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STRATEGIC AND STRUCTURAL MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS AS PREDICTORS OF INCLUSIVE LIBRARY SERVICE PROVISION FOR PERSONS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES IN NIGERIAN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Abstract

This study examined strategic and structural management functions and their relationship with inclusive library service provision for persons with physical disabilities (PWDs) in Nigerian public libraries, with specific focus on public libraries in the South-East and South-South geopolitical zones of Nigeria. Strategic management functions (planning and co-ordinating) and structural management functions (organizing, staffing, and budgeting) were examined as the independent variables, while inclusive library service provision for PWDs constituted the dependent variable. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Using the Taro Yamane (1969) formula, a stratified random sample of 226 respondents—129 library staff and 97 physically disabled users—was drawn from nine state public libraries across nine states. Two structured questionnaires with established reliability coefficients (staff: $r = 0.76$; users: $r = 0.87$) served as the principal data collection instruments. Mean value statistics and independent samples t-test at the 0.05 significance level were employed for data analysis. Findings revealed that strategic management functions, including planning (users: $\bar{x} = 2.82$; staff: $\bar{x} = 2.62$) and co-ordinating (users: $\bar{x} = 2.76$; staff: $\bar{x} = 2.91$), were positively associated with inclusive library service provision. Similarly, structural management functions of organizing (users: $\bar{x} = 2.78$; staff: $\bar{x} = 3.00$) and staffing (users: $\bar{x} = 3.01$; staff: $\bar{x} = 3.15$) demonstrated positive relationships with inclusive service delivery. However, budgeting did not demonstrate a significant relationship with inclusive library service provision from both user and staff perspectives, suggesting possible limitations in financial support for disability-inclusive library practices. The study concludes that effective strategic and structural management practices are important components of inclusive library service provision, although sustainable inclusion requires stronger institutional commitment, adequate funding structures, and improved accessibility planning. The study recommends enhanced budgetary allocation, continuous staff competency development, and improved physical accessibility planning for public libraries. Future studies should employ predictive analytical techniques, such as multiple regression or structural equation modelling, to further validate the relationships identified.

Keywords: strategic management, structural management, inclusive library services, predictors, South-East Nigeria.

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1.1 Introduction

The provision of inclusive library services to persons with physical disabilities (PWDs) is both a moral imperative and a legal obligation for public libraries in Nigeria. The Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act (2018) mandates equal access to public services and facilities, and international frameworks from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006) to the IFLA Access to Libraries for Persons with Disabilities Checklist (IFLA, 2022) establish universal standards for disability-inclusive information service delivery. Yet across Nigeria's public library systems, service provision for persons with physical disabilities remains structurally inadequate, episodic, and institutionally marginalised (Feizbadi, Vaziri, Hosseini & Fahimi, 2021; Osadebe, Onuigbo & Ewa, 2019).

Literature consistently considers library management as the proximate cause of this inadequacy. Although several factors contribute to the quality of inclusive library service provision for people with physical disabilities (PWDs), including government policy, institutional funding, technological infrastructure, public awareness, disability legislation, and user characteristics, the effectiveness of library management remains a critical organisational determinant. These broader contextual factors shape the environment within which libraries operate, yet the extent to which inclusive services are realised depends largely on how library management plans, organises, coordinates, staffs, and allocates available resources. Poor planning may produce inaccessible library buildings; inadequate organising can result in environments that are difficult for mobility-impaired and visually impaired users to navigate; undertrained staff may be unable to bridge communication barriers with hearing-impaired patrons; chronically inadequate

budgeting limits the acquisition of assistive technologies and accessible information resources; while weak coordination often leads to fragmented and inconsistent service delivery for PWDs (Khasseh, Rahimi-Yamchi, Azimi, Ghazizadeh, & Alipour, 2020; Madu, Gomma, Omame, & Jubril, 2020; Nyaboke, 2018). Consequently, while management functions do not operate in isolation, they represent organisational mechanisms through which many of these broader contextual influences are translated into actual service delivery. The question, therefore, is not whether other factors influence inclusive library services, but the extent to which specific strategic and structural management functions contribute to inclusive service provision in Nigerian public libraries.

This study is anchored on the premise that effective library management enhances the provision of inclusive library services for persons with physical disabilities (PWDs). The conceptual framework identifies strategic management functions, planning and coordinating, and structural management functions, organizing, staffing, and budgeting as the independent variables, while inclusive library service provision constitutes the dependent variable. The framework assumes that strategic management functions provide the policy direction and coordination required for inclusive servicedelivery, whereas structural management functions provide the institutional mechanisms through which these strategic intentions are implemented. Together, these management functions are expected to influence the accessibility, availability, and quality of library services provided to persons with physical disabilities. Accordingly, the framework provides the conceptual basis for examining the extent to which each management function is associated with inclusive library service provision in Nigerian public libraries.

Strategic management functions are those which operate at the forward-looking,

policy-setting, and integrative levels of library management, particularly planning and co-ordinating. Planning is the process by which library management identifies community needs, establishes priorities, sets objectives, and designs courses of action to achieve desired service outcomes (Onwubiko, 2004; Graves & German, 2020). In the context of inclusive library service, strategic planning encompasses universal design assessments, community disability needs assessments, policy development for PWD services, and resource acquisition frameworks for alternative format collections and assistive technologies.

