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Access to Information in the Attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Federal University Libraries in Nigeria

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

It is common knowledge that information is power as well as a liberating factor. Information is the lifeblood for the socio-economic, political, cultural and educational advancement of any person, society and a nation. It is a sine-qua-non for whatever level of achievement that is made in life. According to Onah, Urom and Amanze-Unagha (2015), whatever man (or a nation or group of nations like the United Nations) is planning to actualize on earth (like the sustainable development goals-SDGs), without access to relevant, reliable and timely information, it may be difficult or impossible to accomplish. Information is a strategic instrument, fundamentally necessary for human existence, growth and success. Kolawole and Igwe (2016) assert that information has assumed a prominent position in the affairs of man to the extent that it is now seen as a factor of production, in addition to land, capital, labour and the entrepreneur. Information is the accumulation of knowledge by human beings in all areas of endeavor and useful in solving problems and reducing uncertainties (Aina, 2013). Information is equally conceived as that phenomenon which adds to one's awareness or understanding of some topics, issues, problems or events to which individuals in every society should have easy access in order to play effective roles in the society and to live meaningfully (Uhegbu, 2014).

From the above perspectives, having access to the right information at the right time is a powerful force for success. This is because access to relevant, adequate, and up-to-date information is required for result-oriented decision-making in all spheres of life. In other words, access to factual information enhances knowledge, provides direction and shapes the future of individuals, societies and nations. In this study, the searchlight is beamed towards examining access to information in the attainment of SDGs in federal university libraries in Nigeria. This is because any information that is available without accessibility is useless and counterproductive. According to Encyclopedia.com (2017), access to information is the freedom or ability to identify, obtain and make use of information effectively. It enables people to obtain and further process large and

unwieldy amount of information for personal, societal and national benefits. Access to information is an empowerment tool, which enhances the maximization of people's rights and freedom to participate in democratic governance and policy-making processes (United Nations Development Programme, 2003).

Access to information is a linchpin for growth and development. It has the capacity to facilitate citizens' participation in governmental, educational, economic, legal, religious, cultural and social activities for collective sustainable development. Access to information promotes transparency and accountability across the different strata of the society. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2003) clarifies that access to information and freedom of expression are international human rights norms; as Article 19 of both the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights (UNDHR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) affirms that the right to freedom of expression includes not only freedom to 'impart information and ideas of all kinds', but also freedom to 'seek' and 'receive' them 'regardless of frontiers' and in whatever medium. Logically, access to information is not only about promoting and protecting rights to information but is equally concerned with promoting and protecting communication (use of information) to voice one's views, and to participate in democratic processes that take place at the community, national, regional and global levels as the means of setting priorities for action.

For the sustainable development of any segment of the society either at the local or international stage, access to information remains indispensable. Differently puts, the sustainable development of nations across the world requires unfettered access to information. This is because access to information serves the purpose of keeping the citizens informed, enlightened, educated and abreast of both national and international policies and programmes like the ones embedded in the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Access to information, in the view of Nwakanma (2016) is like access to life because information is life and access to information is the leveler for all inequalities. Similarly, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2008) points out that access to information can change the way we see the world around us, our place in it, and how to adjust or fiddle with our lives in order to maximize the benefits available through our local resources. In a nutshell, access to accurate, reliable, current and useful information driven by practical decision-making and actions can significantly alter our political, social and economic perspectives. It promotes a true sense of ownership within our societies and gives

meaning to the concept of citizenship. Access to information encourages the empowerment of citizens for enhanced participation in better governance, improved economy and poverty reduction, which are encapsulated in the SDGs.

However, to attain the global sustainable development goals (SDGs), access to information can be regarded as the central tool or better still, the irrefutable panacea. This is because the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which is defined as a set of global goals that came into effect in 2015 as a replacement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (United Nations, 2015) cannot succeed or be attained without access to relevant information by the right people and at the right time. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), officially known as “Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development or Agenda 2030 is a set or collection of seventeen (17) interrelated “Global Goals”, with 169 targets established and promoted by the United Nations (United Nations, 2015). SDGs, in its entirety aim at: ending poverty in all its forms everywhere; ending hunger, achieving food security and improving nutrition and sustainable agriculture. It also aims at ensuring healthy lives and promotion of well-being for all at all ages; ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all; as well as promoting the achievement of gender equality and empowering all women and girls. Other SDGs goals include; ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all; access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all; promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization and fostering innovation. SDGs also foster the reduction of inequality within and among countries; making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable; ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns; promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels; as well as strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development, among others (United Nations, 2015; Horoszowski, 2015); International Federation of Library Association and Institution (IFLA), 2015).

