ACQUISITION AND RELEVANCE OF INFORMATION RESOURCES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING IN GOVERNMENT HEALTH INSTITUTION LIBRARIES (GHILS) IN KATSINA STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

This study investigated the acquisition and relevance of information resources for teaching and learning in Government Health Institution Libraries (GHILs) in Katsina State, Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study: What methods are used to acquire information resources for teaching and learning in GHILs in Katsina State? To what extent are the acquired information resources relevant to the needs of these libraries for teaching and learning? Employing a quantitative survey research design, the study targeted all 16 librarians in GHILs across Katsina State. Data were collected through questionnaires administered by the researcher and a research assistant and analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation. The collected data were findings revealed that GHILs in Katsina State primarily acquire information resources through purchases, gifts, and donations, while alternative methods such as resource sharing, consortia, and database subscriptions remain underutilized, limiting the diversity and accessibility of resources. Thus, the acquired information resources often failed to meet the specific needs of library users, resulting in poor patronage and undermining the libraries' ability to fulfill mission of supporting teaching, learning and research. To address these challenges, it is recommended that GHILs in Katsina State adopt alternative acquisition methods like resource sharing, consortia, and database subscriptions to broaden resource diversity and accessibility. Furthermore, regular needs assessments and active collaboration with stakeholders, including healthcare professionals and library users, should be conducted to ensure the acquisition strategies align with users' evolving information needs.

Keywords: Acquisition, Government Health Institution Libraries, Information Resources, Resource Relevance, Teaching and Learning.

Introduction

Government Health Institution Libraries (GHILs) in Nigeria play an essential role in the healthcare and academic sectors by providing critical information resources for teaching, learning, and research. These libraries support the medical education and professional development of healthcare practitioners by offering a wide array of information materials, including textbooks, journals, databases, and other resources that are necessary for both students and faculty. The effectiveness of GHILs is heavily dependent on the strategies used for acquiring information resources. These strategies often involve various methods such as direct purchases, donations, interlibrary loans, and resource sharing among institutions. Research into the acquisition practices of libraries, such as the study conducted on the Benue State University College of Health Science Library, highlights the importance of these strategies in ensuring that libraries are adequately stocked with up-to-date resources to meet the needs of their users (Msurshima, Ternenge, & Terhemen, 2022).

However, despite the implementation of these varied acquisition methods, GHILs face significant challenges that hinder their ability to meet the information needs of their users. Msurshima, Tergenge and Terhemen (2022) stressed that financial constraints limit the libraries' capacity to purchase new materials or to subscribe to important databases, which is particularly problematic in specialized areas of medical knowledge. In addition to funding constraints, many GHILs lack clear and consistent acquisition policies. This absence of well-defined policies makes it difficult to systematically select and acquire resources that align with the educational and research goals of the institution. Research conducted at the Nigeria Institute of Transport Technology Library in Zaria found that the lack of acquisition policies, combined with insufficient financial resources, significantly impedes effective resource development (Abdulsalami & Arowolo, 2019). A similar study examining Nigerian medical libraries also identified key challenges such as outdated resources, insufficient library funding, and difficulties in maintaining up-to-date collections (Popoola, Uzoagba, & Rabiu, 2020).

Furthermore, the relevance of acquired information resources is a critical concern for GHILs. Ensuring that the resources in their collections are relevant to the needs of users—particularly in a rapidly evolving field like healthcare—is crucial for the effectiveness of these libraries. Unfortunately, many GHILs struggle with ensuring that their collections remain current and reflect the diverse needs of the healthcare and academic community. This challenge is compounded by the lack of comprehensive collection development policies, which are essential

for guiding the selection of materials that meet the educational and research needs of users. For instance, research indicates that many libraries in Nigeria lack written collection development policies, which can lead to acquisitions that do not fully address the specific needs of users, thereby rendering parts of their collections obsolete or irrelevant (Olaojo & Akewukereke, 2016).

