

**Income Generation: An alternative Source of Funding for Academic Libraries in Ghana:
Koforidua Technical University Library in Perspective**

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Abstract

The study assesses the alternative income generation activities that academic libraries can adopt to support the funding of academic libraries in Ghana. Survey method was adopted with the use of questionnaire to gather data and information. Copies of questionnaire were distributed to the main stakeholders of the academic library, out of 200 copies of questionnaire distribute, and 121 copies were retrieved representing a response rate of 60.5% of the sample size. The study brought to light that the library has been perceived as a non-profit unit for far long, bindery and photocopying activities are among avenues for income generation and creating awareness of such activity needs urgent attention. The study recommends among others that librarians should also be given training and short courses on how to generate alternative income in the library. Besides, in showing readiness the mangement of the parent institution should also provide the necessary tools and equipment needed for the new step.

Keywords: University Library, Mobilization of Funds, Budgetary Allocation, Quality Services.

1. Introduction

It would be stating the obvious to say that adequate funding should be considered a basic necessity for the effective development of library and information services. But when such a fundamental consideration is often ignored or is not sufficiently appreciated by the parent organizations, then it becomes necessary to reiterate even what is obvious as a means of driving the wedge in a little further (Boadi, 2006). Libraries have for long played a central role in the lives of Universities, in supporting learning, teaching and research. Since Universities themselves vary considerably in the nature, range and scale of their activities, it is not surprising that their libraries too come in many different shapes and sizes (RIN, 2010).

Along with the rest of the Higher Education (HE) sector, however, all of them have experienced over the past decade a period of unprecedented change. They have transformed their operations as they have responded to the opportunities of the digital revolution, and further challenges ahead of them. Like the rest of the sector, however, academic libraries are now facing a renewed and intensified period of financial stringency. In recent years, a number of bodies, including the Research Information Network (RIN), have been gathering evidence about the nature and scale of the financial and other challenges that libraries are facing in these new circumstances. The RIN has also organized, with the help of the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) a number of workshops to draw the attention of the situation (RIN, 2010).

Academic libraries need alternative source of funding to keep them surviving in the world of financial difficulties nowadays as argued by (Foo et al, 2002). Also this stems from the fact that, both public and academic cannot totally fund their activities without a vibrant alternative income generation venture as commented in (Paut & Poulter, 2014). Again, due to the high financial crisis in all sectors of the economy, it is prudent for the academic library to find avenues of alternative income generation to support their services as suggested by Chaputula (2011). Peachey (2003) commented that libraries need to adopt strategies to assist them in implementing alternative income generation activities, and not depending solely on government support or parent organization.

Boadi (2006) equally on income generation activities as a variable financial source for African academic libraries intimated that, though academic libraries are funded by their colleges, universities, polytechnics and so on, it is critical for the librarians and library staff to find viable sources of alternative income generation activity to support them.

This is because it is on record that, funding of academic library comes from the government hence any delay turns to affect the existence of the library (Boadi, 2006), and as a matter of urgency, academic libraries need to break away from the complete over reliance on government, institutional funding, and employ consultancy services and brokerages services in their day to day survival. Generally, fee base services are very critical in the life of academic libraries' growth. This is because academic libraries have a crucial role to play in the achievement of the goals of their parent institutions (Osei – Boadi & Ahenkroah – Marfo, 2013).

2. Statement of the Problem

Libraries all over the world are constrained by financial resources. This as a result has affected their survival and provision of quality services. The budgets allocated to libraries are woefully inadequate especially in the developing world where information preservation, dissemination, storage and organization seem not to be the central vision and mission of most parent organizations of libraries. The issue of Koforidua Technical University library is not much different. Though a lot of studies have been conducted by authors such as Ahenkorah-Marfo and Osei-Boadi (2013), Boadi (2006) and Martey (2000) none had totally focused on the polytechnic library. It is against this backdrop that is why a research of this kind is done to assess the alternative sources of income that the library can generate to support the existing budgets of a typical polytechnic library in Ghana.