Considering the enormity of the SDGs as enumerated above, easy and seamless access to information from the federal university libraries is quite essential. This access to information can be better facilitated by the university libraries as the purveyors, engine

rooms and the storehouses of information and knowledge in both print and non-print formats. This is very pertinent because in the attainment of the seventeen (17) SDGs, the university libraries must keenly play catalytic roles to ensure that citizens, including; students, professors, research scholars, policy makers, government officials, and all other information consumers are given access to well-organized information without discrimination. This is in agreement with the views of Adeleke, Okusaga and Lateef (2002); Buchannan (1994); and Dada (2016), who say that the success of any institution, country or society, in achieving set goals rests squarely on the adequacy of its library collections since the library is as an agency for discovery, innovation, vocational skills repository, scholarship and research. Therefore, access to information is vital for efficient research at universities which in turn enhances innovation and creative ways of solving national and global problems (Ani, Ngulube and Onyancha, 2015).

From the above standpoints, knowing that the attainment of SDGs demands access to information, information professionals such as the librarians and other library staff in the federal university libraries should be up-and-doing in their responsibilities. This will enable them provide access to information for researchers, innovators and inventors to facilitate their researches, discoveries and innovations; for health workers to harness quality healthcare researches and improve healthy lives and wellbeing; for farmers to meet their information needs on sources of farm tools, seedlings, credit facilities, government policies and new markets; for entrepreneurs to galvanize new capital for start-ups and expansion of existing businesses, for youths to bring about gainful employment and conscientize them against restiveness; and for girls and women to enhance their rights, vocational skills acquisition and gender balancing (Dada, 2016).

Meanwhile, with the SDGs 2030 maturity date drawing fast closer, the federal university libraries are compelled to ensure that they contribute and fast track the attainment of the SDGs by redoubling their efforts. In doing this, the university libraries need to leverage on their core mandates and gains of open access information through advancement in information and communication technology (ICT), while deemphasizing the daunting challenges facing their operations in the forms of human, materials, machines and financial resources. In the light of the above, this study examines access to information on the attainment of SDGs in federal university libraries in Nigeria, using the Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike (MOUAAU) Abia State and University of Uyo (UNIUYO) Libraries.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

It is quite apparent that access to information is a major determinant to whatever level of success is recorded in any sphere of life. And the federal university libraries are pivot in the provision of access to information necessary to support teaching, learning and research for quality education. They shape the academic fate and level of intellectual capacity of the lecturers, students, research scholars, and other users in order to lead them through the path of sustainable development and inclusive prosperity. However, notwithstanding this unquestionable truth, it is disheartening to observe that most federal university libraries in Nigeria are unable to enhance easy access to information due to several inherent and environmental obstacles such as: inadequate awareness of available information, underfunding of federal university libraries, inadequate information and communication technology and internet facilities, low information literacy skills of users, inadequate cataloguing and classification of information materials, censorship and lack of freedom of information, poor attitude of information providers, and inadequate trained personnel in federal university libraries. There is also lack of translation and information repackaging services, inadequate current awareness services (CAS) and selective dissemination of information (SDI), information/literature explosion, among others. These realities have great negative impacts on the planning, coordination and implementation of the SDGs, which obviously rely on access to information. In addition to the above, there is a dearth of scholarly research on federal university libraries-facilitated activities and programmes for access to information on the attainment of SDGs in Nigeria, even with the imminent 2030 deadline. Based on this backdrop, therefore, this study examines access to information in the attainment of SDGs in federal university libraries in Nigeria.

1.3 Research Objectives

The study examines access to information in the attainment of SDGs in federal university libraries in Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

- i. find out the level of awareness of the SDGs amongst staff of federal university libraries in Nigeria;

- ii. identify the roles of access to information in the attainment of (SDGs) in federal university libraries in Nigeria;
- iii. examine the extent to which access to information facilitates the attainment of the (SDGs) in federal university libraries in Nigeria;
- iv. find out the factors militating against access to information in the attainment of the SDGs in federal university libraries in Nigeria.

2.0 Literature Review

Information has been defined as the oil that greases the wheels of governance, programmes, and activities of the governments, organizations, societies and individuals, serving as a key resource in any society for positive change and development (Satija, 2013), and forms the hub of the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Similarly, Nnadozie, (2014) posits that information is a lubricant to life just as engine oil is to a machine. Information are gathered from various sources, which are capable of reshaping the vision, thoughts, understanding and actions of individuals in a particular system or society. Without information, no governmental or organizational programmes and policies can be conceived or implemented. Thus, Afolabi (2003) holds that information is a conveyor belt, a change agent, a reinforcement of ideas and opinions. It is the accumulated knowledge of man in various subjects, forms and various sources which are useful and helpful to users in making rational decisions.

