



# **Acquisition And Management Of Electronic Information Resources In Special Libraries In Kogi State, Nigeria**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study examined the acquisition and management of electronic information resources in special libraries in Kogi State. Three objectives and three research questions guided the study. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study was ten librarians in the three special libraries, all of whom were drawn as sample for the study, using the total enumeration sampling technique. The observation checklist and the questionnaire were the instruments used to collect data which were analysed using the mean. Findings in the study reveal the electronic information resources in special libraries in Kogi State include: e-books, e-journals, e-conference proceedings, online databases, digital archives, websites, social media applications, and subject gateways, among others. The methods of acquiring electronic information resources are; purchase, subscription, and open access. The methods of managing the e-resources in the libraries are; digital rights management, user training, user feedback, e-resource preservation, usage tracking and assessment, and e-resource inventory. The study recommends among others, that parent institutions should engage the services of relevant professionals like computer scientists to complement the services of librarians in handling the electronic information resources.

**Keywords:** Acquisition, electronic, Information resources, Libraries, Management, Special libraries

## **INTRODUCTION**

Electronic information resources as a product of ICT play a crucial role in providing a veritable platform for research and networking among and across professionals and guarantee timely and round-the-clock access to required information. Electronic information resources refer to any type of information or content that is stored and accessed electronically William (2021). They can include a wide range of materials such as documents, images, videos, audio recordings, software programs, films, CD-ROM readers, e-encyclopedia, e-dictionaries, databases, institutional repositories, and much more. These resources are typically stored and accessed through computers, smartphones, tablets, or other electronic devices. Electronic information resources according to Tariq and Zia (2014) are those materials that require computer access, whether through a personal computer, mainframe, or handheld mobile devices. They may be accessed remotely via the internet or locally. Similarly, Mansur (2018) described electronic

information resources as electronic products that deliver a collection of data, be it text, referring to full-text databases, e-journals, e-books, image collections, other multimedia products and numerical, graphical or time-based, as a commercially available title that has been published with the sole aim of being marketed for information dissemination. There are several categories of electronic information resources available in various formats and media. They include text-based resources, multimedia resources, software and applications, online learning resources, open digital resources, cloud storage and file-sharing platforms.

Electronic information resources are characterized by their ability to be easily stored, replicated, accessed remotely, and easily manipulated and searched. They can be easily modified, and transmitted to different devices and locations. These resources are typically stored in electronic formats, such as files or databases. They have numerous uses across various domains. They are used in education for online learning and access to educational materials. In research, electronic information resources provide access to vast amounts of information and scholarly articles. In entertainment, they enable the creation, distribution, and consumption of music, movies, and games. Communication and collaboration are facilitated through electronic resources like email, instant messaging, and online collaboration tools. Businesses rely on electronic information resources for marketing, e-commerce, managing finances, and accessing online services. They play a crucial role in preserving and archiving historical documents and in healthcare for managing patient records and diagnostic data. In courts and legal institutions, electronic information resources are critical for access to legal records, law reports, research for cases, etc (Moruf & Adeleke, 2018).

Libraries play a crucial role in facilitating access to information and knowledge in various fields. With the advent of the digital age, libraries have witnessed a significant shift in the acquisition and management of resources, particularly electronic information resources. The emergence of electronic information resources has provided unique opportunities and challenges for libraries to enhance their collections and better serve their patrons including those of special libraries.

