

Proposed Information Resource Management Policy for School Libraries in Zaria

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ABSTRACT: *This document proposes an information resource management policy for the school Libraries in Zaria. It discusses the concept of information resource management policy, explaining that Information Resource Management Policy is a guideline on how libraries should select, acquire and manage their resources. The purposes of school libraries were highlighted so as to encourage the reading habit of the learners and develop in pupils the ability to learn from book without the teacher. It also provides the principle and requirement that governs the planning, processing, acquisition, preservation and security of school information resources. Information Resources should be provided as a collective resource for the whole user community (Teacher, Student/pupil, members of the community). The budget allocations for school libraries were highlighted of which at least 5% of school annual budget should be allocated to the library. It also discusses the issue of staffing in which qualified personal is needed to hold several posts in the library. Information services were highlighted such as reference services, selective dissemination of information, library user education for which convenient time should be allocated on the school time-table to enable students participate fully in the programmed of the library instructions which shall be designed to inculcate students' necessary skills in using the library resources. It ended with the need for policy review by stating that the policy is subject to review and changing this policy will be in the light of new development.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Information Resources Management

(IRM) is a technique of managing information as shared organizational resources. IRM includes:

- (1) Identification of information sources,
- (2) Type and value of information they provide, and
- (3) Ways of classification, valuation, processing and storage of information.

Information Resource Management Policy is a guideline on how libraries should select, acquire and manage their resources. It also serves as a function upon which other library services are built.

Eguavon & Ochai (2002) defined IRM policy as a planned for systematic development of a collection based on the objective of the library. It is also a written statement of selection principle and criteria on the depth of subject coverage and details such as language, geographical treatment and time period.

School Libraries are built and maintained to provide information resources to the school community. The resources are to support and enhance the educational goal of their parent institution as set out in their curricula. The qualities of school library to users (teenagers) are provided by staff that understands and respect their unique informational, educational and recreational needs. In accordance with the principle expressed in the Library Bill of Right and free access to libraries for minors (Intellectual Freedom Manual, 6th edition, ALA, 2001), teenagers must have access on equal basis with adults to all the services and materials the library provides. Services to this group of users must be based on a written policy outlining the philosophy, goals and objectives of the school library.

II. PURPOSE OF SCHOOL LIBRARY

A school library is known by other names such as School media centre, School resources centre, School Library media centre etc. it's a collection of print and non print materials which include Electronic resources that are meant to respond to ever changing needs of its users (pupils, student, teachers and in some instances, the members of the community) in terms of their curricula co-curricular requirement must be based on a policy. In Vein, Elaturoti (2000) is of the view that school Libraries exist to support and enhance the educational goal of their parent institution as set out in their curriculum; to develop and sustain the pupils and students the habit of reading to learn and for pleasure; to impart into them the habit of lifelong usage of libraries and reading.

The main purpose of school Library as enumerated by Aina (2004) is to:

1. Encourage the reading habit of the learners
2. Develop in pupils the ability to learn from book without teacher
3. Gives social training to the pupils/ students.

III. PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

This policy will be used in the following ways:

1. To inform the users and other Libraries on the nature and scope of the collection.
2. To establish criteria for the acquisition of the school Library information resources, thus creating a collection
3. of the highest degree of excellence and relevance.
4. To establish criteria for the retention and preservation of resources in the collection.
5. To serve as a tool for user education
6. Assist teachers, pupils/students and community and library staff in making optimum use of the available
7. financial resources.

IV. GENERAL POLICY

1. The goal of information services is to provide access to high quality information service and resources.
2. Library resources should include primary and secondary information resources both in print and electronic
3. format.
4. The acquisition of information resources and management of school Library collection should be informed
5. by and prioritized according to the school current curriculum.
6. The Library should aim to covering all areas of knowledge.

V. PRINCIPLES

Certain principles under pin this policy

1. Resources should be provide to satisfy the whole users/ community i.e. the Teacher, Student/pupil, etc
2. Information resources in all formats should be covered.
3. Information services should be committed to provide equitable access to all users including those with special needs.
4. The policy is designed to be flexible and responsive to change the need of users.
5. Resources development and management in school library includes information services to school community.
6. The provision of all resources should be covered by this policy unless constrained by budget.

