ACADEMIC LIBRARY STAFFING AND IMPLICATIONS FOR LIBRARIANSHIP PRACTICE IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

*A.O. Issa; *A.O. Idowu; ** B.B. Amusan; ***B.Y. Ojokuku;
****F.A. Adedeji & *****S. Oguntayo

* Department of Library and Information Science, University of Ilorin, Kwara State
** Department of Library and Information Science, Federal Polytechnic, Ede, Osun State
***Department of Library and Information Science, Federal Polytechnic, Ede, Osun State
****Library Department, Federal Polytechnic, Offa, Kwara State
*****Centre for Learning Resources, Landmark University, Omu-Aran, Kwara State

Abstract
Owing to the observed lackadaisical attitude of many university authorities towards the adequate staffing of university libraries, except towards accreditation exercises, this study examined the academic library staffing implications for the librarianship practice in Nigeria, presenting the report from Kwara State, Nigeria. The descriptive research method was adopted, whereby interview served as the main instrument for data collection from the four University Librarians in the State. The descriptive method was used to present and discuss the findings, alongside their implications. The findings revealed gross inadequacy in the staffing situations of two of the libraries while the third was found to have a top-light, bottom-heavy pyramidal staffing structure, all of which are not good enough. Only in one, of the four libraries was there a good number and mix of staff as desired. The rest of the libraries lacked staff in sufficient number and mix, proportional to their material holdings and user populations. Challenges identified as responsible for this include: difficulty in attracting high quality staff to fill top-level positions in the library as well as inability to get the university management to appreciate the dire need to hire required library staff in good quantity and mix. Based on the findings, the study recommended that the library management should continue to lobby and persuade the university administration to appreciate the need to recruit more library staff to further enhance the performance of these university libraries towards their service delivery to the satisfaction of their communities of users.
Keywords: Report, Academic Library, Staffing Implications, Librarianship Practice, Kwara State, Nigeria

Introduction

Human resources, unarguably, constitute an integral part of organizations. Without the input of human resources, the objectives of setting up organizations will be defeated. Staffing represents a way of getting the human resources required for the attainment of organizational objectives. Staffing can be described as the selection and training of individual for specific job functions and charging them with the associated functions. It is the process of acquiring, deploying, and retaining a workforce of sufficient quantity and quality to create positive impacts on the organization's effectiveness (Heneman & Judge,

2005). It is an essential aspect of management which focuses on obtaining the most qualified personnel for organizations.

Organizations, irrespective of type or goals, need adequate number of staff for operational and competitive efficiency. Staff or personnel, among other factors, serve as a catalyst for engendering the desired organizational goals, determining its position among other competitors or in shaping its future. To this end, organizations are extremely careful in choosing their employees. No wonder corporate organizations spend a huge amount of money in recruiting (either directly or through recruiting firms) and training new employees and re-training of the existing ones. Thus, there is a symbiosis between organizational achievements and the nature of its workforce otherwise known as staffing. Staffing is central to the effective utilization of organizational resources, comprising series of activities, which are geared towards getting the best brains out of the available ones and assigning them to tasks for which they are best suited. Staffing offers organizations the opportunity to have competent personnel to man the activities of organization at all levels. Staffing could be on short-term basis (temporary), long-term basis (permanent) as well as on contract. Staffing as a management function is pivotal to the proper functioning of educational programmes as well as professional practice. Arubayi (2009) corroborated this by stating that the strength of a good educational programme is not the beautiful buildings, adequate equipment/facilities, sound curriculum but the quality and quantity of the staff. Qualified personnel are needed in order to achieve the objectives of educational institutions. Hence, academic libraries, as hubs of intellectual activities of tertiary institutions of learning, require seasoned and qualified personnel to carry out their functions effectively.

Academic libraries are libraries attached to tertiary institutions such as universities, polytechnics colleges of education, colleges of agriculture, colleges of technology and also research institutes (Akporhonor, 2005). However, in a strict sense, and as used in this study, academic libraries refer to the university libraries mainly. These are libraries that offer services, which are central to the attainment of the objectives of their parent institutions and represents one of the pillars which the intellectual activities of tertiary institutions rest on. Singh and Kaur (2009) affirmed this by stating that preservation and access to knowledge and information is the main mandate of academic libraries alongside supporting the mission of their parent institutions which is teaching and research.

Personnel in academic libraries can be categorized into professionals (librarians) and para-professionals (technical-support staff). A librarian is usually a professional who is trained and educated to deal with information in a wide variety of formats and settings (WordiQ, 2010). Professional librarians that work in the academic libraries especially in this information era have always engaged themselves with the collection, organization and dissemination of information resources to support research and learning (Eze & Uzoigwe, 2013). Professional librarians are usually saddled with the administrative responsibilities of the library. For librarians to function successfully, they must be flexible enough to update their skills with the ever-changing technology (Ogunsola, 2011). The professional staff of the library is also treated as academic staff in terms of

appointment, promotion and other conditions of service (NCCE, 1994). Para-professionals refer to those personnel which offer support-service to professionals.

