

BUDGET ALLOCATION AND ITS IMPACT ON ACQUISITION OF LIBRARY RESOURCES IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN ABIA STATE

¹Charles Terwuese TSENONGU & ²Boma B. OBI

¹Clifford University, Owerinta, Abia State, Nigeria

²Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

¹tsonongucharlesfeb14@gmail.com ²boma.obi@iaue.edu.ng

Abstract

The study explores the critical role of budget allocation for library resources in private universities in Abia State, Nigeria. The population of this study comprised thirty-seven (37) library staff in private universities in Abia State. Since the population was manageable, total enumeration technique was used to capture all the number of staff. A 'Google form' questionnaire was sent for data collection. Twenty-six (26) library staff, representing 70.27% filled and returned the questionnaire. This study adopted frequency counts and simple percentages in charts for data presentation. The findings revealed that majority of respondents perceive the current level of budget allocation for library resources as inadequate, leading to challenges such as limited access to updated library materials, competition with other needs, and the cost of digital resources. The study also identifies the positive impacts of budget allocation, including enhanced service delivery, access to new technologies, and improved preservation of information materials. Based on the findings, recommendations are made for addressing the perceived inadequacy of budget allocation, diversify budgeting techniques, and develop strategies to balance the allocation of funds between physical and digital collections.

Keywords: *Budget Allocation, Acquisition, Library Resources, Private Universities, Abia State*

Introduction

The availability of adequate library resources is essential for the academic and intellectual development of students. These resources include books, journals, electronic databases, and other materials that support research and learning. However, the process of acquiring and maintaining such resources requires a significant financial investment. Private universities play a crucial role in the provision of quality education to students. However, one of the challenges they face is the limited budget allocation for acquiring library resources. Budget allocation plays a critical role in the acquisition of library resources in private universities. The efficient allocation of funds towards library resources is essential for the overall academic and research development of these institutions.

Private universities face unique challenges in budget allocation for library resources. Studies indicate that, private universities often have limited financial resources compared to their public counterparts, which can significantly impact their ability to acquire adequate library

resources (Patel, 2020; Eze, Nwosu & Ezeani, 2020; Akintola, Ojo, & Adedeji, 2022).. Additionally, the increasing costs of library materials and subscriptions further strain the budget allocation for library resources in private universities (Bello, 2019). Furthermore, the impact of budget allocation on the acquisition of library resources extends beyond the immediate availability of materials. Adequate funding for library resources is essential for maintaining up-to-date collections, subscribing to scholarly journals and databases, and providing access to electronic resources, all of which are crucial for supporting teaching, learning, and research activities within the university.

The primary goal of academic libraries as averred by Tsenongu and Otuza (2024), is to attain self-reliance in their resources and deliver an outstanding level of services to engage a broader audience and foster the utilization of library resources. Limited budget allocation can have a direct impact on the quality and quantity of library resources available to students and faculty. It may result in outdated or insufficient materials, limited access to electronic databases, and inadequate infrastructure for housing and organizing the resources. The allocation of funds for library resources in private universities is a critical factor that directly impacts the quality of education and research. Insufficient budget allocation leads to a lack of updated books, journals, electronic databases, and other essential resources. As a result, students and faculty members are unable to access the necessary materials for their academic and research needs. This ultimately affects the overall academic performance and research output of the institution.

The impact of budget allocation on the acquisition of library resources in private universities is significant. Inadequate funding can hinder the ability of these institutions to provide students and faculty with access to quality and relevant materials for their academic and research needs. Scholars (Jones, 2019; Okafor, 2019; Patel, 2020; Eze, et al., 2020; Udeaja & Okoli, 2021; Tsenongu, Osuji & Aguwa, 2024) appear to be in consensus that by prioritizing budget allocation for library resources, exploring alternative funding sources, and implementing cost-effective strategies, universities can work towards improving the availability and quality of library resources for the benefit of their academic community. It is imperative for universities can ensure that their academic communities have access to the latest books, journals, and digital tools essential for research and learning. Allocating a portion of the budget specifically for library upgrades and acquisitions demonstrates a commitment to fostering academic excellence and supporting student and faculty needs.

