

# A Survey of Preservation and Conservation Practices and Techniques used by the Public Sector University Libraries in Karachi, Pakistan.

Muhammad Sameem Kardar<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Waseem Zia<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Abul Kalam Library, NED University of Engineering and Technology,  
Gulshan E IQbal (Karachi);

Email : sameemkardar@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Department of Library and Information Sciences University of Karachi,  
Gulshan e Iqbal (Karachi);

Email : mwzia@uok.edu.pk

## ABSTRACT

*This study investigated the various techniques used in the preservation and conservation of library materials in selected public sector university libraries of Karachi, Pakistan. Particularly, it examined the strategies used in process of preservation and conservation, the policies provides guidelines to achieve preservation goals, constraints limiting effective preservation and conservation. The survey method was used to conduct this study and a structured questionnaire was used for data collection.*

*The study revealed that barriers to effective preservation of library materials in public sector university libraries in Karachi are significantly high. The study also revealed that there is nonexistence of conservation and preservation skill development programs for the library staff. It is also find out that binding of books is a common technique that is commonly used in all selected libraries on regular basis to prevent the library materials from damages and make them long life for the library users. The study also revealed that the dusts and particulate matters are the big sign of deterioration in all the selected public sector university libraries.*

*Based on the findings, the study recommended among others that libraries should recruit adequate and trained manpower in the libraries for effective preservation and conservation practices. University libraries should consider various methods that could be applied to reduce degradation of library material in their holding and the university should allocate adequate annual budget for preservation and conservation in public university libraries in Karachi.*

Keywords: Preservation Z700, Conservation Z700, Deterioration QC100 .U57, Degradation QC100 .U57

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Varlamoff (2005) considered preservation and access as two important tasks of libraries. Preserving just for the preserving and allow access extravagantly to whole archives without keeping in mind that the conservation estimates will, at some point or another, making the documented heritage unapproachable to reach for people in the future. National Research Council, (1986) stated that the nature and importance of print and electronic items and declares them essential and fragile. The

lifespan expectation of the data contained in them can be affected the way in which they are taken care. They must be conserved and preserved for future usage. Preservation and conservation is described by Jordan (2003) as collective term for a collection of functions, practices, rules and administration make possible its usability, prolonged existence, and availability of documented knowledge. These activities include; repairing general collection, reproduction environmental protection and control, care and usage of library holdings, calamity preparation and rescue, preservation and binding learning and training.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Some prior studies on conservation and preservation of library holdings are discussed in this segment. The reviews of studies include in this segment are conducted in different localities of the world, particularly in Pakistan.

Abid Hussain and Muhammad Ibrahim (2020) investigated that the causes and prevention of book damages in libraries of academic institutions. The findings revealed that lack of national/ local level policy, lack of knowledge of patron's learning, unexpected cost of the study packs, inexperienced staff and lack of ownership marks are the reason of stealing in the libraries of academic institutions in Pakistan. The study established that usually stolen materials from academic libraries in Pakistan are monographs. In Pakistan, the expensive educational resources, lack of library materials, and financial limitations are the main reason of book stealing in the academic libraries.

Ifeyinwa Blessing Okoye (2019) in his study on the conservation and preservation process of library resources. The case of FUTO & IMSU Imo state revealed that the management of the libraries studies was not doing enough in conserving and preserving their numerous collections against deteriorative agents for many reasons. The study suggested that the libraries should be provided with more air conditioners than fans because of more powerful cooling. Findings also indicate that they do not have adequate budgets for conservation and preservation of their information materials. The study also revealed that library staffs are not involved in the process of de-acidification.

Another study was conducted by Makwae and Ogoti (2018), on the several methods applied in the conservation and preservation of holdings of university libraries short listed in this research in Kenya studied the numerous methods practiced in the conservation and preservation of library resources in designated university libraries in Kenya. The study examines the outlines and plans used in the conservation and preservation of non-print and print library holdings in the university libraries short listed in the study. The results indicates that the main reason of deterioration of library holdings is wear and tear because of mostly to too much photocopying of the information resources by users and plenty usage and misuse of the library resources. It was also shown by the findings that library holdings in the libraries of educational institutions also affected from high acidity and high temperature levels, while bad shelving and too much light was found minimum issue faced by the libraries.

