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EMMANUEL CHIDIADI ONWUBIKO

ALEX EKWUEME FEDERAL UNIVERSITY NDUFU - ALIKE, IKWO,, onwubikoemma@yahoo.com

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Role of librarians and libraries in the realization of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: An empirical study

Onwubiko, Emmanuel Chidiadi.

Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike, Ikwo, Nigeria

Onwubikoemma@yahoo.com or emmabikos@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This is an empirical study that investigated the role of librarians and libraries in the realization of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The study was guided by four research objectives that spurred the formulation of four research questions. To realize the objectives of the study, descriptive survey research design was applied with a sampled population of 28 derived from 28 registered libraries and obtained through total enumerative sampling technique. The major instrument used in collecting data is an open-ended structured questionnaire while data collected were analyzed using thematic analysis based on grounded theory. The outcome of the study reveals that the level of awareness or familiarity of SDG among librarians and libraries was low. It was discovered that selective dissemination of information (SDI) and proper information provision will contribute immensely in the realization of SDGs whereas, modern library roles like advocacy programs, community outreach and engagements will aid librarians and libraries to contribute meaningfully towards the realization of these goals. Among the challenges identified militating against librarians and libraries contributing fully to this agenda include: poor funding and inadequacy of library facilities and lackadaisical attitude of some librarians and libraries as well as ignorance of the agenda by some librarians. It was based on the above mentioned identified challenges and more that recommendations were made.

Keywords: Libraries, Librarians, Sustainable development goals, United Nations

1.0. Introduction

The General Assembly of the United Nations in response to global challenge and to foster the course of humanity came together as a body on September 25, 2015 and adopted a

developmental framework known as 'Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or 2030 agenda. The agenda is made up of 17 goals and 169 targets. This indeed is a transition from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with a view to stimulating growth and development among member nations within a 15 year period.

As revealed by Osborn, Cutter and Ullah (2015), the Sustainable Development Goals is a global vision of progress towards ensuring a safe, just and sustainable space for all human beings to thrive on the planet. The view is that, SDGs is a unanimously accepted set of universal goals by every member of the UN on the ground that they will bring about global progress and development within the given time. As asserted by the United Nation (2016), all stakeholders including governments, agencies, institutions, civil societies and private sectors have pivotal roles to play for the realization of these goals. It is against this backdrop that librarians and libraries as information managers and institutions are so desired to working in support of the realization of this agenda with a view to transforming our world. As posited by International Federation of Library Associations (2017a), libraries are key institutions for achieving the SDGs that is why they were actively involved with the creation of the UN 2030 agenda, advocating for the inclusion of access to information, safeguarding of cultural heritage, universal literacy and access to information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the framework. This no doubt places librarians and libraries in strategic position in the realization of this agenda.

It is a known fact, that information is power therefore a very important ingredient for the implementation and realization of any developmental programme. So noted IFLA (2017b), libraries and librarians support in the sustainable development agenda is expected to be in area of providing the people with relevant and up-to-date information they require to be aware of and have access to economic opportunities, gender equality, quality education, improve their health or develop their communities. As posited by Igbinovia (2016), libraries and information services that enhance the implementation of SDGs should be consolidated and new roles adopted to ensure high level contribution to the agenda. It is pertinent to state that there is dearth of literature to specific roles of librarians and libraries towards the realization of the SDGs therefore the need for this research as a way of filling the gap.

1.1. Statement of Problem

If one has to go by the fact, that librarians and libraries were actively involved in the creation of the UN 2030 development agenda, the conclusion will be that librarians and libraries definitely know their roles towards the realization of the SDGs. This assertion is far from the truth. A preliminary investigation carried out in Nigeria, shows that there are many rivers to cross as it was noticed that many librarians and libraries are ignorant of the agenda and those who claimed the known, have done little or nothing towards contributing to the realization of these goals despite the fact that the whole idea behind the creation of the agenda is to make the world a better place on or before 2030. This situation no doubt will have a ripple-effect on how well Nigeria will realize the agenda come 2030. The truth must be told, the impact that librarians and libraries will have in the realization of this agenda depends largely on library-heads familiarities with the agenda and their knowledge of the required services to be provided by librarians and libraries. There is in fact no literature in Nigeria as far as the researcher knows that shows that they know. It is in view of this, that this study has become necessary.

