

COMPETENCIES AND EFFECTIVE UTILISATION OF SELECTION TOOLS AMONG ACQUISITION LIBRARIANS IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN THE NIGER DELTA, NIGERIA

Edith Ijeoma Oshiokpu

Department of Library and Information Science
Southern Delta University, Ozoro

Prof . Esharenana E. Adomi

Department of Library and Information Science
Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria.

and

Prof. Edwin Iroroeavwo Achugbue

Department of Library and Information Science
Delta State University, Abraka,

Abstract

This study examined competencies and the effective utilisation of selection tools among acquisition librarians in university libraries in the Niger Delta, Nigeria. The study was guided by three research questions and one hypothesis. The study adopted a correlational research design. The population comprised 212 acquisition librarians in federal, state, and private universities in the Niger Delta region. A total enumeration sampling technique was adopted because the population was manageable. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analysed using mean, standard deviation, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Findings revealed that acquisition librarians possessed competencies to a very high extent ($\bar{x} = 3.86$), while the utilisation of selection tools was high ($\bar{x} = 3.59$). The study further established a moderate positive and significant relationship between competencies and the utilisation of selection tools ($r = .370$, $p < .05$). The study concluded that acquisition librarians' competencies significantly influence their effective utilisation of selection tools for collection development activities. The study recommends continuous professional development programmes, competency-based training, and increased access to modern selection tools to enhance acquisition practices in university libraries.

Keywords: Competencies, acquisition librarians, selection tools, collection development, university libraries, Niger Delta.

Introduction

Collection development remains one of the fundamental functions of university libraries because it determines the quality, relevance, and adequacy of information resources available to support teaching, learning, research, and community service. An important aspect of collection development is the selection of information resources, which requires librarians to identify, evaluate, and choose materials that best satisfy the information needs of their users. To facilitate this process, acquisition librarians rely on a variety of selection tools, including publishers' catalogues, bibliographies, book reviews, bibliographic databases, online vendors' platforms, electronic resource evaluation tools, and digital repositories. The effective utilisation of these tools enables librarians to make informed acquisition decisions that contribute to the development of balanced and user-centred library collections. Harrison, as cited in Adomi (2022), observed that selection is one of the most important and demanding components of collection development because of the continuous growth of information resources and the diversity of available information formats.

The rapid advancement of information and communication technologies has transformed collection development practices in university libraries. Contemporary acquisition librarians are no longer limited to selecting printed books and journals but are increasingly required to evaluate electronic databases, e-books, online journals, open-access resources, institutional repositories, and other digital information resources. Consequently, the selection process has become more complex, requiring librarians to possess the competencies needed to identify, evaluate, compare, and

acquire resources from both traditional and digital information environments. Effective utilisation of modern selection tools therefore depends largely on the professional competencies of acquisition librarians.

University libraries depend on competent acquisition librarians to ensure that library collections remain relevant, current, and responsive to users' information needs. Acquisition librarians perform diverse responsibilities that include identifying user needs, evaluating information resources, negotiating with publishers and vendors, managing acquisition budgets, and selecting appropriate print and electronic materials. Successful execution of these responsibilities requires a combination of professional knowledge, technological skills, communication abilities, decision-making capacity, and information management competence. Kurinna (2022) described competence as the ability to apply knowledge and skills effectively within professional contexts, while Manu et al. (2018) viewed competencies as the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for effective professional practice.

The increasing integration of digital technologies into library operations has expanded the competency requirements of acquisition librarians. In addition to traditional collection development skills, librarians are expected to possess competencies in information and communication technology, electronic resource management, bibliographic databases, digital repositories, integrated library management systems, and online information retrieval. These competencies enable librarians to utilise contemporary selection tools efficiently and respond effectively to the changing information needs of library users. Similar observations were made by Anunobi and Okere (2025), who emphasised the need for digital competencies in

research data management, while Okechukwu et al. (2024) and Makhafola (2025) highlighted the growing importance of digital competence and information literacy in contemporary librarianship.

The relationship between competencies and the utilisation of selection tools has become increasingly important because effective collection development depends on librarians' ability to apply appropriate knowledge and skills throughout the acquisition process. Librarians who possess adequate professional competencies are better positioned to identify authoritative information sources, evaluate print and electronic resources critically, utilise bibliographic databases effectively, and make informed acquisition decisions. Conversely, inadequate competencies may reduce librarians' ability to exploit available selection tools and consequently affect the quality of collection development. Thus, strengthening librarians' competencies is likely to improve the effective utilisation of selection tools and enhance library service delivery.