3. Objectives of the Study

Generally, the study seeks to assess the extent to which the academic library can generate alternative income of funding focusing on Koforidua Technical University Library in Ghana.

The objectives of the study are to:

- i. Identify the strategies of generating alternative income in libraries
- ii. Assess the readiness of the library in implementing alternative income generation
- iii. Find out the challenges impeding alternative income generation in libraries

4. Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions. They are as follows:

- i. What are the strategies of generating alternative income in libraries?
- ii. Are the libraries ready in implementing alternative income generation?
- iii. Any challenges impeding alternative income generation in libraries?

5. Literature Review

The literature on librarianship and information science is replete with cries of inadequate financial support for information services. These voices come from all types of libraries in both developed and developing countries. This situation has been attributed to diminishing library budgets as a result of budgetary cuts, rising costs, inflation, and recession to name several as supported by the authors such as (Coffman, 2004; Jehlik, 2004; Dugdale, 1997; Bhatt, 1995; Adaramola, 1992; Quinn and Rogers, 1992).

A few studies are in the literature on marketing of products and services in Ghanaian university libraries which should have been bringing revenue to the library. Martey (2000) advocates that in marketing products and services of academic libraries in Ghana, there must be a conscious effort to do what is known as 'personal selling'. It was further added that, pricing is extremely important for marketing but this has not been the major preoccupation of the Ghanaian academic librarian for a very long time (Martey, 2000).

Besides, it was also intimated that, this is so because the government pays for library services and so libraries do not see the need to charge users for information that has already been paid for.

A survey conducted by Kwadzo and Amekuedee (2007) indicated that types of fee-based services provided by libraries in agriculture related special libraries in Ghana included online bibliographic search, photocopying, Email, CD-ROM searches and training. They gave varied reasons for the fee-based services offered. The reasons are mainly to make up for the shortfall in government subvention, to improve quality of service and to recover cost of service hence generation of alternative income for the library.

Ibegwam and Ogunyade (2008) revealed that, majority of the library services and products were free in Ibadan and Lagos medical libraries. They indicated that, the most common fee based services are photocopying and reprographic services which are not traditional library services. They however indicated that, new products and services that medical librarians would want to introduce to their libraries in order to generate funds include indexing and abstracting services. They intimated that, for libraries to develop products which will sell in libraries, five key problems need to be addressed. These are ideal alternative income generation, identifying the business opportunity, doing venture analysis, product design and development and market strategy.

In a survey conducted by Thompson (2008) on marketing library services focusing on state-owned multi-campus university libraries in Ghana, 74.4% of user-respondents of over 300 indicated that, they were prepared to pay for some services and products offered by their respective campus libraries. The author therefore suggested that, service providers should take advantage to introduce services which are very well packaged to meet user-needs at realistic charges (Thompson, 2008). In the opinion of Neal (1997) the successful library is the one that provides a range of expensive resources that, most individuals cannot afford and provide a well-established mechanism of information acquisition and dissemination that is, accessible to most people.

There are indeed different schools of thought with regard to libraries charging fees for some library services. In this regard, Ekoja (1996) points out that, those who are arguing in favour of fee-based services are gaining the upper hand in the debate because many compounding variables have made it expedient for libraries around the world to look outside their traditional sources of funding in order to raise additional funds to be able to sustain the level of services

which hitherto, normal funding was able to take care of (Ekoja, 1996). Sight should not be lost on the fact that, libraries have become clients of commercial databases on the Internet. So to be able to deliver services efficiently, some categories of services must be paid for. This point is further buttressed by Leisner (1995) who holds the view that; increased customer satisfaction will result in increased willingness to pay for the services offered

6. Research Methodology

The case study approach was adopted for the research. The research instrument for data gathering was a questionnaire which comprise of open and close ended questions. The study population comprises of all the stakeholders of the library that is faculty, administrators, students and the library staff as well as other researchers. Simple random sampling method was adopted to make sure all the stakeholders are given equally chance of being part of the study. Before the distribution of the questionnaire a pilot study was conducted at a nearby university known as All Nations University College at Koforidua.