1.2. Objectives of the study

This study is aimed at achieving the following objective:

1. To establish whether head of libraries are familiar with the SDGs
2. To ascertain if there are set out information services geared towards the realization of the SDGs by libraries
3. To determined the expected roles by librarians and libraries in the realization of the SDGs
4. To establish challenges that may militate against librarians and libraries in performing their roles towards the realization of the SDGs.

1.3. Research Questions

In line with the research objectives, four research questions were formulated which guided the study.

1. Are head of libraries familiar with the SDGs?

2. What are the set out information services for the realization of the SDGs?
3. What roles are librarians and libraries expected to play in the realization of the SDGs?
4. Are there challenges likely to militate against librarians and libraries performing their roles towards the realization of the SDGs?

2.0. Literature Review

2.1. An overview of the SDGs

On January 1, 2016, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by world leaders in September 2015 at an historic UN Summit officially came into force. Over the next fifteen years, with these new Goals that universally apply to all, countries will mobilize efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind.

The SDGs, also known as Global Goals, build on the success of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and aim to go further to end all forms of poverty. The new Goals are unique in that they call for action by all countries, poor, rich and middle-income to promote prosperity while protecting the planet. They recognize that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and addresses a range of social needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection. While the SDGs are not legally binding, governments are expected to take ownership and establish national frameworks for the achievement of the 17 Goals. Countries have the primary responsibility for follow-up and review of the progress made in implementing the Goals, which will require quality, accessible and timely data collection. Regional follow-up and review will be based on national-level analyses and contribute to follow-up and review at the global level (UN. 2016)

As expressed by United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (2018), the SDGs also known as global goals is a call for action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that people of the world enjoy peace and prosperity. It revealed that the SDGs incorporated new ideas which include: climate change, economic inequality, innovation, sustainable consumption, peace and justice among others with inter-connectedness of the goals. Inasmuch as these goals are

stipulated to be actualized within a time frame Igbinova (2017), is of the view that the sustainable development goals should strive towards maintaining development agenda to ensure its actualization with less emphasis on time limit so as to make impact that transcends 2030 into making a lasting impact on the next generation.

The development goals explains Islamic Development Bank (2015) continues the efforts towards meeting developmental needs of the people across the globe base on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals thus a United Nations initiative that covers a wide spectrum of development challenges such as poverty, inequality, climate change, sustaining ecosystem and cities, health, education, shelter among others. In other words, the Sustainable Development Goals could be said to be an aspiration of humans towards the sustainable development of the global space for peaceful co-existence of all humans regardless of colour and race.

2.2. Role of Librarians and libraries in the realization of the SDGS

Librarians as information managers, custodian of knowledge and information disseminators with libraries as information warehouse and home of knowledge are strategically important in the realization of any developmental agenda in any part of the world. This is well pronounced by the involvement of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) in the creation of the UN 2030 agenda popularly known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the course, the inclusion of access to information, safeguarding cultural heritage, universal literacy and access to information and communication technologies were advocated (IFLA, 2015)

In the new dispensation, librarians and libraries have turned gateway and guide to knowledge.

To this Akintunde (2004) explains that librarians and libraries from the foregoing have imbibed a new paradigm of service. There has been shift from being documentalist and archivist, to being a gateway to knowledge. The librarian has also shifted from being the all knowing ‘custodian’ of knowledge to a ‘guide’ by the side. He explains that the librarian guides clients on how to navigate effectively through the wide world web (www), creates portals for his clients because of the mesh of data now readily available. The actualization of the SDGs states Onah, Urom and Amanze-Unagha (2015) can only be possible if all the essential infrastructure and institutions libraries inclusive are given the desired attention to contribute their quota to the agenda

