# The library and accreditation of academic programmes at Bingham University, Nassarawa State, Nigeria

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**Abstract**
This study focused on the role of academic libraries in course accreditation: A case study of Bingham University, Karu, Nasarawa State. Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design which sought library staff assessment on the subject matter. The population consisted of fifty (50) library staff. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. Fifty (50) copies of questionnaire were administered to the staff but a total of forty eight (48) (98%)duly completed were returned and used for this study. Data collected was analysed using frequency counts and percentages. The finding revealed that academic libraries play important, direct and positive roles on courses accreditation of academic programmes in Bingham University, Karu, Nasarawa State by providing up-to-date information resources in both printed and electronics formats, skilled personnel and conducive infrastructure needed for learning and teaching with guarantee of easy access to the organised information resources; that inadequate funding and erratic power supply were the major challenges to the provision of necessary accreditation requirement. The study recommended that the library should be adequately funded, systematic and deliberate staff development programme should be put in place to keep staff abreast ofcurrent library trends; that alternative power sources should be provided to address erratic electricity supply in the library.

**Key words:** Accreditation of academic programmes, University library, Bingham University, Nigeria

## Introduction

The main purpose of a university library is to support the objectives of a university, which are in the areas of learning, teaching, research and service provision. The users of the university library are students, researchers, faculty, support staff (non-teaching staff) and the members of the local community in which the university is located. The library is regarded as the heart of the intellectual system of the university. To a large extent, the quality of the university is measured by the services it provides due to its unique position in the university system. To the undergraduates, the library is the learning centre. It provides materials needed for learning of all the present and potential academic programmes offered in the university. The postgraduate students use the library essentially for research. The library provides all resources needed for carrying out effective learning and research activities.Apart from serving its primary purposes of providing resources and services for learning, teaching and research, it also serves as institutional repository.

Nkiko and Yusuf (2007) opined that accreditation of degree and other academic programmes is an acknowledgement process in which standards, guidelines and procedures are evaluated to ascertain the quality of a particular programme by accrediting authorities, which are either government agencies or professional bodies. It is a process of examining the relevance and adequacy of resources, merit rating of resources and programmes in order to enhance the quality of output. Accreditation is an exercise that ensures that the curriculum, personnel, infrastructure, learning materials as well as learning environment meet the needs of a university to achieve its predefined objectives. It is a process of evaluating, from time to time, the academic standards of various academic

programmes in various higher institutions of learning. In Nigeria, for instance, accreditation of universities programmes is administered by the National Universities Commission (NUC) in all federal, state and private universities. The National Board for Technical Education (NABTE) is saddled with the responsibility of accrediting polytechnics and monotechnics, while the National Commission for Colleges of Education does the accreditation of collegesof education. The library plays a major role in the accreditation of academic programmes in every tertiary institution in Nigeria. The NUC sets up a Quality Control Division (QCD) that carries out research to test the quality of Nigerian university academic programmes. The NUC sets up benchmarks for each academic programme which is evaluated and scored based on the criteria of staffing, academic content, physical facilities, library, funding and employer's rating. Academic programmes must have a score of 70% or above based on the following criteria: curriculum, personnel, infrastructure, learning materials as well as satisfactory learning environment in order to get full accreditation (NUC manual of accreditation, March 2013, National University Commission Pg. 114). After the NUC has assessed an academic programme during accreditation, the programme may be granted "Full Accreditation'', or " Interim Accreditation" or may have "Denied Accreditation", depending on the outcome of the assessment of the resources and facilities in place.

Okebukola (2006) opined that accreditation of undergraduate programs in Nigerian universities is meant to ensure that the provision of Minimum Academic standard documents is attained, maintained and enhanced.Akomolafe (2009) pointed out the various benchmarks for accreditation of academic programmes such as; to examine adequacy of admission requirements; resource assessment at the inception; scrutinize the fitness of philosophy of the programs and academic status of academic personnel. She further identified adequacy of office accommodation and curriculum in line with National University Commission Bench mark; budget allocation to departments; examine external moderation of script; results; scores; reports of students work capability and library

facilities. Some of these facilities include currency, physical structure of the library and budget allocation.

