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Corruption: A bane to information utilization for governance in Secondary School libraries in Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined corruption as the bane to information utilization for effective governance in secondary schools libraries in Cross River State. Two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Descriptive survey design was used for the study with the questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. The population for the study constituted 342 purposefully selected subjects made up of 245 principals and 97 library staff. The entire population was used for the study. The research data was analyzed using One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and were all subjected to testing at .05 level of significance with relative degrees of freedom. The analysis reveals that corruption in terms of poor funding and under-employment of staff significantly influences information utilization for effective governance of secondary school libraries across the state. It was recommended that there should be collaboration between principals and library staff on how best to utilise the meagre funds for effective governance of the student users. Also there should be employment qualified personnel into the schools to man the school libraries instead of the unqualified ones on the basis of man-know-man.

Keywords: Corruption, Governance, Principals, Library Staff, School Library

Introduction

Generally, a library is defined as a storehouse in which materials that promote knowledge are stored or as a repository of knowledge. It is a very important place within secondary schools as this supports life-long learning to the students and also aids in supporting teaching learning processes in the school. The library also performs the duty of an agent or agency which acquires, assembles and preserves for use knowledge in different formats such as books, maps, cassettes and others. For a library to be said to have achieved its goals and objective which is that of satisfactorily meeting and serving the information needs of its users, there must be the presence of effective governance and freedom from corruption (Bassey, 2016).

There is noticeable harmonious synergy among library staff and school management as effective utilization of information among them brings about clarification on wrong concepts and ideas about different programmes and policies which governs the school organisation and this in turn tends to promote the aims and goals of the library in terms of encouraging the students to grow into self-directed learners and individuals who are now committed to life-long learning (Ogunrombi and Sanni, 2009). According to International Federation of Library Association and Institutions (IFLA) (2018), information is a key ingredient to good governance and utilizing information promotes development in organisation from bottom up. Consequently, information as corroborated by Onu (2005) is a very vital resource which enables the organization to run smoothly in order to achieve its set goals. Through effective utilization of information that the library staff in consonance with teachers and principals can deliberate and make decisions on appropriate materials either in non-print or in print formats which will captivate and build the students to a higher level above that of their primary school experience. This is to encourage them in developing their reading skills for life.

In this context, governance according to Ackerman (2017) is an ambiguous term but in this

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case its emphasis is based on managerial competence, cooperative and decision making borne out of consensus of a group of people at the helm of affairs which *in* this case is the school library. Hence library governance in secondary schools is made up of people who are responsible for the smooth running of the library with authority and power to make decisions that will ensure that the library fulfills its goals as an intellectual store house and repository of knowledge. Library authority refers to the power an individual is bestowed due to the office he/she occupies granted by a competent agency or authority with the sole purpose of allowing such individuals perform their duties in the library through administrative process. This is where the school principals, library staff/librarians and teachers fall under. Like in every other organization, corruption also takes place in the secondary school libraries in different forms and methods. Corruption can be seen as dishonest, fraudulent or criminal activities which can be carried out by office holders themselves or their subordinates and sometimes the users themselves.

Statement of the Problem

Since the library in this study are school libraries, corruption in this context will be related to organizational corruption and the schools in this study are all public secondary schools. Therefore, it is understood from this study that mainly government officials are the perpetrators of the act of which their main aim is driven by the desire to increase their personal wealth and status (Graff and Huberts, 2008; Aguilera and Vadera, 2007). In any organization where there is lack of good governance or incompetence of the officials, gives rise and room for corruption to thrive (Ackerman, 2017). Furthermore, corruption can be seen as an infringement of the laid down rules and regulations guiding both the personnel of the school, library and the students who are also the users of the library. This phenomenon known as corruption can be said to occur even when bribery is not involved. Hence, it can be said that any behaviour that differs or departs from established norms with regards to public trust be it exhibited by individuals who are selected, nominated, elected or appointed into an office of governance in any capacity, is a corrupt behaviour.