Statement of the Problem

Private universities play a crucial role in providing quality education and research opportunities, and their libraries are essential resources for supporting these endeavors. However, the effectiveness of library services and resources is heavily dependent on the allocation of financial resources. Insufficient financial resources can limit the acquisition of new books, journals, electronic databases, and other essential materials, thereby affecting the quality and scope of resources available to students and faculty. This limitation can hinder research productivity, academic excellence, and the overall learning experience within these institutions

(Ezeh, 2020; Tanaka. 2020). As such, it is essential to assess whether budget allocations align with the needs and demands of libraries in private universities in Abia State.

In an era of digital transformation and evolving user expectations, libraries are increasingly challenged to offer innovative services such as makerspaces, digital scholarship support, data management services, and other emerging initiatives (Odunlade & Ojo, 2023; Amwiine, 2025). However, the availability of financial resources can significantly impact the ability of libraries to implement and sustain these innovative services. Therefore, investigating how budget allocation affects the capacity of libraries to innovate and adapt to changing user needs is essential for understanding the broader implications of financial resource allocation. The findings of this study are expected to have several implications for private universities in Abia State. By identifying the challenges and opportunities related to budget allocation for library resources, the study aims to provide evidence-based recommendations for improving budgeting practices and enhancing the acquisition of library resources.

Objectives of the Study

8. To examine the types of budgeting techniques that are obtainable in private universities in Abia State
9. To find out the current level of budget allocation for library resources in private universities in Abia State.
10. To assess the impact of budget allocation on libraries in private universities in Abia State.
11. To identify the challenges faced in budget allocation for library resources in private universities in Abia State.

Literature Review

Budget allocation plays a crucial role in the acquisition of library resources in private universities. The ability of a university to provide adequate and up-to-date library resources is largely dependent on the budget allocated for this purpose. Budget allocation directly influences a university's ability to acquire and maintain library materials. According to Johnson, Williams and Carter (2022), private universities often rely on tuition fees and donations for funding, which can lead to fluctuations in library budgets. These fluctuations affect the acquisition of essential resources, including books, journals, databases, and multimedia materials. For instance, a study by Smith and Green (2021) found that private universities with stable or increasing library budgets were more likely to provide diverse and up-to-date collections compared to those with stagnant or declining budgets.

The shift toward digital resources has also reshaped budget priorities. Libraries are now allocating significant portions of their budgets to electronic journals, e-books, and subscription databases (Chen, Wang and Paterl 2023). While this transition enhances accessibility and convenience, it also introduces challenges related to licensing fees and long-term sustainability. As noted by Ahmed and Khan (2023), private universities with limited budgets often struggle to balance investments in digital resources with the need to maintain physical collections.

Private universities face unique challenges in allocating budgets for library resources due to various factors such as competition with public institutions, limited financial resources, and the need to meet the diverse academic and research needs of students and faculty. Several challenges hinder effective budget allocation for library resource acquisition in private universities. The rising cost of academic publications poses a significant barrier. A report by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) (2023) highlighted that subscription fees for scholarly journals have increased by an average of 6% annually over the past decade. This trend places additional strain on already limited budgets. Again, private universities often face competing financial priorities. As observed by Taylor, Brown and Miller (2022), investments in infrastructure development, faculty salaries, and student services frequently take precedence over library funding. Consequently, libraries may receive only a fraction of the institution's overall budget, limiting their ability to acquire new materials.

Furthermore, the lack of centralized funding policies in some private universities exacerbates inconsistencies in budget allocation. According to a study by Williams and Brown (2021), decentralized decision-making processes can lead to disparities in resource distribution across departments, further complicating efforts to build comprehensive library collections. Another challenge is balancing diverse user needs within limited budgets. Libraries must cater to various stakeholders, including students, faculty, researchers, and community members. Meeting these needs requires careful prioritization, which is often influenced by institutional goals rather than user preferences (Taylor & Miller, 2020).

