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The Role of Academic Library towards Economic Development in Nigeria

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Abstract

The paper looked at academic libraries in Nigeria as a special agent of economic development in Nigeria, A nation is said to be developed economically when its citizen reaches the high possible standard of living and having a security information for their wellbeing. Academic Library is an institution that is well established to take care of the information needs of students, lecturers, researchers and other comity of scholars and communities. The Academic library is continuously bringing man in contact with the world in the fulfilment of its functions as a repository for knowledge. The paper critically focuses on National development, Security, tourism and Academic Library Marking.

Keyword: Academic Library, Economic Development, Nigeria

Introduction

The Academic library is an important institution that plays prominent role in shaping the knowledge society if closely driven and monitored by information policy and economic development. The Library has a big role to play in national development. Consequently to guide in taking the advantage of the information resources at its disposal, it is pertinent for professionals with the requisite knowledge and competence at all levels to oversee the collection, management and dissemination of information. Library is an important institution in designing the establishment of an information policy since it has the expertise as an information provider Basri et al (2012) affirmed that the establishment of information provision stems out from library as it has the expertise in acquiring, disseminating, organizing and

administering information The impact of library to culture and civilization is tremendous and not deniable. Furthermore, library is also central in the creation and establishment of information society which sometimes called knowledge society. The development of library demands re-defining the position and objectives of institutions dealing with information and knowledge (Ryynanen, 1999). This paper highlights the role of academic libraries in connection with economic development in Nigeria.

The objectives of this paper are:

1. To examine the role of academic library in the context of economic development of Nigeria
2. To examine how academic Library help towards National Security in
3. To examines problems militating against the performances of Academic library in Nigeria for economic development

Academic Library in Nigeria

The history of Academic library development in Nigeria dates back to pre-independence time when the University of Ibadan and its library were established in 1948. As mentioned by Aguolu (1996). Academic libraries are libraries attached to tertiary institutions such as universities, polytechnic institutions, and colleges of education, colleges of agriculture, colleges of technology and other research institution (Bappah, 2011). Nigeria has a number of universities attached with academic libraries. At present Nigeria has forty three federal University(43), forty eight (48) state owned universities and seventy nine private Universities across the country there are about one hundred and seventy (170) universities in Nigeria (NUC, 2020).

Nigeria's university system is been supervised by the National Universities Commission (NUC), While the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) supervises polytechnics and colleges respectively. kiy (2005) notes that of all the different types of libraries in Nigeria, only university libraries have a clearly defined policy of funding, because they are allocated 10% of the recurrent annual budget of their parent institutions. However, it is regrettable that such monies are not forthcoming as most university administrators tend to flout that decision (Okiy, 2005; Yetunde, 2008). Through their vital services, academic libraries have positioned themselves to be potent vehicle for societal development and lifelong learning among the citizenry for national and Economic Development in Nigeria.

Academic Library for National Development.

Academic library is central to the provision of information resources that empowers the educational institutions to produce highly resourceful people for national development to impact positively on development in Nigeria. Valantin (1996) notes, that the ability of governments to develop effective policies and plans depends on their capacity to interpret information relevant to the country's economic, social, cultural, and financial situation. According to him, a strong national information centres such as Academic libraries and Information infrastructure allows access to information at all sectors and provides the basis for competent planning and decision-making. Libraries are at the centre of the academic excellence of all educational institutions providing all the relevant information resources necessary for teaching, learning and research functions (Achitabwino, 2007). This is because the Academic library contain information which is a vital tool for the pursuit of economic excellence at all levels of developments. The realization of the enormous power of information has made Academic libraries and Information resource centres inevitably present in all sectors of a nation's economy.

Doctor (1992) has observed that improvements in social access to information will ultimately facilitate the transformation of a society from information economy to an information democracy. Through quality information service delivery, libraries in higher institution of learning have been able contribute to the actualization of SDGs as well as help improve the digital and information literacy skills of the citizens for national Development in Nigeria (Emezie&Igwe, 2017).