Thus corruption occasioned by poor governance has robbed school libraries from being equipped adequately with teaching aids and materials which would have supported teaching learning activities due to poor funding of the libraries from government (Lawal, 2002). For effective governance of school libraries, there must be adequate funds provided by government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), donor agencies and well-meaning citizens of the country. According to Transparency International (2013), funding obtained from most countries’ budget is placed at 20-30 percent of their budget and therefore prone to corruption right from the education ministries. The inevitable effect of this translates to unequipped libraries which negatively affect the principals and library staff because they lack available data which would have aided information utilization, for proper governance of the library.

Nepotism is also a form of corruption as seen by Alston (2018), which sees the entry and employment of unqualified staff to oversee the governance of the libraries in secondary schools by those who have godfathers of high ranking status in the corridors of power. Such library

personnel and principals can be seen to display their incompetence in the governance of the school library as they are unable to utilize information effectively in order to disseminate information to library users of the school organisation as a whole (Bassey, 2015).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the effect of corruption on effective governance in secondary schools libraries in Cross River State. Specifically, the study was:

1. To determine the effect of poor funding on governance in secondary schools libraries.
2. To determine the effect of under-employment of staff on governance in secondary schools libraries.

Statement of Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for this study.

1. Poor funding does not significantly influence governance in secondary schools libraries in Cross River State. Nigeria.
2. Under-employment of library staff does not significantly influence governance in secondary schools libraries in Cross River Slate. Nigeria.

Research Methodology

A descriptive survey research method was adopted for the study. The study comprised of 342 subjects of which 245 are principals and 97 library staff drawn from the three educational zones of cross river state. Data for the study was collected through questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: demographic variables of the respondent and the substantive data on corruption the bane of information utilization among library staff and secondary school principals in regards to effective governance of school libraries. The designed questionnaire were distributed to 342 library staff and principals of secondary schools which were duly completed and retrieved and used for data analysis using One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and subjected to testing at .05 with relative degrees of freedom. The generated data was analysed and different influences were made in this paper. Analysis of data generated for this study was done using One- way Analysis of Variance.

Results

Hypothesis one: Poor funding does not significantly influence governance in secondary school libraries in Cross River State in terms of adequately equipping the school library.

Table 1: Summary data and one-way ANOVA of the influence of poor funding on governance in secondary school libraries by library staff and principals (N = 301)

Poor funding	N	X	SD		
Low – 1	75	17.18	1.095		
Average – 2	131	19.26	.66		
High – 3	97	19.20	.74		
Total	301	18.73	1.44		
Source of variance	SS	Df	MS	F-ratio	Sig.
Between group	233.599	2	116.799	90.373*	.000
Within group	385.139	298	1.292		
Total	618.738	300			

* Significant at .05 level, critical F = 3.00, df = 298

The result on table 1 revealed that the calculated F-value of 90.373 is higher than the critical value of 3.00 at .05 level of significance with 2 and 298 degrees of freedom with this result the null hypothesis which stated that poor funding does not significantly influence governance in secondary schools libraries was rejected. It was alternately accepted that poor funding significantly influence libraries. Since there is a significant influence on governance in secondary school libraries by poor funding, a post hoc analysis was employed using Fisher's Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple

comparison analysis in table 2 below.

The result of the analysis revealed that library staff and principals from high funding have significantly higher mean achievement than library staff and principals from low and average sources of information. From this result, it was revealed that library staff and principals from high funding had significantly effective governance of school libraries than library staff from low or average funding of libraries.

