

Organizational Factors Affecting Library Resources Provision in University Libraries in North Central Zone of Nigeria

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Abstract

Purpose: This study examines the organizational factors that affect library resources provision in university libraries in north central zone of Nigeria.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The research design employed was a descriptive survey. The population of the study consisted of all the ninety-nine librarians and twenty five library officers in the university libraries. The instrument for data collection was mainly questionnaires which were self administered to the respondents. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis.

Findings: The results revealed that the university libraries engaged to a large extent ($\bar{x}=3.13$) in organization activities aimed at fulfilling the goals of the parent institutions which broadly include planning ($\bar{x}=2.51$), organization ($\bar{x}=3.14$) and evaluation ($\bar{x}=2.65$)

Practical Implications: The combined managerial variable of managing, organization and evaluation have influence at the provision of library resources in federal, state and private university libraries.

Originality/Value: an emphatic empirical evidence that planning, organization and evaluation combined to significantly influence library provision in university libraries in North central zone of Nigeria

Keywords: Library resources, planning, evaluation organization, university libraries, Nigeria

Paper type: Empirical

Introduction

It is very important to harmonise the different departments and functions of the library if the entire library must progress smoothly toward its goals of unleashing its resources for effective provision of services to the library users. This important activity is achieved by means of coordination, which is a management function that is closely linked to the managerial variable of organisation. Coordination represents the process of integrating all the parts and functions of an organisation in order to enhance smooth and mutual operation toward the attainment of organisational goals. (Hartzell, 2006). The different departments of a university library like acquisition, cataloguing, circulation and bindery, which make up the university library, perform different but interrelated functions none of which, alone, is sufficient to enable the organisation achieve its set goals. The creation of departments helps to enhance specialisation and organized functioning for the common good of all the parts.

Another important management function is leadership, which is the function that enables the manager to persuade others to pursue the objectives of the organisation enthusiastically. The leader triggers motivation in the staff and inspires them to release their potentials as they apply themselves to their tasks which he guides towards the organisation's goals. Leadership is a process by which a person exerts influence over other persons. Such influence, according to French and Raven (1967) as quoted by Donnelly, Gibson and Ivancevich, (1987), derives from five bases of power, namely, coercive power- power based upon fear; reward power- positive rewards for subordinates; legitimate power- power derived from the position of the supervisor; expert power- power of one with an expertise, and referent power- power due resulting from admiration of the supervisor. One way of providing leadership is through supervision which concerns overseeing the staff to ensure that each of the members is carrying out the task assigned to him properly. Supervision involves direct observation of the

situation on ground: number and quality of staff, staff performance, providing encouragement, sanctions, and appropriate recommendations to higher authorities (Ogunsaju, 1983).

Direction is yet another management function worthy of mention. It is the totality of actions of managers relating to instructions to subordinates in the methods and procedures and to the supervision of the work of subordinates to ensure that it is being performed properly.

Although directing is generally associated with line supervisors, every manager undertakes it to some degree as he rises up within the organisational hierarchy, assuming other management functions. To be effective, a directive must be not only consistent with the overall goals of the organisation but also reasonable and clear. Clarity of directives relates to the need for effective communication in the work place. Communication is a flow of information that people use to pass messages from one person to another. The crucial place of communication lies in the fact that it is the basis of collaborative action which is the essence of organisational performance where different departments and officials have to perform different but interdependent tasks. When every staff has clear understanding of the expectations of his office, and other relevant information relating to the organisation, this reduces ambiguity and the tendency to spread rumour. Proper communication enhances the quality of supervision in the university library because it promotes release of clear instructions and adequate flow of information up and down the hierarchy (Tyons and York, 1996).

The present study is focused on the managerial variables of planning, organization and evaluation. This choice was guided by the realization that the three management functions are the core elements of management given the fact that each of the other functions like staffing, coordinating and control is intricately linked to planning, organisation or evaluation (Connor, 1978).

