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# The Challenges of Selection and Acquisition of Grey Literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi

Beetseh Kwaghga

*University of Agriculture Makurdi, beetsekwaghga@gmail.com*

AKPE DOO PRECIOUS

*Library Department Federal University of Agricultural Makurdi Nigeria. PMB 2373, preshdoo@gmail.com*

Ajav I. Gabriel

*The University Library, Nasarawa State University Keffi, Nigeria., ajavgabriel@yahoo.com*

OKECHUKWU OBEDIAH CHUKWUKA

*Federal Polytechnic, Nasarawa" Department of Library and Information Science, obedex4real2002@yahoo.com*

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**The Challenges of Selection and Acquisition of Grey Literature in Francis Sulemanu  
Idachaba Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi**

**By**

**AKPE PRECIOUS DOO.**

Library Department Federal University of Agricultural Makurdi

Nigeria. PMB 2373

[preshdoo@gmail.com](mailto:preshdoo@gmail.com)

Gabriel I. Ajav

The University Library, Nasarawa State University Keffi, Nigeria.

[ajavgabriel@yahoo.com](mailto:ajavgabriel@yahoo.com)

**OKECHUKWU OBEDIAH CHUKWUKA**

Federal Polytechnic, Nasarawa” Department of Library and Information Science

[obedex4real2002@yahoo.com](mailto:obedex4real2002@yahoo.com)

**Abstract**

*This study was designed to examine the challenges of selection and acquisition of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi. Six research questions were answered. The population for this study was 89 subjects comprising all staff both Professionals and Para-professional from University of Agriculture Makurdi library. There was no sampling for the study. The entire population of 89 was used for the study as sample. Findings of the study revealed types of grey Literature provided, processes of selecting grey literature, methods of acquisition of grey literature, methods of processing of grey literature, extent to which grey literature and the strategies for improving on the selection and acquisition of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi. The study concluded that there are strategies could be adopted for improving the selection and acquisition of grey literature. It was recommended that the government should make provision for adequate funds for acquisition of grey literature, University management should embark on regular review and supply of new grey materials, regular review and supply of new grey materials the library and creation of proper awareness to both teachers and students on the role of grey literature.*

**Key words:** Challenges, Selection, Acquisition and Grey Literature

## **Introduction**

The main objective of establishing any library is to satisfy the needs of its clientele by providing the aim of setting up a library in any institution through its selection and acquisition of materials, adequate collection required by the users should be made available to them at the right time.

Selection as the process of choosing library materials to satisfy the needs for inclusion in a library with a view to providing a balanced increase to the stock. (Anyanwu, Amadi and Zander, 2006) according to Nwalo, (2003) Book selection is the art of choosing items to be acquired from a list of publication in every library of any university, there should be a specific policy with regard to selection of materials. This policy should specify the type and range of items to be selected and acquired and reflect the objectives of the parent's institution.

Acquisition can be defined as the process of obtaining library materials to satisfy the needs of users, and its work, it's a means by which books and non-books materials are added to the library.

Moreover, the essence of selection and acquisition of library materials in academic libraries is to know the materials relevant to them. Selection of library materials is important because of literature explosion, reduction in library budget, reduction in income of library users. Good selectors should aim, at satisfying existing demand, anticipate future needs by users and ensure that good quality materials are provided, avoid bias in selection and ensure that the right kind of materials are provided at the right time.

Ojebode (2009) and Eze &Eze, (2006) identified processes involved in books selection by one person, selection meeting/selection committee and specialized group. In selecting/acquisition of materials for academic libraries you must consider the aims and objectives of the institution, the

number of department and subject areas. The number of faculty member's research and teaching needs and the nature of materials required in terms of books and non-book materials. In academic library, materials selected/acquired are meant to cater the support of the curriculum, which means the impute/attribute of the teaching staff is usually required in selecting appropriate materials for the students in most academic libraries the library committee carries out the selection of library materials. Furthermore, in acquisition, of times acquisition librarian is included in selection in acquisition, their responsibility is also in selection of library materials.

Selection and acquisition are terms used in provision of library materials. Selection is the process of choosing while acquisition is the process of obtaining library materials (Anyanwu, Zander & Amadi, 2006) selection must precede acquisition, what to select depends on the type of library since the library is interested in serving primarily its clients which could be homogenous or heterogeneous (Hlwiki, 2012). Book selection is used as a generic term covering the selection of both book and non-book materials for library. Acquisition on the other hand is a process of obtaining books and other items for the library, documentation centre, or archives (Manson, 2012).