It is also a catalyst for change, which has become as important as life itself. Information appears in a data form (i.e. unprocessed information), and in a recorded form (i.e. information that has been processed and recorded into book or non-book formats) (Kolawole & Igwe, 2016). In the view of Magaji (2017), information is a very vital resource for economic and political development of any nation or state. It is a statement of facts, figures, ideas, and creative works of the human intellect which are logical or way of reasoning interrelated and have been communicated, recorded, published and/or distributed formally or informally in any format (Ojedokun, 2007). As an essential asset for decision making, information are available in both paper-based and digital media such as; textbooks, journals, encyclopedias, dictionaries, newspapers, magazines, research monographs, government publications, audiovisual recordings,

CD-ROMs databases, online databases, internet web pages, etc. (Adomi, 2012; Kolawole & Igwe, 2016; Kumar, 2010; Nnadozie, 2014).

Apart from information that is available in any formats or media, access to information or information access remains the bottomline for sound action. Hence, access to information is defined as a combination of intellectual, physical and social elements that affect the availability of information to individuals (Burnett & Jaeger, 2008). Oltmann (2009) in his study opines that access to information is an important part of answering questions concerning the creation, organization, dissemination and use of information. It is the freedom or ability to identify, obtain and make use of data or information effectively (Encyclopedia.com, 2017). Nwakanma (2016) asserts that access to information is like access to life because information is life and access to information is the leveler for all inequalities. According to the United Nations Development Programme (2003), access to information is an empowerment tool, maximizing people's participation in democratic and policy-making processes. Mathiesen (2004) asserts that access to information coincides with information ethics, which is fundamentally about who ought to have access to information and under what conditions. Building within this premise of the information ethics, Frohman, as cited in Oltmann (2009) avers that information ethics theories that posit a moral agent (such as Froehlich, 1992; Mathiesen, 2004) tend to see access to information as a central concern. Thus, for information ethicists, access to information is very essential to human development (Mathiesen, 2004). It focuses on the free flow of information and ideas to present and future (ALA, 2009).

Clarifying access, Burnett and Jaeger (2008) in their study, define access as the presence of a robust system through which information is made available to citizens and others, where such a system has physical, intellectual and social components. This view coincides with similar perspectives of different scholars who see access to information as; free dissemination of information (Farber, 1991); access to information and knowledge resources (Doctor, 1991); freedom of information (Lor and Britz, 2007); freedom of access to information (Hamilton and Pors, 2003); and the right to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity and intellectual activity (IFLA, 2007). Specially, a study carried out by Jaeger (2007) contends that access to information stands at the center of information behaviors. This aligns with Buckland, as cited in Oltmann (2009) who opines that access to information consist of six unique aspects of: identification, availability, price (to the user), cost (to the producer), understanding and

acceptability, including and/or involving technological capabilities. For McCreddie and Rice (1999), access to information is access to knowledge and access to communication because access to information involves making sense of and using information, including comprehension, retention and decision-making.

In the view of Lor and Britz (2007), information that is accessible, is information that is affordable, timely, relevant, readily assimilated, and in languages and contexts users can relate to and understand. Therefore, in buttressing access to information, Burnett, Jaeger and Thompson (2008) argue that access to information comprises three complementary components such as: physical, intellectual and social access. Physical access to information involves the physical and electronic structures that contain information, as well as the paths through which the information is obtained. This consists of the university libraries and the various media or formats of information within the university libraries (Jaeger & Thompson, 2008). Intellectual access to information involves understanding information in a document, including how the information is categorized, organized, displayed and represented (Jaeger & Bowman, 2005). While, social access to information involves the element of information that appealing to user's social world, including social norms and worldviews, which influence the information accessed, how and why particular [an or a] information is sought (Burnett & Jaeger, 2008; Jaeger & Thompson, 2008). In sum, Library and Information Science (LIS) research scholars agree that access to information has stronger emphasize on information that is useable, workable and beneficial to individual users in specific social and organizational contexts (O'Neil, 2002; Rubin, 2004; Thompson, 2008). Therefore, access to information is the driver to the attainment of the SDGs.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a broad intergovernmental agreement that acts as the post-2015 development agenda agreed upon in Resolution A/RES/66/288, entitled "The Future We Want". It has the objective of producing a set of universal goals that meet the urgent environmental, political and economic challenges facing the world (United Nations, 2016; Anaeme & Okoye, 2017). Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a global development agenda with an expected lifespan of 15 years, created to replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which came to an end in 2015. According to United Nations (2015), the Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs), officially known as "Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development or Agenda 2030 is a set or collection of seventeen (17) interrelated "Global Goals", with a total of 169 targets established and promoted by the

United Nations. The SDGs came to being at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 2012, with 193 Member States of the United Nations and global civil societies.