Although previous studies have examined librarians' competencies, digital literacy, and collection development practices, relatively few empirical studies have specifically investigated the relationship between acquisition librarians' competencies and their effective utilisation of selection tools, particularly within university libraries in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. This gap in knowledge makes it difficult to determine the extent to which professional competencies influence librarians' use of selection tools during collection development. It is against this background that this study examined competencies and effective utilisation of selection tools among acquisition librarians in university libraries in the Niger Delta, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Selection tools play a critical role in helping acquisition librarians identify, evaluate, and select information resources that meet the teaching, learning, and research needs of university communities. As the information environment becomes increasingly digital, acquisition librarians are expected to possess competencies in information and communication technology, information literacy, bibliographic control, electronic resource management, and related professional skills to utilise both traditional and electronic selection tools effectively.

Despite these expectations, observations suggest that some acquisition librarians encounter difficulties in effectively utilising modern selection tools because of variations in professional and technological competencies. Such deficiencies may affect the quality of acquisition decisions, collection relevance, and the efficient utilisation of library acquisition budgets. While competencies have been widely recognised as determinants of professional effectiveness, empirical evidence on their influence on acquisition librarians' utilisation of selection tools remains limited, particularly within university libraries in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

Consequently, there is insufficient empirical evidence to establish the extent to which acquisition librarians' competencies influence their effective utilisation of selection tools in the study area. Addressing this knowledge gap is important because improving librarians' competencies may contribute to more effective collection development and better management of library resources. This study was therefore undertaken to examine the relationship between competencies and the effective utilisation of selection tools among acquisition librarians in university libraries in the Niger Delta, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to answered the study.

1. What is the extent of competencies possessed by acquisition librarians in university libraries in the Niger Delta?
2. To what extent do acquisition librarians utilise selection tools in university libraries in the Niger Delta?
3. What is the relationship between competencies and utilisation of selection tools among acquisition librarians?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was formulated for the study.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between competencies and the utilisation of selection tools among acquisition librarians in university libraries in the Niger Delta.

Literature Review

Competencies of Acquisition Librarians

Competencies are widely recognised as fundamental requirements for effective professional practice in library and information science. In university libraries, acquisition librarians require a combination of professional knowledge, technical skills, attitudes, and personal abilities to perform collection development functions efficiently. These competencies enable librarians to identify users' information needs, evaluate information resources, negotiate with vendors, manage acquisition budgets, utilise selection tools, and make informed decisions regarding resource acquisition. Sholpan et

al. (2023) described competencies as the combination of knowledge and skills that enable professionals to perform effectively within their work environment, while Idhalama et al. (2020) viewed competencies as cognitive, affective, and psychomotor capabilities that enhance professional performance.

The rapid advancement of information and communication technologies has expanded the competency requirements of acquisition librarians beyond traditional collection development skills. Contemporary librarians are expected to possess competencies in information and communication technology, information literacy, bibliographic control, electronic resource management, digital repositories, metadata management, communication, negotiation, and decision-making. These competencies facilitate the effective utilisation of automated library systems, bibliographic databases, online vendor platforms, and electronic resource management systems used during collection development. Dube et al. (2024) reported that technological competence enables librarians to utilise digital information tools effectively, while Ali (2022) identified digital competence and information literacy as essential competencies for managing electronic information resources.

Professional organisations have equally emphasised the importance of competencies in librarianship. The American Library Association (2023) identified collection development, technology management, communication, bibliographic control, and data analysis among the core competencies required of contemporary librarians. Similarly, Badenhorst and Raju (2023) observed that competencies in research data management, digital resource management, and electronic information systems have become increasingly important in academic libraries. These competencies enable

acquisition librarians to respond effectively to changing information environments and improve the quality of collection development decisions.

Empirical evidence demonstrates that acquisition librarians generally possess competencies that positively influence professional effectiveness. Oyedokun et al. (2025) found that Nigerian library and information professionals possessed competencies in ICT, digital literacy, communication, and advocacy that enhanced service delivery. Likewise, Abubakar and Yahaya (2024) reported that academic librarians in federal university libraries demonstrated competencies in database searching, information retrieval, software utilisation, and institutional repository management. Similar findings were reported by Idhalama et al. (2020) and Bankole et al. (2024), who established that technological and information management competencies significantly improve librarians' effectiveness in performing professional responsibilities. Collectively, these studies suggest that competencies constitute an important foundation for effective acquisition and collection development practices in university libraries.