Librarians are actively involved in the accreditation because the provision and use of library resources and services contribute to the quality of the students' educational experience. The way academic libraries support and manages library collections reveals the priorities of the institution, the educational goals and methods of faculty and the performance of students and graduates.

In order for the university to be able to carry out its tripartite mandate of teaching,Chiedu (2014) noted that research and community development, certain elements that contribute to the existence of the university must be present in adequate qualitative and quantitative measure. The library must be stocked with current books and journals in hard and soft copies to enrich the knowledge of the teacher/researcher and learners, thus motivating them to generate knowledge that will further update knowledge. Umar (2013) reported that libraries play integral role in educational development through activities of research services, acquisition, organization and dissemination of relevant information and education carrier materials in both print and electronic media to its users. He stressed that the goals of education cannot be achieved without emphasis on the proper and adequate management of libraries and that quality education is impossible without quality libraries in any given educational institutions.
. Ogunsola (2008) opined that the development of education may be said to be synonymous with the development of libraries and library services within any given community. Libraries are very relevant to the development of our educational system. The goals of the library are to promote literacy, provide services, materials and opportunities for citizens to become a part of the educational system and to give support to government educational policies and programs.

The National Universities Commission (NUC) is empowered under section 10 of Decree No 16 of 1985and section 4(M) of the National Universities Commission (NUC) Amendment decree of No:49 of 1988, to laydown minimum

standards for the universities in Nigeria and to accredit their degrees and other academic awards after obtaining prior license for their establishment (National Universities Commission, 2012).

The objectives of accreditation have been enumerated by the National Universities Commission (NUC) to include the following:

- Ensure that at least the provisions of the minimum academic standards document are attained, maintained and enhanced.

- Assure employers and other members of the community that Nigerian graduates of all academic programs have attained an acceptable level of competency in their areas of specialization.

- Certify to the international community that the programs offered in Nigerian Universities are of high standards and their graduates are adequate for employment and for further studies.

The accreditation exercise was formally confined to undergraduate programmes in universities, but today it covers undergraduate, postgraduate and institutional accreditation.

Oseghale (2008) posited that the library has the sole responsibilities of ensuring accreditation of a program by ensuring that their collection reflects the requirements for accreditation. Accreditation Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS, 2016) added that not only library resources are necessary for accrediting a program but the quality of services, resources and the competence and adequacy of library staff is necessary for the successful running of every program in an academic environment and as such, they will serve as the standards for accreditation. This is evident that the library's print and electronic resources, its professional and non-professional staff and its infrastructure support the accreditation of programs in an institution.

The library is an essential facility that a university must have, not just in building but well-stocked with various forms of information materials and extending its role to providing effective networking and collaboration, updating knowledge among

others. Thus, academic libraries have proved invaluable through provision of information materials ranging from print resources, electronic resources, audio visual resources, databases, to support teaching, learning and research by postgraduate students and lecturers. If the university library falls short of this criterion, it can impede the full accreditation of such university's programme.

According to NUC (2009), accreditation status laid down by the National Universities Commission (NUC) has outlined the following range of status for programmes assessed and considered for accreditation:

