

Budgeting Strategies in Selected Federal Polytechnic Libraries in Nigeria.

by

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Abstract

The study investigated budgeting strategies in selected Federal Polytechnic Libraries in Nigeria. Four research questions were raised and answered. The objectives of the research was to determine sources of funds for Federal Polytechnic Libraries in Nigeria, adequacy of budgeting allocation, types of budgeting system that are used, and to discover the level of polytechnic librarian involvement in the planning and budgeting for their libraries. A survey research method was adopted for this study and stratified random sampling technique was used to draw samples for the study. Questionnaire was developed and used to collect data from the samples. Data collected from the respondents was analysed using frequency distributions and percentages. The study discovered that the main sources of funds for polytechnic libraries in Nigeria were library grants and Education Trust Fund which recorded responses of (87.5%) and (22.5%) respectively. It was also identified that budget preparation and implementation were undertaken quarterly and executed by the library committees in all the sampled polytechnic libraries as recorded by (87.5%) and (63.4%) respectively. It established that the funds allocated to the colleges were inadequate as shown in the responses of (100%) of the respondents. The study concluded that there are not many researches in areas of budget strategies and implementation; whereas these are important areas in library financial management.

Introduction

A budget is generally defined as a formal document that quantifies an organization's plan for achieving its goal, Jiambolvo (2001). A budget, in other words, is a description of the financial implications of a sequence of coordinated actions and specialized targets that will allow an organization to achieve its objectives in a changing environment. Budget gives the overall picture of the various allocation (for expenditure) and the expected income will include funds in hands at the beginning of the period, and intentions to add to or subtract from those reserves during the period. The term "budget" is also used to denote the financial allocation for a specific purpose or purposes during a given period.

Mbanefoh (1999) notes that budgeting is one of the modern management tools that aids in the allocation of available resources of Government to satisfy private and public needs. Budgeting is practiced in industries, private business, in societies and organizations. However, budgeting today has attained multi-faced dimensions and it is a key instrument of policy making at the federal, state and local government levels, as well as other organizations.

The task of finding money, investing funds, managing property, preparing and getting the sanction for the budget and all other matters relating to the finances of the polytechnic library usually fall to the share of the central executive of the major organization of which the library is a department. Nevertheless, there is same amount of financial work

that falls to the share of the polytechnic library. Prentice (2001), in his contribution, stated that budget is a document that sets out the spending limits for each area of library expenditure. The way in which these costs are defined is usually fairly simple. For example, books, periodicals, binding, online searching and audio-visual materials e.t.c. This line item approach has all the advantages of being simple and easy to understand, although the advocates of some of the more recently developed budgetary techniques, such as the Planning, Programming, Budgeting System (PPBS) program budgeting and zero-based budgeting, Traditional/incremental Budgeting System and Programme Budgeting (PB), have been extremely critical of it. This is so because the budget is a financial and quantitative document of the policy to be pursued, it is easy to be critical of the traditional line budget.

Another way of looking at the purpose of budget is to analyze it in terms of a set of more specific objectives. It fixes the amount to be spent, authorize future expenditure, provides a base for controlling expenditure and income, assists policy making and provides a yardstick for measuring policy implementation. In most federal polytechnics in Nigeria, the finance section of the library will have to do the initial work in the framing of the library budget. The American Association of School Librarians (1998) observes that with a strong stable budget, the library and information centre will have:

New technology, current collection of resources, attractive and inviting library

media centre facilities, otherwise lack of stable budget will be a major constraint on the present and future library and information centre programmes. For any organization to perform creditably, budget and budgeting will facilitate effective utilization of available funds, improves decision – making, provides a bench mark to measure and control performance, increases general communication and analysis within the organization and establish understanding between managers about goals and objectives.

Features of Effective Budget

In developing budget by a polytechnic librarian, there is need for him to gather wealth of data: past and present, and future changes, surveys of students and teachers, collection analyses and curriculum maps, can portray an accurate picture of the state of the resources collection.