Selection Tools for Collection Development

Selection tools are indispensable resources that support librarians in identifying, evaluating, and selecting information materials that meet the educational, research, and information needs of library users. They provide bibliographic information, reviews, publication details, pricing information, and other evaluative data that facilitate informed acquisition decisions. Johnson (2018) explained that selection tools assist librarians in making objective and evidence-based decisions regarding collection development, while Adomi (2022) observed that both traditional and electronic

selection tools contribute significantly to effective resource selection in contemporary libraries.

The development of digital information technologies has considerably expanded the range of selection tools available to acquisition librarians. In addition to traditional tools such as publishers' catalogues, bibliographies, accession lists, and book reviews, librarians increasingly utilise bibliographic databases, online publishers' platforms, electronic review services, digital repositories, vendor catalogues, consortium databases, and online bookstores. These resources provide current information on newly published materials, facilitate comparison of alternative resources, and support evidence-based collection development. Evans and Saponaro (2019) noted that electronic selection tools enable librarians to assess resource quality, compare prices, evaluate usage statistics, and identify appropriate electronic resources before acquisition decisions are made.

Studies conducted within Nigeria indicate that acquisition librarians employ a variety of traditional and digital selection tools during collection development. Okogwu and Ekere (2018) identified trial access services, publishers' demonstrations, electronic resource reviews, and vendor presentations as important tools used in evaluating electronic resources in university libraries. Similarly, Ogbomo and Ogo (2020) reported that librarians considered vendor credibility, software functionality, technical support, maintenance services, and cost when selecting automation software for university libraries. Chukwusa (2023) further observed that collection development librarians employ diverse selection approaches to ensure that acquired resources remain relevant to users' information needs. These findings indicate that effective utilisation of selection

tools contributes significantly to informed acquisition decisions and the development of balanced library collections.

Relationship Between Competencies and Selection Tool Utilisation

Competencies play a significant role in determining librarians' ability to utilise selection tools effectively during collection development. Acquisition librarians who possess adequate technological, bibliographic, communication, and information management competencies are generally better equipped to identify, evaluate, compare, and select appropriate information resources using both traditional and electronic selection tools. Consequently, competencies influence not only the efficiency of acquisition activities but also the overall quality of library collections.

The relationship between competencies and selection tool utilisation can be explained by the Diffusion of Innovation Theory, which suggests that individuals possessing adequate knowledge and skills are more likely to adopt and utilise innovations effectively. Within university libraries, acquisition librarians who possess stronger ICT competencies, information literacy skills, and technological capabilities are more likely to embrace electronic selection tools, digital acquisition platforms, bibliographic databases, and other emerging technologies used in collection development. The theory therefore provides a useful framework for understanding how competencies facilitate the adoption and effective utilisation of modern selection tools.

Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated positive relationships between competencies and technology utilisation. Santika (2025) found that professional competencies significantly enhanced digital adaptation and workplace performance

among information professionals, while Popa et al. (2024) reported that competencies improve professionals' capacity to utilise emerging technologies effectively. Similarly, Ahmed and Gama (2025) observed that librarians possessing stronger digital competencies demonstrated greater effectiveness in utilising electronic information systems, whereas Badenhorst and Raju (2023) established that technological competencies significantly influenced digital resource management in academic libraries.

Evidence from Nigerian studies also supports this relationship. Dime et al. (2025) found that librarians' technological knowledge and professional competencies significantly influenced the utilisation of collection development policies and electronic information resource management systems. Likewise, Bankole et al. (2024) reported that ICT competencies and web competencies enhanced effective research information retrieval among Nigerian librarians, while Ogo et al. (2025) established a significant relationship between librarians' ICT skills and professional effectiveness in university libraries. Collectively, these findings indicate that acquisition librarians who possess stronger competencies are more likely to utilise selection tools effectively, thereby improving collection development practices and enhancing the quality of library services.

Methodology

The study adopted a correlational research design. The population comprised 212 acquisition librarians from 66 university libraries in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The universities included federal, state, and private institutions. The total enumeration sampling technique was adopted because the population was manageable.

Therefore, the entire population was used as the sample for the study. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled *Acquisition Librarians' Competencies and Selection Tools Questionnaire (ALCSTQ)*. The instrument was validated by experts in Library and Information Science and Measurement and Evaluation. Reliability of the instrument was established using split-half reliability technique and the Spearman-Brown correction method and yielded a coefficient of 0.96. Out of 212 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 205 were properly completed and returned, representing 97% response rate. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation, while Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion

This section is concerned with the analysis of results and the discussion of findings.