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Kashish Fatima and Nishat Fatima, Dr. (2021) conducted a survey on preventive conservation process in National Library of India. It was concluded in this study that all the primary process of preventive conservation such as pest controlling, weather control, access system; suitable storing, book binding, calamity preparation, digitization and digital preservation are adopted by National Library in efficient manner.

### 3. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are:

- 1- To determine the processes used for preservation and conservation in the public sector university libraries of Karachi, Pakistan.
- 2- To identify the problems in the process of preservation and conservation.

### 4. RESEARCH METHOD

Explanatory mixed methods design is used for this study i-e quantitative as well as qualitative method. The combination of both qualitative and quantitative method during any phase or throughout the study is a mixed method approach.

The data collected from forty six professional librarians working in the 9 public sector university libraries situated in Karachi with the help of questionnaire. On the other hand the interviews conducted with heads of the libraries.

Table 1: Name of Public University Libraries

S.No.	Names of Public Sector University
01	University of Karachi
02	NED University of Engineering and Technology
03	Federal Urdu University of Science and Technology
04	Dawood University of Engineering and Technology
05	Sindh Madressatul Islam University
06	DOW University of Health Sciences
07	Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Center
08	Benazir Bhutto Shaheed University Lyari
09	Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto University of Law

5. RESULTS

The collected data through questionnaire is representing in the following.

This section provides the general information of library and its institution or university,

Table 02: Conservation and Preservation Techniques adopted by university libraries

S.No	Conservation and Preservation Methods adopted by the library	Yes	No
1	Binding	46 (100%)	0 (0%)
2	Cleaning and dusting of library materials	46 (100%)	0 (0%)
3	Shelving library materials to allow for free flow of air	43 (93.47%)	3 (6.52%)
4	Use of insecticide and insect repellent for library materials' preservation	39 (84.78%)	7 (15.21%)
5	Installing air-conditioners in your library	32 (69.56%)	14 (30.43%)
6	Photocopying	31 (67.39%)	15 (32.60%)
7	Provision of adequate security systems to prevent theft, mutilation and defacing of paper-based materials	31 (67.39%)	15 (32.60%)
8	Lamination	13 (28.26%)	33 (71.73%)
9	Encapsulation	11 (29.31%)	35 (76.08%)
10	pH testing	0 (0%)	46 (100%)
11	Microfilming	0	46 (100%)
12	De-acidification	0	46 (100%)

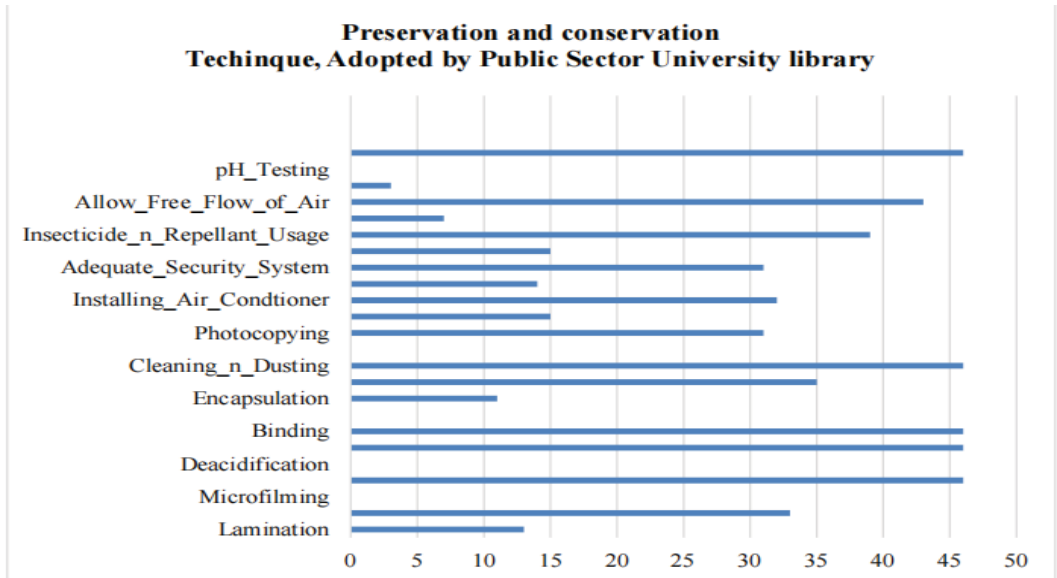


Figure1. Preservation and Conservation Techniques adopted by Public Sector University Library.