Special libraries are specialized information centres that cater to the needs of specific user groups, such as government agencies, corporations, research institutions, and nonprofit organizations. These libraries are committed to acquiring and managing resources that are tailored to the specific needs and interests of their users. In recent years, the digital revolution has transformed the information landscape, prompting special libraries to adapt their collection development and management strategies. A special library is established and funded to provide information to serve the interests of the parent body. A special library is a mission-oriented library that ranges from a public-funded scientific and technical research library to the private sector corporate information center. A special library is an important entity and establishment in agencies, ministries, educational institutions, research centres, etc., because it fosters the objectives and goals of the parent organizations by providing current information (Adayi, 2023). The functions of the special library are to select, acquire, organize, store, and preserve information and information resources in manual and electronic formats in line with the objectives, interests, goals, products, and services of the funding body. A special library is generally concerned with the literature on a particular subject or a group of subjects and extends its facilities to a particular type of clientele (Asghar & Shafique, 2012). Special libraries must effectively navigate the complexities associated with the acquisition and management of electronic information resources to meet the diverse needs of their users. This is the scenario expected of special libraries in Kogi State.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

Electronic information resources have greatly impacted library resources and the role of librarians in this era of globalization. These resources encompass a vast array of online databases, e-books, academic journals, multimedia materials, and many more. Their importance lies in their ability to transcend physical boundaries, offering users unrestricted access to a wealth of information anytime and anywhere. Electronic information resources enable libraries to offer comprehensive, up-to-date collections that cater to diverse learning needs. They foster research, learning, and collaboration by providing instantaneous

access to information, thus empowering users to explore new topics, enhance their skills, and engage with global knowledge networks. Given the critical role of special libraries in facilitating the achievement of the mission and vision of their parent institutions, the acquisition and effective management of electronic information resources towards attaining these goals are critical. This seems to be contrary to the experiences of special libraries in Kogi State. The absence or shortage of electronic information resources in any educational, research or service institutions' libraries in this era of globalization would leave a huge gap in the information needs of the patron communities. It is against this backdrop that this research is aimed at investigating the acquisition and management of electronic information resources in special libraries in Kogi State.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of this study is to examine the acquisition and management of electronic information resources in special libraries in Kogi State. Specifically, the study seeks to address the following objectives:

1. Identify the electronic information resources available in special libraries in Kogi State.
2. Determine the methods of acquisition of electronic information resources in special libraries in Kogi State.
3. Determine the methods of management of electronic information resources in special libraries in Kogi State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were addressed in the study:

1. What are the electronic information resources available in special libraries in Kogi State?
2. What are the methods of acquisition of electronic information resources in special libraries in Kogi State?
3. What are the methods of management of electronic information resources in special libraries in Kogi State?

### **Review of Literature**

Electronic information resources are innovative resources that enhance library services in this era of globalization. They are digital information materials accessed and utilized through various devices, such as computers, smartphones, tablets, and e-readers. These resources include e-books, e-journals, online databases, multimedia materials, and other forms of digital content. The increasing popularity of electronic information resources can be attributed to their accessibility, cost-effectiveness, efficiency, and eco-friendliness. Electronic information resources have revolutionized how information is accessed and shared, impacting various domains such as education, research, healthcare, and business. As technology continues to evolve, electronic information resources will play a vital role in the digital age, transforming how we access and utilize information (Dauben, 2020). Like other library resources in manual format, electronic information resources are also acquired.

Acquisition is the various means by which additions are made to the library stock. According to Librarianship Studies and Information Technology (2021), the acquisition is the process of acquiring materials after the final selection decision has been made and it concerns all the processes involved in building up the collection of the library. Acquisition of library materials, including electronic information resources involves a variety of methods, including purchase, gifts/donations, exchange, bequeath, resource sharing, open access, subscription, and legal deposit.

Acquisition by purchase is the most widespread method. It is making outright purchase of materials from the publisher, vendor or bookstore. Gifts/donations are very valuable sources of gaining materials for the library. Individuals, groups and corporate bodies who are affiliated to the library deliver materials to them free of charge. Exchange is the concrete arrangement between libraries that have common needs. The library exchanges its duplicate or unique materials for those of another library (Adepoju, 2021). Bequeath refers to the transfer of the entire personal collection to a library. Many private collections have been bequeathed to publicly financed libraries, such as those of Herbert Macaulay, Henry Carr, Teslim Elias, Adetokumbo

Ademola, etc. (Adayi, 2023). The library engages in resource sharing through the formation of a library consortium. This is more common among academic libraries. Electronic information resources can also be obtained through the open internet source. This is because all items on the internet are electronic and many of them are available for free. Some of the resources are however restricted and require financial subscription to be made, which many libraries do given their huge value. Legal deposits provide an avenue for the collection of electronic information resources by libraries. In most cases, graduating students and staff are required to deposit a hard and soft copy of their projects/thesis in the institution's library. This is, however, more common in academic libraries. The electronic resources thus obtained are managed for effective use by patrons.