VI. BUDGET ALLOCATION

There should be adequate budgetary provision and implementation in the school for their library, certain percentage of recurrent school budget should be allocated to the school library, at least five 5% of school annual budget which is to be use to fund its activities. Therefore information resource budget shall be use to:

- I. Build physical collection including print and electronic resources as well as providing subscription access to online information. The budget allocation should be based on the following principles and assumptions:
 - a. The school allocation to the library must be consistent with an annual positive growth as much as possible.
 - b. The library budget should include sufficient funds for staffing, collections, equipment, etc
 - c. The school librarian should have authority to apportion funds and initiate library expenditures within the library budget and in accordance with policy of the school.
 - d. Every subject be it science, art and commerce requires some level of collection, however the appropriate measure for each subject area may be different but would made equitable by applying a formula devised by the library management.
 - e. library Funds should not be transferred to other school activities.
 - f. The information resources budgets would be managed by the library and the funds would remain at all time part of the library's budget.
 - g. Any resources purchased with library funds become library property.
 - h. The decision of library management should be final.
 - i. The school library can also be finance through gifts and donations.

In spending the school library funds, accountability and transparency should be the watch word. There should be a library committee chaired by the principal or his vice admin with the school librarian, the representative of the Bursar and PTA Community as Members. The committee shall ensure judicious application of funds so that donors can see physically how their donations have been used, thus encouraging them and others to donate more in the future.

School librarian should ensure that the budget allocation shall be shared according to the following percentages

- a. 40% shall be spent on books
- b. 10% shall be spent on serials
- c. 20% on Media resources
- d. 10% on e-resources

- e. the remaining percentages shall be spent on miscellaneous. E.g. photocopy and others.

VII. STAFFING

This is a process of recruiting personnel to maintain the various section of the library. Also in staff recruitment there should be professionals, Para professional, and non professional for successful work flow.

1. The school librarian should be a professional and administrative head of the library; He/ she must possess at least a University degree/ HND in library and Information Science with ICT skills.
2. The Library Assistants shall be responsible for routine duties including book shelving; He/ she must possess Diploma in library science or computer science.
3. The Typist or Secretary shall be responsible for secretarial function; He/ she must have at least certificate in administration.
4. Cleaner to be primarily responsible for cleaning the library.
5. Motivation should be given to staff always and their end of the year bonus should not be ignored.
6. Staff welfare should be taken seriously.
7. Library staff should be encouraged to be patient and tolerant with school library users and also should respect users and vice versa.

There should be regular training and retraining of library staff (workshops, conferences and even IT courses) in order to meet the present of library challenges.

VIII. POLICY ON RESOURCE SELECTION

There should be selection criteria, selection tools and periodicals selection Aids available in the library. The following criteria are considered in selecting information resources for school library.

- a. Authority and competence of the author and or his reputation. Should be established
- b. Publishers- Even from the quality of publication, a school librarian should assess the publisher.
- c. Timeliness of information and/or significance of the subject. Is the scope well covered? This can be determined from the table of content or preface to the book.
- d. Effectiveness and suitability of format in terms of physical appearance.
- e. Durability, ease of use and illustration.
- f. Impact on the budget, if the material is very expensive, the number of copies must be considered so that only one item will not take the funds available.
- g. special local interest or community relevance. The style of presentation must meet the level of the user. Topic must be arranged locally etc

The librarian should select books that would support student's studies as well as materials that would continue to develop students reading skills for life.

Also the school librarian should ensure that recommended textbooks, comic book, recreational books are among the materials that will catch the interest of these group of users.

IX. SELECTION TOOLS

There shall be various selection tools that school librarian can use to select materials for the library which include:

1. Book list
2. Publishers catalog
3. Brochures from publishers
4. Book reviews in the newspapers/magazine
5. Subject bibliographies. Etc

X. NON-BOOK RESOURCES

This refer to media or audio-visual materials such as slides, microfilm, micro fiche, audio/visual cassettes, CDROMS, Maps, computer accessories, teaching aids etc. School librarian should work with heads of department to select the needed resources for the library users.

