

# MANAGEMENT OF SERIAL PUBLICATION IN FESTUS AGHAGBO NWAKO LIBRARY, AWKA: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

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## **Abstract**

*This study focused on the management of serial publication in Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library, Awka. A brief historical development of serials was discussed. The paper highlighted some of the library practices used in newspaper indexing and recording of journals. It also discussed problems associated with the management of serial publication in Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library. It recommended among others, automation of the serial department, acquisition of current journals, increase in staff strength of the department as well as access to electronic serial databases.*

**Keywords:** Acquisition, Cataloging, Classification Newspaper indexing, Serials Management, Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library.

## **Introduction**

This paper is meant to provide insight into the management of serial publication in Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library. Serials according to Harrolds (1987) is a publication bearing either chronological or numerical designation issued in successive parts appearing at intervals (usually regular ones) and as a rule intended to be continued indefinitely. They vary in formats and in frequency of publication, such as daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, biannually, annually or irregularly. A serial can also assume the format of a paper, microfiche, on-line or CD-Rom (Adubuika, 2007).

In the Serial Department of Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library, there is a written job specification and job description for staff. This helps to promote continuity and uniformity in the performance of essential functions of serials management in the Serial Department.

There are various categories of serial publications in the Serial Department of the library to cater for the needs of patrons. These serial publications like journals, abstracts, newspapers, transactions of societies,

newsletters, memoirs, government documents, reports, proceedings, magazines, yearbooks, almanacs, bulletins, pamphlets etc are supposed to be used by library patrons to satisfy their academic interest. It is strongly believed by researchers that the value derived from researching with these serial publications if effectively managed would contribute to the enhancement of academic pursuit and research activities (Uzoigwe, 2015). Aghauche (2007) opined that there are many sources of information in the library but the most important and most current sources for research are serial publications. In the same vein, Ossei-Bonsu (1984) cited by Aghauche (2007) in his own contribution described serials as the backbone of any special, academic or research library and students are expected to make use of the library most especially the serial section of the library to get current information in their chosen field of study.

## Historical Development of Serial publication

According to Nisonger (1998), the origin of serials has been traced to antiquity. Osborn (1980) mentioned the following as the places where serials originated.

- Annals written on the tombs of Egyptian kings during the first dynasty (2750 – 2625 BC) may possibly be considered the world's earliest known serials.
- Decree by Julius Caesar in 60 BC requiring the proceedings of the Roman senate to be published.

Osborn divided the history of serial publication into four broad periods:

- The initial period, up to 1700. This period witnessed numerous types of serial publications, “including almanacs, annual book catalogs, news books, weekly newspapers and periodicals which arose during the later part of this period.
- Second period-1700 to 1825 daily newspapers replaced weeklies; and literary periodicals, gentleman's magazines, proceedings of learned societies, scientific periodicals, law reports and parliamentary papers.
- Third period - 1825 to 1890, was characterized by great expansion in the number of periodicals and their circulation, especially in the post – civil war era. The period witnessed the origin of illustrated magazines, trade publications and government publications.
- Fourth period, from 1890 tabloid newspaper pulp, magazines, sports magazines grew in number. Publication from international organizations played an increasingly important role.

Finally, the existence of journals and magazines invariably resulted in the need to access their content. This resulted in the use of *Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory Notes*. *Ulrich's Periodical Directory* is a bibliographic database providing detailed, comprehensive and authoritative information on serials published throughout the world. It covers all subjects, and includes publications that are published regularly or irregularly and are circulated free of charge or by paid subscription (Horoky, 2006).

## Types of Serials Publication in FANL

Various kinds of serials publication exist in the Serial Department of Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library. They include newspapers, journals, newsletters, magazines, abstracts, accessions, almanacs, indexes, reports, proceedings, government documents, transactions of societies, year books and memoirs.

## Procedures for management of Serial in FANL:

**Acquisition of Serial Publication:** The Acquisition Department of Festus AghagboNwako Library supplies the Serial Department all the serial materials except daily newspapers and magazines.

**Recording of Journals:** The recording of journal is done in a thick cover note book, usually a margin is drawn where the required details like the title of the journal, classification number, author, volume, number and year of publication are recorded.

**Journal Indexing:** Journal indexing is done on a 3x5 catalogue card. This makes it easy for the library users to locate the information.

Title of journal, author, publisher, volume, classification number, issue date, year of publication and page number are written on the card.

### **Stamping of Journal and other Periodicals:**

Stamping of journal and other periodical is done whenever they are received. It is done page by page.

**Newspapers and Magazines:** The office of the University Librarian acquires magazines and newspapers. Thereafter they are sent to the Serials Department. Day to Day stamping of newspapers and magazines is done whenever they are acquired.

**Newspaper Indexing:** Newspaper indexing is done whenever the newspaper is received. It is usually done in a notebook for the serials the library subscribed to. The three dailies the library subscribe to are ; *The Guardian, This Day and Daily Sun*. The following relevant information are captured from the various newspapers to meet information needs of researchers/library users:

- Transportation matters
- Judiciary / law
- Health issues
- Political matters
- Property matters
- Population
- Technology
- Security issues
- Trade & investment
- Child and family matters
- Business news
- Maritime news
- Rape matters
- Finance matters
- Religion matters
- Tradition/culture

- International news
- Agriculture
- World news
- Prison matters
- Police matters
- Tourism
- Electricity/power
- Terrorism/war
- Aviation matters
- Boko Haram
- Labour matters
- Energy matters
- Cultism
- Accident
- Petroleum/oil
- Science
- Pension matters
- Sports (important news)
- Education
- Environment
- Entertainment/arts

The subject in the newspaper article will be captured by giving a brief summary of the work. This indexing helps the researchers to access the newspaper easily. The title, subject, names, dates and page are also included to enhance accessibility.