In the context of private universities in Abia State, budget constraints often lead to limited access to essential library materials, including books, journals, electronic databases, and other learning resources. This can significantly hinder the academic and research capabilities of both students and faculty. Furthermore, Okeke and Nwabueze (2019) highlighted the challenges faced by private universities in Abia State due to limited budget allocations for library acquisitions. Their research revealed that many private universities struggle to meet the increasing demands for electronic resources, scholarly journals, and other materials essential for academic excellence. The authors emphasized the need for improved budget allocation to enhance the acquisition of library resources and support the overall educational objectives of private universities.

The impact of budget allocation on library resource acquisition directly affects academic excellence within private universities. Tsenongu et al. (2024), submitted that for library activities to truly thrive, and succeed, they must be supported by sufficient and sustainable funding. The impact of budget allocation on the acquisition of library resources directly influences the academic excellence of private universities in Abia State. Adequate funding allows for the procurement of current and relevant materials, which enhances the learning experience and research capabilities of students and faculty. However, insufficient budget allocations often result in outdated materials, limited access to online databases, and inadequate infrastructure, which hinders the academic progress of students and faculty.

Similarly, Eze et al. (2020) conducted a study focusing on the correlation between budget allocation and academic performance in private universities. Their findings revealed a positive relationship between increased budget allocations for library resources and improved academic performance indicators such as research output, student satisfaction, and faculty productivity. The study emphasized the need for private universities to prioritize budget allocation for library acquisitions to enhance the overall quality of education and research outcomes. In addition to highlighting the impact of budget allocation on library resource acquisition, several scholars have identified specific challenges and opportunities associated with this issue. A study by Onuoha and Uzochukwu (2019) identified inadequate infrastructure and limited access to digital resources as key challenges faced by private universities in Abia State. The authors emphasized the need for strategic budget planning to address these challenges and leverage opportunities for enhancing library resource acquisition. Conversely, Udejaja and Okoli (2021) presented a case study focusing on a private university in Abia State that successfully optimized its budget allocation for library acquisitions. The study highlighted innovative strategies such as consortia memberships, resource sharing agreements, and digital repository development as opportunities for maximizing the impact of limited budget allocations. The findings underscored the importance of proactive management and strategic planning in optimizing resource utilization within private university libraries.

Strategies for Effective Budget Allocation

In addressing the challenges faced by private universities in Abia State, it is imperative to consider strategies that can enhance budget allocation for library resources. Empirical studies indicate the importance of data-driven decision-making in budget allocation. Adeyemi and Salami (2021) found that Nigerian private universities that utilized data analytics achieved greater cost savings and improved academic outcomes. By leveraging financial analytics and performance metrics, private universities can identify areas of inefficiency and reallocate resources to high-impact initiatives.

Research also suggests that prioritizing core academic functions, such as faculty development, research funding, and student support services, is essential for optimizing budget allocation. According to Okechukwu, Umeh and Chukwumeka (2023), private universities in Nigeria that allocated a higher percentage of their budgets to academic programs experienced better student satisfaction and retention rates. Diversifying revenue streams is a critical strategy for reducing dependence on tuition fees and ensuring financial stability. Empirical evidence from Nigerian private universities indicates that investments in endowment funds, partnerships with industry, and income-generating activities can significantly enhance budget flexibility (Adebayo & Oluwaseun, 2020).

The integration of technology in administrative processes has also been shown to reduce operational costs and improve efficiency. Eze, Nwankwo & Okonkwo (2022) reported that private universities in Nigeria that implemented digital budgeting tools experienced faster decision-making and better resource allocation. Furthermore, engaging stakeholders, including

faculty, students, alumni, and donors, is essential for effective budget planning and implementation. Studies show that collaborative budgeting processes lead to greater transparency and accountability. As noted by Ibrahim and Ahmed (2021), stakeholder involvement fosters trust and ensures that budgetary decisions align with institutional goals.