Role of academic Library for Economic Development

Economic Development has to do with qualitative and sometimes quantitative changes in the life of a people or an individual. At the national level, there is an improvement in the general well-being of the people while at the individual level, development implies activity, increased skill and capacity, self-discipline, greater freedom, responsibility, and material well-being ” (Achitabwino, 2007). The presence of Academic libraries in a society will certainly enhance positive human activity in that society Libraries are also germane in educational development of a nation. This is done through their services and programs, introducing children to the habit and joy of reading and aiding scholastic and researchers in contributing their quota to the development. Students are supported with the aid of books and other relevant information to perform well in their academic work while teachers and lecturers get teaching aids from

libraries to prepare useful lesson notes that will help them pass useful knowledge to their students the role of libraries in promoting the marketing of the tourism sector cannot be underestimated (Achitabwino, 2007).

Academic Libraries as reservoirs of information are the most reliable information reference centres where tourists can seek information on hotels, motels, national parks, mountains, and other interesting places. Academic Libraries also play a vital role in the health sector in Nigeria. A vibrant health sector needs well documented and organized health information meant for dissemination to users and potential users in order to consolidate health records, planning and management. Academic Libraries mostly at the teaching hospital provide people with appropriate information on diseases and prevention measures, health care, side effects of premarital affairs, dangers of early pregnancies, and any other health related information.

Another essential role of Academic libraries “is the propounding and propagation of a political ideology for national development and cohesion”. (Anyika, 2005; p. 134). Wright (2001), as quoted by Bhatti (2010), opined that it is equally incontrovertible that libraries have the greatest impact on agricultural development of a nation. Academic Libraries provide relevant information on agricultural improvement at university through the use of data bases to all agricultural officers, extension workers, researchers, peasant farmers, policy makers, etc. on the new method of improving livestock and better farming practices that will meet the increasing need of the population. Academic Libraries make such information available and also provide positive steps towards improving the declining food security of in Nigeria.

Role of Academic Library and National Security

National security is the requirement to maintain the survival of the state through the use of economic, diplomacy, power projection and political power” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_security). Information is therefore a crucial factor in national security. This is because the line between security and insecurity lie in information given or information withheld. The ability to use information and its associated tools is a source of power for any nation (Bordbar 2000). which the Academic library and librarians are best equipped to do. In Nigeria’s current security challenge, citizens and government must recognize this need for information use and literacy as a means of national security towards economic development (Noruzi, 2006). Information remains the only product which the library handles and this includes all media in which the information is shaped. The only mean through which the real integration of people living in political, economic, religious and ideological poles could be brought together is through the actual cooperation and exchange of vital information between the two: the terrorist and the terrorized

Currently, electronic media is one of the most effective and powerful means of mass mobilization. A nation not mobilized enough to withstand terrorism cannot aspire to preserve its freedom, faith and ideology for long. On the other hand, strongly mobilized people cannot be forced to abandon their security in the face of terrorism. It is in this regard that libraries and librarians can ginger up the electronic media to promote and expand security awareness among the people at large (Ossai-Ugbah, 2013). The library through the media has been waging war of its own to counter the hostile propaganda from insurgents and terrorists in Nigeria. Like their names suggests propaganda: Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and Boko Haram (Western Education is nonsense), the government through the library can fund effective counter propaganda campaigns that will sensitize the citizens to the ills of terrorism and win over their sympathizers. One of the most effective means of maintaining national security is through propaganda and the primary tool of propaganda is the media. Some of the techniques adopted in a conflict to gain the desired results are repeating the lies of the terrorists, attacking personal opinions disguised as fact, headlining propaganda, selective control of information and the yellow journalism (Gamble and Kwerliambli, 1990)

Role of Academic Library and Marketing

Academic Libraries are considered as treasures of knowledge. It is also known as storehouse of knowledge. It is true that all libraries in the world are full of reading material which consist books, journals, films, images, manuscripts, Audio visual materials etc. which has knowledge, recorded by peoples, eminent writers and eminent personalities. Preservation of this knowledge is a prime task of all libraries and Information Centres; however it is a need to market these resources which possess by the libraries. Now a day with the help of Information technology many academic libraries and information centres has their own websites on which all kind of material is accessible with its bibliographic details and mechanism to promotion and marketing of services (Patil K. & Pradhan, 2014).

