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PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION OF INFORMATION RESOURCES FOR KNOWLEDGE CONTINUITY IN NNAMDI AZIKIWE LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study on preservation and conservation of information resources for knowledge continuity in Nnamdi Azikiwe library is considered essential due to the function of academic libraries which is to acquire information, organize it, preserve it and make it readily available at the point of need. Again, the essence of preservation and conservation practices is to ensure that information materials are in good shape for use at any point in time.

Design/Methodology/Approach: the paper adopted descriptive survey The population of the study comprised of 131 staff of Nnamdi Azikiwe library. Questionnaire and observation checklist were used to collect data from the respondents.

Findings: From the analysis and discussion of the findings, the research observed that many preservation and conservation practices are provided in the library under study. These practices helps in promoting knowledge continuity especially, binding, proper shelving to allow free flow of air and provision of adequate security to prevent theft and vandalism.

Value: For the enhancement of preservation and conservation of information resources in the library under study, there is need for adoption and implementation of strategies which include adequate funding of the library, provision of security gadgets as well as security personnel to prevent theft and vandalism, regular power supply and formulating good preservation and conservation policy in the library and so many others.

Key; *Preservation, Conservation, Information, Knowledge Continuity*

Introduction

Library is one of the social institutions that have the primary role of acquiring, processing, organizing, preserving as well as conserving the print and non-print information resources for users (Oluwanyi, 2015). This is in line with the view of Bankole (2010), that library collects, organizes, makes available and conserve for future use the record of human knowledge. Like other kinds of libraries, academic libraries are not exempted from this primary role of libraries. In this vein, Singh and Kaur (2009) assert that preservation of, and access to knowledge and information is the main mandate of academic libraries while supporting the mission of the respective colleges and universities. Oyegunle (2013) defined academic library as a library that is attached to academic institutions above the secondary level, serving the teaching and research needs of students and staff. Akporhonor cited in Momodu (2015), identified academic libraries as libraries attached to the tertiary institutions such as universities, polytechnic institutions, colleges of education, colleges of agriculture, colleges of technology and also research institutes. The university library is one aspect of academic libraries.

In his own study, Buhari (2016) opine that academic libraries is repository of knowledge where services like internet service, current awareness service, selective dissemination of information, reprographic service, bindery services,

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indexing and abstracting service, circulation of library information resources, CD-ROM database search, bindery, word-processing etc are rendered to clients of the library. He add that, for academic libraries to provide adequate and qualitative services, there is need for the libraries to have relevant and quality information resources in both print and electronic format. In this vein, Mubofu, Mambo and Samzugi (2021) states that information resources in academic libraries contribute significantly to the community repository of shared knowledge. And society depends on such repositories to protect and transfer knowledge and skills on various developmental issues and across generations.

Knowledge and information are regarded as the new 'factor of production', playing as critically a role in human development as the traditional factors of production – land labour and capital (World Bank, 1998/99) cited in Mchombu (2003). Information is data that has been interpreted (either by the perceiver or someone else) in a way that is understandable to the perceiver (Sajam and Kamppinen (1987), as quoted in Biggam (2001). Similarly, Mohajan (2016) opine that information refers to data which has developed and shaped to be of more meaning to users. It results from the interpretation of data in a provided background. In aspect of resources, the term 'resource' means a source of supply, usually in large quantity (Chimah & Nwokocha, 2013). Therefore, information resources are basically sources through which information can be gotten in order to meet the information needs of users (Abubaka, Shekarau & Abdulhamid, 2018). They are channels through which ideas, opinion, or feelings are stored or preserved.

On the other hand, knowledge is a familiarity, awareness, or understanding of someone or something, such as facts, information, descriptions, or skills, which is acquired through experience or education by perceiving, discovering, or learning (Librarianship Studies and Information Technology, (2017). Quoting Drucker and Brooking (19...,) Mohajan (2016) defined knowledge as organized information that changes something or somebody; either by being foundations for action, or by creating an individual (or an institution) capable of different successful action. Mohajan (2016), further indicate that knowledge is built up from data, information and prior knowledge. It is a dynamic framework from which information may be stored, processed and

understood (Plotkin, 19...) cited in Mohajan (2016).