Table I: Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	98	47.8
Female	107	52.2
Total	205	100.0

Table I shows that out of the 205 respondents, 107 (52.2%) were female, while 98 (47.8%) were male. This indicates that female respondents constituted a slightly higher proportion of the study population than their male counterparts.

Table II: Age of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
-----	-----------	------------

	(%)	
30 years and below	103	50.2
31-40 years	48	23.4
41-50 years	35	17.1
51 years and above	19	9.3
Total	205	100.0

Table II reveals that the majority of the respondents, 103 (50.2%), were aged 30 years and below. This was followed by 48 (23.4%) respondents aged 31–40 years, 35 (17.1%) aged 41–50 years, and 19 (9.3%) aged 51 years and above. This indicates that most of the respondents were relatively young.

Research Question One: What is the extent of competencies possessed by acquisition librarians in university libraries in the Niger Delta?

Table III: Competencies of Acquisition Librarians

S/n	Please indicate [√] the option that best expresses the extent of your opinion on each of the following statements:	Very Great Extent	Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Low Extent	No Extent	x	Std. Dev.
1.	I am confident in my ability to identify and solve library problems effectively.	99	69	27	4	6	4.22	0.95
2.	I convey information clearly and effectively in both written and verbal forms.	84	71	37	5	8	4.06	1.02
3.	I contribute positively to team efforts and work well with others in my library.	85	64	33	11	12	3.97	1.15
4.	I adjust to new work situations or changes quickly and effectively.	82	64	33	17	9	3.94	1.14
5.	I lead and motivate others to achieve common goals effectively in the library.	81	56	43	12	13	3.88	1.18
6.	I am proficient in using library acquisition selection tools.	66	62	46	19	12	3.74	1.18

7. I understand various acquisition sources [e.g., vendors, publishers, online databases] very well.	99	58	35	3	10	4.14	1.07
8. I am proficient in utilizing digital tools and resources for selection acquisitions and collection management.	55	86	43	8	13	3.79	1.08
9. I perform well under team environment to achieve goals	76	72	32	9	16	3.89	1.18
10. I am effective at identifying and solving problems related to acquisitions in the library	67	72	32	1 9	15	3.77	1.21
11. I am proficient in negotiating terms and prices with vendors and publishers.	77	55	38	1 7	18	3.76	1.28
12. I maintain confidentiality and respect privacy in handling sensitive information in my library.	77	76	29	1 4	9	3.97	1.09
13. I am proficient in managing acquisition budgets and financial resources.	74	54	42	1 9	16	3.74	1.26
14. I effectively promote new and existing resources to library users.	55	70	52	1 4	14	3.67	1.14
15. I understand and prioritize the needs and preferences of library users in acquisition decisions.	77	59	47	1 3	9	3.89	1.12
16. I am competent in handling large-scale acquisition projects	62	70	40	2 0	13	3.72	1.18
17. I have strong problem-solving skills in my acquisition processes	60	61	50	1 4	20	3.62	1.25
18. I am knowledgeable about copyright and intellectual property issues	69	68	39	1 4	15	3.79	1.19
19. I can work effectively under pressure in acquisition activities	73	63	42	1 0	17	3.80	1.21
20. I can make best use of funds for information resources acquisitions.	69	70	38	1 5	13	3.81	1.17
Grand Mean/Standard Deviation						3.86	1.15

Decision Rule: Very Great Extent (VGE) = 4.51 - 5.00; Great Extent (GE) = 3.51 - 4.50; Moderate Extent (ME) = 2.51 - 3.50; Low Extent (LE) = 1.51 - 2.50 and No Extent (NE) = 1.00 - 1.50.

The finding in Table III indicates that acquisition librarians in university libraries across the Niger Delta possess competencies to a very high extent ($\bar{x} = 3.86$, $SD = 1.15$). The respondents demonstrated strong professional capabilities, particularly in problem-solving, communication, and the effective understanding and evaluation of information sources. These results suggest that acquisition librarians are adequately equipped to perform their acquisition responsibilities efficiently and make informed collection development decisions.

This finding corroborates Sholpan et al. (2023) and Idhalama et al. (2020), who observed that competencies enhance professional effectiveness and successful job performance. The result is also consistent with the studies of Abubakar and Yahaya (2024), Idhalama et al. (2020), and Bankole et al. (2024), which reported high levels of technological and information management competencies among Nigerian librarians. The high competency level observed in this study may be attributed to increasing exposure to digital information resources, ICT applications, and professional development opportunities. The finding suggests that acquisition librarians possess the requisite competencies needed for effective collection development and resource acquisition in contemporary university libraries.

