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Wikipedia edit- a -thon in a Nigerian academic library

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Abstract

This study examined Wikipedia edit-a-thon programme in a University Library in Nigeria. It adopted the descriptive design. Unstructured questionnaire and interview were used for data collection. A total of 25 people participated in the study. These are the University Librarian and two female deputy University Librarians, four library staff that serve as facilitators and eighteen participants of the edit-a-thon project. Interview was conducted with the University Librarian and her two deputies while the rest responded to an unstructured questionnaire. Data gathered were analysed using frequency counts and narrative. Findings show that the library engages in edit-a-thon for a few reasons amongst which are to contribute to open knowledge and help bridge the gender gap in Wikipedia editing which is dominated by men amongst others. Discoursing and winning the library managements' consent to host edit-a-thon, is an important activity to ensure a successful edit-a-thon. Both the library, participants and facilitators have benefited from the programme. Despite the gains of participating in Wikipedia edit-a-thon, there are challenges of time constraint and infrastructure on the part of the library, lack of institutional support, problem of attracting new participants (editor) and retaining older ones as facilitators and lack of published information on Nigerian Women to support entries on Wikipedia. The implication of the study is that participating in Wikipedia edit-a-thon is an encouraging initiative for the library, an experience which every academic library in Nigeria should endeavour to have to contribute to open knowledge. Unveiling the achievements and contributions of notable women in Africa is a step towards building role models for the upcoming generation

Introduction

Wikipedia is a free online encyclopaedia, created and edited by volunteers around the world. It started in 2001 and is hosted by the Wikimedia Foundation. Wikipedia operates under the open source management style. It is one of the most visited sites in the internet. Wikipedia is available in 250 languages, viewed by 500 million users in a month and is one of the seven biggest websites in the world (Ford, 2016). Wikipedia and Libraries have many things in common. Phetteplace (2015) observed that like libraries Wikipedia are not for profit making and both are dedicated to free spread of information. Moreover, Wikipedia can be used to create visibility to many library collections.

Wikipedia has been facing some challenges. Among them is the decline in the number of article editors. Wikipedia received the highest number of articles editors (i.e those who edited more than one hundred articles in a month) in 2007 and by 2017, the number has declined to about one-third (Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019). Moreover, there has been a persistent gender gap among the editors. For instance, Evans, Mabey and Mandiberg, (2015) noted that only about 10% of Wikipedia editors are women. This results in problems of bias, underrepresentation of women and an environment that is hostile towards female editors as entries on women are easily marked for deletion by men with the slightest excuse. In response to these, Wikipedia introduced Edit-a-thon in 2012 to encourage more people especially women to participate in editing Wikipedia. Edit-a-thon refers to an annual event in which people with the same interest come together to increase or improve the content of Wikipedia on a subject area. Ferzan, Savage and Saviga (2016) defined edit-a-thon as a collocated all day events bringing together novice and experienced Wikipedia editors. Phetteplace (2015) posits that Institutions of higher learning and libraries make perfect partners for such occasions. This is because libraries have useful information materials to be cited and students can easily be recruited to join the project with minimal persuasion.

Since edit a thon started in 2012, many groups especially in the USA have been involved in the editing. Among them are too FEW edit-a-thon and That Camp Feminisms West, East and South edit-a-thon (Wadewitz, 2013) to mention but a few. In 2017, Nnamdi Azikiwe Library, University of Nigeria, Nsukka joined the group of edit-a-thon organisers to improve the content of African women on Wikipedia. To make a difference among their peers, contribute to open knowledge and showcase

their digital skills (Ukwoma, Osadebe, Okafor and Ezeani, 2021). The library mobilized the doctoral staff of the university to edit the arts and feminism aspect of the Wikipedia project. The aim of this study, therefore, evaluate the wikipedia project in Nigeria using the University of Nigeria, Nsukka library as a case study.

Objectives of the study:

- a. Identify the reasons why the library engaged in Wikipedia edit-a-thon.
- b. Examine the processes involved in organising Wikipedia edit-a-thon.
- c. Identify the benefits derived in engaging in Wikipedia edit-a-thon, as edit-a-thon facilitators, participants and to the Library.
- d. Identify the challenges encountered by the library, edit-a-thon facilitators and participants in engaging in Wikipedia edit-a-thon.
- e. To proffer strategies for an improved Wikipedia edit-a-thon experience.

Why People/Libraries Engage in Wikipedia edit-a-thon.