The need to make the vast knowledge acquired by the society accessible and transferrable was what led to the production of information resources. According to Iyishu, Nkanu and Ogar (2013), the process of encoding and recording information has evolved over a thousand years. The way in which generations expressed their ideas, skills, emotions, etc, has led to the production of information materials since time immemorial. This in other words, implies that the essence of information resources is to preserve, make accessible, and ensure the continuation of information / knowledge. Supporting this, Janke (2013), posits that the recording of Indigenous culture in many artistic, oral, written, and recorded forms provides a wealth of knowledge and assists in the continuation of knowledge.

Knowledge is a theoretical or practical understanding of a subject, language etc (Concise Oxford Dictionary) cited in Mohajan (2016). Continuity, according to Britannica dictionary, is the quality of something that does not stop or change as time passes: a continuous quality. Also, Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English defined continuity as the state of continuing for a period of time, without problems, interruptions, or changes. Consequently, knowledge continuity is a process of retaining or continuing a theoretical or practical understanding of subject for a period of time without interruption. Acorrding to Urbancova and Urbanec (2013), "It is obvious, that to use the knowledge capital effectively it is important that there is continuous information transfer" They opine that ignoring the existence of knowledge continuity (in today knowledge econom-y) could have as a consequence a crisis involving knowledge discontinuity, a knowledge vacuum and a knowledge crisis.

The rate at which library information resources deteriorate has left much to be desired on knowledge continuity. The deterioration has become a great impediment to the efficacy of knowledge preservation and transmission across generations. Olatokun (2008) indicated that unlike museum items that are rarely handled, library materials are meant to be used. They are vital sources of information which cannot be conserved and stored away in an ideal and secured environment to arrest their decay. He noted therefore, that, "this is the dilemma of library

preservation - to make information accessible, while still ensuring its ultimate survival". Also, Iyishu, Nkanu and Ogar (2013), note that the way print and electronic materials are handled can affect the life span of the records contained in them. Thus, records must be preserved and conserved for future use.

Preservation and conservation of information resources is essential in ensuring knowledge continuity in the academic libraries. According to Ogbebor (2011), it is important for man to preserve and maintain the valuable knowledge in the books and documents because we want to preserve our knowledge and wisdom for the coming generation. Also, Akande (2009), revealed that preservation practices help to prepare the library's information resources for access as long as they are required for permanent learning.

The words 'preservation and conservation' are often used interchangeably to mean: the process of keeping an object safe from harm or loss, damage, destruction or delay, and maintaining it in a reasonably sound condition for present and future use. However, conservation is the more specific term and is particularly used in relation to specific objectives while preservation is a broader concept covering conservation as well as actions relating to protection (Anjaiah, 2008) quoted in Ozioko (2014). According to San Oo (2019), preservation is the task of minimizing or reducing the physical and chemical deterioration of documents. It is a cord that runs through the activities of a library. It includes all the protection, maintenance and restoration of information materials (Edem & Feather, 1997) quoted in Adeleke, Okusaga and Lateef (2020).

Conservation on the other hand, is one aspect of preservation activity. It implies the active use of preventive measures, or processes to repair damaged material, and ensure the continued existence of individual items (Sawant, 2014). San Oo (2019), posits that conservation is the maintenance of documents in unusable condition through treatment and repairs of individual items to slow the process of decay or to restore them to a usable state. Quoting IFLA Principles for the Care and Handling of Library materials (2010), Onyam, Akpom and Enem (2017), summarized that preservation and conservation has been defined as specific practices taken to slow down deterioration and prolong the life span of an object by directly intervening in its physical or chemical make-up. `

It is on this ground that the study is set out to investigate the preservation and conservation of information resources for knowledge continuity in Nnamdi Azikiwe library.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the preservation and conservation of information resources for knowledge continuity in Nnamdi Azikiwe Library.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Examine the preservation and conservation practices provided in the library
2. Determine the extent to which preservation and conservation of information resources promote knowledge continuity in the library.
3. Determine strategies for enhancing preservation and conservation of information resources to promote knowledge continuity in the library

Research Question

The following will be used to guide the study:

1. What are the preservation and conservation practices provided in the library?
2. What is the extent to which preservation and conservation of information resources promote knowledge continuity in the library?
3. What are the strategies for enhancing preservation and conservation of information resources to promote knowledge continuity in the library?

