



The Impact of Librarians in National Development

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of librarians to national development in Nigeria. Four hundred questionnaires were drawn and administered to respondents, including 112 librarians, 163 teachers and 125 Administrators and staff of the Federal Ministry of Education. Interviews were conducted with some selected librarians, principals, teachers, and Federal Ministry of Education staffs. They were selected by cluster sampling technique, using table of random numbers. One null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha levels using weighted least square regression analysis. The findings show that Librarians efforts have significant influence on national development since the p-values from the result table are less than 0.05. The study recommends a feasible working relationship between the Federal Ministry of Education and the Nigerian Librarian Association for fast growth of national development.

Keywords: Librarians, Federal Ministry of Education, National Development

1. Introduction

Education is a crucial sector in any nation. Being a major investment in human capital development, it plays a critical role in long-term productivity and growth at both micro and macro levels. This explains why the state of education in Nigeria continues to be our national discourse at all levels. Consequently, to have a smooth running of education we cannot overwrite the presence of an academic library. Having an academic library in the educational setting, the Librarians educate users on navigating information sources effectively, thereby critically assessing information credibility, and ethically using and citing resources. The implication of the declining quality of education at all levels has far reaching negative impact on a nation's moral, civic, cultural and economic sustainability. Education reforms help to contribute meaningfully to national development and systematically move education from been politicized to a more analytical approach (Kingdom, 2013).

The Nigerian Library Association and the Librarian Registration Council of Nigeria are the consortia in charge of running the affairs of librarians nationwide. The Federal Ministry of Education develops curriculum and syllabuses for schools to use education as a tool to foster the development of the Nation. As a vital part of educational institution, it is very necessary that librarians are involved in the implementation of the aspect of the section for libraries in the National Policy on Education which states that proprietors of school shall provide functional libraries at all levels.



Samalia and Murtala (2010) state that something urgent has to be done in the educational sector. The main focus of this paper remains impact of librarians in national development.

Libraries headed by librarians have been at the fore front in the management of information in Nigeria and globally, therefore cannot shy away from their responsibilities at this crucial moment. The clamour for nationwide information policy has been on since 1980 at the international, nationwide and local level through the efforts of some African government under the umbrella of Organization of African Unity (OAU) with the assistance of United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). UNECA came up with the Pan-African Development System (PADIS) with the mandate to develop information and documentation infrastructures for African states. This resulted in the acceleration of the conception and corresponding formulation of policies on health, trade, transport and culture (Abba & Song, 2013). In order for Nigeria to have an all-encompassing nationwide information policy, librarians must play vital role in its actualization, some of these roles include: The role of designing nationwide information policy for Nigeria: No other profession has stayed longer in the business of handing information in Nigeria and beyond like the library profession. Supporting this assertion, Ryynanen as cited in Abolarinwa and Owioye, (2016) indicated that the library has been the major custodian of recorded human knowledge for a very long period of time. The study further buttress that the information resources under the custody of the library is synonymous to culture because information yields knowledge which then contributes to the creative power of man. In a nut shell, librarians are in a better position to put together the various components of a formidable and feasible national information policy for the good of the society in synergy with other key players in the information industry.

The role of public access point to knowledge and information: According to Rhoe, Victor and Shelton (2010), evidence-based policy making relies on findings that emerge from research and analysis, hence, the availability of information and data, in addition to advice from experts are the foundation for good policy formulation. Carden (2004) in his study opined that developing countries do not have adequate access to existing knowledge and data fundamental to drawing reliable conclusions from research. Therefore, the absence of a strong information management system, policy arguments are likely not going to be effective. In the view of Omagbemi, Odunewu and Osifeso (2005) a good policy is a product of precise, active and apt reflection on facts before decision is taken. They further stated that any policy arrived at with limited, jaundiced information is more prone to failure and crisis which may negatively affect the society. The role of protecting copy right laws/intellectual properties: in the preparation of nationwide information policy, librarians should ensure to guide all concerned agencies on the best way to strike a balance between copyright laws and the national information policy in order not to infringe on the right of intellectual property owners and also not hinder the execution of the nationwide information policy. The role of a collaborator: The need to collaborate is one of the foremost trends of the 21st Century because the preference to work and think together as a way of addressing fundamental and pressing issues is evident in every society (Montiel