People engage in Wikipedia edit-a-thon for several reasons, some people see contributing to Wikipedia as fun and support for open access to information movement. There are also others that contribute because they possess altruism that drives them to contribute to a resource for the greater good (Soito, 2017). Breckler (2010) and Armstrong (2014) observed that among some disciplines, it is mandatory to contribute to Wikipedia as a professional responsibility. Some libraries contribute to Wikipedia as a way of creating content on their organisation (Robichaud, 2018). The authors however warned that such organisations are using Wikipedia as a promotional platform contrary to what it was meant for. Farzan, Savage and Saviga (2016) observed that many libraries engage in art and Feminism edit-a-thon to increase the coverage of female representation in Wikipedia, encourage female editorship and to address lacklustre coverage of topics which libraries and librarians can support. The University of Washington, Syracuse University, University of Houston, Ball State University and University of Pittsburg contribute to Wikipedia to link Library resources to Wikipedia Content. The Eastern Washington University (EWU) Library collaborate with Archives staff to organise Wikipedia edit-a-thon with the aim of exposing undergraduate students to archival materials and providing students with experience in collaborative knowledge creation and to maintain the centrality of libraries to knowledge management (Krause, 2017).

Some other libraries such as the Smithsonian Institute library collaborated with Wikipedia to organise edit-a-thon bearing three major aims at heart. These are to improve poor entries for some notable women scientists, train new women editors to continue editing work on women in science and inspire upcoming women scientists to greater heights through information on women scientists in Wikipedia (Athene, 2012).

The activities involved in organising Wikipedia edit-a-thon

To organise Wikipedia edit-a-thon a lot of activities are involved, Phetteplace (2015) identified some of these activities to include setting up a meetup page on the internet, securing a good physical venue for the edit-a-thon, identifying and selecting library materials on the theme (these materials will serve as reference sources to be used in creating articles), placing a call for an experienced Wikipedia editor, to helping and

preparing colour coded badges for all participants to denote their comfortability with being photographed. Soito, (2017), observed that setting a meetup page on Wikipedia may involve writing up a personalized meetup page or adopting and customising an already existing meetup page. Meet up page is an important platform where information relating to time and direction to the venue of the edit-a-thon is being communicated to the general public. The meetup page is also a platform for Wikipedia to track information relating to number of editors, number of articles created and edited; and number of pictures uploaded during the edit-a-thon. Soita described a good physical space for edit-a-thon as a key ingredient which hosts of edit-a-thon should consider while, Mohyeddin (2016) opined that engaging actively experienced wikipedia editors and research experts makes for edit-a-thons program run smoothly.

Advertisement and training are some of the other important activities involved in organising edit-a-thon. Farzan, Savage and Saviaga (2016) suggested that edit-a-thon should be advertised on the web and through other various media platforms. The author advised that the advertisement should carry the information that no prior editing knowledge is required and that tutorial will be organised for new editors. Torres (2016) opined that facilitators for the edit-a-thon should be acquainted with the basic knowledge of editing to enable them coach new editors. The training should also be organised for new editors to equip them with the skill to edit and knowledge of established guidelines bearing in mind that Wikipedia has a reputation of being uninviting to new editors (Bear and Collier, 2016).

Production of audio-visual resources (images and audio) for Wikipedia commons is another activity involved in organising Wikipedia edit-a-thon. Although writing and editing text is the main activity, donating photographs and other resources to Wikipedia commons repository also takes place. Ford (2016) is of the opinion that only materials freed through Wikipedia commons can appear in Wikipedia since it is a way to guarantee that the images and audios possess the proper licence for their re-use and free circulation.

Describing the colour coded badges use in edit-a-thon, Phetteplace (2015) noted that red meant no photograph please, orange means please ask for permission while green stands for go ahead without permission. Mohyeddin (2016) suggested that engaging active Wikipedia editors and research experts would enhance the smooth running of the edit-a-thon.

Benefits of the Library from organizing edit-a-thon.

The organization of wikipedia edit-a-thon has benefited some Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums (GLAM), in different ways. Soito (2017) opined that edit-a-thon enable libraries to bring people together to engage in research. Edit-a-thon offers itself as a way for GLAM institutions to showcase the research and writing skills possessed by their staff, provide opportunity for GLAM to engage with their communities, advertise their holdings and services to their communities.

Edit-a-thon helps to create online publicity for libraries free of charge. There are libraries that lack the resources to create online visibility. Many lack the resources to maintain websites. Edit-a-thon provides a means for libraries to maintain online presences without cost at the meetup and Wikipedia programs and events page (Robichaud, 2016).

Organising edit-a-thon presents itself as a way of sharpening the project management skills of librarians. Robichaud, (2016) opined that hosting an edit-a-thon is a good way for libraries to hone their project management skill. Wikipedia editing provides opportunities for students to learn information literacy skills. This includes learning to communicate technical topics to general audiences, collaborating with other University departments, acquiring skills to identify appropriate information sources (Soito, 2017), strengthening students, consulting and citing ability and learning to work in a collaborative environment (Ford, 2016). For librarians, organising edit-a-thon helps librarians to evaluate the quality and accessibility of the descriptive practices use in the library (Krause, 2017).

