in the library's goals, as result, five (5) research questions and objectives were formulated with respect to how unwanted information resources managed, shelf-time period of information resources, effects of weeding on library organisation and services and the challenges of weeding in public libraries. Survey research method was adopted for the study and staff in the circulation, technical, reference, readers and collection development units of the public libraries in Plateau, Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Niger, Nasarawa and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) constituted the population of the study. Data were collected using questionnaire and observation, frequency tables and simple percentages were used to analyse the data collected for the study. The study found among others that public libraries in north-central states of Nigeria keep obsolete information resources in store rooms, basic tasks in library management include the acquisition, classification of acquired materials, preservation of materials (especially rare and fragile archival materials such as manuscripts), are affected by weeding activities. The study concluded that every library will have its own method for handling books pulled for discard.

Keywords: Weeding, Disselection, Strategies, Information, Resource Management

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study

In realization of the significant role played by education in the economic re-engineering of a nation, the present civilian administration in Nigeria has decided to give much attention to the restoration of the education sector. Since the Nigerian economy is labour-intensive with low human development index, only sound education and training can ameliorate the problem. To produce highly skilled manpower for the economy, Institutions of learning and information centres are set up to teach, research and offer community services. The management of public libraries in turn are aware that collection and organization of printed and other forms of recorded knowledge would enable them satisfy the information needs of both present and future users. To this end, balanced collection development is aimed at facilitating the efficient and effective provision of information to the library clientele, and weeding/deselection plays a major role in managing the resources of the library. Any library, whether public, academic, or even personal—needs to undergo regular evaluation and maintenance of its contents if the collection is to remain healthy and valuable.

Library work according to Zimmerman (2009) is an intricate mix of programs, services, and materials. It is important to recognize that weeding is but one part of the collection development process, which in turn is a part of the totality of work that the library managers do to make the library an important part of the community. The library's collection is the most tangible part of any library's service. The basis of the library's collection, as well as how it is developed and maintained, rests within its mission and the service priorities it has established through a formal or informal planning process.

Good library management principles begin with a planning process and an analysis of the needs of the community being served by the library. As good library managers, they have a responsibility to maintain a collection that is free from outdated, obsolete, shabby, or no

longer useful items. It's a little like Newton's Third Law of Motion: For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. For every item public library managers put on the library shelves, Slote (1997) asserted that they should at least be considering whether there are items that need to be removed. However, if one looks at the place of the collection within the library's mission and how a poorly maintained collection negatively impacts the ability to meet that mission, it should become clear that weeding is an important part of the process.

1.1.1 The Concept Of Weeding

Weeding is the periodic and continual evaluation of library's resources with the goal of removing obsolete, damaged, and rarely used books. Weeding ensures that the library's materials are useful, attractive, and accessible to patrons. Every library's print collection is limited by the space available, and collections must change over time to reflect changes in the community and in the library's goals, according to Nelson (2007) "Weeding" is the removal of materials that are judged by professional librarians to be in poor physical condition or to have become inaccurate due to changes in knowledge. Like all collection development processes, weeding should be covered by the library's collection development policy. Indeed, because weeding has the potential for being controversial, it is especially important for this process to be covered in the policy. The policy should clearly explain the purpose of weeding and explain in some detail why it is necessary. It should also explain the criteria that is used in choosing materials to be weeded, the process for weeding, who is responsible for carrying out the process, and how weeded materials are disposed.

What constitutes "poor physical condition" according to Zimmerman (2009) are Among the characteristics that can cause a piece of library material to become a weeding candidate are: food and drink stains that would attract insects or which obscure content, water damage caused by immersion of material in baths, hot tubs, or bad weather, melted plastic parts caused by exposure to excessive heat, mildew or mold, vandalism such as heavily

marked or sliced pages, failed bindings that cannot be repaired, broken parts that cannot be mended.

Besides poor physical condition, Bashir (1990) argues that Library materials intended to provide timely and factual information—particularly in areas where users need current and accurate guidance in order to survive, such as law, medicine, economics, and directories—should be kept up to date in the collection. Older materials the dated information of which provides now incorrect information must be weeded if library users are to rely on the collection as reflecting good information.

According to American Library Association Council (2009), The CREW method gives six general criteria for considering weeding an item from the library's collection. These have been summed up with the acronym MUSTIE

M= Misleading--factually inaccurate

U= Ugly--worn beyond mending or rebinding

S= Superceded--by a new edition of by a much better book on the subject

T= Trivial--of no discernible literary or scientific merit

I= Irrelevant to the needs and interests of the library's community

E= Elsewhere--the material is easily obtainable from another library

1.1.2 Public Library

A public library is a library that is accessible by the public and is generally funded from public sources (such as tax money) and operated by civil servants. There are five fundamental characteristics shared by public libraries (CREW, 2012). The first is that they are generally supported by taxes (usually local, though any level of government can and may contribute); they are governed by a board to serve the public interest; they are open to all and

every community member can access the collection; they are entirely voluntary in that no one is ever forced to use the services provided; and public libraries provide basic services without charge.

Buhari (2006) agreed that Public libraries exist in many countries across the world and are often considered an essential part of having an educated and literate population. Public libraries are distinct from research libraries, school libraries, and other special libraries in that their mandate is to serve the general public's information needs (rather than the needs of a particular school, institution, or research population). Ginaka (2007) posited that Public Libraries also provide free services such as preschool story times to encourage early literacy, quiet study and work areas for students and professionals, or book clubs to encourage appreciation of literature in adults. Public libraries typically allow users to take books and other materials off the premises temporarily; they also have non-circulating reference collections and provide computer and Internet access to patrons.

In addition to print books and periodicals, most public libraries today according to Gary (2001) have a wide array of other media including audio books, e-books, CDs, cassettes, videotapes, and DVDs as well as facilities to access the Internet and inter-library loans (borrowing items from other libraries). Readers' advisory is a fundamental public library service that involves suggesting fiction and nonfiction titles (often called "readalikes").

Public libraries may also provide other services, such as community meeting rooms, storytelling sessions for infants, toddlers, preschool children, or after-school programs, all with an intention of developing early literacy skills and a love of books. In person and on-line programs for reader development, language learning, homework help, free lectures and cultural performances, and other community service programs are common offerings. One of the most popular programs offered in public libraries are summer reading programs for

children, families, and adults. In rural areas, the local public library may have, in addition to its main branch, a mobile library service, consisting of one or more buses furnished as a small public library, serving the countryside according to a regular schedule (Doll, 2002).

Public libraries also provide materials for children, often housed in a special section. Child oriented websites with on-line educational games and programs specifically designed for younger library users are becoming increasingly popular. Services may be provided for other groups, such as large print or Braille materials, Books on tape, young adult literature and other materials for teenagers, or materials in other than the national language (in foreign languages)

1.1.3 Weeding In Public Libraries

The question of whether a public library collection should be weeded has long been a controversial topic in the field of librarianship, generating lively arguments about the advantages or disadvantages of weeding. As Segal, (2000) summarizes, the weeding debate can be traced back to Charles Francis Adams, Jr. and the Quincy Plan. Adams served as a library trustee for the Crane Memorial Public Library in Quincy, Massachusetts, which was built by Henry Hobson Richardson in 1882 . Richardson's designs, Roy reports, were notorious for not taking into account future growth of the collection, and the Quincy library was no exception. By 1892, there were 19,000 volumes in the collection, but the total projected capacity was only 20,000. Dire measures therefore had to be taken, and the so-called Quincy Plan—weeding all but the most popular materials, producing finding aids for readers, and transferring research materials to locations that were more convenient for potential users—was born. According to Zimmerman (2009), the plan caused great consternation, and heated discussion about it ensued at the 1893 American Library Association (ALA) convention. For example, William Poole, a founding member of the ALA, wrote that a concerted program of weeding would ensure that the library will have "no

books which will interest persons with an intellectual range above that of clod-hoppers and market gardeners." Rather than weeding, libraries should adopt a policy of "adding the books which elevate the literary and historical taste of the public, in meeting the wants of scholarly readers, and not neglecting to provide the books for the young and the less educated class" (Slote, 1997). Poole's comments about weeding were part of his campaign for better-designed and more capacious library buildings. In his mind, architects of libraries were overly concerned with aesthetic matters to the detriment of practical considerations such as sufficient space for books. He therefore wanted librarians to take the lead in developing new library buildings and floor plans, thus keeping a tight rein on the proclivity of architects for fanciful excesses(Bashir, 1990). If buildings were larger, weeding pressures would disappear or be mitigated.