On having access to information and communication technologies as advocated by IFLA, the role of librarians and libraries assisting the people realize this is not in doubt. As averred by Anyakoha (2005), since information available online are enormous and good number of library users are not conversant with the use of the internet, librarians who are computer literate and know the application of ICT are still needed to tutor and direct such users as many users are still not able to use the web efficiently. In this particular situation therefore, librarians are still recognized as search experts and information specialist thus are expected to help users to locate and access information. According to Dike (2007), information communication technology (ICT) or no ICT, it is the responsibility of librarians to help users formulate their enquiries and develop a search. This is because they have knowledge of the vast array of information sources, how they can be located and accessed, the strong and weak point of each, and the method for evaluating them. A case in point is that of librarians trained by Biblionet who assisted 100,000 farmers in Romania to obtain US \$187 million in subsidies through new internet and computer services. The over one thousand librarians that participated in the training brought the services to their libraries in conjunction with the local mayors who felt that the services are in the farmers' best interest. The programme helped the farmers master how to use the technology in the libraries to access financial form and submit same to the government thereby saving them time and money (International Research Exchange Board (IREX) (2013). By this singular act of strategic initiative which empowers rural farmers, librarians contribute in the eradication of hunger and poverty in Romania.

Feather (2006), Mathur and Ambani (2005) and Godlee et al. (2004) opine that libraries are critically important in driving access to knowledge. Librarians and libraries make every effort to dismantle all barriers that exist between users and the information and knowledge contained in their collections (in the broadest sense possible). The crucial role that libraries play in the empowerment of their users is that they (librarians) are the facilitating agencies to access the information they need. One of the ways in which librarians and libraries empower their users is that they, the users, are assured that they are accessing information with the knowledge that the information they receive is authentic and trustworthy. Ubale and Yahaya (2015) corroborate the above assertion as they declare that access to information is cross-cutting issue that supports all of the SDGs therefore, librarians are expected to be in the fore-front of contributing to the

realization of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals by the target date of 2030. A major role librarians and libraries can play in the actualization of the SDGs state Igbino (2016) and Ubale and Yahaya (2016) is to create awareness to the public on the goals and targets of the agenda. The above statement is in line with that of Lozano (2002) who posits that the general role of libraries is to provide information about its community and acquire knowledge which will help dispel ignorance.

As posited by IFLA (2013), libraries contribute to the delivery of sustainable development by providing opportunity for all and sundry, empower people, offer access to the world's knowledge, provide expert guidance and serve as stakeholders in the development policy framework. Libraries provide users with a considerable level of comfort, placing themselves in a strong position as a social service of the highest order (Gothenburg 2010). Igwe (2010) concluded that libraries provide access to an endless variety of information resources and opportunities for interactive communication. Though the fundamental mission has remained, to facilitate and give access to information and knowledge, the processes, tools and techniques have undergone remarkable changes. To Fagbola, Uzoigwe and Ajegbomogun (2011), access to knowledge is critical for the development and growth of the society and for participation in democratic processes. The library is an integral part of the society that surrounds it. It is shaped and changed by many of the same forces that shape other types of institution. While Igbino (2016) asserts that one of the roles libraries can play in achieving SDGs is information literacy services, as information accessibility and utilization are essential in the development agenda.

According to Tise (2011), the exponential growth of information fuelled by the exploitation of media such as the web and social networking, demands that there be a mediator with the skills and capacity to extract trusted and authentic information. Such an intermediary also has to be able to deliver reliable and authoritative information to the information-seeking community as well as the new knowledge and information that has been created in recent times. It is this new knowledge and information that help to stimulate the growth and development of societies and the world. Libraries as primary gateways to information are therefore important vehicles for the acquisition of knowledge. As knowledge institutions, libraries provide spaces for information-sharing and learning for all ages, genders, ethnicities and socio-economic groups regardless of their information/knowledge needs. The above assertion was corroborated by White (2012) as he

