

CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS INFLUENCING CORRUPTION IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES: A STUDY OF UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTHERN NIGERIA

By

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Abstract

Corruption remains a pervasive challenge across higher education and its knowledge hubs university libraries. This study investigates contributory factors influencing corruption in university libraries in Southern Nigeria, focusing on political leadership, library management practices, and systemic structures. Data were collected using a validated structured questionnaire administered to 360 librarians who attended the 2024 Nigerian Library Association conference (University of Port Harcourt); respondents represented 40 academic libraries from federal, and state universities across Southern Nigeria (South-South, South-East and South-West geopolitical zones) anonymous for confidentiality. Reliability testing returned Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.82$. Findings show that governmental interference, weak institutional checks, conflicting appropriations, and poor leadership significantly exacerbate corruption. Within library management, embezzlement, weak financial controls, and fund mismanagement were identified as key enablers. Systemic factors greed, poor living standards and weak enforcement further entrench corrupt behaviour. Corruption was reported to negatively affect philanthropic donations, subscription and acquisition of electronic resources, infrastructure development, acquisition quality, and recruitment of qualified staff (grand mean = 3.2). The study concludes that unchecked corruption undermines knowledge dissemination, academic integrity and university development. Recommended responses include stricter financial auditing, internal controls, staff welfare improvements, legislative frameworks addressing library crime, and adoption of technological monitoring to mitigate corrupt practice and safeguard academic libraries.

Keywords: Corruption; University Libraries; Nigeria; Library Management

Introduction

Globally in institutions of higher learning, corruption undermines services delivery, erodes public trust, and weakens the knowledge system infrastructures essential for teaching, learning and research in academic institutions. Academic libraries, that are libraries found in the universities and are central repositories and facilitators of scholarly services and practices, and are highly vulnerable due to fund management, subscription and physical collections that can be targets for misappropriation or malpractice. However, theft is one form of corrupt practice, a system act also known as theft, distorting resource allocation and services priorities. Theft is experienced in every sector of the economy including the library and information science profession (Sturges 2008). This implies that corrupt practices is a general pandemic. However, corruption is a broader term to theft, is endemic that collapses development. The term corruption will be interchanged with theft in this study. Historical reports according to Onyancha and Ocholla (2024) from a content analysis revealed that articles on corruption were published in various subject fields such as History, Anthropology, Economics, Management, Sociology and Library Science. This indicates that corruption is endemic and impacts diverse aspects of human endeavour in society beyond Political Science (Onyancha & Ocholla, 2024; Trushina, 2008). The phenomenon has migrated into all private and public sectors (Mugellini et al., 2021; Sartor & Bramish, 2020) including the library with negative implications on the university and the library at large.

The authors observed that corruption has infiltrated both public and private institutions, including university libraries, where it poses serious negative consequences for academic integrity and institutional development. The university is an ivory tower with the library as a

service unit and serves the users irrespective of their academic qualification, affiliation, gender, social status, region and religion. The library is defined as an organized department in an academic institution containing collections of print and electronic information resources for use by community members (Appleton & Hall, 2022). This implies that knowledge sharing in higher institution includes the teaching and learning that emanates from the lectures and the library resources, which makes the library an engine house or integral part of the institution.

Today, the library makes use of information and community technologies (ICT) facilities that cost a lot of money to enhance access to information materials and services to users. The university library provides vital information resources and services that impact the learning, teaching and research activities of its users (Ajani et al., 2022; Ikpeze & Ofodile 2023). In a practical term it implies, no institution can succeed academically without adequate library for information and knowledge sharing. Information services play a vital role to users in the university community, serving as a gateway to knowledge and culture. However, despite the relevance of the university library in the academic institution, its existence is facing a lot of challenges resulting from corrupt practices. According to Chen (2023), corruption is dishonest behavior by those in positions of power. Corruption entails a variety of actions, including giving or accepting bribes or inappropriate gifts, double-dealing, graft and defrauding investors (Ragazou, Passas & Garefalakis, 2022). This means in any illegal exchange of tangible or financial gift in office for favour or pre patronage, is perceived as corruption, as the bases of the gift exchange is found illegal. Educational corrupt act is the abuse of authority for personal as well as material gain (Heyneman, 2018). Thus, most perpetrators of the corrupts act emanates from greed and irresponsibility on the officials.

Corruption in the library and information service environment would lead to an unsustainable system, affecting the development of the library and knowledge economy of any nation. Library corruption in most countries has become a great challenge to information access, threatening effective knowledge and information services (Khan, Ibrahim & Hussain, 2021). Corruption is undoubtedly the worst social vice and a cog on the wheel of progress that is confronting today's libraries. Hence in consideration of the relevance of the library in the academic institutions, this study expediently investigates the factors that contribute to corruption in the university library with a focus in Nigeria. The following research questions were set by the authors as parameters.