- **Full Accreditation:**which will be granted to any degree or other academic program that has satisfied the Minimum Academic Standards (MACS). Full accreditation shall be granted for a period of six (6) academic sessions with a mid-term appraisal after three years. After the six academic sessions, there shall be a Re-accreditation visit.According to Bingham University News Bulletin vol.1 no. 3 Monday, April 2018, a letter dated 7th March, 2018 from the NUC Executive Secretary signed on his behalf by the Director of Accreditation, National Universities Commission to Bingham University, KaruNassarawaState, nine academic programmes run by the University were granted full accreditation as a result of accreditation exercise carried out by NUC. In addition to the nine courses granted full accreditation on the 7th March, 2018, political science programme was reported to have also been granted full accreditation following a re-accreditation exercise after a second time earning of Interim accreditation. This was reported in the Bingham University News Bulletin vol. 1 no. 8 of Monday 17th September, 2018. The following is the list of programmes and accreditation status granted by NUC to academic programmes run by Bingham University:

| Programmes | Accreditation status |
|---|---|
| English | Full |
| Anatomy | Full |
| Physiology | Full |
| Biochemistry | Full |
| Microbiology | Full |
| Economics | Full |
| Mass Communication | Full |
| Sociology | Full |
| Business Administration | Full |
| Political Science | Full |

- **Interim Accreditation:** This accreditation status is granted to any degree or other academic programmes that has minor deficiencies that must be rectified within a specific period. Interim accreditation isusually granted for a period of not more than two (2) academic sessions.

  As reported by Bingham University News Bulletin vol. 1 no. 3 of Monday April, 2018, a letter dated 7th March, 2018 from NUC Executive Secretary to Bingham University; Karu stated that the Accounting programme run by Bingham University, KaruNassarawa state was granted interim accreditation.

- **Denied Accreditation:** This is applied to any degree or other academic programme, which has failed to satisfy the approved Minimum Academic Standards (MACS). Request for Re-visitation for the purpose of

Accreditation shall come from the university concerned.

According to NUC's letter to Bingham University, Political Science programme run by the University has earned interim accreditation for the second time running and was therefore denied accreditation. However, the university Management made concerted efforts and rectified the identified deficiencies and represented the programme to the NUC in May, 2018 for re-accreditation.

Among the various requests of the National University Commission (NUC) and different sets of criteria that a department must meet for the programme to be accredited are the curriculum and general facility, which the library is at its core.

The following is a benchmark set up by NUC for each academic programme evaluated and scored:

**NUC benchmark NUC for each academic programmes**

| Criteria | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Staffing | 32 |
| Academic content | 18 |
| Physical Facilities | 27 |
| Library | 18 |
| Funding | 03 |
| Employers' Rating | 02 |
| Total | 100 |

Academic programmes must have a score of 70% or above in each of the core areas of staffing, academic content, physical facilities, and the library in order to get full accreditation (Okojie 2008). The result of the 2005/2006 NUC Accreditation Exercise in Nigeria was shocking. A total of 1,670 academic programmes were accredited, 748 (44.8%) academic programmes were fully accredited, and 810 (48.5%) academic got interim accreditation while 112 (6.7%) academic programs were not only denied accreditation,

but also barred from admitting new students. Four (4) programmes in universities that failed to have a score of 12% in the quality of library services were denied accreditation (Okojie, 2008). The 2005/2006 accreditation exercise result by NUC showed a deteriorating quality of academic activities in Nigerian universities. A close examination of those university libraries where the academic programmes were denied accreditation revealed that most do not have adequate ICT facilities. On the other hand, most of the libraries in which the programmes received full or interim accreditation had a functional internet café, in addition to other ICT facilities.

**Statement of the problem**

Adegbesan (2011) posited that the future of accreditation exercise is of great concern, since the criteria that are applied may affect the proportion of the institutional resources that are available to libraries and the prospects for their performance. The quality of a university library is measured by the services it provides to patrons within and outside the university community. It has been revealed that libraries are not given required support as.in terms of funding, staffing and modern technology thereby hampering them from performing their expected role(Agbetuyi, 2017),.It was against this backdrop that this research was conducted to deterrminethe role of the library in     accreditation of academic programmes at Bingham University, Karu and Jos campuses, Nigeria
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**Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study were to:
1. Identify university accreditation requirements compared with library holdings.
2. Identify the role of Bingham university library in accreditation of her academic programs.
3. Determine the challenges to effective library role in accreditation exercises

**Research questions**

The following research questions were answered in the study:
1. What is the University accreditation requirements compared with the library holdings?

