



Review

The roles quality library information plays in education, technology and economic development in Nigeria

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The paper discusses the roles of quality library information in technology, education and economic development of Nigeria. The paper gives definitions of library, and types of libraries ranging from school libraries, academic libraries, public libraries and special libraries and the functions that all these libraries perform in the society. The paper mentioned how libraries have contributed to the development of education in Nigeria, through the provision of different types of information materials like books, periodicals and non-prints information resources like information communication technology (ICT).

Key words: Education, technology, information, library and economic development.

INTRODUCTION

Information for all, access to Information is very much important and a key factor for all-round growth and development of a country like Nigeria. According to Ntui and Edam – Agbor, (2015). Information is recorded in documents such as books, journals, research papers, thesis, periodicals, patents, monographs, bulletins, pamphlets, annual reports, surveys, official records, archival materials, files, commissions reports, addresses, procedures, enactments, statistical sources, audiovisual materials and micrographic sets. In addition, in secondary sources like dictionaries, encyclopedias, handbooks, guides, directories, etc. all these are found in a library. A library also houses, other modern informative sources such as audiotapes, videotapes, CD's, and cable television. Today vast information is accessed over the internet, which is available in libraries. International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA, 2003).

Library has been given various types of definitions by various writers. According to Ranganathan, (1961), who is acclaimed as the 'Father of Library Science', "A library is a public institution of establishment charged with the care of a collection of books and the duty of making them

accessible to those who require use of them and the task of converting every person in its neighbourhood into a habitual library goers and a regular reader."

A library is a means of access to information, ideas and works of imagination. Eberhart, (2010) offers this definition: "A library is a collection of resources in a variety of formats that is organized by information professionals or other experts who provide convenient physical, digital, bibliographic, or intellectual access and offer targeted services and programs with the mission of educating, informing, or entertaining a variety of audiences and the goal of stimulating individual learning and advancing society as a whole."

Library and information services are key actors in providing unhindered access to essential resources for economic and cultural advance. In doing so, they contribute effectively to the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom, safeguarding democratic values and universal civil rights. They encourage social inclusion, by striving to serve all those in their user communities regardless of age, gender, economic or employment status, literacy or technical skills, cultural or ethnic origin,

religious or political beliefs, sexual orientation, and physical or mental ability. The communities they serve may be geographically based or, increasingly, linked only by technology and shared interests.

The objective of this study is to review the contributions of libraries to the development of education, technology and economic of Nigeria as a nation.

Types of libraries

There are various types of Libraries they include: public libraries, special libraries, school libraries and academic libraries.

The Special Library

According to United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) publication cited by Ajibero (2001), the special library is defined as Libraries primarily designed to serve limited number of experts, scientists, research workers, etc and not coming within any of the categories of national libraries, university libraries and school libraries. A special library has information on a particular group of subjects, and caters exclusively for the resource requirements of a specific organization, company or a department of the government. One of its principal aims is to save the time of the staff members and researchers of such institutions. Libraries that are very special, like those pertaining to business administration, for example, must cater for information on statistics, accountancy, economics, and banking. With a clear mandate for direct access to the needed information only, researchers will find them more accessible, corporeal, down- to- earth and a great time saver in their interaction for specific information and education in whichever organization that houses them. (IFLA, 97).

The Public Library

The Public or Professional libraries, also sometimes called "People's University," plays the role of a local point in assimilating informal or formal information of local learning content and co-relating it to knowledge and information from global resources. Public libraries, therefore, will wear the mantle of an important constituent in the future of the lifelong continuous learning process and education by put on their contemporary thinking cap on how to improve evolving tasks, demands and working environments. They will also have to bring about change in the perception of the responsibilities of the librarian in pursuit of a more useful library system in tune with the new demands of the users. The public libraries and their expert librarians offer not only wide access to information from a global network, thanks to the development of the networks as a result of the advancement in technology and communication, but also offer their expertise in areas of information sourcing and their quality rating. In other words, a public library is an indispensable pillar of

democratic knowledge. Public libraries now certainly play a more strategic part in establishing lifelong learning tools in a meaningful effort to become dynamic collaborators in the systems of education. IFLA publication, (1997) compiled by Gil and others, (2001).