Research Question 2: To what extent do acquisition librarians utilise selection tools in university libraries in the Niger Delta?

Table IV: Use of Selection Tools among Acquisition Librarians

s/ n	Please indicate [$\sqrt{\quad}$] the option that best expresses the extent of your use of each of the following selection tools:	Very Great Extent	Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Low Extent	No Extent	x	Std. Dev.
A	Review Tools							
1.	Booklist for my selection	62	85	34	8	16	3.82	1.14
2.	Choice Reviews Online,	62	69	37	15	22	3.65	1.28
3.	Library Journal	70	63	38	11	23	3.71	1.30
	Sub-Mean/Standard Deviation						3.73	1.24
B	Retrospective Tools							
4.	Book Review Digest	47	71	47	17	23	3.50	1.25
5.	Book Review Index	80	65	30	14	16	3.87	1.23
	Sub-Mean/Standard Deviation						3.69	1.24
C	Tools by Library Type							
6.	Children's Core Collection	67	65	34	18	21	3.68	1.29
7.	Public Library Core Collection]	66	66	38	13	22	3.69	1.28
8.	Fiction Core Collection	66	57	43	12	27	3.60	1.34
9.	Middle and Junior High Core Collection	70	69	32	12	22	3.75	1.28
10.	Senior High Core Collection	68	61	32	19	25	3.62	1.35
	Sub-Mean/Standard Deviation						3.67	1.31
D	Tools by user type/age							
11.	Type or age of the user.	71	70	31	11	22	3.77	1.28
12.	Best Books for Young Adults, Notable Books for Adults	66	62	36	17	24	3.63	1.32
	Sub-Mean/Standard Deviation						3.70	1.30
E	Tools by literature, format, or genre							
13.	Fiction Core Collection	66	63	30	24	22	3.62	1.33
14.	Non-book Materials Core Collection,	67	60	36	19	23	3.63	1.32
15.	Graphic Novels Core Collection	71	60	36	19	19	3.71	1.28
	Sub-Mean/Standard Deviation						3.65	1.31
F	Tools for academic and special libraries							
16.	Global Books in Print [Bowke	58	58	39	22	28	3.47	1.36
17.	Forthcoming Books in Print	49	69	41	14	32	3.43	1.34
18.	Livres Disponibles [French Books in Print]	50	46	45	31	33	3.24	1.40
19.	Criticas, an English speaker's guide to the latest Spanish language titles	59	60	36	20	30	3.48	1.38
20.	Publisher's Weekly	56	64	39	22	24	3.52	1.31
21.	Serials Review	65	57	37	22	24	3.57	1.34
22.	Library Journal	61	65	37	18	24	3.59	1.31
23.	Choice Reviews Online	51	54	43	30	27	3.35	1.35
24.	Publisher's Weekly	61	46	44	26	28	3.42	1.39
	Sub-Mean/Standard Deviation						3.45	1.35
G	"Best of" and recommended lists	47	71	47	17	23	3.50	1.25
H	Online bookstores	80	65	30	14	16	3.87	1.23
I	Vendor catalogs & online inventory lists	61	65	37	18	24	3.59	1.31

J National bibliography

25. British National Bibliography [BNB]	49	63	44	17	32	3.39	1.35
26. National Bibliography of Nigeria [NBN]	58	61	44	17	25	3.54	1.31

Sub-Mean/Standard Deviation**3.47 1.33****Aggregate-Mean/Standard Deviation****3.59 1.31**

Decision Rule: Very Great Extent (VGE) = 4.51 - 5.00; Great Extent (GE) = 3.51 - 4.50; Moderate Extent (ME) = 2.51 - 3.50; Low Extent (LE) = 1.51 - 2.50 and No Extent (NE) = 1.00 - 1.50.

Table IV shows the extent of the use of selection tools among acquisition librarians in university libraries in the Niger Delta. The aggregate mean score of 3.59 (SD = 1.31) indicates that acquisition librarians use selection tools to a great extent. This suggests that selection tools are widely utilised in the acquisition process to support informed decision-making and the development of balanced library collections. Among the categories of selection tools, online bookstores recorded the highest mean score ($\bar{x}$ = 3.87), indicating that they are among the most frequently used tools by acquisition librarians. Similarly, review tools ($\bar{x}$ = 3.73), tools by user type/age ($\bar{x}$ = 3.70), and retrospective tools ($\bar{x}$ = 3.69) were utilised to a great extent. The findings further show substantial use of tools by library type ($\bar{x}$ = 3.67) and tools by literature, format, or genre ($\bar{x}$ = 3.65), reflecting librarians' efforts to select resources that meet the diverse information needs of their users.

