

Exploiting Library Advocacy as a Funding Strategy among Academic Libraries for Information Services Delivery in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

The study focuses on exploiting library advocacy as a funding strategy among academic libraries for information services delivery in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The objectives set out were; to know the essence of exploiting library advocacy as a funding strategy and to investigate areas of library advocacy as funding strategy for library and information services delivery in academic libraries in Kaduna State. Survey research design of the quantitative research methodology was adopted to randomly administered questionnaire to collect data. Two hundred and seventeen librarians were the respondents. Data collected were analysed descriptively and results presented using tables, frequency count and simple percentages. The findings showed that Identification and pursuing opportunities such as grants, partnerships and philanthropic support is the essence of advocacy as a funding strategy in academic libraries and Funding and budgeting, developing strategies to secure and manage library funding including grants, donors and budget allocation are the most needed areas of advocacy as funding strategies in academic libraries in Kaduna State. It was concluded that library advocacy is paramount to funding of academic Libraries in the libraries studied. In view of this, it is recommended that, the management of the academic libraries should maintain and strive to improve on the library advocacy efforts, as this would increase the effectiveness of Library and information services delivery in Academic Libraries in Kaduna State. The management and Librarians of Academic Libraries in Kaduna State should focus more the most needed areas of Library Advocacy which help to secure more funding in the libraries thereby enhancing in providing effective Library and information services delivery.

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INTRODUCTION

In contemporary Nigeria society in which library and information service is not at the forefront of government activities, the subject matter of advocacy could be seen to be very pertinent to the information world. It is assumed that education is the key to economic development of any society, if education is the bedrock of any society suffice it to state that librarianship is a hub upon which every educational activity rotates on. However, it is disheartening to note that in most developed countries, in an attempt to enhance the educational system, more often than not, libraries in our educational institutions are neglected in the scheme of things. Libraries are inadequately funded; most heads of institution

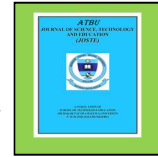
have poor perception of library especially for the fact that it is not income generating avenue for the Institutions. This above reasons among orders underpinned the necessity of the subject matter of advocacy in library and information services. (Ezeala 2023 cited Osuchukwu, Anyadiegwu, Nzewi & Eneh, 2015).

The word "advocacy" takes its roots from the Latin word "advocare", meaning to speak for someone, not only speaking for, but also speaking with the people, proposing or recommending something or someone for better options. It implies identifying a cause, believing in it, mobilizing and influencing others to support it so as to change the policy or programme that is negatively affecting that cause. Advocacy is a planned, deliberate,

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sustained effort to raise awareness of an issue or issues. It is a continuous process during which support and understanding of the issue are gradually increased over an extended period of time. (Koukourakis, n.d). According to Illinois Library Association (n.d) Advocacy simply means to actively support a cause. Libraries are our cause, people in the community recognize libraries are an important asset; but there are others who feel that technology has made library services obsolete and the current economic situation sometimes makes their argument compelling. Library supporters must remind their neighbors, community leaders, and elected officials of the fact that libraries provide great learning opportunities, excellent public service, and serve as invaluable contributors in their communities.

Emezie & Nwaohiri (n.d) Opined library advocacy should be a leading role for Librarians in repositioning the academic library for effective information service delivery in the 21st century. He further said, in the current dispensation, users no longer seek information in the library. The reverse has become the case where the library goes out to render information services to users. To achieve this, the librarian has to look out for opportunities to connect and interact with his varied users. He therefore employs his interpersonal skills strategies to connect with administrators, faculty and students. During meetings, he can brief faculty on current publications and their terms of accessibility. By this, acts as a strong advocate for the library which is a vital organ of the university.

Statement of the Problem

Academic libraries are the intellectual heart of educational institutions, serving as vital repositories of knowledge, resources, and support for students, faculty, and researchers in an age marked by rapid technological advancements and evolving educational paradigms, the role of academic libraries and library staff has expanded beyond the mere provision of books and periodicals. Library advocacy, as a strategic approach. Empowers academic libraries to assert their importance and communicate their value effectively. It involves articulating a compelling narrative that resonates with key stakeholders, such as

students, faculty, administrators and funding bodies. Library advocacy is not merely a promotional endeavor but a means to ensure that libraries remain at the forefront of academic excellence, innovation, and knowledge dissemination.

