

## **Managing and Funding University Library in Nigeria**

**<sup>1</sup>Shittu, Taofeek Olawale**

taofeek.shittu@lasu.edu.ng

08026297217

Department of Educational Management,  
Lagos State University, Lagos, Nigeria<sup>1</sup>

**<sup>2</sup>Gbenu, Sarah**

gbenusarah52@gmail.com

08035769232

**<sup>3</sup>Sessi, Abiodun Michael**

nsasa2@yahoo.com

07038596568

<sup>1,2,3</sup>University Library, Lagos State University, Ojo, Nigeria

### **Abstract**

*This paper examined the managing and funding university library in Nigeria. Library is the heart of university system and repository centre for all academic institution. The objective of University library is to facilitate teaching and learning, and promote scholarship for end users in line with mission and vision of the University. Some public university libraries in Nigeria are bedeviled with critical challenges which culminated to poor management, insufficient fund, lack of trained personnel, destructive character of library users, high foreign exchange rate, dilapidated infrastructure, dwindling collection of library materials and poor automation of library system in meeting up with demand of 21st century. These problems include inability to provide internet facilities, obsolete computers hardware, epileptic supply of electricity, dilapidated library buildings and inadequate staff strength. The study concluded that University libraries in Nigeria are in need of sufficient fund to provide internet and automation facilities, modern building and stable supply of electricity. It is therefore recommended among others that University Librarian should boost Internally Generated Revenue and plan annual budget through financial support from government grants, private donors and philanthropist, endowments and consultancy fees for smooth running of library system.*

**Keywords:** Managing, Funding, Library and University

### **Introduction**

All over the world, library has been regarded as a heart of all academic institutions. Academic libraries are libraries attached to universities, polytechnics, monotechnics and colleges of education for achieving academic excellence. The

ranking of tertiary institutions depend on the standard and capacity of their library. Higher institutions of learning has a central library attached to it and may have many constituent libraries attached to its different teaching faculties, departments or the constituent colleges. Library is a collection of printed or written materials arranged or organized for the purpose of study and research or general reading or both (Shittu, Gbenu and Francis-Okokuro, 2020). Library is the powerhouse of knowledge where information is stored, generated and transferred to fulfill the objective of users. Libraries are vital to education, and research has shown that the current lower levels of proficiency in reading and learning are due to underfunding of libraries and their services (Dibu, 2012). The objective of University library is to facilitate teaching and learning, and promote scholarship for end users in line with mission and vision of the University. Some public university libraries in Nigeria are bedeviled with critical problems which culminated to poor management, insufficient fund, lack of trained personnel, destructive character of library users, high foreign exchange rate, dilapidated infrastructure, dwindling collection of library materials and poor automation of library system in meeting up with demand of 21st century. However, the purpose of university libraries is to support teaching, learning, and research in ways consistent with, and supportive of, the institution's mission and goals (Ishola, 2014). Universities library is the major organ which must be properly supported financially toward national development. Library is the heart of university system and repository centre for all academic institution.

### **Management and Funding of University Library in Nigeria**

Management is the act of getting things done through planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting and budgeting towards achieving organisational goals and objectives. University librarians formulate policies and programmes for effective and efficient running of libraries with aim of achieving teaching and research and community services. Management of information in library provides both physical and digital access to book and non-book material in a physical building or virtual space. Library seems to be the repository centre for all universities in Nigeria. However, university library' seems to be a library or group of libraries established, organised and managed by the university to meet the needs of its student and members of the academic staff. University libraries are often considered the most important resource center of an academic institution. However, some public university libraries in Nigeria are facing critical challenge in meeting new demands of the 21st century. Professional librarians that work in the university libraries especially in this information era have always engaged themselves with the collection, organization and dissemination of information resources to support research and learning. These are resources in both print and electronic formats. That is why librarians in the university libraries are fully recognized as academic staff (Ajibero, in Eze & Uzoigwe, 2013).