The SDGs took effect from September 25, 2015, and typically aim at: ending poverty in all its forms across the world; ending hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture. It is also aimed at: ensuring good health and wellbeing for all people across all ages; ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all; achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls; ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all; ensuring affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all; and promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. The SDGs, as a set of global developmental plans also include: building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization and innovation; reducing income inequality within and among countries; making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable; and ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns. Others include: taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts by regulating emissions and promoting development in renewable energy; and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels; among others (United Nations, 2015; Fan & Polman, 2014; UNDP, 2016; Onah, Urom & Amanze-Unagha, 2015; Leach, 2015; Firli & Nicolas, 2016).

Ensuring attainment of SDGs via access to information remains a necessary task for the federal university libraries. Hence, studies and literature have shown that access to information is indispensable in every step. Bradley (2016) in his study reveals that access to information in federal university libraries facilitate the attainment of SDGs by: promoting universal literacy, including media and information literacy by helping governments, civil societies, and businesses to better understand local information and academic information needs; providing a network of delivery sites for government programmes and services, advancing digital inclusion through access to information and communication technology (ICT); promote the UN Depository libraries for the dissemination of information and research to help decision makers achieve the SDGs through access to health, education, business, environmental and agricultural

information as targets of the SDGs. Specifically, access to information on education promotes basic literacy skills, increase school enrolment, support programmes such as school feeding, scholarships, reading materials such as books and other non-book resources, and test and evaluations for the purpose of facilitating the attainment of SDGs (Bradley, 2016). In addition, Joel and Ayinla (2015) in their study reported that federal university libraries serve as tools for intellectuals' freedom and economic development; gateways to political, economic and social happiness and survival; providing information resources that empowers the educational institutions to produce highly resourceful people to impact positively on sustainable national and international development by being the facilitators of teaching, learning, research and community services.

Anaeme and Okoye (2017); Ononogbo and Nnadozie (2017) in their respective, but related studies underscore the role of access to information in the achievement of the SDGs by pointing out that access to information is very essential in ending poverty, ending hunger and achieving food security, improving nutrition and sustainable agriculture, ensuring good health and wellbeing, as well as promoting equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities. Ononogbo and Nnadozie (2017) in their study also went further to assert that access to information reduce poverty, hunger, inequality, and restiveness, while promoting quality education, decent work and economic growth, peace and access to justice, fosters innovation and environmental growth and sustainability. In a study conducted by Yusuf (2015), it was revealed that key information for achieving the SDGs include: cultural information, market information, religious information, education information, health information, information on government policies and programmes, agricultural information and political information. Access to these forms of information is vital in attaining the global SDGs.

Moreover, several studies and literature point out the challenges that militate against access to information on the attainment of SDGs in the federal university libraries. Chiemenem and Bakare (2014) in their study revealed that the road to achieving the SDGs is highly bleak due to lack of relevant information on key SDGs implementation, in addition to high level of poverty, poor medical facilities, low level of education, negative cultural practices, HIV/AIDS, religious beliefs, family size, early marriages. Also, in a survey of strategic information services to rural farmers in Anambra East and West Local Government Areas of Anambra State, Nigeria, Osuchukwu, Otubelu, Alor,

and Okonkwo (2014), investigated that lack of strategic information has been a major hindrance for sustainable agricultural development, food security and improved nutrition, which are key parameters of the SDGs. These scholars drew a line that rural farmers need information on agricultural loan, which they could not easily access due to such challenges as: lack of library services in the communities under study. Meanwhile, sustainable agriculture is a major target of the SDGs under Goal 2, towards ending hunger and achieving food security and improved nutrition (UNDP, 2017).

A number of other factors have also been observed to militate against the attainment of sustainable development goals (SDGs) in federal university libraries. In this wise, Kolawole and Igwe (2016); Burnett, Jaeger and Thompson (2008); Oltmann (2009); Nnadozie (2016); Arua, Uzuegbu and Ugah (2014); UNDP (2003) point out the factors to include: censorship and lack of freedom of information, inaccurate information access tools, inadequate access to information and communication technology (ICT) facilities like internet, underfunding of libraries, lack of transparency and accountability in government operations, language barriers, lack of information literacy skills, high cost of access to information like searching time, unfriendly attitude of information providers and background notion and beliefs of information seekers.