In the 20th century, the debate about weeding followed, for all intents and purposes, the contours of the controversy surrounding the Quincy Plan. On one side are those who believe that weeding is all about space: space must be made for current, useful materials that will actually circulate and make the library more appealing. On the opposing side are those who believe that other considerations beyond mere numbers must be taken into account when operating a public library. Acadan (2008) Argued that "antique books are not a renewable resource" and that "the enormous strength of the historic preservation and collectibles movement belie claims that there is no demand for worthwhile old books and authors," Miller suggests that "every public library should establish a substantial American Heritage collection containing the whole works of classic authors of Anglo-American culture up to 1900" and that, if any weeding is to be done, it must be left to the most learned, experienced, and conservative of multidisciplinary information specialists simply because it takes a great deal of learning to know just how important minor authors are (Alabaster, 2002). Of course, a distinction should be made between the library's role with regard to retaining research materials and weeding of general collections. Central branches of systems often serve a

research function, and thus the question of weeding in such research-oriented public units should likely be applied on a different basis than in non-research oriented units.

Another consistent feature of the weeding debate is that almost all of the literature about weeding is advocacy-based and prescriptive in nature, with a few controlled studies about whether weeding fulfils its goal of increasing circulation. Segal (1997) suggests that books have "useful careers," but once these careers are over, they should be "retired" using a systematic approach that "streamlines your collection for efficient and reliable use making it easier and faster for the people of your community to find the facts, phrases, and stories they need". His approach includes three components: the number of years since the book's latest copyright data; the number of years since its last recorded circulation; and the presence of various factors he labels as "musty"—misleading, ugly, superseded, trivial, irrelevant to a particular library's collection. Suffice it to say therefore that same principle of weeding is adopted in the public libraries in Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

One of the dilemmas facing today's manager is that on one hand they seem to be suffering from information overload, yet on other hand, they often they complain about shortage of information needed to make vital decisions. Symptoms of overload are a growth of incoming information, including electronic mail, an explosion in the volume of information sources (there are over 10,000 business newsletter titles and a similar number of CD-ROM titles). Symptoms of scarcity are the lack of vital information for decision making, unexpected competitor moves and the inability to find the relevant 'needle in the haystack' There is also the crucial problem of exploiting an organisation's proprietary information as a strategic asset. Underlying these problems is that of having "the right information, in the right place, in the right format, at the right time"

The researcher observed that, the collections in public libraries are cluttered, unattractive and resources are often unreliable, this is judged by the stacks of dusty and non-core collections which constitute the bulk of the libraries resources, it has also been observed that the library users show no form of interaction with the library collections, with little or no interest in other services provided by the library

Perhaps due to poor weeding strategy, weak budget strength, prolonged shelf-time of information resources, fear of emptying out dated library collections without replacement, lack of motivated and trained library staff, and library managerial incompetence.

In view of the aforementioned, the study intends to assess the effects of weeding strategies on information resource management among public libraries in north-central states of Nigeria

1.3 Research Questions

This study will address the problems identified above by answering the following questions:

1. How are unwanted information resources managed in public libraries of Northern States of Nigeria?

2. What is the shelf-time period of information resources in Public Libraries of Northern States of Nigeria?

3. To what extent does weeding influence material organization in the public Libraries of Northern States of Nigeria?

4. How does weeding improve the services of the Public Libraries in North-central States of Nigeria?

5. What are the challenges of weeding materials in the public libraries of north-central states of Nigeria?

1.3 Research Objectives

The general objectives of the study is to determine the effects of weeding/deselction strategies on information resource management in public libraries of north-central states of Nigeria. In specific terms, the study has the following objectives:

1. To identify how unwanted information resources are managed in Public Libraries of North-central States of Nigeria

2. To determine the shelf-time period of information resources of Public Libraries in North-central States of Nigeria

3. To determine the extent in which weeding/deselection affects material organization of the Public Libraries in North-central States of Nigeria

4. To identify how weeding/deselection improves services in Public Libraries in North-central States of Nigeria

5. To pin-point the challenges of weeding/deselection of information resources in Public Libraries in North-central States of Nigeria

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study throws a spotlight on what lies ahead for the Library collection. It addresses the overall direction of the Public library's information resource development and justifies the need for an increased materials budget and the need for a carefully thought-out development strategy for the purpose of scholarship.

The study provides a blueprint to library managers, and librarians on when to weed, how to weed and benefits of weeding, dangers of not weeding, and the best weeding strategy to adopt in information resources management. government and private organisations, national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) among others will benefit from this study on areas to assist in the management and development of the library.

Similarly, the study will be of significant value to researchers in library and information science.

1.5 Scope/Delimitation of the Study

The study area covers all the public libraries in the north-central geo-political zone of Nigeria, including the Federal Capital Teritory (FCT), Abuja. The libraries consist: Kwara State Library, Plateau State Library, Stella Obasanjo library, Lokoja, Kogi State, Apo Library, Apo, Abuja, Benue state Library, Niger State library, Minna.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

In the process of conducting this study, a number of shortcomings were encountered. The researcher encounters problem of inadequacy of funds, time within which to complete the research thoroughly

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CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review the related literature to this study. This review centres on the effects of weeding/deselection strategy on information resource management among public libraries of north-central states of Nigeria. The following sub-themes are discussed:

2.2. Method of disposal of unwanted resources in public libraries

2.3. Shelf-time period of information resources in public libraries

2.4. Effects of weeding on Material organization in the library

2.5. Effects of weeding on public library services

2.6. Challenges of weeding/deselection in public libraries in Nigeria

2.7. Summary of the review

2.2. Method of disposal of unwanted resources in public libraries

One of the most difficult problems in weeding a collection is to actually dispose of the weeded materials. When some well-meaning members of the public find out that the library is "throwing books away," it may create a public relations problem for the library. For agencies and institutions, a book is not a permanent acquisition. Space limitations, collection development, and customer service dictate that periodic weeding or discarding of books occur. However, one library or school's unwanted book might be appreciated by another organization or individual. Environmental awareness also mandates that books be re-used rather than trashed (Baker, 2003). Once materials have been weeded, there are a number of ways in which they can be handled. Carey (2002) stated that in some cases, materials are repaired and returned to the collection. In others they are sent to other libraries or made available for purchase to members of their communities through book sales. And lastly some

materials are removed permanently from the collection, and are discarded. Every library will have its own method for handling books pulled for discard. Some use a printout from the online catalogue to record disposition decisions. Others use a pre-printed disposal slip that allows other staff to know how to process the discard.

The CREW method is well suited to using a simple, pre-printed disposal slip (placed in each book when it is pulled) that indicates whether the book is to be sold, donated, destroyed, mended, transferred, rebound, or replaced. Mend sparingly! Mending should not require longer than fifteen minutes nor be so extensive as to ruin the materials' appearance. Any item that cannot be mended within this time frame should be disposed of and replaced, if use warrants, with a newer copy or edition (Budd and Watt, 2002). Bind sparingly Before sending a book to a bindery, determine whether the continued value and use in the collection warrants the time and expenses to bind. Compare the cost of rebinding with the cost of a new copy or edition. Often, a new copy is almost as inexpensive and is more appealing; a rebound volume is not as attractive as a new book. For out-of-print titles and titles of important local interest, rebinding is the best option. The library may wish to remove and save the plastic covered dust jacket and/or barcode label from the book before sending it to the bindery, since they might possibly be reused on the rebound volume.

