

Implications of Inflationary Trends on Collection Development at the University of Ilorin Library, 1976-1985, 2010-2014

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Abstract

This case study discussed inflation and its implication for collection development at the University of Ilorin Library in particular and academic Libraries in Nigeria. Documentary Research Method and Structured Oral Interview techniques were used to examine the records of budgetary allocations and expenditure in the acquisition of books and journals at the University of Ilorin Library between 2010 and 2014. The study identified some problems facing collection development at the university of Ilorin library as a result of inflationary trends. The study therefore posited that inflation-driven library collection development poses great danger to the quality of information resources of the library, the quality of information retrieval by library users, the quality of research and community service mantra of the university. It there recommended that collection development librarian should ensure balanced acquisition with the available funds. Rising number of academic programmes should be controlled in view of the fact that paucity of funds would not be able to go round the myriads of academic programmes satisfactorily. The Federal Government of Nigeria should checkmate inflationary phenomenon on library books and periodicals while textbook writers and publishers should focus more on producing local books/periodicals so that libraries and library clientele would be discouraged from patronizing the more expensive foreign publications.

Keywords: Inflation, Collection Development, University of Ilorin, budgetary allocation

Introduction

The main purpose of establishing a University is for teaching, research and community service. One of the means for achieving the mantra is that the University should have a virile Library system with efficient collection development. Collection development is used in this study to explain the process and product of acquiring information resources such as books and journals in various formats into the library (ifidon, 2006). Acquisition of information resources in the right quantity and quality will allow Library users to retrieve information from the materials for different purposes. Since universities are established primarily to provide a conducive environment for teaching, research and community service, the library ensures that it provides suitable and quantitative books; journals and reference materials so as to enable the university realize its mantra. The university library can only succeed in its collection

development drive if there is adequate funding and stabilized exchange rate. For example, when exchange rate is low, the Library is better for it because it will be able to acquire more information resources across programmes being taught in University. But when prices of books and journals are high as a result of inflation, the Library becomes worse for it because it will not be able to acquire as many information resources as it requires (Bitagi & Akor, 2012).

Brief History of the University of Ilorin Library

A cursory look at the University of Ilorin, otherwise known as Unilorin showed that the institution is a second generation University established by the Federal government of Nigeria in 1975. It started academic work in October, 1976. Like its parent Institution, the Library commenced routines and services to its clientele in October, 1976. The acquisition section is one of the foundation sections in the Library and its primary responsibility is to develop the library collection and make them available to users for teaching, learning, research, self-development and community service purposes. Since its academic inception in 1976, the mantra of the University of Ilorin has remained teaching, research and community service. The University of Ilorin has therefore, tailored its collection development in such manner that would enable the University archive its vision and mission by ensuring the book and periodical (print and non-print) collections are in the right quantity and quality for library users.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to examine the implication of inflation-driven collection development on the University of Ilorin Library. Specifically, it investigated the collection development of expenditure profile of University of Ilorin Library from 1976 to 1985 and 2010-2014. It also studied whether or not the funding profile of the library as on the higher or lower side during the 2010-2014 period. It finally investigated the effect of inflation on the collection development drive of University of Ilorin Library the library user and the University during the period under study.

Literature Review

Inflation connotes a high and persistent rise in the general price level. Sometimes, however, the price level may rise without necessarily being the result of inflation. Inflation can be hyper or galloping when price level rises very rapidly; creeping if the price level rises gently or demand-pull when demand exceeds supply. Inflationary trend also occurs when the cost of the factors of production increases and such increase is passed on the consumers in the form of higher prices. The implication of inflation on library collection development is that the library is bound to spend more money on procuring fewer books. If library users cannot get the books that they require in the library they will most probably want to buy from the middle men bookshops at higher prices. This may lead to fall in the living standard of the people who may have to spend a large chunk of their income into buying books so that they can meet their academic or research needs. If there is paucity of books in the library as a result of inflation, the library will not be able

to meet the resource needs of its clientele and the goals and objective of educational system of the country will be negatively affected.

