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Funding Of Academic Libraries in Nigeria: A Case Study of Plateau State

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This research examines the funding of academic libraries in selected institutions in Plateau State. The objectives of the study are to: determine the nature of information resources in libraries of tertiary institutions in Plateau State; highlight the various ways of funding information resources; ascertain the extent of funds allocated for information resources acquisition in the libraries; identify the challenges of funding the libraries and provide recommendations that will improve the situation. The study adopted the cross-sectional research design. Copies of the questionnaire were administered to a sample of 10 libraries out of a population of 25 academic libraries in the state, using purposive sampling technique. The findings reveal among others that there is poor availability of information resources in the libraries, due to inadequate funding; the sources of funding are mainly from the parent institutions of the libraries and grants from TET Fund. The paper therefor, recommends amongst others that: academic libraries should explore alternatives to funding their services; libraries should apply for grants from reputable donors (foundations); academic institutions should organize appeal fund launchings to develop their library services; the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) should amend TET Fund laws to enable mono-technics, research institutions and public libraries benefit from the fund, academic institutions should encourage their alumnus to donate in kind or cash towards developing the library services and fee-based services should be introduced in the libraries. The study concludes that for academic libraries in Plateau State to compete globally in the educational system with those of other countries, the funding situation must be improved.

Key words: Academic Libraries, Funding, Plateau State, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Recent development in the country shows that the educational system is in bad shape and needs urgent intervention from the appropriate quarters, if Nigeria is to compete favourably in the global arena. Current revelation by Global Competitive Index for 2012-2013 released by the World Economic Forum (WEF) shows that Nigeria's educational system is in crises. It ranked Nigeria 146th among 148 countries presented on primary education (NIPSS Concluding Seminar report, 2015). According to the report, some 10.5 million children of

school age, 60% of them female are out of school in the country; the infrastructure is in a deplorable situation and the quality of teachers, very poor. The situation of public secondary schools, the report further states, is no better than that in the primary schools. The learning environment is poor and often characterized by decaying infrastructure. There is also inadequate teaching materials and personnel. Therefore, the rate of success in public examinations among secondary school students is low, while examination misconduct and several other vices including membership of secret cults is rampant (NIPSS Concluding Seminar report, 2015).

At tertiary level, which absorbs products of secondary schools there is gross underutilization of available places in the polytechnics and colleges of education; while on one hand, the universities are massively oversubscribed. For example, of the 1,257,257 candidates that sat for the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) in 2016, only 1.59% and 1.65% indicated interest in polytechnic and colleges of education respectively. Others wanted space in the universities, where only 14.6% of them could be accommodated (NIPSS Concluding Seminar Report, 2015:52).

The above scenarios most likely reflect the picture of libraries at these three levels of education in Nigeria. Libraries are a critical part of the learning process and have tremendous impact on the country's educational system. If the educational system is good, it is a reflection of the standard of the libraries therein. Therefore, for the country's educational system to compete globally with those of other countries, great attention must be given to libraries, by way of adequate funding.

The present economic situation (perhaps globally) better couched in the phrase "Economic Recession" is not auguring well for academic libraries in terms of adequate funding to develop their collections and services. This has compelled academic libraries to explore other means of supporting their services. As Olurotimi (2014) aptly puts it "-------- there is the need to build the consciousness of librarians to always face the reality that funds are not forth coming, hence they have to seek for alternative funding to make ends meet"

The importance of funding in providing qualitative library services therefore, cannot be over emphasized. It is the adhesive that holds the building, collection and staff together, and allows the library to realise its goals. As such, money can be considered indispensable in the library operations. Inadequate funds, notes Anafulu, as cited in Ubonu and Okiy (2011) impede the effectiveness of any library.

The discussion in this paper is limited to academic libraries in tertiary institutions in Plateau State, notably: universities, polytechnics, mono techniques, research

institutions and the like. Funding, in the paper, is restricted to library information resources only, and does not include personnel, building and other library equipment. Funding in the paper also includes "gifts and donations" as alternative to "cash funding".