The respondents were probed to point out procedures and measures that the librarians at the libraries have implemented to conserve and preserve library materials. The results of several conservation and preservation methods and processes through the analysis used in the libraries universities are shown here. All of the respondents, out of 46 (100%) librarians indicated that binding and Cleaning and dusting of library materials were the most famous conservation and preservation methods in the libraries of public university. 43(93.47%) respondents out of 46 respondents were shelving library materials to allow air to cross pass from the shelves freely of in university libraries. 39 (84.78%) librarians responded that they were using insecticide and insect repulsive for library holdings preservation. 32 (69.56%) of the respondents ranked installing air-conditioners said yes. This was followed by photocopying, which was reported by 31 (67.39%) of the respondents. On other hand 11 (29.31%) librarians were using encapsulation technique to preserve library materials.

Table 03 Training for Staff on Preservation & Conservation

Yes	11 (29.31%)
No	35 (76.08%)

Respondents were asked to indicate whether the training in that particular area of conservation and preservation had received by them. The wide range of 35 respondents (76.08%) reported that they did not get any formal training in conservation and preservation of library resources, while 11 (29.31%) of the respondents replied that they received formal training in the conservation and preservation of library materials.

Table 04: Training received by Librarians:

Preservation & Strategy Techniques	7	15.21%
Archive protection	4	34.30%
Training not received	35	76.08%

Investigative further, the respondents were asked to state the type of training they had received. It turned out that 07 (15.21%) of the respondents received training in preservation & strategy techniques, while 04 (34.3%) received training in archive protection. The remaining of the 35 (76.08%) respondents did not. The findings suggest that the main problems regarding conservation and preservation of library holdings in the libraries of public sector universities in Karachi were shortage of concerned staff that should be properly trained.

Table 05: Fund Allocation for preservation & conservation:

Yes	0	0%
Not a specific line item but other budgeted funds are available	10	21.73%
No	36	78.26%
Don't Know	Nil	0%

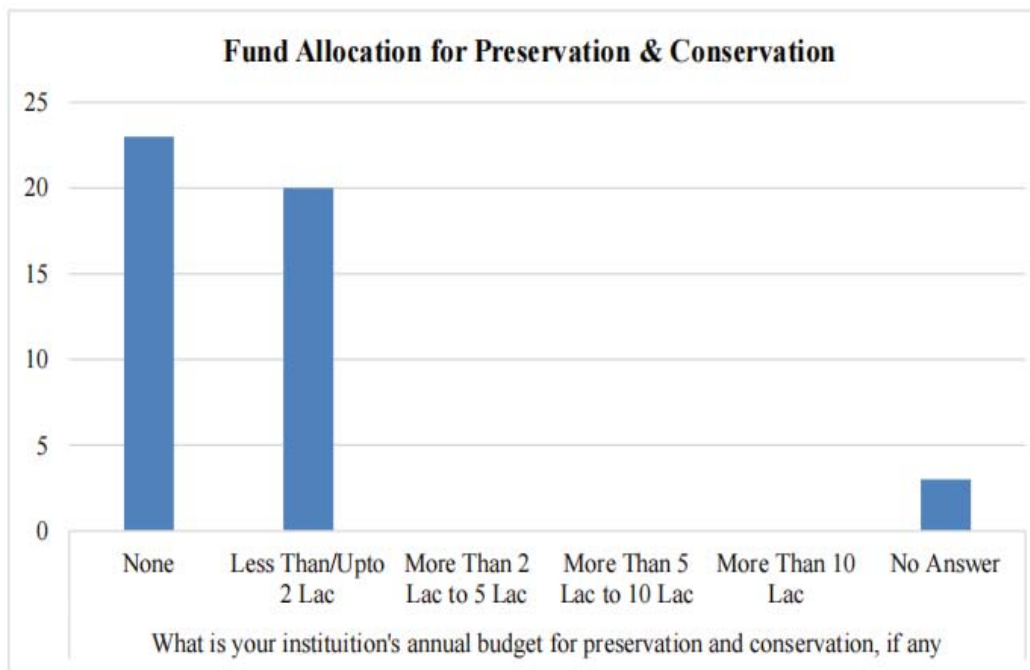


Figure 2. Fund Allocation for Preservation & Conservation.