2. What is the role of Bingham University Library in accreditation of academic programs?
3. What are the challenges to effective library role in accreditation of academic programmes in Bingham University?

**Methods**

The study adopted a survey research design This research design enabled the researcher to seek the opinion of library staff on the role played by the library in securing accreditation for academic programmes in Bingham University, Karu, Nigeria. The population for this study consisted of the staff of the university library. Random sampling was adopted in the study. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection, while data collected were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages. A total of fifty (50) copies of questionnaire were administered to the respondents. However, forty eight (48) copies (98%) duly completed were retrieved and used for this research.

**Results**

The sex of the respondents is depicted in Table 1. The table shows that there were more male - 36(75.0%) - than female staff - 12(25.0%) - in the library. This indicates that work in preparation for accreditation would be active.

Table 2 shows the qualification frequency respondents. The frequency of SSCE holders is 15 (31.2%) while that of diploma holders is 16 (33.3%), HND\B.Sc 9(18.7), Master Degree holders are 6 (12.5%), while PhD holders are 2 (4.1%) of the staff strength. This implies that there a highly trained and capable staff to provide services that are adequate for accreditation of theacademic programmes of the university. It also reveals that the library has adequate trained personnel in terms of number and level of education to steer the library towards effective information dissemination.

Table 3 shows work experiences of respondents. Those who have worked for 0-5 years ranked highest with 33 (68%) respondents followed by 6-10 years with 13 (27%) respondents representing, while those that have worked for 11-15 years were 2(4.16%) of the respondents. This indicates

that those with higher work experiences are adequate to transfer knowledge and experiences to those with lower years of working experiences for effective and efficient library operations.

Table 4 show responses of respondents on whether the university library has met the accreditation requirement for various departments in the university. A total of 45(93.7 %) respondents answered in the affirmative, while 2 respondents (4.1%) in the negative, and 1(one) respondent (2%) abstained. From the analysis, it is evident that the library's input has led to many programmes in the university meeting accreditation requirements.

Table 5 reveals responses of respondents on the volumes of information resources stocked in the library for accreditation. From the table, 6,000 and above volumes of books recorded the highest frequency of 28 (58.3%) respondents, while 4000 to 6,000 and 2,000 to 4,000 volumes came second with frequencies of 6 (12.5%) respectively, 0 to 2,000 volumes of books recorded the lowest frequency of 5 (10.4%), while the frequency for undecided stood at 3 (6.2%) . From the analysis above, it is evident that a majority of the respondent are aware that the library stocks 6000 and above volume of information resources, which are adequate to meet the information accreditation needs of the academic programmes.

Table 6 shows responses on the status of library resources for accreditation. A total of 41(85.4%) respondents affirmed that the library information resources were adequate for accreditation, while 7(14.5%) were of the view that the information resources in the library were adequate for accreditation. From

this analysis, it is clear to conclude that the information resources in the library were adequate to earn a pass for accreditation, thereby confirming the analysis in Table 6.

Table 7 shows responses on inadequate skilled personnel as a challenge to the library's provison for accreditation of academic programmes. The frequency shows that 10 (20.8%) respondents agreed that inadequate skilled personnel is a challenge to the provision of necessary accreditation requirements, while 36 (75%) disagreed and that inadequate skilled personnel was not one of the challenges to the provision of necessary accreditation requirement in Bingham University Library.

Table 8 highlights inadequate funding as a challenge to provision of necessary resources to meet accreditation requirements. A total of 38 (79.1%) respondents affirmed inadequacy of funding as a challenge, while 7 (14.5%) did not agree to this assertion, 3 responses (6.2%) were undecided. From this analysis, one may conclude that inadequate funding was one of the challenges to the provision of necessary resources for accreditation requirements.