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Education has often been said to be the bedrock of any country's development. The quality of a nation's human resources is a strong determinant of its level of development. However, recent development in the country has revealed that the country's educational system at all levels is declining. Educational infrastructure such as buildings, learning materials (books, computers etc) are in a deplorable situation and short supply, respectively. Even the quality of teaching personnel is questionable. What then is responsible for this declining trend in the country's educational system? Experts in the country's educational system have identified poor funding as a major factor responsible for the deteriorating standard in the country's educational system. Consequently, and by extension, this also affects the standard of libraries in the educational system.

Libraries, as a critical and indispensable part of the country's educational system need adequate information resources to provide effective and efficient services to users in tertiary institutions. To do this effectively, they must be adequately funded. The question that readily comes to mind is, are libraries in tertiary institutions in Plateau State funded to enable them provide the desired services? If they are, how adequate is the funding? If they are not, what alternatives do they employ in providing the desired information resources to their users? Similarly, are these alternatives enabling them fulfill their mandate of providing effective and efficient service to users? Furthermore, are these funding measures enhancing library services in tertiary institutions in Plateau State that would enable the tertiary institutions compete globally with the educational system in other climes? This paper is an attempt to provide answers to these questions.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are to:

1.   Determine the nature of information resources that are available in the libraries of tertiary institutions in Plateau State;
2.   Highlight the various ways of funding the

acquisition of information resources in the libraries;

3. Ascertain the extent of funds allocated for information resources acquisition in the libraries;
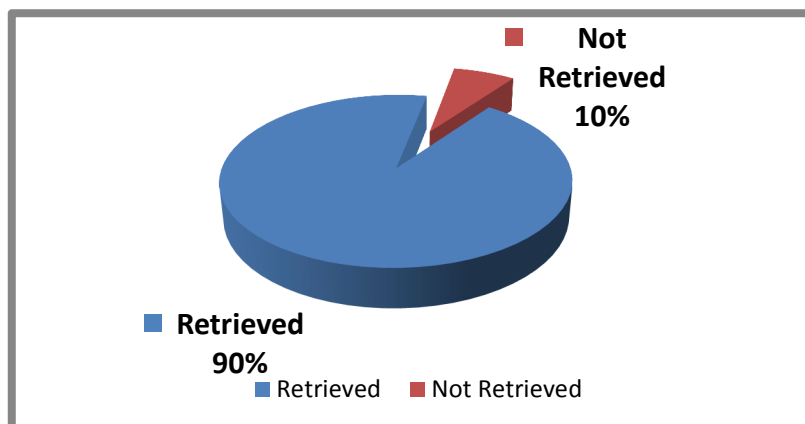4. Determine the challenges of funding in the acquisition of information resources in the libraries;

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the cross-sectional research design (covering a number of entities in a particular area). The instrument used in the study was questionnaire. The researcher also observed the scenario and interacted with staff of some of the libraries in a bid to obtain more information. The population of the study comprised the tertiary institutions in Plateau State, numbering twenty five (25). Purposive sampling technique was used in choosing the sample of ten (10) libraries. Ten (10) copies of the questionnaire were administered to the sample of the study. Nine (9) copies of the questionnaire were returned (duly completed), giving a response rate of 90%. Data was presented in tables and figures and was analyzed descriptively.

Data Presentation and Analysis

For Objective 1, ten copies of the questionnaire were administered to the sample of the study, being the ten academic libraries in the tertiary institutions in Plateau State. The result is presented in tables and figures to draw inferences on the phenomenon under investigation. Figure 1 gives a graphic representation of the response rate of the administered questionnaire.

