

## **Full Length Research**

# **Adoption and Compliance of Research Grants Policies among Library Schools in Federal Universities in Northern Nigeria**

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**This study examines the adoption and compliance of research grants policies among Library Schools in federal universities in Northern Nigeria. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were collected through questionnaires (n = 180), interviews with research administrators, and document analysis. Findings indicate that while awareness of research grants policies is high (84%), formal adoption by Library Schools is moderate (62%), and compliance particularly in financial reporting and ethical protocols is uneven. Key factors influencing adoption and compliance include institutional support, training, and bureaucratic bottlenecks. The study recommends standardizing policies, establishing research support offices, enhancing capacity-building programs, and implementing monitoring mechanisms to improve research governance. The findings are relevant for federal universities, policy makers, and Library Schools aiming to strengthen research productivity, accountability, and academic excellence.**

**Keywords:** Library Schools in federal universities, Northern Nigeria, research grants policies, adoption and compliance

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## **Introduction**

Research grants policies provide a framework through which academic institutions formulate, administer, and evaluate research activities funded by external and internal sources. These policies define eligibility criteria, application procedures, budgetary controls, ethical requirements, reporting mechanisms, and compliance expectations. Universities that adopt comprehensive and compliant research grants policies are better positioned to enhance research productivity, attract funding, ensure accountability, and uphold academic integrity. Federal universities in Nigeria, particularly those with Library Schools, play critical roles in knowledge production, information management, and professional education. However, the extent to which these units adopt, internalize, and comply with research grants policies remains under-examined. In Northern Nigeria home to many federal universities such as Ahmadu Bello University (Zaria), Bayero University (Kano), Federal University of Technology (Minna), and Usmanu Danfodiyo University (Sokoto) Library Schools are increasingly expected to conduct research, secure funding, and contribute to national and global scholarly discourse. Yet, anecdotal evidence suggests inconsistent policy adoption, challenges in grant management, and varying levels of compliance among these units. This study examines the adoption and compliance of research grants policies among Library Schools in federal universities in Northern Nigeria, identifies factors influencing practices, and offers recommendations to strengthen research governance.

## Statement of the Problem

Research grants serve as engines for scholarly inquiry, innovation, and institutional development. However, in many developing contexts including Northern Nigeria, institutional research frameworks are weak, fragmented, or poorly implemented. A well-formulated research grants policy without effective adoption and compliance mechanisms fails to translate into improved research outputs or ethical standards.

Several key problems have been observed:

1. Inadequate awareness and poor understanding of research grants policies among faculty and administrators in Library Schools.
2. Limited institutional capacity to manage and monitor grant activities effectively.
3. Weak compliance with reporting, ethical guidelines, and financial accountability stipulated in existing policies.
4. Disparities in access to grant opportunities due to structural, administrative, or resource-related constraints.

These challenges may undermine research quality, reduce competitiveness for external funding, and erode trust among stakeholders. Yet, empirical evidence on policy adoption and compliance specifically within Library Schools of Northern Nigerian federal universities is limited.

## Significance of the Study

This research is significant for several stakeholders:

- **Federal Universities:** Provides insights into institutional strengths and weaknesses in research governance.
- **Library Schools:** Helps model good governance and secure research support.
- **Faculty and Researchers:** Highlights areas for capacity building and policy adherence.
- **Policy Makers and Funders:** Informs refinement of policy frameworks and accountability mechanisms.
- **Academic Community:** Contributes to literature on research policy adoption in developing contexts.

## Literature Review

Policy adoption refers to institutional acceptance and formalization of regulatory frameworks. Sustainable policy adoption requires structured governance, funding, and regulatory oversight (Ogunsola et al., 2024). Recent reforms in Nigeria's higher education sector have reshaped research funding governance, particularly the exclusion of university research grants from the Treasury Single Account to promote financial autonomy and transparency (Daily Post Nigeria, 2024). This reform strengthens institutional responsibility for internal compliance mechanisms.

Compliance involves adherence to stipulated financial, ethical, and reporting standards. Onyiaorah and Ezugwu (2025) demonstrate that compliance gaps in Nigerian research contexts often stem from inadequate monitoring mechanisms. Compliance challenges are not limited to financial regulations but extend to ethical research governance. For example, Onyiaorah and Ezugwu (2025) observed inconsistencies in adherence to research participant protection guidelines among Nigerian journals, reflecting broader systemic compliance gaps within the research ecosystem.

