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Funding and Accommodation as Indices of Preservation of Information Resources of University Libraries in the Digital Age: The Case Study of South-South Nigeria.

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to carry out an analysis of funding and accommodation as indices of preservation of information resources in libraries in South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design with a census sampling technique. A total number of three hundred and sixty-one (361) certified librarians in all the universities spread across the South-South zone of Nigeria was used. A questionnaire titled 'funding/accommodation and preservation of information resources scale (FAPIRS) designed by the researcher with thirty-five (35) items pattern using the Likert type scale to measure the variables was used for data collection. The questionnaire was validated by test expert and its' reliability established using Cronbach alpha. The coefficient of the sub scales ranged from .76 to .81. Data were collected by the researcher and were analysed using one way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and the result showed that funding and accommodation provisions significantly influenced preservation of information resources in libraries. It was recommended that adequate funds should be allocated to the library by school management and government in order to help them acquire facilities that will help them preserve the library materials. Also facilities needed to shelve materials in the library should be provided in order to prevent destruction of the library information resources.

Keywords: *Funding, accommodation, library, preservation and information resources*

1.1 Introduction

The library is basically conceived as a place where all collections in terms of books, artefacts etc are kept. It houses materials that are used for both academic and entertainment cum social purposes. No academic institution can achieve her goals without the establishment of a library. The university

library is a place where academic information sources are acquired, organized, processed, stored and made available to meet the information needs of the students, teachers and the entire university community. The university library is set up to serve its institution and considered as an organ around which all academic activities revolve and

therefore the library can aptly be described as the heart of the university. The role of a university library to the institutions could be seen as:

1. Acquisition of resources to support learning and teaching process in the university.
2. Provision of resources necessary for research and to meet the requirement of faculty.
3. Cooperation with other university libraries with a view of developing a network of academic library resources which will be at the disposal of all students and teachers.
4. Opening door to a wide range of resources that lie beyond the borders of one's own field of specialization.
5. Bringing information resources to the door step of students and scholars together under conditions which encourage reading for pleasure, self-discovering, personal growth and satisfying of intellectual curiosity.

Given the relevance of these facilities and materials that are found in the library, it is therefore important that they are preserved and conserved to meet the needs of today and that of tomorrow. The print and electronic materials are vital and delicate. The way they are handled can affect the lifespan of the records contained in them. Records must be preserved and conserved for future use (Iyishu; William, Nkanu & Ogar, 2013).

It is based on this backdrop that this study delves into investigating funding and accommodation as indices of preservation of information resources in libraries with a particular reference to South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria. It is hoped that the findings and recommendations of the study would be beneficial to librarians in preserving library resources in this digital era.

1.2 Research questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study

1. How does funding influence preservation of information resources in University libraries?
2. To what extent does accommodation/space influence the preservation of information resources in University libraries?

1.3 Hypotheses

The hypotheses were stated in null form as follows:

Ho1: There is no significant influence of funding of libraries on preservation of information resources in universities libraries.

Ho2: There is no significant influence of accommodation/space on preservation of information resources in universities libraries.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Preserving library materials from abuses like mutilation, defacing and or stealing of materials are necessary preservation tenets. These are done to ensure longevity of the lifespan of library materials. Unfortunately, materials in some university libraries are treated with all amount of levity or flippancy. It appears as if there is a growing deterioration of information resources as a result of poor preservation practices among librarians.

Many librarians have tried to protect their information from theft, mutilation, pest, fungi, high temperature, fire, floods, earthquakes, chemicals degradation, wear and tear, humidity, exposure to rays of sunlight and war. These efforts seem not to have yielded the right result. Researchers have tried to find out what probably would have been the causes of the poor preservation of library collections. The researcher presumed that poor funding of libraries and insufficient accommodation/space could influence the

preservation problem and it was on this assumption that this study was carried out in order to investigate the cause and proffer solutions.