Another important strategy is implementation of cost control measures, such as energy efficiency initiatives and streamlined procurement processes, can help private universities reduce expenses without compromising quality. Akintola, et al (2022) found that Nigerian private universities that adopted cost-saving strategies achieved significant reductions in operational costs. This fact underscores the importance of strategic financial management within the education sector, particularly in a context where operational efficiency is critical for sustainability.

The literature review indicates that there is a gap in the understanding of how budget allocation specifically impacts the acquisition of library resources in private universities in Abia State. While existing studies emphasize the importance of budget allocation for library acquisitions, there is a need for a more focused investigation into the specific challenges faced by private universities in Abia State when allocating budgets for library resources.

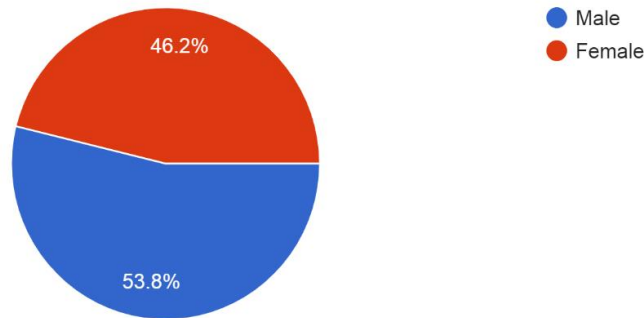
Research Methodology

The study used a descriptive approach, adopting a survey questionnaire method for data collection. The population of this study comprised of all professional library staff in private universities in Abia State. Three (3) private universities in Abia State namely; Clifford University, Owerinta, Gregory University, Uturu, and Rhema University, Aba, were selected for the study. The reason for exclusion of the other private universities in the state is because they are newly established institutions, thus may not yet have fully developed budgeting practices or historical data. The total population was thirty-seven (37) professional librarians. Clifford University has thirteen (13) librarians, Gregory University has thirteen (13) librarians, and Rhema University has eleven (11) librarians. Since the population was small and manageable, total enumeration technique was used to capture all the professional librarians in these institutions. The decision to use only professional librarians is because their professional background, experience and expertise would provide valuable insights and credible data relevant to the research objectives. The questionnaire was adopted as an instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was subjected to validation by two professionals in the field of library and information science. Administration of the instrument was done online using 'Google form' thus the library staff filled and submitted through the same medium. Twenty-six (26) of the respondents' staff representing 70.27% filled and returned the questionnaire. The questionnaire included the types of budgeting techniques, the current level of budget allocation for library resources, the impact of budget allocation on libraries, and the challenges faced in budget allocation for library resources in private universities in Abia States. The study employed the use of descriptive statistical analysis to analyze the data. The study consequently used frequency counts and percentages in charts for data presentation and analysis.

Data presentation and Interpretation

Demographic Data

26 responses



Source: Field survey, 2024

Figure 1 shows that 14(53.8%) of the respondents were male while 12(46.2%) were female.

Qualification

26 responses

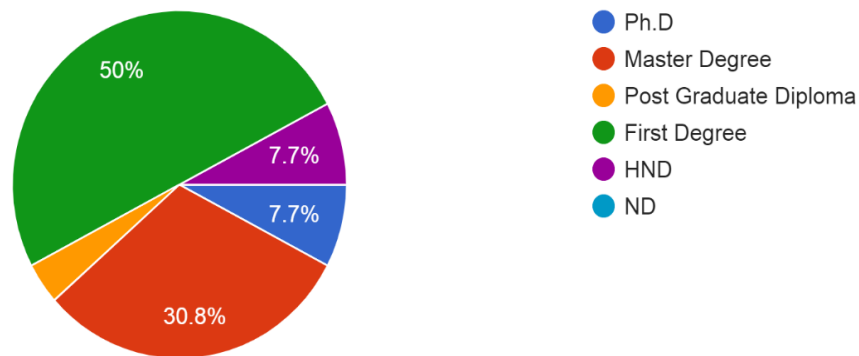
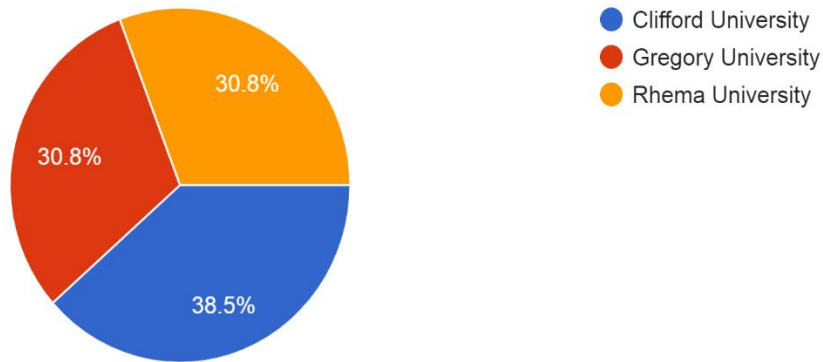