Figure 1: Response rate of Administered Questionnaires
Source: Field Survey, 2019

Figure 1 above shows that out of 10 copies of questionnaire administered, 9 of the questionnaires representing 90% were returned. The retrieved questionnaires are adequate to enable effective discussion of the results.
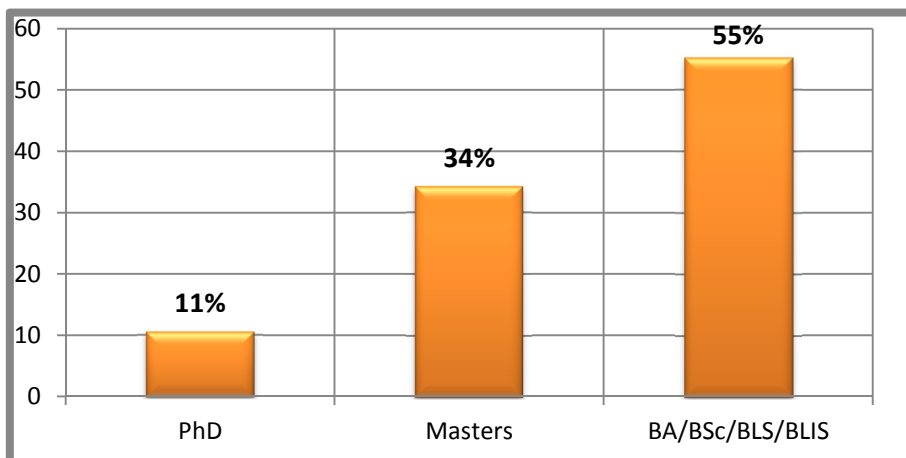
Figure 2: Assessment of Level of Professionalism
Source: Field Survey, 2019

Figure 2 above shows that, all the libraries have professional librarians that can be relied upon to manage and provide effective services to library users.

Table 2: Information Resources available in the Libraries

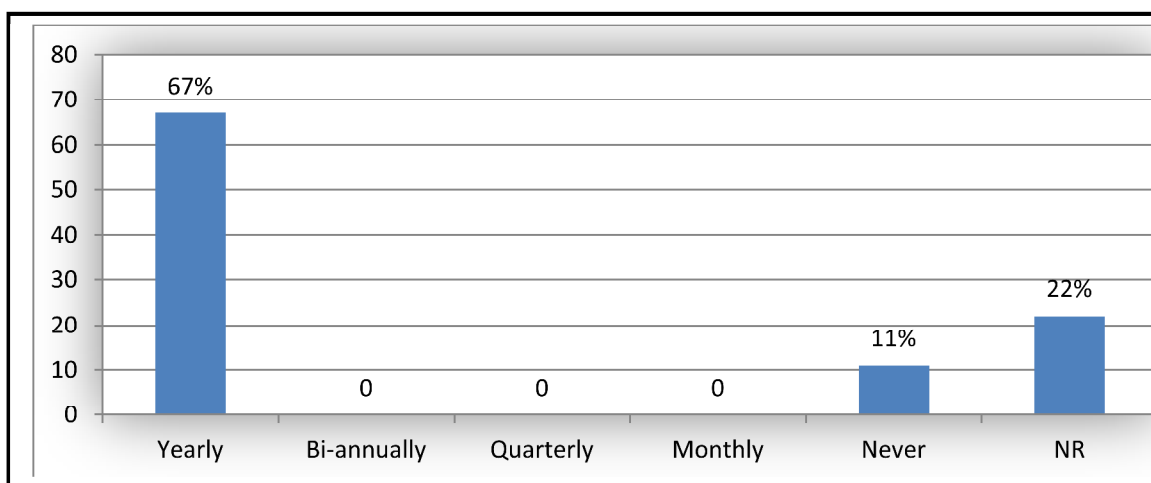| S/N	Information Resources	Highly available%	Available	Poorly available	Not Available	Don't know	NR	Total
1	Books (Hard copies)	33%	56%	0	0	0	11%	100
2	Journals (Hard copies)	22%	33%	22%	0	0	22%	100
3	Newspapers/Magazines	33%	44%	11%	0	0	11%	100
4	Govt. Publications/Doc.	0	56%	44%	0	0	0	100
5	E-Books	11%	22%	33%	33%	0	0	100
6	E-Journals	11%	22%	22%	44%	0	0	100
7	Online Database	0	22%	11%	56%	0	11%	100
8	Off-line Database	11%	11%	33%	33%	0	11%	100
9	Internet	11%	33%	0	33%	0	1%	100
10	Students' Projects	56%	22%	0	11%	0	11%	100