Observations by the researcher coupled with studies like the ones by Ngalla (2007), Etuk (2008), and Akor (2009) provide an insight into the management practices in university libraries on the African continent, and particularly in Nigerian university libraries. Nigerian university libraries are plagued by various problems, one of

which relates to problems of anti-library policies. Such policies include management policies that restrict the freedom of the university librarians to develop library services. Actions regarding the library are dictated by the Vice-Chancellor or his deputy. Added to these anomalies are inadequacies concerning the management of funds, including haphazard allocations to the library. Moreover, the university libraries are faced with lack of adequate staff development policies. Etuk (2008) identified inadequate management practices relating to planning, organizing, staffing and coordinating functions as key problems plaguing Nigerian university libraries which hamper the availability of information resources, particularly postgraduate theses. Other limitations of management which are affecting the university libraries relate to the development of organisational vision and goals, building trust among the library work force, providing a conducive reading environment and developing an effective system of communication among the library staff (Ugwu, 2011). Surprisingly, another major problem concerns the librarians themselves, especially the university librarians who are the key managers of the affairs of the university libraries in Nigeria. There is evidence suggesting that the university librarians in the North Central Zone of Nigeria are employing repressive leadership tactics as represented by their autocratic and laissez faire leadership styles in the discharge of their duties (2009). This is of great concern because such leadership styles, when used excessively to the detriment of other approaches such as participative management styles, are bound to have deleterious effect on the performance of staff who have a huge role in the provision of library resources in the university libraries.

Managerial variables thus appear to be the influence behind the precarious state of library resources the researcher observed in the northern parts of Nigeria, even though references were also made to funding as a factor given the power of money in the financing of every other type of library resource. But there is lack of empirical evidence to support such claim of the influence of managerial variables. There is clearly, therefore, the need to investigate the Influence of Managerial Variables on the Provision of Library Resources in Universities in the North Central Zone of Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to determine the organizational factors or managerial variables that affect library resources provision in university libraries in North Central Zone of Nigeria. Specifically, this study sought to find out:

1. The extent of library resources provision in university libraries in North Central zone of Nigeria
2. The extent of organizational practices in university libraries in the North Central zone.
3. The influences of organizational factors on library resources provision in the north central zone.

Literature Review

A number of empirical studies relating to organizational factors variables and the provision of library resources were reviewed in this section. One of them was Ngalla's (2007) investigation into the management problems of university libraries in Cameroon. Like the present study which seeks answers to the management problems affecting Nigerian libraries by focusing on the influence of managerial variables and the provision of library resources in universities in the North Central Zone of Nigeria, Ngalla's research gave particular attention to the problems which affect the Cameroonian libraries' level of expectations and those which hinder the attainment of the libraries' objectives. Based on five research questions and three hypotheses, the study employed descriptive survey in form of the combined use of questionnaire, interview, observation checklist and document analysis to collect data consisting of the opinions of University Authorities, University Librarians and Deputy University librarians. Data collected was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) to establish means and standard deviation and to calculate the t-test. The mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while the t-test was used to test the hypotheses and to do comparative analysis. The results revealed a plethora of problems such as those related to management policies that restricted the freedom of the University Librarians to develop library services with all actions dictated by the Vice-Chancellor or his Deputy; poor funding, inadequate management of funds and haphazard allocations; lack of staff development policies,

and few obsolete information resources largely resulting from donations. The results also revealed that the university libraries patterned after the English system of education received better attention in terms of funds, management policies, organizational structure, and position the library occupied within the university system than those patterned after the French system. The study consequently recommended among others that the English model of library management be extended to other universities in Cameroon.

In another relevant empirical study was Etuk's (2008) investigation of the relationships between the managerial variables of planning, organizing, staffing, coordination, which were termed administrative functions, and physical facilities and postgraduate theses availability in universities in the South- South Zone of Nigeria. The study was based on a random sample of 169 librarians and library officers and 44 post graduate school administrators from the five universities within the South- South Zone of Nigeria. Data for the study was collected via two survey instruments, namely, Librarians' and Library Officers' Questionnaire (LALOQ) administered on librarians and library officers and Theses Collection Attribute Descriptive Scale (TCADS) administered on postgraduate school administrators. By means of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis, five null hypotheses were tested. The study found that staffing, physical facilities, coordination and planning have significant relationship with postgraduate theses availability in universities in the South- South Zone of Nigeria. It was consequently recommended that adequate attention be paid to planning, organizing, staffing and coordination functions and also the provision of adequate physical facilities by university librarians to make postgraduate theses readily available to users in universities in the South- South Zone of Nigeria.