2.1 Review of Related Literature

Preservation and conservation of library resources, according to Akissa (1991), can be defined as all managerial, technical and financial considerations applied to retard deterioration and extend the useful life of the materials to ensure their continued availability. Cedar Digital Preservation Project (2002) equally sees it as the controlled use of a limited supply of materials to prevent waste or loss so as to facilitate its use in the future. It implies the active use of preservative measures or processes of repair of damaged materials to ensure they are usable. There are different types of materials to be preserved. Preservation includes all the managerial and financial considerations, including storage and accommodation provisions, staffing levels, policies, techniques and methods involved in preserving library and archival materials and information contained in them. Agbo and Mohammed (2015) identified these collections to include:

- i. Serials as library print materials* such as periodicals, newspapers, magazines, numbered monographic series and proceedings, transactions and memos of learned societies. Reference books as a library print materials such as direction books or guides, language books, biographical books, indexes and abstracts, gazetteers, yearbooks, handbooks, etc.
- ii. Non-print/digital materials such as* slides, audio-tapes, radio, microforms, computers, photocopiers, videos, films, telephone, televisions, internet access, fax, CD-ROM etc.

According to Iyishu et al (2013), at a higher level, preservation connotes far more than keeping a material in its original form or

being familiar with all reformatting technologies available. It also means accessibility – when a user needs it, he gets it. Hence, the whole process of security, shelving, shelf-reading and circulation are actually preservation techniques.

Deterioration of library resources could be caused by various factors. Iyishu et al (2013) noted that these could be biological and environmental. That biologically, Mold, mildew can cause serious, often irreparable damage to paper materials. The most common species affecting library and archives materials are silver fish, bookworms, booklice and cockroaches. Most insects are not attracted to the paper, but rather to sizing, adhesives and starches that are dark, wet, dirty, clustered and undisturbed.

Environmentally, uncontrolled humidity levels can cause mechanical damage. If conditions are too humid, material will swell and warp, resulting in cockling and other physical distortions. These dimensional changes weaken physical bonds and set up stresses that can shorten the life of most materials. If conditions are too dry, materials will become brittle and more susceptible to cracking, particularly during handling. The effect of these on library collections is that information is lost, non-motivation in the use of manual libraries, destruction of history, among others. Efforts by government and other stakeholders to avert these problems have proved abortive.

In his study on Selected Variables that Impede the Effective Preservation and Conservation in Tertiary Institutions, Tyn (2011) adopted a survey research design with a purposive sampling technique to select a total of 139 certified librarians from 16 universities and colleges of education. A self-constructed questionnaire was used for data collection and the data collected were analyzed using one way analysis of variance and independent t-test. The result showed that there was no significant difference between

private and public universities and colleges of education preservation of information resource. It was found that funding, staff low level of ICT and low staff capacity influence preservation of information resources.

Again, Urhiewhu(2011) carried out a study on Factors Militating against the Preservation of Information Resources by Librarians in Delta and Edo States, Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The study was conducted in federal and state university libraries in Delta and Edo states in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The universities in the zone are located in Abraka, Benin City, Ekpoma and Ugbomro. The sample for the study comprised one hundred (100) librarians drawn from four universities. Purposive sampling technique was used to select two universities from Delta and Edo states respectively. Proportionate stratified sampling technique was used to select respondents from each of the federal and state university libraries used for the study. The instruments used for the collection of data was structured questionnaire and were administered with the help of research assistant in each school to librarians of the library as at the time of administration. The data obtained for this study were analysed and presented based on the research question and hypothesis that guided the study. Descriptive statistics was used to answer all the research questions and inferential statistics was used in testing the hypothesis. The research hypothesis was tested using Z- test method. Out of 100 questionnaires distributed, all duly completed and returned. This shows 89.5% return rate. The result showed that staff inadequacy, poor financial allocation, poor infrastructural facilities were factors militating against the preservation of information resources.

Similarly, Okere and Dennis (2014) carried out a study to examine school plant variables as correlates of management of

information resources in universities in Nigeria. The study adopted a causal comparative research design with a purposive sampling technique to select a total of 230 respondents who are considered as certified librarians. The variables of the study were infrastructural facilities, school building size and adequacy of books and shelves for the library. Relevant literatures were reviewed empirically and theoretically according to the sub variables of the study. The study utilized a self-constructed questionnaire validated by test experts and its reliability ascertained using Cronbach alpha reliability estimates. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson product moment and the result showed that there is a significant relationship between accommodation and management of information resources. There was no significant relationship between adequacy of books and shelves and school building size and management of information resources.