Co-ordinating is the integrative strategic function through which all other management activities are harmonised toward coherent service delivery outcomes (Bratton & Gold, 1999; Usoro & Ukpanah, 2020). In disability-inclusive library management, co-ordination encompasses the alignment of acquisitions, facilities management, ICT, outreach, and reference services toward a common accessibility goal, as well as inter-library collaboration for disability-specific resource sharing.

Structural management functions constitute the institutional architecture through which strategic intentions are operationalised: organizing, staffing, and budgeting. Organizing is the function by which tasks, roles, physical spaces, and communication structures are arranged to facilitate service delivery (Armstrong, 2012). In disability-inclusive library provision, organizing determines the physical accessibility of library spaces, the arrangement of accessible collections and workstations, and the structural protocols through which PWDs access services.

Staffing concerns the selection, training, deployment, and development of personnel who directly deliver services to all user groups (Suta, 2020). In the disability

context, staffing competency in disability-responsive communication and assistive technology operation is a critical service determinant. Budgeting translates institutional priorities into funded commitments (Abdulsalami & Irongbe, 2021). Without dedicated fiscal allocation for disability services, the other structural management functions are deprived of the resources required to produce inclusive outcomes.

Inclusive library service provision for persons with physical disabilities refers to the deliberate design and delivery of library programmes, resources, spaces, and communication systems that are fully accessible to and appropriate for users with mobility, visual, hearing, and other physical impairments (Rugara, Ndide & Kadodo, 2016; American Library Association [ALA], 2022). The IFLA (2022) Access to Libraries for Persons with Disabilities Checklist identifies the essential dimensions of inclusive library services to include physical accessibility (ramps, elevators, accessible parking), collection accessibility (Braille materials, large-print resources, DAISY formats, and audiobooks), communication accessibility (trained staff, clear signage, and assistive technologies), and programmatic accessibility (home delivery services, outreach programmes, extended loan periods, and volunteer reader services).

Conceptually, this framework proposes that strategic and structural management functions operate as complementary dimensions of library administration. Strategic management functions provide the vision, policy direction, and coordination mechanisms necessary for effective service delivery, while structural management functions provide the organisational capacity, human resources, and financial support required to implement these strategic intentions. Consequently, the effectiveness of inclusive library service

provision is viewed as a function of the interaction among these management dimensions rather than any single management activity operating in isolation. The framework therefore assumes that improvements in planning, co-ordinating, organizing, staffing, and budgeting are likely to enhance the accessibility, availability, and quality of library services for persons with physical disabilities. This conceptual relationship guided the formulation of the study objectives and hypotheses and informed the examination of the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables in this study.

2.1 Literature Review

2.2 Strategic Function: Planning as a Predictor of Inclusive Library Services

Planning has been consistently identified as a foundational predictor of inclusive library service provision. Feizbadi et al. (2021), in a 40-document systematic review, found that policy development, budgeting frameworks, and multi-format information provision—all outcomes of deliberate strategic planning were the highest-frequency indicators of disability-friendly library environments. Kiriki and Mutula (2021) found that the absence of disability-specific website planning in Kenyan university libraries resulted in inaccessible digital interfaces for visually and physically disabled users. Smadi (2022) found that planned physical accessibility provisions dedicated accessible spaces, labelled assistive technology stations, and organised accessible seating—were among the highest-rated service elements by students with disabilities in a Saudi Arabian library, affirming planning's direct role in service satisfaction. Graves and German (2020) assert that strategic planning is the most important management tool for public library

sustainability, including for the needs of marginalised user populations.

Collectively, these studies demonstrate broad agreement that strategic planning is fundamental to improving inclusive library services. However, the evidence is largely drawn from institutional case studies and descriptive assessments conducted in different national contexts, making it difficult to determine the extent to which these findings are applicable to Nigerian public libraries. Furthermore, while previous studies have examined planning as an important management activity, they have rarely evaluated it alongside other strategic and structural management functions within a single analytical framework. Consequently, there remains limited empirical evidence on the relative contribution of planning to inclusive library service provision in Nigerian public libraries, particularly within the South-East and South-South geopolitical zones.

2.3 Strategic Function: Co-ordinating as a Predictor of Inclusive Library Services

Co-ordination represents the integrative dimension of strategic management and has been identified as a significant predictor of resource availability and service consistency for PWDs. Usoro and Ukpanah (2020) demonstrated a statistically significant positive relationship between co-ordination and resource availability in Nigerian libraries, noting that well-co-ordinated libraries were better able to direct resources toward specific user needs. Nelson (1996)—in findings that remain empirically relevant—found that the absence of inter-library co-ordination for disability services resulted in most libraries assigning no specific responsibility for PWD service provision, producing systematically inconsistent access. Amaechi, Nwankwo and Ogalue (2021) found that public libraries in Awka, Nigeria lacked coordination between their physical services

and community outreach functions, limiting awareness of available disability services among potential PWD users.

Although existing studies consistently suggest that effective coordination enhances service delivery and resource utilisation, the evidence is not entirely uniform. While Usoro and Ukpanah (2020) demonstrated positive organisational outcomes associated with coordination, Nelson (1996) and Amaechi et al. (2021) highlighted persistent weaknesses in collaborative service delivery and inter-library cooperation. These mixed findings suggest that coordination alone may not guarantee inclusive library services unless supported by complementary management practices. Moreover, relatively few Nigerian studies have examined coordination specifically from the perspective of persons with physical disabilities, creating an important gap that the present study seeks to address.