Libraries acquire print and electronic information resources and process them for the use of its clientele. The term collection development is used in reference to the process and product of attracting books, journals, document and audio-visual materials into the library stock. Ojebode (2009) described collection development as the process of acquiring books and non-print media needed to satisfy users request for information and attain the system objectives. Collection development exercise involves some library activities such as selection of resources, acquisition of selected resources, developing plan of sharing resources between libraries, maintenance of resources, weeding and evaluation. The heartbeat of an academic institution is its Library system while the quality of information that library users can access is determined mostly by the level of its Library collection. The brain box of the Library therefore is its collection. Essien (2007) listed purchase, gifts/donations, endowments, legal deposit, exchanges, and cooperation and staff publications as methods that libraries use to develop their collections. Historically, collection development in Nigerian academic libraries passed through three major phases: (i) the oil boom era of 1970s, (ii) the World Bank intervention period of the 1990s and (iii) the Education Trust Fund Intervention of the 2000s. Each of these phases was accompanied by events that either promoted collection development in libraries or worked against the aspiration of libraries to acquire suitable books and periodicals for the use of library clientele. During the Oil Boom era, there was much money in the country to the extent that the Nigerian government was able to adequately finance the existing Universities and establish additional six (6) others including the University of Ilorin in 1975. According to Essien (2007), the federal Government budgetary allocation to Universities did not indicate particular percentage to be set aside by University for collection development in particular and library development in general, though funding of Libraries was adjudged adequate. Libraries were able to procure books and periodicals in the right quantity and quality.

Budget cuts, galloping inflation, devaluation of the Naira, scarcity of foreign exchange and rising enrolment figures above the 2.5% target set by the National University commission dovetailed into the era of World Bank intervention of the 1990s. Adedibu (2001) reported that one of the steps that government took to address the teething problems in the universities was that the National University commission (UNC) directed that four hundred thousand (N400,000.00) Naira or 5% of recurrent budgets of universities should be allocated to Universities for the purpose of collection development. The 5% allocation to libraries was grossly inadequate as many libraries could not add new books and periodicals to their collection. This precarious library situation of the 1980s to the early 1990s had grievous implications on the university mandate which is to provide suitable information resources to students and staff for teaching, research and community service.

Following the 1992 Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) nationwide strike for better funding of universities, among other demands, the Federal Government entered into a

negotiation with the Union in 1993, which led to a government circular directing the Federal Universities to as a policy:

- a) Set aside 10% of their annual recurrent budget for library development;
- b) Ensure that 60% of the accrued amount is devoted to procurement of books and periodicals;
- c) That Library funds should be released directly to a separate account managed by the University Librarian;
- d) That Library funds should not lapse while unspent funds should be rolled over to the coming year;
- e) That utilization of Library funds should be disclosed to the National University Commission (NUC) on quarterly basis,
- f) That the Library should decide the ratio of spending for books and periods (Adedibu (2001)).

With the new 10% Library Development Fund policy, university libraries bounced back in earnest. Anafulu (1997) aptly asserted that house journals and accessions lists which had gone to sleep for years started reappearing from the late 1994. The new positive development coincided with the arrival of the 120 million US Dollars World Bank Loan for the development of university libraries. The loan came as a relief for comatose university libraries which had been unable to acquire new books and periodical in the right quantity and quality. Ifidon (2006) aptly captured the deplorable collection development situation of university libraries. According to him, "lack of adequate attention for university libraries had literally reached a crises point to the extent that many university libraries were recording zero percentage growth rate due to paucity of funds for collection development.

By the end of the 1990s, it appeared that the Federal Government could no longer cope with the high cost of running the university system in Nigerian. In 2001, the National Universities Commission (NUC) withdrew the 10% library Development Fund Policy. Bitangi and Akor (2012) argued that "absence of new books on Library shelves, inability to subscribe to national and international journals, non-supply of working tools and the inability to modernize library services in line with current trends in other parts of world" were evidence that the 10% Library Development Funds (LDF) to universities had been stopped by government. Prior to the era of Educational Trust Fund (ETF) intervention in the 2000s, the petroleum Trust Fund (PTF) briefly surfaced with mandate to supply books and journals to university libraries. As expected, several titles of books and journals that were delivered to the libraries were not needed by them. So, the approach was simply a huge waste of public funds. The Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TetFund) formerly known as Education Trust Fund (ETF) at inception regularly made specified amount of funds available annually to university libraries for the purpose of collection development and improved working tools and facilities. One would therefore be correct that the TetFund intervention tactically served

as a substitute for the 10% Library development Fund (LDF), with TetFund, Libraries have been able to improve their collection very significantly.