Although all categories of selection tools were generally used to a great extent, tools for academic and special libraries recorded the lowest sub-mean ($\bar{x}$ = 3.45), indicating a moderate level of utilisation. Nevertheless, the overall results demonstrate that acquisition librarians in the Niger Delta make considerable use of a variety of selection tools in carrying out their collection development and acquisition responsibilities.

This finding supports Johnson (2018), who noted that selection tools assist librarians in making objective and informed acquisition decisions. It also agrees with Adomi (2022) and Evans and Saponaro (2019), who observed that digital and traditional selection tools enhance resource evaluation, collection development, and electronic resource selection. The finding is further consistent with Okogwu and Ekere (2018), Ogbomo and Ogo (2020), and Chukwusa (2019), who reported that librarians in Nigerian university libraries rely on various selection tools, criteria, and mechanisms to acquire relevant and user-centred resources. The high use of online bookstores may be linked to their accessibility, currency, and ease of comparing titles, prices, and availability. However, the relatively lower use of tools for academic and special libraries may be due to limited access, subscription costs, or inadequate awareness. Overall, the finding suggests that acquisition librarians utilise diverse selection tools to support informed collection development and ensure that library resources meet users' academic and research needs.

Research Question Three: What is the relationship between competencies and the use of selection tools among acquisition librarians?

Table V: Correlation Between Competencies and Selection Tool Utilisation

Variances	N	Competencies	Use of Selection Tools	Decision
Competencies	205	1	.370	Moderate
Use of Selection Tools	205	.370	1	

Decision Rule: .1.00 to 0.30: Weak; 0.31 to 0.50: Moderate; 0.51 to 0.70: Strong; 0.71 and above: Very strong

The result presented in Table V revealed that there is a moderate positive relationship between competencies and the use of selection tools among acquisition librarians in university libraries in the Niger Delta, Nigeria. The Pearson correlation

coefficient ($r = +.370$) indicates that as acquisition librarians' competencies increase, their use of selection tools also tends to improve correspondingly. This implies that librarians who possess higher levels of professional competence, such as technical proficiency, effective communication, analytical ability, and familiarity with acquisition processes, are moderately more likely to utilize selection tools effectively in performing their duties.

The observed moderate positive relationship suggests that acquisition librarians with stronger professional competencies are more likely to utilise selection tools effectively during collection development. This indicates that competencies influence librarians' ability to identify, evaluate, and apply appropriate selection tools in acquisition decisions.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between competencies and the utilisation of selection tools among acquisition librarians in university libraries in the Niger Delta.

Table VI: Test of the Relationship Between Competencies and Selection Tool Utilisation

N	Cal. R	P-value	Cal. p-value	Decision
205	+.370	0.05	0.00	Significant

Table VI shows that the relationship between competencies and the use of selection tools among acquisition librarians in university libraries in the Niger Delta, Nigeria ($r = +0.370$, $0.000 < 0.05$) is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between competencies and the use of selection tools among acquisition librarians is rejected. Thus, there is a significant positive relationship between competencies and the use of selection tools among

acquisition librarians in university libraries in the Niger Delta, Nigeria. This implies that librarians who possess higher levels of professional competence, such as technical expertise, problem-solving ability, and communication skills, are more likely to effectively utilize selection tools in performing acquisition-related tasks.

The significant relationship observed in this study confirms that acquisition librarians' competencies contribute positively to their utilisation of selection tools. The rejection of the null hypothesis further strengthens the evidence that competencies are important determinants of effective collection development practices. This finding aligns with the Diffusion of Innovation Theory, which posits that individuals with adequate knowledge and skills are more likely to adopt and utilise innovations effectively. The result is consistent with the studies of Santika (2025) and Popa et al. (2024), who reported that competencies enhance professional effectiveness and technology utilisation. It also agrees with Ahmed and Gama (2025) and Badenhorst and Raju (2023), who found that technological competencies significantly influence librarians' ability to utilise electronic information systems and manage digital resources effectively. Within the Nigerian context, the finding corroborates those of Dime et al. (2025), Bankole et al. (2024), and Ogo et al. (2025), who established significant positive relationships between librarians' competencies and their effective use of information tools and systems. The observed relationship may be attributed to the fact that competent librarians possess the technological, bibliographic, and information literacy skills required to identify, evaluate, and utilise selection tools efficiently. The finding therefore suggests that improving acquisition librarians' competencies through

continuous professional development could enhance their effective utilisation of selection tools and strengthen collection development practices in university libraries.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations were made.