The table 05 shows that the respondents were asked to specify the fund allocation for conservation and preservation of library materials. 36 (78.26%) respondents indicated that there was no any fund allocated for conservation and preservation of library materials in their libraries. The remaining 10 (21.73%) librarians indicated that not a specific line item but other budgeted funds are available. The findings revealed that inadequate funding was the most severe inhibitor to effective preservation and conservation activities in the university libraries.

Table 06: Institution's Annual Budget for preservation & conservation

None	23	50%
Less Than/ Up to 2 Lac	20	43.47%
More Than 2 Lac to 5 Lac	Nil	0%
More Than 5 Lac to 10 Lac	Nil	0%
More Than10 Lac	Nil	0%
No Answer	3	6.52%

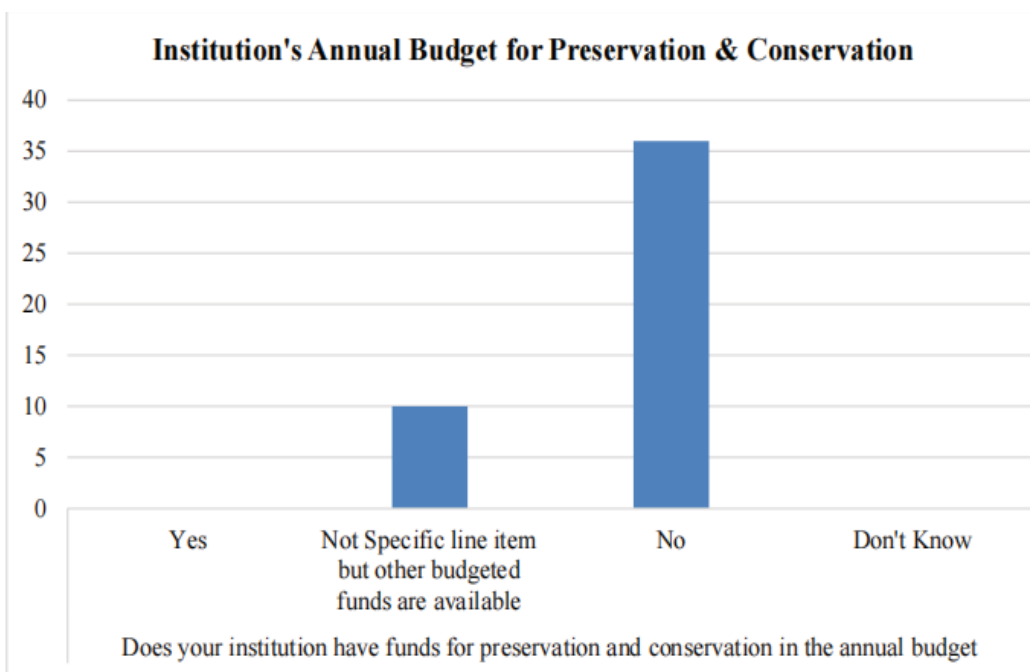


Figure 3: Institution's Annual Budget for Preservation & Conservation.

The table 06 shows that the librarian were inquired about the allocation of annual budget for preservation and conservation of library materials, twenty Three (50%) out of them were indicated that their institution did not allocate any budget related to conservation and reservation of library materials. 20 (43.47%) respondents indicated that their institution allocated less than/up to 2 lac in the annual budget for preservation & conservation of library material. Three (6.52%) librarians did not respond on this question.

Table 07: Library current Preservation policy/practice to be in achieving library's preservation goals

If the answer is Yes, how successful do you consider the library current Preservation policy/practice to be in achieving library's preservation goals?	Very Successful	Moderately Successful	Of limited Success	Unsuccessful	No Answer
	15	13	6	7	5
	32.60%	28.26%	13.04%	15.21%	10.86%

Table 07 required the respondents to state how successful do you consider the library current preservation policy/practice to be in achieving library's preservation objectives. The majority 15 (32.60%) of the respondents reported that they observed very successful, second highest response moderately successful responded by 13 (28.26%) university librarians. 07 (15.21%) librarians responded unsuccessful while 06 (13.04%) responded of limit success, 05(10.86%) librarians did not give any response of this question.