Research Questions

Arising from the background of the study, the following specific questions were formulated to guide this research:

1. What was the collection development expenditure profile of Collection Development Section at the University of Ilorin during 1976-1985 periods?
2. What is the collection development and expenditure profile of the University of Ilorin Library during the 2010-2014 periods?
3. Was the funding profile for Collection Development on the Lower or higher side during the 2010-2014 at the University of Ilorin Library?
4. What effect did inflation have on Collection Development profile of University of Ilorin Library and the Institution?

Methodology

Documentary Research Method and Structured Oral Interview techniques were used to examine the records of budgetary allocations and expenditure in the acquisition of books and journals at the University of Ilorin Library between 1976-1985 and 2010 and 2014.

Findings and discussion

Research question 1: what was the collection development expenditure profile of the Collection Development Section at the University of Ilorin during 1967-1985 periods?

Table1: University of Ilorin Collection Development Expenditure profile-1976-1985

Items	1976/77	1977/78	1978/89	1979/80	1980/81	1981/82	1982/83	1983/84	1984/85
Books	7,238	5,237	2,972	1,169	3,945	3,113	2,901	1,601	2,437
Periodicals	594	156	10	100	40	121	78	96	70
Expenditure (₦)	273,477	237,846	88,378	110,000	127,459	200,000	200,000	200,000	250,000

Sources: Acquisition Records, 1976-1985

From the table (1) above, 1976/77 and 1977/78 periods recorded the highest number of book acquisition (7,238 and 5,237 volumes respectively) as well as periodicals (594 and 121 titles respectively) worth 273,477 and 237,846 Naira respectively. The period marked the first two years in the life of the library during the oil boom era in Nigerian. Surprisingly, however, the next two years (1978/79, 1979/80) of the oil boom era witnessed a fall in the book acquisition (2,

972, and 1,169) and periodicals (10,100). In the early years of budget cuts, galloping inflation and naira devaluation, the library book collection rose (3,945,3,133) and periodicals (40,121) above the situation during the oil boom era. The acquisition fell again during the 1982/83 and 1983/84 years (2, 901, 1,601 for books respectively). The book acquisition rose again to 2,437 in 1984/85 but periodicals fall to titles in same period. Expenditure on books and periods was the highest during the first two years of the library (273,477, 237,846 Naira respectively). Expenditure on the items fell drastically to ₦88, 378 in 1978/79 while expenditure for the years 1979/80- 1984/85 was a mere estimate. By the undulating pattern of acquisition and expenditure during the first nine years of the library’s existence, the conjecture would be that collection development at the University of Ilorin could not be adjudged as being very healthy in terms of balance funding and equitable purchase and allocation of books and periodicals across Departments.

Table2: University of Ilorin Library Collection and Expenditure Distribution, 2010-2014

Items	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Books	2,841 volumes	4,218 volumes	3,053 volumes	2,068 volumes	2,425 volumes
periodicals	87 Titles	84 Titles	105 Titles	165 Titles	125 Titles
Expenditure (₦)	58,541,674.09	1,743,900	31,047,967.7	10480,100	12,968,345