Acquisition is carried out through purchase, gift, exchange and legal deposit. Provision of current information which supports the curriculum of the parent institution is because of selection and acquisition in the academic libraries. The following factors are considered in selecting materials for academic libraries; Aims and objective of the institution are the number of faculty members, the number of departments/subject's areas, research and teaching needs, the nature of materials required in terms of book and non-book. There is a specific library acquisition policy which specifies the type and range of items to be selected and acquired. The purpose of the acquisition policy is to serve as a reference for the library staff to follow when assessing potential

acquisition for the library collections including print and non-print materials, electronic and other type of resources. The mission of the acquisition policy is to ensure that the selection of library resources supports the educational need of the students,

Libraries and information centres acquire a wide range of information resources to satisfy the information needs of their clientele. These resources are both in print and non-print format. They are organized to meet users' needs at all levels of education and professional practices. However, acquisitions of grey literature are not given prominence in academic libraries in Nigeria. Acquisition and integration of grey literature are often neglected in most Nigerian academic libraries, despite their inherent benefits to research and knowledge development.

Juricek, (2009) & Gyasi (2003) defines literature in its broad sense as 'anything that is written', while Okoroma, (2012) & Rees (2007) sees it in the narrow sense of 'writing which expresses and communicate thought, feelings and attitudes towards life. Literature is thus summed up as permanent expression(s) in words (written or spoken), especially arranged in pleasing and accepted pattern or forms.

The term "grey literature" brings connotations of bleakness, apathy, indifference, and questionable authority to mind (Omeje, 2010 & Mason, 2009). Upon investigation, this is far from truth, unless you find research papers from eminent researchers to be boring. Grey literature has some connection to the brain's "grey matter" since so much of it seems highly intellectual and is significant for research and development in many subject areas.

Grey literature is used to describe publications not published commercially or indexed by major database vendors. It is occasionally the sole source for specific research questions. Therefore, it is highly imperative for academic libraries in Africa to acquire these resources against any challenges. Due to the nature of these literatures, academic libraries have had challenges with

their acquisition as well as making them accessible. Their management is also a source of worry to academic librarians. This is because it may be ephemeral but it continues to have impact in research, teaching and learning, on which the goal of academic libraries revolves

Grey literature publications are important materials that libraries, especially academic libraries must acquire to support research. Although not rigorously peer reviewed, they contribute greatly to national development since they sometimes originate from scholars. Grey literature materials do not have any ISBN or ISSN and so cannot be easily tracked down or accessed by a large group of clients except some concerted efforts are made. This explains the reason why it is called grey. Grey is used to connote something that is not clear, wholly, that is different, while literature in this context means publications. This view was strongly supported by Osayand & Ukpebor, 2012 and Mason (2009) who wrote that the term grey literature brings connotation of bleakness, apathy, indifference and questionable authority to mind. They are not controlled by commercial publishing interests because they are usually issued by government, academia, pressure groups, trade unions, industries etc. Grey literature materials are publications without commercial purpose; articles and information published especially on the Internet, without a commercial purpose or the mediation of a commercial publisher. Generally, they are materials which are not attainable through the conventional channels and not available through normal book selling channels.

Research can be defined as a process of arriving at dependable solutions to problems through planned and systematic collection, classification, analysis and interpretation of data. It is a logical way of finding solutions to an identified problem. Precisely; research is the application of scientific methods to problem-solving which involves careful observations, reliable measurement of phenomena, objective interpretation of facts, and validation of accepted theories.

or their revision based on new evidence. Research is aimed at finding solutions to the multifarious and multi-faceted problems confronting us in various fields of endeavour. From the fore-going, the quest to know investigate, examine, study, explore, delve into, or make inquiries about the unknown using a systematic approach is referred to as research. Emaikwu (2015).

### **Objective of the Study**

The objective of this study is to investigate challenges in the selection and acquisition of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi. Specifically, the study attempts to:

1. Identify types of grey literature provided in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba library University of Agriculture Makurdi
2. Identify the processes of selecting grey literature Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi
3. Examine methods of acquisition of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi.
4. Investigate methods of processing of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi
5. Examine the extent to which grey literature are accessed in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi.
6. Identify strategies for improving on the selection and acquisition of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are types of grey literature provided in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi?
2. What are the processes of selecting grey literature Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi?
3. What are the methods of acquisition of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi?
4. Are there methods of processing of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi?
5. What is the extent to which grey literature are accessed in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi?
6. Identify strategies for improving on the selection and acquisition of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi.

## **Methodology**

The area of the study is Benue State. This study employed a survey research design. The population for this study was 89 subjects comprising all staff both Professionals and Para-professional from University of Agriculture Makurdi library. There was no sampling for the study. The entire population was used for the study as sample because the population size could be handled effectively by the researcher.

The instrument for the study was a structured questionnaire titled “Challenges in the Selection and Acquisition of Grey Literature Questionnaire (CSAGLQ). The instrument which was developed by the researcher was divided into six sections based on the research objectives. The questionnaire had restricted response options of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and



strongly disagree (SD) with corresponding values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The data for this study will be collected by the researcher and 3 research assistants.

