

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

Funding Academic Libraries as a Function of Library Policies and Budgetary Issues: A Survey of Academic Libraries in Cross River State, Nigeria

Dr. Godwin B. Afebende

Senior Lecturer, Department of Library and Information Science, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria

Akin-Fakorade Oluwaseun

Assistant Lecturer, Department of Library and Information Science, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria

Abstract:

The paper examined the role of management variable of policy and budgeting issues in attracting funds to cater for library services in academic libraries in Cross River State, Nigeria. Survey research design was used for the study. Sample sizes of 30 senior management library staff drawn from five tertiary institutions in the state libraries were used for the study. A six-point Likert type questionnaire measuring responses on the impact of policy issues and budgeting in attracting funds to the library was developed, validated and used. The internal consistency of the instrument lied in the range of $(.729 \leq r_{xx} \leq .893)$ with the across the time stability in the range of $(.706 \leq r_{tt} \leq .796)$ measured via Cronbach alpha and test-retest reliability. The study found that both policy matters and budgeting issues were important variables in ensuring and attracting funds to the library from their institutions. It also revealed that despite their relevance, libraries and librarians were not doing enough in formulating and ensuring policies nor were they effectively engaged in preparing and using budgets to justify funds to the library. Recommendations were made urging librarians to be actively involved in preparing policies and budgets for their libraries. Proprietary authorities were equally urged to give priority attention to libraries as vital links to the sustenance of institutional goals and objectives.

Keywords: Policy issues, Budgeting, funding, Library services, academic libraries, public, Cross River State, Nigeria

1. Introduction

Libraries in whatever guise, be they public, special, national or academic are established to achieve specific goals and objectives. Academic libraries are libraries attached to universities, polytechnics, colleges of education and other higher institution of learning (Okeh, 2004, Ubigu and Okiy, 2011). Krubu and Osawaru (2010) on their part see them as libraries that are found mainly in tertiary institutions, and established to support learning, teaching and research process.

Poole (1977) observed that academic libraries do not exist in isolation; they draw their meaning and function from the nature of their parent institution. Olanlokun and Salisu (1985) see academic libraries as the nerve centre of educational institutions and a place where information in print and other forms are collected and arranged to serve people of all ages and interest. According to Lynch (1986) academic libraries reflect the development of the colleges and universities in which they are part and the basic assumption governing their growth and development is that the library plays a role of central and critical importance in the institutional and scholarly life of their colleges or universities. In their discussion of the objectives of Nigerian universities, Aguola and Aguola (2002) agree that the objectives of any university library are based on the objectives of the universities establishing the library. Thus stated, they maintain that the major obligation of the university's library is to provide information which will best fulfil or contribute to the achievement of the university's primary function of promoting teaching, research and dissemination of knowledge.

A good academic library should be able to provide a variety of multi-functional learning and research environment within the library space which will create the platform for researchers, scholars, students and other users to achieve their set goals. Modern technologies such as computers, internet and other telecommunication networks have impacted tremendously on information processing, storage and dissemination. These need to be embraced to improve library services.

Procuring books and other e-resources/services in line with modern technologies requires a lot of financial resources to support materials, equipment and facilities. In recent years emphasis is shifting to the consideration of justification of efficient use of expenditure and resources to ensure effective impact in terms of outcomes and not outputs. This poses new challenges for demonstrating impacts in areas such as attainment and learning (Ugwuanyi, Okwor and Ezeji, 2011). Two critical management variables essential to the funding success of these goals are policy issues and budgeting for library services. While policies define and provide definite method or line of action to take in the management and development of library services, budgeting ensures the amount of money or funds available to be spent for library development are based on planning. These both require planning and

articulation of how funds will be generated or sourced, how they will be spent on specific items and within specified time lines or cycles. It equally involves setting out actions that have been thought out to achieve the goals of the library.