Management of electronic information resources in special libraries requires a strategic approach to ensure effective organisation, accessibility, and preservation of valuable contents Aina (2017). Lewis (2018) provides some methods of managing electronic information resources in special libraries, which include: digital resource inventory, metadata standards, digital preservation, access control, user training, and digital rights management. Others are; usage tracking and assessment, access control, collaboration, and user feedback. On their part, Mukhtar and Maidabino (2021) provide several key steps and methods for managing electronic information resources in special libraries. They include; electronic resources inventory, metadata standards, digital preservation, access control, user training, digital right management (DRM), usage tracking and assessment, and content licensing.

Electronic resources inventory begins by creating a comprehensive inventory of all electronic resources, including databases, e-books, e-journals, multimedia, etc. This inventory should include details like title, source, access rights, and usage statistics. Creating resources involves systematically listing and categorizing all electronic resources available in the library. This includes specifying the title, source or provider, publication date, access rights (such as subscription details), and usage statistics. The inventory serves as a foundational reference for managing the electronic resource collection.

Metadata is essential for describing and organizing electronic resources. It helps in the efficient searching and retrieval of information within the library's electronic resources collection. Special libraries should adopt established metadata standards like Dublin Core or MARC (Machine-Readable Catalogue) to ensure consistent and structured information about each resource. Electronic information resources require regular backups, migration to extended file formats, and adherence to digital preservation best practices. Digital preservation is crucial for preventing data loss and ensuring the long-term accessibility of digital resources. Special libraries should develop these preservation strategies for enhanced sustainability. Access control measures involve setting up a system for user authentication and authorisation. These mechanisms ensure that only authorised users can access certain digital resources particularly when dealing with sensitive or subscription-based content. It helps protect publisher's rights and maintain compliance with licensing agreements.

Offering user training programmes to library staff and users to familiarize them with electronic resources access, search techniques, and proper usage is another strategy for managing electronic information resources in libraries. To maximize the utility of electronic resources, special libraries should provide training programmes to both library staff and users. These training sessions can cover topics such as how to access electronic resources, effective search techniques, and understanding usage rights and restrictions, among others.

Digital Right Management (DRM) refers to the technological and legal measures used to protect digital content. Special libraries must understand and comply with DRM restrictions. They should ensure that users are aware of any limitations on copying, printing, or downloading content. Usage tracking and assessment utilize usage statistics and analytics tools to monitor how digital resources are utilized. This data helps librarians make informed decisions about resource subscriptions and allocation of budget. Usage statistics and analytics tools allow libraries to monitor how electronic resources are utilized. This data helps librarians make informed decisions about resource subscription, budget allocation, and collection development. It can also highlight popular resources and those in need of promotion.

Content licensing keeps track of licensing agreements and subscription terms for electronic resources. It ensures compliance with copyright and licensing restrictions. Special libraries need to be well-versed in the licensing agreements governing their electronic resources. Compliance with copyright laws and licensing

restrictions is crucial. This includes understanding limitations on resource sharing, interlibrary loan, and their distribution of electronic content.