Literature Review

Information refers to data which has developed and shaped to be of more meaning to users. It results from the interpretation of data in a provided background (Mohajan, 2016). Buhari (2016) opine that the essence of information is to adequately equip the information seekers to make right decision. On the other hand, Chimah and Nwokocha (2013) opine that the term 'resource' means a source of supply, usually in large quantity. A person is said to be 'resourceful' when he or she is

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capable of handling difficult situations. Generally, resources are aids to the researcher. They are those materials, strategies, manipulations, apparatuses or consultations that help the researcher to enhance research and development. They therefore, defined Information resources as all forms of information carriers that can be used to promote and encourage effective research activities and developmental projects. Still on the same trend, Fayose, in Oiza (2015) identified information resources as those materials which enable libraries to carry out their functions effectively which are made of books and other information bearing media. In support of this, Lorver (2020) posits that resources of the library ranges from print and non-print resources, the print which forms the text books and hard copy journals and other instructional materials in print form.

Knowledge continuity is achievable through information resources in which knowledge can be stored, preserved and made accessible to the users. Abubaka, Shekarau & Abdulhamid (2018) buttress that information resources are channels through which ideas, opinion, or feelings are stored or preserved. Therefore, Janke (2013) assert that the recording of indigenous culture in many artistic, oral, written, and recorded forms provides a wealth of knowledge and assists in the continuation of knowledge. However, Davenport and Prusak, (1997) cited in Mohajan (2016), argue that, in organizations, knowledge is often becomes entrenched not only in documents but also in organizational routines, practice, methods, progressions, and norm. In fact, Urbancova and Urbanec (2013) states that knowledge market works optimally in organizations [and] key knowledge is successfully evaluated in the form of processes, structures, projects and patents. They noted that, if the organization ensures their operational knowledge continuity, it will get the competitive advantage before its competitors.

It is obvious, that to use the knowledge capital effectively it is important that there is continuous information transfer (Urbancova and Urbanec, 2013). They opine that ignoring the existence of knowledge continuity (in today knowledge economy) could have as a consequence a crisis involving knowledge discontinuity, a knowledge vacuum and a knowledge crisis. Non-ensuring knowledge continuity means that organizations are jeopardized by the loss of key knowledge.

Preservation and conservation of information resources is also essential in ensuring knowledge continuity in the libraries. In conformity, Ogbebor (2011) assert that it is important for man to preserve and maintain the valuable knowledge in the books and documents because we want to preserve our knowledge and wisdom for the coming generation. Also, Hazarika, in Mubofu, Mambo and Samzugi (2021) reports that preservation of library information resources enables future generations to use the data and it ensures an unbroken chain of evidence in research data.

Preservation and Conservation of Information Resources

The terms preservation and conservation are used interchangeably. But strictly speaking experts in the field draw a distinction between the two words (Alegbeleye, 2002) cited in Eniekebi (2020). While Preservation covers both administrative and financial aspects, including arrangements for storage and housing, staffing rates, regulations, procedures and methods involved in preserving library and archival resources, and the information found within. Conservation, on the other hand, refers to specific practices taken to slow deterioration and prolong the life of an object by directly intervening in its physical or chemical makeup. Examples of the latter are the repair of damaged books, binding or the de-acidification of paper. Preservation is therefore, a more embracing concept and it include conservation (IFLA principle for the care and handling of library materials (2010), as cited in Adekannbi and Wahab (2013).

According to Ogunmodede and Ebijuwa (2013), Preservation is the action taken to anticipate, prevent, stop, or slow deterioration.. Ogar (2013) opine that preservation of library materials refers to the activities associated with maintaining library materials for use, either in their original physical format or in some other format. This includes a number of procedures from control of the environment to conservation treatment. In this regard, San oo (2019) states that preservation means the combination of conservation and restoration for a collection, to provide full care and maintenance. It is achieved through appropriate

selection, housing, care and handling, security, climate control, repair and conservation treatment. He further explains that preservation is the task of minimizing or reducing the physical and chemical deterioration of documents. This is in line with the view of Oluwaniyi (2015), that preservation is the process in which all actions are taken to check and retard deterioration of information resources in the library.