Table 2: Fisher's Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis of the influence of poor funding on governance by library staff and principals

(I) Poor Funding	(J) Poor Funding	Mean Different (I - J)	Std. Error	Sig.
1.00	2.00	-2.08146 (*)	.16604	.000
	3.00	-2.01779 (*)	.17615	.000
2.00	1.00	2.08146 (*)	.16604	.000
	3.00	.06367	.15228	.676
3.00	1.00	2.01779 (*)	.17615	.000
	2.00	-.06367	.15228	.676

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level

Hypothesis two

Under-employment of library staff does not significantly influence governance in secondary schools libraries. One-way Analysis of Variance was applied in testing this hypothesis. The result on table 3 revealed that the calculated F-value of 50.33 is higher than the critical F-value of 3.00 at .05 level of significance with 2 and 298 degrees of freedom. With this, the null hypothesis which stated that under-employment of library staff does not significantly influence governance of libraries was rejected. This result therefore implies that underemployment of library staff significantly influence governance of libraries. Since under-employment of library staff has a significant influence on governance of library by principals and library

staff, a further pattern of influence was employed using Fishers' Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis. The result of the analysis is presented on table 4.

The result of the analysis on table 4 indicated that library staff and principals from low unemployment had significantly higher mean achievement than library staff and principals from average and high unemployment of library staff. This result revealed that library staff and principals from low unemployment had significant influence on the governance of libraries by library staff and principals from average or high under-employment of library staff.

Table 3: Summary data and one-way ANOVA of the influence of underemployment of library staff on governance in the library by library staff and principals (N = 301)

Under-employment of library staff	N	X	SD
Low - 1	97	17.69	1.94
Average - 2	118	19.25	.67
High - 3	86	19.20	.75
Total	301	18.73	1.44

Source of variance	SS	Df	MS	F-ratio	Sig.
Between group	156.003	2	78.002	50.233*	.000
Within group	462.734	298	1.553		
Total	618.738	300			

* Significant at .05 level, critical F = 3.00, df = 298

Table 4: Fisher's Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis of the influence of under-employment on governance of library by library staff and principals

(I) Poor Funding	(J) Poor Funding	Mean Different (I - J)	Std. Error	Sig.
1.00	2.00	-1.56352 (*)	.17079	.000
	3.00	-1.50695 (*)	.18456	.000
2.00	1.00	1.56352 (*)	.17079	.000
	3.00	.05656	.17668	.749
3.00	1.00	1.50695 (*)	.18456	.000
	2.00	-.05656	.17668	.749

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level

Discussion of Findings

The result of the study indicated that corruption significantly influenced information utilization for effective

governance in secondary school libraries in regards to research. Thus, the findings in hypothesis one is in agreement with Reinikka and Svensson (2004) who

observed that educational quality is hurt by corruption when government officials and politicians capture the meagre funds disbursed for education. This ultimately translates to poor governance in school libraries as principals and library staff is left with very little or no funds with which to ensure adequate collection development of the libraries that would have supported teaching learning processes in the school (Reinikka and Svensson, 2005).

Furthermore, on information utilization for governance in schools libraries by library staff and secondary schools principals, the study revealed that there is no significant influence by under-employment on governance in libraries as there isn't enough library staff to man the libraries of the 245 public secondary schools across the 3 educational zones in Cross River State. Thus under-employment of adequate manpower as revealed in the study has impeded the power of the library from being unfolded to the users by supporting teaching learning activities and as Lawal (2004) posits that non utilization of information sources to its fullest creates a barrier to national development.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate corruption as a bane to information utilization for effective governance with regards to library staff and principals of public secondary schools in Cross River state. The findings of the study reveal existence of significant influence of corruption on the utilization of information by library staff and principals showing that poor funding hindered effective governance of the library by library staff and principals in terms of making decisions on collection development and acquisitions. Also that under-employment rendered some schools libraries without staff which would have joined the principals in the service of sourcing acquiring and organizing of information in different formats either in prints and non-prints to support in teaching learning activities and also encourage life-long learning of the students.

Based on the conclusion, it is recommended that government employ into the education system more library staff who have been trained in the field of library and information science because they have been trained on how to identify when information is needed, how to organise and arrange such information for the effective governance of the school libraries to the satisfaction of the users. The principals as chief administrative officers of schools should partner with library staff in order to make judicious utilization of meagre funds allocated by government in the governance of the libraries effectively.

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