“Ibrahim (2004) stated that “there is need to determine budget objectives and purposes, as well as finding ways of achieving them. Plans depend upon the existence of alternatives and then discussions have to be made regarding what to do, how to do it, when to do it and by whom it is to be done, planning budget need early preparation, this is because budgeting is a back room activity and can take a lot of time”.

Budget request usually go through series of stages. Therefore, the early it is started the better. Public relation also matters a lot in planning. The polytechnic librarian should establish a good rapport with people that matters, who can help him in seeing that his request scales through. So, he should establish good support well ahead of time.

To measure progress of budget utilization, there is need for a specific check points to be fixed that will allow effective control of budget implementation. The tool not only allows measurement to be made but also allows comparison to be made between the actual results with planned and budget goals. A careful management study should be made to determine the underlying causes.

Statement of the Problem

Adequate funding is necessary for the survival and growth of any library. Therefore, it is generally expected and not a matter of debate that libraries should have budget situations. As it is the usual case with a typical good budgeting,

Ogunlana (2003) advised that, they should be prepared in sufficient details to permit adequate analysis and convincing explanation of deviation from expected results and to facilitate the adjustment of plans to meet changing situations.

From the submission of Ogunlana, the question then is do polytechnic libraries have a budget? Are they in actual sense involved in the budgeting for their libraries? Is the budgeting system the same for all the federal polytechnic libraries in Nigeria? Federal polytechnic library are suppose to get 5% of the total recurrent grant to each of them, do they enjoy the 5% from the recurrent grant to their institutions?

Therefore, without adequate knowledge of budgeting systems and strategies for their implementation by the federal polytechnic librarians, all efforts to improve library services will not produce the desired result. It is in the light of this reality, that this study was conducted, so as to identify the budgeting system and their strategies in the federal polytechnic libraries as well as the implications of this on library services in these institutions.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide this study:

1. What are the sources of funds for Federal Polytechnic Libraries in Nigeria?
2. To what extent are the budgeting allocations adequate?
3. What are the types of budgeting system that are used in the Federal Polytechnic Libraries in Nigeria?
4. To what extent are the polytechnic librarians involved in the planning and budgeting for their libraries?

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this study is to:

1. Find out the sources of funds for Federal Polytechnic Libraries in Nigeria.
2. Find out the adequacy and inadequacy of the budget allocation in the federal polytechnic libraries in Nigeria
3. Determine the type of budgeting systems in the Federal Polytechnic Libraries in Nigeria.
4. Identify those responsible for the planning and budgeting in the Federal Polytechnic Libraries in Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

This study will help the intellectual world to know how funds are sourced for in Federal Polytechnic Libraries in Nigeria. The outcome of the study would shed some light on the types of budgeting systems and their implementations in the Federal Polytechnic Libraries in Nigeria, as well as give a clearer understanding of who is responsible for the planning and budgeting in the Federal Polytechnic Libraries in Nigeria. It is hoped that the finding and recommendations of this study would contribute to the existing knowledge in the field of budgeting in Federal Polytechnic Libraries in Nigeria

Scope and Limitations of the study

This study is concerned with the federally owned and funded polytechnic libraries in Nigeria. However, due to the constraints of time and fund, the study is limited to only eleven federal polytechnic libraries that are spread over six geo-political zones of Nigeria viz: North Central, North East, South West, North West, South South and South East.

Review of Related Literature

The word budget has been defined in the Terminology of cost accounting of the institute of cost and Management Accounts as “a financial and/or quantitative statement prepared prior to a defined period of time, of the policy to be pursued during that period for the purpose of attaining a given objectives”. View in this way, the concept of Budget is strategic in nature.

In the word of John Gribbs, (1999) “a budget is the expression in financial and quantitative terms of a business plan for defined period of time”. Budget therefore is a statement or plan consisting of a number of targets which are to be achieved by managers and departments in a Company. If all these targets are achieved, then the performance will be in line with the budget. Since budget is differs from forecast which is merely an assessment of future events which are likely to occur if no positive planning action is taken. Forecast, however, argues John Gribbs “are a necessary preliminary to budget preparation. It is only when the existing trends have been extrapolated and modified to take account of changes conditions that it becomes possible to take decisions about the actions

necessary to alter the forecast results and to establish a budget plan”.