Other benefits for engaging in Wikipedia edit-a-thon as enunciated by Ford (2016), include enabling participants to incorporate technology and digital media as learning tools, develop critical thinking, information management, research and content curating. The author further opined that participating in Wikipedia edit-a-thon enables participants to develop a culture of respect to copyright, partake in promoting open learning, open knowledge and open culture by the production and contribution of content through the creative commons license and to become part of the global community.

Challenges in organizing edit-a-thon in university libraries

Instant literature has shown that, Wikipedia edit-a-thon has experienced tremendous success (Farzan, Savage and Saviaga, 2016). However, this has been stringed with diverse challenges. Kraut, Burke, Riedl and Resnick (2010) noted that some of the major challenges in organizing edit-a-thon include being able to attract and retain new editors, to replace the unavoidable exit of old participants or editors. Lam, Uduwage, Dong, Sen, Musicant, Terveen and Riedl (2011) and Suh, Convertino, Chi and Pirolli (2009) cited in Farzan, Savage and Saviaga (2016) highlighted that in more recent years, Wikipedia has been having the problem of recruiting new editors and retaining old ones. Another nagging challenge faced by Wikipedia edit-a-thon is lack of institutional support for trainings. Which implies that only few people attend trainings and after trainings, very few participants practice working on the Wikipedia platform on their own. Moreover, training on itself is laborious as many of the participants had no working experience with Wikipedia (Quijano and Alvarez, 2016).

Difficulty in obtaining Wikipedia accounts is another problem encountered in organising Wikipedia edit-a-thon. Varner (2016) observed that though edit-a-thon may attract many new users, only very few can obtain Wikipedia accounts as there are limits to how many new users can request editor accounts at a time and a sudden flurry of unexpected activity can set off moderators' alarms.

Many people lacked the confidence to work in online environment. Bear and Collier (2016) stated that many people are afraid to work on online environment while many are afraid of imagined online conflicts that may arise as a result of their participation in Wikipedia editing. Time constraint has been identified to be one of the challenges in organizing and carrying out edit-a-thon. Varner (2016) noted that edit-a-thon requires more time than a typical class session. There are also issues of infrastructure such as steady internet connectivity and steady power supply.

Methodology

This is a descriptive study that employed qualitative techniques. Qualitative studies enable participants to answer questions about their experiences using their own words and sentence structure (Hammarberg, Kirkman and De Lucey, 2016). Interview and unstructured questionnaire were used for data gathering. 25 people participated in the study. These are the University Librarian and two female deputy university librarians, 4 edit-a-thon facilitators and 18 participants that have participated in the Nnamdi Azikiwe Library edit-a-thon consistently since the program started. The participants are all females drawn from different departments of the University (Nnamdi Azikiwe Library edits Arts and Feminism aspect of Wikipedia). Interview was held with the university librarian and the two female deputies while the facilitators and participants responded to an unstructured questionnaire. The unstructured questionnaire for facilitators sought information on three items. These are the activities involved in organizing edit-a-thon, benefit of edit-a-thon to the facilitators and the challenges the facilitators encountered in the course of anchoring edit-a-thon. The unstructured questionnaire for participants sought information on the benefits of participating in wikipedia edit-a-thon for the participants and the challenges the participants encountered in the process. The interview guide sought information from the librarian and her deputies on three items also. These are the reasons the library engaged in edit-a-thon, the benefits of organizing edit-a-thon to the library and the challenges the library encounters in organizing edit-a-thon. The interview guide and unstructured questionnaires were constructed by the researchers. The data collection spanned for two months- 3rdDecember 2019 through 3rd February 2020. The data collected were analyzed using content analysis involving frequencies. Results were presented in narratives and tables.

Presentation of findings.

Reasons the library engaged with Wikipedia edit-a-thon.

Interview with the library management (University Librarian and two Deputy University Librarians) showed that the library engaged in the Art and Feminism Wikipedia edit a thon for several reasons. Among the reasons are that it was the university librarians desire that the university library should be part of the global editors of Wikipedia as a way through which the library contributes to open knowledge, to bridge the gender gap in wikipedia editing which is dominated by men. To show the world that the Library is in tune with current developments in the library and information science field, showcase to the university administration some of the efforts the library is making to promote the image of the university and to use it to attract the university community to the library, to showcase the library's resources and services. During the interview, one of the interviewees said "Since we started the edit-a-thon, the perception of the university community towards the library changed for better. The university community now have a feel of the calibre of staff at the university library". Another interviewee commented "We engage in Wikipedia edit-a-thon to create visibility for the works of our notable female staff. Before we started this project, very few if any at all our notable female staff had an entry in Wikipedia.

