

The Role of Donation on the Collection Development In Ghana Communication technology University Library

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Abstract: *The study was conducted to ascertain the trends of donations to Ghana Communication Technology University library, Accra Campus. It was also to establish how donations have impacted the collection development of the library as well as service delivery. Study participants comprised of one (1) Head Librarian and four (4) assistant librarians. The face-to-face interview method was employed as a data collection instrument for this study—content analysis was used to analyse the data. The findings indicated that even though there was a collection development policy to regulate acquisitions, the policy was not of much use due to the economic situation in the country and low budget allocation to the library. Findings also revealed that the University library hardly receives donations. Findings again indicated that this library lacks adequate resources to serve its clients. It was recommended that librarians of GCTU should be proactive in soliciting for donations from alumni, corporate bodies, international organizations and philanthropic organizations to supplement purchases for better service delivery to users. It was also recommended that management of the GCTU library should lobby for adequate funds to purchase needed resources.*

Keywords: *Accra Campus, Collection Development, Donations, Ghana Communication Technology University, Policy.*

I. INTRODUCTION

An academic library is a place for learning, research and knowledge acquisition, it is a storehouse of knowledge in different forms. The mission of every academic library globally, is to provide information services and resources to support the mission and vision of the institution. Thanuskodi (2013) posits that the fundamental reason for the establishment of an academic library is to support teaching, learning and research activities in the institution. According to Somi and De Jager (2013) the library is intended to help users become critical thinkers, problem solvers, independent information seekers and lifelong learners.

In the view of Onoyeyan and Adesina (2014), a library could also be considered as an agency, which engages in the collection processing, preservation and dissemination of recorded information in the various formats most convenient to its target users. Ishola and Obadare (2014) established that both academic and non-academic activities revolve round the resources that are stocked in the library which are utilized by the university community for all scholarly and administrative endeavors in the scholarly world. Akande (2008), considered a library as a collection of information resources and the place where the materials are kept for consultation. According to Ekoh, and Uduebor (2017) an excellent library and information service cannot be achieved without rich collections. For a library to perform its function of supporting teaching and learning as stated above it needs a well-stocked collection to be able to achieve this mission. Materials for academic libraries collection are mostly acquired through gift, direct purchase and exchange (Adesanya, 2015a).

A collection development policy is essential for a balanced and robust collection. It specifies the scope of the collection, authority for selection, criteria for allocation of funds and for selection of various types of materials, priorities in selection and criteria for weeding (Kumar, Hussain, & Singh, 2008a)

A research by Akobi (2008) revealed that majority of libraries currently achieve their library development goals through donations. This assertion is supported by Patricia (2009) that a significant number of libraries in Africa rely heavily on donations and other financial support from individuals and organisations such as the Ford Foundation and Carnegie Corporation to remain functional in their operations. According to the study, this phenomenon has resulted in poor library services as well as research activities in some tertiary institutions which Ghana Communication Technology University (GCTU) Library is no exception. This study was to examine the role of donation on the collection development practices in Ghana Communication Technology University Library and to ascertain the impact donations have had on its collection and service delivery.

II. Statement of the Problem

Academic libraries in Ghana are bedeviled with under- funding and therefore constrained to acquire sufficient and relevant information materials for their users. This has therefore adversely affected the delivery of quality service to their users (Plockey, Appiah and Ofori 2019). Due to this libraries in developing countries have relied on donations as a major method of resources development to meet user needs. A study by Ibrahim & Daudu, (2013a) revealed that a low level of funding of libraries had led to the deterioration in the quality of library collections in Nigerian Universities. The study further indicated that 91 percent of collections in a library they studied was derived from donations, gifts, and bequeath.

Academic Institutions in the country in recent times have seen an upsurge in student numbers as many more people desire to acquire university education. However, a look at the resources of some of these libraries shows that there has not been a commensurate expansion of facilities and resources to meet the information needs of these increasing numbers of students. The situation in the GCTU library is not different from what pertains in many libraries on the continent. The GCTU library, the main library of the University, has three smaller branches, all on its Accra campus. It serves over eight thousand (8000) graduate and undergraduate students. This library is not exempted from all the challenges faced by other libraries in the country, like low budget allocation, inability to acquire needed resources due to the problem with the book industry and the difficulty in buying books overseas. It however does the best under the circumstances to provide the best of service to its clientele. Donations have played crucial role in many library's resource acquisition in sub-Saharan Africa to help offer effective service despite the numerous challenges associated with receiving donations (Kanyengo, 2009). This study seeks to assess the role of donation on the collection development practices in Ghana Communication Technology University Library and service delivery.

