

Global Trends in the 21st Century Librarianship: The Experience in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper highlighted the emerging trends in Library and Information profession in this 21st century with particular emphasis on library practices and library education. The positive trends on both aspects of librarianship were those of online housekeeping operations such as automated online acquisition, circulation, reference services, digitization, curriculum review and modification to accommodate information and communication components and entrepreneurship in libraries and library schools respectively. Challenges to the 21st century librarianship include technological facilities, indifference of government and stakeholders, proliferation of library schools and programmes, divergent curriculum and the abuse of the modern technology in library practices and library education. The paper concluded that with both positive and negative trends, there is the need for LIS professionals to work harder so as to catch up with the counterparts in the rest part of the world. It was recommended among others the collaboration among the regulatory/professional bodies in term of resource assessment, accreditation of LIS programmes, promotion of reading culture.

Keywords: 21st century; Librarianship; Library practice; Library Education; Nigeria.

Introduction

Librarianship as a profession globally has witnessed series of developmental stages which are not far from the pre-industrial, industrial and post-industrial otherwise known as information era. Each of these era aimed at making information available not only to clientele but majority of mankind that needed these vital ingredients. Although in the past emphasis was laid on the four factors of production which are land, labour, capital and entrepreneurship, but today the fifth factor of production which is information is considered of high paramount. This is because

information has affected all spheres of human life. Thus, information is used to enhance decision-making processes, high productivity, reduce uncertainty and so on.

Librarianship as a Profession

Is a librarianship a profession?

Let us examine some of the characteristics of librarianship as a profession as postulated by Nwalo, (2000).

- a. Contains theories and principles
- b. Teaching through formal education in universities and basic qualification is bachelor degree in librarianship.
- c. Knowledge is communicated via information resources and managed by librarians
- d. Trainees undergoes practical attachment/SIWES
- e. Librarianship is funded by decree no. 12 of 1995 (LRCN)
- f. Librarianship has Professional Association at National and Local level (NLA)
- g. NLA has professional publication called Nigerian Libraries
- h. Usefulness of profession to society information as ingredient to overall development of the society

The Concept of Global Trends, 21st Century and Librarianship

Globally literally means world-wide while trends mean developments, discoveries, new things which could positive or negative. The 21st century is a century which begins from the year 2000 to-date and will last for 100 years. It is a century that marks the new developments and challenges in all spheres of human life, librarianship inclusive. One major characteristics of the 21st century is the ICT application to librarianship. Librarianship is a profession that is concern with not only making information resources available for uses on request but also concern with the education and training of librarians and information professionals, publishers, records managers, information managers, archivist and the like.). The unique trend in librarianship in this 21st century is the professionalization of library profession through the promulgation decree 12, of 1995 by Federal Government of Nigeria. With emphasis on who is a librarian, qualifications required to be a librarian, accreditation of library school's curriculum and programmes in library school respectively.

Trends in 21st Century Librarianship

As earlier pointed out, there are lots of global trends in the librarianship particularly in this 21st century. These remarkable developments can be seen out based on the Nigeria perspectives which are to be supported with researches conducted and evidences. These trends can be sub-divided into two main areas: -

1. Current library practices or services
2. Library education and training

Some traditional library practices or services have been taken over by the advent of ICT, some are run parallel with the traditional mode of information service delivery.

ICT Application in Library Services

The concept of ICT is the convergence of computing, broadcasting and telecommunication technologies to provide information, these technologies have been used in the library operation and provision of library services more especially in the universities and research libraries.