Futas, E., and Tyron, J. S. (2000) agreed that there are five basic ways to dispose of print or non print materials:

a. Sell It: to the public, either at a large annual sale or from a continuous sale rack; or to a used book dealer or pulp dealer, usually in large lots, or through online sales.

b. Donate It: donate books to a hospital, nursing home, adult or juvenile correctional facility, charitable institution, school district, or to a small library struggling toward system membership.

c. Trade It: with another library, or with a used book dealer, for a book your library can use.

d. Recycle It: by using a local contractor, perhaps in cooperation with local government agencies.

e. Destroy It: by burning in an incinerator or by tossing it into the trash. If the latter method is used, be sure the books won't be seen by someone passing by. Citizens might misunderstand the reasons for destroying 'valuable' books. Each method of disposal has its advantages and drawbacks, and its own preconditions:

In total submission to the assertion above, McKee, (2001) believed that selling promotes good public relations and is potentially profitable if the materials have some residual value, and if selling is done with the clear understanding that the items may contain dated information. Mark all discards clearly to avoid donations from well-intentioned, but ill-informed, patrons who return the books to your library. Books that cannot be sold should be recycled, destroyed or sold with other hopeless cases to a pulp dealer (if one is within driving distance). Jacob (2001) however added that public libraries should keep in mind that their governing authority (city, county, district) probably has rules about selling items that were purchased with taxpayer funds or that were donated to the collection. Be sure that they follow the rules In some cases, it is a matter of wording the transaction properly to remain within the rules. For example, it may be okay to sell 'surplus' materials or the 'asset' may need to be transferred to a group, such as the Friends of the Library, who can then handle the sale of weeded items. Most Friends groups hold annual or semi-annual sales that can be great community events(Breisch, 1997). Others may instead, or in addition, hold ongoing sales. Budd and Watt (2002) added that book sales also promote goodwill and generate publicity for the library. Some governing agencies require, or offer as an option, that old books be sold as surplus through the agency's purchasing department, although rarely does the library benefit from any proceeds of the sale. As a goodwill gesture, consider giving away books that don't

sell at the book sale. If local rules permit, allow interested people to cart off the excess inventory, saving the library the expense of hauling the books to the dump. This also allows the library to avoid public relations issues that may arise if the community perceives the library as 'throwing away perfectly good books.'

Moreso, Baker (2003) believed that donating is not a profitable method, but promotes good public relations if only very good discards are disposed of in this way. Carey (2002) argued that giving away junk does not promote good public relations, nor does it help the recipients. A childcare centre, for example, will remember kindly your donation of picture books even if the covers are shabby. Public libraries should sincerely consider the wants and needs of the recipient of their discards. For good quality books that are too technical for their collection, check with local universities to see if they can use the items. Even books that include outdated information, stereotypes, and such may be useful for a museum or history centre that focuses on the population or topic. If a book depository or branch is planned, you might store discarded second and third copies for such a purpose if they are in good condition and are likely to remain viable in a collection. Consider donating duplicates that are in good condition to a local hospital, literacy program, nursing home, or an adult or juvenile correctional facility (especially paperbacks and large type books). McKee (2001) warned that "Do not donate books that are in poor condition or that contain dangerously outdated information."

Futas and Tyron, (2000) opined that trading your 'best' discards is both excellent public relations and a shrewd financial move. Trading works with only two specific classes of discard: the high quality (or, at least, well-reviewed) item that is nonetheless of no interest to your community (e.g., a shelf sitter in Del Rio might be dynamite in Pampa, and vice versa); or the occasional donated duplicate of a good book of less than two-copy demand. Inquiries

about trades can be made over the phone, by email, by letter, or as part of the business of the Texas Library Association annual conference or regional system meetings

In another perspective, Miller (2004) stated that recycling services are now widely available and many communities encourage 'going green.' Recycling not only saves resources and improves the environment; it also helps control the rising costs of new books by holding down paper prices. Many community recycling programs accept the 'slick' paper that most magazines and vendor catalogs are printed on, as well as newsprint, making it easy to recycle discarded magazines and newspapers. Unfortunately, it is very difficult to recycle books. Paperbacks can often be recycled, but hardbacks are usually only recyclable if the covers are removed, a job that is very time consuming. Check with local recycling companies to ensure that you are not simply passing along 'garbage' that will either foul the recycling process or need to be hauled to the dump by someone else. Children's books that are worn or damaged beyond repair may also be 'recycled' by laminating the illustrations and putting them on craft sticks to make puppets for library story time, local child care centres, or teachers, or for creating flannel board versions of popular stories. Many crafters have begun to 'recycle' books into works of art such as hollowed out 'book boxes' to hide valuables or store items, or turning them into purses and other items. Some books have become so decrepit that they are no longer candidates for re-use. Some city recycling programs allow you to put paperbacks into your single-stream recycling bins, and other municipalities will recycle books if brought to a solid waste deposit. Check with your local recycling plant to see if they will take your old books for their paper. The advantage of this method is that the materials are delivered to an agency that can be informed that the materials are no longer needed, and so the chance of the materials being returned is reduced (Moore, 2002). This method may also be somewhat more acceptable in a political sense, since the books will be used again and you might even make a little money this way.

According to Rouse (1971), destruction should be reserved for materials in the worst physical condition, the absolutely hopeless cases, and then only as a last resort if the books cannot be recycled or sold for pulp. Quinn (2001) added that the advantage of this method is that it requires minimal time and effort. The major drawback is that the library derives no benefits, in money or public relations, from the discarded materials. Besides contributing to the already overflowing landfills, this method of disposal is likeliest to cause a 'weeding controversy,' since many people are shocked by the 'waste' of throwing 'good books' on the trash heap. Also, 'book burning' has unpleasant connotations (Roy, 2000). If the library can explain that only those books and non-print items in the worst physical condition get this treatment, they may be able to avert negative publicity. Moore (2002) posits that another potentially embarrassing situation that can occur is for well-intentioned patrons to 'find' library books in the trash and assume vandals have put them there. Although this method of disposal cannot be avoided, it should be the last resort.

Ritzer (1993) frowned at the situation where Some materials are weeded simply because they are in poor condition. In some cases such materials are no longer available for sale. If such materials do not have to be rebound, they may be removed temporarily from the collection to be repaired. They then will be returned to the shelves. Repaired books will never look as good as new, so the library need to be careful not to allow too many damaged books to be repaired and returned to the shelves. Often it is better to find a suitable replacement for a book that would otherwise be repaired. In other cases, materials which still have value to the community are taken from the shelf because of damage to their covers or binding. In these cases, if the material is no longer available for sale, the materials may be sent to a commercial bindery for repair. Upon their return from the bindery, they are returned to the shelves (Moore, 2002).

Moreover**,** Some materials that are weeded are no longer appropriate for smaller libraries, but they may be very useful in larger collections. For example, materials on a "hot topic" of several years ago may still be useful to a library serving a larger population, but may no longer be appropriate for a small collection. The advantage of this option for disposing of materials is that the materials remain available to the community through interlibrary loan, but valuable shelf space is not taken up by materials that are not likely to be used often (Roy, 1994).

Simon (2002) opined that Scan books into digital files with a book scanning service would be a profitable means of discarding weeded materials. Public libraries and e-books should be a perfect match. Libraries want as many readers as possible to have access to as many books as possible whatever their income or location. An e-book, which can be downloaded by any patron for free in their own home, presses all the right buttons.

2.3 Shelf-time period of information resources in public libraries

A variable has been uncovered, studied, applied and found to be of value in solving the weeding problem. This strong valid, positive, predictive, meaningful variable is called shelf-time period (Segal, 2000). Shelf-time period is the length of time a book remains on the shelf between uses. For practical purposes, it also may be considered an open-ended period, reflecting the time that has passed between the previous usage of a book and the day weeding is being done. In this case, the open-end shelf period measures a period still ongoing, and therefore it measures a period of time no less than next true shelf period would have been if the volume had been given opportunity to be used again.

To better understand the concept and use of shelf-time period, Simon, M.(2002) said that, replace the variable "green bindings" with the variable "one year shelf-time period." Suppose that every volume that was used during the entire history of a library had remained on the shelf less than one year since its previous use or its acquisition. This means that 100%

of the usage had a shelf-time period of under one year. If one then removes from the library shelves all the volumes that have remained on the shelves unused for one year or more, one would have removed books that will not be used in the future. The result would be a core collection that would likely retain 100 percent of the future use of the library.

Segal (2000) stated that theoretically, past use is not an absolute predictor of future use, but practically, in library after library where the assumption of predictability has been tested, it has been shown that past use has been a reliable, valid predictor of future use. Furthermore, in every case where shelf-time period has been used for weeding, contrary to expectations, usage was found to increase. Thus, this variable as a predictor of future use can be applied without fear of reducing the value of the collection.