2.4 Structural Function: Organizing as a Predictor of Inclusive Library Services

The organizing function encompassing the arrangement of spaces, collections, personnel roles, and communication structures directly determines the physical and informational environment encountered by PWDs. Nazim (2021), in a pilot study of JNU Library India, found that well-organized accessible workstations, signage, collection formats, and seating arrangements produced significantly higher satisfaction ratings from disabled library users. Khasseh et al. (2020) found that the absence of elevators, inaccessible shelving heights, inadequate signage, and poorly lit spaces in Iranian public libraries were direct consequences of organizational failures in library management, creating disability barriers that were institutional rather than inevitable. Ayoung, Baade and Baayel (2020) found that the organizing of outreach programmes, home delivery services, and reading assistance for physically challenged users in a Ghanaian

public library significantly expanded the library's inclusive service reach.

The reviewed studies generally agree that effective organisation of library facilities and services contributes significantly to accessibility for persons with disabilities. Nevertheless, the existing literature focuses primarily on physical infrastructure and service arrangements, with comparatively limited attention given to organisational processes within public library management. In addition, most available studies are context-specific and provide little comparative evidence from Nigerian public libraries. This indicates the need for further empirical investigation into how organising, as a management function, influences inclusive library service provision across different institutional settings.

2.5 Structural Function: Staffing as a Predictor of Inclusive Library Services

Staffing is the structural management function most directly proximate to user experience, and its quality is a strong predictor of service inclusivity. Akolade et al. (2015) found that training deficiency among library staff was the most significant barrier to satisfactory service for physically challenged undergraduates in Kwara State, with well-trained staff being the clearest differentiator between inclusive and non-inclusive service environments. Nyaboke (2018) identified unskilled staff as among the most pervasive barriers to library access for PWDs in Kenya, second only to physical infrastructure deficits. Abdulsalami and Irongbe(2021) observed that libraries with defined competency standards for disability-responsive service delivery achieved better user satisfaction outcomes, indicating a positive predictive relationship between staffing quality and service inclusivity. Nwosu (2021) emphasises that the workforce is the most critical organisational resource; in the public library context, this translates

directly to disability-competent staff being the most powerful structural predictor of inclusive service quality.

Overall, previous studies consistently identify competent and well-trained staff as a major determinant of inclusive library services. However, most investigations have concentrated on staff competence or user satisfaction independently rather than examining staffing as one component of a broader management system. Consequently, little is known about the relative influence of staffing when considered alongside planning, coordination, organising, and budgeting. The present study addresses this limitation by examining staffing within an integrated management framework.

2.6 Structural Function: Budgeting as a Predictor of Inclusive Library Services

Budgeting is theoretically the most powerful structural predictor of inclusive library service provision—as it determines what resources are available for all other management functions—yet empirically it consistently emerges as the most deficient. Madu et al. (2020) found, in a study spanning seven states in North Central Nigeria, that inadequate funding was the primary systemic obstacle to disability-inclusive library service delivery, with libraries dependent on unreliable state government subventions and NGO contributions. Feizbadi (2021) identified formal disability budgeting frameworks as among the highest-frequency requirements for disability-friendly libraries globally. Abdulsalami and Irongbe (2021) found that while Federal University libraries in Nigeria had established budget structures, disability-specific allocations were negligible or absent. Iroeze, Umunnakwe and Eze (2020) documented persistent procurement failures for assistive technologies and alternative format materials directly attributable to budget deficits.

Unlike the other management functions, budgeting presents relatively consistent evidence of persistent inadequacy across different studies. Nevertheless, most previous research has focused on identifying funding shortages rather than examining whether budgeting significantly influences inclusive service provision relative to other management functions. Consequently, there remains limited empirical evidence regarding the comparative role of budgeting within an integrated strategic and structural management framework. This study therefore seeks to determine whether budgeting functions as a significant management predictor of inclusive library service provision in Nigerian public libraries.

Research Gap

The reviewed literature demonstrates that planning, co-ordinating, organizing, staffing, and budgeting have each been investigated as important management functions influencing library service delivery. However, most previous studies have examined these functions independently, focused on single institutions or specific categories of libraries, or concentrated primarily on descriptive assessments of accessibility challenges. Few studies have integrated both strategic and structural management functions within a single conceptual framework to examine their relationship with inclusive library service provision for persons with physical disabilities. Furthermore, empirical evidence from Nigerian public libraries, particularly across the South-East and South-South geopolitical zones, remains limited. This study addresses these gaps by examining the strategic and structural management functions simultaneously within one analytical framework and by providing evidence from multiple state public libraries to enhance understanding of management practices associated with inclusive library service

provision.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

This study is underpinned by three complementary theoretical perspectives: Oliver's Social Model of Disability (1990), the Resource-Based View (RBV) of Management, and Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science. Each theory explains a different aspect of the relationship between the independent variables—strategic management functions (planning and co-ordinating) and structural management functions (organizing, staffing, and budgeting) and the dependent variable, inclusive library service provision for persons with physical disabilities (PWDs). While the Social Model of Disability explains why institutional barriers limit access to library services, the Resource-Based View explains how organisational resources and management capabilities influence service delivery, and Ranganathan's Five Laws provide the professional philosophy that guides equitable access to information. Together, these theories provide an integrated explanatory framework for understanding how management functions contribute to inclusive library service provision in Nigerian public libraries.