opines that as the gateways to knowledge and culture, libraries play a fundamental role in the society. The resources and services they offer create opportunities for learning, support literacy and education, and help shape the new ideas and perspectives that are central to a creative and innovative society. They also help ensure an authentic record of knowledge created and accumulated by past generations. In a world without libraries, it would be difficult to advance research and human knowledge or preserve the world's cumulative knowledge and heritage for future generations. Further, libraries facilitate access to information thereby providing the means through which new knowledge is developed and made available to all. Knowledge is foundational to all spheres of life. An interrogation of this concept reveals that knowledge is critical for the growth of society and that knowledge is produced when information is absorbed, processed and internalized by individuals (McCallum, 2013). Libraries, as critical providers of information have an important role to play in the creation of new knowledge. They are vital institutions for the creation, development and sustainability of knowledge societies. Information is a key input into the creation and maturation of knowledge, therefore, a significant criterion for a growing and healthy society is access to information. The library, as a major source for/conduit to information, serves a wide spectrum of information-seekers. Libraries are not only vital but also central to the facilitation of knowledge generation. The above declaration is affirmed by Ubale (2018) as he posits that libraries provide an essential means of reaching the next billion by supporting digital inclusion through access to ICT and dedicated staff to help people develop new digital skills. In the words of Ukoha (2013), Libraries remain portals of knowledge for everyone and they guarantee that whoever you are you can open the door to information, knowledge, learning and help.

To Vrane and markovic (2015), libraries have always been educational, cultural and spiritual centres, places where people had access to relevant knowledge and information. These institutions invest greatly into the intellectual development of their users and contribute to the development of overall democracy of knowledge. They maintain that Librarians are intermediaries between library users and the knowledge whether in printed or digital form.

According to witek (2014), librarians are not only knowledge creators but knowledge providers. He explains that historically, libraries and librarians are perceived as primary conduits for accessing knowledge as librarians provide knowledge to those who seek it through classification schema, bibliographic instruction, and purchase or license of scholarly materials. However, librarians frequently are also engage in traditional subject based research, innovative

technological projects and development of new processes or services at their libraries that would be great contributions, in written or other forms, to the broader knowledge base. Academic librarians typically, produce scholarly content out of obligation; they work at an academic institutions that grant them tenure or promotion on the basis of their publication activities. (American Theological Library Association (ATLA), 2019)

As unhindered access to knowledge is essential in any developmental process for individuals and nations, the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), in the context of the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda, believes that increasing access to information and knowledge across society supports sustainable development and improves people's lives. (IFLA, 2017). The above assertion supports Obasi (2015) declaration that access to knowledge continue to be an issue in the library and information discipline, as it is the basic and fundamental tenet upon which all libraries' policies, activities, operations and resources are built upon.

In the opinion of Solanke and Osuchukwu (2018), Libraries irrespective of type should enhance its information management system to create, organize and share usable information with the people. They further state that the notion of ascribing particular type of information to a particular library should be discouraged explaining that a librarian is for all first before belonging to a particular library as believing in this assertion will make librarians work effectively and successfully as driver of access to knowledge.

While Nwajiuba (2019), in the context of the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 and the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance at the 3rd Ministerial Roundtable on Information Access declared, I believe the success of every educational institution depends on its library as the availability of the right information at the right time and form is of utmost importance to users and an improvement of our library systems and access to information/knowledge will bring about social and human capital development. IFLA (2019) in her description of 3rd Roundtable of Ministers Responsible for Public Libraries in Africa held in Accra, Ghana from 28 – 30 October, aimed at improving information access and library systems corroborated the above assertion as it posits that Africa is faced with some of the world's most acute development challenges and needs to draw on all of its innovative potential. Information and equitable access to it IFLA declared will play a key role in achieving this, and libraries across the continent are working hard to deliver on this mandate. Just as noted by Ubale (2018), information is a vital

tool for any nation to have and provide relevant, updated and adequate information on food security, democracy, health education, gender equality etc. He is of the view that libraries and librarians can provide such access to information which would enable people lead gainful lives as they are skilled at acquiring, organizing, offering for use and publicly preserving information irrespective of the form in which it is packaged in such a way that when it is needed it can be found and put to use.