Intuitively, Slote (2007) stated that most of librarians can accept the principles being advanced above. For example, if advised to remove all volumes that have experienced no usage in 20 years few would resist his advice. If a book has not been used in the last 20 years it seems unlikely that it will be used in the next 20 years. However, as the time span is reduced, resistance to weeding is increased. Truett (1990) stated that a few librarians would resist if asked to remove volumes not used for 10 years; and even more would resist five years. Under the methods to be described shortly, the cut-off point is frequently two or three years; and sometimes it is a little as one. And here massively resistance is likely unless librarians understand the underlying concepts.

Once librarians agree to the principle, it is necessary to measure the shelf-time periods of volumes in use and try to predict what will happen when books are removed from the shelves based upon such measurements.

Slote (2007) in his research showed that the amount of time since an item was last used is the best indicator of whether it will ever be used again. The longer it has been since an item was checked out, the more likely it is that it will never be checked out again. Slote also

discovered, in several studies, that after removing books that had not been used for awhile (he gives several ways of judging what that time period should be, depending on the space available on your shelves and other factors) circulation went up! This is the root of the truism that 'Weeding will increase circulation.' The full sentence should be: "Weeding by the shelf-time method will increase circulation."

2.4. Effects of weeding on Material organization in the library

Libraries have materials arranged in a specified order according to a library classification system, so that items may be located quickly and collections may be browsed efficiently (Alabaster, 2002). Some libraries have additional galleries beyond the public ones, where reference materials are stored. These reference stacks may be open to selected members of the public. Others require patrons to submit a "stack request," which is a request for an assistant to retrieve the material from the closed stacks. Larger libraries according to Baumbach and Linda (2006) are often divided into departments staffed by both paraprofessionals and professional librarians such as:

- Circulation (or Access Services) – Handles user accounts and the loaning/returning and shelving of materials.

- Collection Development – Orders materials and maintains materials budgets.

- Reference – Staffs a reference desk answering questions from users (using structured reference interviews), instructing users, and developing library programming. Reference may be further broken down by user groups or materials; common collections are children's literature, young adult literature, and genealogy materials.

- Technical Services – Works behind the scenes cataloging and processing new materials and deaccessioning weeded materials.

- Stacks Maintenance – Re-shelves materials that have been returned to the library after patron use and shelves materials that have been processed by Technical Services. Stacks Maintenance also shelf reads the material in the stacks to ensure that it is in the correct library classification order.

Basic tasks in library management include the planning of acquisitions (which materials the library should acquire, by purchase or otherwise), library classification of acquired materials, preservation of materials (especially rare and fragile archival materials such as manuscripts), the deaccessioning of materials, patron borrowing of materials, and developing and administering library computer systems. Bromann (2002) believed that more long-term issues include the planning of the construction of new libraries or extensions to existing ones, and the development and implementation of outreach services and reading-enhancement services (such as adult literacy and children's programming).

Moreso, weeding has played and continues to play a major role in library management and material organisation. According to Bazirjian (1990) weeding and circulation go hand in hand in library management, materials that have not been circulated for a reasonable period of time may be recommended for weeding in the library, and once removed from the library's collection, such a material has lost its circulation right. Three examples of controlled studies about weeding in public libraries provided mixed results about the positive effect of weeding on circulation. Dilevko (2003) after using the Slote method, observed that there was "a strong positive relationship between declining stock [due to weeding] and increasing circulation" Carey (2002) found that, after weeding, the "use factor" of the photography section increased from 25% to 33%, but that the "use factor" of the travel section remained at 9% [12]. Doll and Pamela (2002), after four rural Illinois libraries were weeded of 10% of their circulating adult collection, noted that there was "no significant increase in stock turnover rate, total circulation, or adult circulation". Additionally, in collection development, evaluation of

library collection is first of all carried out which includes weeding out materials that are no longer needed in the library before selection and order lists are prepared taking into cognisance the weeded materials for replacement (Garcia and Sandra 2007)

Greiner and Bob (2007) asserted that, weeding of library resources results in to the reorganisation of the library, the entire collection is reassessed, deaccessioned, decatalogued, and declassified, where newer materials acquired to replace the weeded ones are reassessioned, recatalogued, and reclassified; this no doubt is a herculean task of library organisation. Worthy of not is the fact that, this exercise is necessary as it keeps the collection in-tune with latest discoveries and provide current knowledge to patrons of the library.

2.5. Effects of weeding on public library services

One of the major aims of libraries especially the public library is to provide information to the clientele in a form that suits their educational level. The literacy level in Nigeria is still low. Handman (2002) realised this fact when he noted in his study of public libraries and community information services, that it is absolutely essential that information meant for people in lower social groups should not only be prepared and repackaged in forms suitable for them, but it should be delivered at the right time. According to Hogan (2008) Rural dwellers like audio-visual materials such as films, filmstrips, video tapes, records etc, because they have been accustomed to obtaining information through hearing rather than from reading. They find it easier to learn by seeing and listening. By providing printed and audio-visual materials related to folk activities, materials that take into account the levels of comprehension of the users, the library can promote reading. Information could be effectively disseminated through exhibitions, mass communication media and library public relations efforts, compilation of oral history, preparation of background histories on local traditional celebrations. Outreach work would involve organizing talks, meetings providing direct services to individuals and groups (Larson and Herman 2008).

2.5.1. The Services offered by Public Libraries and the effects of weeding

i.   Lending Services

All public libraries provide books which can be borrowed by members of the library. All kinds of books can be borrowed, fiction (such as the latest bestseller or a classic novel) and non-fiction (such as history, biography, science, travel, self-help, etc.). In addition to standard books, libraries also have copies of many books in "large print" format, which are popular with readers with a visual impairment. Weeding enables public libraries to lend out relevant materials to its patrons by taking out materials that are outdated and replacing with up-to-date materials (Nelson, 2007).

ii.   Children's Lending Service

According to Metz and Caryl (2005) ,In most libraries there are Adult and Junior sections. Children up to a certain age use the Junior section only which provides books and other materials especially for children. Books for children of all ages, from babies up to teenagers are available in the Junior library. Weeding keeps the children's collection up-to-date, with latest collections on books that appeal to children in modern times

iii.   Reserves and Requests

If the book a patron wants is already out on loan or weeded, the patron can reserve it by filling in a reservation form or placing a 'hold' on the item using the computerised library management system. The library staff or in some cases the system, will notify the patron when the book is available for the patron to borrow (Nelson, 2001).

Hoffmann and Richard (2007) stated that if the library does not have the book the patron want, the patron can request it, again by filling in a form. The library may purchase the book or may look for a copy through the "inter-library loan" system. This is a system through

which libraries in Ireland, the UK, Nigeria and around the world, loan items to each other for the use of library members. weeded materials are not loaned out.

iv.   Magazines and Newspapers

Public Libraries carry a range of journals and periodicals including national and local newspapers and magazines on a variety of topics. (e.g. business, health and lifestyle, gardening, science, nature, history.) they use these resources for the provision Current Awareness Services (CAS) to the serving community, these materials are continuously weeded to keep to track with current happenings within the community and beyond (Handman, 2002).

v.   Reference and General Information Services

According to Dilevko (2003) all public libraries have "reference" sections, containing books and other materials which can be consulted in the library. Reference sections typically include resources such as dictionaries, directories, encyclopaedias, government publications, business information, yearbooks and atlases. Some reference material, in particular business related material, is available on CD-ROM or over the Internet. The dangers of not weeding reference materials is that, current scientific discoveries would not be captured, in the case of a dictionary, new words and meanings find their way into our dictionaries in latest editions, for example, words like "air time", "ATM" among others were not found in older editions, therefore, public libraries need a continuous evaluation of reference materials through weeding to secure the currency of these resources (Alabaster, 2002).

