RESEARCH ARTICLE

LIBRARIES AS INDISPENSABLE AGENT FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	The paper discussed the library as a pre-requisite for sustainable development at all levels of education. It gave a typical breakdown of the types of libraries and their functions in bringing about educational development among the teeming rural and city population in our attempts at national growth and development. It emphasized the role of libraries through extension services and audio-visual aids, book exhibitions, pictures, newsreels, films, etc, for mass education. It also established that the libraries strengthen collaborative research among business, government and educational communities in the society and contribute to all life-long learning opportunities of all Nigerians. The library acknowledged the importance of a commitment to sustainable development to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future. As a way forward, the paper recommended that for education for all (EFA) to be a reality in Nigeria, government and policy makers in education should ensure that libraries are established alongside education and that all the libraries should be stocked with materials that are of immense contribution to the development of minds of the community and people in the environment which the libraries serve, which will in turn affect the country in general.

INTRODUCTION

The introduction of formal education in colonial countries could be cited as the crucial factor that caused the establishment of libraries and education systems by the colonial government and the missionaries. In Nigeria, libraries were introduced by the colonial government and international organizations. Over the years, we have witnessed that the library; education, literacy and national development always went hand in hand and have influenced everyone from the primary school students to the highest levels of education, not to speak of the informal medium of adult literacy. Library and education thus became symbiotically and inexorably dependent on one another. Moja (2000), notes that over a decade in Nigeria, the political instability generated a negative effect on the education system. A library's role is always shaped on the institutions like schools, colleges and other professional and non-professional organizations, the needs of which it services. In a "Statement on Libraries and Sustainable Development" that was approved by IFLA's Governing Board on 24 August 2002 in Glasgow, Scotland, United Kingdom, IFLA says that library and information services help people improve educational and social skills, indispensable in an information society and for sustained participation in democracy. Islam (2004), describes library as a learned institution equipped with treasures of knowledge maintained, organized, and managed by trained personnel to educate the children, men and women continuously and assist in their self-improvement through an effective and prompt dissemination of information embodied in the resources. Furthermore, he describes library as an instrument of self education, a means of knowledge and factual information, a centre of intellectual recreation, and a beacon of enlightenment that provides accumulated preserved knowledge of civilization which consequently enriches one's mental vision, and dignifies his habit, character, taste, attitude, conduct, and outlook on life. The Online Etymology Dictionary, Thesaurus and Encyclopedia described the library as a place in which literary and artistic materials, such as books, periodicals, newspapers, pamphlets, prints, records, and tapes are kept for reading, reference, or lending. In a digital sense, a library may be more than a building that houses a collection of books and other materials as the Internet has opened up an avalanche of online and electronic resources for accessing documents on various fields of interest. ALA (2007), states that libraries equip the learners with variety of resources that will help them develop life applicable skills. Ogunsola (2008), states that research has found that libraries make significant contribution to the effectiveness of the education process. Libraries are very relevant to the development of our educational system. So, a library should rekindle the passions of the students and entice their elements to experience the library in its new glory as a resourceful learning space in place of an outmoded structure that hardly offers them the atmosphere or environment for advancement in their own special disciplines.

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The educational development of any nation will determine the knowledge base of the nation which will in effect determine the growth of the industrial, political, economic/financial and every other aspects of the nation. Ogunsola (2008:7), opines that the development of education may be said to be synonymous with the development of library and its services within any given community. Essentially, libraries are viewed as an important component of this massive educational effort of the Federal Government without the library no meaningful academic efforts can be carried out.