The activities involved in organising Wikipedia edit-a-thon

The edit-a-thon facilitators responded that a lot of activities are involved in organising wikipedia edit-a-thon. First is agreeing with the Library Management to organise edit-a-thon. This involves discussing and winning the university librarian's consent, selecting a suitable date and theme for the event with the university librarian. Next is setting up a meetup page on the Wiki platform to inform the general public and wikipedia edit-a-thon organisers that edit-a-thon will hold in the library. The meetup page is also where participants for the program will enrol. It also serves the purpose of being a venue through which the number of enrolees is tracked, as well as number of edits and pictures uploaded. One of the facilitators commented "indirectly, the meetup page created global visibility for the library and the participants".

Following closely is applying for grant from the Wikimedia foundation to organise the program. "Usually Art and Feminism (the aspect of Wikipedia which Nnamdi Azikiwe Library edits), provides funds for snacks and babysitting for participants but their funds are always meagre and unable to sustain the program adequately and has no provision for equipment. Wikimedia Foundation through its rapid grants provide funds up to \$2,000 to support feeding, babysitting and procurement of equipment. So, it is always better to apply to Wikimedia Rapid grants" said one facilitator. Another facilitator said, "Wikipedia Foundation puts fun into the program by providing enough snacks".

Choosing a venue is an important activity in organising Wikipedia Edit- a -thon. The venue to be selected for edit-a-thon must be spacious, has internet connectivity and electricity power outlets where people can plug extension cables. The venue should also provide access to desktop computers and laptops for people who may not have functional computers.

Advertising the program through other means such as the university website, social media (whatsApp, library and personal facebook page) and billboards to create more publicity for the program. The advertisement carries information on the venue, time and other incentives for participants such as prizes for the best editors and article creators. Information for tutorials for new participants and re-fresher trainings for returning participants. Commenting on publicity given to the program, one of the facilitators said "this is a very busy period for the library as the library tries to show the university community that they are serious with the program and have the capability to execute it".

Recruiting participants for the program involves training of the participants (editors) at various places convenient for them. At the faculty, departments, post graduate hostels and in the library. Trainings take place in the last three weeks following the edit-a-thon proper. One facilitator commented "recruiting new participants is not easy, we have to follow them up. Where ever we think is the best place to meet them we go there to offer the training to them"

Another activity involved in organising edit-a-thon is raising facilitators for the program and training them. The facilitators are selected by the university librarian based on ICT skills and commitment to duty of staff. Using group learning strategy, the edit-a-thon facilitators familiarise themselves with editing basics bases on the edit-a-thon online training guide.

Finally, pictures taken at the edit-a-thon are uploaded into Wikipedia Commons platform.

Benefits of engaging in Wikipedia edit-a-thon to the Library, facilitators and the participants.

Three categories of people responded to this item. They are the library management,(University librarian and the two Deputy university librarian) four facilitators and eighteen participants.

Table 1. Benefits of engaging in Wikipedia edit-a-thon to the Library. N=3

Content analysis of the responses.	Freq.
The Library gained global visibility by being named among institutions where Art and Feminism edit-a-thon holds in the Wikipedia global programs and events dashboard.	3
It helped to showcase the calibre of staff available in the library to the University community	3
It enabled the library to engage the University community in research	3
It offers the library the opportunity to offer information literacy and ICT skills tutorials to University Staff that participated in the program.	3
It offers the library the opportunity to create entries for notable University of Nigeria female professors online and edit existing ones.	3
There are many staff who have not visited or used the library for the first time, the program offered them the opportunity to visit the library for the first time.	2
It enabled the library to repair some of its damaged ICT equipment in preparation for the program and to acquire some new ones..	2
It helped to upgrade the capacity of staff in working in online environment	1

All the three interviewees opined that library benefit from the program by being named among the places where edit-a-thon holds globally. All the three interviewees also stated that the program helped to showcase the calibre of staff in the library to the university community, enables the library to engage the university community in research, offers the library the opportunity to offer information literacy skill tutorial to University Staff and offers the library the opportunity to create entries to notable University of Nigeria female staff. Two of the interviewees said that the program brought some of the university staff who have not visited the library before into the library and enabled the library to repair some of its damaged equipment. Only one of the interviewees was of the opinion that the program helped to upgrade the capacity of staff to work in online environment.