Sources: Acquisition Records, 2010-2014

From the table (2) above, the University of Ilorin Library expended ₦58, 541,674.09 on purchasing 2,841 Volumes of books and 87 journal titles in 2010. The journal titles for the five years under study were mostly annual law reports. The volumes of books increased to 4,218 in 2011 because they were sourced from 2010 TetFund intervention. The journal titles were 84 during the same period. The low expenditure on book and periodicals was because there was no TetFund intervention in 2011. In 2012, the Library expended ₦31,047,967.7 (99% TetFund) on 3,053 Volumes of books and 105 Titles of journals. In 2013, 4,068 volumes of books and 165 Titles of journals were purchased at ₦4,480,100 while ₦2,968,345 was expended on 2,425 Volumes of books and 125 journal titles in 2014. It is important point out that during the TetFund bailout in 2010, 2011 and 2012 the Library spent ₦ 91,333,541.79 to purchase just 10,112 Volumes of books and 276 journal titles. The situation between 2010, 2011and 2012 was an effect of inflation during which too much money was expended on few volumes of book materials. 2013 and 2014 appeared to be worse because the Library spent ₦23, 448,445 to buy just 4,493 volumes of book and 276 journal titles. During the 2013/2014years, the Central Bank of Nigerian carried out a devaluation of the naira in such a way that imported materials such as books and journals became so expensive for Libraries to purchase. The situation did not allow Libraries to develop their collections in the right quantity and quality.

Summary of Findings

Available records and findings revealed the following::

a) Unsteady Collection Development

Collection of books and periodicals at the University of Ilorin Library was not steady over the years under study. This is evident in Table (1) and (2) which showed that book and periodical acquisition was high in some years and fell in other years. One would argue that the incongruous funding of collection development was a factor militating against steady and balanced acquisition of books and periodicals. Ever increasing population of student enrolment and staff recruitment was also found culpable in the inability of the library to plan ahead for equitable acquisition of books and periodicals for Library users. This finding is in tandem with saint's (1992) assertion that sometimes, the numbers of books and journals per capital are small not because the growth size of the collection is small, but because the growth rate of the University itself is too high.

b) High Growth in Academic Programmes

Expenditure on books and periodicals over the years (2010-2014) under study was erratic, predictably, as a result of paucity and irregular inflow of funds from the government and the University for Collection development. This situation was responsible for the inability of the University of Ilorin Library to plan its collection budget efficiently. As Ifidon (2006) opined, ever-growing several academic programmes that would have to share form the inadequate funds that might have been made available to buy books and periodicals. According to Odusanya (et al, 2004), adequate funding is the only key that can unlock the gate to efficient collection development in academic libraries. Inadequate funds can lead to a variance between library development and academic institutions. This is because the library will not be able to add new books to its stock nor subscribe to new periodicals. The implication of under-funding on library collection development is also that library users will lose interest in the library if they are not able to access books of their choice on the library shelves. The overall effect of inadequate funding on the library is that it will not be able to achieve its primary objective of quantitative efficient service delivery to its clientele.

c) Dwindling Book and Journal Acquisition

It was found that book and periodical purchases kept on dwindling during the period under study. Inflation usually results in a fall in the local currency and higher exchange rate. This leads naturally to higher prices of books and journals as well as a reduction in the volumes of books and journals that libraries can purchases. Essien (2007) also attested to the fact that during inflation, exchange rate of local currency against the foreign one is higher, which make the cost of imported books and journals to be higher. The effect of higher foreign exchange rate on collection development is that of a significant fall in library collection because more funds will be required to purchase just a few of the required information resources.

d) Inadequate Local Publication

On a closer examination of its stock records, 98.7% of book and periodical purchase by the University of Ilorin Library were foreign materials. Non-availability of locally published quality books and journals has remained a deterrent to collection development in the library. According to Ifidon (2006) "Sub-Saharan African countries produced only 15% of books and periods that the advanced countries produced. This implies that over 80% of required books and journals by sub-Saharan African countries have to be imported from foreign countries thereby subjecting the scarce library collection development funds to the whims and caprices of foreign currencies.

Recommendations

On the basis of the summary of findings in this study, it is recommended as follows:

1. Collection Development Librarian should ensure a balanced acquisition of information resources across programmes and departments. Available funds should, therefore, be planned and expended in a balanced manner as a means of ensuring steady growth of library collection.
2. . It is therefore recommended that governments should only allow inflationary tendencies very sparingly when it become absolutely necessary to do so. This will enable the library to keep afloat in its collection development drive. Government should consider removing books and journals from import duty regime.
3. Local Publication: Local authors and publisher should be more productive in local books and periodicals publishing in the right quantity and quality. This will enable libraries re-direct their efforts at purchasing more locally produced texts than the foreign ones. When more authors get into writing more books and more publishers get involved in local publications trade, lectures will have more local books to access and prescribe for libraries to acquire them.

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