2.8 The Social Model of Disability

Oliver's Social Model of Disability (1990) argues that disability is produced primarily by social, physical, and institutional barriers rather than by an individual's impairment. According to the model, exclusion occurs when institutions fail to remove environmental and organisational barriers that restrict equal participation. This perspective is directly applicable to the present study because the management functions under investigation determine whether libraries create or remove such barriers. For example, inadequate planning may result in inaccessible buildings, poor

organizing may limit physical access to collections and facilities, insufficient staffing may reduce the availability of disability-responsive services, inadequate budgeting may prevent the acquisition of assistive technologies, and weak co-ordination may produce fragmented service delivery. Consequently, the Social Model provides the theoretical basis for explaining how deficiencies in strategic and structural management functions can reduce inclusive library service provision for persons with physical disabilities. The model therefore supports the study's assumption that improving management practices contributes to removing institutional barriers and enhancing accessibility.

The Resource-Based View of Management

The Resource-Based View (RBV), advanced by Barney (1991) and subsequently applied to library management by Biswas and Chakrabarti (2021) and Armstrong (2012), argues that organisational performance depends on the effective acquisition, development, and utilisation of valuable resources and capabilities. These resources include competent personnel, organisational structures, financial resources, infrastructure, and managerial expertise. Within the context of this study, strategic management functions such as planning and co-ordinating facilitate the effective utilisation of organisational resources, while structural management functions such as organizing, staffing, and budgeting determine the availability and deployment of those resources. The RBV therefore predicts that libraries possessing stronger management capabilities and better resource allocation mechanisms are more likely to provide inclusive, accessible, and sustainable services for persons with physical disabilities. This theory provides the explanatory basis for examining the relationship between management functions and inclusive library service provision.

Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science

Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science (1931) provide the professional and ethical foundation for equitable library service delivery. In particular, the principles of "Every reader his or her book" and "The library is a growing organism" emphasise that library services should be accessible to every user regardless of personal circumstances, including disability. These principles require libraries to continuously adapt their services, collections, technologies, and facilities to meet the changing needs of diverse user populations. Within the present study, these principles reinforce the importance of strategic planning, effective organisation, competent staffing, adequate budgeting, and efficient co-ordination as management functions necessary for ensuring equitable access to information. Ranganathan's theory therefore provides professional justification for the expectation that effective management practices will enhance inclusive library service provision for persons with physical disabilities.

Integration of the Theoretical Framework

The three theories complement one another in explaining the relationships examined in this study. The Social Model of Disability identifies the institutional and environmental barriers that hinder inclusive library services and emphasises the need to remove these barriers through effective management practices. The Resource-Based View explains how organisational resources and management capabilities enable libraries to implement strategic and structural management functions effectively. Ranganathan's Five Laws provide the normative and professional principles that guide libraries in ensuring equitable access to information for all users. Collectively, these theories explain why planning, co-ordinating, organizing, staffing, and budgeting are

expected to influence inclusive library service provision for persons with physical disabilities. Accordingly, the integrated theoretical framework provides the foundation for the study's conceptual framework, research objectives, and hypotheses by demonstrating how effective strategic and structural management functions contribute to accessible, equitable, and sustainable library services.

3.1 Methodology

The study adopted a **descriptive survey research design** to examine the relationship between strategic and structural management functions and inclusive library service provision for persons with physical disabilities (PWDs) in public libraries in South-East and South-South Nigeria. The descriptive survey design was considered appropriate because it enabled the researchers to collect data from respondents regarding their perceptions and experiences of management practices and inclusive library services without manipulating the study variables.

The study population comprised 560 respondents, consisting of 316 library staff, 9 library directors, and 235 persons with physical disabilities (PWDs) drawn from nine state public libraries in the South-East and South-South geopolitical zones of Nigeria. The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamane (1969) formula at a 0.05 level of significance, yielding a sample of 285 respondents, comprising 158 library staff, 9 library directors, and 118 persons with physical disabilities. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure proportional representation of respondents across the selected public libraries in the nine states. Table 1 presents the population and sample distribution.

Table 1: Study Population and Sample Size Distribution

State	Staff Pop.	Staff Sample	PWD Pop.	PWD Sample	Library Director
Akwa Ibom	48	24	21	10	1
Cross River	24	12	18	9	1
Rivers	41	21	20	10	1
Bayelsa	17	8	14	7	1
Edo	44	22	16	8	1
Delta	38	19	23	12	1
Abia	35	15	22	11	1
Enugu	30	15	22	11	1
Imo	39	20	25	13	1
TOTAL	316	158	235	118 (97 returned)	9

Note: PWD = Persons with Physical Disabilities/Physically Disabled Users

Research Hypotheses

The study tested the following null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance:

H₀ : There is no significant relationship between planning as a strategic management function and inclusive library service provision for persons with physical disabilities.

H₀ : There is no significant relationship between co-ordinating as a strategic management function and inclusive library service provision for persons with physical disabilities.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

Data was collected using a structured questionnaire titled Management Indices and Provision of Library Services to Physically Challenged Persons Questionnaire (MIPLSPCPPLQ). Separate versions of the questionnaire were administered to library

staff and persons with physical disabilities to capture their respective perceptions of strategic and structural management functions and inclusive library service provision.