Figure 2 i Source: Field survey, 2024 e respondents had PhD 8(30.8%) had Master Degree, 1(3.8%) had Postgraduate Diploma, 13(50%) had First Degree, while 2(7.7%) had Higher National Diploma certificate.

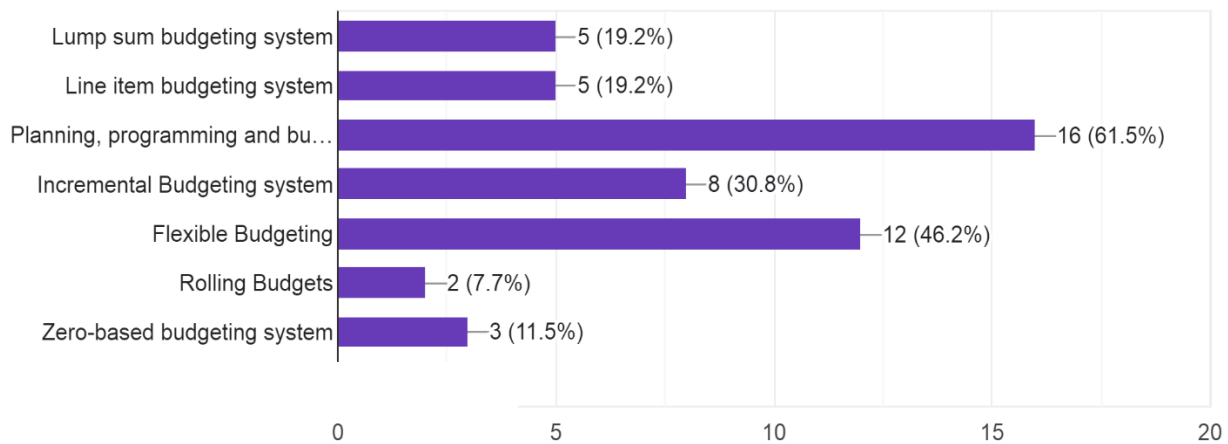
Institution
26 responses



Source: Field survey, 2024

Figure 3 shows that 10(38.5%) of the respondents were staff of Clifford University, Owerinta, 8(30.8%) were from Gregory University, Uturu and 8(30.8%) of the respondents' staff were from Rhema University, Aba.

