

Information Services & The School Library Media Centre



Edited by



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CHAPTER Seven

ACQUISITION OF SCHOOL LIBRARY RESOURCES

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Introduction

A school library is the part of the school where books and other non-book materials are housed for use by teachers, pupils and students for learning and relaxation. The school library is to implement, complement and supplement the total educational programme of the school. The school library is managed by the teacher librarian, and some schools have school librarians.

Acquisition

Acquisition is the process of obtaining books and other materials for library or information centres. It also refers to the department concerned with acquiring books, and audio visual resources for a library or a media resource centres. Acquisition of school library resources is one of the major functions of the school librarian. Acquisition involves the ordering of books and non-book materials for the proper functioning of the library. It is the process of identifying what the library ought to acquire, determine how and from whom it can be obtained and actually getting it. Wilkinson and Lewis (2005) defined acquisition as the process of locating and acquiring all types of library materials, after they have been selected for a library collection. Others have defined acquisition as follows;

- Acquisition work involves locating and acquiring the items identified as appropriate for the collection (Evans 2000.).
- Acquisitions is the process of acquiring library materials; it includes all task related to obtaining all library material (Diedrichs and Schmidt 1999).

- Harrods (2000) defines acquisition as a process of obtaining book and other items for libraries, and documentation centres. It is carried through purchases, gift and exchange.

Generally, acquisition systems are designed to facilitate ordering and receiving of library materials and monitoring expenditure of funds for those materials.

Functions of Acquisition in School Libraries

Acquisition librarian is conversant with book dealers, they know when and where to buy information resources. They interact with publishers and book dealers to maintain good relationship. Acquisition librarian is always watchful of new titles, new editions, new materials in the market, finding new product of interest to the school, and make known. Acquisition librarian investigate and know the rule and government regulation/policies that relate to the library. Acquisition librarian know the book to purchase and those to avoid. Acquisition librarian/ interview publishers'/book dealers on recent development in publishing and book trade. They invite the purchasing department of the school to participate in formulation of specifications of materials, and gives advice on the best materials. Formulation of acquisition policy, maintain appropriate files for the acquisition of libraries materials, filling of acquisition recording. Keeps records of book dealers and other activities. Study library needs, prepare accession list of bibliographic search to avoid duplication. The acquisition handles gift and exchange with other libraries. Acquisition department write to the book dealer and ensure that libraries materials are received at the right time. After accessing, recording and accessing information resources, the acquisition librarian forwarded the materials to cataloguing department for cataloguing and classification.

Methods Used for Acquiring Information Resources in School Libraries

Essentially there are methods used in acquiring materials in school libraries and resource centres. They include, purchase, gift, donation, and exchange of materials between libraries re – distribution of materials, locally produced and Photocopying of information resources.

Purchase: This is a method of acquiring by paying money. It is the common way of obtaining materials in school libraries. Having decided

on what to buy and the approval given the librarian will plan on how to visit the publishers and book dealers for physical and direct examination of those materials. Thereafter, the librarian will place certain restrictions in advance on the type of materials they will accept, reading level of the materials, subject areas and types of binding, etc. making payment plan for the materials so acquired.

Gift: Gift can be defined as the action of giving. Gift is also another method of acquiring information resources in school libraries. It involves when the possession of resources are transferred to another without the expectation or receipt of its equivalent. In this regard, it is when information resources are given to the school libraries unsolicited that they are said to be donated.

Donation: This is another way of obtaining materials and equipment in a school library. It involves the making of gifts. In most cases solicited gift.

Exchange of materials between Libraries: This is a very important way of obtaining books and non-book materials in the school library. In librarianship, it is a recognized practice where by duplicates of materials of a library is given out to other libraries in exchange. It is exchange by barter. For this exchange to take place, school libraries involve must have duplicate copies of materials different from the one being expected in return. No library gives out the only copy of materials it has. There must be duplicates for exchange to occur.