III. Objectives of the Study

The study seeks to:

1. To find out whether the GCTU library had collection development and donation policies and how these policies informed the donations that are received.
2. To establish the frequency with which donations were received.
3. To identify the forms of the donations that were made to the library.

IV. Research Questions

The research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Do the library's collection development and donation policies influence the donations that come to the library?
2. What is the frequency with which donations were received?
3. What are the forms of donations that came into the library?

V. Review of Literature:

5.1 Collection Development Policy (CDP)

Collection development is one of the core activities of a library service. Fordham (2013) outlines it as the route toward building library collections to serve the distinctive educational needs of library users. According to Edem and Luqman (2018) libraries all over the world still acquire and maintain massive information resources, in order to ensure effective use of these resources by their clients. The essence of these is to build and maintain library collection that will serve the want and needs of its clientele.

Nwosu and Udo-Anyanwu (2015) state that collection development is guided in most libraries by the collection development policy during the collection building. It is therefore necessary to have the CDP written to make for objectivity in developing the library collection. Johnson (2014) asserted that CDPs provide guidelines within which the library selects and manages its collection. These guidelines are a contract between the library and its community, supplying a framework within which complex decisions are made with consistency and reason.

Collection development policies are an important document for libraries according Cassell, (2008a). They describe library collections and discuss its core mission for each aspect of the collection. The policy also provides a way to develop the library's collections in a consistent way and to communicate the library's policies to its users (Cassell, 2008b). A study by Kumar, Hussain, and Singh, (2008b) intimates that a collection development policy is necessary for a balanced and robust collection. It specifies the scope of the collection, authority for selection, criteria for allocation of funds and for selection of various types of materials, priorities in selection and criteria for weeding. The study stresses that despite its importance many libraries do not have detailed collection policies.

The lack of a policy to guide collection development makes it difficult to distinguish between the long and short-term needs of patrons and to establish priorities for the allocation of resources to meet those needs, according to (Agyen-Gyesi, Lamptey & Frempong, 2010). Preparation and review of a written CDP therefore encourages the library to define or refine their goals and help the library collection to conform to the aims and objectives of the institution and of the library (Patel, 2016). CDP therefore, has a direct effect on access to library and information resources since it determines whether or not the collection contains the kinds of materials that are required.

5.2 Donation/Gift Policy

Donations can be described as aid in the form of information materials to libraries, which are important for collection development, they help supplement the book budget. Acquisition through donations is normally through solicited or unsolicited means. Gifts and donations are made and accepted to complement a library's acquisitions by purchase and provide the means by which libraries can build up comprehensive and useful collections for their clientele (Edem, 2010a). In view of this, Mwilongo, Luambano and Lwehabura, (2020) and Akporhonor (2005) posited that academic libraries should have a comprehensive policy on the soliciting and acceptance of gifts for the library collection. The gift policy should be consistent with the general collection development policy and should be included within that CDP statement. In the view of Cassell (2008), libraries that already have the donation policies have them closely linked to the library's collection development policies. In them strategies for the development of every part of the collection and the satisfaction of user are described.

The study of Edem (2010b) emphasizes that policy on donation must clarify on what materials to be accepted in the library as well as when to dispose of unwanted materials.

Filson (2015) in a comparative study of collection management practices of academic libraries management in West Africa states that the sources of the collection of most of the libraries come from donations and that libraries could only survive through proper collection management procedures such as the use of policies, the effective training of professionals and resource sharing among others. Bevis, Knight, and Taylor (2015) opined that policy on donation should provide basic information to prepare and allocate funds for library materials. In other words, the policy is to guide how donations are acquired and added to the collection to be of benefit to library users.

5.3 Types/ Forms of donations that came to the library

University of Cambridge (2015), describes book donation as an aid in the form of information materials. Information materials in this case refer to both book and non-book materials. It is to supplement the book budget and to encourage community interest and involvement in the library's mission. All the gifts that come to a library help to enrich and improve the library's resources. Donation made to libraries varies and could be in form other than funds, all non-monetary interventions are referred to as "in-kind" donations. These can include sponsorship or training of library personnel, provision of information resources and equipment to the library (Ibrahim & Daudu, 2013b). Hite (2006a) states that solicited donations are of two types. The first is what comes in material form. Here the assistance comes only in kind. The second comes in cash form. These two types of gifts exist in developing countries although the first type is the more popular among donors, especially foreign governments and agencies. The study continues that in developing countries, two types of book donations are common: the donation of books or monographs, and periodical subscriptions (Hite, 2006b). Both forms of donations to library go a long way to enrich the library collection and help the library achieve its mission of providing efficient resource and service to the University community.