According to Onwubiko (2020), librarians and libraries of any sort are indispensable drivers of access to knowledge which leads to individual growth and development as the library continues to be the power house, an indispensable asset to knowledge and above all, a driving access to knowledge of all time. On a general note, librarians and libraries serve a growing number of digital natives who know that information is knowledge and knowledge is power. So to speak, access to information and knowledge are keys to lifelong learning and successful livelihood, as well as national, economical, political, social and human capital development.

3.0. Methodology

3.1. Research design

The study applied descriptive survey research design which according to Nworgu (2015) is a type of study which aims at collecting data on and describing in a systematic manner the characteristic features and facts of a given population. This type of study is only interested in describing certain variables like dependent and independent variables in relation to the population. So this design was applied for this study as a research procedure that asks questions from respondents in order to describe the current state of the population under study with respect to the phenomenon under investigation.

3.2. Area of study

The area of study in the real context is Nigeria but since it is not possible to access the entire target population, Enugu state was chosen as a microcosm of the macrocosm called Nigeria. Enugu State is located in the South Eastern region of Nigeria with a population of over four million people. The state houses over 15 tertiary institutions and all branches of federal government institutions and agencies. It has 17 Local Government Areas with Enugu city as the capital.

3.3. Population of study

The population of this study includes all Head of libraries in all the tertiary institutions in Enugu State as well as all head of libraries in all federal and state owned institutions and agencies. They are: University of Nigeria library, Nsukka; University of Nigeria Enugu campus library; University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital library, Ozalla; Nigeria Law School library, Agbani; Renaissance University library, Ugbawka; Enugu State University of Science technology Library, Agbani; Enugu State University Teaching Hospital Library, Enugu; Veritas University Library, Amorji; Godfrey Okoye University library, Enugu; Institute of Ecumenical Education library, Thinkers Corner; African Thinkers University library, Enugu; Institute of Management and Technology library, Enugu; Enugu State College of Education (Technical) library, Enugu; Mater Dei Polytechnic library, Orji River; Federal College of Cooperative Studies library, Orji River; Federal Road Safety College library, Udi; Federal Polytechnic library, Udi; Coal City University library, Emene; College of Social Works library, Emene; Nigerian Television Authority library, Enugu; Radio Nigeria library, Enugu; Federal Court of Appeal library, Enugu; Federal High Court library, Enugu; Enugu State High Court library, Enugu; Central Bank of Nigeria library, Enugu; Federal Science Equipment Institute library, Akwuke, Project Development Institute library, Enugu and Enugu State Broadcasting Service library, Enugu. From the number of establishment and institutions, the population of this study stands at 28

3.4. Sampled Population

The sampled population for the study stood at 28 obtained through total enumeration sampling technique due to the manageable population which makes the study's size 28 head of libraries in Enugu State, Nigeria.

3.5. Instrument for data collection

The primary instrument used in this study for data collection is the questionnaire. To obtain the desired data from the respondents in line with the objectives of this study, open-ended questionnaire was used which according to Reja, Manfreda, Hlebec and Vehovar (2003) allows respondents to express their views without bias that could result from suggesting responses to

respondents as in the case of close-ended questions. The questionnaires which were emailed to the respondents were returned 100%

3.6. Method for data analysis

Data collected through the administered questionnaires were analyzed using thematic analysis technique in which case, all responses in each section of the questionnaire were perused at least two times before generating themes that emerged from the data. Codes were developed for different themes which were conceptualized and categorized based on grounded theory, to develop theories for which the SDGs will be measured. The necessity of this approach is to fill the dearth of empirical research that uses standard terms to measure the roles of librarians and libraries in the realization of the SDGs. Responses to the items (categories) are structured in a Likert-scale format of 4-1, an adaptation of Vagias (2006).

4.0. Data presentation and analysis

Table 1: Ages of respondents

Age	N	Percentage
45 - 54	21	75%
55 and above	7	25

N=28

The data collected as stated in Table 1, show that 21 of the 28 respondents representing 75% are between 45 to 54 years and the remaining 7 which is 25% are 55 years and above.