Academic libraries require qualified personnel in order to meet the responsibility saddled on them. In other words, the academic library as an (educational, socio or cultural) institution equally needs staff that will assist in realizing the library's objectives or goals. As stated by Lockhart and Jamal (2012), academic libraries' workforce constitutes its single most valuable resource. This becomes required because without educated, well trained and motivated librarians and library staff, an academic library programme is ill-prepared to meet the needs of its clienteles or the challenges that face institutions of higher education.

According to Obasola, Alonge, Eyers and Oladele (2014), "academic librarians have an important role to play in supporting research, training and developing the knowledge economies of nations" p.171. However, keeping large organizations such as academic libraries fully staffed is a challenge. As described by AIM (2015), academic libraries are opened for long hours and required large number of skilled or specialized personnel to manage acquisitions, cataloguing, classification, circulation and reference departments. Thus, academic libraries require a number of staff that can cope with the multifarious library routines as well as engaging the clienteles for improved information service delivery, which is the bedrock of academic excellence and research.

Given the prominence of staffing in any organization, including the academic library, a good number and mix of staff is *sine qua non* for it overall success and a fundamental requirement for effective library operations and services delivery/provision in particular. However, observations have revealed that many academic libraries in Nigeria are not on good showing/standing on these scores with its attendant low services delivery, which in turn rubs off on the image of these libraries. The proliferation of library schools in many institutions of higher learning today seems to compound further the issue of adequate staffing in academic libraries; owing to a seeming attraction they tend to be; hence, the imperative of an investigation of the academic library staffing implications for librarianship practice in Nigeria, presenting the report from Kwara State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

From the foregoing, it is apparent that staffing is essential to the proper functioning of academic libraries. Academic libraries will become irrelevant in this information age without the expertise of trained personnel. Despite the importance of staffing to the attainment of academic libraries' goals, most academic libraries do not possess the right quality of staff. Some of these libraries do not even have enough staff to carry out their daily activities. This unwholesome situation tends to affect the services rendered by academic libraries to their clients. However, empirical evidence to this effect may not be readily available particularly regarding the situation in Kwara State, Nigeria; hence, the report of an investigation of the present situation from Kwara State, Nigeria.

Study Objectives

This study was aimed at investigating the academic library staffing implications for librarianship practice in Nigeria with a view to presenting a report from Kwara State. The specific objectives were to:

1. establish the historical perspective to the staffing conditions in the four university libraries in Kwara State, regarding the number and mix;
2. ascertain the present staffing conditions in the four university libraries in Kwara State, regarding the number and mix;
3. identify the conditions of service existing in these university libraries previously and presently;
4. determine ways by which the establishment of library schools has affected the staffing of these academic libraries;
5. examine the adequacy of these libraries' staffing strength in relation to the size of their collections;
6. assess the adequacy of these libraries' staffing mix in relation to user population; and
7. identify the challenges the libraries face in keeping a good staffing number and mix for effective performance.

Study Justification

Investigating the academic library staffing implications for librarianship practice and education in Nigeria is desirable; given the pride of place that adequate staffing occupies ineffective service provision. Understanding the situation will allow for a better appreciation of the need to provide the university libraries with good number and mix for adequate service provision to their clientele. Specifically, for Kwara State, where two library schools exist with four university libraries, a study of this nature could, at a micro level though, establish some implications of the establishment of library schools on the staffing conditions of the university libraries. In addition to this, revealing the current staffing situations in these libraries would have some far-reaching benefits for the individual libraries in question even as the revelations will enable the appropriate authorities have a reappraisal of their present standings with a view to re-strategizing for improvement. In other words, once the problem is put into proper perspective, identifying and proffering appropriate solutions are made much easier to accomplish; hence, the justification of this study.

Literature Review

Historical Development of Academic Libraries in Nigeria

The development of academic library in Nigeria can be traced back to the pre-independence era when the Yaba College of Technology library was established in 1947. This was followed by the establishment of the University College, Ibadan Library in 1948, which later became the University of Ibadan Library also known as Kenneth Dike Library. Since independence in 1960, there has been a steady upsurge in the establishment of educational institutions at all levels, especially at the higher level as

successive Nigerian governments have continued to invest strongly in higher education (Aguolu, 1996).

Four other university libraries were established at Nsukka (1960), Ife (1961), Lagos and Zaria (1962), technical colleges, colleges of technology, and other special colleges were also established all over the country at the period (Nwalo, 2000). These universities were established alongside their respective libraries in order to cater for their educational activities. Sobalaje and Ogunmodede (2015) noted that academic libraries, being integral academic parts of the universities and other higher institutes of learning in Nigeria, emerged simultaneously with their parent institutions, which makes the total number of higher institutions in the country to equal the number of academic libraries available in Nigeria.

Academic libraries are found in higher institutions of learning. Librarians working in academic libraries are also known as subject librarians and are responsible for managing, organizing, evaluating and disseminating information; providing informational support to members of the academic communities including students, researchers and lecturing staff (Graduate Prospects Ltd, 2015). Also, the main role of an academic librarian involves facilitating and supporting learning by teaching information retrieval skills to students and staff within classrooms or virtual learning environments. However, it should be noted that due to the proliferation in the emergence of new library schools and higher institutions of learning, the demand for doctoral degree in LIS (being minimum requirement to teach in the university) and academic librarians has soared (Aina, 2015).