Usono (2008) examined the views of university librarians on the influence of organizing on the availability of information sources in the library. The study was based on the assumption that organizing was so indispensable that effective library services could not be achieved without it. Data were collected via a questionnaire distributed to a sample of all academic librarians in the libraries of four federal universities in the South- South Zone of Nigeria. Upon analysis, the data collected led to the conclusion that the principle of organizing supported the goal

attainment, which would result in availability and accessibility of information resources.

Another relevant empirical study was that by Ugwu (2011), which examined the relationship between organizational factors and knowledge management applications to user-centred services in federal university libraries in Nigeria. The study used correlational survey design and the population of the study consisted of 456 librarians working in federal university libraries in Nigeria. Data for the study were collected by means of questionnaire which had been pretested using Cronbach Alpha procedure.

From the 456 copies of questionnaire distributed, 354 were returned giving a response rate of 78%. Mean, Standard Deviation, Multiple Regression Analysis and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient were used to analyse the data collected. The findings showed that the knowledge management activities being used to provide user-centred services in federal university libraries in Nigeria were mainly in areas of identifying user needs, acquiring knowledge resources based on user needs, and disseminating the knowledge resources to users. Acquisition of knowledge resources was the greatest area of knowledge management activity, while top management leadership and collaboration were the greatest factors required for knowledge management application to user services. These factors accounted for 54% level of knowledge management application to user-centred services while the remaining 46% was unexplained. Among the aspects of these factors that were found to be important to knowledge management application were developing organizational vision and goals, building trust among librarians, creating a conducive organizational learning environment and developing a good system of communication. Moreover, the findings showed that top management had the strongest association with knowledge management applications while human resource policy had the weakest association. The study therefore recommended that knowledge management strategy should be developed for federal university libraries in Nigeria.

Methodology

The research design employed in this study was a descriptive survey. The population consisted of all the ninety-nine librarians and all the twenty-five chief in the university libraries in all the six state and four federal-owned universities in the North Central Zone of Nigeria. The major instrument for data collection was questionnaire.

The instrument consisted of three main sections, beginning with section A used to provide the needed demographic data. Sections B and C dealt with the extent of provision of library resources and the level of organizational practices in the university libraries respectively. Section B had 46 items clustered under the four types of library resources, namely, information resources, infrastructural resources, financial resources and human resources. Section C, on the other hand, had thirty items measuring levels of organizational activities in the University libraries.

The instrument was subjected to face validity. Two senior lecturers in library and information science and an expert in educational measurement carried out the face validation. The expert and senior lecturers were specifically requested to validate the instrument in terms of the relevance and adequacy of content and clarity of the statements. The experts vetted the items of the instrument in the light of the study's purpose, constructs and hypotheses. This is to ensure that each instrument is capable of collecting complete, precise and accurate information.

The researcher and some research assistants specially trained for the purpose distributed the questionnaire to all the librarians, chief library officers and assistant chief library officers in each of the universities under study. A total of 100 copies of the questionnaire were distributed. Out of this number, 90 copies were returned but only 80 copies were correctly filled by the respondents. This gave a response rate of 80%. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions posed in the study.

Results

Table 1: Mean ratings of respondents on the extent of library resources provision

S/No	Organization practiced	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
1	Information resources	2.43	0.58	SE
2	Infrastructural resources	2.61	0.52	LE
3	Financial resources	2.36	0.64	SE
4	Human resources	2.27	0.62	SE
	Over all	2.42	0.59	SE

VLE- Very Large Extent; LE- Large Extent; SE- Small Extent, VSE- Very Small Extent, SD-Standard Deviation, \bar{x} = Mean

Table 2: Mean ratings of respondents on extent of organizational practices in terms of planning, organisation and evaluation done in the library.