Studies and literature suggest that access to information is even more essential than information availability (IFLA, 2014; UNDP, 2003; Oltmann, 2009). Therefore, on measures for enhancing access to information, Nnadozie (2016) in his study revealed that access to information can be enhanced through raising awareness, promoting the right of access to information and strengthening the mechanisms to access information. Lor and Britz (2007); and Nwakanma (2016) suggests the provision of information and communication technology (ICT) facilities like internet connectivity as the means of facilitating wider access to national and international action programmes on SDGs. Other scholars also suggested enhanced collaboration among federal university libraries, adoption of social media platforms like library blogs, Facebook, WhatApps, Twitter, etc., adoption of mass media like radio, television, newspapers, and magazines in dissemination of information, use of posters, handbills, fliers, information repackaging and translation services, use of current awareness services (CAS) and selective dissemination of information (SDI), provision of adequate funding for libraries to embark public campaigns, workshops and seminars, and information literacy training programmes, etc. (Bradley, 2017; Chiemenem & Bakare, 2014; Yusuf, 2015;

Onah, Urom & Amanze-Unagha, 2015; IFLA, 2014; Osuchukwu, Otubelu, Alor, & Okonkwo, 2014).

3.0 Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design, with a study population of one hundred and six (106) academic librarians and senior para-professional staff. The population comprised forty-three (43) academic librarians and senior para-professional staff from MOUAU Library, Abia State and sixty-three (63) from UNIUYO Library, Akwa Ibom State. The complete census sampling technique since the study population was just small and manageable in size based on the recommendation of Nworgu (2015). A 4-point structured questionnaire titled: *“Questionnaire on Access to Information on the Attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs) in Two Federal University Libraries”* and unstructured interview were used for data collection. The researchers personally distributed 106 copies of the questionnaire to the academic librarians and senior para-professional staff of the two federal universities and collected same on-the-spot. This method facilitates the return of all copies, which yielded a 100% response rate. Data collected were analysed using the descriptive statistics of mean scores and frequency counts in accordance with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM-SPSS Version 23). A four scale approach was used to determine the degree of agreement or disagreement in each of the item statements. The criterion mean of 2.50 was used to ascertain the level of agreement or disagreement in each case. This implies that any mean score below 2.50 was an indicative of disagreement while item statements with mean scores of 2.50 and above reflects agreement. The presentation of results was done using frequency tables.

4.0 Results and Discussion of Findings

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents and Response Rate by University

Institutions	AL	SPS	QD	% Rate of QD	QR	% Rate of QR
MOUAAU	13	30	43	41%	43	41%
UNIUYO	26	37	63	59%	63	59%
TOTAL	39	67	106	100%	106	100%

Keys: QD=Questionnaire Distributed, QR=Questionnaire Retrieved, AL=Academic Librarians, SPS=Senior Para-Professional Staff.

Table 1 shows that 106 academic librarians and senior para-professional staff were considered for the study. This comprises 39 academic librarians, 13 from MOUAAU and 26 from UNIUYO Libraries and 67 senior para-professional staff, 30 from MOUAAU and 37 from UNIUYO Libraries. It further shows that forty-three (43) copies of the questionnaire representing 41% and sixty-three (63), representing 59% were distributed at MOUAAU and UNIUYO Libraries, respectively. All copies of the questionnaire distributed were completed and retrieved with valid information by the researchers. This reflects a response rate of 100%. However, this level of response was prompted by the positive rapport that the researchers were able to establish with the respondents and the importance they (respondents) attached to the subject matter of the research.

Table 2: Mean Responses on the Level of Awareness of the SDGs in Federal University Libraries in Nigeria (n = 106)

S/No.	Item Statements	HA	A	FA	NA	Mean	Decision
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1.	End poverty across the world	43	49	5	9	3.19	Agreed
2.	End hunger and achieve food security	46	43	6	11	3.17	Agreed
3.	Ensure healthy lives and wellbeing	27	29	26	24	2.56	Agreed
4.	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all	31	38	22	15	2.80	Agreed
5.	Achieve gender equality	26	35	22	23	2.60	Agreed
6.	Ensure clean water and sanitation	21	28	43	14	2.52	Agreed
7.	Ensure access to affordable and clean energy	19	25	47	15	2.45	Disagreed
8.	Promote decent work and economic growth	23	42	33	8	2.75	Agreed
9.	Build industry, innovation and infrastructure	8	24	35	39	1.92	Disagreed
10.	Reduce income inequalities	17	28	28	33	2.27	Disagreed
11.	Make cities and communities safe	20	26	32	28	2.36	Disagreed
12.	Ensure responsible consumption and production patterns	32	44	27	3	2.99	Agreed
13.	Take action to combat climate change	29	40	26	11	2.82	Agreed
14.	Conservation of life below water	19	30	39	18	2.47	Disagreed
15.	Protect, restore and promote life on land	22	23	43	18	2.46	Disagreed
16.	Promote peace, justice and strong institutions	21	58	27	-	2.94	Agreed
17.	Strengthen partnerships for the goals	29	42	15	20	2.75	Agreed
	Grand Mean					2.65	Agreed

Criterion Mean = 2.50

Keys: HA = Highly Aware, A = Aware, FA = Fairly Aware and NA = Not Aware.