Inextricable Relationship between Library and Education
The library represents a structure that houses a collection of services and resources and sometimes alludes to an alternative meaning of an aggregation of useful material, published, unpublished, or audiovisual content that serves common use. A good library is like a solid rock on which people build their base for self-advancement and works for the general good of the community as a whole, and the nation in its entirety. Akintunde (2005), states that libraries have always served as tools for educational advancement at all levels of education. Okiy (2006), states that it is knowledge that allows people to contribute meaningfully to national development. She opines that the library is central to the provision of the right type of information resources that empowers the educational institutions to produce highly resourceful people to impact positively on national development. According to Wale (2006), posits that there are profound changes going on in the educational system as a result of ever growing pressure in the school systems because the society itself is changing into one in which knowledge work becomes more important and partly because of the information communication technologies. He further reinstated that librarians have and can develop further skills to support educational innovation and have the opportunity to act as role models within their institutions. Ranasinghe (2007), describes library as an indispensable embellishment to a school, university, museum, organization or institution, without which, any teaching institution will find it hard to impart education and the knowledge accruing from it. The connotation of the word," Library", goes far beyond the realm of just a compilation of books. It is a treasure house of information and knowledge that employs trained librarians to preserve, systematize and administer, so that they can contribute successfully to the continuing education and self improvement of men, women and children by providing meaningful assistance to identifying, extracting and disseminating proper information from the mass of material available in its collections. In other words, they are tools in learning at all levels and an agency for selection, collection of knowledge, preserving and disseminating it to those aspiring for it.

Education, on the other hand, represents a congregation of processes that enhances the positive values of a society, by imbibing knowledge, abilities and attitudes in a controlled environment like a school, leading to individual development and social competence arising from an amassing of experiences and observations. It is defined as the process of acquiring knowledge or habit through instruction or study. Education is the process of bringing desirable change in the behaviour of human beings. A good education is imperative to impart to a human being, perfect and adequate knowledge in a rational and civic manner, withdrawing someone from the realms of ignorance into the glow of enlightenment, a path of useful and factual information leading to self- education, thus

leading him to enjoy intellectual self reliability that enhances his inner vision on factors like behavior, attitude, character, conduct and outlook. Education will help an individual learn all aspects of knowledge, differentiate between the right and the wrong, the good and the bad, and in general, set him apart from meager men. The standard of education of the citizenry of any nation, determines the level of development of the nation. The interesting fact that comes out in this analogy is that, while the library plays the enviable part of the knowledge source and its dissemination and protects knowledge and its storage, education cannot exist on its own without a library support, and a library is redundant if it cannot pass on education. Okiy (2006), opines that the library is central to the provision of the right type of information resources that empowers the resourceful people to impact positively on educational development. As part of the education, it is the librarian and his assistants that disseminate the compilation of such knowledge after revitalizing it, to the young men and women who will be the leaders of tomorrow in diverse fields like, research. A library's undisputed link as an aid in this learning curve cannot be challenged, and instead, becomes the focal point that triggers forays into the multifarious areas of engineering, know-how and skill. The library stands as a permanent resolute pillar in promoting the process of culture and education. The libraries offer immeasurable scope for education and study. Before stating the roles of the library in educational development, it may be pertinent to recall the functions of these various kinds of libraries of which all are primarily aimed at the improving education for national development.

Types of Library

There are different types of libraries, viz:

- Academic/University Library
- School Library
- Public Libraries
- Special Library
- National Library
- Electronic Library

Academic/University Libraries

Academic libraries are considered all libraries which serve the university, colleges and its affiliated organizations and provide services to their undergraduates, post-graduate students, faculty and staff members. Academic libraries focus more also on information related to research and projects. The academic library's trump card is that, notwithstanding the situation, it supports a powerful educational system, and this facet of its identity is often relegated to the realms of the ignored or the forgotten. The Academic library has the utmost potential to develop into the best learner-centered facility among all campuses. The prime objective is to meet the academic needs of the particular institution for which it is created to serve.
Academic libraries are fully and comprehensively equipped to meet the varying demands of the students for their references and research on all subjects that form part of their curriculum.
According to Idoko (1996), states that university libraries offer more of general collection of material of common interest to several fields from the most recent to those of historical value. Their collection include general and specialized reference materials, curricula, research materials such as incunabula, first editions, manuscripts, papers, letters, museum objects,

broadsides and historical maps, publications of federal, state, local and foreign government as well as those of United Nations, research reports, theses, dissertations, archives, microforms, disc, tape recordings, films, language laboratories, listening and viewing apparatus, computers and other machines. The view is growing stronger that those who inherit the control of academic libraries must appreciate that, though the educational fabric of these institutions are inextricably tied to their parent institution, they are indeed self-contained educational establishments that can shape the educational destiny of students and even others who come into contact with them.