The questionnaire was structured on a four-point Likert scale comprising Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). The instrument contained items covering the five management functions investigated in the study—planning, co-ordinating, organizing, staffing, and budgeting—as well as items relating to inclusive library service provision for persons with physical disabilities.

The instrument was subjected to face and content validity through evaluation by the researchers' supervisors and a measurement specialist from the National Mathematical Centre, Abuja. Reliability was established using the test-retest method and analysed using the Pearson Product Moment

Correlation (PPMC), yielding reliability coefficients of 0.76 for the staff questionnaire and 0.87 for the questionnaire administered to persons with physical disabilities, indicating that the instrument possessed acceptable reliability for the study. In addition to the questionnaires, structured interviews were conducted with the library directors to obtain complementary information on management practices relating to inclusive library service provision.

Analytical Framework

Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics, including mean scores and agreement totals, were used to summarise respondents' perceptions regarding strategic and structural management functions and inclusive library service provision. The criterion mean serves as the basis for determining respondents' levels of agreement with each questionnaire item.

To examine whether significant differences existed between the responses of library staff and persons with physical disabilities, an independent-samples t-test was employed at the 0.05 level of significance. The decision to accept or reject each null hypothesis was based on the calculated

probability value (p-value). A hypothesis was rejected where the p-value was less than 0.05 and retained where the p-value was greater than 0.05.

It is important to note that the statistical techniques adopted in this study were intended to describe respondents' perceptions and determine statistically significant differences between respondent groups. Consequently, the findings should be interpreted as indicating relationships and differences in perceptions rather than establishing predictive or causal effects among the variables investigated.

4.1 Results and Data Analysis

Although demographic characteristics were collected to describe the respondents, the primary focus of the study was on strategic and structural management functions in relation to inclusive library service provision. Consequently, the demographic variables were not analysed as explanatory variables in the present study. Future studies may employ inferential analyses such as independent-samples t-tests, analysis of variance (ANOVA), or regression analysis to determine the extent to which demographic characteristics influence perceptions of inclusive library service provision.

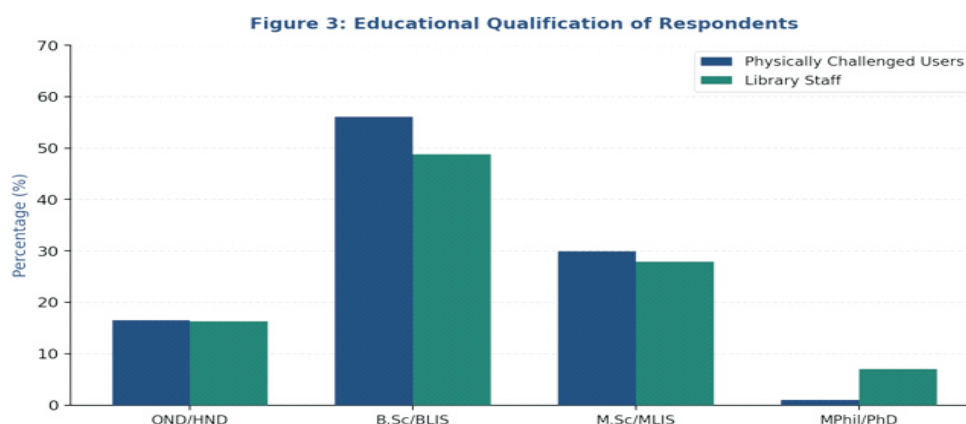


Figure 1: Educational Qualification of Respondents — PWD Users vs. Library Staff

Hypothesis 1: Planning (Strategic) and Inclusive Library Service Provision

Ho : There is no significant relationship between planning as a strategic management function and inclusive library service provision for persons with physical disabilities in public libraries.

The findings presented in Table 3 indicate that respondents generally perceived planning as an important strategic management function associated with inclusive library service provision. The overall mean scores for persons with physical disabilities ($\bar{x} = 2.82$) and library staff ($\bar{x} = 2.62$) exceeded the criterion mean, while the agreement totals were greater than the disagreement totals for both respondent groups. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating a significant relationship between planning as a strategic management function and inclusive library service provision.

Specifically, respondents agreed that planning contributed to ease of entry and exit from library buildings (users: $\bar{x} = 3.16$; staff: $\bar{x} = 3.24$), ease of navigation within the library (users: $\bar{x} = 3.30$; staff: $\bar{x} = 3.07$), accessible parking and entryways for persons with physical disabilities

(users: $\bar{x} = 3.06$; staff: $\bar{x} = 2.87$), and the ease of locating information resources within the library (users: $\bar{x} = 3.17$; staff: $\bar{x} = 3.20$). These findings suggest that effective planning is associated with improved accessibility and service delivery for persons with physical disabilities.

However, respondents expressed disagreement regarding the adequacy of planning for multi-floor mobility within library buildings (users: $\bar{x} = 2.23$; staff: $\bar{x} = 1.76$) and the availability of wheelchairs or motorised mobility aids for library users (users: $\bar{x} = 2.01$; staff: $\bar{x} = 2.38$). These lower mean scores indicate that, despite generally positive perceptions of planning, important aspects of physical accessibility remain inadequately addressed in the public libraries studied.