According to Massey (2005), some estates are bequeathed to institutions, while some important people give their life's work (usually papers, letters, etc.). These may include materials like Presidential papers, screenplays of famous playwrights, or music scores written for special occasions. All these help to vary the library's collections. Ibrahim and Daudu (2013c) posited that donations made to libraries vary and can be in the forms of funds, books, journals, library equipment, databases, etc. depending on what the donors have and are willing to give. Adesanya (2015b) states that library gifts are classified into two well-known categories of solicited and unsolicited gifts. Again, sources from which gifts flow into the libraries vary, they include memorial gifts, honour gifts, wills, annuities, insurances, endowments, trust funds, bequests and deferred gifts. All these forms and the frequency with which they come as well as the policy to regulate their inclusion in the collection make it possible to achieve a comprehensive collection that is needed to serve library users.

A work by Kanyengo, (2009b) on book acquisitions at the University of Zambia Medical Library reveals that, book acquisitions in the library has followed similar trends as those of the serials subscriptions, and that this particular library has mainly depended on donations to sustain its book collection. Also a study by Ibrahim and Daudu (2013) on 'Relevance of Donation to Special Federal Tertiary Institution Libraries in Zaria, Kaduna State' discovered that the special Federal tertiary institution libraries were inadequately funded. Thus, the libraries sought for an alternative means in terms of donation to support or augment the major source of fund for library resource development, which has contributed positively but not sufficiently to the development of the library.

Zakari and Okojie (2009) in their work discussed recent interventions which have saved the libraries in Nigeria from total collapse. They identified donor agencies such as the Carnegie cooperation, Mac Arthur and Ford foundation, Book Aid International (BAI) and the Library Development Funds (LDF) arrangement by the National University Commission (NUC) have continued to serve as face-saving devices for the degenerating academic and public libraries, and further state that many academic libraries have successfully sought aid and support from Nigeria Book Foundation (NBF), efl. Net, Journal Donation Project (JDP) and so on. Sources of financial support for libraries are also derived from individuals, corporations, private foundations, etc. successfully sought aid and support from Nigeria Book Foundation (NBF), efl. Net, Journal Donation Project (JDP) and so on. Sources of financial support for libraries are also derived from individuals, corporations, private foundations, etc. The conclusion by all these researches is that without donations the various libraries would not have been able to meet clients' needs in resource provision.

VI. Research Methodology

The research employed a case study approach that made use of a qualitative method. The qualitative approach was adopted because it allows the researcher to obtain first-hand information from the participants about a

phenomenon or problems in their natural settings or environment. Data was collected by the researcher with only an interview guide as a data collection instrument. Interviews were held with all the respondents which included the head librarian, and four (4) assistant librarians. The population of the study comprised of all professionals and para-professionals of the GCTU Accra campus library. The entire population for the study was nine (9). The whole population was used in the study, but for lack of time and to avoid repetition four (4) assistant librarians who were directly involved in collection development processes and management were interviewed in addition to the head librarian. A total of five (5) interviewees were interviewed including the head librarian. The researcher designed a semi-structured interview guide based on themes derived from the objectives of the study. The face-to-face interviews were conducted by the researcher in the offices of the respondents at their own convenient. The qualitative data was analysed by Content analysis. The interviews were audio – recorded by the researcher and later transcribed, coded, and grouped based on emerging themes. The interview with each participant lasted for between 40-55 minutes. The results for each objective was presented in narrative as well as quotes.

The composition of staff who participated in the study were made up of two (2) males and three (3) females, this included the head librarian. The staff were all professionals and para-professional whose ages range between fifty-three (53) and twenty-five (25) years. The participants of the study had worked in the library from between four (4) to thirteen (13) years. These categories of staff were used in the study because they were in the position to provide the necessary information needed for the study.

VII. Discussion of Findings

Collection Development Policy and its influence on acquisitions

The objective one of the study sought to find out whether the library had a collection development policy and if it did, how the policy influenced the acquisitions practices in the library. Under this subtheme the questions that were asked were to ascertain how collection development was carried out in the library, whether the library had a policy to regulate the collection development activities and how satisfied respondents were with their library's collections. The findings showed that the library did have a collection development policy, but further findings revealed that even though the policy had been in existence for many years it did not influence resource acquisitions so much due to the economic situation in the country coupled with the low budgetary allocation to the library. In response to the questions under this subtheme the Head Librarian opined, "... well as for the policy we have it but the economic situation in the country, would not allow us to follow strictly what the policy dictates to develop our collection if we do that we will never have enough resources to serve our users."

Resp.1 also revealed that "Yes, we have a collection development policy, but it is like a white elephant, we have it crafted carefully on paper but in practice that is not what happens. We acquire what the budget allocated to the library can afford which makes it difficult to acquire a reasonable number of needed resources due to inadequate funds for acquisitions."