1. Selection, Ordering and Acquisition is done online through contact of vendors or publishers – e-mail, telephone and text messages. Integrated library software called Yordam (Turkish software) is used to acquire library collection (Saka&Aliyu, 2017).
2. Cataloguing: it is done online while Librarika software is used to enter bibliographic information of 1,000 volumes of books. KOHA integrated software is used to catalogue collection (Saka and Aliyu, 2017). OPAC is also used in universities of Jos, Ilorin and African University of Science and Technology, Abuja, all located in North Central Nigeria. It is the electronic version of the catalogue (Mohammed and Saka, 2016).
3. Circulation: Automated university/research libraries now offer circulation services online. Through Librarika software, user can click ID number; enter the title and user's particulars. Bar code readers are used to check in and check out books. Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) is now introduced in some libraries to serve the purpose of circulation and security service to library collection respectively.
4. Old wine in a new bottle (Digitization of printed library collection): This simply means retrospective conversion exercise whereby the previous collections are now transformed to electronic form thereby creating database. Library materials mostly affected by this trend include: catalogue cards, projects and theses. A reasonable number of universities in Nigeria have not only digitized their collection but also enter them into institutional digital repositories. In some university libraries, D space software is used to digitized their collection particularly research works mainly undergraduate projects and postgraduate thesis (Saka, 2013).

Reference Services

Online Reference services in Nigeria libraries are not left in the information provision and service delivery. Typical example is the use of social media network (WhatsApp, twitter) whereby user sends queries and responses are obtained instantly. Ideas are shared through these networks (Ugwu and Ezema, 2014). Research conducted by Saka and Adegboye (2016) revealed that reference services can be made possible hence two laptops were stationed 100 meters away from each other. User and reference librarian were communicating and can see each other through the screen. Reference queries and answers were made possible through web-cap software (Saka and Adegboye 2017). This is evidence as libraries are now transformed as that traditional face to face reference services are now declining and queries are now being answered through the use of short messages system (SMS), chats, video conferencing and social media (Salami and Kolo, 2015).

Security in Libraries

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is being used in some libraries in Nigeria to safeguard against lost and deterioration of Library collection and facilities, closed circuit television (CCTV) and Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) are technologies adopted to monitor users, protect collections against theft. Library collections are more secured through the use of RFID and this is aimed at complimenting the work of security men stationed at the entrance and exit of libraries (Saka and Aliyu, 2017).

Trends in LIS Education in Nigeria

In this 21st century librarianship, LIS education in Nigeria has witnessed remarkable development in the areas of curriculum development, establishment of library schools (Saka, 2015) and academic collaboration (research, project supervision and teaching). The LIS curriculum has been subjected to timely reviews, restructures and modifications which are geared towards meeting the employers' market demand and also that students on graduation, instead of being job seekers they should rather be job creators. In this regard, ICT and entrepreneurship courses were incorporated into the LIS curriculum and that no LIS course contents that does not have elements of entrepreneurship. The graduate of library schools can be information brokers, consultants, ICT business men, etc The LRCN has developed uniform curriculum for university – based library schools in Nigeria and shall soon be implemented (Salau, 2015; LRCN, 2017). More library schools and LIS programmes are now established. This is as a result of the creation of various establishments and establishment of new universities which create demand for more librarians. Using FUT Minna as an example, most of the traditional LIT courses contains elements of ICT courses like preservation of library materials, collection development (just to mention but few) others contain aspects like formatting and preservation of non- books materials as the case of the later (Aina, 2004) as well as automated subscription and acquisition of library collection as the case of the former (PG Brochure Minna, 2014- 2019).

Librarianship is a multidisciplinary field and so it has relationships with various fields hence the trend is now feared towards interdisciplinary research, teaching, project supervision. Professionals from different but related fields (LIS professionals inclusive) now engage in academic collaboration in the area of teaching, research and supervision of undergraduate and postgraduate research work. You would now find librarian collaborating with geographer to conduct or supervise research on geography. For example, influence of climate change on university library building and collection in North Central Nigeria. In the area of teaching, university lecturers in Nigeria now collaborate in teaching LIS courses with their colleagues in university libraries. This is to strike a balance between theory and practice.