## METHOD

The research adopted the descriptive survey research design. This type of research design aims to obtain information to systematically describe a current phenomenon, situation, or population (Shona, 2020). The study was carried out in Lokoja, Kogi State. The population comprised four staff in the Kogi State Specialist Hospital Library, three staff in the Federal Medical Center Library and three staff in Federal High Court Library, making total number of ten staff. The total enumeration sampling technique was employed to draw all the ten staff for the study. This method was used because the entire population was small and shared well-defined features. Moreover, using a fraction of it may not measure what was desired (Canonizado, 2021). The instruments used to collect data were an observation checklist and a researcher-constructed questionnaire, titled “Acquisition and Management of Electronic Information Resources in Special Libraries Questionnaire (AMEIRSLQ)”. The data collected were analysed using the mean. A criterion mean of 2.50 was used as a decision rule. This implies that items with a mean score of 2.50 and above were considered positive and accepted, while items with scores below the threshold of 2.50 were considered negative and rejected. A four-point modified Likert scale was used as a response format.

## RESULTS

**Research Question 1:** *What are the electronic information resources available in special libraries in Kogi State?*

**Table 1:** Results of observation checklist of electronic information resources available in special libraries in Kogi State.

S/N	Item Statement	KSSHL		FMCL		FHCL	
		A	NA	A	NA	A	NA
1	Website	√	×	√	×	√	×
2	Blogs	√	×	√	×	×	×
3	Forums/chatrooms	√	×	√	×	×	×
4	Search engines	√	×	√	×	√	×
5	Online databases	√	×	√	×	√	×
6	E-books	√	×	√	×	√	×
7	Digital archives	√	×	√	×	√	×
8	Social media	√	×	√	×	√	×
9	E-newspapers	√	×	√	×	√	×
10	E-journals	√	×	√	×	√	×
11	DVDs	√	×	√	×	√	×
12	CD ROMs	√	×	√	×	√	×
13	E-conference proceedings	√	×	√	×	√	×
14	E-reports	×	√	×	√	√	×
15	Professional books on CDs	√	×	√	×	√	×
16	Professional journals on CDs	√	×	√	×	√	×
17	E-reference sources	√	×	√	×	√	×

**Key:** KSSHL: Kogi State Specialist Hospital Library; FMCL: Federal Medical Center Library; FHCL: Federal High Court Library. A: Available; NA: Not Available

Table 1 above shows the availability of electronic information resources in special libraries in Kogi State. KSSHL has in its stock, all the listed resources except e-reports. The same applies to FMCL, while FHCL has all the listed e-resources in its stock, including e-reports. From the table, the e-resources found in

special libraries in Kogi State, therefore, include websites, blogs, forums/chartrooms, search engines, online libraries, online databases, e-books, digital archives, social media, e-newspapers, e-journals, DVDs, CD ROMs, and e-conference proceedings, Professional books on CDs, Professional journals on CDs and E-reference sources.

**Research Question 2:** *What are the methods of acquisition of electronic information resources in special libraries in Kogi State?*

**Table 2:** Mean ratings of respondents on methods of acquisition of electronic information resources in special libraries in Kogi State.

N = 10

S/N	Item Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Rank	Decision
1	Acquisition by purchase	5	5	0	0	3.50	1 <sup>st</sup>	Accepted
2	Acquisition by open access	3	5	2	0	3.10	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Accepted
3	Acquisition by subscription	3	5	1	1	3.00	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Accepted
4	Acquisition by exchange	2	5	2	1	2.80	4 <sup>th</sup>	Accepted
5	Acquisition by resource sharing	1	4	2	3	2.30	5 <sup>th</sup>	Rejected
6	Acquisition by gifts/donations	0	2	3	5	1.70	6 <sup>th</sup>	Rejected
7	Bequeath	0	0	4	6	1.40	7 <sup>th</sup>	Rejected
8	Acquisition by legal deposit	0	0	3	7	1.30	8 <sup>th</sup>	Rejected
	<b>Average Mean</b>					<b>2.39</b>		<b>Rejected</b>

Table 2 above shows that only four items, namely; acquisition by purchase, acquisition by open access, acquisition by subscription and acquisition by exchange have mean scores above the threshold of 2.50. The scores are: 3.50, 3.10, 3.00, and 2.80 respectively. These indicate that the respondents accepted the four items as the methods of acquisition of electronic information resources in special libraries in Kogi State.