In the contemporary information environment, characterized by increasing use of electronic information resources, the success or failure of an academic library depends largely on the skills and abilities of the staff. As Onifade and Onifade (2011) suggested, academic library staff must be sufficient in number (quantity) to meet the demand made upon it, and it should have the right mixture of qualifications and experience (quality) in order to perform to users' expectations. Similarly, Baro, Eze and Nkanu (2013) pointed out that the current information environment presents a challenge to librarians to see the need for training and skills upgrading. Training is needed not only to address weakness in performance, but also to serve as a tool to enable staff to update their skills continually. Therefore, academic librarians need to be trained to perform optimally in the competitive digital environment; while the academic libraries are expected to parade a cache of staff well equipped to carry out their daily routines.

Classification of Academic Library Staffing

The Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (2014), posited that for effective and efficient service delivery, it is required that academic libraries are staffed by a mix of relevant personnel, including academic librarians, para-professionals and support staff. However, different criteria could be used in categorizing academic library staff, including: i. academic qualifications; and ii. kind of job/ routine performed (level of responsibility).

Classification According to Qualifications

i. **Professional staff:** These are library personnel with the first Degree or Masters and even PhD in Library and Information Science; usually responsible for cataloguing, classification, selection and other technical routines in the library.

ii. **Para-professional staff:** These are library personnel with Diploma/Higher Diploma in Library and Information Science; usually assisting the professional staff in the processing of information resources, and duplication of information materials.

iii. **Non-professional/Supportive staff:** This category of staff includes the administrative secretaries, library security personnel, porters, and cleaners.

Classification According to Nature of Routines Performed

i. **Strategic Staff:** This referred to those at the helms of library affairs- the management (University Librarians, Deputy University Librarians and Chief Library Officers), who are responsible for formulating long-term goals for the library. They develop policies that are capable of developing the library.

ii. **Tactical Staff:** These are mostly heads of various departments and units responsible for breaking down the long term goals and policies into what could be easily achieved within a short time. They are in charge of directly supervising the day-to-day activities of the library and other subordinate staff.

iii. **Operational Staff:** This set of staff is responsible for communicating library services directly to the library patrons. These are the staff directly in charge of carrying out daily activities in the library; including those at the circulation desk, reference staff, cataloguers and classifiers.

Imperatives of Academic Library Staffing in Nigeria

The library in academic institutions, like the colleges of education, polytechnics, and universities, is the soul/heart of that institution; given its central role in the realization of the core mandates of their parent institutions viz: teaching, research and community service. Issa, Amusan, Olarongbe and Akangbe (2013) stated that academic library is a *sine qua non* in any tertiary institution as they provide the informational input necessary to realize the core objectives of the institutions that they serve. Therefore, in a rapidly changing educational environment, academic libraries need more time and staff resources to meet the needs of the faculty and students. To meet this challenge, academic libraries are required to parade different categories of staff needed to provide effective library services for efficient delivery.

Given the fact that academic library staffing in Nigeria assists in facilitating research and development, it follows that the nature of staff in these libraries go a long way in determining the effectiveness of their output, in terms of meeting the set goals and relevance to the academic community at large. Academic libraries, according to Abubakar (2011), are at the forefront of providing information services to their respective communities, comprising students, lecturers, and researchers in order to support their teaching, learning and research needs. Academic libraries are citadel of academic excellence, established to facilitate learning, teaching, research, scholarship and

knowledge dissemination (Owusu-Acheaw & Larson, 2007). They serve as repositories of knowledge for tertiary institutions. Due to the nature of their services, academic libraries require the expertise of qualified personnel. Staffing is a crucial element in the proper functioning of academic libraries. Numerous scholars have expressed the need for libraries to be equipped with the right quality and quantity of staff.

Insaidoo (2001) opined that human resources are the key to sustainable library services in any organization. It is therefore paramount for librarians or information officers to provide up-to-date comprehensive library and information services needed to satisfy the information required by users (Owusu-Acheaw & Larson, 2007). Libraries play an important role in Nigerian education; their main function is to provide materials for teaching and research to members of their communities (Adeniji, Babalola & Adeniji, 2012). Accordingly, Oriowo (2002) contended that the success or failure of a library depends on the skill and abilities of people who make up the staff. In the same vein, Onifade and Onifade (2011) noted that library staff must be sufficient in number to meet the demand made upon it, with the right mixture of qualifications and experience in order to perform to users' expectation. This is because, it is essential for libraries to reinvent themselves, if they hope to develop and facilitate access to information in this digital age (Baro, Eze & Nkanu, 2013). Thus unarguably, a library needs skilled, qualified and adequate human resources to make up the staff, to be functional and successful in its operations (Egunjobi, 2006).

Imperative of Academic Library Staffing for the Librarianship Practice in Nigeria
One of the criteria for earning promotion by academic librarians in their work place is publication of research articles in referred journals. Embarking on various research activities in library and information science (LIS) facilitates the development of the profession by identifying problem areas in the field and proffering solutions to them based on the data collected, predicting the profession's future, formulating policies/standards for the profession based on common opinions from experts in the field. Academic librarians are members of different library associations: Nigerian Library Association, Cataloguing and Classification Section, Academic and Research Libraries Section, among others. They attend various conferences, workshops and seminars, which enable them to share ideas and experiences to further develop the profession to meet global standards, and to enhance capacity building.