Data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics. Mean was used to answer the research questions. The bench mark for this was 2.50 ( $4+3+2+1=10/4=2.50$ ). The decision rule was: any items with a mean value of 2.50 or above was regarded as high or agree while any item with a mean value of less than 2.50 was regarded as low or disagree.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Research Questions 1

What are types of grey literature provided in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi?

Data for answering research question 1 is presented in Table 1:

**Table 1:** Mean of Respondents on the types of grey literature provided in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Remarks
1	Calendars	38	10	15	26	89	2.67	1.29	Provided
2	Clippings	19	4	41	25	89	2.19	1.07	Not provided
3	Company reports	17	3	53	16	89	2.23	0.96	Not provided
4	Guides information leaflets	15	21	28	25	89	2.29	1.05	Not provided
5	Menus	20	18	37	14	89	2.49	1.01	Not provided
6	Newsletters	22	1	48	18	89	2.30	1.05	Not provided
7	Newspapers	43	10	23	13	89	2.93	1.15	Provided
8	Press release	19	21	32	17	89	2.47	1.03	Not provided
9	Society ephemera	22	17	27	23	89	2.42	1.12	Not provided

**Source:** Field survey, 2019

Result in Table 1 shows that out of 9 items, 2 had a mean value of 2.67 to 2.93 while 7 had their mean values ranging from 2.19 to 2.49 and were below the bench mark of 2.50. This shows that the respondents agreed that the 2 items are the types of Grey Literature provided in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi.

### Research Questions 2

What are the processes of selecting grey literature Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi?

Data for answering research question 2 is presented in Table 2:

**Table 2:** Mean of Respondents on processes of selecting grey literature Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Remarks
10	Find out about the publication	19	23	10	37	89	2.73	1.21	Agree
11	Monitoring new literature or ephemeral publication	22	20	43	4	89	2.52	0.90	Agree
12	Learn about new books	21	20	33	15	89	2.57	1.03	Agree
13	Scan daily newspapers, looking for report on conference, seminars and workshops	15	19	47	8	89	2.53	0.87	Agree
14	Make contact with academic world	19	21	48	1	89	2.64	0.82	Agree
15	Stay in contact to grey materials	15	50	16	8	89	2.51	0.82	Agree
16	Have a strong sense of curiosity and a willingness to ask important questions about new publication on grey literature	51	15	16	7	89	3.23	1.01	Agree

Source: Field survey, 2019

Result in Table 2 shows that 7 items had their mean values ranged from 2.51 to 3.21 and were above the bench mark of 2.50. This shows that the respondents agreed that the items are processes of selecting grey literature Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi.

### Research Questions 3

What are the methods of acquisition of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi?

Data for answering research question 3 is presented in Table 3:

**Table 3:** Mean of Respondents on the methods of acquisition of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Remarks
17	Gifts	42	30	2	15	89	2.89	1.08	Agree
18	Legal Deposit	40	24	6	19	89	2.54	1.17	Agree
19	Subscription	26	30	15	18	89	2.78	1.09	Agree
20	Resource Sharing	31	29	21	8	89	2.98	0.82	Agree

21	Online Search	56	30	1	2	89	2.53	0.63	Agree
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**Source:** Field survey, 2019

Result in Table 3 shows that 5 items had their mean values of 2.54 to 2.98 and were above the bench mark of 2.50. This shows that the items are methods of acquisition of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi.

#### Research Questions 4

Are there methods of processing of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi?

Data for answering research question 4 is presented in Table 4 below:

**Table 4:** Mean of Respondents on the methods of processing of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Remarks
22	Stamping	50	11	16	12	89	3.11	1.13	Agree
23	Accessioned	30	10	33	16	89	2.61	1.13	Agree
24	Catalogued	29	12	41	7	89	2.71	1.01	Agree
25	Classification	23	27	18	21	89	2.58	1.11	Agree
26	Digitization of grey materials	33	22	29	5	89	2.93	0.96	Agree

**Source:** Field survey, 2019

Result in Table 4 shows that 5 items had their mean values of 2.58 to 3.11 and were above the bench mark of 2.50. This shows that the items are methods of processing of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi.

#### Research Questions 5

What is the extent to which grey literature are accessed in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi?