Table 2. Benefits of engaging in Wikipedia edit-a-thon to facilitators. N=4

Content analysis of the responses.	Freq.
I learnt how to be a good team player	4
It made me a member of global Wikipedia edit-a-thon facilitators	4
I learnt how to write a structured grant proposal	4
I learnt how to plan and implement a project with minimal supervision.	3
I learnt how to manage people.	3
It helped to sharpen my skill in public speaking.	3
It created visibility for me within the University	2
It pushed me into feminist advocacy.	1
It helped me to learn more about working in online environment	1

Findings from table 2 shows that acting as edit-a-thon facilitator helped all the facilitators to be good team players and counted among global Wikipedia edit-a-thon facilitators. It also enabled them to learn how to write a structured grant proposal. Three out of four of the facilitators stated that being edit-a-thon facilitators helped them to learn how to plan and implement projects with minimal supervision, manage people and sharpen their public speaking skills. Participating in wikipedia edit-a-thon created visibility for two of the facilitators within the campus while it pushed one of the facilitators into feminist advocacy and another learned more about working in online environment.

Table 4. **Benefits of engaging in Wikipedia edit-a-thon to participants. N=18**

Content analysis of the responses.	Freq.
It helped to improve my communication skill	17
It provided opportunity for me to contribute in building Wikipedia	13
I learned how to works in a collaborative online environment	12
It created an opportunity for staff from different academic departments to meet in a less academic sphere	10
It improved my digital writing skill	10
I learned how to edit Wikipedia	9
It helped me to learn about notable African women in history	8
Editing influential women served as a source of motivation for me to aspire higher to become influential.	8
It increased my online visibility	7
I received a Certificate of participation which is evidence that I participated in a workshop and a requirement for promotion.	7
It was fun	6
It improved my literature search skill	6
I gained new knowledge on how to identify notable women	5
It created opportunity to create entries or edit works on notable African women.	5
It helped to sharpen my knowledge on plagiarism issues	3
I was exposed to the knowledge of gender gaps in Wikipedia entries	2

Table 4 shows that the participants benefited in edit-a-thon in a number of ways. It helped 17 participants to improve their communication skills. 13 benefited by contributing to build Wikipedia, 12 learned how to work in a collaborative online environment, 10 benefited by meeting staff from different departments in a less academic environment, 9 learnt how to edit Wikipedia. 8 participants learned more about notable women in history and it also served as a source of motivation for them to aspire higher to become influential. Participating in edit-a-thon increased the online visibility of 7 participants. 7 participants also received certificate of participation which is important for them for promotion as academic staff. 6 participants saw participation in wikipedia edit-a-thon as fun while another 6 said it improved their literature search skill. 5 participants gained new knowledge on how to identify notable women. Participating in wikipedia edit-a-thon created opportunity for 5 of the participants to create entries on notable African women. It helped three participants to sharpen their knowledge of plagiarism while 2 gained knowledge of gender gaps in wikipedia by participating in wikipedia edit-a-thon.

Challenges of engaging in Wikipedia edit-a-thon for the Library, facilitators and participants.

Challenges of engaging in Wikipedia edit-a-thon for the Library.

Interview results showed that the Library face a lot of challenges in organising edit-a-thon. Among these challenges is the timing of the program. If the program falls within the time in the life of the University when there are many activities such as examinations and marking of students' scripts, the number of participants will dwindle but if the program falls within a low activity period on the campus, the number of participants will increase. This make it difficult for the library to fix the program at a time it suits the library best. One of the interviewees commented "The library is not free to carry out the program at a time most suitable to them. The library is forced to fix the program at a time when there is less activities in the University which might not even be the best period for library"

Dearth of infrastructure to support editing is another factor mentioned by interviewees. Availability of robust internet connectivity, high speed computer systems and steady electric power supply can make editing interesting. However, that is not always the case. One interviewee commented "On one occasion when we were busy enjoying our edits, there was power outage. Many computer systems without efficient batteries and backups switched off immediately. It was so frustrating".

Challenges of engaging in Wikipedia edit-a-thon for the Facilitators

Lack of effective institutional support. Though the library management supported the hosting of edit-a-thon in the library, there was no instrument to force Library staff to participate in the project. At times, during the project, different library departments will be having different activities that will prevent staff from participating in the edit-a-thon. Some will be having sectional meetings while others may be in one taskforce or the other. One of the facilitators commented "I think some library departments see the edit-a-thon as the problem of the facilitators and cares not whether it succeeds or not".

The issue of publish or perish and category of journals where one publishes prevents many people from participating. Publishing in high impact journals is tedious, involves a lot of research and is time consuming. Staff do not want to get involved in any writing exercise that will not add to the number of articles they published or used for promotion. One facilitator said "Some staff do not want to get involved in a workshop they think will take them nowhere".