However, funding has always been a great challenge to most university libraries in Nigeria. Library funding is the act of providing available financial resources for use in developing and equipping the library; these funds are needed to provide library services, materials and sustain human resources. Public libraries in Nigeria do not only lack adequate funds to purchase books and required journals but also cannot afford huge amount needed to purchase and maintain computers hardware, build modern infrastructure nor hire personnel. Libraries cannot generate enough funds on their own to run their services adequately. They depend on funds allocated from their parents' institution and these funds are almost always inadequate to meet library needs (Godwin, 2017). In fact, funding has the capacity to bring about renewal, maintenance, and sustenance, nourishment, durability of university libraries (Ntui & Wiche, 2015). In this respect, it must be recognised that funds are needed for the materials and services which are provided for library users. Funds are also needed for the staff that will obtain and make available the library materials and maintain the services (Ishola, 2014).

In the university system, NUC approved that 10% of the university approved recurrent annual budget should operate in any institution of higher learning and this should be set aside for library development, that students' library fee be applied to library development, that separate account be opened into which the library subvention should be paid and disbursement of this amount be made by the university Librarian and the Bursar. Agboola and Bamigboye (2010) maintained that the quality and strength of any educational program depends on the library; not the library as a magnificent building but the use of it. University library is the heart of the university using the human and material resources at its disposal to support teaching, learning and research objectives of the institution. However, Muhammad (2012) posited that the University need funds to pay staff salaries, human resources, staff development, equipment for classrooms and offices, and the construction of new buildings, security, research development, library facilities, and scholarships. Famurewa, (2014) reported that universities should seek for alternate funding to supplement government funding, through internally generated revenue and there should be adequate monitoring of how allocated funds are used and areas where they are applied. The poor funding of university libraries and epileptic implementation of annual budget for many Nigerian universities has affected the quality of library resource, access, services and use. As such university libraries are handicapped in their promotion of scholarship and reading culture in their parent institutions. Hence, some libraries have introduced different courses of actions to promote income generation from library patrons.

To this end, libraries have tried to respond to this problem by introducing fee based library and information services (Ishola, 2014). It was concluded that for efficient service delivery users must be asked to pay, though the regulatory body (NUC) for federal university libraries is strongly raising objection. According to Ogundipe (2008), on recommendation of the National Universities Commission (NUC), ten percent (10%) of each university's recurrent budget is supposed to be allocated to the library. In practice, libraries most often receive less than their budgetary provision due to irregular grants from government or arbitrary cuts or



withholding of funds by administrative fiat to meet contending exigencies. Omoba and Fabinmi (2010) opined that limited budget, rising salaries, growing users demand, pressure fact of life which forces to ensure sustainability of information service and products as well as market demand are facts of life which forces library managers to charge fees, hence as a result of this, cost of production must be ascertained and the appropriate pricing policy determined.

In the time past, States and Federal Government have approved special grants to libraries of new institutions for the development of their stock especially in the beginning years. At other times, under due pressures from academic staff unions, government is forced to sign agreements for the capital provision for the upgrading of basic infrastructure/facilities like laboratories, workshops and libraries (Godwin, 2017). TETFund (2014) reported that between 2001 to 2013, it had allocated twenty-three billion, eight hundred and forty-two million, seven hundred and ninety-one thousand, one hundred and seventy-six naira, fifty-seven kobo (N23,842,791,176.57k) for library development in public tertiary institutions. Out of this sum, a total of nine billion, six hundred and thirty-seven million, two hundred and ninety-six thousand, five hundred and eighty-nine naira, fifty-one kobo (N9,637,296,589.51k) had been accessed as at August 2014 leaving a balance of Fourteen billion, two hundred and five million, four hundred and ninety-four thousand, five hundred and eighty-seven naira, six kobo (N14,205,494,587.06k) to be accessed. The allocation is presented to play very vital role in the development and sustenance of library services through her intervention funds for information resources, equipment and infrastructure. Agbedo (2015) in the Guardian Newspaper features article reported that TETFund under the leadership of Prof. Bogoro was not only working but was bridging the gap between industry and classroom by funding and sustaining materials and infrastructure for teaching and learning. It credited all basic infrastructure funds in tertiary institutions to TETFund, including libraries. Adamu (2017) reported that although TETFund "Special Intervention" has been removed from 2017 budget due to the current economic crunch in the country, its annual interventions have remained sustained. In a nutshell, lack of sufficient funds to build public universities library, procure and maintain basic infrastructure and equipment is real.

