



Research Article

## **Alternative funding of academic libraries in Nigeria: case studies of Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife and Wusto Library, Wesley University of Science and Technology, Ondo**

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### **Abstract**

**An academic library is central and important in any academic institution. It's importance hinges on the relevance that is attached to research which is the core area in any university in the world. Research, being a continuum, is an exercise that must not be inhibited by any factor be it finance or lack of relevant books in order to achieve optimal results. So, this research work tends to highlight alternative ways of funding the academic libraries in order for them to meet desire of their users.**

Keywords: Academic Libraries, Funding, Nigeria, National Universities Commission (NUC), Librarian Registration Council (LRCN)

### **INTRODUCTION**

Library is in the front burner because any serious researcher must be in constant touch with the library for its needs. This is why the National Universities Commission (NUC) embarks on routine visitation to universities to ascertain the library holdings and their relevance to the academic needs of researchers and by extension, lecturers and students. However, funding has become an albatross (Ola, 2001) because human needs are endless while the available resources are limited. This situation has drastically affected most institutions to procure relevant books and materials coupled with their inability to sponsor staff to conferences and workshops. Therefore, there is a compelling need to source for alternative funds to meet the ever increasing demands of the library in order to be relevant not only to their clientele but the public. The fact that funds come from the university to the library has not really made librarians to be on their toes when it comes fund raising either from corporate organizations or individuals and this situation has greatly affected the clientele over a long time. Recently, the Librarian Registration Council (LRCN) organized a workshop in March 2013 at Enugu on grant proposal writing for librarians with the aim of equipping them to write beautiful proposals for grants from donor agencies, yet, it should not be limited to this because there is the need to build the consciousness in librarians to always face the reality that funds are not forthcoming hence they have to seek for alternative funding to make ends meet.

The federal government which is the proprietor of federal universities is still battling with budgetary allocation to ministries and parastatals owing to instability in the world price of crude oil and oil theft. This situation has a great toll on the funding of universities and in recent times, universities have been receiving budgetary allocation as at when due which has drastically affected academic libraries. On the other hand, private universities are not finding it easy because funding of universities is capital intensive: there are lots of competing demands and their finances are contingent on student population. Most of the private universities had to increase their fees in order to remain afloat. This situation has great impact in the development of academic libraries hence it becomes imperative to source for alternative funding.

Popoola (2005) opines that in view of the reduction in annual budgetary allocations to information service organizations especially libraries, archives and information centres by their owners, the managers of these information systems must embark on priced based information services. This will enable them to recover their costs on the provisions of information services to users. He reiterated further that libraries must be capable of generating revenue if possible making maximum profit using appropriate pricing policy. He concluded that any good or service that is provided free is never valued.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Wikipedia(2013) defined funding as an act of providing resources , usually in form of money or other values such as effort or time for a project , a person, a business, or any other private or public institutions. Abubakar(2011) citing (Akporhonor, 2005) defined academic libraries as libraries attached to tertiary institutions such as universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, college of agriculture, college of technology and also research institutes. Academic libraries are at the forefront of providing services to their respective communities which comprises students, lecturers, and researchers in order to support their teaching, learning and research needs. Scholars have emphasized on the crucial role of academic libraries in research and scholarship in institutions of higher learning.

Ubogu and Okiy(2011) remarked that funding models for academic libraries vary greatly, depending on whether the institution is private or public, particular states budgetary regulations and funding formulas for higher education and the overall budgetary situation of each university. This view was shared by Omole(2009) by categorizing the university fund administration into three ; recurrent, capital and research. He stated further that the aggregate cost per year to train a student in a medium range international level University across disciplines is US\$20,000.000(twenty thousand US dollars) which is about N2.5m today. Tertiary educational institutions should constantly explore ways and means of meeting its academic obligations and at the same time generate fund to improve their environments.