Also, Daniel (2016) carried out a study on management and preservation of non-book materials in academic libraries: A case study of three university libraries in Nigeria. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The study population consisted of one hundred and forty one (141) staff in the three selected university libraries. The population of the study consists of para-professionals and professionals librarian. Data were collected using questionnaire and interview. Data collected, were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, frequency counts and percentages. The study provides answers to five research questions posed. The result of the study revealed that the three libraries recruited more male staff than their female counterpart. It was revealed that the three libraries lacked adequate preservation space, security guards, photocopy services as well as inadequate funding. It was also revealed that dust and particles serves as one of the greatest problem to management and preservation of non-book

materials in the three selected university libraries. Based on these findings, the following were recommended: provision of working preservation policy, provision of functional air-conditioner to regulate the temperature and humidity of the storage area, an alternative power supply should be provided to check the constant power failure currently being experienced in the three universities libraries, training and retraining of staff through seminars, workshops or short courses in management and preservation; adequate funding should be provided especially for preservation programmes.

3.1 Research Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design with a census sampling technique. A total number three hundred and sixty-one (361) certified Librarians in all the universities spread across the South-South zone of Nigeria was used. A questionnaire titled 'funding / accommodation and preservation of information resources scale (FAPIRS) designed by the researcher with

thirty-five items patterned using the Likert type scale to measure the variables was used for data collection. The questionnaire was validated by test expert and its' reliability established using Cronbach alpha. The coefficient of the sub scales ranged from .76-.81. Data were collected by the researcher and were analysed using one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and the result is presented below.

4.1 Presentation of Result and Analyses

4.1 Hypothesis One

There is no significant influence of funding of libraries on preservation of information resources in Universities libraries. The independent variable in this hypothesis is funding of the library categorized as adequate, moderately adequate and not adequate while the dependent variable is preservation of library information resources. To test this hypothesis, one way analysis of variance was used and the result is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: One way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Result on the Influence of Funding of Library and Preservation of Information Resources

Variables	N	X	S.D
Adequate funding	67	17.61	3.75
Moderately adequate	70	16.84	2.94
Not adequate	113	15.37	4.29
Total	250	16.38	3.92

Source of variation	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
Between	231.565	2	115.78	7.949*	.000
Within	3597.571	247	14.565		
Total	3829.136	249			

Data in Table 1 shows that the mean value ($X=17.61$) of libraries with adequate funding is higher than the mean value of libraries with moderately funding ($X=16.84$) and those not adequately funded ($X=15.36$). This implies that libraries that are adequately funded are prone to preserve information resources in the library. When these means were further compared using one way analysis of variance, the result showed that ($F=7.949, P<.05$). This implies that we reject the null hypothesis. In order to ascertain which category of funding contributed in influencing preservation of library resources, a post hoc test was carried out using Fishers' Least Significant Difference test (LSD). The result as shown in Table 2 showed that the critical value for libraries adequately funded, as well as libraries moderately funded are significant. This implies that where libraries are adequately funded, there is every likelihood that such ensure the preservation of their information resources.

Table 2: Least Significant Differences Post Hoc Analysis of the Influence of Funding of the Library on Preservation of Library Resources

Variables	Adequate (n= 67)	Moderately adequate (n=70)	Not adequate (n=113)
Adequate	17.61 ^a	.769 ^b	2.24
Moderate adequate	0.79 ^c	16.84	1.47
Not adequate	3.32*	2.18*	15.37
MS _{within} =14.56			

a = group means along the principal diagonals

b= group mean differences above the principal diagonal

c= critical t-values below the critical diagonal

4.3 Hypothesis Two

There is no significant influence of accommodation/ space on preservation of library resources. The independent variable in this hypothesis is accommodation/ space categorized as adequate, moderately adequate and not adequate while the dependent variable is preservation of library information resources. To test this hypothesis, one way analysis of variance was used and the result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: One way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Resu It on the Influence of Accommodation/space on Preservation of Information Resources

Variables	N	X	S.D		
Adequate accommodation/space	88	17.73	3.19		
Moderately adequate	55	15.02	4.14		
Not adequate	107	15.98	4.04		
Total	250	16.38	3.92		
Source of variation	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between	278.737	2	139.36	9.69*	.000
Within	3550.399	247	14.37		
Total	3829.136	249			