Conservation on the other hand, implies the treatment of artefacts by interventive procedures (Walker, 2013). It should be seen as one option in a program of collection care. Ogar (2013) posits that conservation is the treatment of library materials to stabilize their physical structure in order to sustain their survival as long as possible in their original format. Adekannbi and Wahab (2015) cited International Record Management Trust (1999), portraying the term 'Conservation' as the intrusive protection of archival material, by the minimal physical and chemical treatments necessary to resist further deterioration, which will not adversely affect the integrity of the original. Quoting Ngulube (2003), Makwae (2018) revealed that conservation can be characterized as both preventive and remedial.

Preventive conservation consists of indirect action to retard deterioration and prevent damage by creating conditions optimal for the preservation of materials. On the other hand, remedial conservation consists mainly of direct action carried out on documents in order to retard further deterioration. Walker (2013) notes that in the first instance, preventive measures should be employed.

Therefore, it can be extrapolated that preservation is measures taken before damage is done to an information material, while conservation is a measure taken after damage has taken place (Alex-Nmecha and Okoro, 2020). This corresponds with the view of Okpidi-urhibo and Saibakumo (2018) that preservation and conservation of information materials requires series of activities ranging from preventing damage and repairing damaging or already damaged resources. However, Osunride and Adetunla (2017) upholds that the whole essence of preservation and conservation practices is to ensure that information materials are in good shape for use

at any point in time. The purpose of Preservation and conservation in library is to prevent, stop, or slow deterioration of information resources.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research design for the study is descriptive survey. According to Mole (2019), descriptive survey is one which aims at collecting data on a given population and describing in a systematic manner, the characteristics, features or facts about the population based on the responses of the population. It is considered the most appropriate research design in studying the preservation and conservation of information resources for knowledge continuity in Nnamdi Azikiwe library. The population of the study comprised of 131 staff of Nnamdi Azikiwe library. Based on the staff lists and records collected from the general office of Nnamdi Azikiwe library, there are 44 professional staff and 87 para- professional staff. Questionnaire and observation checklist were used to collect data from the respondents. A set of questionnaire titled "Preservation and Conservation of Information Resources for Knowledge Continuity Questionnaire" (PCIRKCQ) was used. The observation checklist contains 26 items of information resources (print and non-print) available in the Nnamdi Azikiwe library was used by the researcher to identify the type of information resources available in the library under study. The data collected were organized in tabular form, and analyzed using percentage and measure for central tendency (mean and standard deviation). By assigning 1-4 to the likert's scale the mean and standard deviation were computed. A midpoint mean of 2.50 was accepted as the criterion mean. Thus, any mean score ranged from 2.50 and above was regarded as positive and accepted. While the mean below 2.50 was regarded as negative and rejected.

RESULTS

This chapter presents the analysis of data and interpretation of results of the study. The observation checklist and questionnaire were used to collect data from the respondents and the data was analyzed using percentage and measure for central tendency (mean and standard deviation). A total number of 131 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. However,

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105 were successfully filled and returned, which is considered appropriate for the research.

Question 1: What are the preservation and conservation practices provided in the library?

Table 1: **shows the mean response of respondent on the preservation and conservation practices provided in the library**

S/N	ITEM (PRINT)	HP	P	LP	NP	MEAN	RANK	ST.D	DEC
1	Lamination	50	40	15	0	3.33	3rd	0.343	Provided
2	Photocopying	30	50	20	5	3	9th	0.332	Provided
3	Reformatting	45	44	13	3	3.25	4th	0.339	Provided
4	Digitization	40	50	5	10	3.14	6th	0.341	Provided
5	Binding	61	33	11	0	3.48	1st	0.356	Provided
6	De-acidification	20	50	35	0	2.86	12th	0.339	Provided
7	Cleaning and dusting of information resources	40	35	19	11	2.99	10th	0.32	Provided
8	Proper shelving to allow free flow of air	58	35	6	6	3.38	2nd	0.35	Provided
9	Installation of air-conditioners	36	28	29	12	2.84	13th	0.315	Provided
10	Provision of adequate security to prevent theft	35	40	30	0	3.05	8th	0.33	Provided
11	Migration	26	50	25	4	2.93	11th	0.332	Provided
12	Microfilming	25	60	15	5	3	9th	0.347	Provided
13	Technology preservation	35	50	11	9	3.06	7th	0.334	Provided
14	Fire alarm/smoke detector	24	40	27	14	2.7	15th	0.316	Provided
15	Preventing eating and drinking in the library	50	32	20	3	3.23	5th	0.334	Provided
16	Usage of book mark to identify last read page	26	33	39	7	2.74	14th	0.321	Provided
	Grand mean **Provided**					**3.06**			