The Academic / School Libraries

Academic libraries cater specifically for the educational needs of a school, college or university depending on where they are located, for the convenience of the students and teachers. However, in the case of a University, they will have more focus also on information related to research and projects. The Academic library's trump card is that, notwithstanding the situation, it supports a powerful educational system, and this facet of its identity is often relegated to the realms of the ignored or the forgotten. The Academic library has the utmost potential to develop into the best learner-centered facility among all campuses. The view is growing stronger that those who inherit the control of Academic libraries must appreciate that, though the educational fabric of these institutions are inextricably tied to their parent institution, they are indeed self-contained educational establishments that can shape the educational destiny of students and even others who come into contact with them. In terms of educational benefits, the Academic libraries are fully and comprehensively equipped to meet the varying demands of the students for their references and research on all subjects that form part of their curriculum. School libraries around the world, in their many forms, share a common purpose: the enhancement of "teaching and learning for all." The school library provides information and ideas that are fundamental to functioning successfully in today's information and knowledge-based society. The school library equips students with life-long learning skills and develops the imagination, enabling them to live as responsible citizens." IFLA/UNESCO School Library Manifesto,(1997).

Education: According to (Fanfunwa, 2003). Education has been defined as all efforts, conscious, incidental direct and indirect, made by a given society to accomplish certain objectives that are considered desirable in terms of the individual's own needs as well as the needs of the society where that education is based. The relationship between education and development is well established such that education is a key index of development. Education improves productivity, empowerment and health, but reduces negative features of life such as child labour, prostitution, crime and other vices. UNESCO (2002) opined that education opens the door for all citizens to participate in development activities and when citizens are denied education, they are excluded from the development process, which in turn puts them at a disadvantage vis-à-vis their compatriots with the benefit of education. This is why there has been a lot of emphasis, particularly in recent times, for all citizens of the world to have access to basic education of good quality.

Technology: This is the collection of techniques, skills,

methods, and processes used in the production of goods or services or in the accomplishment of objectives, such as scientific investigation. Technology can be the knowledge of techniques, processes, and the like, or it can be embedded in machines to allow for operation without detailed knowledge of their workings. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Free_encyclopedi_a).

Economic development: This is the process by which a nation improves the economic, political, and social well-being of its people. The term has been used frequently by economists, politicians, and others in the 20th and 21st centuries. The concept, however, has been in existence in the West for centuries. Modernization, Westernization, and especially Industrialization are other terms people have used while discussing economic development. Economic development has a direct relationship with the environment and environmental issues. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Free_encyclopedi_a)

Information: This is knowledge about a particular subject, issue, event or process. Information can be obtained from various sources: you can be told information, for example through a lecture or a television programme, or you can find information through your own research. Information is essential to finding your route to university in the morning, writing an essay, getting the right ingredients for a recipe, conducting an experiment, renting a flat, filling in a job application form, exam revision and for many, everyday tasks. Modern libraries have become more information oriented rather than document oriented. Books were the only unit of transaction in a traditional library and today, information has been fast substituting books and printed material in selective areas. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Free_encyclopedi_a

The quality information services rendered by libraries in Nigeria

The followings are the quality information services rendered by Libraries in Nigeria and their contributions to the development of the economies of the nation.

Quality Library Information Service Give rise to quality Education

It is known in the world over, that education determines not only earning capacity, but also the very quality of human life (Dike, 2002). In a society that appreciates the educated class, those with good education naturally earn higher incomes; they also are in an enhanced position to live better and healthier lives. quality education gives one a greater sense of how to reduce risks in life and change one's behavior. Greater confidence, self-reliance, and adaptability are all hallmarks of advanced education (Davies, 2001). On the whole, it must be emphasized again that quality

education could be an important part of the solutions to the ills of the Nigerian society because how much a nation progresses is a function of the quality of the educational attainment of its citizens.

Kpolovie, (2012) averred that education is the most powerful agent for social transformation, national stability, security, unity, and prosperity. Education constitutes the core of human development as it is the most crucial institution for empowering young people with knowledge and skills, which in turn provide them access to productive employment and meaningful contribution to national development. Library supports both individual and self-conducted education as well as formal education at all levels. The library is the center for information services which directly supports the school and its goals. "Educators who are interested in using technology to promote serious school change should focus first on the library media center...a place to spark teachers and students in the constant, furious construction of knowledge...not as some kind of mechanical switchboard for routing, regulating, and controlling media pipelines. (Fred, 1994).