Furthermore, academic librarians are surrounded with avalanche of information studies. Not only do they spend considerable time working with different information resources (printed and electronics), academic librarians have unrestricted access to various information resources within their reach by equipping them with necessary skills to improve their job performance and knowledge, thereby improving the usability of the library. Mentoring and peer coaching of newly-recruited staff (especially new graduates with little or no work experience) is another way of developing the profession. This set of academic library staff is usually mentored by more experienced ones who guide, motivate and advise them accordingly. As opined by Sare, Bales and Neville (2012), mentoring is part of on-the-job training that allowed young and upcoming librarians to bolster weak

skills and expand their personal sphere of possibilities, in terms of the ability to gain positive experience in different areas of librarianship.

Egunjobi (2006) observed that the number of staff needed by a library is usually determined by the number of population to be served as well as the collection of the library. By implication, whenever the number of library staff is inadequate both in number and quality, the tendency to over-stretch those on ground and compromise the quality of services provided gets higher. Adequate education and thorough training serve as ways of improving the quality of library staff. Yesufu (2000) stressed that education and training are generally indicated to be the most important direct means of upgrading human intellect and skills. Literature affirmed that the change in the nature and roles of libraries vis-à-vis the digital environment has equally brought about the need for the development and acquisitions of new skills and competencies (Youngok, 2006).

In Nigeria, training and education for librarians are grossly inadequate owing to the minimal skilled hands available to man and actualizing the transformation from purely traditional to, if not purely electronic, but at least, hybrid library services (Fadehan & Ali, 2010). The changing education landscape and the different formats in which resources are repackaged have also ushered in new roles for academic librarians who are now actively involved in helping library users to acquire information literacy skills (Adeogun, 2006). In its minimum standards and guidelines for academic librarians in Nigeria, the Librarian's Registration Council of Nigeria (2014) stipulated that academic libraries shall have appropriately qualified and adequate staff commensurate with the academic programmes offered, the institutional population, the number of service points, and the hours during which services are offered. This further underscores the need for academic libraries to conform to the best practices of staffing in order to carry out their functions effectively.

Academic Library Staffing for Quality Library Education in Nigeria
Academic library staffing plays a major role in the development of Library and Information Science (LIS) education. It is necessary for them to be equipped with all relevant skills to function effectively in this technology-driven educational environment. An academic library staff member that is well-equipped with necessary skills is one that will be able to tackle these new challenges and perform the expected new roles. To attain a quality LIS education in Nigeria, a handful of resources are required to be synergized; prominent among which is the availability and easy access to educational information to facilitate teaching, learning and research.

Generally, academic librarians are expected to contribute to faculty teaching in a variety of ways, especially by serving as guest lecturers in library schools, providing online tutorials and library guides. Through this, library science trainees benefit immensely from the wealth of knowledge of these practicing librarians that present them with hands-on classes. The learning environment is changing, owing to various attendant changes in technology. These changes, noticeable in the area of new curriculum, mobile learning, and e-learning, are putting new pressures on academic libraries and academic librarians to assume new roles in providing access to required information. Academic library staff members are expected to be able to provide services such as downloading

full-text journals or e-books. McCombs (2011) observed that academic libraries need to change and adapt to changes noticeable in the current digital environment, otherwise, they would be moved to the sidelines and unable to assume their rightful place as the heart of the university.

The present digital learning environment, pervasive of personal laptops and other mobile devices, demands that an academic library with a competent staff need avail the opportunities presented to assist in providing for the educational, research and information needs of its community. Staley and Malenfant (2010) described such academic library staff as one with enough vision to turn almost any scenario into an opportunity for the library to increase the relevance of such library in the academic world. According to Aboyade and Amusan (2013), effective teaching and learning is a product of certain elements, which have to function collectively. These elements include: the learning instruction (curriculum), quality of teachers, readiness of the learners, the choice of teaching method and availability of, and access to instructional materials. However, if these are identified as fulcrum of quality of education, it should then be stated that academic library staff play a crucial role in providing access to information necessary to achieve this.

Academic library staff duties have direct implication on the quality of education delivery. Academic librarians are responsible for selecting, acquiring and providing access to instructional materials (both printed and electronic, books and journals) on Library Science necessary for teaching, learning and research. They equally assist in writing instructional materials (books and journals) for educational and professional development of library school students and librarians, respectively. They form part of experts that develop instructional contents/curriculum for library schools. Similarly, they are part of various regulatory bodies responsible for accreditation of library school programmes. They organize in-house seminars and workshop necessary for on-the-job training and retraining of staff to keep abreast of trends and developments in the field,; while also contributing to the development of library science education through field trainings giving to trainees during their internship. Knowledge acquired from years of experience is transferred to these categories of students during such programmes. Also, many academic libraries do assist library schools in training of students during special practical classes organized as part of field trips. They also assist researchers with literature searches using databases, printed resources and the Internet.