This survey is therefore aimed at assessing the level to which the management variables of policy and budgeting issues are used for planning to achieve library funding to sustain library services in academic libraries in Cross River State, Nigeria.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Collection development for libraries requires careful planning. When a user community needs have been defined, it is necessary to set down policies and guides on what to acquire and how what are acquired are to be used. It is equally very important that budgeting plans should be made to ensure prudent and efficient management of funds available to the library. This is even more quite compelling bearing in mind the lack of funding syndrome affecting most public libraries in Nigeria. As has been observed by Igbo and Dike (2006) and Inoyo (2014) that libraries in Nigeria are not only underfunded but also do not have planned budgets, this problem will be compounded if the little resources available are not properly planned for. There seem to be neither defined budgets nor policies in place to guide library operations in the libraries under investigation. It is against this background that this study is assessing or investing budgeting and policy issues in academic libraries in Cross River State, Nigeria.

1.2. Research Questions

1. Do these libraries have library policies to guide their acquisitions and services?
2. Are they policies on funding the library?
3. Are there annual budgetary allocations to these libraries?
4. Are funds budgeted to these libraries regularly released to them?
5. Do these libraries adhere to laid down policy in library matters?
6. Do these libraries adhere to their budget plans?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Library Policies and Budgetary Issues

Libraries adopt administrative policies and procedures which regulate the organisation and use of her materials, facilities and services. When policies are well articulated, they can lead to proper collection development, provide a course of action on how to organise the resources as well as provide a focus on how to achieve goals.

Collection development in libraries is aimed at planning and building a useful and balance collection to meet users' information needs. It is important to develop a collection development policy to guide a library's operation. In general, most collection development policies would reflect selection criteria, fines and replacement of lost items and selection or deselection decision amongst others.

Ifidon (2006) justified the need for libraries to be guided by formal library collection development policies. He stressed that these policies aim at:

- i) Identification of users' present and future need i.e. it is user centre.
- ii) Judicious allocation of the limited resources on those priority areas that will maximize the institution's potentials and
- iii) Serving as a useful document for personnel budget authorities to allocate more money to the library.

From practical experience, a major constraint to the achievement of a rounded collection development process is budgetary limitation. It is therefore very important to define and identify not only how materials/resources will be acquired but how funds will be mobilised or generated to achieve budget plans. Accessing funds from authorities and or internally generated source to meet services required by libraries has been a long-standing challenge or issue that libraries have been grappling with in Nigeria and may continue to be so for some long time to come. Apart from gifts/donations and exchange, all other resources required must be paid from available funds.

Another very frustrating issue is that of planning and preparing library budget. Preparing a library estimate or budget presuppose that there is a standing vote for library services within a specified period. This does not seem to be so in most institution. As Igbo & Dike (2006), Lawal (2006), Ike (2007) and Inoyo (2014) have all observed budgeting for the library depends on the interest, concern and priority given to library and information services by first and foremost the proprietary authorities or government and secondly the chief executives of these institutions. The Head Librarian has the responsibility of purposing library budgets which must reflect programme of services and their justification. Before budgets are approved, it is not uncommon that they must undergo scrutiny, modification and cuts to meet available funds. To compete for limited funds from the institutions among competing demands from faculties, departments and other units, the librarian must be proactive, dynamic and sometimes be aggressive in the pursuit of his request for funds. He must employ tact, lobby relevant friends of the library and be diplomatic in ensuring that the library gets its due in the scheme of things. The place of finance in the management of libraries cannot be wished away. It is only through adequate budgetary allocation to the library that it can acquire relevant information resources, procure infrastructure/equipment and sustain useful services.

3. Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study comprised a sample of thirty (30) senior library staff from five (5) tertiary institutions in Cross River State consisting of two (2) Universities, two (2) Colleges of Education and one (1) College of Health Technology. The respondents were purposely selected to consist of University Librarians,

Chief College Librarians and Heads of units in the library who were assumed to have a good knowledge of the working system of their libraries as management staff.

A twenty-one (21-item) questionnaire called Policy and Budgeting Issues in Financing Academic Libraries (PBIFAL) in Cross River State, Nigeria was developed and used for the study. It was divided into two sections (A & B). Section A was designed to collect demographic data of the respondents while B built on a six-point Likert scale and divided into two parts was designed to elicit responses on policy and budgeting issues respectively. Each section of part 'B' of the questionnaire consisted of seven items. The items were vetted by two measurement experts from the University of Calabar and Cross River University of Technology Calabar. The vetted instrument was pilot tested by administering it on a sample of twenty (20) senior library staff. The internal consistency of the instrument was ($r_{xx} = .729$ & $.893$) with the across time stability of ($.706 \leq r_{rr} .796$) measured via Cronbach alpha and test-retest reliability respectively. The demographic description of the study sample is as presented in Table 1.