### **Storage of Newspapers and Magazines:**

Each type of newspaper and magazine is bound every month and kept in the Serial Department for some months before sending it to the Africana unit for consultation by both staff and students. The binding of newspaper is done by the Bindery Unit of the Library at the end of every month.

**Recording of Library Users:** Registration of users who borrow journals, magazines, newsletters, newspapers, government documents etc is done in the Serial Department.

Their library card / or school identity cards are collected and given back to them when they return the borrowed materials.

**Display of Current Holdings:** Newly acquired serials are displayed on a table meant for that purpose. They are later withdrawn and shelved when current issues are received.

**Cataloguing of Serial Materials:** The Serial Librarian catalogues all materials with the exception of magazines and newspapers using the Library of Congress Classification Scheme and Subject Heading List.

**Daily Shelving and Shelf Reading:** All consulted materials are shelved after use. This enhances their location and accessibility.

### **Challenges in the Management of Serials at Festus AghagboNwako Library.**

1. **Non-Availability of Current Journals:** Availability usually determines access. If the journal materials are available, this will motivate the students to access them than when they are not available. This is why Osborn cited by Iyoro (2004) observed that serial collections have research values to the users. Thus no library can serve her patrons effectively, without serial materials. When journals are regular, their relevance as a means of timely dissemination of information becomes evident. However, when journals are irregular their aim of keeping scholars and other professionals informed of new developments in their fields becomes a myth than a reality (Nwali 2004).

2. **Irregular/Epileptic Power Supply:** Irregular supply of electric power at Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library affects students and other library users, particularly those who want to carry out their class assignment or research. Irregular electricity supply affects the lighting, ventilation and general conducive environment of the serials department.
3. **Lack of Current Serial Publications:** Access to requested information by library users is also hindered by lack of current serial Publication. Libraries should acquire current and comprehensive collection of periodicals for immediate and future information needs of their users.
4. **Insufficient Staff:** Inadequate staffing is one factor that affects effective operation of the Serials Department. Only one librarians runs the affairs of the Department. Both the selection, acquisition, cataloguing processes are carried out by just one librarian. This affects the smooth running of the Department.
5. **Shortage of Shelves, Trolley and Kick Step:** Arrangement of the serials appropriately on the shelves is hampered by insufficient shelves. Some acquired materials are not shelved or displayed. This affects their visibility, accessibility and usage.
6. **Increase in Varieties of Newspapers:** The Serials Department of Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library acquires only three (3) newspapers namely: *This Day*, *Daily Sun* and the *Guardian*. This does

not give library users the opportunity to access news items from a variety of sources. In order to sustain newspaper readership in the Serial Department, effort should be made to increase the number of newspapers acquired by addition of *Vanguard, Daily Times, Daily Trust and others.* Major factors affecting procurement of newspapers in FANL are paucity of fund and space.

7. **Non – Availability of Resources for Recording and Storing Serials:** Working materials such as Kardex box and card catalog cabinet and cards and Koha Installment for easy library access are not adequate. This has affected the recording and indexing of serials publication in the Department.

8. **Lack of Automation:** Virtually all the library processes in the serial department is still manual. This affects both the speed and quality of services rendered to users.

## RECOMMENDATION

- **Improving Electric Power Supply:** University management should do everything in its power to provide a standby generator and upgrade the energy supply to the library to an acceptable standard. This will help to preserve the materials and also provide a conducive environment for reading and researching in the department.

- **Automation of Serial Department:** Automation of serial department according to the university librarian is in the priority list of the library management. The library management should include this in its TETFUND budget.

- **Access to Electronic Serial:** Provision of access to serial materials electronically is advocated. This will help both in acquisition and utilization of serials in the library. It will also save cost.

- **Increase in Staff Strength:** More professional, para professional and general duty staff are required to manage the serials collection of the Department

- **Acquisition of Current Journals:** There is need to improve the subscription and purchase of serials in the Department. Current journals should be acquired and on time to meet the information and research needs of users.

- **Exchange of Journal:** Consortia building with other libraries is recommended to enable FANL build up her serials collection.

- **Storage and Display of Facilities:** The department is in dire need of catalogue cabinet, catalogue cards, kardex and computers to aid in the recording, display and storage of serials in the department.

- **Provision of More Shelves:** The Department is in dire need of addition shelves for effective and efficient arrangement and storage of serials collection in the department. This will enhance the use of these resources.

- **Improved Facility:** Some of the air conditioners, lighting and other electronic facilities in the Department which are not functional should be repaired and some replaced. This will help to make reading pleasurable in the Department.

## CONCLUSION

The paper has discussed pertinent issues involved in the management of serials collection in Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library. The paper also highlighted problems associated with serial collection in Festus Aghagbo Nwako Library. Recommendations were made based on the problems highlighted.

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