Source: Field survey, 2019

The responses on the availability of information resources in the libraries from table 2 show that hard copies of information resources (books, journals, newspapers, magazines, government publications and student projects) are available. Soft or electronic copies of information resources are either poorly available or not available at all. Internet connectivity is however fairly available. The researcher's personal observation in some of these libraries revealed the poor availability of some of these information resources is mainly due to inadequate funding. This finding corroborates those of Onifade and Ogunjobi (n.d.), Afolabi (2014) and Ubogu aand Okiy (2011) who found that the funding of libraries in academic institutions is poor and suggested that serious attention be given to them.

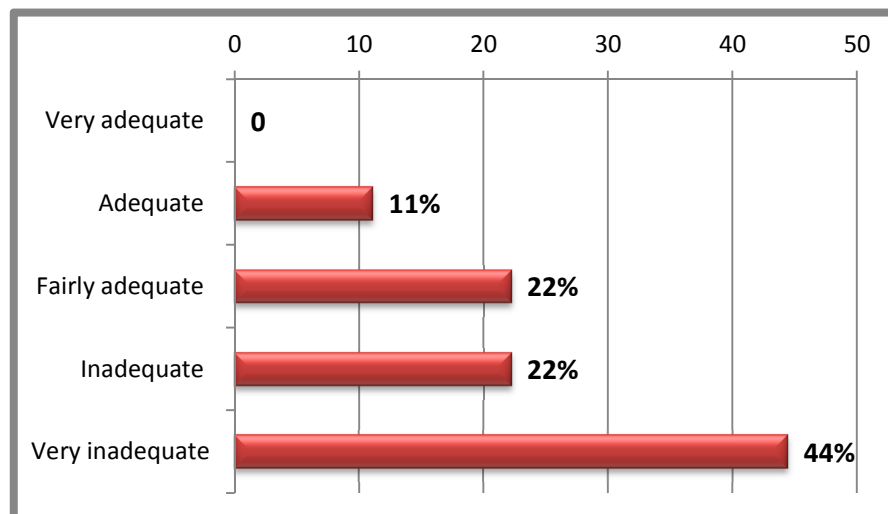**Table 3:** Various Ways of Funding the Acquisition of Information Resources in Libraries In Plateau State

Information resources	Parent Institution	Community	Individuals	Endowments	Govt. Agencies e.g TETFund	Foundations, e.g Bill Gates	Total
Books (Hard copies)	90	0	2	3	5	0	100
Journals (Hard copies)	90	0	2	2	6	0	100
Newspapers/Magazines	94	0	6	0	0	0	100
Government Publications/ Documents	93	0	2	3	2	0	100
E-Books	92	0	0	0	8	0	100
E-Journals	92	0	0	0	8	0	100
Online Database eg. EBSCOhost, Jstor	99	0	0	0	1	0	100
Off-line Database eg. E-Granary, CD-ROMs	99	0	0	0	1	0	100
Internet	98	0	0	0	2	0	100
Students' Projects	98	0	2	0	0	0	100

Source: Field survey, 2019

The analysis in table 3 on sources of funding information resources in the libraries studied reveal that parent institutions are mainly responsible for acquiring information resources with TET Fund playing a supplementary role. Individuals and endowments rarely contribute to funding information resources acquisition in these libraries. From the researcher's observation and interaction with some staff of these libraries grant from TET Fund appears to have played a significant role in funding acquisition of information resources than reported by respondents in the questionnaire. This revelation is in tandem with the discoveries of Sadiku (2012) and Okonkwo (2014) who found that academic libraries in Nigeria benefitted tremendously from grants by TET Fund.