The result in table 2 shows the level of awareness of the SDGs among academic librarians and senior para-professional staff of federal university libraries in Nigeria. The table reveals that majority of the SDGs were agreed upon by the respondents,

indicating various degrees of awareness with a Grand Mean of 2.65 against the Criterion Mean of 2.50. However, out of the 17 SDGs, the respondents indicated their awareness on 11 SDGs, which include: End poverty across the world (3.19), End hunger and achieve food security (3.17), Ensure healthy lives and wellbeing (2.56), Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all (2.80), Achieve gender equality (2.60), and Ensure clean water and sanitation (2.52). Other SDGs showing awareness by the respondents are: Promote decent work and economic growth (2.75), Ensure responsible consumption and production patterns (2.99), Take action to combat climate change (2.82), Promote peace, justice and strong institutions (2.94), and Strengthen partnerships for the goals (2.75). On the contrary, the respondents indicated disagreement on 6 SDGs including: Ensure access to affordable and clean energy (2.45), Build industry, innovation and infrastructure (1.92), Reduce income inequalities (2.27), Make cities and communities safe (2.36), Conservation of life below water (2.47), and Protect, restore and promote life on land (2.46). From this findings, and in addition to the interactions with the respondents, in the form of unstructured interview, their agreement with 11 SDGs are based on their observed attempts by governments, institutions, and corporate bodies to support certain programmes and policies necessary for the achievement of the SDGs. Such attempts as highlighted by some of the respondents include: the School feeding programme of the Nigerian government, N-Power, Buhari’s Agric Empowerment programme for youths - under the National Social Investment Programme (NSIP), as well as the free and compulsory education programme implemented by some State governments in Nigeria, and other advocacy programmes for gender equalities like women participation in politics, among others. This agrees with the works of International Federation of Library Association and Institution (IFLA) (2015); United Nations (2015); Onah, Urom and Amanze-Unagha (2015); Bradley (2016); UNDP (2016); Anaeme and Okoye (2017); Ononogbo and Nnadozie (2017), which revealed that SDGs include: no poverty, zero hunger, good health and wellbeing, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, peace, justice and strong institutions, etc.

Table 3: Mean Responses on the Roles of Access to Information on the Attainment of the SDGs in Federal university Libraries in Nigeria (n = 106)

S/No.	Item Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
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1.	Improves quality and sustainable education	44	40	22	-	3.21	Agreed
2.	Improves healthcare systems and maternal/child health	38	57	11	-	3.25	Agreed
3.	Enforces citizens' legal rights and justice	35	54	7	10	3.08	Agreed
4.	Promotes peaceful and safe societies	28	45	27	6	2.90	Agreed
5.	Ensures gender equality and empowers women and girls	27	61	11	7	3.02	Agreed
6.	Promotes sustainable agriculture, nutrition and food security	22	67	17	-	3.04	Agreed
7.	Promotes socio-economic development and productive employment	35	67	4	0	3.29	Agreed
8.	Reduces trafficking, child labour and sexual exploitation	15	42	34	15	2.53	Agreed
9.	Promotes industry and innovation	36	52	18	-	3.17	Agreed
10.	Promotes the conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas, and marine resources	11	37	35	23	2.34	Disagreed
11.	Helps in combating climate change and development of renewable energy	19	48	22	17	2.65	Agreed
12.	Enhances accountability and transparency in governance	26	69	11	-	3.14	Agreed
13.	Improves access to clean water and sanitation	27	24	38	17	2.58	Agreed
14.	Increases access to more data	32	64	8	2	3.19	Agreed

	and information resources						
15.	Promotes effective decision-making and control	29	71	4	2	3.20	Agreed
	<i>Grand Mean</i>					2.97	<i>Agreed</i>

Criterion Mean =2.50.