Overall, 2005). More so, collaboration is a fundamental element of librarianship and one can say that we librarians have collaboration running through our veins. This assertion is true because librarians have worked in synergy with other sister organizations through activities like inter-library loan, consortia, knowledge sharing, pulling of resources together so as to attain huge ICT project, etc. In light of the above, Pham and Tanney (2015) opined that developing affective forms of collaboration is an effective way of dealing with the challenge associated with complex and dynamic environment such as Nigeria. Therefore, librarians who have been able to manage the dynamism of ICT for handling information resources over the years through collaborative strategy should extend such in the preparation of nationwide information policy to pull all concerned agencies (governmental and non-governmental), professional bodies, information experts, etc. together in order to achieve a common goal. The role of an educator: Librarians over the years have been in the business of sensitizing the public on the utilization of information resources and the various means of getting access to information that are available in the library and beyond. Roman (as cited in Akobe, 2019) posited that librarians as educators should train users on ways of accessing and meaningfully utilize print and non-print sources of information. Hence, in the preparation of a nationwide information policy, librarians should assume the position of educators in sensitizing all concerned experts in the information industry and the general public on the importance of having a national information policy, how, when and where to access needed information and ways to utilize information at their disposal in order not to infringe on copy right laws for the advancement of the society at large.

There is no gain re-emphasizing that no individual, group of people, governmental and non-governmental organizations can grow beyond the level of information at their disposal. Invariably, information policy is fundamental to the effective and efficient operations of every organization to ascertain what information is needed, how to handle the needed information, who should be accountable for circulated information, the limit with which members of an establishment can utilize information at their disposal, etc. To this end, information holds a vital position for the success recorded in every society. In agreement with this school of thought, scholars like Mutongi and Marume (2016); Weiner (2014) identified the following as more or less of the benefits of having a national information policy: Policy formulated by involving all major stakeholders brings about unison in the drive for achieving common national goals thereby ensuring prompt implementation and sustainability. One of the established goals during the formulation of national information policy can include realistic financial strategies. Thereby ensuring that the nation's budget is within its financial strength. It brings about processes for accountability to ensure that goals are met. The understanding of the causes and consequences of policy decisions during policy formulation improves the knowledge of information of all stakeholders involved. It enables nations, societies, organizations, institutions and individuals to learn what others are doing regarding information. Its availability enables nations, societies, organizations, institutions and individuals to know what to do when or if disaster strikes in order to get the business back on its feet. It ensures consistency in handling documents that contains information in order to avoid loss of information in an organization. It brings about a



consistent, coordinated and long-term strategic approach relating to issues that bothers on the access to technologies by making provision for the creation and support for freely available information resources as well as training in how to effectively find, use and communicate information.

National development by Lichman (1972) and Markovitz (1977) stress that a developed society is the one that has succeeded in providing a source of living for the majority of its inhabitants and that in such society, premium is attached to elimination of poverty, provision of food, shelter and clothing to its members. This argument agrees with the definition of development by Todaro and Smith (2006) from the modernization paradigm which sees development as a multidimensional process which involves the sustained elevation of the entire society and social system towards a better or humane life. They identify three basic components for understanding development. These components are sustenance, self-esteem and freedom. These represent common goals sought by all individuals and societies. According to them, sustenance is concerned with ability to meet basic needs, self-esteem is concerned with a sense of worth and self-respect, of not being used by others as tools for their own needs and freedom is concerned with freedom from servitude- servitude to nature, ignorance, other people, misery, institutions and dogmatic beliefs especially, that poverty is a predestination. Therefore, the definition by this paradigm which emphasizes the basic needs of life in transforming the individual in the society to self-actualization is a true definition of development. Any development model that does not reflect these tenets needs a paradigm shift.