Resp. 2 responded in like manner when he revealed "Yes, we have a collection development policy but it does not guide the development of the collection so much when it comes to acquiring materials for the collection."

Resp. 3 also posited that "Yes we have a collection development policy which we refer to anytime there is acquisition to be made. Even though it does not influence what we buy so much it still serves some purpose because it guides the process."

Resp. 4 confirmed the statements of the other respondents by saying "Yes we have a collection development policy which is not consulted so much when it comes to purchases but it is however, consulted when it comes to other activities related to managing the collection." This findings of the library having CDP is consistent with Nwosu and Udo-Anyanwu (2015), Hénard and Roseveare (2012), and Kumar, Hussain, and Singh, (2008) whose studies affirm that collection development must be guided by a written policy to maintain efficiency, consistency and standards in the management of the collection, to make for objectivity in

developing the library collection and also help in having a balanced and robust collection. The policy not being fully utilized when it comes to acquisitions confirms Kissiedu (2009) that limited funds and lack of access to resources hinder the efficiency of CDPs in Africa.

Frequency of donations to the library

Objective two of the study was to examine the frequency with which donations came to the library.

Participants were asked questions on how often their library received donations. The questions were also to seek explanation as to whether the frequency had anything to do with the size of the library's collection. Commenting on the frequency of donations received in the library, the head librarian revealed; *"...it is not easy to tell the frequency, they come intermittently, sometimes a whole year would pass without anybody donating anything to the library."*

Resp.1 revealed that *"...donations come once in a while, occasionally, as and when someone feels like giving."*

Resp. 2 intimated that *"donations do not come in as often as if there were partners to receive from. They come in ones in a while."*

Resp. 3 had this to say *"There is no regular pattern with which donations come in. They come in whenever a donor decides to give and sometimes it takes a whole year before somebody donates to the library."*

Resp. 4 confirmed the statements of the other respondents by saying *"donations do not come in often, they come in once in a while."*

This result corroborates Edem (2010d) whose study indicated that some challenges associated with donations are "deficiency in subject coverage, foreign language materials, and irregular donation patterns which is tended towards declining acquisition over time and hiccups in management efforts.

Forms of donations to the library

This subtheme sought to find out the forms of the donations that came to the library. It was also to know if recipients were comfortable with those forms or they preferred donations in some other format and the reasons why. The findings revealed that donations usually came in one main format, which was hardcopy form of book and journals. The respondents would prefer donations in forms other than the hardcopy books which normally go out of currency quickly. According to the head librarian, *"...they always come in hardcopy form, both books and journals even though we would have preferred other forms liked cash so we could the materials we need ourselves."*

Resp. 1 remarked, *"...donations have always come in hardcopy format but we would have preferred other forms like cash and e-books."*

Resp. 2 revealed that *"...all the donations we have ever received have always come in hardcopy format but we want donations in other formats like pdf which is easier to manage."*

Resp. 3 also revealed that *"We always receive donations in hardcopy material form and not in any other form. We would have preferred funds as donations so that we could buy the materials we want as majority of the books and journals donated are mostly out of date"*

Resp. 4 confirmed the statements of all the other respondent that, *"the library always received hardcopy materials as donations. He also preferred donations in cash form to buy current materials."* These findings are consistent with Hite (2006; Ibrahim & Daudu, 2013) whose studies revealed that donations to libraries vary, and that libraries mostly received hardcopy materials as donations even though in a few occasions cash/funds are received as donations.

VIII. Conclusion

The study set out to investigate the role donations have played in the collection development of Ghana Technology Communication University library. It was found out that GCTU library does not benefit from much donations because the management of the institution has never formed partnership with any donor organization and have also never taken steps to solicit for donations that could allow them to receive as much donations as the few Universities that have partners enjoy. Despite the challenges and some conditions attached to donations, such as irregular giving pattern, materials not being relevant to courses run in the university, unusable materials because they are worn out or out-dated, unplanned financial commitment in the donation process, donations are still beneficial to this institution as the few that are received help in service delivery.

IX. Recommendations:

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations have been suggested to help GCTU acquire more donations to build up their collections.

- Management of GCTU should forge partnerships with charitable organisations such as corporations, non-government organizations (NGOs), research institutions and international organizations to help solicit for relevant donations.
- It is recommended that management of GCTU library should not rely only on receiving physical resources as donations but funds as well.
- The study further recommends that librarians of GCTU should be proactive in soliciting for donations from alumni, corporate bodies, international organizations and philanthropic organizations to supplement their collections for better service delivery to facilitate teaching and learning.
- Finally, it is recommended that management of the GCTU library should lobby for adequate funds to purchase needed resources.

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