Key: HP-Highly Provided, P-Provided, LP-Less Provided, NP-Not Provided

Table 1 shows that binding with mean weight of (3.48) is the highest preservation and conservation practices provided in Nnamdi Azikiwe library. Therefore, it is ranked first. Other practices that are highly provided include; proper shelving to allow free flow of air, lamination, reformatting, preventing eating and drinking in the library and digitization with mean weight of 3.38, 3.33, 3.25, 3.23, and 3.14, respectively.

Question 2: To what extent does preservation and conservation of information resources promote knowledge continuity in the library?

Table 2: **shows the extent to which preservation and conservation of information resources promote knowledge continuity in the library**

S/N	ITEM (PRINT)	VHE	HE	LE	NA	MEAN	RANK	ST.D	DEC
1	Photocopying	45	55	5	0	3.38	4th	0.229	HE
2	Binding	80	25	0	0	3.76	1st	0.311	HE
3	Digitization	48	46	3	8	3.28	5th	0.198	HE
4	Microfilming	35	52	18	0	3.16	7th	0.184	HE
5	Cleaning and dusting of information resources	46	53	6	0	3.38	4th	0.224	HE

6	Proper shelving to allow free flow of air	52	51	2	0	3.48	2nd	0.241	HE
7	Installation of air-conditioners	25	55	23	2	2.98	9th	0.18	HE
8	Provision of adequate security to prevent theft	50	54	1	0	3.47	3rd	0.246	HE
9	Technology preservation	45	55	5	0	3.38	4th	0.229	HE
10	Migration	40	34	31	0	3.09	8th	0.148	HE
11	Use of insecticide	49	32	24	0	3.24	6th	0.168	HE
	Grand mean							**3.33**	**HE**

Key: VHE-Very High Extent, HE-High Extent, LE- Low Extent, NA-Not at All

The results in Table 2 show that preservation and conservation of information resources promote knowledge continuity in Nnamdi Azikiwe library. Amongst others, binding is the highest with and is ranked first. The mean weight of binding is (3.76). This is followed by proper shelving to allow free flow of air and provision of adequate security to prevent theft and vandalism with mean of 3.48, and 3.47 respectively.

Question 3: What are the strategies for enhancing preservation and conservation of information resources to promote knowledge continuity in the library?

Table 3: shows the mean response of the library staff on the strategies for enhancing preservation and conservation of information resources in the library

S/N	ITEM (PRINT)	VHE	HE	LE	NA	MEAN	RANK	ST.D	DEC
1	Adequate funding of the library	62	43	0	0	3.59	1st	0.246	VA
2	Recruitment of professional conservators	50	46	9	0	3.39	9th	0.207	VA
3	Preservation and conservation training to the library staff	63	42	0	0	3.6	10th	0.248	VA
4	Adequate Infrastructure and proper buildings	50	49	6	0	3.42	8th	0.217	VA
5	Adequate Infrastructure and proper buildings	50	49	6	0	3.42	8th	0.217	VA
6	Regular power supply	59	46	0	0	3.56	3rd	0.243	VA
7	Installation of air-conditioner for environmental regulation	52	48	4	1	3.44	7th	0.221	VA
8	Installation of smoke detector, fire alarm, etc.	50	55	0	0	3.48	5th	0.24	VA
9	Formulate good preservation and conservation policies in the libraries	58	47	0	0	3.55	4th	0.242	VA
10	Adequate support from top library management	53	46	6	0	3.45	6th	0.218	VA
11	Preservation and conservation should be a high priority	50	55	0	0	3.48	5th	0.24	VA
12	Provision of security gadgets as well as enough security personnel to prevent theft and vandalism	60	45	0	0	3.57	2nd	0.244	VA
13	Avoid eating in the library	47	58	0	0	3.45	6th	0.242	VA
	Grand mean							**3.49**	**VA**