Public Libraries can also provide contact details and information on the services provided by the county council or corporation and by government departments, including social welfare information, etc. Most libraries also hold a lot of local information about clubs and societies and events in their locality which these information may change therefore, existing

collections must be replaced with latest ones, for example, the previous map of Nigeria represented the federal capital territory as Lagos, once this map is not weeded, the public will continue to be misled (Segal, 2000).

vi.   Local Studies

All public libraries collect materials about the history of their county or locality. There is a huge range of material available including county and parish histories, maps, photographs, drawings, old records, and newspapers these materials need to be keep in check and weeded so that they will be relevant (McKee, 2001). Library services are also using technology, digital archives and microfilm reader/printers, to improve these services, making it easier for users to locate interesting information from local and national collections.

vii.   Internet services

Most of the public library services now have computers which the public can use to access the Internet (Jacob, 2001). In some cases you must be a member of the library to use the computers. Usually you will have to book a session in advance but you should check this in your local branch. Many libraries in Ireland now offer introductory sessions for new users; research and evaluate websites; provide online access to their library catalogues and other resources over the internet.

viii.   Self-directed Learning

Many public libraries, particularly the larger ones, provide resources to enable users learn or follow a course of study themselves. These include language learning booths, computer based training materials and user education programmes. This is made possible with materials and systems that are up-to-date as enabled by weeding.

2.6. Challenges of weeding/deselection in public libraries in Nigeria

The question of whether a public library collection should be weeded has long been a controversial topic in the field of librarianship, generating lively arguments about the advantages or disadvantages of weeding (Baker, 2003). Carey (2002) commented that "the smaller the town, the more heat the Library takes about weeding. In broad terms, lack of weeding is associated with fear, inertia, and a "packrat mentality," causing McKee (2001) to remark that it is "time to weed librarians who don't want to weed." From a philosophical perspective, weeding seems to be an issue that separates librarians who wish to preserve books that might one day be needed from librarians who are committed to a more streamlined and proactively managerial approach to library operations.

The constant press of other duties, coupled with the fact that weeding is a time-intensive activity, caused many librarians to complain that there never seems to be enough time to engage in as thorough a weeding as they would like (Budd and Watt 2002). Librarian hesitancy to weed individual titles or types of titles also was cited as an important factor discouraging weeding. According to Quinn (2001), Such hesitancy centered around local history materials, books by local authors, classics, out-of-print books, donated books, and items that an individual librarian had a hand in purchasing. Budd and Watt (2002) mentioned that they were concerned about the lack of money to replace weeded books. Roy (2000) noted that it was unpleasant to receive public complaints about weeded material. Perhaps the most intriguing responses came from three respondents who stated that they are reluctant to weed either because of state standards mandating a certain number of books per capita of population served or because of state funding formulae that tied an increase in collection development budgets to book titles held per capita.

According to Engeldinger (2006), the problems associated with weeding in public libraries could be summarized as:

i.   Time

ii.   Hesitancy in weeding local history materials

iii.   Hesitancy in weeding "classics"

iv.   Reluctance due to fear that item might be needed in the future

v.   No factors discourage weeding

vi.   No money to replace weeded books

vii.   Hesitancy in weeding out-of-print books

viii.   Hesitancy in weeding one-of-a-kind books (i.e., only book on a particular subject)

ix.   Vocal public opposition by members of general public and elected officials

x.   Hesitancy in weeding "hard to replace" materials

xi.   Hesitancy in weeding "high-demand" items even if such items are in poor condition

xii.   Hesitancy in weeding donated/memorial items

xiii.   Lack of staff

xiv.   No storage space available for weeded materials

xv.   Inclusion in standardized lists such as Public Library Catalog

If librarians recognize that there are many virtues to weeding, a number of factors nonetheless coalesce to inhibit weeding. Of these, lack of time is the most prevalent factor (Moore, 2002). The constant press of other duties, coupled with the fact that weeding is a time-intensive activity, caused many librarians to complain that there never seems to be enough time to engage in as thorough a weeding as they would like. Perhaps the most intriguing report came from Segal (2000) who stated that they are reluctant to weed either because of state standards mandating a certain number of books per capita of population served or because of state funding formulae that tied an increase in collection development budgets to book titles held per capita.

Roy, L. (2000) commented that "the smaller the town, the more heat the Library takes about weeding" because people get attached to their books and fear that "they won't get other books to take the place of the old ones." Yet public complaints may quickly turn into public praise once the initial reluctance to weed disappears. In this regard, Sandra (2001) stated that she weeded 15,000 books during a one-year period, and "the response from the public (heard frequently) was: Oh, it is so much easier to find things now." causing Metz and Caryl (2005) to remark that it is "time to weed librarians who do not want to weed." From a philosophical perspective, weeding seems to be an issue that separates librarians who wish to preserve books that might one day be needed from librarians who are committed to a more streamlined and proactively managerial approach to library operations.

Quinn (2001) indicated that weeding is often a herculean task A common sentiment is that librarians are never done weeding. For example, Moore (2002), a librarian, wrote that "we weed continuously. It takes us approximately 1.5 to 2 years to completely do the non-fiction collection. Then we start over again." Slote (2007) Another librarian noted that "staff are supposed to be weeding continuously and the extent of weeding is a factor in work performance evaluations. The primary reason for weeding print collections was the need to ensure accuracy of information, followed by the physical condition of the item, space constraints, and low circulation.

2.7 Summary of the review

It was discovered from the review that once materials have been weeded, there are a number of ways in which they can be handled. Carey (2002) stated that in some cases, materials are repaired and returned to the collection. In others they are sent to other libraries or made available for purchase to members of their communities through book sales. Lastly some materials are removed permanently from the collection, and are discarded. Every library will have its own method for handling books pulled for discard. Some use a printout

from the online catalogue to record disposition decisions. Others use a pre-printed disposal slip that allows other staff to know how to process the discard.

While discussing self-time period, it was noted that a Shelf-time period is the length of time a book remains on the shelf between uses. For practical purposes, it also may be considered an open-ended period, reflecting the time that has passed between the previous usage of a book and the day weeding is being done. In this case, the open-end shelf period measures a period still ongoing, and therefore it measures a period of time no less than next true shelf period would have been if the volume had been given opportunity to be used again.

Moreso, weeding has played and continues to play a major role in library management and material organisation. According to Bazirjian (1990) weeding and circulation go hand in hand in library management, materials that have not been circulated for a reasonable period of time may be recommended for weeding in the library, and once removed from the library's collection, such a material has lost its circulation right.

Weeding plays a major role in lending, reserve, and current awareness services. Also noted was that The dangers of not weeding reference materials is that, current scientific discoveries would not be captured, in the case of a dictionary, new words and meanings find their way into our dictionaries in latest editions, for example, words like "air time", "ATM" among others were not found in older editions, therefore, public libraries need a continuous evaluation of reference materials through weeding to secure the currency of these resources.

Conclusively, lack of time, Hesitancy in weeding local history materials, Hesitancy in weeding "classics", Reluctance due to fear that item might be needed in the future, No factors discourage weeding, No money to replace weeded books, Hesitancy in weeding out-of-print books, Hesitancy in weeding one-of-a-kind books (i.e., only book on a particular subject), Vocal public opposition by members of general public and elected officials, Hesitancy in

weeding "hard to replace" materials among others were noted as the major challenges associated with weeding.

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHOD ADOPTED FOR THE STUDY

3.0 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to determine the effects of weeding/deselection strategy on information resource management among public libraries of north-central states of Nigeria. To achieve this purpose, the research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, research instrument, method and procedure of data collection and statistical techniques are discussed in this chapter

3.1 Research Method Adopted for the Study

The research method adopted for this research was survey method. Osuala (2001) noted that survey research method can be used for both large and small population by selecting and studying samples chosen from a population to discover the relative incidence, distributions and interrelations of sociological and psychological variable. Also Babbie (2000) asserted that survey method might be used for descriptive and exploratory purpose. The researcher adopted this method because It has the advantages of wider application as it allowed data to be collected from not only a large population but it also involved the processes of obtaining data from a specific population, also, using the appropriate research instrument will help elicit the data

3.2 Population of the Study

The population comprises all the staff in the Circulation, technical, reference, readers and collection development units of the public libraries in North-central states of Nigeria. There are seven public libraries in north-central region of Nigeria including the federal capital territory (FCT), Abuja, the public libraries are in states like: Plateau, Benue, Kogi,

Kwara, Niger, and Nasarawa. Akintunde (2012) put the estimated staff of public libraries in North-Central states of Nigeria as two hundred and five (205)

3.3 Research Instrument

The data for this study will be collected using:

3.3.1 Questionnaire:

Questionnaire according to Omotosho (1994) is the form containing prepared questions to which the respondents are expected to provide answers. The instrument is suitable for this research because it enables the researcher to collect large amount of data within a spread geographical area as the scope of the study.