Research Questions

1. What are the political factors that increase corruption at the university library?
2. How does the library management enable corruption at the university library?
3. What are the contributory factors of corruption at the university library?
4. What are the effects of corruption on the development of the university library?

literature review

There is scarce literature with conceptual discussion on corruption in the university library. Several countries including the United States, United Kingdom among others consider corruption as a negative phenomenon that affects the public administration and the functioning of the system (Madaliev, Mamatkulov, Khalikov, Mamadiyarov & Toshboev, 2022). This implies that any functional system that the personal integrity is questionable is bound to this deadly corruption cancer. A study by Sofyani, Riyadh and Fahlevi (2020) of 141 LGO employees of Surabaya, Indonesia who are involved with e-government implementation on

intervening role of information technology (IT) in governance towards improving service quality, accountability and transparency of local government. The results demonstrated that the culture of compliance in IT is associated with service quality, accountability, and transparency through effective use of IT in governance. The result suggests that effective use of IT is a crucial aspect that must be considered for achieving successful e-government development and eliminating corruption in Indonesian local governments. Surprisingly, IT for accountability cannot control human mind and replace their illegalities, corrupt intents with sanity.

The study by Anyanwu (2020) discussed the future of libraries in developing countries with a focus on Nigeria. The paper traced the history of librarianship in Nigeria from the time of colonial masters and missionaries to the time of independence with several setbacks such as lack of infrastructure, lack of training of library staff, corruption and the poor state of the Nigerian economy. The paper found that the meagre resources that were budgeted for the library were not approved and released to the librarians to actualize the library's objectives. The author further asserted that the future of libraries in Nigeria remains promising if the government adequately funds library services, improves infrastructure, strengthens the economy, and enhances access to information and communication technology. However, these efforts are often undermined in practice by the pervasive corruption arising from the poor ethical standards and compromised integrity of some professional academic librarians responsible for managing library resources.

Corruption in the university occurs among faculty members and students. In the case of faculty members, there are evidence of research falsification, plagiarism, sexual favour and personal favouritism; while among students, sexual exploitation, exchange cheating and plagiarism were seen to be predominant (Heyneman, 2018). Ufuoma and Omekwu (2022)

investigated the challenges of the recruitment and selection process of librarians in federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey. The population consists of 108 librarians, out of which 95 of the respondents answered the questionnaire. The findings revealed that some of the challenges facing recruitment in the library were ethnic influence, favouritisms, recruitment based on god-fatherism and dwindling budgetary allocation. The recruitment and selection process of librarians in Nigeria was seen to be riddled with corruption. The study identified performance at interviews, equity and fairness as benchmarks for recruitment, relevant discipline; and having channels for reporting cases of corruption during recruitment as a means to reduce recruitment corruption in university libraries.

A study was carried out by Bertot, Jaeger and Grimes (2010) on the use of ICTs to create a culture of transparency while focusing on e-government and social media as openness and anti-corruption tools for societies. The paper explores the potential impacts of information and ICTs – especially e-government and social media on cultural attitudes about transparency. The study proposes the use of ICT as a cost-effective and convenient means to promote openness and transparency and reduce corruption. The study argued that e-government, in particular, has been used in many prominent and comprehensive transparency efforts in several nations, but whether these ICT-enabled efforts have the potential to create a substantive social change in attitudes toward transparency has not been widely considered.

Cases of Corruption in University Library

There is limited literature on corruption in the university library in Nigeria. Irrespective of that, Nigerian universities are aware of corruption that has undermined the development of the university library over the years. Ayeni and Andeshi (2023) conducted an analysis of literature

on corruption and university education in Nigeria between 2004 and 2022. The study noted that corruption had been midwifed into almost every aspect and structure of Nigerian society particularly the university education system. The study examined the effect of corruption on university education in Nigeria and relies mostly on secondary data and personal observation based on the experiences of the researchers as university teachers. The data for the study were collected from print and online publications. Content analysis was employed for the analysis. Using the structural-functional theory for data analysis, the study revealed that corruption had negatively affected the quality of university education through symptoms such as increased administrative costs in running university education, mismanagement of available funds, infrastructural deficits, shortage of qualified academic staff, and ultimately poor quality of university education (Ayeni & Andeshi, 2023).

Nigeria has witnessed a lot of corruption cases in every strata of government. This was what motivated the government to establish some agencies to mitigate the menace. The Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) among others are government agencies that were established by law as far back as 2000 and 2002 respectively with a primary role of investigating financial crimes in government/public service such as advance fee fraud, money laundering and other corrupt practices in Nigeria (ICPC Establishment Act, 2024; EFCC Establishment Act, 2024). The purpose of their establishment was to stem the tide and tame corruption. After their establishment, Nigeria is still witnessing high level of corruption in government and public service affecting the development of education and the library. Professor Florence Banku Obi, Vice Chancellor of the University of Calabar (UNICAL) during her launch of the UNICAL

Library Mobile App in 2022 admitted that corruption was endemic and cannot allow her administration to excel if accepted as a norm in the university. In her speech, she promised “to do everything within her powers to fight corruption, ”because according to her, “the university cannot excel in an environment where corruption is a norm” (Nairaland, 2024).