Addressing the challenges faced by GHILs requires a multifaceted approach that includes the development of clear, formal acquisition policies. These policies would help guide decision-making regarding which resources to acquire, based on the needs of the institution and its users. Additionally, it is essential to secure adequate funding to support the acquisition of both physical and digital resources. With the growing importance of digital resources in medical education and research, GHILs must ensure they are investing in technologies that can support access to electronic journals, databases, and other online resources. Moreover, investing in the training of library personnel is critical for improving the efficiency of resource acquisition and management. Library staff must be equipped with the necessary skills to evaluate and select appropriate resources, manage budgets effectively, and utilize modern information management technologies. By enhancing acquisition strategies, securing sustainable funding, and ensuring the relevance of their collections, GHILs can better fulfill their mission of supporting medical education and research, thus contributing to the overall development of the healthcare sector in Nigeria.

While Government Health Institution Libraries play a pivotal role in supporting medical education, they face several challenges that undermine their ability to provide the necessary information resources. Addressing these challenges, particularly through the development of clear acquisition policies, securing adequate funding, and ensuring the relevance of their collections, will enable GHILs to better meet the needs of medical students, faculty, and healthcare professionals in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Ideally, Government Health Institution Libraries (GHILs) in Nigeria should play a vital role in supporting medical education and research by acquiring relevant, up-to-date, and comprehensive information resources for teaching and learning. These libraries are expected to employ well-structured acquisition strategies, including direct purchases, donations, interlibrary loans, and resource sharing, to ensure the availability of resources that meet the diverse and dynamic needs of healthcare professionals and students. A solid foundation in collection

development policies and adequate funding is essential to maintain the relevance of library collections, aligning them with the educational goals and research needs of the institution (Msurshima, Ternenge, & Terhemen, 2022).

However, despite the numerous benefits of information resource acquisition in supporting teaching and learning in GHILs, the current situation in many libraries in Katsina State, Nigeria, contrasts sharply with this ideal. A preliminary study conducted by the researcher, supported by a library checklist and accreditation report, revealed that although many resources have been acquired in these libraries, they appear to be irrelevant to the actual information needs of the library users. This imbalance in resource acquisition has led to ineffective strategies, with the libraries acquiring duplicates of certain materials while failing to acquire sufficient resources for other specialized fields. As a result, the resources available do not adequately support the academic staff, laboratory technicians, and students, particularly about the various areas of specialization offered in these health institutions (Abdulsalami & Arowolo, 2019). Moreover, many of the libraries studied lack a comprehensive written policy to guide the acquisition of information resources in line with the specific needs of their users. Also, the absence of such policies further exacerbates the misalignment between the resources acquired and the actual needs of the target audience.

It is against this backdrop that the researcher deems it necessary to study the acquisition of information resources for teaching and learning in GHILs in Katsina State, Nigeria. This research seeks to investigate the acquisition strategies employed by these libraries and explore potential solutions that would enhance the alignment of the resources with the actual needs of library users, thereby improving the quality and effectiveness of medical education and research in the region.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to collect data for this study:

1. What are the methods used for acquiring information resources for teaching and learning in Government Health Institution Libraries (GHILs) in Katsina State, Nigeria?

2. To what extent are the acquired information resources relevant to the needs of the libraries for teaching and learning in Government Health Institution Libraries (GHILs) in Katsina State, Nigeria?

Literature Review
Methods of Information Resources Acquisition

Acquisition of information resources is a fundamental activity of libraries, serving as the cornerstone of their ability to meet users' needs for consultation, study, learning, and research. Libraries worldwide employ various methods to acquire both printed and non-printed information resources to develop and enrich their collections. These methods may involve financial expenditure or be entirely cost-free. The five primary strategies for resource acquisition are purchase, gift, bequest, exchange, and legal deposit, as noted by Yoon (2009). In addition, libraries increasingly rely on donations, endowments, resource sharing, consortia, and internally generated materials to expand their holdings. This section explores these acquisition strategies in detail.

Acquisition of Library Resources by Purchase

Purchasing remains one of the most reliable methods for acquiring information resources. Libraries purchase books, journals, and electronic resources directly from suppliers or publishers, bearing the full cost. Payments may be made via cash, cheques, or subscription arrangements, depending on the seller's terms and the library's policies.

Local Bookshops

Local bookshops are a vital source of books, particularly for local titles that international suppliers may not offer. They minimize transportation costs and may deliver books directly to libraries at no extra charge. While discounts are often unavailable, many local bookshops supply books on credit, which can ease financial constraints for libraries (Ifidon, 2006). Local bookshops also help libraries quickly access titles relevant to regional curricula and cultural heritage.