Representative questions are to be constructed and designed to suit the peculiar circumstances of the various respondents and to elicit the most appropriate or best responses from them. The questions are also to be designed to cover the entire spectrum of the effects of weeding/deselection strategy on information resource management among the public libraries under study. The questionnaire will be consisted of two sections, Section A contains questions about the bio-data of the respondents, while Section B will consist questions formulated from the research questions in chapter one

3.3.2 Observation

The researcher carried out a physical observation of the resources in the library in the course of distributing and collecting the questionnaire from respondents. Osuala (2001) opined that observation method is not only valuable and popular but it is sophisticated because it eliminates biases that are common in participant and structural observation.

The physical observation gave the researcher the opportunity to give vivid account of the physical infrastructure and resources available to meet the information needs of users.

3.4 Procedure For Data Collection

Two working weeks, with the help of two research assistance from each of the selected institutions were used to administer the questionnaire. All the library staff in the collection development units in all the shifts were contacted. The 5th library user was given a questionnaire upon entrance into the library until the required sample number was achieved.

3.5 Procedure For Data Analysis

The data collected from questionnaire were analysed using descriptive analysis as expressed in percentage and in tabular form. This statistical method was chosen because it affords the researcher an opportunity for an in-depth analysis and prove relationships between different variables.

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CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data collected for the study. It further analyses and discusses the data according to the research questions raised in the study the analysis of the data collected are presented in tables of frequencies and percentage and illustrated with graphical presentation.

4.2 Response Rate

Questionnaires for this study were distributed to the estimated 205 library staff saddled with the task of information resource development, constituting the respondents of the study.

Tables 4.1: Response Rate

Respondents	No. of questionnaires distributed	No. of questionnaires returned	Percentages
Collection Development staff	41	**37**	
Reference staff	41	**40**	
Circulation staff	41	**35**	
Technical staff	41	**41**	
Readers Service	41	**39**	
Total	205	**192**	88.8%

Two hundred and five questionnaires (205) were administered on stakeholders in information resource management in public libraries. it is amazing that One hundred and ninety two (192) questionnaires constituting (88.8%) were found to have been successfully filled and returned. The high response rate recorded from table 4.1 above could be attributed to the researchers personal visits and administration of questionnaires to the respective subjects of study.

4.3: Data Presentation And Analysis

This section presents the analysis and discussion data that were collected for the study through descriptive analysis with respect Questions raised in the study. The data collected from the two categories of the population were also presents and analyses separately for the sake clarify. The data for the library staff (24) were presented first followed by the library user (223)

4.4: Bio-data of Respondents

Table 4.2: Sex and Educational Qualification of Respondents

Variable	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	82	42.7%
	Female	110	52.3
Educational Qualification	Secondary School Certificate	61	31.8%
	Diploma in Library Science	70	36.5%
	HND in Library Science	7	3.6%
	Bachelor of Library and Information Science	24	12.5%
	Master of Library and Information Science	11	5.7%
	Ph.D Library and Information Science	0	0%

	Others 19		9.9%
Total		192	100%

Table 4.2 depicts an amazing majority of the female staff in the public libraries of North-central states of Nigeria owing to the fact that, working at the public library affords the female folks the time for family and child upbringing. This result has no doubt cleared the perception of many on the dominance of the male folks in public libraries under study

Table 4.3 surprisingly depicts the majority of staff in public libraries of North-central states of Nigeria as possessing a Diploma in Library and Information science (36%), followed by Secondary School Certificate. However, respite came with a reasonable number of Bachelor of Library and Information Science and a few Masters holders who are capable of stirring the information resource management of their libraries

This result is also important because it provides a foundation for accessing the weeding program in the public libraries under study, a more qualified personnel no doubt would stir a more qualified weeding and information resource management program

4.5: Management of Unwanted Information Resources

Table 4.3 Number of years working in the library

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Less than one year	4	2.1%
1-5 years	8	4.2%
6-10 years	79	41.1%
11-15 years	26	13.5%
16-20 years	68	35.4%

More than 21 years	7	3.6%
Total	192	100

Majority of the respondents in table 4.4 have been working in the library for 6-10 years with about 41.1% of the total responses. It is amazing that staff that have worked for less than a year recorded the lowest percentage of about 2.1%. this result set a foundation for a credible data generation, this is because as asserted by Simon (2002), Information Resource Management is the job function of the experienced library staff. 6-10 years is enough to provide the staff with the necessary experience and expertise.

Table 4.5: Library's Major Source Of Funding

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Parent Organization (state govt)	163	84.9%
Levies from Patrons	5	2.6%
Grants From Foreign/Local Donor Agencies	22	11.5%
All of the Above	2	1.1%
Total	192	100%

The result in table 4.5 depicts an overwhelming dependence on the state government and secondly, donor agencies, this goes further to tell on the integrity of the collections of the library. Bromann (2002) believed that the budget strength of public libraries is the starting point for any virile information resource management. Alabaster (2002) added that public libraries are underfunded and depend solely on their parent organization, levies from patrons and grants from donor agencies to finance information resource development.

It is pertinent to note therefore that public libraries in north-central states of Nigeria depend solely on state governments which are nonchalant and not committed to library funding thereby affecting information resource management in public libraries negatively.

Table 4.5: Percentage Of Funds Dedicated For Information Resource Development

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
10-40%	58	30.2
40-70%	24	12.5%
70-100%	5	2.6%
No idea	105	54.7%
Total	192	100%

Information resource development as any services of the library requires funds for its proper execution. This aimed at understanding the percentage of funds allocated for information resource development. Table 4.3 above surprisingly shows that 54.7% of the library staff have no idea of the percentage of fund allocated for information resource management. this result show that the information resource development staff have no idea of what percentage is allocated for information resource development. This confirms the opinion of Slote (2007), that the collection of the library deteriorates because funds meant for collection of information resources are shrouded in secrecy.

Table 4.6: Period of time newly acquired materials are available for use

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
2-4 weeks	89	46.4%
1-2 months	70	36.5%
3-5 months	3	1.6%

No idea	30	15.6%
Total	192	100%

In determining shelf-time allocation period of information resources, table 4.6 assesses how early newly acquired resources are processed and made available for use. It is amazing to note that from table 4.6 above,89(46.4%) being the highest, said that it takes 2-4 weeks for acquired resources to be processed and made available for use. This result confirms Simon (2002) who asserted that information resources in the library are for use and should not be kept away from patrons, by this result, the second research objective which seek to determine the period of time it takes for an information resource to find its way to the open shelf in public libraries is achieved

table 4.7: How the library determines information resource usage

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Keeping track of the number of patrons into the library daily	89	46.4%
Taking statistics of heavily used materials in the library	26	13.5%
Statistics of loaned out materials	69	35.9%
All of the above	97	50.2%
Total	192	100%

It is pertinent to note that determining the use of the library materials is mostly a combination of several procedures, such as keeping track of patrons in the library, taking

statistics of heavily used materials in the library and loaned out materials (Carey, 2002). In confirmation to this assertion, table 4.7 shows a whopping 50.2% agreeing that determining library use is a combination of the above listed options. This no doubt has answered the first research question, where before an unwanted resource will be determined, the patronage it attracts must first be ascertained.

Table 4.8: How obsolete information resources treated in the library

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Destroyed	13	6.8%
Kept in a store room	86	44.8%
Donated to weaker libraries	28	14.6%
Left on the shelves	65	33.9%
Total	192	100%

Dealing with weeded materials is an important aspect of information resource management. Based on table 4.8, it is clear that public libraries under study keep obsolete information resources in store rooms. The problem with this strategy according to Engeldinger (2006) is that, the resources in the store rooms will require some sort organisation which entails a fresh accessioning, cataloguing, classification and shelving. It is almost like creating another library which is definitely an herculean task. The result in table 4.8 throws more light on the third research question as to how weeding affects material organisation in the library.

Table 4.9: What qualifies an information resource for weeding

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
No longer used by patrons	17	8.9%

though current		
When the information contents are out of date	115	59.9%
Five-year life cycle policy of resources on the shelves	20	10.4%
No idea	40	20.8%
Total	192	100%

In assessing the criteria for weeding of unwanted information resources, table 4.9 depicts an interesting result, 115 library staff constituting 59.9% being the highest, indicated that a library material is weeded when the information contents are out of date. An amazing 20.8%% of the respondents have no idea of the criteria for material weeding. Simon (2002), in his research showed that the amount of time since an item was last used is the best indicator of whether it will ever be used again. The longer it has been since an item was checked out, the more likely it is that it will never be checked out again.