University libraries receive direct allocations from the parent institutions. And being one of the various units in the university, it has to compete with other units based on the available funds from the host university (Ubogu and Okiy, 2011 citing Omotayo, 1997). The fact that funds come from the university to the library has not really made librarians to be on their toes when it comes fund raising either from corporate organizations or individuals and this situation has greatly affected the clientele over a long time Recently, the Librarian Registration Council (LRCN) organized a workshop in March 2013 at Enugu on grant proposal writing for librarians with the aim of equipping them to write beautiful proposals for grants from donor agencies, yet, it should not be limited to this because there is the need to build the consciousness in librarians to always face the reality that funds are not forthcoming hence they have to see for alternative funding to ends meet.

Coffman(2000) stated that the most critical challenge facing librarians as we enter the Third millennium is how to generate revenue that can replace the institutional support we once assumed would never stop.

Swaydan(2013) opines that academic libraries are in great need for money; all over the world are facing budget reduction or cut. At the same time, some university administrators still look to library as one of their challenges because of the cost of building collections. Some university administrators look to the library as a bottomless pit that can absorb all the funds available: they think no institution has enough money to maintain and operate a library that is satisfactory to the faculty. Abubakar(2011) remarks that the situation in private universities also tends to portray a gloomy picture as the story seems to be the same. In most private universities, the proprietor dictates the tune and when money is not forthcoming the library is worst hit because there would not be priority for procurement of books and materials and the only song in such situation is survival.

Most libraries are experiencing funding problems because Nigeria as a country is facing economic quagmire. According to Nwafor (2013) the third world university libraries are currently perched on a precipice. The state of emergency could be declared in the libraries as a result of the worrisome state of our publishing industries coupled with the shortage of paper, ink, photographic plates, and printing machines. This situation has led to few publications in our countries and the frustration of librarians is shared by the reading public.

Ubogu and Okiy(2011) advised that library should be accorded high priority because it permeates every strata of the society just like water and air, libraries have an integral part of human existence. Fund is needed to meet all these competing demands if it has to be relevant in the society.

Okon(2013) said that school without a library is not a school. Therefore, it is important to fund the library without any hesitation and being a growing organism, it has to be continually funded in order to meet the global challenges. Books are to be constantly procured and processed by competent Librarians who must of necessity be well remunerated. Ola(2011) opined that to starve university of funds is a dangerous exercise that will eventually stifle or paralyze research exploits and academic engagements. He expatiated further that the importance of the library can be measured from the rating given it during accreditation exercise by the National University Commission (NUC) and other

professional councils of various disciplines. The quantity and quality of research outputs in any institutions can be easily measured by the type of library that exist in such institution.

### **Statement of problem**

Funding challenges of academic libraries has always been a recurring decimal. The inflationary trend in the country is quite alarming and this has a great toll on the operations of the library especially academic libraries that have in one of its objectives the provision of research. Funding challenges has manifested in the inability of libraries to procure essential materials and sponsor staff on training. This study seeks to find out the current budget and sources of funds for the two libraries and factors that may affect the introduction of new sources of funds as viable alternatives for income generation.

### **Objectives of the study**

The study aims at examining the existing sources of funds for academic libraries and proposes viable alternatives for income generation to assist the libraries to function properly.

### **Research questions**

The following research questions are tenable:

1. Is there any budget for academic libraries?
2. Do you receive your budget as at when due?
3. What are the current sources of revenue for your library?
4. How much do you charge users?
5. Are you satisfied with the income generated so far?
6. If no, what are the other sources of revenue for the library?

## **METHODOLOGY**

In order to obtain up to date information for this research, documentary method and interview were employed for the study. The researchers were able to check the documents in the various institutions as copious evidence and obtained valuable information from the staff on how they generate funds and how much that has been generated from such undertakings in the past three years.