Re-Distribution: In the re-distribution, school libraries will pull their resources together and agree to distribute to other libraries on a worked out plan. This method is applied because no matter the size or financial position of a particular library, it cannot acquire all the items its users require. This method is otherwise referred to as interlibrary co-operation or lending; it is to strengthen their collections.

Local production: This is very common with school libraries and Media Resource Centres where staff of the school library try their hands in the production of some of the resources. Those who are skilled enough can draw posters, illustrations, maps and graphs. Slides and filmstrips can

also be produced locally.

Photocopy: Photocopying of relevant information materials add to a school library's collection representing one of the surest and cheapest ways of acquiring materials, the library otherwise could not afford to add to its collection. School libraries reproduce rare and expensive materials that will be most useful to their pupils and students through photocopying and downloading from the net.

Need for the Acquisition of School Library Resources

1. **Mass Education:** Many people have been interested in education and this has increased the tendency to acquire information materials which could help in solving the problem of learning, arising from increase in enrolment.
2. **Desire for Learning:** Due to these, many people began to learn and the publishers were able to produce materials such as books, encyclopaedias, journals, etc. the acquisition of all these materials enhance that rapidly growing learning process.

The Recent Development of Individualized Learning: We may not want to face the masses, what an individual does is to come in order to be educated. Some of the equipment that are used for the individual learning in school libraries, example in a period like this pandemic (COVID 19) are: **Radio** – can use radio cassettes to teach pupils how to pronounce words correctly.

Video tapes- show pupils /student drama using video cassettes.

Telephone- communication add information, Cassettes recording, and Disc recording –for recording. The school librarian in our present schools needs to acquire print, non-print and electronic media resources to satisfy library users within the school.

Guide to Acquisition Management in School Libraries.

Identifying and selecting materials for the school library, pre-order searching to identify duplicate orders, to verify correct author and title as well as availability and price. Ordering materials from publishers or vendors, negotiating licensing agreements and contracts for electronic

resources. Claiming materials not delivered within the expected time frame. Receiving materials and approving invoices for payment. Physical processing such as ownership identification, security stamping, and call number marking; binding and preserving materials as needed.

Procedures for Acquiring Library Resources

The first procedure is that the school librarian must know the characteristics of the school.

These characteristics include:

- (a) Safety of the information resources
- b) The size, bearing in mind the space available in the school library.
- © Ensure that you have the materials to use for the requirement of the school curriculum.

The second step that must be taken note of in acquiring information resources in school libraries is to have knowledge of the school in which you operate. He must understand their level of education, experience, age, background, interest and vocabulary.

Thirdly he must have knowledge of teachers' characteristics especially the learning tasks each teacher handles, the curriculum of that school and areas of interest of users.

Fourthly, he must have the knowledge of existing collection of the school library.

This is necessary not to duplicate resources.

Fifthly, he must have knowledge of existing bibliography and review tools.

Sixthly, he must have knowledge of the finances of the school library. The last here is the most important conditions as it determines to a large extent what to purchase.

Selection

Selection is made from the catalogue list and the order is placed for the materials, either overseas or locally. this is also based on the amount of money you have. However, you must leave a percentage for freight and handling, postage and times for cataloguing process.

Selection Procedure: This is the art of choosing items to be acquired from a list of publications. There must be the participation of other staff of

the library and teachers to ensure balance and accuracy. Objectivity is required in this process. After getting all the recommendation slips from the staff, users, etc. the school librarian engages in bibliographic search to make sure that all the recommended materials exist, then merge the list with what others have submitted. After this, the next stage is to establish priority and select the ones considered very important. In doing this, one has to bear in mind the selection criteria.

Selection tools: Publisher catalogues, bibliographies, union lists, abstracts and indexes, and book review are used by libraries in selection. The selection team goes through the tools and mark items to be acquired from the materials listed. Libraries are compelled to select their most pressing needs in order not to over spend acquisition budget.

Selection policy: selection policies should be approved by the school head or any other set – up responsible for the running of the library activities. The policy statement is to guides the day – to-day decisions of those who select materials. Book selection policies are influenced by the book budget. School libraries will try to enlarge its book fund; it is the responsibility of the school librarian to see that increasing costs for undue expenses are not met by reducing the book fund. Efforts are made to restore budgets for books and other library materials, keeping to a certain percentage of the total budget of the parent body as stipulated.