Edit-a-thon added another workload to my job schedule. Facilitating edit-a-thon was entrusted to me without any reduction on my existing workload. This created job overload for me with the accompanying stress. One of the facilitators commented "I have gained a lot from edit-a-thon but it was not without stress. It added to my workload".

The challenge of winning new editors to replace older ones or increase the number of editors as we must move from department to another and even to post graduate hostels after normal working hours trying to win the interest of participants. One facilitator commented "It is time consuming and strenuous organising training during and after normal work schedule".

Lack of remuneration for participants frustrate many people out of the program. Many people volunteered to participate in the program with the hope that a little financial benefit will accrue from the event, unfortunately, this is not the case. "One of the greatest problems facing edit-a-thon is the absence of any form of remuneration. Many people feel cheated not receiving any remuneration".

Non-involvement of junior Library staff (Staff below the rank of Librarian two) in the program led to delays in retrieving relevant physical materials for the program. Junior Library staff are more conversant with the library shelves and can say without consulting the catalogue where many library materials can be found. Delays in retrieving relevant library physical materials as a result of non-involvement of junior non-academic staff in the program wastes time. “One facilitator said, participants waste much of their time, searching the library manual catalogue for materials to support their edits”

Table 5. Challenges of edit-a-thon to participants. N=18

Content analysis of the responses.	Freq.
Content created cannot be used for academic promotion	16
Poor internet bandwidth	12
Lack of stable electric power supply	9
It is time consuming, time to participate in trainings and editing proper	7
Lack of required ICT equipment for editing	6
Lack of published information on Nigerian women to support entries on them.	6
There was problem in obtaining a Wikipedia account	6
Lack of encouragement for participants in terms of remuneration	4
Problem of understanding the guidelines for Wikipedia editing	4
I was frustrated when my edits were deleted.	3
It requires good search skills to find information for edits	3
I was overworked	2

Table 5 shows that the challenges encountered by the participants was that wikipedia articles cannot be used in academic promotions. this was attested to by nine people. This was followed by poor internet bandwidth (12), lack of stable electric power supply (9) and lack of time to participate in training and editing proper (7). Others are lack of required ICT equipment, lack of published information on Nigerian women to support entries on them and the problem of obtaining a Wikipedia account had (6) responses respectively.

Discussion of findings.

The reasons why Nnamdi Azikiwe library participates in Wikipedia edit-a-thon.

Findings show that Nnamdi Azikiwe Library engages in Art and Feminism Wikipedia edit-a-thon for several reasons. Among them is librarians desire to contribute to open knowledge. This finding is consistent with that of Soito (2017) who observed that many people contribute to open knowledge because they possess altruism which drives them to contribute to a resource for greater good. Another reason mentioned is to bridge the gender gap in wikipedia editing which is dominated by men. Which is in line with the findings of Farzan, Savage and Saviaga (2016) many libraries engage in Art and Feminism edit-a-thon to increase the coverage of female representation in wikipedia. It was also mentioned by interviews that the library engaged in Wikipedia edit-a-thon to create content for notable women in the University. The finding tallies with the findings of Robichaud (2018) that some libraries contribute to Wikipedia as a way of creating content for their organisation, thereby using wikipedia as a promotional

platform. However, Nnamdi Azikiwe Library (NAL) is not using edit-a-thon as a promotional platform for its organisation rather as a platform to create visibility for African notable women starting from women closest to it which are women in its parent institution, University of Nigeria.

Activities involved in organizing edit-a-thon.

All the activities mentioned by Phetteplace (2015), Soita (2017), Mohyeddin (2016), Farzan, Savage and Saviaga (2016), Torress (2016) and Bear and Collier (2016) as activities involved in organizing edit-a-thon were also mentioned by edit-a-thon facilitators of Nnamdi Azikiwe Library as activities they undergo in organizing edit-a-thon. The only difference is that the Nnamdi Azikiwe Library facilitators did not mention identifying and selection of relevant library materials in the theme to serve as information sources on which articles can be based and preparing color coded badges to identify people who may want or do not want to be photographed. Nnamdi Azikiwe Library can learn these from this study and add the duo to their activities. Identifying and selecting information sources to base articles on can go a long way in making the program more successful. It must be noted that though Nnamdi Azikiwe Library does not prepare color coded badges for participants to identify whether they (the participants) want to be photographed or not as suggested by PhettePlace (2015), Nnamdi Azikiwe Library has never had any problem with photographs during edit-a-thon. The library photographs every participant, and everybody is happy.

Engaging an active and experienced wikipedia editor to assist during wikipedia edit-a-thon which was mentioned by Nnamdi Azikiwe Library facilitators as one of the activities they engaged in and buttressed by Mohyeddin (2016) is good but must be handled with caution as there are costs attached to it. These costs may include transportation, accommodation and feeding to mention but a few.