School Library

Amongst the different types of libraries, the school library is the most crucial as it forms the basis on which other knowledge is built upon and it is also the one faced with more challenges in the nation. Idoko (1996:11), opines that these are primary and secondary school libraries. They usually contain such materials as books and audio-visuals for reference and educational instructions. The nature and size of a particular school library collection will depend on many factors such as school's philosophy, objectives, programme of instruction or pupils needs and interests. However, all media centres should provide materials for all areas included in the curriculum and in the school programme and for recreation such as books, magazine, newspapers, pamphlets, films, pictures, slides, transparencies, maps, tape recordings, displays, models, exhibits, microforms and the equipment needed to use them. Besides aiding in the studies of children and assisting the teachers in their teaching and periodic research, a school library is primarily concerned to pro-create an urge for reading habit amongst the children who get a first hand-knowledge to use the library resources most effectively in their future career. This institution serves to build up a strong mental base and character of children. Agada (1997), opines that school libraries have remained among the least developed library in Nigeria. Adetoro (2004), notes that that the development of school libraries in Nigeria has been fraught with problems. Problem areas in the development of school libraries in Nigeria have been identified as lack of legislation, shortage of funds, poor infrastructure, unavailability of trained staff, lack of relevant materials, and apathy on the part of school administrators and the government.

Public Library

Idoko (1996), opines that public libraries are established by the second and third tiers of a country's government, i.e. the state, regional or local governments. Public libraries are legally established by the state or local government laws and are maintained by funds provided by such bodies and sometimes supported by community contributions. Public libraries provide print and non-print materials to meet the individual and group needs of its constituency for education, self-realization, recreation, and cultural growth. Public libraries are considered to serve the communities living around of all sizes and types without a creed and caste. The main mission of public libraries is to serve the contemporary society and the general masses of the community from cradle to grave. It is to provide resources and services in a variety of media as a means of meeting the needs of individuals and groups for education, information and personal development including recreation and leisure. Anyika (2005), states that the presence of libraries

in a society will certainly enhance positive human activity in that society. He therefore, buttressed that the public library is an integral part of national, socio-economic development and improvement of the general quality of life. Ogbonyomi (2007), says that the public library is established to provide information materials as a means of satisfying the needs of its clientele by providing the right information at the right time and to the right person. Ajegboniogun (2008), states that public libraries have the mandate to provide appropriate information for people at all levels. The information resources could come in print or electronic form as long as they provide quick access to needed information. It therefore, will wear the mantle of an important constituent in the future of the lifelong continuous learning process and education by donning their contemporary thinking cap on how to improve evolving tasks, demands and working environments. They will also have to bring about change in the perception of the responsibilities of the librarian in pursuit of a more useful library system in tune with the new demands of the users. Public libraries now certainly play a more strategic part in establishing lifelong learning tools in a meaningful effort to become dynamic collaborators in the systems of education. Several factors contribute to the library's efforts in this regard, including assimilation of information and the study of the best practices in bringing about change of networking, library design and the interaction on matters of mutual educational interests on both furthering especially, the work-related education. Their focus on using communication technology and networking in their efforts to reach out to the educational institutions is another feather in promoting a lifelong learning process. A public library is an indispensable pillar of democratic knowledge.