The result from this table shows that currency of information in the acquisition process

Table 4.10: How long materials stay on the shelf before removal from the shelf

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1-12 months	0	0%
1-3 years	12	6.2%
4-6 years	119	61.9%
7-9 years	61	31.7%

Total	192	100%

Table 4.10 attempts to answer the second research question, it is noted that one hundred and nineteen (119) out of the one hundred and ninety two (192) respondents stated that information resources on the shelves of their libraries stay for as long as 4-6 years before being weeded. This result complements the findings of Hoffmann and Richard (2005), they stated that most of librarians can accept the principles being advanced above. For example, if advised to remove all volumes that have experienced no usage in 20 years few would resist his advice. If a book has not been used in the last 20 years it seems unlikely that it will be used in the next 20 years.

Table 4.11: How often information resources are evaluated for weeding

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Quarterly	0	0%
Annually	60	31.2%
Bi-annually	30	15.6%
After five years	102	53.1%
Total	192	100%

It is pertinent to note from table 4.11 that none of the libraries under study carry out a quarterly evaluation of its collections. It is noted that, about one hundred and two (102) representing over fifty three percent (53.1%) being the highest said that the collection of their libraries are evaluated after five years. This has thrown more light on the second research objective which seek to ascertain the shelf-time of materials on the open shelves, to do that successfully, Handman (2002) said that an evaluation of the entire collection must be carried

out. It is clear now that the public libraries in the north central states of Nigeria carry out evaluation of their collections for weeding after five years.

However, Slote (2007), a librarian noted that "staff are supposed to be weeding continuously and the extent of weeding is a factor in work performance evaluations. The primary reason for weeding print collections was the need to ensure accuracy of information, followed by the physical condition of the item, space constraints, and low circulation"

Table 4.12: Significance of weeding to material organization

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Significant	173	90.1%
Not significant	19	9.9%
Total	192	100%

Basic tasks in library management include the planning of acquisitions (which materials the library should acquire, by purchase or otherwise), library classification of acquired materials, preservation of materials (especially rare and fragile archival materials such as manuscripts), the deaccessioning of materials, patron borrowing of materials, and developing and administering library computer systems.

Table 4.12 shows and amazing agreement on the significance of weeding to material organisation in the library. 90.1% of the respondents believed that weeding is significant. In a related case, Bromann (2002) asserted that weeding and circulation go hand in hand in library management, materials that have not been circulated for a reasonable period of time may be recommended for weeding in the library, and once removed from the library's collection, such a material has lost its circulation right

Table 4.12 has addressed the third research question raised in chapter one, which seek to understand the effects of weeding to material organisation in public libraries

Table 4.13: Areas weeding is significant to information resource management

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Selection and Acquisition of information resources	6	3.1%
Charging and discharging of information resources	1	0.5%
Furniture and shelf arrangement of the library	1	0.5%
Staff recruitment and training	1	0.5%
All of the above	183	95.3%
Total	192	100%

Still, in order to achieve the third research objective raised in chapter one, the 'all of the above' option in table 4.13 witness an overwhelming majority of 183 (95.3%); which means, weeding influence all areas and departments of the library, Alabaster (2002) added that even the physical architecture of the library is influenced by weeding. Here it is clear that Selection and Acquisition of information resources, Charging and discharging of information resources, Furniture and shelf arrangement of the library, Staff recruitment and training are significant areas of information resource management influenced by weeding/deselection.

Table 4.14: Aspects of library management most affected by weeding

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Readers services	3	1.6%

Circulation Services	3	1.6%
Reference Services	9	4.7%
Collection development services	32	16.7%
Technical Service	3	1.6%
All of the above	142	73.9%
Total	192	100

Readers, circulation, and technical services recorded the least frequency in table 4.14 above, in consolation therefore, the highest frequency of 142 (73.9%) recorded is for all the above listed options which include readers, circulation, reference, collection development and technical services. This result implies that weeding influences all the services rendered in the library.

Additionally, Greiner and Bob (2007), asserted that, weeding of library resources results in to the reorganisation of the services rendered in the library, the entire collection is reassessed, deaccessioned, decatalogued, and declassified, where newer materials acquired to replace the weeded ones are reassessioned, recatalogued, and reclassified; for the provision of Current Awareness Services (CAS), Bibliographic Services, Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) among others; this no doubt is a herculean task of library organisation. Worthy of note is the fact that, this exercise is necessary as it keeps the collection in-tune with latest discoveries and provide current knowledge to patrons of the library.

This has successfully answered the fourth research question earlier raised in chapter one. Figure 4.1 below explains more
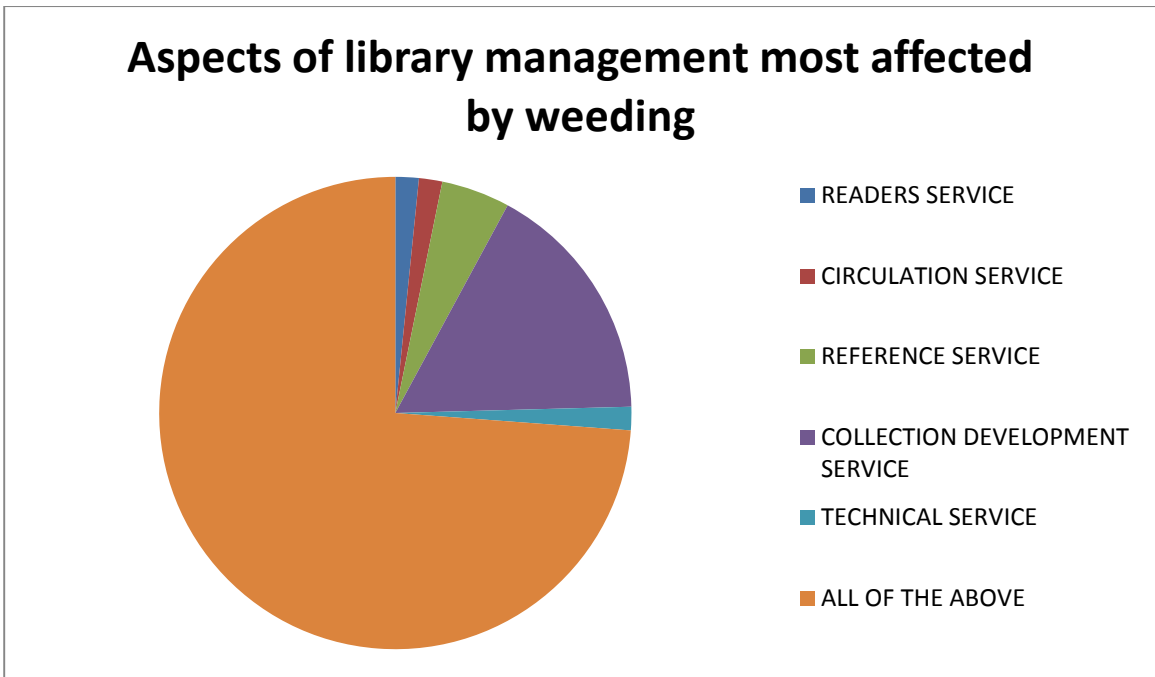
Figure 4.1: **Aspects of library management most affected by weeding**

Table 4.15: Major challenges of weeding information resources in the library

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
No money to replace weeded books	0	0%
Reluctance due to fear that item might be needed in the future	0	0%
No storage space available for weeded materials	0	0%
Time	0	0%
All of the above	192	100%
None of the above	0	0%
Total	192	100

The question of whether a public library collection should be weeded has long been a controversial topic in the field of librarianship, generating lively arguments about the advantages or disadvantages of weeding (Engeldinger, 2006).

librarians have earlier recognized that there are many virtues to weeding, but a number of factors nonetheless coalesce to inhibit weeding. The result from table 4.15 confirmed this assertion, where an amazing 100% of the respondents agreed that challenges such as: No money to replace weeded books, Reluctance due to fear that item might be needed in the future, No storage space available for weeded materials, time among several others have continuously inhibited weeding in public libraries

Based on the foregoing, the fifth research question of major challenges of weeding has been answered

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This Chapter presents the summary of the study, summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations.