However, the value and relevance of academic libraries, they are not always self-evident to all stakeholders within the academic community. Academic libraries often contend with budget constraints, which can impact their ability to acquire and maintain up-to-date resources, invest in emerging technologies, and offer innovative services. These limitations can hinder the libraries capacities to meet the evolving needs of its academic community effectively.

Another possible factor for inadequate funding of academic libraries in Kaduna State is poor advocacy strategies towards influencing the decisions of government, policy makers, foreign bodies as well as private organizations towards the development of academic libraries. Many academic libraries managements do not deploy effective advocacy methods like lobbying policy makers, carrying out community outreaches, taking legal action, building relationships or even make use of media campaign to win the heart of policy maker among others. The study therefore investigates library advocacy as a strategy in academic libraries for information service delivery in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

- 1 To know the essence of exploiting library advocacy as a funding strategy for library and information services delivery among academic libraries in Kaduna State, Nigeria.
- 2 To investigate areas of library advocacy as funding strategy for library and information services delivery are needed among academic libraries in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Essence of advocacy as a funding strategy in Academic libraries

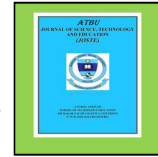
The importance of library advocacy in academic library settings cannot be overstated. Advocacy efforts ensure that libraries remain visible and relevant with the institution even as information landscapes evolve. Advocacy initiatives are essential for securing the

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resources necessary to maintain and expand library collections, services and technologies. (Schmidt, 2004). Effective library advocacy also enhances the library's ability to contribute to student success and faculty research excellence. (Hardesty and Brinkman, 2013).

According to Aghauche, (n.d) The academic library is the nerve center of any tertiary institution. As a resource center it occupies the central and primary place because it performs all the functions of the parent institution- teaching, learning and research. If the library must perform its vital role of teaching, learning and research effectively and efficiently, it must be adequately funded. Adequate funding enables the library to provide information sources and services needed to meet the information needs of users. In the same vein, Ezeala, (2023) posited the library is meant to be keenly involved in the social, economic, cultural and lifelong learning of the people. It is the only institution that offers free access to knowledge to both high and lowly citizens. Yet it is not accorded high priority in planning and development by governing institutions. Libraries have always had to justify their existence to sponsors as they are not considered 'essential' as compared to sectors like health, education, roads, etc. Librarians' voices must become audible in convincing everyone including the grassroots, legislators and leaders at all levels on the need to let libraries exist positively.

In advocating the importance of libraries, librarians should take into consideration that technology has vastly changed the way information is access, and it has greatly enhanced library and information services and it has also raised some unsettling questions. In the information age, library advocates continue to have a crucial role to play in educating our communities about why libraries and librarians are essential in an information society. To be effective, they must speak loudly, clearly and with a unified voice. Society needs libraries, and libraries need advocates. (Koukarakis n.d from Library Advocate's Handbook). To emphasize on the importance of advocacy in academic libraries Obi. (2023), cited Mlanga (2002) opined that the reason for advocacy and lobbying is that things are not going well in the library sector, to him, while libraries are integral units in country's welfare infrastructure, they are not immune to

having their findings or programs jeopardized by changing political environments.

According to Canadian Association of Public Libraries (2011). Libraries are known that have a long fundamental role as centres of knowledge and symbols of intellectual freedom. But the integral role of libraries within society is being undermined by low visibility, passive community support, and the prevailing myth that books, libraries and librarians will be replaced by computer terminals and virtual connections. Libraries receive far less public and media attention than other services such as education and medical care and decision-makers are more likely to regard library services as less essential than these other services. Research shows that although the public regards library service as essential, decision-makers regard them as "soft services". This situation must change, for without greater public and government support, and a challenge to the myth of obsolescence, libraries and society will pay a high price. Advocacy is a weapon used by libraries to mobilize support for library services in general or for a particular situation, examples are supporting increased library services, increased financing of library services and new library legislation are also supported. The goal of advocacy is to influence results, in order to attain their objectives. Advocacy is the process of presenting a case, an argument, or a claim in support of a decision or a course of action. To be a library advocate, one needs to believe in the value of the library, such individual should support impartial access to information in a community. It helps to increase awareness for library and information service centre among communities for self-improvement. (Abegunde, Awujoola and Bamidele, 2023).