1. University library management should organise regular training, workshops, and professional development programmes to enhance acquisition librarians' competencies, particularly in ICT, digital resource management, and collection development.
2. Acquisition librarians should be encouraged to continuously update their professional knowledge and skills through participation in conferences, seminars, and continuing professional education programmes.
3. University libraries should provide access to a wide range of current traditional and electronic selection tools, including bibliographic databases, online review platforms, vendor catalogues, and publishers' databases.
4. Library management should invest in modern acquisition technologies and digital infrastructure that will facilitate the effective utilisation of selection tools in collection development activities.
5. Professional library associations should promote competency development initiatives and establish frameworks for continuous skills enhancement among acquisition librarians.

6. University administrators should provide adequate funding for acquisition activities and subscription to relevant selection tools to support informed resource selection and quality collection development.

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that acquisition librarians' competencies play a significant role in enhancing the effective utilisation of selection tools in university libraries. Librarians possessing stronger professional, technological, and information management competencies are better positioned to make informed collection development decisions, thereby improving the quality and relevance of library collections. Therefore, strengthening acquisition librarians' professional competencies through continuous training and institutional support should remain a strategic priority for university libraries seeking to improve collection development practices and overall library service delivery.

References

- Abubakar, B. M., & Yahaya, A. D. (2024). Competencies and training of academic librarians for the management of institutional repositories in federal university libraries in Northeast Nigeria. *Lokoja Journal of Information Science Research*, 2(1), 40-54. <https://doi.org/10.5281/>
- Adomi, E. E. (2022). *Collection development and management in libraries*. Benin City: Justice Jeco Publishing.
- Ahmed, B., & Gama, U. (2025). Digital competencies of academic librarians for effective provision of digital reference services in selected federal university libraries in Northern Nigeria. *Global Journal of Library and Information Science*, 21(2), 179-198. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/399553057_Digital_Competencies_of_Academic_Librarians_for_Effective_Provision_of_Digital_Reference_Services_in_Selected_Federal_University_Libraries_in_Northern_Nigeria

- Ali, K. (2022). Digital information literacy skills among library and information science professionals in university libraries of Sindh Pakistan. *Journal of Information Management and Practices*, 2(1), 41-61. <https://doi.org/10.52461/jimp.v2i1.1035>
- American Library Association (2023). *ALA's core competences of librarianship*. https://www.ala.org/sites/default/files/educationcareers/content/2022%20ALA%20Core%20Competences%20of%20Librarianship_FINAL.pdf
- Anunobi, V., & Okere, I. (2025). Librarians' digital competencies as correlate of research data management deployment in university libraries in South-South, Nigeria. *Journal of Applied Information Science & Technology*, 18(2), 137-252. <https://doi.org/10.70118/jaist.202501802.19>
- Awodoyin, A. F., & Ibikunle, O. R. (2024). Librarian's core competencies expectations in service delivery: A comprehensive examination using American Library Association (ALA) guidelines in university libraries. *Global Review of Library and Information Science (GRELIS)*, 20(2), 75-97. <https://www.grelis.com.ng/admin/img/paper/Librarian.pdf>
- Badenhorst, P., & Raju, J. (2023). Research data management competencies for academic libraries: Perspectives from two universities in South Africa. *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science*, 33(2), 215-229. <https://doi.org/10.4314/ajlais.v33i2.7>
- Bankole, Q. A., Sulaiman, K. G., Saliu, A., & Mahammuod, S. O. (2024). Determinants of effective research information retrieval among Nigerian librarians: The roles of ICT competencies, web competencies, and web search strategies. *International Journal of Knowledge Content Development & Technology*, 14(4), 45-62. <https://ijkcdt.org/index.php/ijkcdt/article/view/949>
- Chukwusa, J. (2023). Collection development models in academic libraries in South-South, Nigeria. *Regional Journal of Information and Knowledge Management*, 4(2), 22-32. <https://doi.org/10.70759/br59zz34>
- Dime, I. A., Akporhonor, B. A., & Ogbomo, E. F. (2025). Librarians' knowledge and technology skills, utilization of collection development policy and management of electronic information resources in university libraries in South-South Nigeria. *Journal of Education in Developing Areas*, 31(5), 206-222. <https://journals.journalsplace.org/index.php/JEDA/article/view/477>
- Dube, T., Rammutloa, M., & Matatiele, R. (2024). Skills and competencies of academic librarians to use information technology tools in the digital era: A systematic literature review. *Information Development*, 0(0), 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02666669241302054>
- Evans, G. E., & Saponaro, M. Z. (2019). *Collection management basics* (7th ed.). Libraries Unlimited. https://api.pageplace.de/preview/DT0400.9781440859656_A37607643/preview-9781440859656_A37607643.pdf