Challenges of the 21st Century Librarianship in Nigeria

1. Inadequate technological facilities: The provision of information services in the 21st century is inhibited by inadequate technological facilities such as computer and internet facilities and erratic power supply. This misnomer also exists in our library schools where teaching LIS courses are carried out by lecture method as opposed to use of facilities in the instructional delivery (Maifata and Mohammed, 2016; Ochogwu, 2017; Saka, Garba and Abdullahi, 2017). The consequences that library schools would produce graduates without practical knowledge/skills
2. Indifference of government and the concerned authority towards librarianship in Nigeria. Recognition in terms of committing more funds for library development and provision of ICT facilities for practical training in library schools have not been made possible by the concerned authority. Public and school libraries are not properly funded so as to equip them with modern ICT facilities.
3. Attitude of librarians towards the profession is not encouraging at all, e.g. libraries are not proactive, and entertain fear of job misplacement, ergophobia because of the new technology. A reasonable number of librarians do not pay their annual dues, let alone to register and be certified by the LRCN. Most librarians like to be pure administrators (Saka, 2016)
4. Unhealthy proliferation of LIS schools and programmes without due regards to standards (Saka, 2015; Ochogwu, 2017).
5. Divergent curriculum: The curriculum of various LIS schools in Nigeria particularly those in universities are not uniform (Saka, 2015).
6. Abuse of the new technology by children or students at primary, secondary and tertiary institutions take the advantage of the new technology and shy away from imbibing the culture of reading, the youth and present generation of students do not imbibe the reading culture as they solely depend on downloaded internet resources, frequently depend on sending text messages. All these have adverse effect on students' academic performance, students have found in their written examinations.

Conclusion

From the brief elaboration on the trends and challenges in 21st librarianship with particular emphasis to Nigerian universities, there is the need for librarians to work harder so as to catch up with their counterparts in the rest part of the world.

Way Forward

Based on the identified challenges, the concerned authority or body should ensure that:

1. The NUC/LRCN in collaboration with heads of libraries and library schools should adopt advocacy and lobby government so as to commit adequate funds to procure facilities. Standard facilities should be made available for libraries.

2. Ensure that resources assessment is carried out before given approval for the establishment of library schools.
3. The LRCN/NUC/NBTE should properly carry out accreditation exercise so that only library schools that pass the accreditation exercise be allowed to run LIS programme.
4. The LRCN should as a matter of urgency approve the uniform curriculum for LIS schools. Until this is done, library schools shall continue to run divergent curriculum.
5. There should be change in attitude on the part of librarians so that there should be positive focus on LIS professional matters.
6. Libraries in Nigeria should endeavor to organize reading promotion/campaign for primary, secondary and tertiary institutions students. This is to compliment that of National Library of Nigeria.

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Awareness and Use of Electronic Information Resources in University Libraries and Academic Performance of Postgraduate Students in North Central States of Nigeria.

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Abstract

This research work examined the level of awareness and the extent of utilization of electronic information resources (EIRs) in university libraries on academic performance of postgraduate students in North central states of Nigeria. Two research were raised and answered: What is the level of awareness of the available electronic information resources (EIRs) by postgraduate students in the university libraries in the North Central States of Nigeria? How often do postgraduate students utilize EIRs in University libraries in North central states of Nigeria? survey research design was used with a target population of 15, 338 postgraduate students. A sample size of 556 postgraduate students was determined using a multi stage sampling technique. Four rating scale questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection, frequency and simple percentage were used to analyse the data. It was discovered that the postgraduate students' level of awareness of EIRs was low and that the utilisation of CD-ROMs was discovered to be 'very often'. It was recommended among others that the management of university libraries should from time to time organise user awareness programmes that will enlighten the postgraduate students on the types of available electronic information resources as well as educating them on how to use them.

Keywords: Awareness, e-information resources, Utilisation, Postgraduate Students

Introduction

University libraries are primarily established to support the university learning process, serve as the storehouse of knowledge, help in research development and satisfying the information needs of the staff and students of the institution. This is in line with the submission of Okiy (2012) that the university libraries share similar roles with other academic libraries like Polytechnic libraries and College of Education libraries, which are to effectively support their institutions to meet the key functions of teaching, research and community service. These institutions are responsible for the production of

middle and higher level manpower for national development. The extent to which they are able to effectively accomplish that task depends largely on how well their libraries are equipped with the relevant and needed information resources. Therefore, the availability of resources in university libraries is of paramount importance as parts of the accreditation requirement in any institution of higher learning is the institution's library collection in terms of quality and quantity in different formats more especially in this era of information technology. Quadri et al (2014) was of the view that university libraries are established to provide adequate collection in different formats.