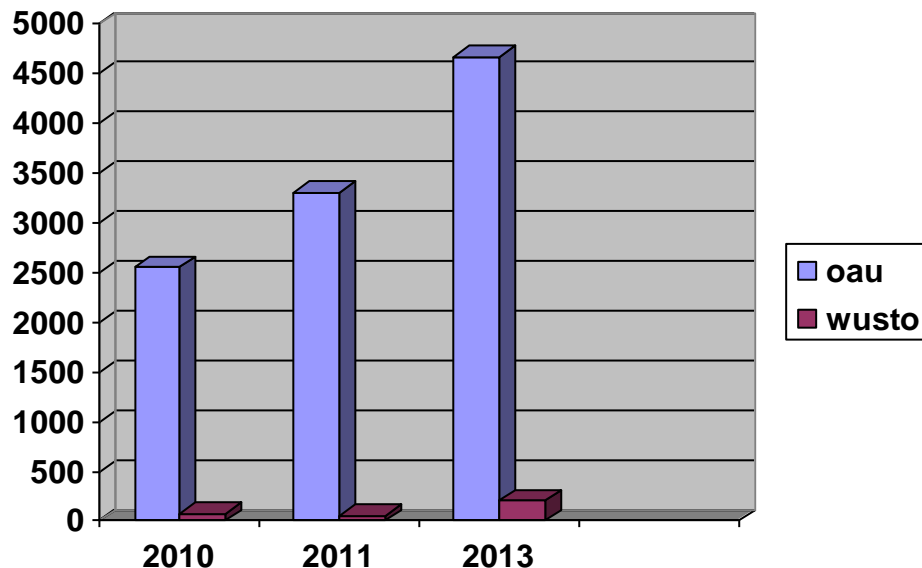
The information got from the interview and documentary evidence was carefully tabulated in the past three years spanning 2010, 2011, and 2013 respectively. Other sources of funding as Alternative Avenue for income they would have generated in the past three years were equally highlighted.

### **The need for alternative funding**

In basic economics, it is stated that man has insatiable wants and resources are scarce. Therefore, we need to source for other sources to complement the limited resources. The second reason hinges on the fact that library has to prove to the academic community that it can stand the on its own and cater for its needs. It is only when the library is able to generate its own revenue that it can have the boldness to challenge any unwholesome entreaties against its revenue. The library being a growing organism is constantly in need of money to finance its multifarious projects in the ever changing technological age. The resources to cater for the library in this digital age is enormous hence, alternative sources of funds are compelling factors the sustenance of the library. The library must constantly be furnished with current books to meet the ever increasing research demands of its clientele because lack of necessary materials as a flaw during the accreditation exercise might not be ascribed to the university management immediately but to the University Librarian who is believed to be a professional that is saddled with such responsibility. For instance, if any faculty fails the accreditation exercise, the University librarian shares in most of the blames likewise when faculties are fully accredited, he receives the accolades. Essentially, alternative sources of funds must be on the top priority of any academic library not only for the institution but also for the relevance of the library profession.

**Table 1.** Library Registration in both institutions in the last three years

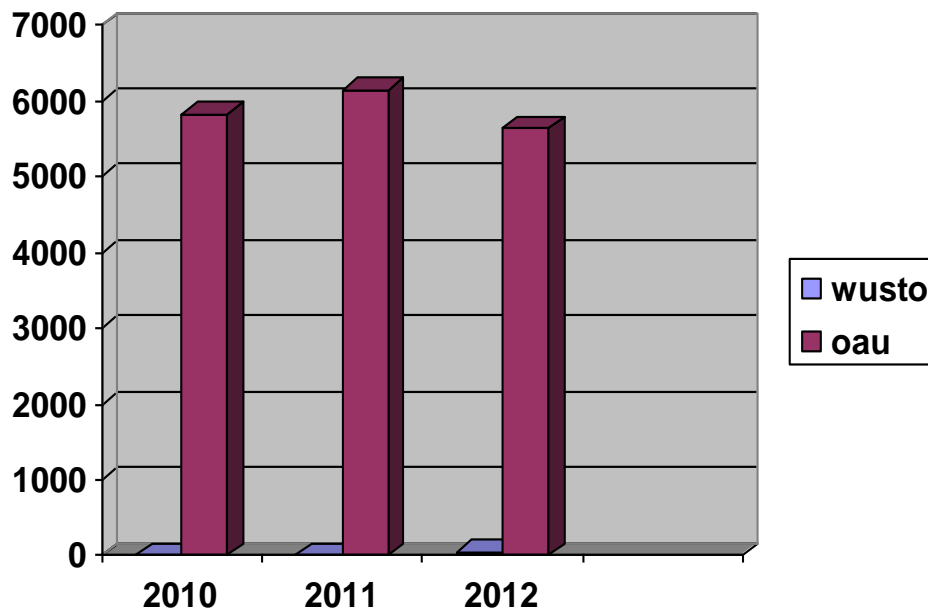
Institutions	2010	2011	2012	total
O.A.U	2551	3298	4673	10522
.WUSTO	65	58	201	324