To execute these tasks, academic library staff in this century are expected to possess some key skills necessary to function effectively. According to Targetjobs (2015), such skills include: strong IT skills and familiarity with the use of databases and the Internet; team-working and management skills; assessment of resources and library users' needs; presentation and verbal communication skills; and subject-specific knowledge or expertise in a particular function, for example ICT resources or resource ordering.

Methodology
The Design
The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study, with a focus on the four (4) university libraries in Kwara State. These are the University of Ilorin, Library, Ilorin, Al-Hikmah University Library, Ilorin, Kwara State University Library, Malete, and Landmark University Library, Omu-Aran. Structured interview, comprising 15 questions bordering on the objectives of the study was used to collect data. This was accompanied with an Introduction Letter by which the interviewees' cooperation was sought; aside from earlier calls to them for the same purpose. The interview responses were reported descriptively by a way of comparative analysis; with a view to having a global view of what obtains for each of the university libraries under study.

Preamble to Data Analysis
This segment presents the interview responses from the four University Librarians under study. The chronology of the four university libraries focused in this study is the University of Ilorin Library, established in 1976, is the oldest, followed by Al-Hikmah University Library (AUL) in 2005, the Kwara State University Library (KWASUL) in 2009, and the youngest, Landmark University Library (LUL) in 2011. At inception, none of the libraries occupied a permanent building as the UIL had its permanent building in 1990, sixteen years after whereas the shortest period being two years, LUL, occupied its permanent building in 2013. As for the KWASUL, the permanent structure is still under construction. The UIL has a separate e-library away from the main library and its other branches in the Faculty of Law and the College of Health Sciences. Aside the use of OPAC, the main library is far from being fully automated presently. Thus, all but LUL can lay claim only to partial automation as they are not fully automated in comparison with it.

Data Analysis
Considering that this study set out to investigate academic library staffing implications for librarianship practice and education in Nigeria, the four University Librarians in Kwara State were interviewed. Thus, their responses to the Interview Questions formed the basis of this analysis, guided strictly by the study objectives.

To establish an historical perspective to the libraries' staffing conditions, responses showed that all the four university libraries got started on a very low level, though with some degree of variations as only six members started off the UIL in 1976, AUL with 5 (1 professional, 4 library assistants) in 2005. KWASUL had 8 (4 professionals, 2 library officers, 2 library assistants) at inception in 2009 and LUL with 7 (2 professionals, 5 library assistants) in 2011, respectively. Presently however, they have all shown varying degree of improvement as UIL now has 91 (21 professionals, 28 library officers, 42 library assistants), AUL with 17 (6 professionals, 2 library officers, 9 library assistants). Both KWASUL and LUL now have 19 each, comprising (8 professionals, 4 library officers, 7 library assistants) and (6 professionals, 1 library officer, 12 library assistants), respectively.

On the conditions of service of the library staff, reports indicated that these are not too different from one library to the other as the conditions are mainly in line with the general conditions in the universities. The LUL spelt out these conditions to include full sponsorship to conferences/workshops/seminars, annual leave, conducive working environment and accommodation facilities whereas annual leave bonus, higher pay than obtainable in many other university libraries and the 2 week lodging at the University Guest House upon appointment before a permanent accommodation is allocated constitute the incentives. Except for slight modifications, both UIL and AUL share much in common in this regard as the latter took much of its practice from the former. Thus, UIL identified with such incentives as shift allowance for junior staff and earned allowance for all staff cadres; which is also similar to the practice in KWASUL.

On the spate of movement from the university libraries to the library schools, only the University of Ilorin and Kwara State University have library schools, where in the former, a few staff serve as associate lecturers in the department aside from teaching in the Use of Library programme- a practice common to all the four libraries studied; perhaps owing to the fact that the course itself is on how to make effective use of their libraries. At Ilorin, the University Librarian serves as external examiners to relevant departments at the postgraduate studies level, and it suffices to note that 2 library staff and a professor crossed over to the department when it took off in 2008. This points, though partly to the nature of attraction that the library school can be for staff movement from the university libraries, at least, where they exist.

Probably explaining the situation above is the responses from 3 of the four interviewees which presented an abysmal inadequacy of the library staff strength in relation to the collections as well as that of the staff mix in relation to their user populations. With the seeming high number of staff at the UIL, the responses to both issues showed that strength and mix only reflect positively in the bottom cadre while the middle and top cadres suffer inadequacy. The situation in AUL and KWASUL was that of outright inadequacy across all the cadres while LUL reported adequacy probably owing to its full automation and its relatively low number of users. The report of inadequacy in the 3 other libraries was due to their high holdings, where UIL presently has 345,000 materials, over 10,000 for AUL and 21,104 for KWASU as against their respective user populations of 25,000, 2055 and 6,301. However, in support of the adequacy claim by LUL is that its collections stand at 32,000 presently with the user population of 2500 even more so that the entire library system is fully automated.

For the remaining 3 libraries which presented inadequacy in their staff strength and mix, the challenges in getting and keeping the staffing situation in good condition include difficulty in attracting high calibre staff to the library, getting approval to hire more staff, and unresolved conflict on how to staff the library. Accordingly, overcoming these challenges requires that the libraries are allowed to fill available vacancies, where the resources to do so are available; keep recommending to the appropriate authorities on the need to do so through persuasion and lobbying, where authorities are unwilling.