Special Libraries

Special libraries are established to meet the highly specialized requirements of professional or business groups. It covers a specialized collection, a special subject, or a particular group of users or even the type of parent organization. Special Libraries are considered as the type of libraries which serves a special community in their research activities and provide services in specialized environments of interest. These libraries are mainly connected with special organization like hospitals, Military Institute, Research Institute etc. When an institution has a mandate, a library supporting such a mandate is a special library. For example, a research institute established to develop the production and development of root and tuber crops or any commodity has a special responsibility to keep its clientele up to date and intellectually stimulated by providing pertinent literature, not only on areas of immediate concern, but also in areas of emerging and developing importance within the scope of the particular library. These libraries often cover a specific and definable subject or field. Edoka (2000), states that a special library is expected to make significant contribution to the parent organization in order to justify its existence. The highly specialized libraries do necessarily contain certain amount of materials bordering on their core or allied subjects for instance, the library of the Institute of Business administration should acquire such subjects as economics, statistics, banks and banking etc., beside the all embracing term 'business and commerce'. In science and technology, it will include report of original research, monographs, abstracts, handbooks, tables of formulas, conference proceedings and reports, microforms, certain types of laboratory materials as well as journals and materials in scientific and technical fields. This happens so usually in a special library for it aims at

making available all the possible related materials on a particular topic chosen by a research scholar for research project. With a clear mandate for direct access to the needed information only, researchers will find them more accessible, corporeal, down- to- earth and a great time saver in their interaction for specific information and education in whichever organization that houses them.

National Libraries

The National library is the apex library of a country. The national libraries in most countries of the world are established by an edict or the law of the countries concerned. According to Idoko (1996), states that most laws establishing National libraries empower them to collect stipulated copies of all publications of their countries free of any payment. They are responsible for developing public libraries in each country. The principal function of a national library is to serve as a depository of all copyright publications within a country. This facilitates the publication by the library of the national bibliography of the country on an annual basis. It is also expected that national libraries should collect all government agencies and other corporate bodies in a country which are by law mandated to deposit copies of their publications with the national library. Other functions of a national library include serving as the national bibliographic centre, national centre for translation, national lending and document delivery centre, national referral centre, co-coordinating centre for library co-operation and resource sharing, etc. The library is expected to provide leadership role, advise government on library development programmes in librarianship in their respective countries.

Electronic/Digital Library

Electronic library is a set of documents available through electronic means by the use of digital technology that allow for the retrieval, archiving, preservation and dissemination of those documents. It is an electronic or on-line library where one can have access to books, journals, novels, articles, or any other information over net. E-libraries help in overcoming timing attendance and travel difficulties. E-libraries allow delivering dialogue and feedback and contact direct with experts in internet. It complements the concept of face to face traditional education and enriches it by providing techniques like pictures, sound, animation and anywhere reading. E-libraries foster creativity and free access to all human knowledge. Information and Communication Technology has revolutionized the concept of libraries. Nagesh (2015), states that digital or e-library comprises digital collections, services and infrastructure to support lifelong learning, research, scholarly communication as well as preservation and conservation of our recorded knowledge. This is the era for visual learning. People are changing the way they read because of the developments on digital technologies. E-libraries are very much essential for schools and higher education like Engineering, Science to understand the concepts with the help of visualization. Electronic learning, or e-learning, refers to computer-enhanced learning. It also refers to research, learning, and teaching in the digital environment. E-learning or electronic learning is a computer based learning that uses a digital environment to teach and learn. The concept of libraries has undergone a revolution with the advent of the Information and Communication Technology. Now, a digital library is equipped with storage of digital collections, infrastructure and

services to sustain lifelong learning, protection of recorded information and intellectual communiqué. We are fast progressing into the realm of visual learning. Digital technology is changing the way we read. Digital libraries with its perception on visualization are the need of the hour for schools, colleges, universities and even for higher education. Textbooks, audio lessons, videos and tutorials in digital formats can radically transform the educational system in both rural and suburban areas, by leaps and bounds. Advanced digital technologies throw open the door for educators to reinvent visual learning. Educators can now integrate visual education with digital learning by a useful merger of the teaching process with image technologies. Charts and digital images now play an important role in creating an information platform. With the advent and advancement of the E-libraries, education is set to become even more accessible resourceful and quality oriented to students using computers or tablets.