Benefits of organizing edit-a-thon to the Library, Facilitators and Participants.

There are various benefits which the Library, facilitators and participants derive from engaging in edit-a-thon. Among them is that engaging in edit a thon brought about collaboration between the library and various departments of the university as edit-a-thon was thrown open for all interested female staff and post graduate students. Many people who have not visited the library before utilize the opportunity to visit. Secondly, the library participated in world events and showed that it can compete favorably with related organizations in the world.

Engaging in edit a thon contributed a lot to human resources development by sharpening the information search skills of participants and providing opportunity for them to work on a collaborative online environment. This finding is consistent with the findings of Soito (2017) who observed that Wikipedia editing provides opportunities for students to learn information literacy and communication skills. To edit, one needs reliable information sources to contribute to knowledge. The participants were able to carry out information searches both physically in the library and online through the internet, thereby learning and improving on what they already know about library search. This finding is also consistent with the findings of Ford (2016) which noted that edit-a-thon helps to strengthen students consulting and citing ability; including the capacity to work in a collaborative environment.

Nnamdi Azikiwe Library online visibility was enhanced by its engagement with wikipedia edit-a-thon as the library was publicised free of charge at the meet up page. However, Nnamdi Azikiwe Library should not be counted among libraries that engage in Wikipedia edit-a-thon to gain cheap global visibility as Robichoud (2016) observed

that some libraries do. Before the Library joined edit-a-thon, the university had a website where the library is conspicuously advertised, the library had its portal, blog and facebook pages. These are enough publicity platforms for the library. Its engagement with wikipedia is just to contribute to open knowledge.

The facilitators gained a lot too. They learned how to become good team players, write structured grant proposal requests, implement projects with minimal supervision and it made them members of global wikipedia edit-a-thon facilitators and many more. All these are skills people need to succeed in their career as academics and as global citizens. The findings on skills in project management gained by the facilitators is consistent with the findings of Robichaud, (2016) who opined that hosting an edit-a-thon is a good way for libraries to hone their project management skill.

Participants in the edit-a-thon are not left out from the benefits. They benefited in various ways. It helped many to improve their communication skills, provided opportunity for many to contribute to open knowledge, some learned how to work in collaborative online environment, it improved the digital skills of many, helped some to learn about notable African women and editing notable women served as a source of motivation for many to aspire higher. The skills the participants learnt are also skills that they need to survive as global citizens. But standing out among the benefits is the motivation to aspire higher to become notable women which the participants gained from participating in wikipedia edit-a-thon. This is what is needed currently in African countries. African countries need experiences that will bring about positive motivation to help curb corruption, terrorism, human trafficking and the likes. Talking about communication skills gained by participants for engaging in Wikipedia edit-a-thon, Soitao (2017) noted that through wikipedia edit-a-thon, participants learned good communications skills including how to communicate technical topics to general audience and collaboration skills.

Challenges of engaging in Wikipedia edit-a-thon for the Library, Facilitators and Participants.

The Library encountered a lot of challenges in planning and implementing Wikipedia edit-a-thon. The problem of the timing of the program which the library does not have a free hand in selecting. The library must study the University calendar carefully to ensure that, that the selected date of the event do not clash with the date of any University major event. This is to ensure that there is a good turnout of people for the program. None availability of required infrastructure such as robust internet connectivity and high-speed computer networks and steady electric power supply can make the whole program frustrating. This finding tallies with the findings of Varner (2016) who opined that issues of infrastructure such as steady power supply and internet connectivity are challenges during edit-a-thon.

The Nnamdi Azikiwe Library Facilitators encountered some challenges too in organising edit-a-thon. Among these challenges are lack of institutional support, problem of publish or perish in the university, excessive workload for the facilitators, problem of attracting new and retaining old editors, lack of remuneration to mention but a few. Lack of institutional support means that though the library management has agreed that the library should engage in the program, the agreement was not backed up with institutional authority to compel library staff to participate in the program. This gave rise to situations in the library where edit-a-thon will be going on and library staff are engaged in one library assignment or the other in their different library sections. This finding is consistent with the findings of Quijano and Alvarev, (2016) who noticed

that many university staff did not attend edit-a-thon in a Mexican University when Wikipedia editing was introduced in the university. "Publish or perish slogan" is a major issue among academics, It keeps staff busy working on papers to be published in established journals to earn promotion, living no time for extra-curricular writing activities that are not considered in promotion exercise.

