

Challenges and Prospects of Academic Libraries in Kebbi State a Case Study of Kebbi State Polytechnic Dakingari Library

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Abstract:

One of the objectives of a university education, according to the national strategy on education, is to develop the intellectual and physical abilities necessary for students to become independent and valuable members of society (Agboola, 2004).

Keyword: Prospects, Academic Libraries, Polytechnic Library

Introduction

One of the objectives of a university education, according to the national strategy on education, is to develop the intellectual and physical abilities necessary for students to become independent and valuable members of society (Agboola, 2004). Since the library is well-known for this, the national policy on education in the aforementioned remark, from the perspective of the librarian, was actually referring to the library. Libraries are renowned for their ability to obtain knowledge resources and make them accessible to their patrons. According to Nwezeh and Shabi (2011), the primary purpose of libraries is to disseminate information. According to Olanlokun and Salisu (1993), the library's functions include gathering, organizing, preserving, and distributing recorded material in the formats that best suit the needs of its intended audience. Taking this role into account, the library is what drives the educational mission and vision. Academic libraries are those that are a part of postsecondary educational establishments, including universities, polytechnics, research institutes, colleges of education, colleges of agriculture, and colleges of technology (Akporhonor, 2005).

Singh and Kaur (2009) emphasized that academic libraries' primary responsibilities are knowledge and information access and preservation, in addition to assisting their parent institutions' teaching and research missions. In order to satisfy the requirements of their respective communities—which include students, instructors, and researchers—academic libraries are at the forefront of offering information services. Academic libraries play a critical role in research and scholarship in higher education institutions, as scholars have highlighted. Academic libraries are frequently described as the central hubs of higher education institutions, around which all academic activity revolve.

Statement of the problem

Libraries of higher institutions are established to assist in the provision of information resources to their parents' institution. The institutions in Kebbi state are not exemption to this rule. Despite their importance, the libraries have some challenges affecting their services. The library in Kebbi state

polytechnic is most hit by these problems. This gave the necessity to conduct a research in order to determine the problems, causes and possible solutions.

Research questions

For the purpose of this research, three research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What is the major challenge facing Kebbi state polytechnic library?
2. What will you consider as a main prospect of Kebbi state polytechnic library?
3. What will be considered as the solution of the problem confronting Kebbi state polytechnic library?

Literature review

Nigerian academic libraries are facing a difficult decision. This is due to the fact that they are working at a time of declining resources, both material and financial. The majority of funding for university libraries in Nigeria comes from the federal and state governments. According to Okiy (2005), university libraries in Nigeria are the only ones with a clearly defined funding policy out of all the other types of libraries in the country since they receive 10% of the annual recurring budget of their parent institutions. It is unfortunate, nonetheless, that these funds are not forthcoming because the majority of university officials disregard that ruling (Okiy, 2005; Yetunde, 2008).

Academic libraries made a number of initiatives to implement the technologies for better services (Etim, 2006; Ani et al., 2005). However, very little success has been reported despite the attempts. There is still much to be done.

It takes dynamic, creative, timely, and sufficient communication technologies to provide current awareness services to an ICT-driven target academic community (Fatoki, 2005). Unfortunately, a number of constraints severely limit the majority of academic libraries in Nigeria. These factors include inconsistent internet services, insufficient hardware and software, and, in most cases, the non-availability of the aforementioned ICTs in most academic libraries.

Also, the huge increase in foreign exchange makes it harder to purchase books and journals from overseas. This has prevented a lot of academic libraries from purchasing new and pertinent books that will enhance the curricula at their parent universities. Thus, the aforementioned issues, which have their roots in a lack of finance, impede the efforts of the majority of university libraries to provide contemporary information services.

Additionally, academic librarians in the majority of libraries still only have a rudimentary understanding of IT. Nok (2006) noted that a large number of university library employees lack computer literacy, which makes it challenging for them to meet the demands of the electronic age.

However, as reported by IT News (2010), the recent establishment of digital libraries by MTN Nigeria at three (3) universities in Nigeria—Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (A.B.U.); University of Lagos; and University of Nigeria Nsukka (UNN)—can be seen as a first step toward the provision of the kind of vibrant and successful academic library services that Nigerians want in the twenty-first century.

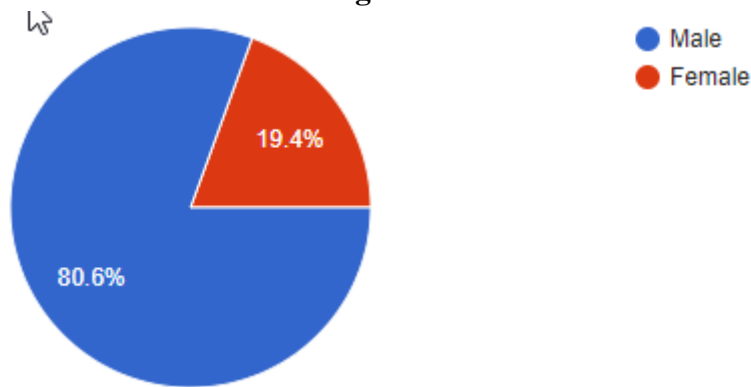
Methodology

This study adopted a survey research method. A structured questionnaire was designed using the three research questions. Respondents were asked to choose the best option appropriate to the questions asked. Their responses were collected through google form and the data was presented using descriptive statistics. A total of 36 staff of the institution responded out of a total of 43 that were selected randomly for the survey.