Table 3 shows the mean responses on the roles of access to information on the attainment of SDGs in federal university libraries in Nigeria. The table shows an overall agreement with the item statements of investigation, except the 1, which indicates agreement that access to information promotes conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas, and marine resources with the mean score of 2.34. On the other hand, the respondents agreed that access to information improves quality and sustainable education (3.21), improves healthcare systems and maternal/child health (3.25), enforces citizens' legal rights and justice (3.08), promotes peaceful and safe societies (2.90), promotes socio-economic development and productive employment (3.29), and ensures gender equality and empowers women and girls (3.02). The findings also show that access to information facilitates attainment of SDGs by: promoting sustainable agriculture, nutrition and food security (3.04), promoting industry and innovation (3.17), enhances accountability and transparency in governance (3.14), promoting effective decision-making and control (3.20), and increasing access to more data and information resources (3.19). Other roles of access to information to the attainment of SDGs are: reduces trafficking, child labour and sexual exploitation (2.53), helps in combating climate change and development of renewable energy (2.65), and improves access to clean water and sanitation (2.58). This finding aligns with the study carried out by Chiemenem and Bakare (2014), which revealed that access to information improves maternal health of rural women. It also agrees with the study of Yusuf (2015), which showed that the contributions of access to information to peaceful co-existence and socio-economic development of any state and nation like the SDGs cannot be underestimated. Equally, this finding supports the study conducted by Bradley (2016), which disclosed that access to information in federal university libraries promotes universal literacy, including media and information literacy by helping governments, civil societies, and businesses to better understand local information and academic information needs; providing a network of delivery sites for government programmes and services, advancing digital inclusion through access to information and communication technology (ICT); promote the UN Depository libraries for the dissemination of information and research to help decision makers achieve the SDGs via access to health, education, business, environmental and agricultural information as the targets of the SDGs.

Table 4: Mean Responses on the Extent to which Access to Information facilitates the Attainment of the SDGs in Federal University Libraries in Nigeria (n = 106)

S/No.	Item Statements	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean	Decision
1.	Access to educational information facilitates attainment of the SDGs	40	53	9	4	3.22	Agreed
2.	Access to health and medical information facilitates attainment of the SDGs	28	70	7	1	3.18	Agreed
3.	Access to agricultural information facilitates attainment of the SDGs	34	65	7	-	3.25	Agreed
4.	Access to political and governance information facilitates attainment of the SDGs	37	50	15	4	3.13	Agreed
5.	Access to business and economic information facilitates attainment of the SDGs	36	40	24	6	3.00	Agreed
6.	Access to finance information facilitates attainment of the SDGs	40	47	18	1	3.19	Agreed
7.	Access to legal and human rights information facilitates attainment of the SDGs	39	55	-	12	3.25	Agreed
8.	Access to scientific information facilitates attainment of the SDGs	35	59	10	2	3.27	Agreed
9.	Access to technological information facilitates attainment of the SDGs	42	56	6	2	3.30	Agreed
10.	Access to socio-cultural information facilitates attainment of the SDGs	39	60	4	3	3.27	Agreed
11.	Access to religious information facilitates	34	56	13	3	3.14	Agreed

	attainment of the SDGs						
12.	Access to environmental information facilitates attainment of the SDGs	33	69	-	4	3.27	Agreed
13.	Access to infrastructural information facilitates attainment of the SDGs	37	56	11	2	3.19	Agreed
14.	Access to employment information facilitates attainment of the SDGs	30	69	-	7	3.22	Agreed
	Grand Mean					3.21	Agreed

Criterion Mean =2.50.

Keys: VHE=Very High Extent, HE=High Extent, LE=Low Extent, VLE=Very Low Extent.

The results in table 4 show the extent to which access to information facilitates the attainment of the SDGs in federal university libraries in Nigeria. The table shows an overall affirmation with the item statements of investigation, indicating a very high extent with a Grand Mean of 3.21, against the Criterion Mean of 2.50. The individual mean scores in all the indices of the findings are very high. Specifically, the finding reveals that the extent to which access to educational information facilitates attainment of SDGs (3.22); access to health and medical information facilitates attainment of SDGs (3.18); access to agricultural information facilitates attainment of SDGs (3.25); access to political and governance information facilitates attainment of SDGs (3.13); and access to business and economic information facilitates attainment of SDGs (3.00) are very high. It also shows that the extent to which access to finance information facilitates attainment of SDGs (3.19); access to legal and human rights information facilitates attainment of SDGs (3.25); access scientific information facilitates attainment of SDGs (3.27); access to technological information facilitates attainment of SDGs (3.30); access to socio-cultural information facilitates attainment of SDGs (3.27); access to religious information facilitates of SDGs (3.14); access to environmental information facilitates attainment of SDGs (3.27); access to infrastructural information facilitates attainment of SDGs (3.19); access to employment information facilitates attainment of SDGs (3.22) are very high. This level of responses could be based on the fact **[that]** information is indispensable in all human's endeavour. Meanwhile, this finding agrees with the works of Kolawole and Igwe (2016); and Magaji (2017), which revealed that the extent to which access to information facilitates the key parameters of the SDGs such as: health, economic, educational, social, and political development of any individual and nation is very high.