1. What are the types of budgeting techniques obtainable in private universities in Abia State?
26 responses

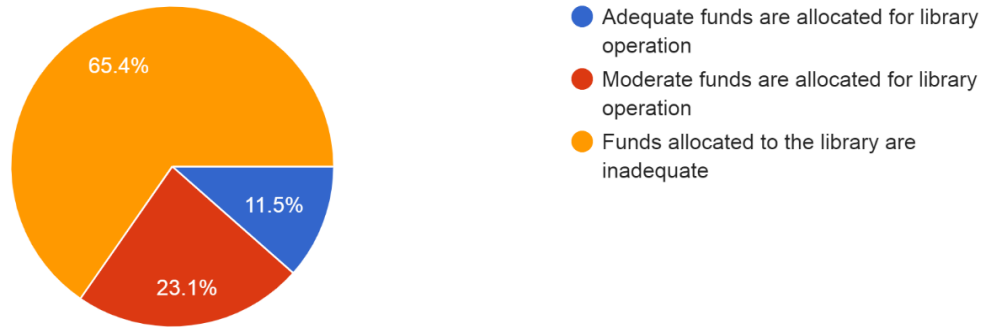


Source: Field survey, 2024

Figure 4 above indicates library staff response on the type of budgeting techniques obtainable in the private universities under study; Lump sum budgeting system 5(19.2%), Line item budgeting 5(19.2%), Planning, programming and budgeting system 16(61.5%), Incremental budgeting system 8(30.8%), Flexible budgeting 12(46.2%), Rolling budgeting 2(7.7%), and zero budgeting 3(11.5%).

2. What is the current level of budget allocation for library resources in private universities in Abia State?

26 responses

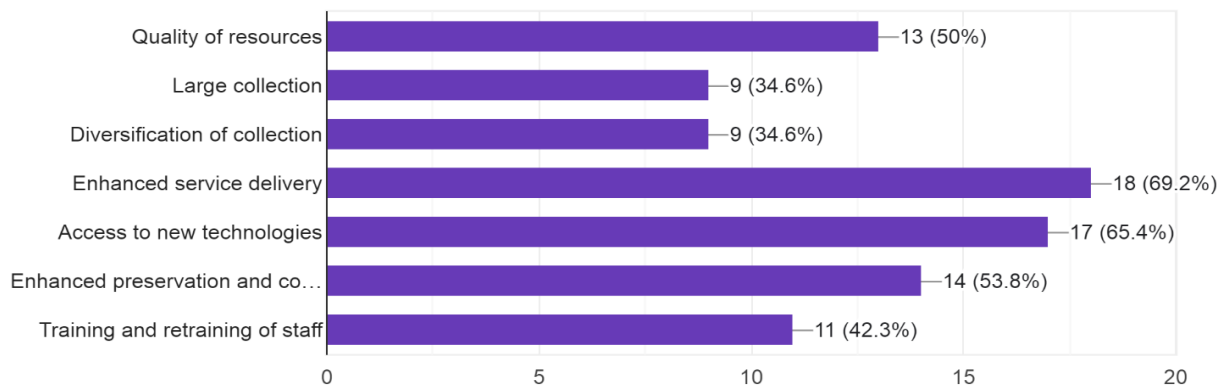


Source: Field survey, 2024

Figure 5 above shows library staff response on the current level of budget allocation for library resources in the private universities in Abia State; Adequate 3(11.5%), Moderate 6(23.1%), while majority of the respondents 17(65.4%) noted that the funds allocated to the library are Inadequate.

3. What are the impacts of budget allocation on libraries in private universities in Abia State?

26 responses



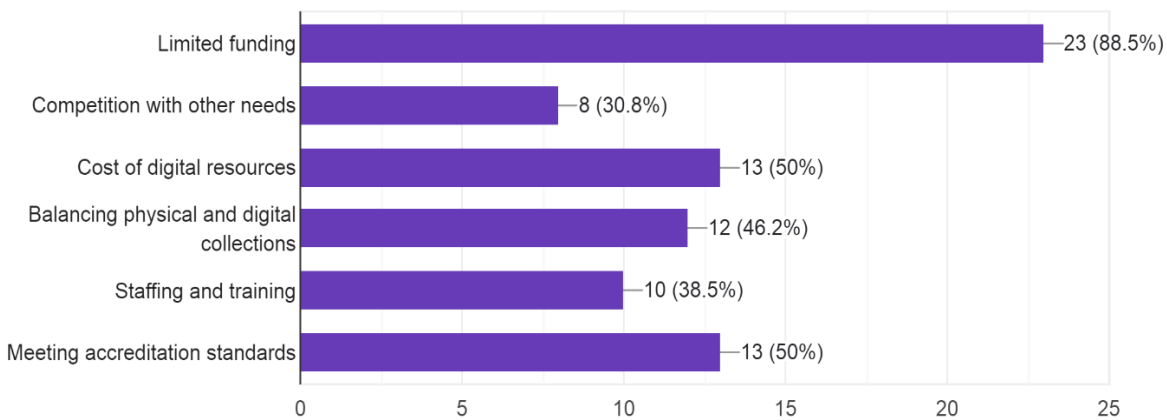
Source: Field survey, 2024

Figure 6 above shows library staff response on the positive impacts of budget allocation on libraries in the private universities in Abia State; Quality of resources 13(50%), Large collection 9(34.6%), Diversification of collection 9(34.6%), Enhanced service delivery 18(69.2%), Access