The Role of the Library Resources in Education

Over the years, there have been various terms referring to teaching effective use of the library and its resources. These terms include "library orientation", "library user education" etc. All these terms refer to organized programmes practiced across various types of libraries to enable library user to acquire skills to allow them to use the library resources effectively. According to Odusanya (2004), library provides an atmosphere for self-education and self-development of individual student and public in general. It is expected to bring its services within the reach of every adult member of the public and every child in the school irrespective of their social and mental status; and also to provide resources of all types on all subjects for students at various levels and classes. The library provides library use education to equip users with knowledge. This will enable the user to use the library resources like books effectively and efficiently. Similarly, Fayose, (2000), opines that library resources are those materials which enable libraries to carry out their functions effectively. They are made up of books and other information bearing media. Library resources can be divided into groups according to their functions and level of scholarship or according to their different formats. In academic libraries, especially university libraries, for example, the resource, fall into two major categories according to the level of scholarship and their functions. These include study/teaching materials and research materials. Study/Teaching materials are the resources required by students for their study. They consist of recommended textbooks, books to support class texts, journals, past examination papers. Other roles of library resources include:

- Facilitate the planning and implementation of learning programs that will equip students with the skills necessary to succeed in a constantly changing social and economic environment. Through resource-based programs, students acquire skills to collect, critically analyze and organize information, problem-solve and communicate their understandings.

- Provide and promotes quality fiction to develop and sustain in students the habit and enjoyment of reading for pleasure and to enrich students' intellectual, aesthetic, cultural and emotional growth.
- Cater for differences in learning and teaching styles through the provision of and equality of access to, a

wide range of materials, fiction and non-fiction, print, audio, video and digital.

- Provide educators with access to relevant curriculum information and professional development materials within and outside the educational system; and opportunities to cooperatively plan implement and evaluate learning programs which integrate information resources and technologies. Usoro (2007).

Aguolu and Aguolu (2002), however, expressed that the effectiveness of any availability of library resources in education is when the resources are accessible to users in a library or any learning resources centre even when such learning material are bibliographically relevant to one's subject of interest. Therefore, the more accessible information sources are the ones that are regularly used. Obru (2004), corroborated this when he identified natural and artificial barriers to free access to information. He added that a library's poor reputation is attributed to lack of accessibility to information sources. The Federal Republic of Nigeria, in its National Policy on Education (2004), recommended the provision of functional school libraries stocked with appropriate media resources meant to promote sound and effective teaching and learning activities, boost students' reading habits and motivate students to come up with desired academic achievement. The minimum standard, according to the policy, should consist of books, pamphlets, paper cuttings, gazettes and government publications, atlas, maps and charts, films, record players, cassette tapes/ payers, film projections, slides, pictures, photographs, realia and periodicals. The book collections, according to the policy outline, comprise reference books, non-fictions and fictions. The need for the provision of these school library resources is to provide a clear path towards the realization of curriculum goals of secondary school subjects. The school library should be set up to facilitate implementation of educational policy goals by providing appropriate media resources through careful selection, acquisition and processing of the resources and make both print and non-print media resources available for use of the school community, particularly, students. The United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organsation (UNESCO) and United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) among others, realizing the need for availability of library resources in the learning environments have immensely contributed, in diverse ways to the provision of instructional resources in Nigeria. While some organisations, according to Aina and Adekenye (2013), have helped to set up micro- teaching and language laboratory, others have assisted some states in Nigeria to establish resource centres.