The standard of a university library is usually measured by the quality of the collection, staffing, services, equipment and space at its disposal; hence the quality of information resources available is a function of the services offered by any library. Information resources which are both in print and non-print formats can be made available in the library via a number of methods which are not limited to purchase, subscription, gift and exchange, inter library loan and bequeath.

Awareness is usually a function of the utilisation and collection may be available and not being consulted due to non- awareness. Once collections are made available in university libraries, users can be made aware of the existence of these collections through display of new arrivals in the notice boards; through bulletins as well as compilation of table of contents. However, lack of awareness according to Abedoh et al. (2017) and Salman et al (2018) led to non – utilisation of resources and absent of the benefit of library services in university libraries.

Electronic information resources have tremendously helped in improving the academic performance of postgraduate students by providing them with current and relevant literature to carry out their researches. Undergraduate students, Postgraduate students and other researchers have benefited from e- resources in so many ways which include; provision of current literature, carrying out their assignments and most importantly, acting as a guide to write their projects/theses. Electronic information resources are categorised as information resources in various formats such as e-books, e-journals, films, CD-ROM and other fixed media. Many electronic information resources are brand new creations that represent traditional media; they include the millions of web pages and databases produced all over the world by individuals, corporate organizations, institutions and government agencies. These creations represent a variety of different types of information including descriptive materials, corporate reports, datasets, educational offerings, theses and dissertations, and many more. Many universities now require that their students submit their theses and dissertations in electronic format for easy access and utilisation (Tiwari, 2008).

Postgraduate students utilize electronic resources for various purposes ranging from study, research, seeking for current information, to have easy access to relevant and current information, to download articles, to carryout assignments to update knowledge and even for pleasure. More importantly is that postgraduate students utilise EIR to conduct researches, do assignments, prepare for test and examination and for the oral examination of the completed research works. The efforts made in this direction can lead

to high academic performance in test and examination leading to score grades of A,B,C,D or E. these are made possible through adequate university library services.

Problem Statement

University libraries are store houses of knowledge that provide different types of resources for students and staff to improve on their research output and academic performance. Recently, electronic information resources have been added to these lists of resources. Electronic information resources also provide students with opportunities to access relevant and current literature while complimenting the printed materials. Physical observation and verbal interactions have shown that there are available electronic information resources for postgraduate students to utilise, but their level of awareness and of usage remains unclear. These two factors or variables can lead to poor academic performance in terms of course work, poor presentation of seminars, poor research output and inability to defend their write-ups. The study therefore seeks to examine the level of awareness and how often EIRs are being utilized by postgraduate students for high academic performance in university libraries in North central states of Nigeria.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the level of awareness of the available EIR by postgraduate students in the university libraries in the North central States of Nigeria?
2. How often do postgraduate students utilize EIRs in University libraries in North central states of Nigeria?

Literature Review

Gilbert (2015) conducted a research on the Utilisation of electronic information resources by postgraduate students in Modibo Adamawa University of Technology, Yola. The study was carried out using survey design. Random sampling technique was used to select 190 respondents from the three levels of their Postgraduate (PhD, Masters and Postgraduate Diploma) students. Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection and data was analysed using frequency, histogram, pie chart and percentages. The study revealed that there was low level of skillfulness in the use of ICT in MAUTECH. This research shares some similarities with the present study in the areas of utilization of electronic information resources and postgraduate students. The study covered only the Postgraduate students of a particular university while the current study will cover more than one. The current study will also adopt the survey design and as well use the questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. In data analysis, the current study will adopt only the frequency tables and percentages. Veena (2016) conducted a study to determine the awareness and use of open Access electronic information resources by postgraduate students in Mangalore University. The researcher adopted the survey research design and used questionnaire as the instrument for data collection, a sample size of 152 was used. Data was analysed using, frequency counts and simple percentages. The study revealed that majority of the students were aware of open access e- resources. The study concluded that as at now, e- resources were considered as essential source of

information for all current and emerging and thoughts imminent in the areas of teaching, learning and research. The study therefore recommended that university libraries should arrange various user awareness programmes so as to educate the learners on how to make use of the open access e-resources. This research is related to the current study in the areas of title, methodology and audience, but differs in location, as the former studied postgraduate students in Mangalore while the current studied the postgraduate students in Nigeria.