Overall, the findings suggest that planning plays an important role in promoting inclusive library service provision for persons with physical disabilities. Nevertheless, improvements are still required in planning for vertical accessibility and the provision of mobility support facilities to ensure that library services are fully accessible to all users.

Table 3: Planning (Strategic Function) and Inclusive Library Service Provision - Selected Items

Item (Condensed)	Users $\bar{x}$	Sig?	Staff $\bar{x}$	Sig?
Ease of entry and exit from library building	3.16	Agree	3.24	Agree
Easy to navigate and find way around library	3.30	Agree	3.07	Agree
Multi-floor mobility in library building	2.23	Disagree	1.76	Disagree
Wheelchairs/scooters available for in-library use	2.01	Disagree	2.38	Disagree
Accessible parking and entryways for PWDs	3.06	Agree	2.87	Agree
Easy to locate information resources in building	3.17	Agree	3.20	Agree
Overall Significant Mean / AT vs. DT	2.82 / AT:442 DT:237	Agree	2.62 / AT:479 DT:424	Agree

*Note: AT = Agreement Total; DT = Disagreement Total. Responses were interpreted using the criterion mean of 2.50, where mean scores of 2.50 and above indicate agreement, while mean scores below **2.50 indicate disagreement.*

Hypothesis 2: Co-ordinating (Strategic) and Inclusive Library Service Provision

The null hypothesis (Ho5), which stated that co-ordinating as a strategic management function does not significantly influence inclusive library service provision, was rejected. The findings indicate that co-ordinating significantly contributes to the provision of inclusive library services for persons with disabilities (PWDs). This was demonstrated by the positive mean scores recorded among both library users ($\bar{x} = 2.76$) and library staff ($\bar{x} = 2.91$), with agreement responses exceeding disagreement responses across the indicators measuring the co-ordinating function.

Among library users, co-ordination was found to improve inclusive access by enhancing information availability ($\bar{x} = 3.09$), facilitating effective utilisation of library services ($\bar{x} = 3.11$), and ensuring unhindered access to library resources ($\bar{x} = 3.29$). These findings suggest that effective internal organisation and alignment of library activities contribute significantly to reducing barriers faced by users, particularly persons with disabilities.

Similarly, library staff affirmed that co-ordination of library activities ($\bar{x} = 3.27$), library services ($\bar{x} = 3.21$), and staff responsibilities ($\bar{x} = 3.10$) positively influenced disability -

inclusive service delivery. This indicates that when responsibilities, services, and operational activities are properly coordinated, libraries are better positioned to respond to diverse user needs and implement inclusive practices effectively.

However, the findings revealed that inter-library resource-sharing co-ordination specifically targeted at persons with disabilities remained below the acceptable significance level for both users ($\bar{x} = 1.88$) and staff ($\bar{x} = 1.80$). This represents the weakest dimension of the co-ordinating function and suggests limited collaboration among libraries in sharing accessible resources, assistive technologies, and inclusive service strategies. The result implies that while internal co-ordination mechanisms are relatively effective, external partnerships and inter-library collaboration require further strengthening to achieve comprehensive disability-inclusive library service provision.

The comparative patterns of strategic and structural management functions are presented in Figure 2, while Figure 3 illustrates the relative predictor strength of each management function. Figure 4 further presents staff agreement and disagreement levels across the different management functions.

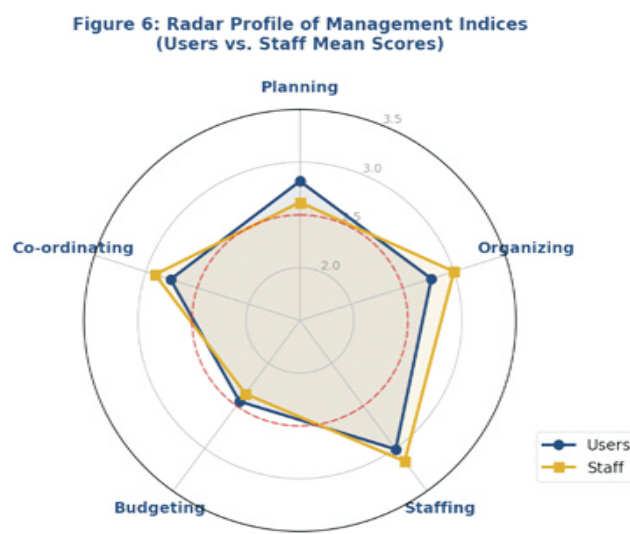


Figure 2: Radar Profile — Mean Scores of Strategic and Structural Management Functions (Users vs. Staff)

Strategic and Structural Management Functions as Predictors of Inclusive Library Service Provision for Persons with Physical Disabilities in Nigerian Public Libraries