In 1997, Snyder and Hersberger explored national and Indiana managerial practices to understand how library embezzlement occurred. Data was gathered from state board of account auditors, library board members, and current directors or staff of the libraries. The study showed that corruption/embezzlement of library funds was not mostly done by the members but initiated at the managerial level. The study revealed that from the national level, the least amount embezzled from the libraries was \$40,000 while some libraries lost above \$100,000.00. The common principles in that study such as separation of duty, adequate documentation, independent checks, proper procedures and authorizations, bonding, job rotation, enforced vacation, policing resources, and employing reliable personnel to control the affairs of the system in ensuring that crime do not advance in the library (Snyder & Hersberger, 1997). The methods that were deployed to embezzle funds from Indiana libraries were unauthorized personal expenses, writing inflated salary and expense checks, and diverting deposits intended for libraries (Snyder & Hersberger 1997). Over the years such has not changed in the present-day academic libraries in Nigeria, especially with the subscription to information databases which is a good means to defraud the library (Ayeni & Andeshi, 2023). In contrast to the Western world, where there is a stringent emphasis on maintaining a detailed record of financial behaviour, there have been instances of library managers, directors, and a few librarians facing legal charges in this context (Baker, 2014). In the context of Nigeria and library corruption, the experience is not

different but in the following phenomenon such as Political leadership factor, library management factor and system structure factors. These three contributors to corrupt practices in academic and public libraries are key concerns of this paper.

Political Leadership Factor

Corruption frequently arises due to governmental interference in the economy, yet it is possible to mitigate it through the implementation of specific mechanisms for oversight and control (Chen, 2023). Corruption is dynamic, adaptable, and present in all socio-economic systems (Luna-Pla & Nicolas-Carlock, 2020; Ullah, et al., 2022). The occurrence and extent of library corruption depend on the institutional system that is meant to check corrupt tendencies. In the United States of America, a case of Queens Public Library was reported by an audit of the Queens Borough Public Library in the USA in January 2014. The report showed some level of corruption scandal in the use of money. The president of the library was alleged of improper use of funds which was marked for sustaining 62 library branches but was veered into his office and steered contracts of the construction to an acquaintance. The report revealed that the non-governmental revenues totaling \$27,000 were used for the renovation of only headquarters executive offices, which was part of an earlier approved \$20.2 million project for the renovation of all the public spaces and administrative offices in the headquarters building (Baker, 2014). An identified issue that has led to library corruption is lack of scrutiny. A professor of planning at the New York University noted that “there is very little scrutiny; the judicial system and court system is highly insulated and therefore it is no surprise that a library board could operate without any oversight. They were able to operate autonomously from the elected officials in Queens.” (Baker, 2014).

From the Nigeria context, documentation and financial records are very rare to apply strict recording and auditing, this is very difficult to come by because of the sensitive nature of cases and the fact that some Nigerians may not be honest enough to own up to such a crime (Zakari & Button 2021; Adediran 2021). Similarly, Nnadozie (2013) reported a reality that was so disappointing that most academic and public libraries receive far less funding and conflicting appropriation than the percentage usually approved for them by both overseeing government ministry/department and the educational institutions under which these libraries operate. This is because the political leaders cut down the allocation to enrich themselves.

Nigeria's economy cannot be compared to that of the developed countries. And the allocation for the universities and their libraries practically passes through some level of corruption scrutiny. According to Aboh, Omame and Isaac (2019), poor leadership in Nigeria is a contributory factor to national economic challenges such as poor government funding, unrealistic government policy plans, corruption by government officials, unscrupulous spending by government agencies and a decline in gross domestic product. These and more were the major issues crippling the economy and directly affecting the development of the university libraries. Corruption practices among the leaders result in inadequate funds for library collection development as well as inadequate funds for staffing, poor service delivery, social vices and insecurity in most libraries in Nigeria (Aboh, Omame & Isaac, 2019).

Library Management Factor

Embezzlement is one area in which most libraries are experiencing corruption which is emanating from mismanagement. Snyder and Hersberger (1997) and Bologna, Lindquist and Wells (1993) explained that some library professionals appear to perceive library assets large

enough to be worth stealing. Their assertion is not far from the present situation in most public and academic libraries in Nigeria. The scenario is due to inadequate or no financial management techniques. Their study revealed three cases of embezzlement from the Library manager in Arkansas, these are: (1) inflating salary checks (2) redirecting library funds and (3) failure to remit cash from library fines to the turn of \$90,000 (Synder & Hersberger, 1997).