The figures above show the level of registration in both Libraries and the total for the last three years.

**Table 2.** Total number of Graduates in the last three years

	2010	2011	2013	Total
OAU	5824	6133	5632	17589
WUSTO	Nil	Nil	43	43



**Table 3.** Revenue sources in both institutions

	Registration	Fines	Lost cards	E-library
O.A.U., Ile ife.	√	√	√	
WUSTO, Ondo	X	√	X	

The table 3 highlights three sources of revenue being explored by OAU, Ile-Ife while WUSTO library only makes use of fine as sources of revenue for the library.

**Table 4.** Total Amount made from the present revenue sources

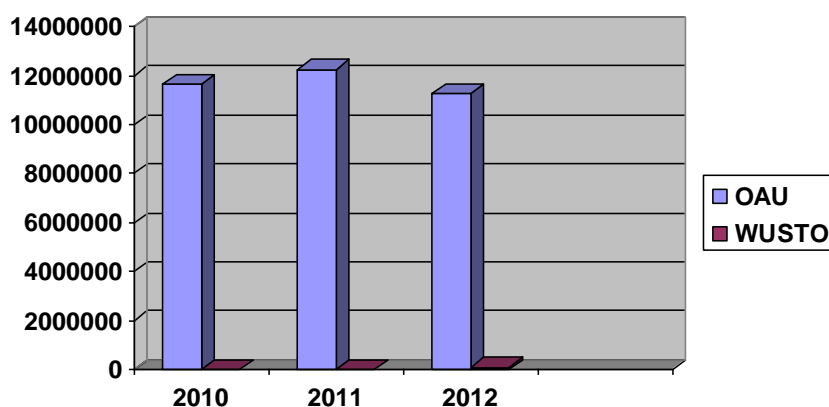
Institutions	2010	2011	2012	Total
O.A.U., Ile lfe.	N131,800.00	N182,900.00	N249,200.00	N563,900.00
WUSTO, Ondo	N5,000.00	N6,050.00	N8,000.00	N19,050.00

**Table 5.** Total amount accruable to both institutions in other sources which were untapped in the last three years

(a) Bindery

O.A.U., Ile lfe	2010	2011	2012	Total
Thesis@N500 each x4 copies per student N2,000	N11,648,000	N12,261,000	N11,264,000	N35,178,000
WUSTO, Ondo	Nil	Nil	N86,500	N86,500