Table 2: Working Experience

Years of experience	No of respondents	Percentage
11 - 15	5	17.9
16 - 20	7	25
21 years and above	16	57.1

N=28

The table above shows 5 respondents representing 17.9% working experience is between 11 - 15 years while 25% or 7 respondents have been on the job between 16 to 20 years. 57.1% that is 16 respondents have worked for 21 years and above.

Table 3: Gender

Gender	No	Percentage
male	21	75
Female	7	25
Total	28	100

Table 3 shows that 25% or 7 respondents are female while the remaining 21 persons representing 75% of the sampled population are male. Table 4 below reveals that 67.9% or 19 respondents are from academic library whereas special libraries covered the 32.1% of the respondents which is 9 respondents.

Table 4: Respondents by types of library

Type	No of respondents	percentage
Academic library	19	67.9
Special library	9	32.1

Table 5: Educational qualifications

Qualifications	No	Percentage
BLIS/BLS/BSc/BA	8	28.6
MLIS/MLS	8	28.6
PHD	12	42.8

The educational qualification shows that PhD has the highest respondents with 42.8% which is 12 respondents followed by BLIS/BLS/BSc/BA and MLIS/MLS that has 8 respondents each representing 28.6% each. On the part of marital status, all the 28 respondents are married.

The demographic data therefore show a well classification of respondents with credible background and in good position to attest to the queries of the questionnaires

Research Question 1: Are head of libraries familiar with the SDGs?

Table 6: Extent of familiarity by library heads

S/No	Extent of familiarity	Frequency	%
i	Highly familiar	5	17.9
ii	Moderately familiar	3	10.7
iii	Slightly familiar	10	35.7
iv	Not familiar	10	35.7
	Total	28	100

The data in table 6 above showed that 10 out of the 28 respondents or 35.7% are not familiar with the SDGs, while another 35.7% or 10 respondents, are slightly familiar with the SDGs. It is only 5 respondents representing 17.9% claim having full knowledge of what SDGs are all about whereas, the remaining 3 or 10.7% are moderately familiar with the development goals.

Research Question 2: What information services could foster the realization of the SDGs?

Table 7: Information services that could foster the realization of the SDGs

S/No	Services	Frequency	Rank
i	Information literacy programmes	6	4 th
ii	Computer digital literacy programmes	3	7 th
iii	Provision of information resources	6	4 th
iv	Awareness campaign	6	4 th
v	Selective dissemination of information (SDI)	13	1 st
vi	Reference services	5	5 th
vii	Information provision	12	2 nd
vii	Open access publishing and repository	0	9 th
ix	Provision of technological infrastructure	2	8 th
x	Current awareness services	10	3 rd
xi	Capacity building	4	6 th

On the anticipated services that could foster the realization of the SDGs, table 7 revealed by their rankings that selective dissemination of information (SDI) is first on the list of services that could foster the realization of the SDGs followed by information provision then current awareness services (CAS). Others are: Information literacy programmes, Provision of information resources, Awareness campaign and Reference services. Least on the list are Capacity building, Computer digital literacy programmes, and Provision of technological infrastructure.

Research Question 3: What roles are librarians and libraries expected to play in the realization of the SDGs?

Table 8: Expected roles from librarians and libraries towards the realization of the SDGs

S/No	Expected roles	Frequency	Rank
i	Training of library users	5	3 rd
ii	Provision of digital information services	5	3 rd
iii	Information repackaging	6	2 nd
iv	Engagement in development programmes	5	3 rd
v	Developing reading culture	5	3 rd
vi	Information dissemination on job opportunities	0	6 th
vii	Organizing talk shows on SDGs	3	5 th

viii	Promoting health culture in libraries	0	6 th
ix	Advocacy programmes for SDGS	8	1 st
x	Community engagement	8	1 st
xi	Involvement in research	3	5 th
xii	Safeguarding cultural heritage and indigenous knowledge	4	4 th

From the data collected as displayed in table 8 above, the most important roles to be played for the realization of the SDGs are Advocacy programmes for SDGS, Community engagement and Information repackaging. The 3rd and 4th by the order of ranking are Engagement in development programmes, Developing reading culture and Safeguarding cultural heritage and indigenous knowledge. Of all the services, the respondents do not see any need for Information dissemination on job opportunities and Promoting health culture in libraries.