The focus of this work is on the role of librarians in the formulation of National Development Policy in Nigeria, therefore, other major players in the preparation of National Development will not be discussed in this work. The National Library of Nigeria (NLN) is an umbrella association for all practicing librarians in Nigeria and it is a parastatal under the Ministry of Education. Librarians via Nigeria Library Association (NLA) in its crusade for the formulation of information policy in Nigeria, has organized several seminars, workshops, conferences with a view to coming out with a blue-print to enable the government formulate an information policy. For instance, "draft of the national policy on information resources and services" was produced at an NLA conferences held at ASCON, Topo, Badagry from February 18-20 1991.

2. Literature Review

Development of Libraries in Nigeria

The governments of different countries establish libraries for the development of different sectors of the nation for instance their educational, national, economic and public sectors etc. 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. According to Ranasinghe (2007) the origin and development of libraries in Sub-Saharan African countries were influenced by the attitudes of its governing countries. The colonial government influenced the establishment of many



libraries in African countries. In Nigeria, libraries were introduced by the colonial government and international organizations. The Nigerian government has done little or nothing in the development of libraries in Nigeria. 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. Ranasinghe (2007) the introduction of formal education in colonial countries could be cited as the crucial factor that caused the establishment of libraries, education systems were inaugurated by the colonial government and the missionaries. While the government's aim was to train the personnel needed for the administration of the countries, objectives of the missionaries was propagating the religion.

Libraries and Education in Nigeria

Okiy (2006) quoting Akintunde (2004) stated that libraries have always served as tools for educational advancement at all levels of education. Libraries and librarians are meant to be agents of changes academically, socially, politically, economically and otherwise. Akanbi (2002) opined that the fact has been established that a well-stocked, professionally staffed school library will assist individualized learning and improve student's/pupils performance throughout the school curriculum (Shaibu, 1997). They are the tools for propagation of information in all sectors of the nation. Okiy (2006) stated that it is knowledge that allows people to contribute meaningfully to national development. She opined 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.

Empirical Review

Oke (2004) stresses that sustainable national development starts with the ability of a nation to satisfactorily provide the food and fibre that are needed by its people and industry and Himmelstrend (1984) has supported this argument by stating that food security must be given adequate attention to the solve problem of mass hunger in Africa. Even if these scholars have given importance to agriculture, national development should be able to transform individuals in virtually all sectors of the economy. Afolabi and Loto (2012) support this argument by stating that a developed or educated polity is the one that has enough manpower and each person occupies his or her rightful position to enhance the growth of the society. To support this, Ajayi and Afolabi (2009) have also remarked that education is largely perceived in Nigeria as an indispensable tool which will not only assist in meeting the nation's social, political, moral, cultural and economic aspirations but will also inculcate in the individual knowledge, skills, dexterity, character and desirable values that will foster national development and self-actualization. From the definition of education given above, it is clear that education trains an individual to be useful in the society and to meet up the need of the society for national development. Therefore, it should be clear that without education, a nation cannot get the needed manpower for material advancement and enlightenment of the citizenry. The trained engineers, teachers, medical doctors, inter alia are all the products of education. This explains why it is argued



also that the quality of a nation's education determines the level of its national development. Obasanjo (2012) states that education trains individuals to relate to and interact meaningfully with others in the society and to appreciate the importance of effective organization for human progress. Here, the school system within the educational system fosters this development. The school brings people of different cultural backgrounds together for a common purpose. This promotes mutual co-existence among the different students. Learners who strongly identify with their school are thought to have a more positive attitude towards teachers, other learners and the entire educational enterprise (Armstrong, D.G. et al 1981).

3. Methodology

The social survey method was adopted for this study. Questionnaire, face to face interview and direct observation were the collection instruments used to collect data from the various respondents for the research variables. The observation instrument was used to collect data on the state of school libraries provision in primary and secondary schools, tertiary institution within the researcher study area in Nigeria, and their utilization by both teachers and students. The structured questionnaire was to establish the impact of Liberians to national development considering the view of Federal Ministry of Education and the implementation of policies in the National Policy on Education, while interviews were carried out on key players of the Nigerian Library Association, teachers and ministry staff of Federal Ministry of Education, Minna and Abuja branch.