Why book selection policy: (i) as a guide for library to execute successfully the set objectives of the school it serves.

(ii) the school library has to decide which of the needs and what materials are to receive top priorities because of their available funds.

(iii) the involvement of many people in selection process, increases the need for the co-ordination.

What to consider in selection policy: selection policy must be in a written document, itemizing the points such as:

- (a) statement of goals and library objectives.
- (b) the person that has the authority and responsibility to select the materials.
- (c) procedure for handling problems.

(d) how to allocate the available funds for fiction and non- fictions for each department in school.

(e) consider a statement on local history collection, and also emphasis that politics, religion do not influence book selection.

Typing Order: After arranging the order is typed, some cards can be sent and others retained, for the purpose of sending as a reminder when ordered books fail to arrive on time. One must search to avoid duplication (repetition) of order. It is important to refer to acquisition records all time.

Mailing Order: Having typed an order, it is mailed to the appropriate vendor (book seller) or publisher. Address correctly, to avoid loss or delay.

Process of Paying: In a well-established school like the University of Uyo Nursery and Primary School, some government schools or even in some private school libraries, when materials are ordered, the records are kept as follows, one copy of the local purchase order (LPO) or overseas purchase order (OPO) is sent to supplier, one to school account section and one to school library. When the materials arrive, the school librarian signs to say that they have been received. The school must have put aside money from the library funds when ordered. They now ask you to pay, if money is not committed by the end of the financial year, the school library loses it. Difficulties arise if money set aside for order is spent on something else before the materials arrive.

Receiving Ordered Books, it is important that careful attention be paid to the checking of books when they arrive from the book supplier, publisher or book dealer. The librarian will consider the following (i) must ensure the address on the packet is indeed his. (ii) he must tick off each book against the enclosed invoice. (iii) he should check the book against the order. (iv) he should check the book physically for any defects. example blank page or wrong binding. missing pages and any other error. If there is any defect due to an error in production, he should write a letter at once to the publisher describing the defect. The publisher will normally send a replacement. Where there are no defects, the book can be taken into stock by stamping with the school's Ownership stamp on selected pages, and

accession stamp should be put on the books.

In all book-buying transactions, the librarian should not forget that the bookseller is his friend and the book seller should also know that the customer is always right, and cooperate with the acquisition librarian, but if the order did not arrive on time as expected, there is need for re-ordering.

Stamping If a book is found to be in perfect physical condition, it is stamped with the appropriate library identification stamp. A book is stamped both on strategic and inner pages. Multiple stamps is given to make sure that users do not easily erase the mark or tear off the stamped page and smuggle the book out of the library. Every library decides on the page of a book which library identification stamp should be put. Example edges, verso page, back page, title page, page 10, 15, 20, 30, 45, 50, 75, 100, last page. This is always secret to the librarians.

Barcoding: Different barcodes are placed on each book to differentiate multiple copies of books for security purpose.

Book pocketing: The book pockets are pasted in the book in case of book lending, to obtain information from borrowers.

Accessioning This entails giving a newly acquired book a number. If the library had 200 books, the next volume will be 201. Each volume has a different accession number.

Computerized Acquisition Process

Certain processes in acquisition work need to be computerized in the libraries. This will help the acquisition librarian to oversee the selection, ordering and management of acquisitions finances, records and receipts of the materials on order. The computer has a great searching function in this regard such as monitoring of the flow of bibliographic materials and preparation of reports. It prepares and prints book selection forms and sends to users, to contribute their suggestions. One can access on line catalogues for selection of items to acquire by use of computer.

Bibliographic Searching: After selection, the school librarian can use

the computer to verify whether the materials acquired were in the library before. With the use of computer one can know the bibliographical details of the selected items, this will ensure accurate acquisition data. It will restrict unintended duplication in existing order.