Academic Library staff needs to extend promotion and cooperation to users and marketing their services. The basic purpose behind promotion is to educate the students, faculty members in how to use the library and its resources and also to upkeep their knowledge by providing information appended in various sources available in the library. Like Companies promotion and marketing concept, library promotion and marketing services are different. The primary purpose of marketing of company products is to increase sales and ultimately to gain the more

profit from it. The libraries are non-profit organizations; it is a social organization and service centre.

The Seven Principles of Marketing in terms of Library and Information Science

There are seven principles of marketing; these principles are also applicable to Library and Information services. These principles are Product, Price, Place, Promotion, Participants, Physical evidence and Process. These principles are described in brief.

- **Product:** Academic Libraries are providing good number of services to their users through various ways e.g. List of Additions (Whatever material added to the library it is communicated to users either printed list or through email). Now OPAC is accessible to all users through internet. Current Content Service, SDI service, Web based services etc. These services are the product of libraries. Hence library professionals have to promote and market their products among the users.
- **Price:** Price factor is important from the point of view of the budget of the Institution. Without budgetary provision, no library cannot purchase reading material. No library cannot self-sufficient. By considering the academic out of the institution, faculty improvement, students growth institution has to make the provision in their budget. Not even for the reading material but for providing qualitative services, it requires financial provision. Internet connectivity should be provided to students with no extra cost.
- **Place:** Services are intangible; they cannot be normally stored, transported or inventoried. Services production cannot be separated from selling. In case of library services, personalized services like SDI are provided to the selected users by collecting what are the areas in which they require information. Library instructions shall be conducted either in the library or computer laboratory to provide hands on training to all segments
- **Promotion:** Promotion is another important phenomenon in marketing. It requires mechanism by which target groups are informed about the resources available in library and Information Centre. Promotion of what we have in the library. Users may not be aware or familiar with the library system. Hence it is essential that every year new students are joined with the library and at the beginning of the academic year, they must be provided awareness programmes. Word of mouth campaign is the best

mechanism for promoting the user of library services. The primary promotion tool is library instructions in the form of workshop, seminars, lectures etc

- Participants : The success of any programmes is depend on the feedback of the participants hence participants involved in promoting and marketing of the library services provided by library professionals, their feedback will help to get the lacunas in the system and it will help to improve the services and library system.
- Physical Evidence : According to Shostack “ a physical object is self-defining ; a service is not “ Hence in educational sector the marketing task is “ defining for the services what it cannot define for itself “ Evidence for the service can be both peripheral and essential. Physical evidence can support the marketing programmes by providing adequate service to the library users. It can make the service tangible
- Process: process is related to the process management, it consists of process planning, control, operation planning, facilities to be available with users, scheduling, quality of services etc.

The Role of Academic Library in Tourism Sector:

The role of academic libraries in promoting the marketing of the tourism sector cannot underestimate. Libraries as reservoirs of information and the most reliable information reference centre where tourists can seek information on hotels, motels, national parks, and other interesting places. Increment in the commercial values were noted in a city or town that housed higher institution of leaning in Nigeria. This in turn increases population and commercial activities such as buying and selling of both visible and invisible goods (Joel & Ayinla, 2015). The impact of Academic library here is the deposition of guilds and directories to locate commercial areas for the new visitors. The combination of each an economic development is the building block for national economic development in Nigeria

Problems Militating Against the Performances of Academic Library in Nigeria Economics.

The primary role of the Academic library is to acquire, process, preserve, and disseminate recorded information. It is therefore the responsibility of the library to enlighten the users and other members of the community it serves by presenting them with factual information that will guide their actions and help make good steps that will promote economic development. Unfortunately, at present, the greatest problem to information provision by libraries to promote

human resource and socio-economic issues are high illiteracy rate and lacked of reading culture. Other barriers include inadequate trained personnel in librarianship that is provision of grants for training of personnel to attend seminars, workshops and conferences, lack of resources, financial constraints, inadequate library services, poor distribution network of libraries, lack of viable data bases for research works and publishing industry that can publish and provide survey and reports. There is no area of library operations to which the computer has not been applied with tremendous gains. At this juncture, one can ask how much of these technological devices are in use in Nigerian Academic libraries. In the past decades, whatever has been done in terms of modern technological applications or automation has not gone deeply enough to make an appreciable impact.

Conclusion

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