Publishers

Directly purchasing from publishers can ensure the availability of first editions and recently published works. However, it often involves dealing with multiple publishers and increasing administrative duties and correspondence. According to Behler (2011), publishers also provide libraries access to exclusive pre-publication discounts or bundled offers for serial publications.

Agents

Agents act as intermediaries, representing multiple publishers and offering libraries the convenience of acquiring diverse titles from a single source. This reduces correspondence and administrative costs. However, libraries must carefully vet agents to avoid discrepancies in pricing or delivery schedules (Aina, 2014).

Acquisition of Library Resources by Gift

Gifts and donations represent a cost-effective way to acquire resources. Donations can be solicited or unsolicited and may come from individuals, organizations, or governments. Solicited donations are made in response to formal requests from libraries, specifying the types of resources needed. This strategy enables libraries to tailor their acquisitions to meet specific gaps in their collections (Imeremba, 2016). Unsolicited donations, on the other hand, may include outdated or irrelevant materials, requiring libraries to assess their value carefully (Ifidon, 2006).

Acquisition of Library Resources by Bequest

Bequests occur when individuals leave their collections to libraries through wills, effective after their passing. This method is prevalent in developed countries, where private collections often contain rare or valuable works (Aina, 2014). Bequests may include restrictions on usage or housing, which libraries must negotiate to align with their operational goals. For instance, the University of Ibadan library benefited significantly from the private collection bequeathed by Sir Charles Orr, enriching its resources on Nigerian history.

Acquisition of Library Resources by Exchange

The inter-library exchange allows libraries to trade surplus copies of resources with one another. This collaborative approach helps libraries diversify their collections without incurring additional costs. Agreements outlining the terms of exchange are crucial for ensuring fairness and mutual benefit (Behler, 2011). In the digital era, such exchanges are often facilitated through online platforms, significantly reducing logistical challenges.

Acquisition of Library Resources by Legal Deposit
Legal deposit mandates publishers to provide copies of all published works to designated libraries. This method ensures that national and public libraries receive comprehensive collections of locally published materials. In Nigeria, this legal framework has been instrumental in preserving the country's literary and intellectual heritage (Ossai, 2010).

Acquisition of Library Resources by Donations
Donations from individuals, organizations, or agencies like Book Aid International and the Nigerian Book Foundation provide a steady influx of resources for libraries. However, donations often require cataloguing, processing, and storage, which may impose hidden costs. Libraries must carefully assess donations to ensure their relevance and usability.

Acquisition of Library Resources by Endowments
Endowments involve funds provided by individuals or organizations to support library acquisitions. The income generated from these funds is used to purchase resources or sustain existing collections. Endowments, common in developed countries, are rare in Nigeria but hold immense potential for supporting specialized libraries (Yoon, 2009). For example, Everett Helm's endowment for Indiana University Libraries highlights how such contributions can transform library services.

Acquisition of Library Resources by Resource Sharing
Resource sharing involves collaborative arrangements among libraries to share information resources. Initiatives like inter-library loans and digital consortia allow libraries to overcome budgetary constraints and provide users with access to a broader range of materials. ICT advancements have simplified resource-sharing processes, enabling real-time access to shared resources. However, administrative and technical challenges must be addressed to ensure the sustainability of such initiatives.

Acquisition of Library Resources by Consortia
Library consortia facilitate coordinated acquisitions, allowing members to share the costs of licensing electronic resources. This model enhances access to expensive databases and journals, particularly for libraries in developing countries (Lawal et al., 2008). Nigerian libraries have increasingly embraced this approach,

leveraging consortia to negotiate better terms and discounts from publishers (Behler, 2011).

Acquisition of Library Resources by Internal Generation
Libraries also acquire resources created within their organizations. For instance, research institutions often deposit staff-authored publications in their libraries. This practice enriches collections with contextually relevant materials while promoting the visibility of institutional research output.