5.2 Summary Of The Study

This study investigated the effects of weeding/deselection strategies on information resource management among public libraries in north-central states of nigeria. They centered on the budget strength of the libraries, how unwanted information resources are managed; the shelf-time period of information resources, effects of weeding on material organisation, how weeding improves services in the libraries and the challenges of weeding/deselection of information resources in Public Libraries in North-central States of Nigeria. Relevant literatures were also reviewed. Survey research method was used and the library staff were the population of the study from the public libraries in north-central states of Nigeria A total of 192 respondents were therefore used for the study. Questionnaire and observation were the

instruments used for date collection. The data was analyzed and presented using frequency distribution tables and simple percentages.

5.2.1 Summary of the findings

In the light of the above analyses and discussions, it was discovered that:

1. Majority of the staff in the public libraries of North-central states of Nigeria are female

2. Majority of staff in public libraries of North-central states of Nigeria possess a Diploma in Library and Information science followed by Secondary School Certificate holders

3. Majority of the staff in the public libraries in North-central states of Nigeria have been working in the library for 6-10 years.

4. There is an overwhelming dependence on the state government and secondly, donor agencies, for the funding of public libraries in North-central states of Nigeria.

5. Information resource management staff have no idea of what percentage is allocated for information resource management

6. It takes 2-4 weeks for acquired resources to be processed and made available for use.

7. Determining the use of the library materials is mostly a combination of several procedures, such as keeping track of patrons in the library, taking statistics of heavily used materials in the library and loaned out materials

8. Public libraries under study keep obsolete information resources in store rooms. The problem with this strategy according to Emorjorho (2004) is that, the resources in the store rooms will require some sort organization which entails a fresh accessioning,

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cataloguing, classification and shelving. It is almost like creating another library which is definitely an herculean task.

9. Library material is weeded when the information contents are out of date

10. Information resources on the shelves of public libraries under study stay for as long as 4-6 years before being weeded.

11. None of the libraries under study carry out a quarterly evaluation of its collections. It is noted that, about one hundred and two (102) representing over fifty three percent (53.1%) being the highest said that the collection of their libraries are evaluated after five years.

12. Basic tasks in library management include the acquisition, classification of acquired materials, preservation of materials (especially rare and fragile archival materials such as manuscripts), the deaccessioning of materials, patron borrowing of materials, and developing and administering library computer systems. Making weeding very significant to material organisation

13. Selection and Acquisition of information resources, Charging and discharging of information resources, Furniture and shelf arrangement of the library, Staff recruitment and training are significant areas of information resource management influenced by weeding/deselection.

14. All the above listed options which include readers, circulation, reference, collection development and technical services are services affected by weeding

15. Challenges such as: No money to replace weeded books, Reluctance due to fear that item might be needed in the future, No storage space available for weeded materials, time among several others have continuously inhibited weeding in public libraries

5.3   Conclusion

This study investigated the effects of weeding/deselection strategies on information resource management among public libraries in north-central states of Nigeria. from the analysis of the data from the respondents, it was concluded that public libraries operate in a dwindling financial situation upon which all stakeholders of the library play a part in the development of information resources in the libraries. weeding has played and continues to play a major role in library management and material organisation It was also discovered from the review and analysis that once materials have been weeded, there are a number of ways in which they can be handled. In some cases, materials are repaired and returned to the collection. In others they are sent to other libraries or made available for purchase to members of their communities through book sales. Lastly some materials are removed permanently from the collection, and are discarded. Every library will have its own method for handling books pulled for discard

librarians have recognized that there are many virtues to weeding, but a number of factors nonetheless coalesce to inhibit weeding such as: No money to replace weeded books, Reluctance due to fear that item might be needed in the future, No storage space available for weeded materials, time among several others have continuously inhibited weeding in public libraries

5.4   Recommendation

Base on the findings of this study, the researcher wishes to make the following recommendations:

1. Public libraries should devise another source of income such as engaging in consultative activities.

2. Public Libraries should have a carefully laid out information resources development policy

3. Funds should be allocated for "standing order" i.e materials needed urgently in the library not waiting for weeding period

4. There should be periodic examination of the pattern of information resources utilization in the library to assess relevance

5. Currency of information resources should not be the only criterion for acquisition and weeding, the literary quality and educational value of such resources should also be considered

5.5   Suggestions for Further Study

1. An assessment of the information technology for information resources management.

2. The study of the management of funds in information resource management.

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APPENDIX 1

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

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This questionnaire solicits for information from staff of public libraries with a view of assessing the effects of weeding/deselection strategies on information resource management among public libraries in North- Central states of Nigeria. Responses will be treated in strike confidence and will only be used for academic purpose

Instructions: Tick [/] as may be applicable.

Section A: Biodata

1. Sex

   Male (a) [   ]   (b) Female [   ]

2. Highest Educational Qualification

   a. Secondary School Certificate   [   ]

   b. Diploma in library and information science   [   ]

c. Higher National Diploma in Library and Information Science   [   ]

d. Bachelor of Library and Information Science   [   ]

e. Master of Library and Information Science   [   ]

f. Ph.D Library and Information Science   [   ]

g. Others please specify…………………………………………………………………

Section B Management of Unwanted Information Resources

3. What qualifies an information. resource for weeding in your library?

    a. No longer used by patrons though current   [   ]

    b. When the information contents are out of date   [   ]

    c. Five-year life cycle policy of resources on the shelves   [   ]

    d. No idea

4. How are obsolete information resources treated in your library?

    a. Destroyed   [   ]

    b. Kept in a store room   [   ]

    c. Donated to weaker libraries   [   ]

    d. Left on the shelves   [   ]

    d.   [   ]

Section C: Shelf-time period of Information Resources in your library

5. How long does it take newly acquired resources to be available for use by patrons?

    a. 2-4 weeks   [   ]

    b. 1-2 months   [   ]

    c. 3-5 months   [   ]

    d. No idea

6. How long does a material stay on the shelf before removal from the shelf?

    a. 1-12 months   [   ]

b. 1-3 years   [   ]

c. 4-6 years   [   ]

d. 7-9years   [   ]

7. How does the library determine information resources usage?

   a. Keeping track of the number of patrons into the library daily   [   ]

   b. Taking statistics of heavily used materials in the library   [   ]

   c. Statistics of loaned out materials   [   ]

   d. All of the above.

Section E: effects of weeding on material organisation your library

8. How often are the information resources evaluated for weeding in the library

   a. Quarterly   [   ]

   b. Annually   [   ]

   c. Bi-annually   [   ]

   d. after five years   [   ]

9. how significant is weeding to material organization in your library?

   a. Significant   [   ]

   b. Very significant   [   ]

10. In what department of the library is the effect of weeding most pronounced

   a. Selection and Acquisition of information resources   [   ]

   b. Charging and discharging of information resources   [   ]

   c. Furniture and shelf arrangement of the library   [   ]

   d. Staff recruitment and training   [   ]

   e. All of the above   [   ]

   f. None of the above   [   ]

Section D: Effects of Weeding on Library Services

11 Tick as appropriate Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Strongly Disagreed (SD), Disagreed (D).

Weeding affects service delivery in the library	(SA)	(A),	SD	D

11. In what way does weeding affect services in the library

   a. Positively

   b. Negatively

12. What aspect of library management is most affected by weeding in your library?

   a. Readers services   [   ]

   b. Circulation services   [   ]

   c. Reference services   [   ]

   d. Collection development services   [   ]

   e. Technical services   [   ]

   f. All of the above   [   ]

13. What library service is most improved by weeding activities in the library

   a. Current Awareness Services (CAS)

   b. Bibliotherapy Services

   c. Bibliographic Information Services

   d. Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)

   e. Referral information Services (RIS)

   f. All of the above

Section E: Problems of Weeding Information Resources

14. Which is the major challenge of weeding information resources in your library?

a. No money to replace weeded books   [   ]

b. Reluctance due to fear that item might be needed in the future   [   ]

c. No storage space available for weeded materials   [   ]

d. Time   [   ]

e. All of the above   [   ]

f. None of the above   [   ]