Attracting new participants and retaining old ones is a major problem of edit-a-thon. Being in a University, it is not easy for the facilitators to convince participants to leave their busy schedule to engage in edit-a-thon. This finding is consistent with that of Varner (2016) who noted that edit-a-thon is time consuming and requires more time than a typical class session. Moreover, there is no remuneration for participating in the program. Kraut, Burke, Riedl and Resnick (2010) had noted that the problem of attracting and retaining old participants is one of the major challenges of organising wikipedia edit-a-thon.

Some of the problems mentioned by the library management and edit-a-thon facilitators were re-echoed by the participants. These are the problems of poor internet connectivity, lack of stable electric power supply and lack of time to participate in the program. The fact that these problems were mentioned by the three groups involved in running a good edit-a-thon program implies that the problem greatly impacted on effective management of the program. Other problems mentioned by the participants include problem of obtaining wikipedia account, lack of published information on women in Nigeria to support entries on the Women, speedy deletion of entries created by women and problem of understanding the guidelines for wikipedia editing.

The problem of obtaining wikipedia account was one of the problems encountered by new participants. Many new attendees were frustrated when they could not obtain a wikipedia account to identify themselves. Failing to obtain a wikipedia account denies the participants the opportunity to identify their contributions, connect with the wikipedia community and enjoy the benefits of being a wikipedia editor such as watchlist for monitoring pages of interest, sandbox to practice editing and a user talk page for monitoring communication with other editors. This finding is in line with the findings of Varner (2016) who observed that though edit-a-thon may attract many new users, only very few can obtain wikipedia accounts as there are limits to how many new users can request editors account at a time.

Lack of information on African women to support edits on them may persist for some time till women learn the importance of having publications on themselves. This is because Wikipedia as a tertiary source of information does not publish fresh ideas. Instead ideas published in it are summary of ideas that have been published in primary and secondary sources of information elsewhere. Lack of information to support edits on women also helps to show the extent of women marginalisation in African Society. Despite the huge contributions of women to the African development, very little is known of these contributions outside the local communities where these contributions were made. The problem of speedy deletion of articles created by some of the participants was mentioned. This may have in one way or the other dampened the enthusiasm of the participants. Robichaud (2016) noted that Wikipedia guidelines encourage improving problem pages rather than deleting them, but many web editors quickly delete entries they considered as poor-quality writing.

Conclusion

Findings from the study show that Nnamdi Azikiwe Library, University of Nigeria, Nsukka participates, in Wikipedia edit-a-thon for several reasons. Among these reasons are the University Librarians desire that the Library should contribute to open

knowledge through Wikipedia editing and help to bridge the gender gap in Wikipedia editing. The activities the library undertake in edit-a-thon are selecting a date and venue for the program and applying for grant amongst others. The edit-a-thon benefits the library, facilitators and participants in several ways. It creates visibility for the library and helps to showcase the calibre of staff available at the university library to the university community. The facilitators learnt how to write a structured grant proposal request and how to manage a project from planning to implementation with minimal supervision. Participation in Wikipedia edit-a-thon improves the communication skills of the participants and makes them contributors to open knowledge.

Despite the gains of participating in Wikipedia edit-a-thon, there are challenges of time constraint and infrastructure on the part of the library, lack of institutional support and problem of attracting new participants (editor) and retaining older ones as facilitators and the problem of obtaining Wikipedia account and lack of published information on Women in Nigeria to support entries on Wikipedia on the part of the participants.

The experience of edit-a-thon is an encouraging one for the library. The challenges associated with it are out weighted by the benefits; and in a little while as society improves and knowledge increases, will sort themselves out. Moreover, literature review has shown that these problems are not peculiar to Nigerian academic libraries.

Recommendations

- Engaging in Wikipedia edit-a-thon is an experience which every academic library in Nigeria should endeavour to have.
- Edit-a-thon projects in Libraries should be publicized early enough to enable participants acquire accounts to avoid the rush that leads to accounts denial.
- University Libraries should take up the battle to make entries created in Wikipedia part of promotion exercise to encourage participation of more staff.
- It is important that a little financial benefit in form of remuneration should be given to participants for encouragement.
- Lack of publication in Nigerian women is a serious problem that should not be allowed to lie low. The library should take up advocacy for publications on Nigerian women to associations of women academics such as Women in Leadership positions in Higher education (WoLPHE) and Forum for African Women Educationalist (FAWE).
- It is important that during edit-a-thon, the library should liaise with other University departments in-charge of ICT and electric power supply to ensure that internet connectivity and electric power supply should be concentrated on the venue of the edit-a-thon project.
- The university Librarian should make it mandatory that every library female academic staff should participate in the edit-a-thon project.

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Declaration of Conflicting Interest. Ngozi Osadebe, Delight Udochukwu are edit-a-thon facilitators at Nnamdi Azikiwe Library, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.