Similarly, there were cases of mismanagement of funds at the Florida and Illinois libraries by the Accounts Clerk II and the Library Director. The clerk failed to remit a total of \$56,000 in library fines and the director used \$160,000 of library funds for personal purposes (Bruns and Bruns Ltd, 2019). Furthermore, the case of Maryland was a mismanagement of library funds by the library director to the turn of \$69,000. The study also showed a case from Michigan Library where the library administrative secretary failed to deposit library funds from fines to the turn of \$400,000. Additionally, there was a case of embezzlement from New Jersey and Texas which indicated that two library directors diverted \$45,000 and \$86,000 library funds respectively into their accounts which were later used to pay bills (Abramson, et al., 2018). The case of Thomas W. Galante, President of Queens Library System and other executives was a clear evidence of fraudulence and embezzlement. Findings showed that the president embezzled \$310,000 while the other executives embezzled \$100,000 of the library funds (Semple, 2015). In all the examined cases, none is left untreated as the nation has no functional internal control and financial misconduct agency (Herbert & Hersberger, 1997). The statistical implication was clear because the Western world abides by financial audit policy in such cases, unlike developing nations such as Nigeria, where financial accounting in such sectors is not easily audited for research purposes.

In the library, corruption tendency may be attributed to the poor salary being paid by the government which inspires the library managers to engage in corrupt practices by using available funds that are meant for the library's development (Emezie, et al., 2024). On the other hand, some of the library managers build on the national corrupt system to control the academic library affairs in various ways such as employment of unqualified professionals, procurement approval of poor standard resources, poor financial control system and poor library auditing system (Emezie, et al., 2024). Some library managers have not adequately harnessed revenue-yielding potentials in their respective libraries, as there is inadequate funding in the academic library (Ogunode, Olowonefa & Suleiman 2024).

The case of Czech higher education is another scandal in library management corruption practice. The Czech Republic's minister of education, Miroslava Kopicova in November 2009 ordered a national audit of all university degrees awarded from the year 2000 after an allegation of widespread corruption at a provincial university. The finding showed that several students had been awarded law degrees by the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen after a few months of study. The report further revealed that the library management gave out copies of law degree dissertations from the university library as most dissertations disappeared from the library. This was the biggest scandal that shook the Czech education system which can build distrust in their academic products. It is also noted that the fear of missing dissertations indicates plagiarism as a factor in the corruption scandal. Petr Mateju, the then Minister of Education, acknowledged that the audit report on the university system was a welcomed idea and long overdue hence the scandal (Holdsworth, 2009). Similarly, Heyneman (2018) stated that corruption is part of the undergraduate experience and may affect the probability that a student can obtain a graduate

degree. Admission committees look carefully at statements of purpose and letters of reference that may be plagiarized or forged; and they constantly note students with a wide divergence in grades and Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores because the former may have been subject to artificial manipulation (Heyneman, 2018). This scenario indicates the importance of reviewing the university and library systems' modus operandi to checkmate corrupt practices.

Contributory Factors of Corruption

Theft and embezzlement of funds have its root from the government that controls the library system. This is because the directors of public libraries and librarians of government owned universities are government appointees and responsible to their pay masters. On a larger scale affecting the Nigerian nation, the World Bank in 2017 noted that corruption has substantially reduced the earnings of the Federal Government of Nigeria from oil revenues. Consequently, most Nigerians are living in abject poverty, with the lowest human development indicators (Statista, 2024). From 2015 to 2023, Nigeria has not witnessed much growth but an astronomical increase in corruption cases within the political class. In 2018, Gbadamosi and Ajogbeje (2018) reviewed the causes and effects of political corruption in Nigeria. The study showed that 96% of the respondents specified that Godfatherism and ethnicity were the main causes of political corruption in Nigeria. Another 92% of the respondents indicated that greed and passion for luxurious living among the political leaders were the cause of corruption in Nigeria. The study further revealed that 83% and 82% of the respondents agreed that poor standard of living, infrastructure and high level of illiteracy rate were the main causes of corruption in Nigeria. The study also showed that 70% of the respondents agreed that the weakness of governmental

enforcement mechanisms induces corrupt practices among political leaders. These corruption tendencies were the bane for the development of education, library and other sectors in Nigeria. Omorogbe (1996) reported that Nigeria is the eighth-largest producer of crude oil worldwide and the fifth-largest in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Member States (OPEC). However, corruption and mismanagement of oil revenues have been compounded by the global decline in oil prices (Olujobi & Olujobi, 2020), affecting the development of libraries and other relevant sectors of the economy.