Table 08: Preservation policy provides guidelines

Does the preservation policy provide guidelines for the following?	Yes	No
Handling of library	35 (76.08%)	11 (23.91%)
Use of library materials	31 (67.39%)	15 (32.60%)
Staff training on preservation of library materials	28 (60.86%)	18 (39.13%)
Restoration of degraded library materials	27 (58.69%)	19 (41.30%)
Disaster recovery procedure	14 (30.43%)	32 (69.56%)

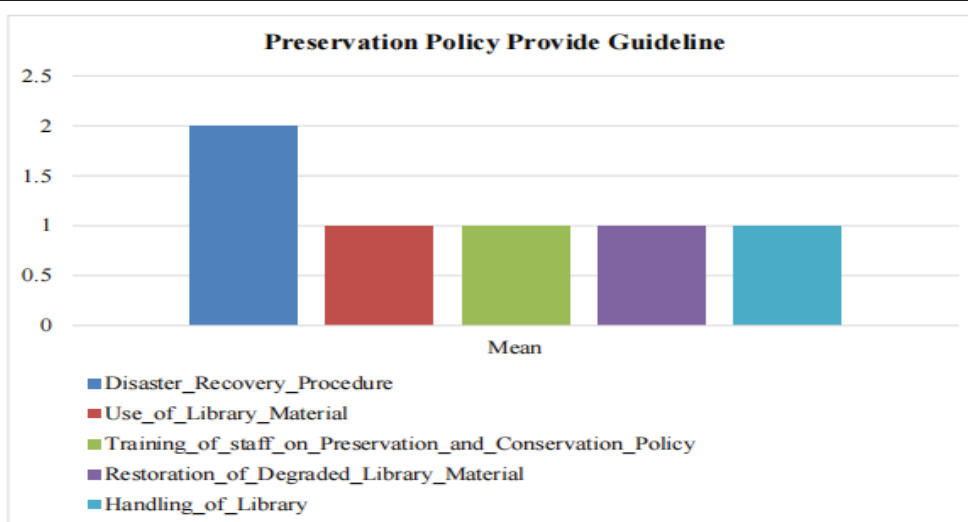


Figure 4: Preservation Policy Provide Guideline.

Table 08 showed that the respondents were probed to state whether the written preservation policy provide guidelines to the university libraries. Majority 35 (76.08%) of the respondents reported that preservation policy provides guidelines for the handling of library materials followed by use of library materials 31(67.39%), while 28(60.86%) university librarians taking guideline for skill development for restoration of degraded library materials. 14(30.43%) librarians responded that they are taking guideline for Disaster recovery procedure.

Table 09: Possible constrains facing during conservation and preservation of library materials

Possible Constrains	Yes	No	No Answer
Lack of conservation and preservation policy	46 (100%)	0 (0%)	0
Lack of preservation equipment	44 (95.65%)	2 (4.34%)	0
Inadequate infrastructure	43 (93.47%)	3 (6.52%)	0
Lack of training to the existing staff	42 (91.30%)	4 (8.69%)	0
Insufficient planning of conservation and preservation of library materials	41 (89.13%)	5 (10.86%)	0
Inadequate funding of the library	40 (86.95%)	6 (13.04%)	0
Lack of competent manpower in conservation and preservation	38 (82.60%)	8 (17.39%)	0
Harsh environmental conditions accelerating library materials depreciation	35(76.08%)	8 (17.39%)	3 (6.52%)
Administrative bottlenecks	27 (58.69%)	19 (41.30%)	0

Respondents were asked to specify the major constrains are facing by libraries during preservation and conservation of library holdings.. The result shows that all of forty six (100%) respondents indicated that lack of conservation and preservation policy was the major problem they were facing during conservation and preservation of library holdings followed by the lack of preservation equipment reported by 44 (95.65%) respondents while inadequate infrastructure was indicated by 43 (93.47%) respondents followed by lack of training to the existing staff point out by 42 (91.30%) respondents. 41 (89.13%) respondents indicated that insufficient planning of conservation and preservation of library holdings were the major constrains they are facing during conservation and preservation of library materials followed by 35 (76.08%) indicated that harsh environmental conditions accelerating library materials depreciation were the major constrains The least 27(58.69%) respondents indicated that Administrative bottlenecks was the major constrain faced by the library staff during conservation and preservation of library materials.