Wildavsky (2002) defines budget as “a document containing words and figures which proposes expenditure for certain items and purposes. The words describe items of expenditure (salary, equipment, Travel) or purpose (improving mental health, providing low income housing) and the figures are attached to each item or purpose in the most general purpose, budgeting concerned with the translation of financial resources into human purposes”. The Committee on budgeting of the Municipal Finance Officers` Association (in the USA) on the other hand, defines a Budget as “a comprehensive plan, expressed in financial terms, by which an operating program is effective for a given period of time which includes estimates of.

- a. The services, activities and projects comprising program.
- b. The resultant expenditure requirements and the recourses usable for their support.

In the three definitions, a number of important features of both the budget and budgeting are highlighted. First, a budget is a plan, a financial plan and has been shown elsewhere in the chapter; budgeting without planning ceases to be a blueprint for action. Secondly, budgeting are futuristic and therefore highly susceptible to uncertainty in their outcome and effects. Thirdly, a budget serves as an instrument for the satisfaction of human purposes which are expressed in financial terms.

Research Method Adopted For the Study

The research method adopted for the study is a survey method. The population of this study comprises of all federal polytechnic libraries in Nigeria. According to National Board for Technical Education Annual Report (2009), there are 21 Federal polytechnics in Nigeria. On the other hand, the subject of the study is made up of the librarians in federal polytechnic who are directly concerned with budgeting strategy in the polytechnics.

From these zones, eleven (11) polytechnics were selected based on their ages i.e. first generation Federal Polytechnics and where in a zone there was no first generation Federal Polytechnic, a second generation Federal Polytechnic was chosen. Two libraries from each zone were chosen except in the South South zone which lacks this number of Federal Polytechnics.

Analysis And Interpretation Of Data

Data collected for the study are presented according to the research questions. Out of the 55 questionnaires distributed to eleven federal polytechnic libraries, 40 (73%) were returned duly completed.

Table 1: Sources of Funds For Polytechnic Libraries in Nigeria

Source of Funds	Frequency	Percentage
Library grant	25	62.5
ETF grant	10	25
Students library Fees	5	12.5
Total	40	100

Table 1 above has shown that library grant, 25 (62.5%) is the most common source of funds for Federal polytechnic libraries. While students library fees 5 (12.5%) accounted for the least common source of funding for polytechnic libraries in Nigeria. The implication of this is that the libraries in the polytechnics do not have much sources of funding. Therefore, should ETF reduce the level of funding to polytechnic libraries there could be serious problem in terms of goods and services to each of the library. This was why Aboi (1992) suggested that at least 5% of the annual recurrent financial provision of the polytechnic should be allocated to the library for the purchase of its materials and maintenance.

However, it could be observed that the National Board for Technical Education has been making effort by supervising each of the polytechnic administration to ensure that this suggestion is implemented by the Federal Polytechnic authorities. The implication is that being an academic library, the polytechnic library is the nerve centre of the polytechnic academic activities. It therefore occupies a central and primary place because it promotes teaching, learning and transmission of new knowledge, hence the need for adequate funding.

Table 2: Adequacy of Funds

Level of adequacy	Frequency	Percentage
Adequate	5	9
Not adequate	46	83.7

Undecided	4	7.3
Total	55	100

Table 2 above has indicated that 46 (83.7%) agreed that the sources of funds to Federal Polytechnic Libraries are grossly inadequate. While 4 (7.3%) was undecided. This implies that a situation where Polytechnic Library depends solemnly on Library grant and the Education Trust Fund for survival is not appropriate. The respondents in federal polytechnic libraries were not satisfied with the attitude of polytechnic management regarding financial allocation to their libraries. They concluded that this kind of situation is not healthy for effective and efficient library service in their institutions.

Table 3 Budgeting System in Federal Polytechnic Libraries.