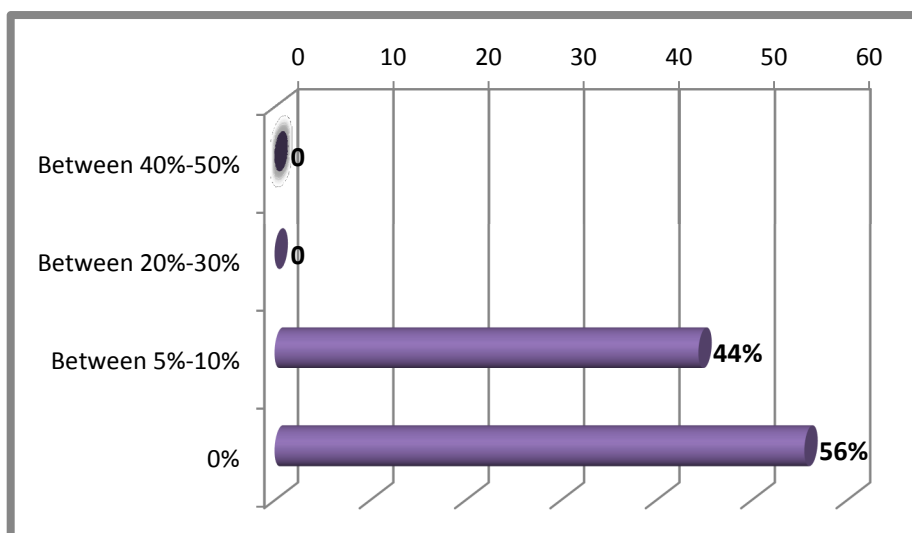**Figure 3:** Frequency of Funds received from source

On the frequency of funding information resources received from source in libraries, figure 3 above shows that most of the institutions studied receive funds once in year for acquiring their information resources in their libraries.

3

Source: Field Survey, 2019
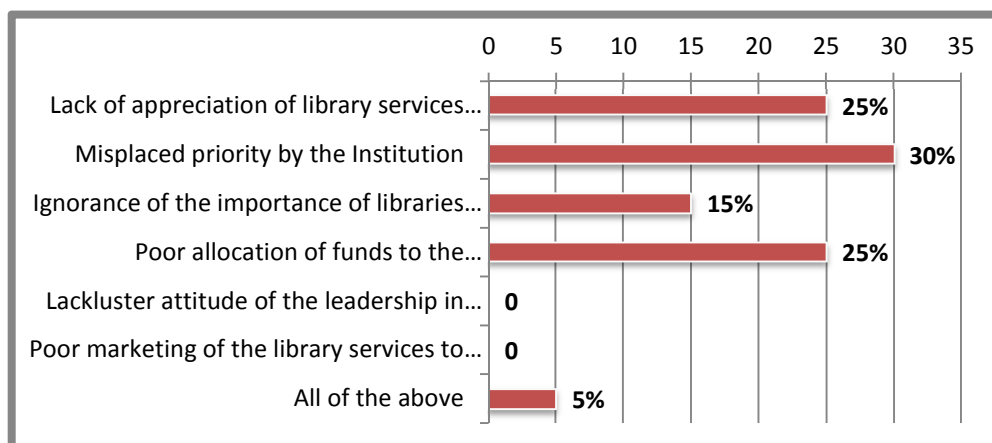**Figure 4**: Assessment of sufficiency of funding to library

From the data in figure 4 above, it can generally be inferred from this revelation that the funding of information resources acquisition in these libraries is grossly inadequate. The researcher also gathered from interaction with staff in some of the libraries that the funding situation is very poor and pathetic

Source: Field Survey, 2019
Figure 5: Assessment of percentage of budget allocation to library development.