Areas of advocacy as a funding strategy in Academic libraries

Advocacy combines various complementary initiatives in order to achieve an objective. Through a series of small wins on specific issues that may appear not to be of great consequence, an organization or coalition gradually builds the social power and technical capacity needed to do advocacy on more complex issues. (Washington Office on Latin America and Center for Development and Population Activities, 2003).

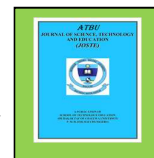
According to Durney, (2023)

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Librarians working in all types of libraries must be competent advocates and policy influencers. Librarians execute advocacy skills through a variety of actions, such as communicating regularly with the library's community, writing an informative letter to the editor to raise public awareness of library issues; researching policy issues and effectively communicating the policy impact on the library to stakeholders and decision-makers; and telling the story of why the library matters to a municipal board looking to cut the library's budget; or testifying before a school board to oppose censorship and defend the freedom to read. In addition, librarians need a foundational understanding of how public policy impacts libraries. This understanding empowers librarians to advocate for policy that enables libraries to realize their mission in ensuring equal access to information for all. Librarians educate policymakers and community members about the important role that libraries play in their communities. Koukarakis cited Alire, (n.d) Advocacy uses many of the tools of marketing and public relations, but it is neither solely one nor the other. The public relations and marketing tool are: public meetings, news conferences, lobbying, surveys, focus groups, advertising in all media, strategic partnerships, a huge variety of print promotional material and much more.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed cross sectional survey research design. The choice of cross-sectional survey design is justified since the study dealt with different entities like age, gender, educational qualifications, working

experiences of librarians from Kashim Ibrahim Library Ahmadu Bello University, Federal College of Education Library, Nuhu Bamalli Polytechnic Library, and A.W Ambi library, Kaduna State College of Education, Gidan Waya Kaduna State. The population of the study is five hundred and nine (509) Librarians in four selected academic libraries in Kaduna State. (Kashim Ibrahim Library Ahmadu Bello University, Federal College of Education Library, Nuhu Bamalli Polytechnic Library and A.W Ambi Library, Kaduna State College of Education, Gidan Waya). Two hundred and seventeen (217) librarians were used (relying on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of determining sample size. simple random sampling techniques was used in selecting the respondents. The researcher used a structured open and close ended questionnaire for data collection. Two hundred and seventeen (217) questionnaire were administered to the four selected academic libraries in Kaduna State and 212 were duly completed and returned and used for this study.

Data were analyzed with the use of computer software called statistical package for the social science. Results were obtained and presented in tables, frequency counts and simple percentages.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Essence of advocacy as a funding strategy in Academic libraries

The essence of advocacy as a funding strategy in academic libraries is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Essence of Advocacy as a Funding Strategy in Academic Libraries

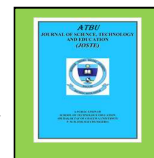
S/N	Essence of Advocacy as a Funding Strategy in Academic Libraries	Frequency	Percentage
1.	To raise awareness about the value and impact of libraries	100	47.17
2.	Build relationships with stakeholders, policy makers, and funders	131	61.792
3.	Demonstrate the library's role in achieving community goals and outcomes	117	55.189
4.	Identify and pursue funding opportunities, such as grants, partnerships and philanthropic support	169	79.717
5.	Develop a strong case for funding, highlighting the library unique contributions and needs	152	71.698
6.	Engage library users, Advocates for supporters to champion the library cause	123	58.019
7.	Foster a culture of advocacy within the library, encouraging staff	137	64.623

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to share the library story and impact.