Data in Table 3 shows that the mean value ($X=17.73$) of adequate accommodation/space is higher than the mean value of libraries with moderate space ($X=15.02$) and those with not adequate accommodate/space ($X=15.98$). This implies that libraries that with adequate accommodation/space can influence the preservation of information resources in the library. When these means were further compared using one way analysis of variance, the result showed that ($F=9.696$, $P<.05$). This implies that we reject the null hypothesis. In order to ascertain which category of accommodation/space contributed in influencing preservation of library resources, a post hoc test was carried out using Fishers' Least significant difference test (LSD). The result is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Least Significant Differences Post Hoc Analysis of the Influence of Accommodation/space on Preservation of Library Resources

Variables	Adequate (n= 88)	Moderate adequate (n=55)	Not adequate (n=105)
Adequate	17.73 ^a	.2.709* ^b	1.746*
Moderate	4.18 ^{c*}	15.02	-.963
adequate			
Not adequate	3.22*	1.53	15.98
MS _{within} =14.37			

a = group means along the principal diagonals

b= group mean differences above the principal diagonal

c= critical t-values below the critical diagonal

The result as shown in Table 4 indicates that the critical t-values for libraries with adequate and moderately accommodation space are significant. This implies that where libraries are adequately provided with accommodation, there is every likelihood that such ensure the preservation of their information resources.

5.1 Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis one which states that there is no significant influence of funding of the library and preservation of library information resources was rejected. Finance is an essential part of every establishment. It drives the functionality of the department, establishment and organization. Where establishments are funded, it may facilitate the attainment of their goals. The result could be due to the fact that where the library is well funded, it will

facilitate the acquisition of facilities, and equipment and infrastructures that are needed to keep the library resources safe. It has been observed that there is need to pump more money on aspect of preservation of information resources so that all the necessary equipment and materials required such as fumigator, fire extinguisher, air conditioners and fans, adequate shelves, good lightning condition, and likewise personnel trainings and good library environment will be attended to at appropriate time. Funds are required for book and non-book resources, e-journals, staff has to be employed and paid to acquire and process materials and also make them available to users.

The findings were in line with that of TyIn (2011) that carried out a study on selected variables that impede the effective preservation and conservation in tertiary institutions. The study found that lack of funds

in the library is a major challenge for preservation of library collection. The findings also supported that of Urhiewhu (2011) that carried out a study on factors militating against the preservation of information resources by librarians in Delta and Edo States, Nigeria. The result showed that staff inadequacy, poor financial allocation, poor infrastructural facilities were factors militating against the preservation of information resources.

Hypothesis two which states that there is no significant influence of accommodation/space on preservation of library information resources was rejected. This result could be due to the fact that when traditional library shelves run out of space, when compact shelving no longer provides enough relief, and when library expansion is not possible, academic and research libraries of all types and sizes will be in trouble. There is therefore every need to ensure that there is enough spaces to accommodate the ever growing body of knowledge in the library if only we are interested in preserving library collection.

The result is in line with the findings of, Akussah (2006), (Mnjama & Wamukoya, 2004) and Akotia (2000) that posited that though there is emphasis on e-libraries across the globe, yet, some libraries material are still kept on shelves and cabinet. It will be relevant to ensure that these materials are not kept anyhow. These traditional materials such as the shelves and cabinets that are still used in our libraries are provided in quantity so that most of the environmental factors such as atmospheric pollution, dust, high temperature, relative humidity, sunlight, heat, ultraviolet rays, library staff and the users and both natural and artificial disaster flood, fire, earthquakes, war, tornadoes, bomb blast, hurricane can be taken care of. Provision of adequate number of electric fans in absence of air conditioners will facilitate air circulation inside the school libraries. Sunlight should be

prevented from falling directly on paper-based information resources in school libraries because the sun is a great emitter of ultraviolet rays that gradually deteriorate information resources in school libraries.

Conclusion Recommendations

The importance of preserving information resources of universities cannot be overemphasized. Four university libraries in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria have been investigated in this study. Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that the provision of funds and enough accommodation for library facilities enhances the preservation of library collections.

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Adequate funds should be allocated to the library by school management and government in order to help them acquire facilities that will help them preserve the library resources.
2. Facilities needed to shelve materials in the library should be provided in order to prevent the deterioration of the library information resources.
3. Professional librarians should be trained and retrained on the techniques of preserving digital resources in the libraries.
4. Library support staff including security officers posted to libraries should be vigilant enough to monitor library users and guard against theft or mutilation of library materials.

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