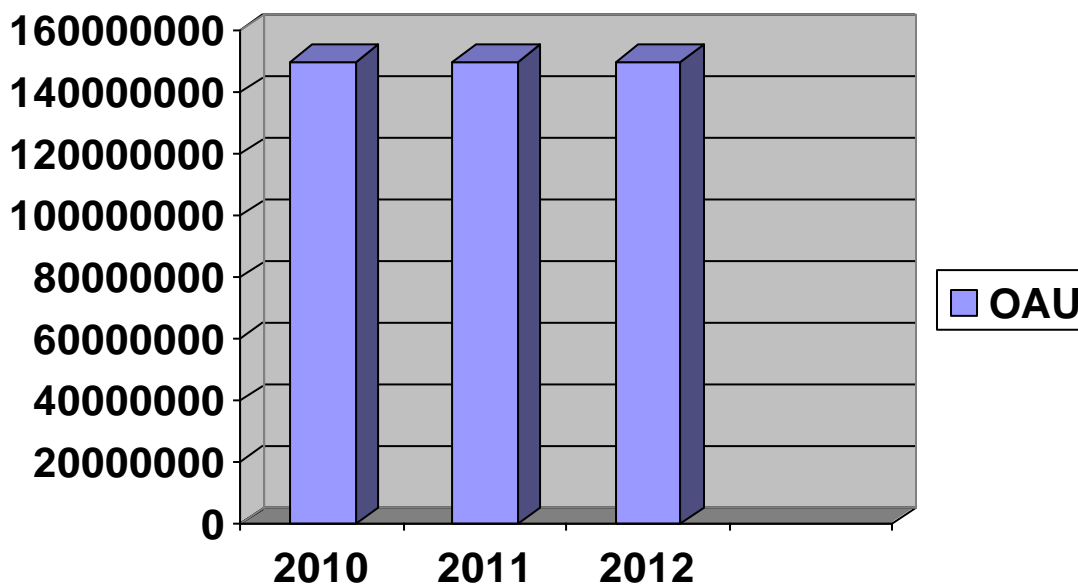
Total amount accruable to both institutions in other sources which were untapped in the last three years in million naira.



(b) Library consultancy services

(Indexing and abstracting, reference services,, information brokerage and training)

O.A.U., Ile lfe	2010	2011	2012	Total
Indexing of book, @ N30, 000 per book. An average of 50 books per year including training and others jobs.	N1.5m	N1.5m	N1.5m	N4.5m



(c) Court Records

O.A.U., Ile Ife	2010	2011	2012	Total
Search fee @N2,000, Certify true copy @N1,000 per page, Court Representation @ N50,000.	Total no. of requests 31, N62,000	Total no. of requests 20 N40,000	Total no. of requests 17 N34,000	68 Requests
WUSTO, Ondo	Nil	Nil	Nil	N136,000 Nil

Table 6. Alternative sources of funds to be explored by both institutions

Items	OAU	WUSTO
Binding of projects	√	√
Consultancy	√	√
Printing	√	√
Court records and representation	√	X
Indexing and Abstracting of books.	√	√

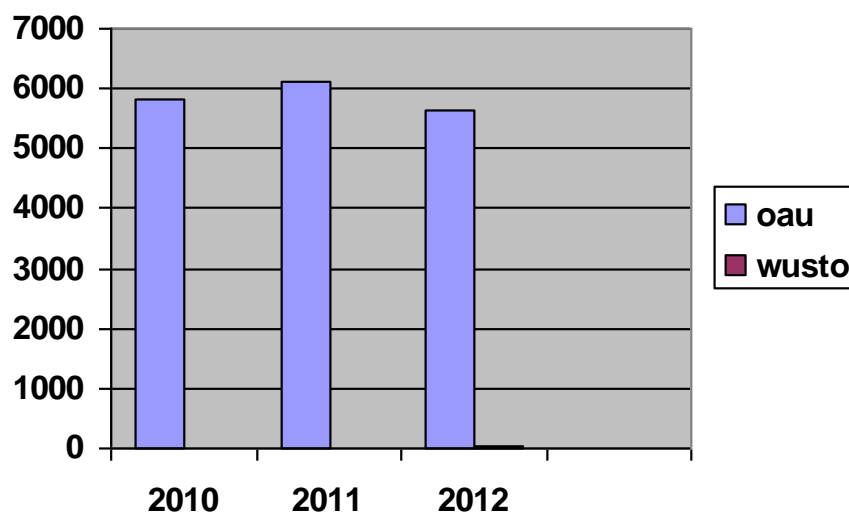
The table above indicates the list of alternative sources of funds for both institutions. These alternative sources are yet to be explored but they are viable alternatives to assist the library to keep afloat.