Relevance of Information Resources Acquisition for Teaching, Learning, and Research

The acquisition of information resources is fundamental to supporting the core activities of teaching, learning, and research in educational institutions. Adequate and relevant resources provide the foundation for knowledge dissemination, intellectual development, and academic achievement. Numerous studies emphasize the importance of systematic acquisition processes in ensuring that libraries and information centres meet the evolving needs of users. The availability of diverse and up-to-date information resources is crucial for effective teaching. Teachers rely on these resources to prepare lessons, develop course materials, and design innovative instructional strategies. As observed by Ifidon (2006), the acquisition of subject-specific materials tailored to curricular needs helps instructors deliver content more effectively, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Furthermore, digital acquisitions such as e-books and online teaching aids have become increasingly important in facilitating access to dynamic and interactive learning materials, particularly in the digital age (Adeoye & Popoola, 2011).

For students, information resources play a critical role in fostering independent learning and academic success. Libraries serve as repositories of knowledge, offering access to textbooks, scholarly journals, multimedia resources, and digital databases that cater to diverse learning styles and academic levels. According to Aina (2014), comprehensive acquisition policies that prioritize user-centric resources ensure that students can access the materials they need for assignments, projects, and self-directed study. Moreover, access to digital collections and open educational resources (OERs) empowers students to engage with global knowledge networks, enhancing their learning experience (Yoon, 2009). Acquiring information resources is also essential for advancing research. Academic researchers rely on access to specialized materials, including peer-reviewed journals, conference proceedings, and archival documents, to

conduct studies, generate new knowledge, and contribute to societal development. Ifidon (2006) highlights that effective acquisition strategies ensure the availability of resources that align with institutional research priorities and emerging fields of inquiry. Additionally, collaborative acquisition models, such as library consortia, enable institutions to pool resources and provide researchers with access to expensive databases and scientific repositories (Lawal et al., 2008).

The acquisition of digital resources has become a key strategy for bridging the digital divide in education. Access to electronic resources enables teachers, students, and researchers to overcome geographical and financial barriers, promoting equity in knowledge dissemination. Adeoye and Popoola (2011) stress the importance of investing in digital acquisitions to foster a culture of continuous learning and innovation. Moreover, the integration of digital tools such as learning management systems (LMS) and virtual libraries supports the creation of hybrid learning environments, which are particularly relevant in the post-COVID-19 era. While the relevance of information resource acquisition is well-documented, challenges such as budgetary constraints, inadequate infrastructure, and evolving user demands often hinder the effectiveness of acquisition processes. Ossai (2010) notes that libraries in developing countries frequently struggle to maintain adequate collections due to limited funding and reliance on traditional acquisition methods. To address these challenges, institutions must adopt innovative strategies, such as leveraging partnerships, seeking donations, and integrating ICT solutions into acquisition workflows (Behler, 2011).

It can be deduced that the acquisition of information resources is indispensable for teaching, learning, and research in educational institutions. By ensuring the availability of relevant and high-quality materials, libraries and information centres can enhance instructional delivery, support student achievement, and advance research activities. As the educational landscape continues to evolve, adopting innovative and sustainable acquisition practices will be critical for meeting the diverse needs of users and fostering academic excellence.

Methodology

The methodology employed in this study was quantitative, utilizing a survey research design. The population of this study consisted of all the 16 librarians in Government Health Institution Libraries (GHILs) in Katsina State. The researcher used the entire 16 members of the population because it was small. For this study, the instrument used was a questionnaire and was subjected to face and content validity and necessary observations, corrections and amendments

which strengthened the instrument. The researchers administered the questionnaire and also employed a research assistant. One week was used to collect the necessary data for the study. The data collected for this study were analyzed using descriptive statistics in the forms of frequency, percentages, mean and standard deviation.

Result and Discussions
Methods of Information Resources Acquisition

In the first research question, the researcher was interested in determining the method through which information resources are acquired for teaching, learning and research in Government Health Institution Libraries in Katsina State, Nigeria. The responses are presented in Table 1

Table 1: Method of Acquisition Information Resources

S/N	INSTITUTIONS	CONAM KAT		COHES KAT		KKBSON KAT		NBSO MMLF		SZDSH TD		KISHTK		TOTAL	
	OPTIONS	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1.	Acquisition by purchase	1	100	1	100	4	100	4	100	3	100	2	100	15	100
2.	Acquisition by Gift	0	0.0	1	100	4	100	4	100	3	100	2	100	14	93.3
3.	Acquisition by Bequeath	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100	2	13.3
4.	Acquisition by Exchange	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
5.	Acquisition by Legal Deposit	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
6.	Donations	1	100	1	100	4	100	4	100	3	100	0	0.0	13	86.7
7.	Endowments	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2		2	13.3
8.	Resource Sharing	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
9.	Consortium	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
10.	Internal Generation	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
11.	By subscription of databases	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
12.	By open access databases	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
13.	Others specify	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 1 highlights the methods used to acquire information resources for teaching, learning, and research in Government Health Institution Libraries in Katsina State, Nigeria. Based on a 50% acceptance threshold, the methods identified as effective include acquisition by purchase (15, 100%), acquisition by gift (14,