**Research Question 3:** *What are the methods of management of electronic information resources in special libraries in Kogi State?*

**Table 3:** Mean ratings of respondents on methods of management of electronic information resources in special libraries in Kogi State.

N = 10

S/N	Item Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Rank	Decision
1	User training	4	6	0	0	3.40	1 <sup>st</sup>	Accepted
2	Digital rights management	5	4	1	0	3.20	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Accepted
3	User feedback	6	3	1	0	3.20	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Accepted
4	Digital preservation	4	4	1	1	3.10	4 <sup>th</sup>	Accepted
5	Usage tracking and assessment	4	3	2	1	3.00	5 <sup>th</sup>	Accepted
6	E- resource inventory	3	4	2	1	2.90	6 <sup>th</sup>	Accepted
7	Collaboration	4	2	3	1	2.90	6 <sup>th</sup>	Accepted
8	Access control	2	5	1	2	2.70	8 <sup>th</sup>	Accepted
9	Usage tracking and assessment	2	2	4	2	2.40	9 <sup>th</sup>	Rejected
10	Metadata standards	1	3	4	2	2.30	10 <sup>th</sup>	Rejected
	<b>Average Mean</b>					<b>2.83</b>		<b>Accepted</b>

**Key:** SA- Strongly Agree, A- Agree, D- Disagree, SD- Strongly Disagree

Table 3 above shows the accepted mean ratings of between 3.40 and 2.70 were obtained on items one to eight respectively, indicating that respondents are agreed that those items constitute the methods for the management of electronic information resources in special libraries in Kogi State. The methods are; user training (3.40), digital rights management (3.20), user Feedback (3.20), digital preservation (3.10), usage

Tracking and Assessment (3.00), e-resource inventory (2.90), collaboration (2.90), and access control (2.70). The average mean score (2.83) is above the criterion mean score of 2.50.

### **DISCUSSION**

A finding in this study indicates that a rich collection of electronic information resources is available in special libraries in Kogi State. The resources include; websites, blogs, forums/chatrooms, search engines, online databases, e-books, digital archives, social media, e-newspaper, e-journals, DVDs, e-conference proceedings, professional books, professional journals on CDs, and e-reference sources. This finding validates the position of Mansur (2018).

In terms of the acquisition of electronic information resources in special libraries in Kogi State, the study reveals four methods, namely; by purchase, open access, subscription, and exchange. This finding to some extent aligns with the views of Adepoju (2021), who agreed that libraries obtain their resources through exchange. However, the finding did not confirm the opinion of Adayi (2023) who noted that one of the ways libraries obtain resources is through outright bequeath. Acquisition by bequeath seem to be more common with academic and public libraries than in special libraries. There are indeed a few acquisition strategies adopted in special libraries in Kogi State. This number accounts for the low average mean score of 2.39, which is below the threshold mean score of 2.50.

The average mean score of 2.83 was recorded in Table 3, where eight items out of the ten in the list were accepted as the methods of management of electronic information resources in special libraries in Kogi State. the finding corroborate that of Mukhtar and Maidabino (2021) who maintained that user feedback, digital preservation, user training, digital rights management, usage tracking and assessment, collaboration, etc. are methods of managing electronic information resources in libraries.

### **CONCLUSION**

Electronic information resources are greatly utilized for research purposes in contemporary libraries, particularly academic and research libraries. Special libraries in Kogi State have a rich stock of electronic information resources. These resources are however acquired through limited methods. The special libraries adopt a variety of methods in the management of electronic information resources to the advantage of the patrons. What remains to be known, however, is the degree of utilization of electronic information resources and the impact of usage on the job performance of patrons.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of the study, the following measures are recommended:

1. The special libraries should explore other methods of acquisition to enrich their stock.
2. The parent institutions should employ ICT-related professionals to effectively manage electronic information resources in the libraries.
3. Special libraries with the same or similar service objectives should adopt resource sharing for greater effectiveness.

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