Discussion of the Findings

Reports from the findings indicate that all the four university libraries were established simultaneously with their parent institutions, as is the expected practice noted by Ogunmodede (2015). Also, it is evident that conditions of service existing in the four libraries are similar. Staff members are opened to conference sponsorship, annual leave and conducive working environment which serve as incentives for effective service delivery. This is in line with the contention of Baro, Eze and Nkanu (2013) that current information environment presents a challenge to librarians to see the need for training and skills upgrading. Also, professional staff members in all the libraries (except AUL) were involved in teaching *Use of Library* to undergraduates. This is in line with what is obtainable in some academic libraries (Katamba, Garba & Zarmai, 2016). Similarly, with the establishment of library school at the University of Ilorin, few of the professional staff of the UIL teach in the library school. This is a good thing for the development of librarianship education in Nigeria as they impart the trainees with relevant hands-on experience acquired from years of practicing. Issa, Idowu, Harande and Igwe (2016) reported "the involvement of practising librarians in the teaching of LIS courses" (p.45), in some library schools. However, this has increased the workload of the affected staff. The libraries are growing in terms of staff strength and collections. Although all the libraries are developing, noteworthy is the rapid growth of the LUL. From moving to its permanent structure within two years of establishment to growing from 5000 collections in 2011 to over 32000 presently. That is some 84.3% increase in just four years and the only library reported to be fully automated.

All the libraries (except LUL) claimed to experience inadequate staff strength in relation to the number of their collections. In the same vein, AUL, UIL and KWASUL claimed to experience staff shortage in relation to user population. More evident is AUL, which has 5 professionals but no para-professional. This is not in line with LRCN (2014) which recommended a mix of professional, para-professional and supportive staff in certain proportion as part of minimum standards for academic libraries. It affirms that para-professionals play a crucial role in the library system by performing certain routines that are instrumental to effective service delivery. The case of adequate number of staff at LUL may not be unconnected with its full level of automation. Automation eliminates repetition of tasks, saves time and reduces manpower.

From the findings, it is also evident that AUL and KWASUL face challenges associated with inadequate staff in terms of required number and mix. While UIL has adequate number of staff at the lower level, it experiences staff shortage at the middle and upper level (professionals and paraprofessionals). This has culminated into overworking the few librarians at the upper and middle levels; leading to overstretch of those on ground with its attendant compromise of quality service provision to the users (Egunjobi, 2006). Being a state-owned institution, getting approval to hire more staff in KWASUL can be challenging. Therefore, the library has to resolve to lobbying and persuading appropriate authorities. This is evident in the submission that lack of adequate funding by appropriate authorities prevents academic libraries from functioning effectively due to shortage of staff and material resources. There is also a lingering unresolved conflict in AUL about staffing the library. The findings fall short of the assertion by Arubayi (2009)

that "the strength of a good educational programme is not...but the quality and quantity of the staff" (p.3).

The academic libraries are better placed for adequate staffing when they occupy their permanent building, which will normally provide for a full complement of departments/ sections/units, which will require appropriate personnel to man them, a fact that LUL has demonstrated in this study. This is because according to Lockhart and Jamal (2012), academic library workforce constitutes its single most valuable resource. Although the year of establishment/existence has an implication for growth in staffing, this did not translate directly into good number and mix of staff in the studied libraries. The oldest UIL, demonstrated a staffing growth in an unbalanced direction, which produced a bottom-heavy and top-light pyramidal structure for its staffing situation. The AUL, with three campuses after over a decade of existence still grapples with the foundation issues of staffing, when juxtaposed with the LUL, the youngest, and its giant staffing strides, will further confirm this position. This may not be unconnected with the short supply of adequate number of professional staff in most of the studied libraries, a condition which affects their mix in good proportion. Given the nature of academic libraries which requires large number of specialized personnel to manage the various professional departments, (AIM, 2015), the prevalence of staffing inadequacy as revealed in the majority of the libraries studied was only inevitable. This tends to affect adversely the role of library management to some extent and then the supervision of subordinate staff for better performance (Fadehan & Ali, 2010).

Implications of the Findings

When the conditions of service of the library staff and the incentives they enjoy are in ready supply, there is the likelihood that the staff would give their utmost in the performance of their roles and duties for the attainment of the library's goals. This is the expected situation in all the libraries studied, since this condition serves as a driving force towards value-added performance. In two of the libraries where library schools exist, some forms of collaborations were recorded because of the symbiotic relationship that had always existed between practice and education in the librarianship profession. This explains why the library school will continue to be a source of attraction to the practitioners in particular. Suffice to underscore the fact that the synergy is highly desirable for both the practice and education. Meanwhile, that the movement from the libraries to the library schools has not been much pronounced as expected may be linked with the standard required of a faculty to possess a PhD degree and be of no less rank than Senior Lecturer.

