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**MATRIC NUMBER: EDU1904065**

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**COURSE: LIS 312 (COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT)**

**TOPIC: TEN (10) CRITERIAS FOR THE SELECTION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS.**

**INTRODUCTION**

Library materials are the varieties of information resources or documents that are acquired and kept in the library for the meeting of the users need and the satisfaction of the readers information desire according to their various interest.

Before materials are acquired or purchased for use in a library, they are first selected by the acquisition section who are responsible for the procurement of materials meant to be used by users in the library, and then they are approved for acquisition by the chief Librarian before they can be ordered for and supplied to the library by the publisher or vendor been patronised.

However, there are some criterias that must be followed by the selector when selecting information materials that needs to be acquired by the library so as to ensure that the right materials are selected according to the current need of the library.

Below are a list of ten (10) criterias that needs to be followed and put into consideration before selecting a material to be added to the acquisition list of the library;

(1) **THE COST:** The cost of an information material as a yardstick in the selection of library materials is important because, the library wouldn't be willing and ready to spend its fund on materials that are way too expensive for it to afford. It would rather go for a cheaper alternative that is similar to or even the same with such material. Hence, like the economic law of demand, it could therefore be said that, the higher the cost of a material (needed by the library), the lower the quantity of such material the library will acquire from the publisher and vice versa.

(2) **USERS DEMAND:** Another criteria that must be followed in the selection process of library materials is the demand for such book or resource by users. It would make no sense for the library to select for acquisition books that the users are not interested in or demanding for. The best thing to do is to select according to the need and interest of the readers and library users because, they are the ones whom the library is acquiring the book for. Here, the selector must value, respect and act on the readers opinion and interest in this regard so as not to select for acquisition what the users will not make use of in any way.

(3) **COMMUNITY ANALYSIS:** Materials are best selected after a good community analysis has been carried out in the environment where the library is located to know the what and when is the information need of the user community and make provision for it respectively.

(4) **POTENTIAL READER:** Every user of the library is a potential reader. Hence, it is important to know that books and other information materials that is capable of drawing the attention of users as potential readers should be selected in varieties for acquisition by the library.

(5) **CENSORSHIP:** The selector must be careful to take note ofInformation materials which have been censored by the government and declared as not fit for public use and not select anyone for acquisition by the library so as not to incite nor trigger any issue for the library and the library users.

(6) **QUALITY OF MATERIALS:** Materials to be selected for acquisition must be of good quality and not the type that would not be able to stand the test of time. Low quality materials such as the soft cover books will end up becoming a liability for the library because it will quickly deteriorate. But high quality materials such as the hard cover books will be an asset to the library in that, it would last longer and hence can be used for an extensive period of time by the library in meeting the information needs of its users.

(7) **COMPLETE COLLECTION:** The materials to be selected for acquisition by the acquisition Librarian must be a complete collection that would be capable enough to meet the information needs of users in their various field and scope of practice. There shouldn't be any incomplete collection. For instance, edited books should be acquired in full according to their number of edition unless a particular edition is not yet out for publication, so as to keep readers and researchers abreast on such particular topic in that information material.

(8) **SELECTION POLICY STATEMENT:** Every library has its selection policy as drafted by the acquisition Librarian in conjunction with other head of department in the various sections of the library and approved by the chief Librarian. This selection policy should be a guideline that must be followed when selecting materials to be acquired by the library.

(9) **RESOURCES IN OTHER LIBRARY:** The resources available in other library is also another criteria to be followed in selecting materials for acquisition. The acquisition Librarian should check for resources which are available in other libraries but which are found wanting in his library and also check for relevant resources which other libraries do not have that he may select them for acquisition inorder not to be left behind and also be above others respectively in terms of collection development.

(10) **SPACE:** Beyond the above criterias is the an important criteria which must be carefully considered before making any advance in acquiring materials for collection development. The place of space to accommodate the materials that are to be selected for acquisition cannot be overlooked and thus must be provided by the library. Hence, it can simply be said that all things been equal, the larger the space available in the library, the more the materials that would be selected for acquisition and the smaller the space available, the less the materials that would be selected for acquisition by the acquisition Librarian.

**CONCLUSION**

Collection Development is an important activity that must constantly take place in the library so as to ensure that the user community are constantly engaged with the materials available in the library for the satisfaction of their various information needs according to their individual desire and interest.

However, before resources are acquired, they must first be selected by following the laid down criteria outlined in this write-up so as to ensure that both sides are balanced towards achieving the aim of the establishment of every library as a repository of knowledge to serve the information needs of the user community is achieved.