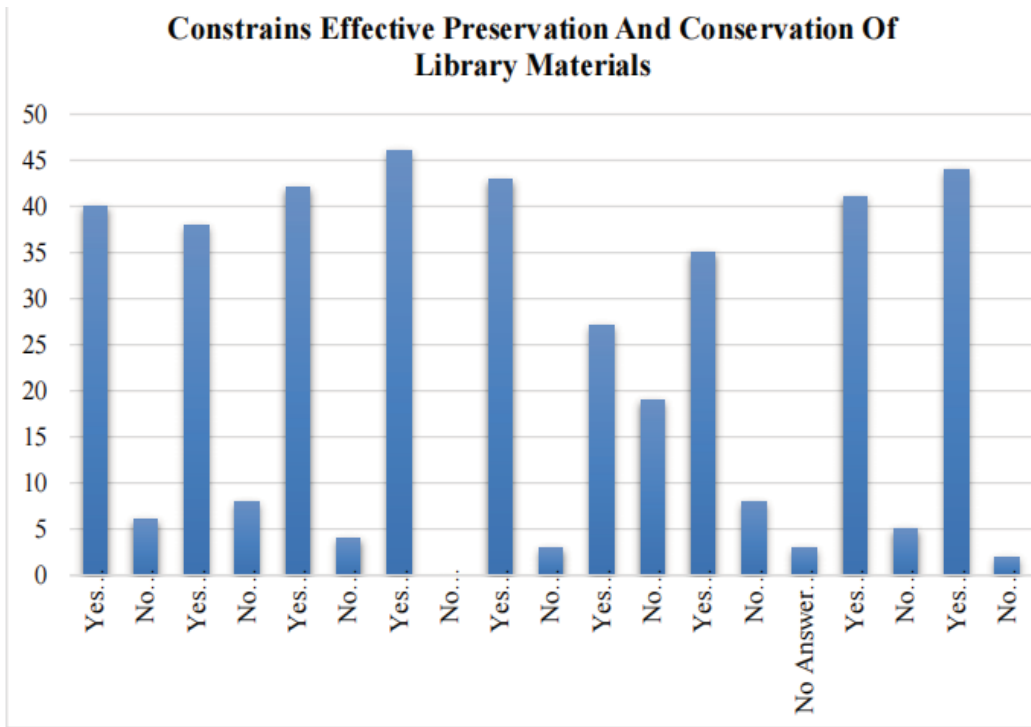


Figure 5: Constrains Effective Preservation and Conservation of Library Materials.

## 6. Conclusion:

The conservation and preservation of library material is an essential procedure of any library that should be well equipped with the required equipment to perform the function properly. The study is conducted to examine the preservation and conservation of library holdings, procedure and practices applies to preserve and conserve library holdings in the public sector university libraries in Karachi. There are number of challenges faced by public sector university libraries in the capacity of preservation and conservation. On the basis of the facts and other information it can be safely concluded that the nonexistence of proper conservation and preservation practices in the university libraries are the reason of great loss of library material and deterioration.

The preservation and conservation policy is not adopted by any library in written form that is the main problem that creates hurdles to follow a uniform method for the preservation of library materials. Preservation policy is not followed by any library with its whole spirit rather apart of it is adopted by all libraries according to their need. Rasaki and Abioye (2015) mentioned that the management should formulate and implement a well-articulated preservation and conservation policy that can give focus

and direction to preservation program in the university libraries in Southern Nigeria. Ambika and Khaizer (2017) suggested that policy with good quality on conservation and preservation of print as well as non-print materials should be articulated. Hussain and Ibrahim (2020) also point out the importance of the presence of a written preservation policy in order to protect the library materials from theft.

Beside the policy, lack of preservation equipment is also a major issue that is creating hurdle to keep the preservation and conservation process continues without any hindrance. This finding is supported by Rasaki and Abiola (2015) the preservation equipment is low funded in relation to the scale of the challenge.

Limited budget is the main cause in buying latest equipment in all the libraries. Separate budget is not allocated for the conservation and preservation of library holdings is another reason of not furnishing the libraries with the latest preservation and conservation equipment. Annual budget allocation for preservation and conservation was also recommended by Oluwaseun, Ottong and Ottong (2017).

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