Corruption is prevalent in Nigeria and has been integrated into other sectors of the economy including the library despite the plethora of anti-corruption laws and policies in the country. The ‘system structured factor’ is contributing to the present corruption issues that the public and academic libraries in Nigeria are experiencing. There is no policy or measure in place yet to ameliorate corruption tendencies which is challenging the development of university libraries and information services that support teaching, learning and research in academic institutions. The Punch Editorial of 20th September, 2023 highlighted several reports about corruption cases in Nigeria and the involvement of several democratic governments in taming the menace to no avail. The report emphasized the efforts made by various governments since the democratic rule in 1999 and the failure of the Nigerian government in taking drastic action to exterminate corruption. The report revealed the weakness of the Nigerian government towards eliminating corruption which is compounded by weak institutions, nepotism, sentiment, emasculation and strangulation of vested institutions with power to prosecute corruption cases (The Punch, 2023). In May 2024, Senator Ali Ndume, the Chief Whip of the Senate stated in an interview on Channel Television that “corruption among politicians in Nigeria was people-

driven.” He noted that corruption among politicians was propelled by the people whom the politicians share their loot with. This assertion reveals the fact that corruption is systemic, structured and endemic in several systems in Nigeria since the cut across those in power and their followers.

Materials & Research Methododology

This descriptive study examined three categories of perceived contributors to corruption in university libraries: political leadership, library management, and system structure. The target population was librarians in Nigeria (Nigeria has 174 universities federal, state and private). The sample comprised 360 librarians who attended the 2024 Nigeria Library Association (NLA) Conference at University of Port Harcourt, 7–12 July 2024, respondents represented librarians from federal, state and private universities across Southern Nigeria. Data were collected with a structured questionnaire designed by the authors (five sections: demographics; political factors; management factors; system factors; effects). The instrument was validated by expert review and pilot-tested with 10 librarians: Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.82$. Question items used a 4-point Likert scale (4 = strongly agree to 1 = strongly disagree). Purposive sampling was used to administer questionnaires face-to-face at the conference; 360 usable responses were retrieved (10% of the conference attendees). Data were coded in Excel and analyzed using SPSS v16. Descriptive statistics (frequency, percent, means, grand mean) were used to answer the four research questions.

The study covered all universities in Nigeria, which comprises six geopolitical zones and the Federal Capital Territory, totaling 174 federal, state, and private institutions. The population consisted of all librarians in Nigerian universities, while the sample included those who attended

the 2024 Nigerian Library Association (NLA) Conference held at the University of Port Harcourt from July 7–12, 2024. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers to address four research questions. The instrument's validity was confirmed through expert review by a professor and pre-tested with ten librarians at the Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Effurun, yielding a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.82, indicating high reliability. Using purposive sampling, the researchers distributed questionnaires face-to-face at the conference with the help of five research assistants. Out of approximately 3,600 librarians in attendance, 360 (10%) were selected, and all questionnaires were completed and returned, giving a 100% response rate. The collected data were coded in Excel and analyzed using SPSS version 16.0 for descriptive statistics.

Result

Demographic Information of the Respondents

The demographic information of the respondents shows that the study cut across librarians from various libraries in Nigeria. The result in Table 1 shows the library unit, length of service year and designation of the respondents.

Table 1: Library unit, Length of service year and Designation

Library Unit	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Serials	73	20.2
Departmental Library	66	18.3
Collection development/Acquisition	58	16.1
Circulation	57	15.8
E-library	56	15.5
Cataloguing	50	13.8
Length of Service Year	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1 – 5 years	81	22.5
6 – 10 years	137	38
11 – 15 years	78	21.6

16 years and above	64	17.7
Designation	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Assistant Librarian	103	28.6
Librarian II	86	23.8
Librarian I	58	16.1
Senior Librarian	47	13
Associate Professor	36	10
Professor	30	8.3

The result in Table 1 shows that 73 (20.2%) of the respondents work at the Serials unit; while 66 (18.3%) of the respondents work at the departmental libraries. The result further reveals that 58 (16.2%) of the respondents work at the Collection development/Acquisition unit while 57 (15.8%) of the respondents work at the Circulation unit. The result also shows that 56 (15.5%) of the respondents work at the Electronic Library unit while 50 (13.8%) of the respondents work at the Cataloguing Unit. The result on the length of service year of the respondents in Table 1 reveals that 81 (22.5%) of the respondents have worked between 1 to 5 years. The result shows that majority 137 (38%) of the respondents have worked 6 to 10 years, 78 (21.6%) of the respondents have worked for 11 to 15 years while another 64 (17.7%) of the respondents have worked for 16 years and above. On the designation of the respondents, the result shows that 103 (28.6%) of the respondents were Assistant Librarian, 86 (23.8%) were Librarian II, 58 (16.1%) were Librarian I, 47 (13%) were Senior Librarian, 36 (10%) were Associate Librarian, while 30 (8.3%) were professors.