In a related study, Akporjotor (2016) conducted a research on the awareness and usage of electronic information resources (EIR) among postgraduate students of LIS in Southern Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive survey design. A total of 375 master students were sampled and questionnaire was used to elicit information from the respondents. Data were analysed using frequency counts and simple percentages, mean and standard deviation. The findings showed that the postgraduate students of LIS in southern Nigeria are highly skilled in the use of EIR, but encountered numerous challenges in accessing them. The study concluded that EIR were essential tools for empowering postgraduate students of LIS in southern Nigeria. The study is also similar to the current study in addressing EIR usage among postgraduate students in Nigeria though in different zones. They both adopted the use of questionnaire and analysed with frequency and simple percentage but the current study did not use mean and standard deviation as part of the analytical methods.

In a study on awareness, use and satisfaction of collections and services in Federal University of Petroleum Resources Effurun, Salma, Sambo, Shehu and Saka (2018) reported that majority of the respondents were aware of the availability of college libraries, less than half of the respondents use library occasionally which according to report, may be due to the size of the library and lack of orientation. While this study centred on registered users of branch libraries with FUPR, the present study centred on postgraduate students. Anhwere, Afful-Arthur and Manu (2018) examined the utilisation of library resources by lecturers in University of Cape Coast. The study revealed that quite a number of lecturers patronised library to prepare lecture notes and that majority of library resources, books, journals, research monographs, indexes, e – resources, research reports, abstracts, were utilised to a large extent. The study centred on lecturers on lecturers in Cape Coast while the present study is centred on postgraduate students in the North central states of Nigeria.

Methodology

Survey research design was adopted for the study and the area of the study covers the six states in the North central zone of Nigeria including FCT.Abuja. The population of the study is 15,338 postgraduate students in five state and five federal universities running postgraduate programmes in the North central states of Nigeria as at 2015/2016 academic session. A sample size of 566 postgraduate students was determined using a multi stage sampling technique by first selecting seven universities, there and then, selected 556 postgraduate students by programs (PGD Masters and PhD). According to Otaha (2015), multi stage sampling technique involves quite a number of processes/ stages and sampling

techniques in order to arrive at an acceptable sample size. Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. Data was analysed using frequency and simple percentage, Mean and Standard deviation.

Findings and Discussions

Level of awareness on the available of electronic information resources by Postgraduate Studies in North Central Nigeria

Table 1: Level of Awareness of Available EIRs by Postgraduate students

EIRs	Level of Awareness					
	PhD		Masters		PGD	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
E-books	25	20.7	89	15.5	35	20.8
E-Journals	20	16.5	100	17.5	29	17.3
E-Databases	18	14.9	97	16.9	26	15.5
E-zines /News papers	19	15.7	98	17.1	27	16.1
E-Theses/ Dissertations	21	17.3	92	16.1	26	15.5
E-Reports	18	14.9	97	16.9	26	15.5

Key: 40-50 = Very High, 30-39 = High, 20-29 = Low, 0-19 = Very Low.