**Table 7.** Total amount that could have accrued to both institutions in the last three years from alternative sources

1. binding of theses  
(a). N500 X 4 (N2000.00)

School	Years	No of graduates	Amount expected
OAU Ile-Ife	2010	5,824	N11,658,000
	2011	6,133	N1, 226, 600
	2012	5,632	N11,264,000
	Total	17,589	N24,138,600

School	Years	No of graduates	Amount expected
WUSTO	2010	Nil	
	2011	Nil	
	2012	43	N86,000
	Total	43	N86,000



From table 7 above, it is quite revealing that OAU, Ile-Ife could have generated a sum of N24,138,600 from binding of theses alone. This amount could have been utilized on other areas that could have advanced the course of the library. In addition to this, the bindery section of OAU has enough personnel and equipment that could have been put into optimal use during the period.

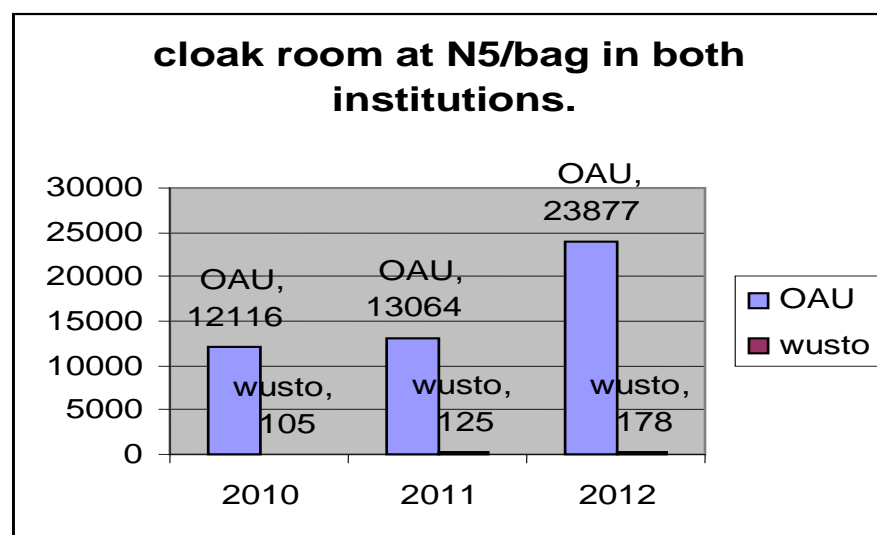
WUSTO on the other hand could have equally realized a sum of N86,000 from binding of these. This is a reasonable amount which can increase within a short time.

**Table 8.** Cloak Room: N5 per bag. 10% of the total number of readers per annum

School	Years	No of graduates	Amount expected
OAU Ile-Ife	2010	12116	N60584
	2011	13064	N6534
	2012	23877	N119386
	Total	49057	N186,504

School	Years	No of graduates	Amount expected
WUSTO	2010	105	N525
	2011	125	N625
	2012	178	N890
	Total	408	N2040

**Table 9.** Library consultancy, Indexing, Abstracting, reference services, information brokerage, training

School	Year 2010	Year 2011	Year 2012	Total
OAU. Ile-Ife				
Indexing of book (N30, 000 per book) an average of 50 books per annum training and others.	1.5m	1.5m	1.5m	N4.5m
Consultancy (N100, 000) per year.				
Catchment areas	N500,000	N500,000	N500,000	N1.5m
a. Oduduwa University, Ipetumodu				
b. Wesley University of Science and Technology Ondo.				
c. The Polytechnic, Ile-Ife.				
d. College of Education, moro.				
Fountain University Osogbo.				

**Table 10.** Other sources that could be worked upon in both libraries

Institutions	Use of carrels	Increment of registration fees	Increment of fines	Grants Aids
O.A.U, Ile-Ife	√	√	√	√
WUSTO	√	√	√	√

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