Multiple- Choice responses

Table 1 showed responses on the essence of advocacy as a funding strategy in academic libraries. The table revealed that 169(79.72%) indicated that identification and pursuing opportunities such as grants, partnerships and philanthropic support is the essence of advocacy as a funding strategy in academic libraries while 100(47.17%) of the respondents indicated that the essence of advocacy as a funding strategy in academic libraries is to raise awareness about the value and impact of libraries. Identifying and pursuing funding opportunities, such as grants, partnerships and philanthropic supports is the major essence of advocacy as funding strategy in academic libraries. Others include developing strong case for funding, highlighting the library unique contributions and needs and fostering a culture of advocacy within the library encouraging staff to share the library story and impact with 71.70% and 64.62% response respectively. By implication all the identified

reasons for advocacy as a funding strategy in academic libraries were positive since the responses are all above 50% except for item 1 which is less than 50%. The outcome of this study affirmed the standpoint of Schmidt (2004) who noted that the importance of library advocacy in academic library settings cannot be overstated. Advocacy efforts ensure that libraries remain visible and relevant with the institution even as information landscapes evolve. Advocacy initiatives are essential for securing the resources necessary to maintain and expand library collections, services and technologies.

Areas of Library Advocacy that is needed as a funding strategies in Academic libraries in Kaduna State.

Response on areas of advocacy that is needed as funding strategies in academic libraries in Kaduna State is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Areas of Advocacy needed as a Funding Strategies in Academic libraries in Kaduna State.

S/N	Areas of Advocacy that is needed as a funding strategies in Academic libraries	Frequency	Percentage
1	Funding and budgeting, developing strategies to secure and manage library funding including grants, donors and budget allocation	196	92.45
2	Partnership and collaborations with other libraries to expand resources and services	163	76.89
3	Collection development for diverse inclusive, and relevant collections that support curriculum and research needs	154	72.64
4	Research Support, emphasizing the library's contributions to faculty research grant, funding and scholarly productivity	121	57.08
5	Student Success, highlighting the library's role in supporting students learning	123	58.02
6	Marketing and outreach, promoting the library's services and value through targeted marketing and outreach efforts	137	64.62

Multiple- Choice responses

Table 2 revealed that 196(92.45%) of the respondents indicated that funding and budgeting, developing strategies to secure and manage library funding including grants, donors and budget allocation are areas of advocacy needed as funding strategies in academic libraries in Kaduna State with 121(57.08%) of respondents who indicated that research

support, emphasizing the library's contributions to faculty research grant, funding and scholarly productivity are areas of advocacy needed as funding strategies in academic libraries in Kaduna State. Other areas of advocacy include; Partnership and collaborations with other libraries to expand resources and services, collection development for diverse inclusive, and relevant collections that support curriculum

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and research needs with response of 76.89% and 72.64% respectively. Arising from the above analysis a conclusion can be drawn that Funding and budgeting, developing strategies to secure and manage library funding including grants, donors and budget allocation and Partnership and collaborations with other libraries to expand resources and services are the most needed areas of Advocacy in Academic Libraries in Kaduna State. On the other hand, the low percentages responses of other areas needed for advocacy signify that Academic libraries are contributing well in the areas of research support and scholarly productivity.

From the Table, it can be deduced that the major area of advocacy in academic libraries in Kaduna State is funding and budgeting, developing strategies to secure and manage library funding including grants, donors and budget as this item attracted over 90% response.

By implication, the academic libraries in Kaduna State would be better working environments if the advocacy efforts in the most needed area are consider important and more deliberate efforts is geared by the Librarians towards achieving it.

CONCLUSION

From the analysis it could be said that Identification and pursuing opportunities such as grants, partnerships and philanthropic support is the essence of advocacy as a funding strategy in academic libraries and Funding and budgeting, developing strategies to secure and manage library funding including grants, donors and budget allocation are the most needed areas of advocacy as funding strategies in academic libraries in Kaduna State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The management of the academic libraries should maintain and strive to improve on the library advocacy efforts, as this would increase the effectiveness of Library and information services delivery in Academic Libraries in Kaduna State.
2. The management and Librarians of Academic Libraries in Kaduna State should focus more the most needed areas of Library Advocacy which help to secure more funding in the libraries thereby

enhancing in providing effective Library and information services delivery.

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