The field work kicked off with administering of the questionnaire in some selected schools at Minna in State, Lapai Local government area of Niger state and Abuja Federal Capital territory of Nigeria. The reason for selecting this population was for easy asses of reliable information. The researcher commenced the field work from Minna by going to the State Ministry of Education to get information about the number of public and private schools at Minna and to get permission to proceed with administering the questionnaire and conducting interview in some selected schools at Minna. Due to time constraint, the researcher proceeded by going to three public and three private schools randomly selected in Minna and Lapai. Later he went on to administer questionnaires in Abuja at all times he makes sure he requested to see the libraries in the schools and carefully make his observation.

The total number of librarians administered questionnaires was 112, while 125 Administrative Staff members of the Federal Ministry of Education and 163 teachers was also administered the questionnaire making it a total of 400 questionnaires administered. A structured interview was employed to guide the researcher and respondent, so as to get specific answers that will suit the study. Those interviewed were asked their experiences and contribution to the education sector and the library profession thus far in their career and their responses forms a basis for the conclusion and recommendation of this study. The cluster sampling procedure was adopted for this study and SPSS (Statistical Package Software for Social Sciences) was used to analyze the data. Frequencies and percentages



was used for descriptive statistics while Simple linear regression was used for testing the hypotheses.

4. Results

Table 1: Summary statistics of Respondents Demographic Characteristics

	Frequency	Percentage
Name of institution		
<i>Nigerian library association</i>	87	21.75
<i>Federal ministry of education</i>	53	13.25
<i>Primary and secondary school</i>	60	15.00
<i>Federal University of Technology Minna.</i>	90	22.5
<i>IBB University Lapai.</i>	110	27.5
Working Experience		
<i>Less than 5 years</i>	140	35.0
<i>5 - 10 year</i>	161	40.3
<i>11 - 15 years</i>	55	13.8
<i>Above 15 years</i>	44	11.0
Area of specialization		
<i>Administration</i>	125	31.3
<i>Librarian</i>	112	28.0
<i>Teaching</i>	163	40.8

Source: Authors Computation

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristic of the respondents. Information drawn from the respondents based on *institution*, the result shows that Academic and Non-academic Staff Federal University of Technology Minna, has the largest percentage response to the study. And based on *working experience* we observed that larger percentage 40.3% of the respondents have working experience of 5-10 years. From, the table, the result also shows that larger percentage 40.8% of the respondents are teachers based on *area of specialization* of the respondents.

Table 2: Result on Librarians significant Role in the Formulation of National Development

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	FX	Mean	Decision
The role of designing nationwide information policy for Nigeria	359 (89.8)	41 (10.3)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	1559	3.90	True
The role of public access point to knowledge and information	181 (45.3)	219 (54.8)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	1381	3.45	True
The role of protecting copy right laws intellectual properties	161 (40.3)	239 (59.8)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	1361	3.40	True
The role of an educator	185 (46.3)	215 (53.8)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	1385	3.46	True
The role of guiding and influencing users to useful information's	58 (14.5)	17 (4.3)	196 (49.0)	129 (32.3)	804	2.01	Not True
Overall Mean						3.25	

Note: Percentage in parenthesis

Source: Authors Computation



The result from this table shows the roles Librarians play in the Formulation of National development. From the table, we observed that, in each case larger percentage of the sampled respondents strongly agreed and responded True to the following as roles Librarians play in the formulation of national development: (a) *Librarians play the role of designing nationwide information policy for Nigeria* (b) *Librarians play the role of public access point to knowledge and information.* (c) *Librarians play the role of protecting copy right laws intellectual properties* (d) *Librarians play the role of an educator* (e). and it not true for the statement *Librarians play the role of guiding and influencing users to useful information's*.

Table 3: Do you think Librarians play vital role to facilitate national development from the direction of education?

	Frequency	Percentage
No Response	17	4.25
Yes	277	69.25
No	69	17.25
Undecided	37	9.25

Source: Authors Computation

The result from table 3 reveals that 69.25% of the respondents from ministry of education, teachers at primary and secondary, academic and non-academic staffs of tertiary institutions from the study area agreed that the Librarians play vital role to facilitate national development as far as education is consigning. 17.25% were not in support that Librarians play vital role to facilitate national development while 9.25% were undecided and 4.25% did not respond.