### **Sources of Funding University Library**

1. The grants from government are the major source of financing academic libraries in public institution.
2. International donor through agencies like Ford Foundation USA; Carnegie Corporation; British Council; CIDA; UNESCO; UNICEF; World Bank; Council for the Development of Social Commission of Nigeria; Council for the Develop of Social Research in Africa and Rotary Club of Victoria Island, Lagos are contributing in ICTs development in Nigeria by accelerating access to computers and local internet connectivity.
3. Grants-in aid principally from TETFUND constitute the major source of funding public university libraries. The fund accounts for about 70.6% of finances accruing to these libraries.

4. National gifts and donations are making some impact through their contributions to library development in public university.
5. Donations from parents and alumni associations; Payment of tuition fees; education tax and development levy generate funds for public university.

### **Challenges of Funding University Library in Nigeria**

1. Insufficient budgetary allocation to public university libraries which limit their effort to acquire necessary materials.
2. Poor automation services, high cost of books and journals worldwide due to general inflation.
3. Lack of foreign grants to provide adequate ICTs infrastructure and lack of technical know-how in areas like Local Area Network management, network design, back-up system, assuring data integrity and network security to manage the operating system software.
4. Lack of Electronics Access: Most public university libraries in Nigeria still depend on print materials and African scholarly materials are still largely available in print and this overdependence on print tend to limit the availability to form library consortia in Nigeria.
5. Inadequate Staff Training and development. Many public university library staff have not had adequate training in maintenance and development of ICT.
6. Bureaucracy in payment for materials ordered due to procedures involved in processing invoices for payment since most materials are imported and required sourcing for scarce foreign exchange/currency.

### **Implications**

Most public university libraries in Nigeria faced the following challenges which include: insufficient fund, lack of trained personnel, destructive character of library users, high foreign exchange rate, dilapidated infrastructure and dwindling collection of library materials. This position corroborated with the assertion of Oyegunle, (2013) that Other challenges of library in recent times include digitalization of collections, electronic access, competition from online search engines, information literacy, value added services for new students and faculty and the education and skills needed by today's libraries to address these issues. Therefore, government needs to allocate enough funds to provide ultra-modern library facilities, internet and automation facilities for public university.

### **Conclusion**

This study explores the management and funding of University library in Nigeria. Managing and funding of university library involves: planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting and budgeting of all physical and material resources of library. This involves managing of building facilities for



academic and non-academic facilities in the areas of landscape and gardens, roads and paths. Other facilities include furniture and toilet facilities, lighting, acoustics, storage facilities, parking lot, security, transportation, ICT, cleaning materials, food services, and special facilities for the physically challenged. Library is the repository of knowledge where information is stored, generated, transferred to fulfil the users' demand. In Nigeria, most public university libraries have been bedevilled with insufficient funds to provide automation facilities, electricity, online and internet services and so on. Public university libraries depend on funds through the university whose sources of financial support are government grants, private contributions and gifts, endowments, students' fees and consultancy. However, the Internally Generated Revenue for university libraries may come from payment of photocopying proceeds, fines for overdue books, sale of duplicates and charge for loan of special items.

### Recommendations

The study recommended the following:

1. University librarians should boost their Internally Generated Revenue and plan annual budget through financial support from government grants, private donors and philanthropists, endowments and consultancy fees for smooth running of library system.
2. New initiatives are required in the form of consultancy services, marketing of information products as well as other income-generating services.
3. More emphasis should be placed on the provision of online access and services such as Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), e-journals, e-books, and networked information services.
4. University librarians should improve the ICT facilities such as the internet, intranet, hardware and software as well as internet bandwidth.
5. Finally, government must realize the central role of libraries to national development which requires provision of more funds for library development in the country.

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