The revelation in figure 5 above shows that libraries in these institutions are very poorly captured in their institutions' budgets. This finding supports that of Afolabi (2014) and Ubogu and Okiy (2011) who discovered that libraries in federal universities and academic libraries in Delta State, respectively were not adequately funded and recommended that adequate funding be provided for them in the institutions' budgets.

Source: Field Survey, 2019
Figure 6: Assessment of challenges of funding libraries in Institution

The revelations in figure 6 above show that misplaced priority by the management of the institutions, lack of appreciation of library services by the institutions' management and poor allocation of funds to the institutions constitute the major challenges of funding libraries in the institutions. Interaction with staff in some of the libraries showed that poor allocation of funds to the libraries constitutes the major challenge than the issues of lack of appreciation of the library services and misplaced priority by the parent institutions. The findings of Onifade and Ogunjobi (nid), Afolubi (2014) and Ubogu and Okiy (2011) further corroborate this.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

1. The responses on the availability of information resources in the libraries show that hard copies of information resources (books, journals, newspapers, magazines, government publications and student projects) are available. While soft or electronic copies of information resources are either poorly available or not available at all.
2. On sources of funding of information resources in the libraries studied, it was discovered that the funding of the libraries were mainly through the parent institutions with TET Fund playing a supplementary role.
3. It was also discovered that the funding of information resources acquisition in these libraries are grossly inadequate.
4. However, misplaced priority by the management of the institutions, lack of appreciation of library services by the institutions' management and poor allocation of funds to the institutions constitute the major challenges of funding libraries in the institutions.

CONCLUSION

Funding is an indispensable requirement in libraries of academic institutions globally, as it ensures the attainment of the institutions' goals and guarantees national development. Poor or inadequate funding of academic libraries can have devastating consequences on a country's educational system. Treatises have revealed that academic standard has fallen in most developing countries due to poor funding of the library services therein. This study has also shown that academic libraries are poorly funded in Plateau State. Hence, for libraries in the educational system of Plateau State to compete globally, there is the need to improve the funding situation in libraries. The implication of the study therefore is that, adequate funding of academic libraries is essential in a nation's educational system if it is to compete globally with other nations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings in this study, the following recommendations are proffered:

1. Academic libraries should explore alternatives to

funding their services other than their parent institutions.

2. Academic libraries should apply for grants from reputable foundations to develop their services. Examples of these foundations are: Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Jim Ovia Foundation, Aliko Dangote Foundation and many others.

3. Academic institutions should organize appeal fund launchings for the purpose of developing their library services. This should involve important individuals, alumnus of the institutions and corporate bodies in the community.

4. Academic institutions should value the importance of libraries in uplifting the standard of education in the society and allocate more funds (at least 10%) for development of library services from their budgets.

5. The Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) should amend the TETFund laws to allow monotechnics, research institutes and public libraries benefit from the fund.

6. Library management should introduce fees for some of its services, such as access to databases, request for gray literature etc.

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APPENDIX

Institutions Used in the Study

1.   Baptist Bible College Lamingo, Jos
2.   College of Agriculture, Garkawa
3.   College of Animal Health and Production Technology, Vom
4.   College of Arts, Science and Technology, Kurgwi.
5.   College of Education Gindiri
6.   College of Health Technology, Pankshin
7.   College of Health Technology, Zawan.
8.   College of Land Resources Technology, Kuru
9.   ECWA Theological College, Jos
10.   Federal College of Education, Pankshin
11.   Federal College of Forestry, Jos.
12.   National Centre for Remote Sensing, Jos
13.   National College of Accountancy, Jos
14.   National Film Institute, Jos.
15.   National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru
16.   National Veterinary Research Institute, Vom
17.   NTA, TV College, Jos
18.   Plateau State Polytechnic, Barkin Ladi
19.   Plateau State University, Bokkos
20.   Police Staff College, Jos
21.   School of Biblical Studies, Jos
22.   School of Nursing, Jos
23.   School of Nursing, Vom
24.   Theological College, Jos
25.   University of Jos