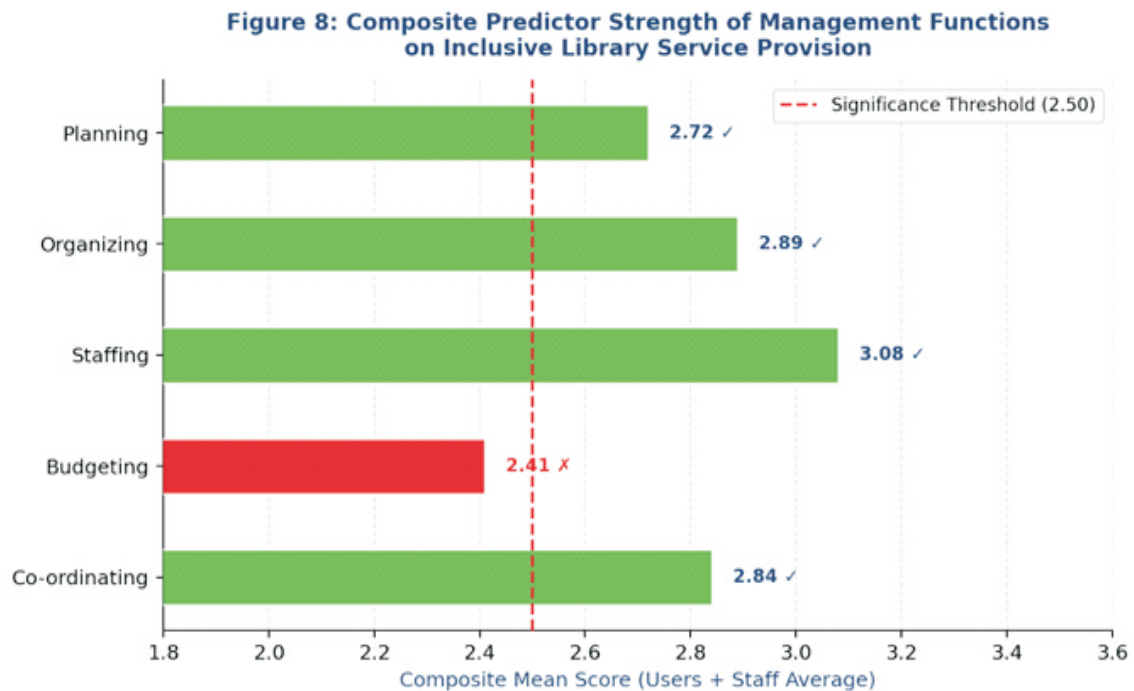


Figure 3: Composite Predictor Strength of Strategic and Structural Management Functions

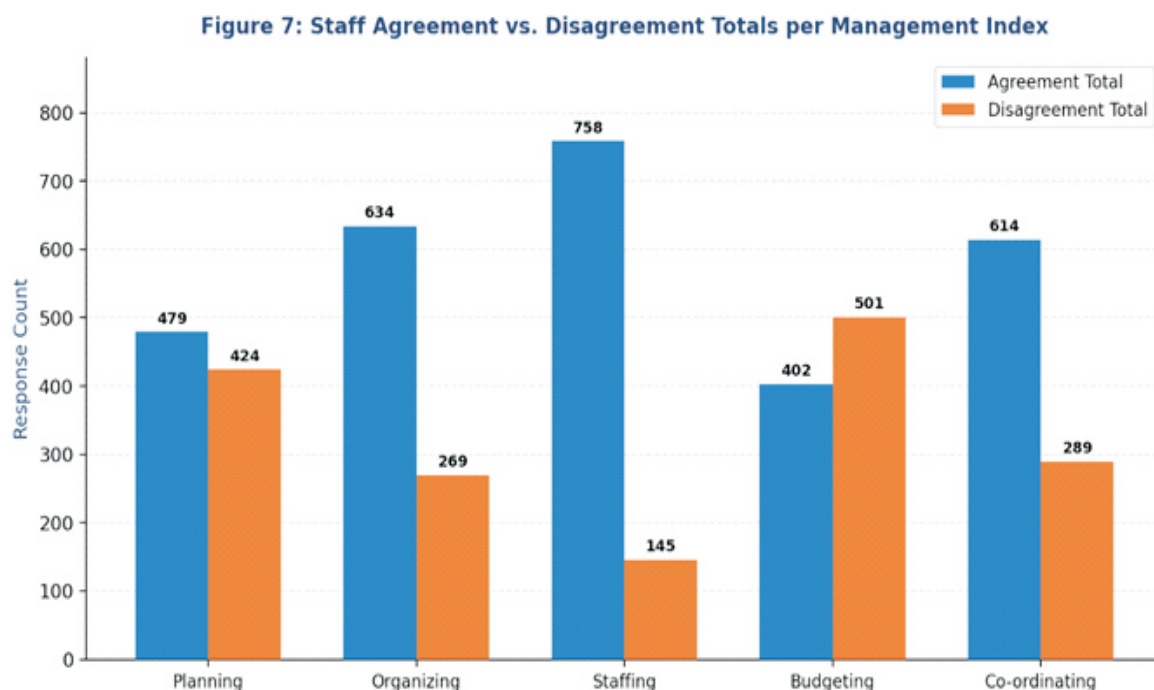


Figure 4: Staff Agreement vs. Disagreement Totals per Management Function

Table 7: Hypothesis Testing Summary**Strategic and Structural Management Functions as Predictors**

Hypothesis	Management Function	Type	User Mean	Staff Mean	User AT/DT	Staff AT/DT	Decision	Hypothesis
Ho	Planning	Strategic	2.82	2.62	442/237	479/424	Significant Predictor	Rejected
Ho	Organizing	Structural	2.78	3.00	432/247	634/269	Significant Predictor	Rejected
Ho	Staffing	Structural	3.01	3.15	494/185	758/145	Significant Predictor	Rejected
Ho	Budgeting	Structural	2.45	2.36	290/389	402/501	Not a Predictor	Accepted
Ho ₅	Co-ordinating	Strategic	2.76	2.91	430/249	614/289	Significant Predictor	Rejected