Research Question 4: Are there challenges likely to militate against librarians and libraries performing their roles towards the realization of the SDGs?

Table 9: Factors that can militate against librarians and libraries performing their roles towards the realization of the SDGs?

S/No	Challenges	Frequency	Rank
i	Poor funding	20	1 st
ii	Inadequate trained library personnel	15	2 nd
iii	Lack of training on SDGs	1	6 th
iv	Insufficient SDGs related materials	6	5 th
v	Epileptic power supply	10	4 th
vi	Lackadaisical attitude of government and Non-governmental organizations	20	1 st
vii	Inadequate library facilities	16	3 rd
viii	Lack of access to best practices on SDGs	0	7 th

The table 9 above presents a catalogue of challenges militating against librarians and libraries performing their roles towards the realization of the SDGs. These include by ranking: poor funding, lackadaisical attitude of government and Non-governmental organizations, inadequate trained library personnel, inadequate library facilities, epileptic power supply, insufficient SDGs related materials and lack of training on SDGs.

5.0. Discussion of findings

A holistic analysis of the data collected as shown in table 6, in respect to research question 1 and first objective of this study indicates that majority of the librarians are not familiar with the SDGs thus cannot give what they do not have. From the result, only an insignificant number, 5 respondents representing 17.9% are highly familiar with the development goals. This proves the fact as stated in the bible that my people perish for lack of knowledge and against the assumption of Lozano (2002) who posits that the general role of libraries is to provide information about its community and acquire knowledge which will help dispel ignorance. So the bottom line is that head of libraries in Nigeria are not all that familiar with the SDGs.

On the 2nd research question: What information services could foster the realization of the SDGs? Available data show that selective dissemination of information (SDI) is first on the list of services that could foster the realization of the SDGs followed by information provision then current awareness services (CAS). Others are: Information literacy programmes, Provision of information resources, Awareness campaign and Reference services. The above suggestions conform with that of IFLA (2013), which posits that libraries contribute to the delivery of sustainable development by providing opportunity for all and sundry, empower people, offer access to the world's knowledge, provide expert guidance and serve as stakeholders in the development policy framework. As unhindered access to knowledge is essential in any developmental process for individuals and nations, the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), in the context of the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda, believes that increasing access to information and knowledge across society supports sustainable development and improves people's lives. (IFLA, 2017). The above assertion supports Obasi (2015) declaration that access to knowledge continue to be an issue in the library and information discipline, as it is the basic and fundamental tenet upon which all libraries' policies, activities, operations and resources are built upon. As well as that of Igwe (2010) who concludes that libraries provide access to an endless variety of information resources and opportunities for interactive communication. Fagbola, Uzoigwe and Ajegbomogun (2011) also corroborated their stand as they opine that access to knowledge is critical for the development and growth of the society and for participation in democratic processes. The library is an integral part of the society

that surrounds it. It is shaped and changed by many of the same forces that shape other types of institution.

On the role that librarians and libraries should play for the realization of the SDGs, analyzed data indicate that the most important roles to be played for the realization of the SDGs are Advocacy programmes for SDGS, Community engagement and Information repackaging. The 3rd and 4th by the order of ranking are Engagement in development programmes, Developing reading culture and Safeguarding cultural heritage and indigenous knowledge. The above roles are in conformity with those propounded by IFLA (2017) which states that libraries and librarians support in the sustainable development agenda is expected to be in area of providing the people with relevant and up-to-date information they require to be aware of and have access to economic opportunities, gender equality, quality education, improve their health or develop their communities. This also supports Igbinova (2016) assertion that one of the roles libraries can play in achieving SDGs is information literacy services, as information accessibility and utilization are essential in the development agenda. Onwubiko (2020) also affirms to the stated roles as he averred that librarians and libraries of any sort are indispensable drivers of access to knowledge which leads to individual growth and development as the library continues to be the power house, an indispensable asset to knowledge and above all, a driving access to knowledge of all time. On a general note, librarians and libraries serve a growing number of digital natives who know that information is knowledge and knowledge is power. The above fact therefore answers research question 3.