to new technologies 17(65.4%), Enhanced preservation and conservation of information materials 14 (53.8%), and Training and retraining of staff 11(42.3%).

4. What are the challenges faced in budget allocation for library resources in private universities in Abia State?

26 responses



Source: Field survey, 2024

Figure 7 above indicates library staff response on the challenges of budget allocation for library resources in the private universities in Abia State; Limited funding ranked excessively high 23(88.5%), Competition with other needs 8(30.8%), Cost of digital resources 13 (50%), Balancing physical and digital collections 12(46.2%), Staffing and training 10(38.5%), while 13(50%), cited meeting accreditation standards as a challenge.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from the study provide valuable insights into the budgeting techniques, budget allocation, impacts, and challenges related to library resources in private universities in Abia State. The results reveal that the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System (PPBS) is the most commonly used budgeting technique, followed by Flexible budgeting and Incremental budgeting systems. This is consistent with previous studies that have also highlighted the prevalence of these budgeting techniques in educational institutions and libraries alike (Jones, 2019; Johnson & Lee, 2021; Smith & Brown, 2022; Williams, 2023). However, the study also identifies a significant proportion of respondents indicating the use of Line item budgeting and Lump sum budgeting system. Furthermore, the data indicates that the majority of library staff perceive the current level of budget allocation for library resources in private universities in Abia State as inadequate. This finding aligns with previous studies that have emphasized the challenges of insufficient funding for libraries in academic institutions (Patel, 2020). The impact of budget allocation on libraries is evident from the positive outcomes reported by the respondents, including enhanced service delivery, access to new technologies (Smith & Johnson, 2021), and improved preservation and conservation (Brown & Green, 2022), of information

materials. These positive impacts resonate with the findings of other research highlighting the crucial role of adequate budget allocation in improving library resources and services (Matthews & Walster, 2019; Miller, 2023).

However, the study also uncovers several challenges associated with budget allocation for library resources in private universities in Abia State. Notably, limited funding emerges as the most significant challenge, reflecting the broader issue of financial constraints faced by educational institutions in Nigeria (Okafor, 2019; Adekunle, 2021). Additionally, the competition with other needs, cost of digital resources, and the need to balance physical and digital collections are identified as notable challenges, echoing similar concerns raised in previous literature on library budgeting and resource allocation (Tanaka, 2020). Moreover, meeting accreditation standards is highlighted as a significant challenge, emphasizing the critical link between adequate budget allocation and the fulfillment of academic quality standards in university libraries (Tijani & Ivongbe, 2021). On the whole, these findings shed light on the various aspects of budgeting for library resources in private universities in Abia State.

Conclusion

The study shed light on the critical role of budget allocation in private universities in Abia State. The prevalent use of budgeting techniques such as the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System (PPBS), Flexible budgeting, and Incremental budgeting reflects the complexity of financial planning within these institutions. However, the study reveals a concerning trend of inadequate budget allocation for library resources, as reported by a majority of the respondents. This inadequacy poses significant challenges, including limited access to updated materials, competition with other needs, and the cost of digital resources. Addressing the identified challenges will be essential for private universities in Abia State to optimize their budget allocation for library resources and thereby enhance the academic and research environment within their institutions.

Recommendations

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

15. University authorities should address the perceived inadequacy of budget allocation for library resources.
16. There is a need for private universities in Abia State to consider diversifying their budgeting techniques beyond the commonly used Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System (PPBS), Flexible budgeting, and Incremental budgeting systems.
17. Strategies should be developed to effectively balance the allocation of funds between physical and digital collections.

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