93.3%), and donations (12, 86.7%). These were the only methods accepted as viable for resource acquisition in these libraries. Conversely, methods such as acquisition by bequeath, exchange, legal deposit, endowments, resource sharing, consortium, internal generation, subscription to databases, open access databases, and others were rejected as effective methods for resource acquisition. This finding suggests a reliance on purchase, gifts, and donations as the primary avenues for acquiring information resources in Government Health Institution Libraries in Katsina State. As corroborated by Ifidon (2006) and Lawal et al. (2008), this limited reliance on traditional methods may restrict the diversity and quantity of resources available to library users.

The implication of this finding is significant. Without leveraging alternative methods such as resource sharing, consortia, and database subscriptions, libraries may struggle to meet the diverse and dynamic information needs of their users. Aina (2014) notes that such limitations can adversely affect the quality of library services and user satisfaction. Additionally, the underutilization of modern and collaborative approaches to resource acquisition could hinder the libraries' ability to adapt to emerging demands in teaching, learning, and research.

Relevant of information resources Acquisition for Teaching, Learning and Research

The second research question was raised to ascertain the relevant of information resources acquired to the information need of the library users for teaching, learning and research in Government Health Institution Libraries in Katsina State, Nigeria. The responses are presented in table 2 below;

Table 2 Relevance of Information Resources Acquisition

INSTITUTIONS		CONAMKAT			COHESKAT			KKBSONKAT			NBSOMMLF			SZDSHTD			KISHTK			T	M	SD
S/N	STATEMENTS	R	NR	UD	R	NR	UD	R	NR	UD	R	NR	UD	R	NR	UD	R	NR	UD			
1.	The information resources acquired are always being utilized by library users	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	4	0	0	3	1	0	3	0	0	2	0	15	1.96	1.31
2.	No complaints from the library users about the irrelevance of the information resources to their needs	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	3	1	0	3	1	0	3	0	0	2	0	15	1.92	1.18
03.	No complaints from the library users about inadequate of the information resources	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	3	0	1	2	0	0	0	2	15	1.76	0.90
4.	The information resources are always being accessed by the library users	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	4	0	0	3	0	0	2	0	15	1.67	1.44
5.	The information always helps library users solve their problems	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	4	0	0	4	0	0	3	0	0	1	1	15	1.92	1.35
6.	It gives the library a good image	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	3	0	0	3	1	0	2	1	0	2	0	15	1.94	1.06
7.	It promotes the rate at which students and staff patronize the library	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	4	0	0	4	0	0	3	0	0	1	1	15	1.92	1.35
8.	It increases the library users' satisfaction and confidence	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	4	0	0	4	0	0	3	0	0	1	1	15	1.92	1.35

Source: Field Survey, 2021   **Key:** R=Relevant; NR= Not Relevant; UD=Undecided; T=Total; M= Mean; SD= Standard deviation.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, the findings revealed significant challenges in the acquisition and relevance of information resources in Government Health Institution Libraries in Katsina State, Nigeria. While methods such as acquisition by purchase, gifts, and donations are widely used, alternative methods like legal deposit, resource sharing, and subscription to databases are underutilized, limiting the diversity and adequacy of resources. Additionally, the acquired information resources often fail to meet the specific needs of library users, resulting in poor patronage and undermining the libraries' ability to fulfil their mission of supporting teaching, learning, and research. The study therefore recommended that Government Health Institution Libraries in Katsina state should explore and integrate alternative acquisition methods such as resource sharing, consortia, and database subscriptions to enhance the diversity and accessibility of information

resources, thereby better meeting the evolving needs of library users. Also, improvement in the alignment of information resource acquisition strategies with the specific information needs of library users through regular needs assessments and active collaboration with stakeholders, including healthcare professionals and library users.

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