Chart on the Academic qualification of respondents:

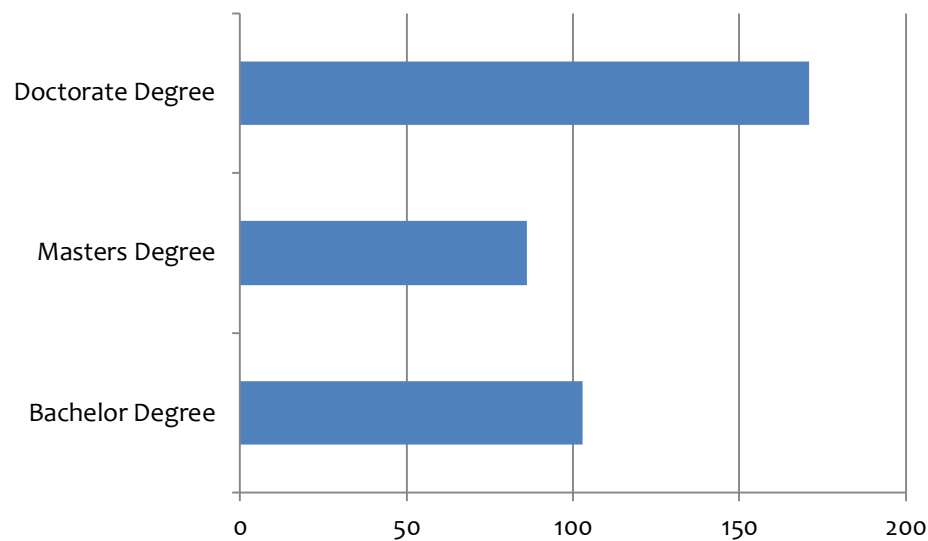


Figure 1: Academic Qualification of Respondents

The result in figure 1 reveals that 103 (28.6%) were Bachelor Degree holder, another 86 (23.8%) had Masters Degree while 171 (47.5%) had Doctorate Degree.

Chart on Gender of Respondents

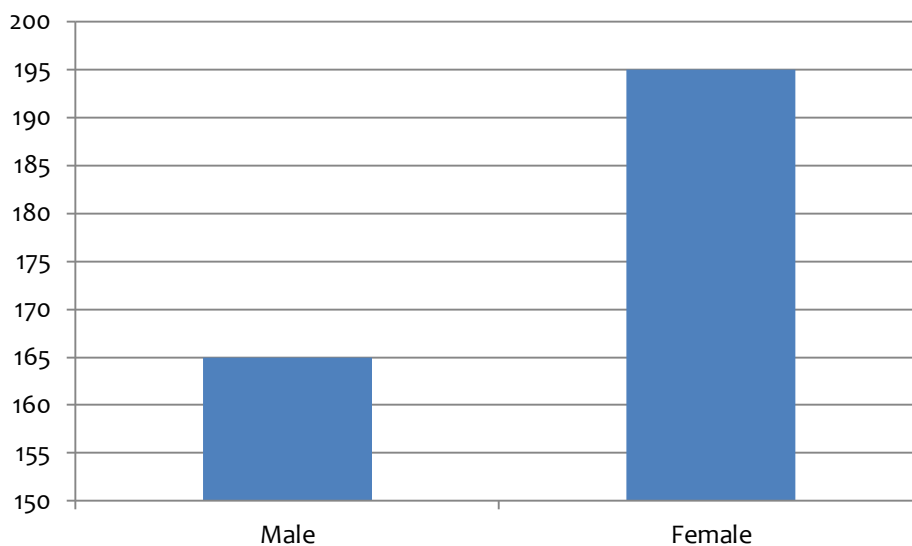


Figure 2: Gender of Respondents

The result in figure 2 showing the gender of the respondents indicates that 165 (45.8%) were male while 195 (54.1%) were female. This result indicates that there were more women in this study than their men counterpart.

Findings

RQ1. Table 2: How library management enables corruption

Political factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Governmental interference in university system increase corruption at university library	27 (7.5)	259 (71.9)	35 (9.7)	39 (10.8)
Weak government institutions to check corruption increase corruption at the university library	37 (10.3)	323 (89.7)	-	-
Lack of documentations of financial records increase corruption at the university library	28 (7.8)	257 (71.4)	42 (11.7)	33 (9.2)
Conflicting appropriation of funds increase corruption at the university library	31 (8.6)	267 (74.2)	35 (9.7)	27 (7.5)
Poor leadership in the university increase corruption at the university library	76 (21.1)	210 (58.3)	32 (8.9)	42 (11.7)
Unrealistic government policy plan increase corruption at the university library	-	318 (88.3)	18 (5)	24 (6.7)