This was done to ascertain the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. The necessary changes and omissions were done before the actual distribution of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into four sections. Section A elicited general and demographical information about the respondents. Section B contained items on strategies of alternative income generation in libraries, Section C dealt with the process of implementing them in libraries, Section D focused on challenges impeding generation of alternative income in the library.

Two hundred (200) copies of questionnaire were distributed to the target population, out of that; one hundred and twenty-one (121) copies were retrieved fully completed. This gave a response rate of 60.5%. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0 and Microsoft Word were used to analyze the quantitative data.

7. Discussion of Findings

7.1 Demographic data

With reference to the demographic data, 28(20.7%) were within the age group of 20-25year, 15(12.4%) were among the age group of 34-40years 17(14.6%) were within 31-35year group, 49(40.5%) were within 36-40 year while 15(12.4%) were within the age range of 41-50 in terms of the age distribution of respondents. On academic qualification, 13(10.7%) hold HND Certificates, 27(22.3%) had Bachelor's Degree, while 11(9.1%) had Master Degree. As to the stakeholders who were chosen to participate in the survey, 35(28.9%) were from the Academic Faculty, 61(50.4%) were Students, 18(14.9%) were Administrative Staff, 5(4.1%) were Library Staff while 2(1.7%) were other Researchers who use the library.

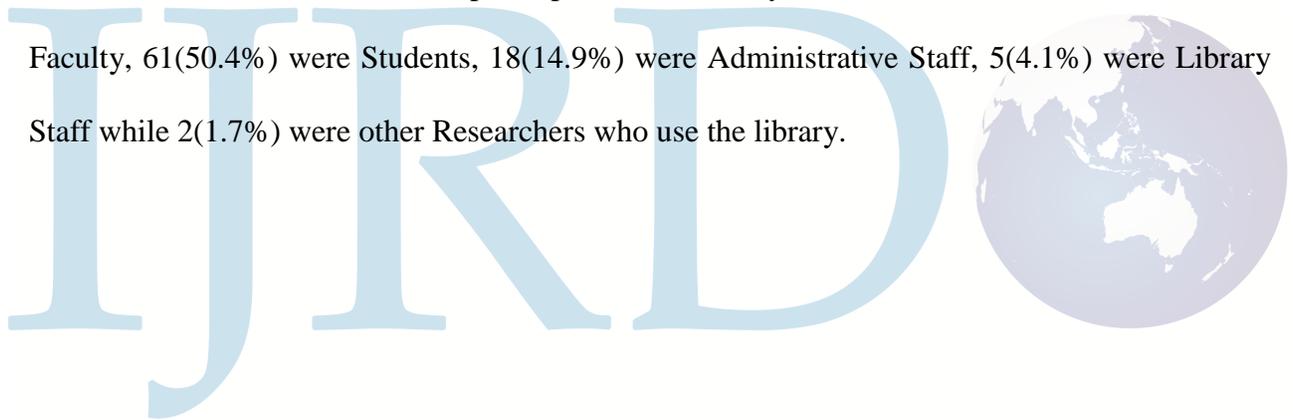


Table 1 Demographic data

Age	Frequency(n=121)	Percentage (100)
20-25	25	20.7
26-30	15	12.4
31-35	17	14.0
36-40	49	40.5
41-50	15	12.4
Academic qualification	Frequency	Percentage
HND	13	10.7
Bachelor's Degree	27	22.3
Master's Degree	70	57.9
PhD	11	9.1
Stakeholders	Frequency	Percentage
Faculty	35	28.9
Students	61	50.4
Administrative Staff	18	14.9
Library Staff	5	4.1
Others Researchers	2	1.7

Source: survey data, 2016

7.2 Factors Accounting for Inadequate Budgetary Allocation

As to the factors accounting for the inadequate budget of the library, 60(48.6%) indicated that, it is as a result of the non-profit unit in the institution, 45(37.2%) held the view that, it stems from lack of lobbying skills of most of librarians, 11(9.1%) ascribed it to lack of management commitment to the development of the library, 5(4.1%) also held the opinion that, it is also influence from other stakeholders. The results are displayed in the Table 2.