Data for answering research question 4 is presented in Table 4 below:

**Table 5:** Mean of Respondents on the extent to which grey literature are accessed in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi

S/N	Item	VLE	L	G	VGE	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Remarks
27	Calendars	37	10	23	19	89	2.73	1.21	GE

28	Clippings	4	43	20	22	89	2.32	0.90	LE
29	Company reports	15	33	20	21	89	2.47	1.03	LE
30	Guides information leaflets	8	47	19	15	89	2.53	0.87	GE
31	Menus	1	48	21	19	89	2.34	0.82	LE
32	Newsletters	8	16	50	15	89	2.11	0.82	LE
33	Newspapers	51	15	16	7	89	3.23	1.01	GE
34	Press release	32	17	15	25	89	2.62	1.23	GE
35	Society ephemera	17	4	35	33	89	2.05	1.09	LE

**Source:** Field survey, 2019

Result in Table 4 shows that out of 9 items, 4 had their mean values ranged from 2.53 to 3.23 while 4 had their grand mean values ranging from 2.05 to 2.47 and were below the benchmark of 2.50. This shows that the respondents agreed that the extent to which grey literature is accessed by postgraduate Students is low.

### Research Questions 6

What are strategies for improving on the selection and acquisition of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi?

Data for answering research question 5 is presented in Table 5 below:

**Table 6:** Mean of Respondents on the strategies for improving grey literature

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Remarks
36	Provision of adequate funds for acquisition of grey literature	63	5	14	7	89	3.39	1.01	Agree
37	Supply of relevant materials to current curricula and teacher/student interests	30	10	36	13	89	2.64	1.10	Agree
38	Estimation of good budgets for stock upgrading or replenishment grey materials	29	8	39	13	89	2.59	1.09	Agree
39	Regular review and supply of new grey materials	28	26	13	22	89	2.67	1.16	Agree
40	Setting up tight security guards to prevent theft and loss of grey literature	29	29	25	6	89	2.91	0.93	Agree

41	Creation of proper awareness to both teachers and students on the role of grey literature	35	1	39	14	89	2.64	1.16	Agree
42	Employment of trained university librarians	39	8	36	6	89	2.89	1.05	Agree
43	Ensure routine maintenance culture of grey literature	21	23	10		89	2.91	1.05	Agree
44	Acquisition of adequate space to stock grey literature	28	28	19	14	89	2.79	1.06	Agree
45	Acquisition of adequate space to stock grey literature	24	30	17	18	89	2.67	1.08	Agree

**Source:** Field survey, 2019

Result in Table 5 shows that all the 10 items had their mean values ranged from 2.59 to 3.39 and were above the bench mark of 2.50. This shows that the items are the strategies needed to promote utilization of grey literature in University of Agriculture Makurdi library.

### **Discussion of Findings**

Research question one was to find out the of grey literature provided in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi. Findings revealed that calendars and newspapers are accessed while clippings, company reports, guides information leaflets, menus, newsletters, press release and society ephemera were types of grey Literature provided in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi.

Research question two was on processes of selecting grey literature Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi. Findings revealed that the process is to find out about the publication, monitoring new literature or ephemeral publication, learn about new books, scan daily newspapers, looking for report on conference, seminars and workshops, make contact with academic world, stay in contact to grey materials, have a strong sense of curiosity and a willingness to ask important questions about new publication on grey literature.

Research question three was methods of acquisition of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi. Findings revealed that gifts, legal deposit,

subscription, resource sharing and online search are the methods of acquisition of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi.

Research question four was on the methods of processing of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi. Findings revealed that stamping, accessioned, cataloguing, classification and digitization of grey materials are methods of processing of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi.

Research question five was on the extent to which grey literature are accessed in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi. Finding revealed that clippings, company reports, menus, newsletters and society ephemera are lowly accessed by students in in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi.

Research question six was on the strategies for improving on the selection and acquisition of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi. Findings revealed that provision of adequate funds for acquisition of grey literature, supply of relevant materials to current curricula and teacher/student interests, estimation of good budgets for stock upgrading or replenishment grey materials, regular review and supply of new grey materials, setting up tight security guards to prevent theft and loss of grey literature , creation of proper awareness to both teachers and students on the role of grey literature, employment of trained university librarians, ensure routine maintenance culture of grey literature, acquisition of adequate space to stock grey literature and provision of sufficient shelving, furniture, equipment were the strategies for improving on the selection and acquisition of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi. Those findings are similar to that of Upev, Terna & Beetseh (2018) and Ukpebor, (2017)

### **Conclusion**

Grey literature has been found to be important to students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Calendars and newspapers are accessed while clippings, company reports, guides information

leaflets, menus, newsletters, press release and society ephemera add value to academic activities of students. However, this study found out that the extent to which students accessed grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi is very low. The study concludes that strategies could be adopted for improving the selection and acquisition of grey literature in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture Makurdi.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The government should make provision for adequate funds for acquisition of grey literature in University libraries
2. The University management should embark on regular review and supply of new grey materials
3. University management should embark on regular review and supply of new grey materials the library
4. University management should create of proper awareness to both teachers and students on the role of grey literature

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