VA-Very Appropriate, A-Appropriate, FA-Fairly Appropriate, NA-Not Appropriate

Results from Table 3 reveal the mean response of the library staff on strategies for enhancing preservation and conservation to promote knowledge continuity in Nnamdi Azikiwe

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library. Adequate funding of the library (3.59), is considered the most appropriate and is ranked first other strategies are provision of security gadgets as well as security personnel to prevent theft and vandalism (3.57), regular power supply (3.56), formulate good preservation and conservation policy in the library (3.55), installation of smoke detector, fire alarm, etc (3.48), preservation and conservation should be a high priority (3.48) and others. All the items are accepted and this make them to be positively rated.

Discussion of Findings

The analysis done on the availability of information resources showed that a good number of both the print and non-print information resources are available in Nnamdi Azikiwe library. The observation showed that out of (10) non-print resources listed, only (2) were not available. While (16) print resources listed were all available. The available print resources include textbooks, novels, thesis and dissertation, journals, newspapers, magazines, indexes, encyclopedia, dictionaries, biographies, abstracts, manuals and handbooks, yearbooks, dictionaries, maps, atlases and globe and catalogue cards. The available non-print resources include website, C.D ROM databases, online databases, e-book, e-journal, e-article, online reference sources and computers. This support the view of Mason (2010), cited in Unebgu and Ladan (2016), that, academic libraries are to provide all sources of information.

The findings revealed that the preservation and conservation practices provided in Nnamdi Azikiwe library based on their ranking order, include binding which is the highest provided followed by, proper shelving to allow free flow of air, lamination, reformatting, preventing eating and drinking in the library, digitization (replication, emulation and encapsulation), technology preservation, provision of adequate security to prevent theft and vandalism, photocopying, cleaning and dusting of information resources, migration, de-acidification, installation of air conditioners, usage of book mark to identify last read pages, and fire alarm/ smoke detector. The findings correspond with Ozioko (2014) view, that all libraries are, or should be involved in preservation and conservation practices such as

using photocopying machine, digitization facilities, lamination equipment, bindery, fumigation, cleaning and dusting of the library materials, reformation and others.

The analysis on the extent to which preservation and conservation of information resources promote knowledge continuity revealed that binding, proper shelving to allow free flow of air and provision of adequate security to prevent theft and vandalism are at very high extent in promoting knowledge continuity in the library. The findings is in line with Ozioko (2014), observation that cleaning and dusting of library resources, binding and provision of enough security to prevent theft and mutilation of library resources are used to a great extent in the preservation and conservation of library materials.

Recommendation

Based on the findings from this study, the following are recommended for the library management as ways of enhancing preservation and conservation practices to promote knowledge continuity:

1. Librarians should ensure prompt binding and repairs of books that are disintegrating to avoid further deterioration.
2. Security gadgets like closes circuit television (CCTV) should be installed in the library for checking theft and vandalism.
3. Library users should be adequately trained on proper handling of books and other information resources to avoid damage
4. Library should deploy modern preservation and conservation tools such as technologically enabled ICT devices which will aid adequate storage and enhance the durability and longevity of information materials in the libraries.
5. Library should create or improve other sources of income to curb the financial barrier and enhance productivity.

Conclusion

This study on preservation and conservation of information resources for knowledge continuity in Nnamdi Azikiwe library is considered essential due to the function of academic libraries which is to

acquire information, organize it, preserve it and make it readily available at the point of need. Again, the essence of preservation and conservation practices is to ensure that information materials are in good shape for use at any point in time. From the analysis and discussion of the findings, the researcher observed that a good number of print and non-print information resources are available in the library. It is further observed that many preservation and conservation practices are provided in the library under study. These practices helps in promoting knowledge continuity especially, binding, proper shelving to allow free flow of air and provision of adequate security to prevent theft and vandalism. Finally, the researcher observed that for the enhancement of preservation and conservation of information resources in the library under study, there is need for adoption and implementation of strategies which include adequate funding of the library, provision of security gadgets as well as security personnel to prevent theft and vandalism, regular power supply and formulating good preservation and conservation policy in the library and so many others.

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