System	Frequency	Percentage
Line-Item	37	92.5
Zero base	2	5
Lump Sum	1	2.5
Total	40	100

Table 3 above has show that, out of the 40 respondents, 37 (92.5%) indicated that their libraries adopt the Line-Item budgeting system. 2 (5%) adopt the zero-based, while 1 (2.5%) use the Lump-Sum. Other types of budgeting are not really applicable to libraries, since libraries are not primarily profit making institutions. Martins (1999) observed that Line-Item budgeting is an estimate of proposed expenditure and revenue of government or an organization for a period of 12 calendar months or a fiscal year. It is a short term plan. It is on yearly basis that budget is prepared by adding certain percentage to allow for inflation and other costs increases to the previous budget. Similarly. Roberts (2001) stated that it is a system of making minor changes or marginal increases over the existing budget for next year's estimates. It itemizes details under headings and sub-headings in accordance with the objects, such as salaries, allowances, services and special expenditures. However, from the analysis, it clearly shows that most polytechnic libraries have adopted the Line-Item budgeting system

because of the way in which costs of every items are defined, fairly in a simple manner. For example, books, periodicals, binding, online searching and audio-visual materials e.t.c. are clearly defined. This Line-Item approach has all the advantages of being simple and easy to understand.

None of the Federal Polytechnic Libraries studied operates a real budget system. Though to most of them it is a wasteful exercise because it is just mere paper work. The real budget system in which the librarian controls the expenditure is the most preferred and ideal in the federal polytechnic Libraries and no other system is acceptable by the polytechnic libraries. The implication of this finding is that if a polytechnic library is to be a place one can obtain information expeditiously, then the librarian must plan intently the library budget. Without a real budgeting system in operation, polytechnic libraries will not be able to achieve their set goals.

Table 4: Level of Librarians Involvement in Planning and Budgeting in Federal Polytechnic Libraries

	Frequency	Percentage Response
Polytechnic Librarian	38	95%
Team work by the polytechnic management	2	5%
Total	40	100

Table 4 above has show that 38(95%) out of the 40 respondents agreed that the planning and budgeting in Federal Polytechnic Libraries are done by the Polytechnic's librarian. While 2 (5%) stated that the responsibility of planning and budgeting rest upon Team-work by the Polytechnic management. Fielden (1995) stated that budgeting without planning ceases to be a blueprint for action. He argued further that budgeting process is often a time delay process and is usually prepared one-year or in some cases two to three years from now, even if one has done some long range planning. In most cases, a library must follow the budget system and budgeting cycle that has been adopted by the larger system whether this is the University, College or Polytechnic. The implication of this finding is that librarians in the polytechnic libraries will be in position to construct, justify,

administered budgets and will be able to plan and forecast systematically how the budgets would positively or otherwise affect and promote the library services and programmes towards meeting set objectives or goals of their libraries.

Summary of Findings

1. The funding situation in federal polytechnic libraries is inadequate. A situation whereby federal polytechnic libraries rely solely on library grant and subvention from the Educational Trust Fund is not appropriate.
2. Budget without a budget system is the situation that exists in federal polytechnic libraries.
3. Library budgeting contribute positively to the development and survival of the polytechnic libraries in terms of adequate staffing, resources and services.
4. The Federal Polytechnic Librarian are responsible for the planning and budgeting for their institution libraries, though to most of them it is a wasteful exercise because it is just mere paper work.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study discovered that the main sources of funds for federal polytechnic libraries in Nigeria were library grants and Educational Trust Fund. The study concluded that there are not many researches in areas of budget strategies, preparation and implementation, whereas these are important areas in library financial management. Without adequate knowledge of finance, the library managers in the polytechnics may not be able to manage their libraries well. Moreover, finances are necessary for every activity. For this, knowledge of library financing will help library managers to secure enough funding to run their libraries. Therefore, the study recommended, among others, that more sources of funding should be identified by the polytechnic librarians, so as to augment the existing sources. It also recommended that responsibility for budget preparation and implementation should be left to the librarians who are the managers of the resources in the library and not to the library committees as the practice now in polytechnic libraries in Nigeria.

Lastly, all federal polytechnic librarians should start a good rapport and harmonious working relationship with the academic staff, the Rector, Bursar and other principal officers as a way of

advertising their libraries and their services. This is a good strategy for getting maximum support for improved funding for the library.

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