Undoubtedly, this is a tall order for the academic library staff, which will apparently keep off many of them who would have desired such a movement; especially in the context of the libraries studied, where many of them were reported to be grossly inadequate in staffing. The challenges of inadequate staffing as reported in this study directly implied that 3 of the 4 of the libraries studied suffer under-performance as the few staff on ground are perpetually being overworked- a situation that does not guarantee optimum performance; which in turn, affects the effective delivery of services to the library users.

The postulations reported on the ways of overcoming the challenges identified has brought to the fore the political dimension to university library management. The need to use lobbying and persuasion as tools for establishing good rapport between the university library and the university management becomes important for the continued survival of the library as a whole and getting adequate staffing number and mix for the library in particular.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Although staffing of academic libraries is very crucial to their growth and key to actualizing their set objectives, this study concludes that the present existing condition of service in the four libraries are similar, while all but LUL, experience shortage of staff in terms of number and mix. Therefore, the study recommends that:

1. The UIL should consider the appointment of more librarians at the upper and middle levels mainly, to increase productivity at these two crucial levels of operation.
2. The AUL should urgently resolve the staffing crises to enable it hire more qualified professional and para professional staff as this will better place the library on an advantageous platform to fully attain its primary objectives.
3. In KWASUL, there should henceforth be prompt approval for hiring of new staff by appropriate quarters rather than subjecting the library management to lobbying before the needful is done.
4. Each library is encouraged to develop a written staffing policy that covers areas such as appointment, nature of responsibilities, and promotions, among others. This is to assist in guiding the library to fully bring out the best from their personnel and make recommendations to appropriate authorities regarding staffing.
5. There is the need for the libraries to access the *LRCN Minimum Standards and Guidelines for Academic Libraries in Nigeria (2004)*, carefully study it and implement it, especially as it affects staffing of the libraries.

References

Aboyade, M. A. & Amusan, B. B. (2013). An investigation into the utilization of media resources for effective instructional process in private primary schools in Osogbo metropolis. *Journal of Library, Education, Media and Information Studies.* 5(1), 17-26.

Abubakar, B. M. (2011) Academic libraries in Nigeria in the 21st Century. *Library Philosophy and Practice.* Accessed from http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/

Adeogun, M. (2006). The challenges of a modern tertiary education system: paradigm shift for educators and information professionals in Sub-Sahara Africa. *African Journal of Library and Information Science,* 16(1), 45-52.

Aguolu, I. E. (1996). Nigerian university libraries: what future? *The International Information and Library Review,* 28(3), 261.

AIM (2015). Staffing strategies in academic libraries. Accessed from https://www.aimusa. com/articles/staffing_in_academic_libraries.php on 19th October, 2015.

Aina, L. O. (2015). Factors affecting the timely completion of doctoral degree in library and information science in Nigerian universities. *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science*. 25(2), 111-123.

Akporhonor, B. A. (2005). Library Funding in Nigeria: Past, Present and Future. *The Bottom Line: Managing Library Finances, 18* (2), 63-70

Arubayi, D.O. (2009). Lecturer quality, quantity and gender in colleges of education in Nigeria. *College Student Journal* FindArticles.com. 10 Oct, 2010.

Adeniji, M.A., Babalola, G.A. & Adeniji, E.A. (2012). Workers Training Programmes in Two University Libraries in Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. Accessed from http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/

Baro, E. E., Eze, M. E. & Nkanu, W. O. (2013). E-library services: challenges and training needs of librarians in Nigeria. *OCLC Systems and Services: International Digital Library Perspectives*. 29(2), 101-116. Accessed from http://www. Emerald insight. com/ 1065-075X.htm on 11th July, 2015.

Egunjobi, R.A. (2006). Staffing patterns of federal colleges of education libraries in Nigeria. *The Nigerian Academic Forum* 11, 52-57.

Eze, J. U. & Uzoigwe, C. U. (2013). The place of academic libraries in Nigerian university education: contributing to the 'Education for All' initiative. *International Journal of Library and Information Science*. 5(10).

Fadehan, O. A. & Ali, H. (2010). Educational needs of librarians in the digital environment: case studies of selected academic libraries in Lagos State, Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. Accessed from http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/

Graduate Prospects Ltd (2015). Academic librarian: job description. Accessed from www. prospects.ac.uk/academic_librarian_job_description.htm on 19th October, 2015.

Heneman, G. H. & Judge, T. (2005). *Staffing organizations*. McGraw-Hill.

Insaidoo, A.W. (2001). Human resources development: the key to sustainable public library services in Ghana. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science in Africa* 1(1): 2.

Issa, A. O., Amusan, B. B., Olarongbe, S. A. & Akangbe, R. B. (2013). E-library and information services for the transformation of tertiary education in Nigeria. In: Issa, A. O., Igwe, K. N. & Uzuegbu, C. P. (ed.) (2013) *Provision of Library and Information Services to Users in the Era of Globalization*. Lagos: Waltodanny Visual Concept.

Issa, A. O., Idowu, A.O., Harande, Y.I. & Igwe, K. N. (2016). Perceived Effects of Library School Proliferation on Quality Education for Librarianship in Nigerian Universities. Proceedings of the Annual National Conference of the National association of Library and Information Science Association (NALISE). Pp. 35-57. University of Ibadan. 3-9 May, 2016.