XI. POLICY ON ACQUISITION

In process of acquiring materials for the library, the school library materials can be acquired through the following:

1. Direct purchase from publishers/book vendors.
2. Legal Deposit where publishers are required to deposit certain number of copies at a depository as stipulated by law. (E.g. National Library of Nigeria).

3. Gifts: Gifts from individuals, institutions or other libraries can be donated to the library within and outside the country. The national Library of Nigeria can also donate to the school libraries on request all over the country.
4. Acquisition of information resources should be based on the needs of the users, their numbers and financial capability.
5. The resources acquired from the publisher, vendor and bookshops, shall be depend on need and finance available.
6. The resources should be in the format that the users will understand and appreciate.

XII. POLICY ON GIFT AND DONATION

Only gift and donation that meet the library selection requirement should be added to the library's collection and all the unwanted ones should be given out to other libraries in need of them and the written acknowledgement shall be sent to the donors by the recipients.

XIII. RESOURCE PROCESSING

1. At the arrival of the resources, they should be given ownership stamp.
2. Accession number should be given to the new resources.
3. The resources should be sent for further processing to the division in charge of cataloguing and classification.

XIV. WEEDING

The following criteria shall be used in the process of weeding the unwanted materials of the library:

- a. Out dated resources.
- b. Poor physical condition.
- c. Resources in multiple copies.
- d. Teacher's recommendation to remove the resources.

XV. ORDERING

The school librarian shall assigned one of the library staff to be responsible for ordering, receiving, invoicing and tracking of all library resources. In order to minimize funds, majority of the resources are to be ordered directly from the publishers. And audio-visual titles are to be purchased from commercial or educational suppliers.

XVI. SERVICES

The quality of library services will be largely influenced by the availability of human, material and financial resources. School library is to promote and maintain quality service that will support reading and learning process in the school. The following service shall be provided for school library:

- a. Reference Services: The school library should offer reasonable reference assistance to library users. Answers shall be provided to all enquiries.
- b. Circulation (or loan) Service: The school shall lends its materials to registered users with the exception of reference materials and other designated "restricted" items.
- c. Selective Dissemination of Information: This service shall involves the searching of information and making it available to the subject teacher on request. It may be in form of providing list of current publication, abstract of research and current contents.
- d. Photocopy Services: photocopying of library materials shall be allowed costing the students and staff within the limit of copyright law.
- e. School librarian shall have the responsibility of encouraging the use of library and library resources through several promotional activities such as library week, library display/exhibition, book talk, reading competition, book sharing, reading clubs, film shows, story hour etc.
- f. Library User Education: Convenient time should be allocated on the library time-table to enable students participate fully in the programmed of the library instruction which shall be designed to inculcate student necessary skills for using the library resources.

XVII. PRESERVATION/ SECURITY

Resources are very expensive and lost or damage will create a vacuum. Natural and Manmade disaster can affect such resources. The disaster could be flood, fire outbreak, rainstorm, stealing, and destruction by insect etc.

Therefore, the library building should be secured through the following;

1. Provision of drainage all around the library

2. Provision of adequate light both within and outside the library
3. The resources and shelves should be dusted daily.
4. Provision of ceiling fans, air conditioners and adequate ventilation (cross ventilation).
5. Not less than two security men should be available on duty.
6. Provision of fire extinguishers, buckets of sand and escape doors.
7. Trees close to the library building should be cut down and the surrounding should be clean always.
8. Conducive environment should be provided for student to relax.

XVIII. MAINTENANCE

1. Shelving of library resources should be done at least twice a day.
2. Worn out resources should be mended and bound
3. Relegation and weeding of outdated damage and un-used resources should be done regularly for the purpose of creating space for new ones.

XIX. POLICY REVIEW

This policy is subject to review and changes to this policy will be in light of new development, it will also be with teaching staff on the basis to ensure that, it continues to reflect the priorities of the school curriculums.

XX. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Demonstration secondary school library, Ahmadu Bello University shall operate within the policy of this proposal because the policy covers some aspect of information resources management.

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