Demographic variable	Category	Frequency	%
Institution	Unical Calabar	6	20.0
	Crutech, Calabar	6	20.0
	COE, Akamkpa	6	20.0
	FCE, Obudu	6	20.0
	College of Health Technology, Calabar	6	20.0
	Total	30	100.0
Gender	Male	21	70.0
	Female	9	30.0
	Total	30	100.0
Rank	University/ College Librarian	5	16.7
	Deputy University/ Chief Librarian	3	10.0
	Snr./Ass. Chief Librarian	8	26.7
	Librarian I/ Principal Librarian	7	23.3
	Librarian II/ Senior Librarian	7	23.3
	Total	30	100.0
Unit	Acquisition/ Resource Development	5	16.7
	Processing	5	16.7
	Readers Service/Circulation	6	20.7
	Reference	5	16.7
	Serials/Periodicals	5	16.7
	Bindery/Reprography	4	13.3
Total	30	100.0	
Highest level of education attained	Bachelor's Degree	17	56.7
	Master's Degree	6	20.0
	Doctorate Degree	7	23.3
	Total	30	100.0
Marital Status	Single	-	-
	Married	28	93.3
	Divorced	1	3.3
	Separated	-	-
	Widowed	1	3.3
	Total	30	100.0
Years of working experience	Below 5 years	-	-
	5-9 years	1	3.3
	10-14 years	7	23.3
	15-19 years	11	36.7
	20-24 years	10	33.3
	25-29 years	1	3.3
	30 and Above	-	-
	Total	30	100.0

Table 1: Demographic description of study sample

From Table I, it can be seen that there were five (5) institution involved, with six (6) respondents from each academic library. Of this number twenty-one (21) representing 70% were males while nine (9) representing 30% of the samples were females. In terms of rank, there were five (5) university/college librarians, three (3) Deputy/Chief librarians, eight (8) Senior/Assistant Chief Librarians, seven (7) each of librarian I and II of principal and senior librarian. Five (16.7%) each came from acquisition/resource development unit,

five (16.7%) from processing, six (20.0%) from reader services/circulation, five (16.7%) from reference, five (16.7%) from serials/periodicals and four (13.3%) from Bindery/Reprography units.

In terms of their Educational qualification, 17 (56.7%) had Bachelor's degree six (20.0%) Master's degree and seven (23.3%) Doctorate degrees. None of the respondents was single and none was separated. There were 28 (93.3%) married persons, one (3.3%) divorced and one (3.3%) widowed.

In terms of their years of working experience, none had worked for less than 5yrs, one (3.3%) between 5 and 9yrs, 7 (23.3%) between 10 and 14yrs, 11 (36.7%) between 15 and 19yrs, 10 (33.3%) between 20 and 24 yrs.and one (3.3%) between 25 and 29yrs. None had worked for more than 30 yrs.

Thus, the sample was considered heterogeneous enough for an inferential study of this nature.

3.1. Presentation of Results

Items No	Items Content	Statistics	Responses					
			SA	A	TA	TD	D	SD
1	Our library policy guidelines are strictly adhered to.	n %	- -	10 33.3	6 20.0	7 23.3	7 23.3	- -
2	We do not have any written library policy in our library	n %	1 3.3	13 43.3	9 30.0	5 16.7	2 6.7	- -
3	We do not have a library policy that can lead to internally generated revenue	n %	7 23.3	8 26.7	8 26.7	6 20.0	1 3.3	- -
4	We have a sound library policy as a condition for our services	n %	- -	8 26.7	8 26.7	6 20.0	8 26.7	- -
5	Library policies have the potential for influencing library financing.	n %	4 13.3	8 26.7	11 36.7	4 13.3	3 10.0	- -
6	There is no use relying on policy guideline in financing our library.	n %	1 3.3	2 6.7	4 13.3	11 36.7	10 33.3	2 6.7
7	It is just necessary to have a library policy.	n %	6 20.0	17 56.7	3 10.0	4 13.3	- -	- -