Katamba, A.S., Garba, S.K. & Zarmai, M.M. (2016). Proliferation of Library and Information Science Schools in Nigeria: Issues at Stake and Quality Control. Proceedings of the Annual National Conference of the National association of Library and Information Science Association (NALISE). Pp. 47-57. University of Ibadan. 3-9 May, 2016.

Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) (2014). Minimum standards and guidelines for academic libraries in Nigeria. Abuja: Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria.

Lockhart, J. & Jamal, S. (2012). The effect of library staff training and development on the user experience: a case study at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT). *Proceedings of the IATUL Conferences*. Paper 44. Accessed from http://docs. lib.purdue.edu/iatul/2012/papers/44 on 19th October, 2015.

McCombs, G. M. (2011). The expert library: staffing, sustaining, and advancing the academic library in the 21st century (review). *Libraries and the Academy*. 11(2), 742-744.

National Commission for Colleges of Education (1994). *Guidelines for Running Libraries in Colleges of Education in Nigeria*. Kaduna: NCCE.

Nwalo, K. I. N. (2000). Society, development and libraries. Ibadan: Distance Learning Centre. University of Ibadan.

Obasola, O. I., Alonge, A. J., Eyers, J., & Oladele, B. (2014). Building capacity of librarians for knowledge and skill development: a case study of nine institutions of the consortium for advanced research training in Africa (CARTA). *Collaborative Librarianship*. 6(4). 169-174.

Ogunsola, L. A. (2011) Libraries as tools for capacity building in developing countries. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. Accessed from http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libph

Onifade, G. O. & Onifade, F. N. (2011). Staffing patterns of state colleges of education libraries in Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. Paper 664. Accessed from http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/664 on 19th October, 2015.

Oriowo, O.T. (2002).Staffing Needs and Requirements for Effective Library Services in Academic Libraries. In Quadri, R.F., & Gbadamosi, B.O. (eds.). *Issues in Library and Information Services*. Emola Joy: 1-10.

Owusu –Acheaw, M. & Larson, A. G. (2007). Effective use of library resources: A case study of business students of Koforidua Polytechnic, Ghana. *Information and Knowledge Management*. 4(2).

Sare L., Bales, S. & Neville, B. (2012). New academic librarians and their perceptions of the profession. *Libraries and the Academy*. 12(2). 179- 203.

Singh, J. & Kaur, T. (2009). Future of academic libraries in India: challenges and opportunities. A Paper Presented at the International Conference on Academic Libraries (ICAL) held at the University of Delhi, India. P. 52

Sobalaje, A. J. & Ogunmodede, T. A (2015). Roles of academic library in the national and economic development of Nigeria. *Greener Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(2):036-041, http://doi.org/10.15580/GJSS.2015.2.281114401.

Staley, D. J. & Malenfant, K. J. (2010). Futures thinking for academic librarians: higher education in 2025. Accessed from http://www.ala.org/acrl/files/issues/ value/ futures /2025.pdf on 28th September, 2015.

Targetjobs (2015). Academic librarian: job description. Accessed from https://targetjobs.co. uk/careers-advice/job-descritions/275697-academic-librarian-job-description on 19th October, 2015.

WordiQ (2010). Librarian. Available: http://www.wordiq.com/definition/Librarian.www. business dictionary.com/staffing

Yesufu, T. M. (2000). The *Human Factor in National Development*. University of Benin Press, Benin City.

Youngok, C. (2006). What is needed to educate future digital librarians *D-Lib Magazine* 12 (9), Sept. Retrieved Nov., 17, 2008 from http://www.dlib.org/dlibseptember06/ choi. html.

APPENDIX A
LETTER OF INTRODUCTION
Dear Sir/Ma,
Permission to Conduct Research Interview

Toward attending and presenting a paper at the forthcoming scheduled Conference of the Academic and Research Library Section of the Nigerian Library Association, a team headed by me, is conducting a research on Academic Library Staffing Implications for Librarianship Practice and Education in Nigeria: a Report from Kwara State.

I therefore request your kind permit to enable us conduct an interview with you at your convenience.

Please be rest assured that the responses to the Interview Questions would be treated with utmost confidentiality and for this research purpose only.
Thank you.

Dr. A.O. Issa
(Research Team Leader)

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTION GUIDES FOR UNIVERSITY LIBRARIANS

1. When was your library established?
2. When did it occupy its permanent structure?
3. What is the total number of its collections at inception and presently?
4. What is the breakdown of this total number of the collections at inception and presently?
5. What is the total number of your library's registered users at inception and presently?
6. What is the total number of your staff at inception and presently?
7. What is the breakdown of this total number of the staff at inception and presently?
8. What conditions of service exist for the library staff at inception and presently?
9. What incentives do the library staff members enjoy at inception and presently?
10. How often do the staff members leave the library job to teach in the library schools?
11. Where else do the library staff members leave the library job for apart from going to library schools?
12. How adequate is the present staff strength in your library in relation to the size of the library's collections?
13. How adequate is the present staff mix in your library in relation to the user population?
14. What challenges does your library face in having and keeping the staffing situation in good number and mix?
15. What would you do to overcome the challenges?