Receipt of New Book: Like in the manual system, cross-checking of the details of materials received to ensure their correspondence with the records in the books-on-order file is done with the aid of computer.

Checking and Claiming:

Order files are checked to know books or items that fail to arrive within the expected period. The use of e-mail and fax via computer can speed up the claiming process if delivery delays or faulty books need to be returned.

Payment to Suppliers: The library maintains a computer file on all payments it has approved, and cross checks any invoice sent by the vendor. Previous and new supply records are stored in the database.

Keeping Acquisition Statistics

Most acquisition activities in a computerized system such as searching, order preparation, communication, processing of invoices and statistics keeping are done in computer. Computer generates and store statistics of items received and those ordered. It can equally spot duplicated orders.

The Features of Automated Acquisition System are:

Automated acquisition files carry out the following acquisition activities with accuracy and increased speed. Database access, name/address file, purchase order writing, Online ordering, processing files, funds accounting, management information, vendor monitoring, receiving/paying, claiming. All school libraries are advised to computerized their services.

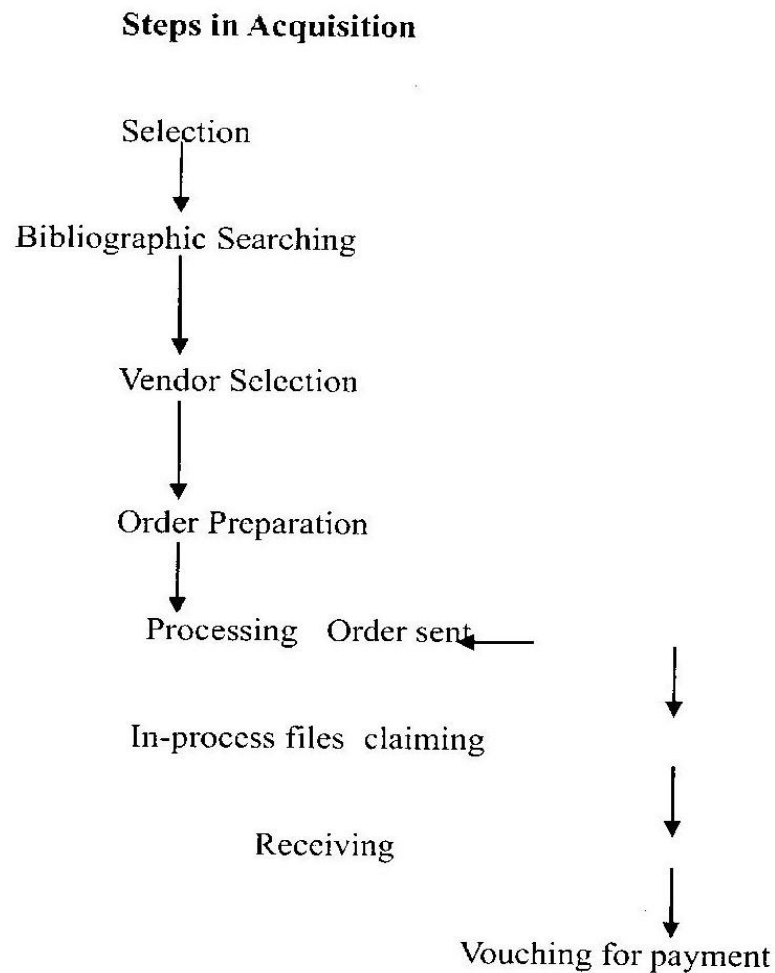


Fig 7.1 Steps in acquisition

Conclusion

Regardless of the type and the size of the school library, acquisition process is to support the mission of the parent institution by acquiring, processing, and providing access to the materials for the collection in an efficient and accurate manner. As a result of this the school librarian must know what the library wants, what the library needs and what the library can afford. Computer process are to be incorporated to ensure, speed and accuracy.

To improve from the past manual acquisition of school library resources, the new technology and the use of audio-visual in school libraries and information centres emerged. The advent of the computer in the libraries has brought not only new things but new ways of acquiring them.

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