Table 2: Factors Accounting for Inadequate Budgetary Allocation

Budgetary allocation	Frequency(n=121)	Percentage(100)
Perception of non-profit unit in the institutions	60	49.6
Lack of lobbying skills of librarians	45	37.2
Lack of management commitment to library services	11	9.1
Other influential factors	5	4.1

Source: survey data, 2016

7.3 Strategies of Generation Alternative Income in the Library

In terms of the strategies that the library could adopt to generate alternative income, Table 2, shows that 21(17.4%) indicated sale of recommended text books, 57(47.1%) indicated bindery services/photocopying, 15(12.4%) mentioned short courses and training programmes at a fee for clients, 9(7.4%) indicated data analysis and presentation of research findings for individuals and institutions at a fee, 4(3.3%) hold the opinion that the librarians could involve in proposal writing for individuals and institutions at a fee, and 5(4.1%) stated charging on internet access by users, 10(8.3%) indicated also indicated proof reading and editing of manuscript at a fee for authors. The Table 3 illustrates the picture further.

Table 3 Strategies of Generation Alternative Income in the Library

Alternative Income Generation	Frequency(n=121)	Percentage(100)
Sale of recommended text books	21	17.4
Bindery/ photocopying services	57	47.1
Short courses and training programmes	15	12.4
Data analysis and presentation of research findings	9	7.4
Proposal writing for individuals and institutions	4	3.3
Charging on internet and other ICT services	5	4.1
Proof reading and editing of manuscript	10	8.3

Source: survey data, 2016

7.4 Readiness of Implementing Income Generation Activity

Regarding the readiness of the library in implementing alternative income generation activity, 109(8.3%) raised concerns of policy formulation, 9(7.4%) calls for the provision of appropriate tools and equipment for support the venture, 17(14.8%) stated that the library staff should be given training on alternative income generation activities 50(41.3%) stressed that there is the

need for creation of awareness and marketing of library services, 35 (28.9%) indicated orientation on the service available in the library. The picture is presented in the Table 4.

Table 4 Readiness of Implementing Income Generation Activity

Implementation of income generation	Frequency(n=121)	Percentage(100)
Policy formulation	10	8.3
Provision of working tools and equipment	9	7.4
Training of library staff on income generation activities	17	14.1
Creation awareness and marketing of the services	50	41.3
Organization of orientation services	35	28.9

7.5 Challenges of Implementing Alternative Income Generation

With respect to challenges impending the generation of alternative income generation, 25(20.7%) stated the attitude of library staff, 5(4.1%) attitude of head of librarians, 45(37.2%) indicated lack of management, 7(5.8%) indicated low interest of library staff, 16(13.2%) indicated perception of the traditional library services. This is further illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5: Challenges of Implementing Alternative Income Generation

Challenges	Frequency(121)	Percentage(100)
Attitude of library staff	25	20.7
Attitude of head librarians	5	4.1
Inadequate budgetary allocation	45	37.2
Lack of management commitment	23	19.0
Low interest of library staff	7	5.8
Perception of users about the traditional library services	16	13.2

Source: survey data, 2016

8. Conclusion

Since academic libraries are still functioning in supporting research, learning and teaching in their status it is paramount that, the issue of alternative income generation is given a critical attention. This is because the budgetary allocation to the academic libraries is woefully inadequate most at times. This suggest that there is the urgent need for the librarians to get involve with strategies that could assist in the generation of alternative income for the survival of the library so as to provide quality services to the satisfaction of the users.

9. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the research it is prudent to recommend that management of libraries should lobby for more funding especially for their budgetary allocation. Librarians should also be given training and short courses on how to generate alternative income in the library. Besides, in showing readiness the management of the parent institution should also provide the necessary tools and equipment needed for the new step.

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