Table 2: Analysis of responses to items on library policy issues in funding academic libraries

From Table 2, there was about an even split in the responses as to whether their library guidelines are strictly adhered to since 16 (53.3%) agreed and 14 (46.7%) disagreed. About 76.6% (23) said they did not have any written library policy for their library while 7 (23.4) disagreed saying they had. When the statement "We do not have a library policy that can lead to IGR was put to the respondents, 23 (86.7) agreed while 7 (13.3%) disagreed. To the statement "We have a sound library policy as condition for our services", 16 (53.4%) agreed while 46.6% disagreed. About 76.7% (23) however agreed that library policies have the potentials of influencing library finances, though 23.3 disagreed. Indeed, 23 (76.7%) disagreed with the statement that there was no use relying on policy, guidelines in financing the libraries, just as 86.7% agreed that it was just necessary to have a library policy.

Items No	Items Content	Statistics	Responses					
			SA	A	TA	TD	D	SD
8	There is an annual budgetary allocation for our library	n %	3 10.0	9 30.0	11 36.7	4 13.3	3 10.0	- -
9	We have a dream budget that guides our library expenditure	n %	3 10.0	7 23.3	12 40.0	8 26.7	- -	- -
10	The budget for our library is never implemented	n %	7 23.3	6 20.0	10 33.3	5 16.7	2 6.7	- -
11	We have institutional support to access funds allocated to our library	n %	1 3.3	5 16.7	5 16.7	9 30.0	10 33.3	- -
12	Our library is given priority in the institutions budget allocations	n %	- -	1 3.3	- -	10 33.3	15 50.0	4 13.3
13	The release of budgeted funds to our library has not been easy	n %	13 43.3	15 50.0	2 6.7	- -	- -	- -
14	Funds budgeted to our library are promptly released to the library.	n %	- -	- -	- -	5 16.7	11 36.7	14 46.7

Table 3: Analysis of responses on items on budgetary issues as they relate to funding of academic libraries

From table 3, the results showed that 23 or 76.7% agreed that there is always an annual budgetary allocation for their libraries while 2.3% disagreed. About 22 or 73.3% agreed that they had a drawn-up budget that guides their library expenditure, while 8 or 26.7 did not agree or strongly disagreed. On the implementation of the budget, 23 or 76.7% agreed that the budget for their libraries were never implemented. Only 11 (36.6%) out of the 30 respondents agreed that they had institutional support to access funds allocated to their libraries. Moreover, 29 (96.67) out of 30 respondents disagreed with the statement that their libraries were given priority in the institutions budget allocation. In fact, all the respondents (30 or 100%) disagreed with the statement that funds budgeted for their libraries were promptly released to the library.

3.2. Summary of Findings

- In general, it is recognised that planning through proper policy formulation and budgeting are essential in the development and management of library services.
- The study revealed that policy and budgetary variable play a significant role in attracting finances to the library from their parent institutions.
- Despite the importance of policy and budgetary factor in justifying and attracting finances to the library to cater for her expenditure and services, most if not all the institutions do not have laid down policies on their funding neither do they operate from clearly articulated budgets.
- Equally revealing from the work is the fact that parent institutions of these institutions are not doing enough by allocating or making adequate budgetary provisions for library services.

4. Discussion of Findings

It is important to note that while collection development policy establishes ground rules for planning, budgeting, selecting and acquiring library materials, budgeting ensures that the library receives its fair share of the institutions financial resources to cater for books/journals, cost of ICT equipment, software and licensing cost, stationery and administrative cost among others.

It is clear from the study that the question of policy as a necessary factor in driving library processes and services is not in doubt. About 76.67 (23) respondents agreed that library policies have the potential of influencing library finances, while only 23.3% (7) disagreed. There seem however to be a split between the responses as to whether there was sound library policy as condition for library services as 16 (53.4%) agreed while 14 (46.6) disagreed. While Ifidon (2006) justified the need for libraries to be guided by formal collection development policies, Igbo & Duke (2006), Ike (2007) and Inoyo (2014) doubt the strict adhere to those policies as they claim that in reality, interests, concerns and priorities of the proprietary authorities often prevail over that of the library policy.