Libraries are strengthening links between education and employment, as well as building workforce skills and participation. The need for an agency available to all, which provides access to knowledge in printed and other formats to support formal and informal education, has been the reason for the foundation and maintenance of most libraries and remains a core purpose for the library. Throughout their lives people require education either at formal institutions, for example, schools, colleges and universities, or in a less formal context related to their employment and daily life. Learning does not end with the completion of formal education but is, for most people, a lifelong activity. In an increasingly complex society people will need to acquire new skills at various stages of their life. Libraries has substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

Educational efforts over several years have seen the positive involvement of libraries in education by offering their referral services, information and teaching resources. Individual tutoring programs and educational classes, besides their outreach to specific people's groups with educational handicaps taken up now by libraries, alludes to their active and enhanced involvement in education. Now a days, in Nigeria some libraries invite uneducated parents to learn interactive language skills that help them to teach their young ones, while others invite whole families for book talks and reading classes. <http://www.infosciencetoday.org/library-science/the-role-of-libraries-in-education.html>,

This corroborates with the study carried out by Radijeng, (2013). On the role of public libraries in the attainment of Botswana's vision 2016. Botswana Library Association developed a strategy to identify where libraries contribute to Botswana Vision 2016. Libraries organise and disseminate information that society access and uses to

inform themselves on various issues of life. However, attainment of the Vision extends beyond just informing and educating, it cuts across all the pillars by empowering communities through knowledge and the ability to access information for themselves.

Libraries also help the user to make use of these learning resources effectively as well as providing facilities that enable people to study. The ability to access information and make effective use of it is vital to successful quality education and, where possible, libraries co-operate with other educational organizations in teaching the use of information resources. Libraries actively support literacy campaigns, as literacy is the key to education and knowledge and to the use of libraries and information services.

Provision of Quality Information through Electronic Resources

Libraries provide quality information through electronic resources this has led to technological development. The library is the local centre of information, making all kinds of knowledge and information readily available to its users. Libraries have been around for a very long time and are traditionally seen as collections of information and services. Libraries have always played a significant role, enabling people to engage with all kinds of information and knowledge resources (Curran et al., 2006). Through the development of electronic resources, the means to collect, store, manage, and use widely distributed knowledge resources have become more effective serving the library users even better (Griffin, 1998).

Modern libraries are therefore being redefined as places to get wider access to information in many formats and from many sources. The technological development in libraries has affected both information space and information practice. Today we talk about libraries without walls being logical extensions to libraries (Fox and Urs, 2002). An important development is the dissemination of information. Libraries provide access to an endless variety of information resources and opportunities for interactive communication. However, the fundamental mission has remained, to facilitate and give access to information and knowledge, but the processes, tools, and techniques have undergone big development through the provision of digital library.

Digital library is the basic model of the new Internet Management information resource, and it is becoming a kind of trend of the world library, which adapts the requirement of the information society and knowledge technology time. With the development of the modern information technology, such as computer and Internet, the traditional library hasn't been fit on the requirement of the information time and knowledge economic development, so it faces the basic changes and innovation, also faces changing and developing to the modern library. (Baohua et al., 2002). The information carrier has changed the quality comparing with the traditional library. Digital is the basis of

the information and information lives on digital. The documents have changed from printing into digital, network, multi-media and beyond media. The library offers not the paper documents, such as traditional book and publication, but an aggregate of all kinds of information, knowledge. This kind of aggregate can be traditional paper documents, CD-ROMs, software, E-mail, and can also be digital internet information resource, that is indexed, selected, organized carefully by the person managing books.

It is a basic human right to be able to have access to and an understanding of information, and there is now more information available than ever before in the world's history. As a public service open to all, the public library has a key role in collecting, organizing and exploiting information, as well as providing access to a wide range of information sources. The public library has a particular responsibility to collect local information and make it readily available. It also acts as a memory of the past by collecting, conserving and providing access to material relating to the history of the community and of individuals. In providing a wide range of information the public library assists the community in informed debate and decision-making on key issues. In collecting and providing information the library wherever possible, co-operate with other agencies to make the best use of available resources. (IFLA, 2003).