- Fakir, A. S., & Waghchoure, S. (2018). Role of library and information professionals in digital environment. *International Multilingual Refereed Journal*, 193-201. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337136643_Role_of_Library_and_Information_Professionals_in_Digital_Environment
- Idhalama, O., Aiyebelehin, A., & Okobo, O. (2020). Competencies of librarians as a factor affecting information service delivery in selected university libraries in Delta State, Nigeria. *International Journal on Integrated Education*, 3(11), 23-36. <https://doi.org/10.31149/ijie.v3i11.818>
- Johnson, P. (2018). *Fundamentals of collection development and management* (4th ed.). American Library Association. https://alastore.ala.org/sites/default/files/book_samples/9780838916414_sample.pdf
- Kurinna, A., Iliichuk, L., Mamicheva, O., Nesterenko, T., Romanova, I., & Pinchuk, Y. (2022). Formation of rhetorical competence in university applicants as a necessary factor for successful professional activity. *Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensionala*, 14(4), 230-242. <https://10.18662/rrem/14.4/639>
- Makhafola, L., van Deventer, M. J., Holmner, M. A., van Wyk, B. (2025). A scoping review of digital literacy, digital competence, digital fluency and digital dexterity in academic libraries' context. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 51(3), 103053. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2025.103053>
- Manu, T. R., Aavarti, S., & Asjola, V., Chaudhary, P., & Kumar, P. (2018). Core competencies for 21st century library and information science professionals. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/348871436_Core_Competencies_for_21st_Century_Library_and_Information_Science_Professionals
- Obiozor-Ekeze, R. N. (2022). Acquisition of information resources in university libraries in South-East Nigeria: Prospects and challenges. *Library Research Journal*, 7(2), 7-12. <http://repository.unizik.edu.ng/bitstream/123456789/807/1/library%20journal.pdf>
- Ogbomo, E.F. & Ogo, E.P. (2020). Selection criteria and usage of automation software among librarians in university libraries in South-South, Nigeria. *Regional Journal of Information and Knowledge Management*, 5 (1), 51-74. <https://rjikm.org/index.php/rjikm/article/view/29>
- Ogo, E., Wiche, H., & Kikiri, H. (2025). Librarians' awareness, ICT skills and marketing of university library services in the 21st century in Delta State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Librarianship*, 10(3), 19-38. <https://doi.org/10.23974/ijol.2025.vol10.3.462>
- Okechukwu, N., Chinemerem, C., & Ujunwa, A. (2024). Digital literacy and competencies in library and information science education students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. *Indonesian Journal of Learning Education and Counseling*, 7(1), 39-51. <https://doi.org/10.31960/ijolec.v7i1.2750>

Okogwu, F. I., & Ekere, F. C. (2018). Collection development policies of electronic resources in university libraries in South-East Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. 1758.

<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/1758>

Oyedokun, S. O., Okewale, O. S., Mabawonku, T. O., & Odunewu, A. O. (2025). Competence needs among library and information service providers in Nigeria. *Journal of Humanities, Social Science and Creative Arts*, 20, 113-125. <https://www.journal.funaab.edu.ng/index.php/JHSSCA/article/view/2500>

Popa, I., Cioc, M., Breazu, A., & Popa, C. (2024). Identifying Sufficient and necessary competencies in the effective use of artificial intelligence technologies. *Amfiteatru Economic*, 26(65), 33-53. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/377722932_Identifying_Sufficient_and_Necessary_Competencies_in_the_Effective_Use_of_Artificial_Intelligence_Technologies

Santika, I. (2025). The effect of competence and professionalism on employee performance through the mediation of information technology proficiency at BMKG Regional Office III. *International Journal of Economics and Management Sciences*, 2(3), 175-184. <https://doi.org/10.61132/ijems.v2i3.917>

Sholpan, K., Oshakbayeva, Z., Bekmagambetov, A., & Sarybayeva, I. (2023). The role of professional competencies in developing a culture of safety in the workplace. *European Journal of Sustainable Development*, 12(4), 237. <https://doi.org/10.14207/ejsd.2023.v12n4p237>