The library budget is a tool for turning library dreams into reality. It determines services that will be offered by the library and the resources devoted to each library program. A carefully planned budget will ensure that available funds are effectively utilized to realise the library's service objectives (Lamb, (N.D.).

On budgeting, the study shows that 23 (76.7) of respondents agreed that there is always annual budgetary allocation to the library while 7 (23.3) disagreed. This is in consonance with Lamb (N.D.) who underscores the importance of budgeting for library services. What is however very discouraging or sad from the work is the revelation that 30 (100%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement that funds allocated to the library were released promptly. More so, 29 (96.67%) disagreed with the statement that their libraries were given priority in their institution's budget releases.

As integral part of academic systems, libraries are expected to play key roles in teaching, learning and research by providing requisite information resource required by faculty, students and staff. The key role and functions they perform are expected to be given special attention but this seems not so. This is underscored by Virkus and Metsar (2004) observation that there is a disheartening decrease in academic library share of institutional funding and noted that libraries remain for the most part on the periphery of decision-making and innovative processes and librarians are often not involved in information policy development. They note ironically that it is a metaphor to describe the library traditionally as the "heart of the university". This unfortunate situation is a cause for much concern and rethinking in the overall interest to pursue academic library development.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The panacea for providing effective, efficient and satisfactory library services is adequate financial support to procure needed infrastructure, facilities and information resources, hire personnel and maintain services. Although funds from government/parent institutions of libraries are considered the major sources of funding in public academic libraries, both government and the institutions are not doing enough to support library collection development.

Also, libraries and librarians are not demonstrating enough zeal in properly planning, articulating policies and budget to justify their funding to attract institutional support. This is revealing from responses from respondents which showed significant lack of policies and budget preparations in these libraries.

Arising from the above conclusion the following recommendations are made:

- A clarion call is being made on government to place the financing of education and the funding and recognition of libraries as critical infrastructure in teaching, learning and research especially in academic institutions.
- The need for librarians to carefully plan, prepare and articulate sound collection development policies and budgets to justifying and seek support from their institutions proprietary authorities is stressed.
- There is also the need to promote and publicize library services as well as mobilize and seek support through public relations in pursuing and defending their budgets to attract attention.

6. References

- i. Abubakar, B. M. (2011). Academic Libraries in Nigeria in the 21st Century. *Library Philosophy and Practice*.
- ii. Aguolu, C. C. & Aguolu, I. E. (2002). *Libraries and Information Management in Nigeria: Seminal essays on themes and problems*. Maiduguri: ED – Linform Services.
- iii. Ifidon, S. E. (2006). *Modern Theory and Practice of Library Collection Development*. Ekpoma, Nigeria: Department of Library and Information Science, Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma.
- iv. Igbo, H. U. & Dike, C. C. (2006). Sources of Funds and Budgeting procedure in academic libraries: The Nigerian example. In *Administration of Academic Libraries: A Book of Readings* edited by Ekere, F. C. pp 12-20.
- v. Inoyo, Udom (2014). Challenges and opportunities for university graduates in a season of economic and moral decay being an address delivered at the 19th/20th Convocation ceremony of University of Uyo, November 21, 2014.
- vi. Krubu, D. E. & Osawaru, K. E. (2011). The Impact of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Nigerian University Libraries. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. <http://unlib.unl.edu/lpp>
- vii. Lynch, B. P. (ed) (1986). *Academic libraries in ALA World Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science* (2nded.). Chicago: ALA Adamantine.
- viii. Obogu, J. O. & Okiy, R. B. (2011). Sources of funds in academic libraries in Delta State, Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. <http://unlib.unl.edu>.
- ix. Olanlokun, S. O. & Salisu, T. M. (1985). *Understanding the library: A handbook on library Use*. Lagos: Concept Publishers.
- x. Poole, A. (ed) (1977). *Academic Libraries in the Year 2000*. New York : R. R. Bowker.
- xi. Ugwanyi, J. O.; Okwor, R. N. & Ezeji, E. C. (2011). Library space and place: Nature, use and impact on academic library. *International Journal of Library and Information Science*. www.academicjournals.org/articles