Table 5: Mean Responses on the Factors militating against Access to Information on the Attainment of SDGs in Federal University Libraries in Nigeria (n = 106)

S/No.	Item Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1.	Inadequate awareness of available information	50	40	7	9	3.24	Agreed
2.	Low information literacy skills	34	59	13	-	3.20	Agreed
3.	Underfunding of libraries	60	42	4	-	3.53	Agreed
4.	Incorrect or incomplete cataloguing and classification of information materials	11	46	29	20	2.45	Disagreed
5.	Users' delinquencies like mutilation, defacing and theft of information materials	26	67	11	2	3.10	Agreed
6.	Application of censorship and lack of freedom of information	29	57	20	-	3.08	Agreed
7.	Poor attitude of library staff	14	33	34	25	2.34	Disagreed
8.	Inadequate technological facilities like Computers, Internet and associated tools	27	62	12	5	3.05	Agreed
9.	Personal inadequacies of the information seekers such as ICT skills	28	71	-	7	3.13	Agreed
10.	Lack of translation/information repackaging services	18	52	28	8	2.75	Agreed
11.	Language of presentation of information	20	29	42	15	2.51	Agreed
12.	Inadequate training and motivation of library staff	35	57	12	2	3.18	Agreed
13.	Users' social attitude, expectation and perception	22	50	7	27	2.63	Agreed

14.	Inadequate Awareness (CAS)/Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)	Current Services of	26	63	17	-	3.08	Agreed
	<i>Grand Mean</i>						2.95	<i>Agreed</i>

Criterion Mean = 2.50

Table 5 shows the factors that militate against access to information in the attainment of SDGs in federal university libraries in Nigeria. The table reveals that out of the 14 item statements of investigation, 13 were agreed upon by the respondents as the factors facing access to information in the attainment of SDGs in federal university libraries, with a Grand Mean of 2.95 against the Criterion Mean of 2.50. However, the individual mean scores indicating agreement include: inadequate awareness of available information (3.24); low information literacy skills (3.20); underfunding of libraries (3.53); incorrect or incomplete cataloguing and classification of information materials (3.45); users' delinquencies like mutilation, defacing and theft of information materials (3.10); and application of censorship and lack of freedom of information (3.08). The finding also reveals inadequate technological facilities like Computers, Internet and associated tools (3.05); personal inadequacies of the information seekers such as ICT skills (3.13); lack of translation/information repackaging services (2.75); language of presentation of information (2.51); inadequate training and motivation of library staff (3.18); users' social attitude, expectation and perception (2.63); and Inadequate Current Awareness Services (CAS)/Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) (3.08). On the other hand, poor attitude of library staff (2.34) was disagreed upon as a factor that militates against access to information on the attainment of SDGs in federal university libraries. This finding agrees with studies conducted by Kolawole and Igwe (2016); Nnadozie (2016), which revealed that factors hindering access to information in university libraries include: economic factors, social factors, infrastructural factors, underfunding of information agencies, among others.

5.0 Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, access to information is indispensable in the attainment of the SDGs, and the federal university libraries are central in ensuring that the right information is accessible at the right time. This is because without access to information, it will be impossible to think of attaining the SDGs within the 2030 deadline due to the fact that every element of the SDGs requires access to information by all stakeholders, including people at the grassroots. As seen from the findings, access to information plays vital roles in achieving sustainable quality and inclusive education, healthy lives and wellbeing, gender equality, legal rights and justice, innovation, decent work and productive employment, as well as ending poverty and hunger via sustainable agriculture, nutrition and food security. However, from the findings, factors that hampers the capacity of the federal university libraries from enhancing access to information for the attainment of the SDGs were identified and include: inadequate awareness of available information; low information literacy skills of users; underfunding of libraries; users' delinquencies like mutilation, defacing and theft of information materials; application of censorship and lack of freedom of information; inadequate technological facilities such as computers, Internet and associated tools, among others. Finally, it is concluded that federal university libraries as purveyors of information should ensure improved access to information by taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the advancement in information and communication technology (ICT) and open access resources for their teaming users.

6.0 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are necessary:

- i.** Federal university libraries should ensure that greater awareness about available information on SDGs and related issues are created by displaying and/or exhibiting information materials to users;
- ii.** Governments, organizations and public spirited individuals should provide financial aids to federal university libraries in order to enable them engage in public enlightenment campaigns, workshops and seminars to sensitize information users and the public on the SDGs;
- iii.** Management of federal universities should provide necessary information and communication technology (ICT) facilities and internet connectivity to university libraries to enable them live up to their expectations of enhancing access to information, including open access resources;
- iv.** Federal university libraries should provide current awareness services (CAS), selective dissemination of information (SDI), translation and information repackaging services in order to ensure that the right information gets to every users at the right time; and

- v. Governments should facilitate the freedom of information in order to enable university libraries the liberty of enhancing unhindered access to all categories of information that are necessary for supporting the attainment of the SDGs.

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