The rapid growth in the volume of available information and the continuing technological changes, which have radically affected the way information is accessed, have already made a significant effect on libraries and their services. Information is very important to the development of the individual and of society, and information technology gives considerable power to those able to access and use it. Despite its rapid growth it is not available to the majority of the world's population, and the gap between the information rich and the information poor continues to widen. A vital role for the library is to bridge that gap by providing public access to the Internet as well as providing information in traditional formats. This corroborates the statements of Edem et al. (2011) that Libraries promote free and equal access to information, understanding that an informed citizenry is the foundation of a vibrant, democratic society. Therefore, the citizenry should recognize and exploit the opportunities provided by the exciting developments of Libraries in areas of information and communications technology.

Libraries Expanding Access to Technology and Technical Training Has Brought about Economic development

Libraies expanding access to technonlogy and technical training which has led to economic development. Despite the rapid proliferation of home computers, public computers in libraries are still in high demand, serving as an important entry point for new technology users. A recent survey found that 70% of people using computers in

libraries reported the library was their only way to get on a computer (Hart Research 2006, as cited in Urban Libraries Council, 2007). Another study reports that 95% of all public libraries provide some sort of public access to the Internet (Bertot and McClure 2002, as cited in Urban Libraries Council, 2007). Libraries have grasped the opportunities presented by the application of new technologies to revolutionize the technical processes required to deliver services. Examples include shared cataloguing, whereby many libraries share the task of preparing catalogue records so that duplication of effort is avoided. Other examples include self-issue and return systems, and security measures. The most dramatic impacts have been in the expansion of the range of materials collected and made available, together with the ability to reach users regardless of geography. The 'Library without Walls', (digital library) once a dream is now emerging as a reality. The role of the library as a place for people to gain ICT skills in a welcoming atmosphere is becoming a decisive element in capacity building.

Technology is gradually transforming the lives of library users who have been largely excluded from using traditional library materials, for example the visually impaired. Digital revolution has transformed the intellectual function of traditional libraries. Digital libraries are providing the base for a set of distributed activities. It is also providing a one stop solution for speedy delivery in a reliable fashion. Libraries are being digitized and patrons demand is growing the concept of content management has been adapted to the library world. More libraries are providing virtual references via the web.

With the advent of on line information resources available in the libraries, many Nigerian are now internet users, smartphones, high phone and laptops and computer users. Oketunji (2002). examined the state and future of ICT in library and information services in Nigeria and found that out of all the libraries analysed, the distribution of staff with regards to professional/paraprofessional ratio 148(46.5%) were professional and 170(53.5%) paraprofessionals were computer literate. This is an enormous progress when compared with the first three decades of library practice in Nigeria when computer literacy was at its lowest ebb amongst librarians and library users.

Conclusion

Quality library Information has substantially increase the number of youths and adults who have skills, including technical and vocational skills for employment, decent job and entrepreneurship through the provision of quality Information for all thus promoting equality and ensuring an informed citizenry. Therefore, quality library information, has led to advent of technologies and economic development in Nigeria. It is known in the world over, that education determines not only earning capacity, but also the very quality of human life. In a society that appreciates

the educated class, those with good education naturally earn higher incomes; they also are in an enhanced position to live better and healthier lives. Quality education gives one a greater sense of how to reduce risks in life and change one's behavior. On the whole, it must be emphasized again that quality education could be an important part of the solutions to the ills of the Nigerian because how much a nation progresses is a function of the quality of the educational attainment of its citizens. With the advent of technology in the Libraries, many Nigerian are now information users.

Recommendation

Nigerians must build and maintain good schools, and accord education its rightful place as the only elixir that has full capability of curing all the ills of the society.

The need to improve the quality of education should begin with giving greater attention to the provision of quality libraries from preschool, elementary, secondary, and tertiary institutions. The government should allocate more funds for the development of libraries in our institutions. More library schools should be established for the librarians' educational development.

Conflict of interests

The author declare that there is no conflict of interests.

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