Role of Libraries in the Society's Education

A library's role is always shaped on the institutions like schools, colleges and other professional and non-professional organizations, the needs of which it services. Mostly, these services are inadequate for the role proposed for it at a particular level of education. Libraries are meant to be established in every citadel of learning and communities to help students and people in the rural areas to improve their reading and study skills to become independent learners, yet many schools do not have libraries and the government, ministry of education and proprietors, and all stakeholders have not realized that it is the absence of libraries and lack of implementation of policy that has affected the education system.

Ogunsola (2008), states that research has found that libraries make significant contribution to the effectiveness of the education process. The present educational system emphasizes active learning and this is where the role of librarians and libraries on the development of education comes in. Libraries and librarians can easily network to enhance the access to information resources and services through the use of ICTs. Library professional association all over the world have a crucial role in empowering the citizenry for upward development, the Nigerian Library Association should take a cue from ALA and other associations of developed countries to ensure that our educational system is developed to a set standard. Libraries provide a forum for global network of Information resources, which helps to inculcate in the individual information literacy skills that will enhance independent learning. Librarians work with other information professionals to provide the needed platform and reform for our educational systems. While libraries possess different types of resources that inform, educate and make persons information literate, information literacy enhances skills that encourage learning competencies and instill abilities to access and use information in the various formats. There is need for the policy on education to be implemented and for both librarians and teachers to have a working relationship in educating pupils and students.

This study is necessary to all key players of the education system. Uta (2005), noted that in fact, most associations in Africa are by and large seen as lobby channels rather than enforcers of standards. Education will only be completed when both teachers and librarians come together to teach students reading skills, while the library enhances independent learning skills. Learning is a lifelong skill and it is only when individuals are open to learn that there is education. This will bring about the development of our education system and the nation at large. The educational development of Nigeria will determine her knowledge base which will in effect determine the growth of the industrial, political, economic, and financial aspects of Nigeria. In societies where the government knows the importance of the libraries they encourage not only the education sector but also the industries to set up libraries for the upward review of their operations. The growth of any organization is directly proportional to the knowledge base of its operations. Okiy (2006), reinstated this fact by stating that the general poor attitude of the Nigerian government towards development of libraries has adversely affected the development of public libraries services in Nigeria. The Nigerian government has done little or nothing in the development of libraries in Nigeria. He further asserted that consequently it is only a nation which is conscious of the importance of libraries and information in the drive towards the accelerated development of a nation that can thrive in the comity of nations of this age.

The importance of the library in educational development cannot be over-estimated. Education refers to the process of learning and acquiring information. Education can be divided into two main types: formal learning through an institution such as school and self taught learning or what is often termed life experience. Education is not only an instrument of social change but viewed as an investment in the national development. Education has the same importance as food and shelter and it is known to be essential to a life of an individual. As food is considered necessary for the health and shelter for the body, education is needed for the mind.

Recommendations & Conclusion

It is necessary that libraries at all levels of education in Nigeria be reorganized drastically in line with the electronic libraries of the modern era. Kiondo (2004), also identified gross under funding of libraries as a major obstacle in the acquisition and application of information technology in their services. This is a major problem that should be addressed since adequate funding is at the core of the provision of the facilities required to equip the electronic libraries of the 21st century being advocated for education and national development in Nigeria. The Nigerian government should rise to the challenge and provide all the essential resources to put the educational system in proper perspective by providing the right type of libraries which will enable the products of the educational system to serve as effective agents for accelerated economic, political and social development of the nation. The role of libraries in the educational system is examined and the importance of education as a central feature in national development process discussed. The present state of various types of libraries in Nigerian is highlighted. Most types of libraries in Nigeria including libraries in educational institutions are not adequately stocked with appropriate resources and facilities thereby making them unable to effectively serve as tools for education and national development in Nigeria. Libraries are vital institutions, which cannot be separated from education. The provision of libraries is crucial and indispensable to education in a nation. Therefore, whatever is done to improve the quality of education is done to improve the nation. The absence of libraries will have negative effects on education. Therefore, individual learners should be encouraged to use them.

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