N = 360

The result in Table 2 shows the political factors that increases corruption at the university library. The result reveals that 79.4% of the respondents strongly agree and agree that governmental interference in university system increases corruption. These results suggest that when political actors interfere with university budgets and oversight, library funds become vulnerable to diversion. Majority or 100% of the respondents strongly agree and agree that weak government institutions check corruption and increase corruption at the library. This aligns with previous studies by Van et al., (2025) weak external checks correlate with higher perceived corruption. This also revealed that all the political factors increases corruption and have the tendency of weakening the university library. There was evidence from the result that

government interference, weak government institution, lack of documentations of financial records, conflicting appropriation of funds, poor leadership and unrealistic government policy which have shown in several studies, for instance, Aboh, Oname and Isaac (2019), Zakari and Button (2021); Adediran, et al., (2021) and Nnadozie (2013) were major factors as attested by over 50% of the respondents. The result also shows that 79.2% of the respondents strongly agree that lack of documentation of financial records increases corruption in the university library. Practically, the data indicates a need for clearer financial lines and autonomous audit mechanisms for libraries.

RQ1. Table 3: Political factors that increase corruption

Factors enabling corruption	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Embezzlement of funds by librarians enables corruption at the university library.	144 (40)	172 (47.8)	23 (6.4)	21 (5.8)
Inadequate or poor financial management techniques enable corruption at the university library.	173 (48.1)	137 (38.1)	28 (7.8)	22 (6.1)
Inflating salary checks enables corruption at the university library.	56 (15.6)	41 (11.4)	48 (13.3)	215 (59.7)
Failure to deposit and redirect library funds enables corruption at the university library.	60 (16.7)	228 (63.3)	40 (11.1)	32 (8.9)
Failure to remit cash from library fines enables corruption at the university library.	54 (15)	240 (66.7)	40 (11.1)	26 (7.2)

N = 360

Respondents indicated that governmental interference, weak institutional checks, conflicting appropriations and poor leadership were major political contributors to corruption. Respondents indicated that governmental interference, weak institutional checks, conflicting appropriations and poor leadership were major political contributors to corruption (see Table 2, governmental interference: 79.4% agree/strongly agree; weak institutions: 100% agree/strongly agree). These results suggest that when political actors interfere with university budgets and oversight, library funds become vulnerable to diversion. Study further reveals that there are some factors that enable corruption in the library. The factors are not farfetched from issues that interrelate with the library and organizations. This aligns with previous studies empirical evidence from Nigeria, that includes: weak external checks correlate with higher perceived corruption, Embezzlement, poor financial management technique, failure to deposit and remit library funds were identified in Table 3 as enablers of corruption in the library (Semple, 2015; Abramson, et al., 2018; Statista, 2024). The findings showed that inflating salary was not a factor of corruption in the library which is against the findings of Snyder and Hersberge (1997). However, most of the factors are increasingly exacerbating corruption in the university library that can undermine its development and a country at large (Olujobi & Olujobi, 2020). The continuous embodying of the factors as norms in the library and university system is capable of enabling corruption which is capable of undermining the development of the library and its facilities. The findings in Table 3 further signifies that inflating salary checks does not enable corruption at the university library as attested by a higher percentage of 73% of the respondents. Practically, the data indicate a need for clearer financial lines and autonomous audit mechanisms for libraries.

RQ3 Table 4: Contributory System Factors

Contributory System factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
God-fatherism and ethnicity is a contributory system factor of corruption at the university library	-	98 (27.2)	262 (72.8)	-
Greed and passion for luxurious living is a contributory system factor of corruption at the university library	193 (53.6)	-	167 (46.4)	-
Poor standard of living is a contributory system factor of corruption at the university library	-	204 (56.7)	156 (43.3)	-
Infrastructure is a contributory system factor of corruption at the university library	-	-	162 (45)	198 (55)
Weakness of governmental enforcement mechanism is a contributory system factor of corruption at the university library	92 (25.6)	213 (59.2)	31 (8.6)	24 (6.7)

N = 360

The result in Table 4 showed that Greed/luxury, poor standard of living, and weak governmental enforcement mechanisms emerged as significant contributors, as respondents did not uniformly identify ethnicity/godfatherism as contributory factor to corrupt practices in library. The result reveals that 53.6% strongly agree that greed and passion for luxurious living was a contributory system factor of corruption at the university library. The result further indicates that 56.7% of the respondents agree that poor standard of living was a factor increasing corruption at the university library. System-level drivers often amplify local managerial vulnerabilities. The result shows that 100% of the respondents strongly disagree and disagree that infrastructure was a contributory system factor of corruption at the university library while a higher percentage or 84.8% of the respondents strongly agree and agree that weakness of governmental enforcement mechanism was a factor that increase corruption at the university library. These results implies that while some factors contribute to corruption at the university

library, other factors were not contributory to corruption. There is evidence from the findings that agreed to the passion for luxurious living. Greediness and exorbitant living above personal income increase corruption as attested by 92% as found by Gbadamosi and Ajogbeje (2018) increase corruption. Similarly, poor standard of living and weakness of government enforcement mechanism with a high response above 50% were the contributory factors of corruption in the university library. These findings agree with those of Gbadamosi and Ajogbeje (2018) and Aboh, Oname and Isaac (2019) as contributory factors of corruption in any system of governance. The implication is that anti-corruption measures should pair organizational reforms with broader policy enforcement and welfare improvements.