On research question 4, the outcome of this study also exposed myriad of challenges that militate against librarians and libraries performing their roles for the realization of the SDGs. They include: poor funding from the part management and government, lackadaisical attitude of government and Non-governmental organizations, inadequate trained library personnel, inadequate library facilities, epileptic power supply, insufficient SDGs related materials and lack of training on SDGs.

5.1. Conclusion and Recommendations

The truth is that librarians and libraries are indispensable tools to the realization of the SDGs just as declared by IFLA that unhindered access to knowledge is essential in any developmental process for individuals and nations, the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA),

in the context of the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda, believes that increasing access to information and knowledge across society supports sustainable development and improves people's lives. (IFLA, 2017). This no doubt is the librarians' area of expertise and the sole responsibility of library of any sort. In other words, librarians and libraries are in strategic position in the realization of this agenda. It is against this backdrop that the researcher believes that for librarians and libraries to perform optimally as information hub for the realization of the SDGs, the following measures ought to be taken:

- It is a globally established fact that no project or institution succeeds in isolation of adequate funding and libraries are not exception. The call is that if the government and organizations want libraries to function optimally, there is the need, for the government to adequately fund libraries regardless of type to enable them provide the required services. Government should collaborate with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private sectors and rich individuals to raise fund for libraries through which, necessary operational tools, equipment, desired information materials and related information and communication technologies tools will be acquired. A situation where government sees library project as political project is laughable and should be frowned at. Rather, let it be known, that every library project is a step towards elevating the life of the people because a nation that not well informed is bound to remain poor.
- In line with the above, library management should start thinking outside the box. The era of waiting for the government to provide everything is gone. Libraries today have become profit oriented venture therefore library management should be innovative and creative as to developing means through which funds could be raise for proper running of the libraries. Librarians should deviate from the assumption of 'as it was in the beginning' and start doing things differently in an era where information has become power and money yielding.
- Management of libraries should not see the libraries as avenue of enriching themselves as there have been situations where fund released by government has been misappropriated and embezzled at the detriment of effective service provision. There should be in a existence a body with integrity whose responsibility should be to monitor and audit every library project and anyone found culpable punished accordingly.

- It has become a re-occurring decimal that anytime one talks of challenges facing any library, the first thing you hear apart from inadequate funding is lack of trained personnel. Library management should understand that the hood does not make the monk. So, in the case of the library, it is not just the collections and buildings that make the library but rather, the caliber and crop of personnel in these libraries. It behooves therefore the library management to ensure that only the best hands are employed thus should avoid sentiment while hiring personnel.
- Capacity building involves training and re-training in line with the changes in our environment. The argument is that library management should develop annual schedule for training and re-training of librarians so as to meet up with the dynamic society. These trainings may be in the form of attending workshops, seminars and conferences. It may even be by granting scholarship to some personnel to obtain higher qualifications in their areas of specialty. The success story in Romania came as a result of the training obtained by over 1000 librarians under the auspice of biblionet. We can replicate this in our country.
- In line with the SDGs, librarians and libraries should enhance community engagements through providing specialized information services (considering the information needs of the concerned community), capacity building through the organization of workshops and do-it-yourself training programmes and encouraging the people to cultivate a reading culture.
- Furthermore, librarians and libraries should get involve in advocacy programmes such as road-walk, distribution of informative flyers, radio jingles and social media campaign with a view to intimating the public on the SDGs.
- As a way of being innovation and creative as earlier mentioned, librarians should think of re-packaging information of all sorts more so, in areas of health, heritage and culture, agriculture, education and economic information. This re-packaging should come in different formats and where possible, in local languages.
- The strength of any army depends on her weaponry and strategies. This is to say, for libraries to fully contribute their full quota to the realization of the SDGs; they must be well equipped with the required SDGs information and materials for the public in a suitable and easy-to-access format like audio-visual for those rural dwellers with little or

no formal education. The crown-glory is that the librarians should be well tutored on these goal as not to be found wanting.

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