Table 9 reveals data on erratic power supply as one of the challenges standing against the provision of necessary accreditation requirement in Bingham University Library. The table shows that 30 (62.5%) respondents agreed on this challenge, while 14 (29.1%) disagreed and 4(8.3%) were undecided. The analysis shows that erratic power supply is one of the challenges militating against the provision of resources and services to meet accreditation requirements in Bingham University Library.

**Table 1: Sex of the respondents**

| Sex | | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Male | 36 | 75.0 |
| | Female | 12 | 25.0 |
| | Total | 48 | 100.0 |

**Table 2: Qualification of the respondents**

| Response | | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| | SSCE | 15 | 31.2 |
| | Diploma | 16 | 33.3 |
| | HND/BSC | 9 | 18.7 |
| Valid | Masters | 6 | 12.5 |
| | Ph.D. | 2 | 4.1 |
| | Total | 48 | 100.0 |
| Missing | System | 0 | 0 |
| Total | | 48 | 100.0 |

**Table 3: Work experience of the respondents**

| Age range | | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 0-5 | 33 | 68.0 |
| | 6-10 | 13 | 27.0 |
| | 11-15 | 2 | 4.1 |
| Total | Total | 48 | 100.00 |

**Table 4: The university library and accreditation requirement for various departments in the university**

| Response | | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | 45 | 93.7 |
| Valid | No | 2 | 4.1 |
| | Total | 47 | 97.1 |
| Missing | System | 1 | 2.0 |
| Total | | 48 | 100.0 |

**Table 5: Volumes of information resources stocked in the library for accreditation**

| Response | | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 0-2000 | 5 | 10.4 |
| | 2000-4000 | 6 | 12.5 |
| Valid | 4000-6000 | 6 | 12.5 |
| | 6000-above | 28 | 58.3 |
| | Total | 45 | 93.7 |
| Missing | System | 3 | 6.2 |
| Total | | 48 | 100.0 |

**Table 6: Status of library resources for accreditation**

| Response | | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Adequate resources | 41 | 85.4 |
| Valid | Inadequate resources | 7 | 14.5 |
| | Total | 48 | 100.0 |
| Missing | System | 0 | 0 |
| Total | | 48 | 100.0 |

**Table 7: Inadequate Funding**

| Response | | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | 38 | 79.1 |
| Valid | No | 7 | 14.5 |
| | Total | 45 | 93.7 |
| Missing | System | 3 | 6.2 |
| Total | | 48 | 100.0 |

**Table 8: Inadequate skilled personnel**

| Response | | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | 10 | 20.8 |
| | No | 36 | |
| Valid | Total | 46 | 95.8 |
| Missing | System | 2 | 4.1 |
| | Total | 48 | 100.0 |

**Table 9: Erratic power supply**

| Response | | Frequency | Percent | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | Yes | 30 | | 62.5 |
| | No | 14 | 29.1 | |
| | Total | 44 | 91.6 | |
| Missing | System | 4 | 8.3 | |
| | Total | 48 | 100.0 | |

**Conclusion**

The study focuses on the role played by the library in securing accreditation for academic programmes in Bingham University, Karu, Nassarawa State, Nigeria. Based on the finding of the study, it could be stated that the academic library plays important, roles in accreditation of academic programmes in Bingham University, Karu, Nassarawa State through the provision of information resources and skilled personnel needed for learning and teaching. It is evident in the study that accreditation of academic programmes suffer setback when the university library is not well stocked with resources and manned by skilled personnel. In the light of the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. There library staff should be encouraged to undergo relevant staff development programme to keep them up-to-date with the requisite and skills for efficient service delivery.

2. That sufficient fund should be provided by university management to the Library in Bingham University, Karu, Nassarawa State to enable the library provide the necessary resources needed to meet accreditation requirement of all the academic programmes of the university

3. It also recommended that alternative power supply should be provided for steady power supply in the University Library of Bingham University, Karu.

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