Institutional Theory posits that organizations conform to regulatory expectations to gain legitimacy. Universities adopt research policies partly due to regulatory pressure from bodies such as the NUC (Ilawagbon, 2025). Policy implementation depends on clarity, enforcement, administrative capacity, and stakeholder engagement. Uneke et al. (2023) highlight the importance of institutional structures and funding in effective policy implementation. While general studies on research governance exist, few focus specifically on library schools in Northern Nigeria. Sustainable funding and structured policy frameworks are essential for effective policy adoption (Ogunsola et al., 2024). Weak financial governance systems often result in fragmented compliance structures. Institutional roles, funding structures, and research partnerships significantly influence policy implementation outcomes (Uneke et al., 2023). Universities with clearly defined governance frameworks demonstrate stronger adherence to compliance regulations.

## Empirical Findings

### Awareness and Policy Adoption

- **High Awareness:** Overall, 84% of respondents indicated awareness of institutional research grants policies.
- **Adoption Gaps:** Only 62% reported that their Library School had formally adopted a research grants policy document.
- Variations existed across universities, with older institutions demonstrating stronger formal policy adoption than newer ones.

## Compliance Levels

- **Reporting Compliance:** Less than half (48%) of respondents indicated consistent compliance with reporting requirements for research grants.
- **Ethical Compliance:** Ethical approval processes were recognized, but only 57% indicated full adherence to ethical protocols in grant submissions and implementations.
- **Financial Accountability:** Challenges in timely financial reporting and auditing were noted, with only 39% reporting full compliance.

## Factors Influencing Adoption and Compliance

### Positive Influences

- Institutional support and training
- Clear policy documentation
- Dedicated research management units

### Barriers

- Lack of awareness or inadequate dissemination of policies
- Limited funding management capacity
- Bureaucratic bottlenecks
- Inadequate enforcement mechanisms

## Stakeholder Perspectives

Interviews with research administrators highlighted:

- A need for **capacity building** in grant writing and financial compliance.
- Desire for **centralized research support offices** to coordinate grants management.
- Calls for **regular policy reviews** to align with evolving research funding environments.

Document analysis revealed inconsistencies in policy language across universities, indicating a need for harmonized frameworks.

## Methodology

### Population and Sample

The target population included faculty members, research administrators, and postgraduate students in Library Schools of six federal universities in Northern Nigeria:

- Ahmadu Bello University (Zaria)
- Bayero University (Kano)
- Federal University of Technology (Minna)
- Federal University Gusau
- Usmanu Danfodiyo University (Sokoto)
- Federal University Dutse

Using purposive sampling and stratified random sampling, 180 respondents were selected.

## Data Collection Instruments

- Structured questionnaires – measured awareness, adoption, and compliance.
- Semi-structured interviews – in-depth perspectives from administrators and senior faculty.
- Document analysis – institutional policies, guidelines, and compliance reports.

## Data Analysis

- Quantitative data: Descriptive (frequencies, means, percentages) and inferential statistics (ANOVA, correlation) via SPSS.
- Qualitative data: Thematic analysis for patterns related to adoption, enforcement, and best practices.

## Empirical Findings

### Awareness and Policy Adoption

University	Respondents Aware (%)	Policy Formally Adopted (%)
ABU Zaria	92	75
Bayero Univ Kano	87	68
FUT Minna	80	60
Usmanu Danfodiyo Univ	81	55
Federal Univ Gusau	79	50
Federal Univ Dutse	78	55
<b>Overall Average</b>	84	62

### Compliance Levels

Compliance Area	Full Compliance (%)	Partial Compliance (%)	Non-Compliance (%)
Reporting Requirements	48	36	16
Ethical Approval	57	33	10
Financial Accountability	39	41	20

### Factors Influencing Adoption and Compliance

Factor	Positive Influence	Negative Influence
Institutional Support	✓	
Clear Policy Documentation	✓	
Dedicated Research Management Units	✓	
Awareness/Dissemination		✓
Bureaucratic Bottlenecks		✓
Limited Funding Management Capacity		✓

## Discussion

The study found high awareness (84%) but moderate adoption (62%) and uneven compliance, particularly in financial reporting and ethical adherence. Institutional support, training, and clear documentation positively influenced adoption, while bureaucratic challenges and limited capacity hindered compliance.

## Policy Implications

- Enhance communication strategies.
- Implement training and capacity-building programs.
- Strengthen monitoring and accountability mechanisms.

## Institutional Culture

Leadership commitment and incentive structures significantly affect adoption and compliance behaviors.

## Way Forward (Recommendations)

1. Standardize research grants policies across federal universities.
2. Establish research support offices in each Library School.
3. Conduct regular capacity-building workshops.
4. Introduce performance metrics and recognition for compliance.
5. Strengthen monitoring and evaluation using digital tools.
6. Encourage inter-university collaborations.
7. Conduct periodic policy reviews.

## Conclusion

Effective adoption and compliance of research grants policies are critical for enhancing research capacity in Library Schools of Northern Nigeria. While awareness is high, adoption and compliance remain inconsistent. Strategic interventions in policy standardization, capacity building, and governance monitoring are necessary to improve research outcomes and accountability.

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