In Table 1, postgraduate students were requested to state their level of awareness of the available electronic information resources. Ranking was used to determine their level of awareness of the existing electronic information resources in the studied university libraries. Here, 40-50 is scored very high, 30-39 scored high, 20-29 low and below 20% is rated very low. The table showed that the level of awareness of E-books by PhD students is (20.7%), Masters students (15.5%), PGD students (20.8%). E-journals awareness by PhD students (16.5%), Masters students (17.5%), PGD students (17.3%). E-Databases awareness by PhD students (14.9%), Masters students (16.9%), PGD students (15.5%). E-zines/Newspapers awareness by PhD students (15.7%), Masters students (17.1%), PGD students (16.1%). E-theses/Dissertations awareness by PhD students (17.3%), Master Degree students (16.1%), PGD students (15.5%) and E-reports awareness by PhD students is (14.9%), Masters students (16.9%) and PGD students (15.5%). The table therefore indicated that the level of postgraduate students' awareness about electronic information resources was low.

Research question one investigated the level of awareness of the available electronic information resources in university libraries in North central Nigeria. The

findings showed that the level of postgraduate students' awareness about electronic information resources was low because all the frequencies were rated between 20 and 29. This result was therefore very low. This finding is not in conformity with the findings by Akporjotor (2016) and Veena (2016) respectively. Akporjotor (2016) revealed that the postgraduate students of Library and Information Science in southern Nigeria were highly skilled in the use of electronic information resources. (EIR). On the other hand, Veena (2016) discovered that majority of students were aware of open access e- resources. Often postgraduate students use electronic information resources in the University libraries in North Central Nigeria

Table 2: Use of Electronic Information Resources by Postgraduate Students

Items	Response (Frequency and Percentages)				Mean	SD
	Very Often	Often	Rarely	Never		
I consult e-books for my information needs	150 (30%)	256 (51%)	49 (10%)	50 (10%)	3.00	.890
I Utilise e-journals for reseatch purposes	213 (42%)	165 (33%)	43 (9%)	84(17%)	3.00	1.084
Films are used for recreational purposes	218 (43%)	181(36%)	8 (2%)	98-(19%)	3.03	1.107
CD-ROMS mainly for research	340 (67%)	55 (11%)	20 (4%)	90 (18%)	3.28	1.163
e-zines are consulted for current information	82 (16%)	234 (46%)	100 (%)	89 (18%)	2.61	.957
e- newspapers are consulted for current and up to date	217 (43%)	156 (31%)	50 (10%)	82 (16%)	3.01	1.087
e-reports for campus news update	220 (44%)	175 (35%)	62 (12%)	48 (10%)	3.12	.962
To get information on bibliographic databases	203 (40%)	192 (38%)	66 (13%)	44(9%)	3.10	.935

From table 2, it was discovered that 340 (67%) of the respondents use CD-ROMs very often mainly for research hence postgraduate students in universities are expected to embark on quality research that will yield innovations in their field of specialization. Lowest responses were discovered from 8 (2%), the respondents indicated that films are rarely used for recreational purposes.

Research question two investigated how often postgraduate students utilized EIR in the university libraries in North Central states of Nigeria. Majority of the respondents indicated to have used CD-ROMs very often. This finding is contrary to the findings by Gilbert (2015) and Anhwere, Afful-Arthur, and Manu (2018) respectively. Gilbert (2015) revealed that there was low level of skillfulness in the use of ICT in MAUTECH, Yola. On the other hand, Anhwere, Afful-arthur and Manu (2018) revealed that majority of library collections including e- resources, research reports, abstracts, books and journals were utilized to a large extent.

Summary of Findings

1. The level of awareness of postgraduate students as regard to electronic information resources was low.
2. Post graduate students in university libraries in North Central States of Nigeria, utilize CD-ROMs very often.

Conclusion

There was absence or low level of Current Awareness Services (CAS) in university libraries in North Central States of Nigeria; Postgraduate students in university libraries utilized CD-ROMs more often and the implication is that respondents might lack skills in the use of other EIRs.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Management of university libraries should from time to time come up with user awareness programme that will enlighten the postgraduate students on the types of electronic information resources available in the university libraries and also educate them on how to search and use these resources
2. Management of university libraries should work together with the university management, to ensure that reports of meetings and other publications in the universities should be uploaded and encourage the postgraduate students to use other electronic information resources like e-journals, e-books, e-theses/dissertation etc. as this would give the postgraduate students chances of getting reliable information for good academic performance and quality research works

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