Data analysis

Demographic profile of respondents

Figure 1



The figure above depicts the demographic presentation of the respondents. It can be clearly seen that 80.6% of the respondents were male while 19.4 were female

Research question 1

1. What is the major challenge facing Kebbi state polytechnic library?

Figure 2

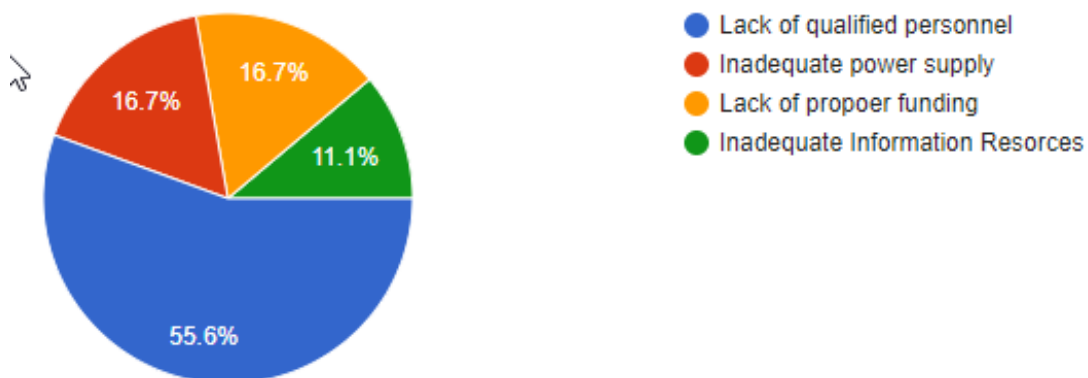


Figure 2 above clearly shows that majority of the respondents indicated that lack of qualified staff is the main problem confronting the service provision of Kebbi state library, proper funding and lack of power supply got 16.7 % each. Inadequate information resources got 11.1 %.

Inadequate power supply and lack of funding got 16.7 % each, while

Research question 2

1. What will you consider as a main prospect of Kebbi state polytechnic library?

Figure 3

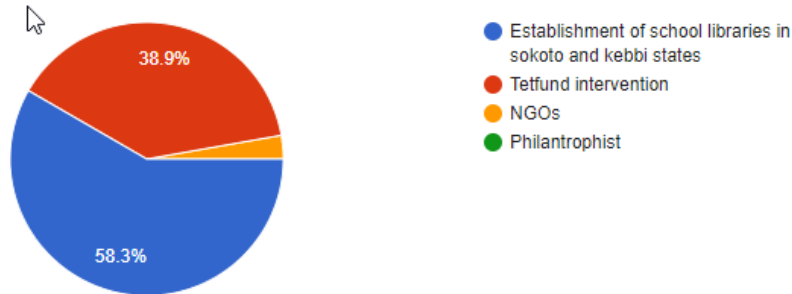


Figure 3 above shows that most of the respondents believe that with the establishment of library schools in some institutions with Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara states is the major prospects for the development of kebbi state polytechnic library (58.3%). Tetfund intervention with a score of 38.9 % came second then NGO had the least with 2.8 %. This is because these institutions will start producing adequate manpower in form of their graduates to be employed in academic libraries within Kebbi state

Research question 3

What will be considered as the solution of the problem confronting Kebbi state polytechnic library?

Figure 4

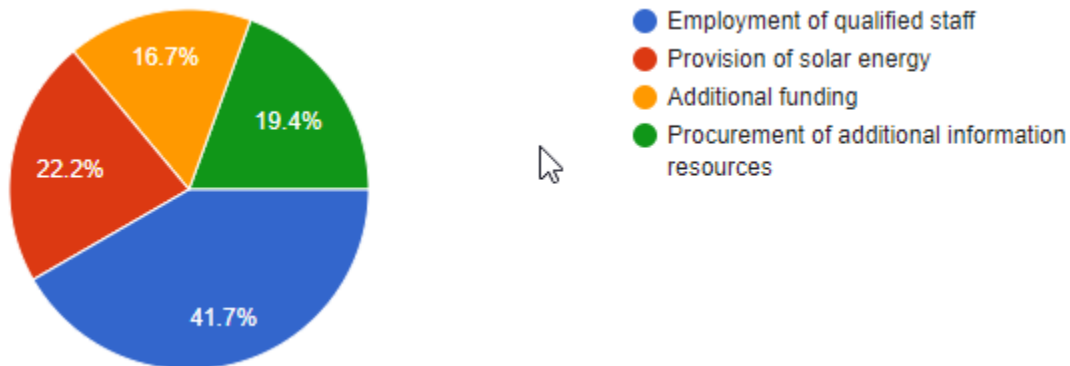


Figure 4 above presented the data on the major solution to the problem facing the polytechnic library. Most of the respondents (41.7%) indicated that employment of qualified personnel is the main solution to the problem. Followed by 22.2% who believe provision of alternative energy in form of solar is the solution. Procurement of additional information resources was another solution 19.4 % and additional funding with 16.7 respectively.

Conclusion

This research finding indicated that most of the problems associated with Kebbi state polytechnic library focus around unqualified personnel, poor funding, inadequate power supply and lack of adequate information resources. The solutions to these problems include employment of additional qualified staff, ad equate funding and adequate power supply.

It is hopeful that with the establishment of library schools in Kebbi and neighboring states of Zamfara and Sokoto, the problem of personnel is expected to be sorted out soon. Tetfund intervention on the other hand will go a long way in helping with the funding of the library.

Recommendations

1. Employment of qualified staff should be encouraged.
2. State government should improve on the budgetary allocation and funding to the institution.
3. Alternative powers supply in form of solar panels and inverter should be improved.
4. The assistance of NGOs should be seek in terms of equipment for the library.
5. Tetfund intervention should be adequately utilised and monitored
6. There is the need for the library staff to undergo on the job training in order to equip staff with adequate technical knowledge of the library service

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