Note: AT = Agreement Total; DT = Disagreement Total; Predictor confirmed when AT > DT and mean $\geq$ significant mean

4.1 Discussion of Findings**Strategic Functions: Planning and Co-ordinating**

Both strategic management functions planning and co-ordinating demonstrated significant positive relationships with inclusive library service provision for persons with disabilities (PWDs), leading to the rejection of Ho₁ and Ho₅. The findings suggest that libraries with stronger planning and co-ordination practices tend to report higher levels of inclusive service provision. This finding is consistent with Feizbadi et al. (2021), who identified strategic planning elements, including disability policies, budgeting frameworks, and the provision of diverse information formats, as important characteristics of disability-friendly library environments. Similarly, Kiriki and Mutula (2021) observed that inadequate planning

contributed to inaccessible digital library environments. The observed relationship between co-ordination and inclusive service provision also supports the findings of Usoro and Ukanah (2020), who reported significant associations between co-ordination practices and resource availability in Nigerian libraries.

The consistency between staff and user responses across the strategic functions suggests that aspects of library planning and co-ordination are observable in users' experiences of service accessibility. This implies that strategic management practices are not only administrative processes but may also shape how users perceive the inclusiveness and responsiveness of library services.

However, the findings also reveal important gaps within these strategic functions. For instance, physical accessibility

planning, particularly multi-floor mobility, recorded relatively low ratings among users ($\bar{x} = 2.23$), while inter-library resource-sharing co-ordination for PWDs remained the weakest indicator among both users ($\bar{x} = 1.88$) and staff ($\bar{x} = 1.80$). These findings indicate that although planning and co-ordination are positively associated with inclusive service provision, their implementation appears uneven across different dimensions of accessibility. The results therefore suggest the need for Nigerian public libraries to strengthen disability-focused strategic approaches by incorporating universal design principles, accessibility planning, and collaborative resource-sharing frameworks.

Structural Functions: Organizing, Staffing, and Budgeting

Among the structural management functions examined, organizing and staffing demonstrated significant positive relationships with inclusive library service provision, whereas budgeting did not emerge as a significant statistical contributor. Staffing recorded the highest composite mean score among all five management functions (users: $\bar{x} = 3.01$; staff: $\bar{x} = 3.15$), suggesting that users and staff perceive personnel-related practices as a particularly important component of inclusive library service delivery.

This finding corresponds with Abdulsalami and Irongbe (2021), who emphasized the importance of staff capacity and professional preparedness in supporting library services for persons with disabilities. It also aligns with Akolade et al. (2015), who identified staff attitude and competency as key factors associated with disability service quality in Nigerian library environments. The strong rating of staffing suggests that improving staff awareness, training, and disability-related competencies may represent an important area for strengthening inclusive library practices.

The non-significant relationship

observed for budgeting represents an important finding. Rather than indicating that financial resources are unnecessary, the result may suggest that within the sampled libraries, current levels of budgeting were not sufficiently differentiated or consistently applied to produce measurable variations in inclusive service provision. This interpretation is consistent with Madu et al. (2020) and Feizbadi et al. (2021), who argued that sustainable disability-inclusive library services require deliberate financial planning and institutional support.

The finding should therefore be interpreted cautiously. The survey design identifies relationships between management functions and inclusive service provision but cannot establish that changes in budgeting, staffing, planning, or co-ordination will directly produce improvements in accessibility outcomes. Other institutional factors, such as government policy implementation, infrastructure conditions, staff experience, availability of assistive technologies, and organizational culture, may also contribute to inclusive library practices.

Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between strategic and structural management functions and inclusive library service provision for persons with physical disabilities in public libraries in South-East and South-South Nigeria. The findings revealed that planning, co-ordinating, organizing, and staffing demonstrated significant positive relationships with inclusive library service provision, while budgeting did not emerge as a statistically significant contributor among the management functions examined.

The findings suggest that libraries with stronger strategic planning, effective co-ordination mechanisms, organized service structures, and better staff-related practices tend to report higher levels of inclusiveness in

service delivery. Among the management functions assessed, staffing recorded the strongest association with inclusive library service provision, highlighting the importance of staff knowledge, attitudes, and preparedness in supporting persons with physical disabilities. However, the non-significant contribution of budgeting indicates a possible gap in the extent to which financial structures support disability-inclusive initiatives within the sampled libraries.

The study concludes that effective management practices are important components of inclusive library service delivery, but their effectiveness depends on broader institutional conditions, including funding structures, accessibility infrastructure, policy implementation, and availability of assistive resources. The findings should, however, be interpreted within the limitations of the descriptive survey design adopted. Since data were collected at a single point in time through respondents' perceptions, the study establishes relationships between management functions and inclusive service provision rather than definitive causal effects.

Future studies should therefore employ longitudinal designs, mixed-method approaches, and advanced predictive analytical techniques to further examine how management practices influence the development and sustainability of disability-inclusive library services over time. Such research would provide stronger evidence for designing interventions and policies aimed at improving accessibility within Nigerian public libraries.

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