S/No	Information resource	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
	Planning Practices	2.51	.643	LE
1	The library has a direction in which it wants to execute activities	2.94	.864	LE
2	Library has a projection of its means of achieving its goals	2.85	.848	LE
3	The library has plan to examine its environment to identify its inherent SWOT	2.85	.826	LE
4	Preparation of a collection development policy	2.65	1.022	LE
5	Development of a building programme which is like a road map	2.53	1.085	LE
6	Library has a budget for personnel cost	2.48	.996	SE
7	Library has a budget for building and equipment	2.25	1.038	SE
8	Developing a plan for generating internal revenue	2.17	1.096	SE
9	Developing a plan for attracting donor funds	2.14	.938	SE
10	A policy is available on staff recruitment	2.30	1.084	SE
11	A policy is available on staff training and development	2.42	1.039	SE
12	Articulation of conditions of service for staff	2.52	1.111	LE
	Organisation practices	3.14	.044	LE
13	The information materials are processed by means of CCIA	3.45	.811	LE
14	The information materials are grouped according to their formats	3.91	3.913	LE
15	The library practices a subject arrangement	3.26	.074	LE
16	The library building is centrally located in the university	.3.06	.891	LE
17	Library budget is done under various sub-heads	2.72	1.070	LE
18	Assignment of tasks is done according to the skills experience and competences	.2.96	.962	LE
19	Schedule of duty are designed for staff	3.04	.110	LE
20	The structure of authority in the library is clearly defined	3.03	.976	LE
21	Library has a clear structure of authority and responsibility	2.93	2.928	LE
22	There is communication to the staff about things which staff need to know	3.00	.936	LE
	Evaluation practices	2.65	.195	LE
24	The library evaluates its information materials	2.76	.922	LE
25	The library undertakes appraisal of its processes	2.82	.852	LE
26	Appraisal is done to ascertain the quality and quantity of library outputs	2.76	.870	LE
27	Appraisal is done to determine the adequacy of the library's inputs	2.79	.872	LE
28	Appraisal is done to determine the effectiveness of library processes	2.74	.927	LE
29	An examination of the library's environment to help highlight its SWOT	2.80	.900	LE
40	Library appraises its buildings to ascertain their adequacy	2.29	1.257	SE
41	Library appraises its equipment to determine its adequacy	2.27	1.296	SE

VLE- Very Large Extent; LE- Large Extent; SE- Small Extent, VSE- Very Small Extent, SD-Standard Deviation, \bar{x} = Mean

Table 3: Standardized Beta coefficients of the influence of organizational factors on library resources provision

Type of Library	Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
			B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
Federal university Library	1	(Constant)	1.731	.286		6.056	.000
		Managerial variables	.252	.103	.320	2.460	.017
State University Library	1	(Constant)	1.039	.211		4.933	.000
		Managerial variables	.483	.075	.720	6.478	.000
Private University Library	1	(Constant)	1.095	.609		1.799	.099
		Managerial variables	.500	.203	.597	2.466	.031

Table 1 shows that library resources were provided to a small extent in university libraries in North Central Zone (\bar{x} =2.42). However, only infrastructural resources were provided to a large extent (\bar{x} =2.61).

Table 2 above shows the mean rating of the respondents on the extent of the organisational practices in the University Libraries.

The results reveal that planning activities were carried out to a large extent (\bar{x} =2.51) in the University Libraries. The greatest of all the planning activities in these Libraries are task execution according to direction (\bar{x} =2.51), application of SINOT analysis (\bar{x} =2.85), achieving goals through projection (\bar{x} =2.85), and preparation of collection development policy (\bar{x} =2.65). The greatest of all the organisational activities also carried out to a large extent include grouping information materials according to their formats (\bar{x} =3.91), processing information materials by means of ICT (\bar{x} =3.01), defining structure of authority (\bar{x} =3.11) and indicating very clearly responsibilities within this structure (\bar{x} =3.12). The evaluation activities carried out in the University Libraries consist mainly of examining the library environment to aid SWOT analysis (\bar{x} =2.80), appraisal of library processes (\bar{x} =2.82) and determining the adequacy of the libraries' input (\bar{x} =2.79). In conclusion the Universities Libraries were engaged to a large extent (\bar{x} =3.13) in organisational activities aimed at fulfilling the goals of the parent institution, which broadly included planning (\bar{x} =2.51), organization (\bar{x} =3.14) and evaluation (\bar{x} =2.65).

Table 3 above shows the combined managerial variables' influence on library resource provision in each of the University Libraries studied. The results of the Data analysis revealed that the combined managerial variables of

planning, organisations and evaluation have a highly significant influence on Federal University Library resource provision (B=0.320, P<0.05), State University Library resource provision (B=0.720, P<0.05) and Private University Library resource provision (B=0.597, P<0.05).

Since the test on Table 3 is significant in each of the University Libraries, the null hypothesis is rejected in favour of the alternate hypothesis that states that managerial variables have significant influence on the provision of library resources in university Libraries in the North Central Zone of Nigeria based on ownership of university.