RQ4. Table 5: Effects on library development

Effects of Corruption library's development	N	Min	Max	M (X)	Std. Dev.
Corruption affect philanthropic donations to the university library	360	1.00	4.00	3.3	0.50
Corruption affect subscription and acquisition of relevant information resources for the university library	360	2.00	4.00	3.2	0.70
Corruption affect the funding of the university library	360	3.00	4.00	3.4	0.50
Corruption affect the infrastructural development of the university library	360	2.00	4.00	3.4	0.74
Corruption affect the quality and quantity of resources that should be acquired for the library patrons	360	2.00	3.00	2.6	0.48
Corruption affect the employment of qualified staff at the university library	360	3.00	4.00	3.2	0.43
Grand Mean				3.2	

N= 360

The result in Table 5 shows that Corruption negatively affects philanthropic donations (M = 3.3), funding and infrastructural development (M = 3.4), and subscription/acquisition of key resources (M = 3.2). Grand mean = 3.2. The result also indicates that corruption affect

subscription and acquisition of relevant information resources for the university library ($X = 3.2$). it also affect the funding of the university library ($X = 3.4$), affect the infrastructural development of the university library ($X = 3.4$), affect the quality and quantity of resources that should be acquired for the library patrons ($X = 2.6$) and also affect the employment of qualified staff in the university library ($X = 3.2$). The overall mean of $X = 3.2$ implies that all the factors in Table 5 have effect on the development of the university library. Therefore, corruption has several negative effects on the development of the library and the university at large. That includes philanthropic donations, subscription and acquisition of relevant information sources, funding, infrastructural development, quality and quantity of resources and employment of qualified staff as evidenced in (Ayeni & Andeshi, 2023). This implies that, Corruption measurably constrains libraries' ability to deliver services. Reduced funding and donor confidence impede access to e-resources and qualified staff recruitment, with downstream effects on teaching and research quality.

Recommendations

1. It is imperative that Institute mandatory annual external financial audits be in place for university libraries and publish audit summaries to improve transparency and ameliorate existing corrupt practices.
2. The academic institutions Establish clear segregation of duties and documented financial procedures at library units (procurement, receipts, banking, reconciliations). That should be monitored and evaluation plan be made, in support of an effective system. This is to

guard against the enablers of corruption and ensure that there are checks and balances for every financial transaction in the library.

3. Library managers need to create a statutory library-crime legislative instrument or university regulation that criminalizes library embezzlement and prescribes sanctions and recovery procedures.
4. Government should improve staff welfare such as salary review, performance incentives, and training, to enhance academics welfare as it is in the in their counterpart nations, thereby, reduce economic drivers of corrupt behavior in the general institution of higher learning. Indirectly reducing corruption that can hamper the development of the library.
5. These universities must adopt ICT-based financial controls and monitoring such as integrated procurement systems, e-receipting, and CCTV for cash-handling points with role-based access control.
6. Government and educational management agencies should strengthen whistleblowing channels, that is confidential reporting, protections, and institute an independent oversight committee for library governance.

Conclusion

University libraries are indispensable to academic excellence, serving as the intellectual hub that supports teaching, learning, and research. Corruption, however, undermines their effectiveness and threatens the broader mission of the university. This study revealed that political interference, managerial weaknesses, and systemic inefficiencies are the key drivers of corruption within university libraries in Southern Nigeria. Addressing these issues is essential for safeguarding transparency, accountability, and the ethical management of library resources. The

university library occupies a pivotal position within the academic structure; thus, any factor that impairs its operations inevitably affects the university's overall performance and the nation's capacity for human capital development. Corruption, when left unchecked, erodes institutional growth, weakens infrastructure, and diminishes the quality of library services. Its pervasive integration into Nigeria's public and private sectors represents a deeply entrenched culture that continues to hinder national development and the integrity of educational systems. The findings of this study underscore the multifaceted nature of corruption—spanning political, managerial, and systemic dimensions—and its adverse implications for library development. To combat this menace, university libraries must adopt stringent anti-corruption strategies such as enacting enforceable legislation on library-related crimes, instituting internal monitoring and auditing mechanisms, deploying CCTV surveillance, maintaining accurate financial and administrative records, and promoting a culture of transparency. Effective implementation of these measures will help sustain libraries as vital instruments for academic and national advancement.

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