Discussion

The results of the data analysis in tables 1 to 3 reveal that managerial variables have influence on provision of library resources based on ownership of university. That is, the combined managerial variables of planning, organization and evaluation have influence on provision of resources in federal, state and private university libraries. This finding is not unexpected because of the critical roles of these variables in the management of resources in university libraries. The resources which include information sources, physical facilities, funds and staff should be managed effectively to enable the university libraries support learning, teaching and scholarship activities of their parent institutions.

The above findings commensurate with those of Ngalla (2007) and Usoro (2008), who found that management is a critical factor for the provision of library resources. Both studies tried to establish the influence of managerial variables on library resources provision. Because of the significance of this influence, the above authors recommended that attention should be paid to the managerial variables of planning, organizing,

staffing, and coordinating by the university library management.

The above recommendation should be taken seriously by the university libraries in North-Central Zone of Nigeria. This means that the library organizational environment has significant contributions to make towards resources provision to the end-users. The above managerial variables are factors within the university library environment that are capable of influencing organizational processes to achieve goals. These organizational processes are complex and inter-related activities designed to enable the organization achieve its objectives. In the library system, these processes involve cataloguing, acquisition, circulation, assistance to library users, provision of resources and services and indexing. These processes will be efficiently handled if they are well planned, organized, coordinated and evaluated. As these factors or variables have been found to significantly influence library resources provision, it implies that the university library management staff should begin to apply measures developed in the contexts of these factors or variables for efficient provision of library resources and services to users.

It is equally important to note that these findings agree, in part, with those of Ugwu (2012) who tried to establish the relationship between organization factors and knowledge management application in federal university libraries in Nigeria. The managerial variables studied were found to have positive correlations with knowledge management application. This study also emphasized the importance of managerial variables as factors within the organization that can bring about positive changes in the organization. It is important to note that Ugwu's (2012) study did not de-emphasize ICT applications in libraries, rather it tried to offer solutions to the limitations of ICT. This implies that technology has both the human aspect and the business aspect. The success of the business aspects of IT depends on the human aspects. The human aspects of IT greatly depend on management of people and resources related to information and finance. Therefore, proper management of all these resources will enhance the status and strengths of university libraries especially in Nigeria.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study showed interesting results on the influence of managerial variables on provision

of library resources in universities in the North Central Zone of Nigeria. It was found that provision of resources in three university libraries studied was inadequate. This may be attributable to the fact that only planning was found to have a great significant influence on library resources provision. Other managerial variables of organization and evaluation were not significant, even though activities in these areas were found to be carried out to a large extent.

Infrastructural resources were found to be carried out to a large extent in the university libraries. This result is not surprising because efforts in many universities in Nigeria are geared towards the development of physical facilities, which include also ICT infrastructure. This also means that less attention is paid to other library resources. The belief or thinking is that with ICT infrastructure in place, other resources can naturally follow. This is not true because lack of planning, organization and evaluation of these resources will definitely affect their provision by libraries. As it was found in this study, information resources, financial resources and human resources were provided to a little extent in the university libraries studied.

The managerial variables of planning, organization and evaluation combined to significantly influence library resources provision in each of the federal, state and private university libraries. This finding emphasizes the importance of efficient and effective management of library resources in university libraries in the North Central Zone of Nigeria. What these findings therefore suggest is that university librarians should strategically manage their libraries for better results in the areas of resources allocation, development and provision. More efforts should be devoted to information, infrastructural, financial and human resources planning so as to enhance both the capacity and capability of the university libraries in the North Central Zone of Nigeria. It is recommended that: The Federal Government of Nigeria should look into the funding situations in Nigerian universities with a view to increasing the recurrent expenditure remitted to Nigerian universities. This definitely will increase the percent of the Library Development Fund (LDF). University librarians should show serious commitments to information, infrastructural, financial and human resources planning with a view to improving library resources provision. University librarians should begin to get

involved in knowledge innovation as a means of developing knowledge resources for their university libraries. There should be a strong partnership between the teaching faculty and the university library so that resources that are provided are the ones needed by both staff and students. University librarians should also show serious commitments to enhancing the resource-base of their university libraries by making available free online databases or resources to both staff and students.

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