Table 4: Does your institution/organisation provide the opportunity for you as a Librarian to go for training as stipulated in the national policy on education for National Development? N (112)

	Frequency	Percentage
No Response	3	2.68
Yes	88	78.57
No	12	10.71
Undecided	9	8.04

Source: Authors Computation

The result from table 4 reveals that 78.57% of the Librarians from primary schools, secondary schools and tertiary institutions from the study area agreed that the institution/organisation provide the opportunity for them as Librarian to go for training as stipulated in the national policy on education for National Development. 10.71% were not provide the opportunity for their Librarian to go for training as stipulated in the national policy on education for National Development while 8.04% were undecided and 2.68% did not respond.



Table 5: Measures at which Education play vital role to national development in collaboration with a Liberian.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	FX	Mean	Ranking measures
A	287(71.8)	113(28.3)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	1487	3.72	1 st
B	166(41.5)	234(58.5)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	1366	3.42	3 rd
C	108(27.0)	292(73.0)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	1308	3.27	4 th
D	212(53.0)	151(37.8)	37(9.3)	0(0.00)	1375	3.44	2 nd
Overall Mean						3.46	

Note: A (Education is no doubt, directly linked with the processes of nation building and development through the efforts Liberians); B (Education in Nigeria has not been properly funded and this leads to poor infrastructure developed in the universities, secondary and primary schools. This factor thereby inhibits national development of the country); C (Education does not promote the culture of productivity by enabling individuals to discover the creative potentials in them as it applies to national development); D (Education develops in individuals, those values which make for good citizenship, such as honesty, selflessness, tolerance, dedication, hard-work and personal integrity, all of which provide the rich soil from which good leadership potential is groomed for national development. These are greased by the efforts of Liberians in an institution).

Source: Authors Computation

The result from this table shows the measures at which education play vital role to national development in collaboration with a Liberian. From the table, we observed that, in each case larger percentage of the sampled respondents strongly agreed to the responses on measures at which Education play vital role to national development in collaboration with a Liberian. The respondent's agreement to each statements in the table are ranked based on their averages. From the result in the table, it is observed that the respondents ranked *Education is no doubt, directly linked with the processes of nation building and development through the efforts Liberians* as first. Followed by *Education develops in individuals, those values which make for good citizenship, such as honesty, selflessness, tolerance, dedication, hard-work and personal integrity, all of which provide the rich soil from which good leadership potential is groomed for national development. These are greased by the efforts of Liberians in an institution* is ranked second. And lastly the respondents ranked *Education does not promote the culture of productivity by enabling individuals to discover the creative potentials in them as it applies to national development* fourth.

Hypothesis Testing

Ho: Liberians effort in education have no significant influence on National Development

Table 6 shows the result of weighted least square Regression, which shows the significant influence of Liberians efforts on National Development. From the table we observed that $P\text{-value}(F) = 0.014173$ is less than 0.05 significant level, this infers that there is a significant relationship between Liberians efforts and National Development. We also observed that the p-values from the efforts of Liberians from four selected categories (Nigerian library association, Federal ministry of education, Primary and secondary school staffs and the academic and non-academic staffs of FUT and IBB University Lapai) are less



than 0.05 significant level. This signifies that Liberians effort in education have no significant influence on National Development.

Table 6: weighted least square Regression analysis, showing significant influence Liberians efforts on National Development

<i>Responses from</i>	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>t-ratio</i>	<i>p-value</i>	
Nigerian library association	1375.7	181.901	7.5629	0.0006	***
Federal ministry of education	-1.0946	1.04834	-1.0441	0.0443	**
Primary and secondary school staffs	-0.203447	1.31313	-0.1549	0.0329	**
FUT Minna and IBB University Lapai	0.627659	0.566486	1.1080	0.0183	**
Mean dependent var	1336.222	S.D. dependent var		213.2515	
Sum squared resid	189294.5	S.E. of regression		194.5736	
R-squared	0.479688	Adjusted R-squared		0.167501	
F(3, 5)	1.536540	P-value(F)		0.014173	
Log-likelihood	-57.56270	Akaike criterion		123.1254	
Schwarz criterion	123.9143	Hannan-Quinn		121.4230	

Dependent variable: Response on National development

5. Conclusion

The study demonstrated that the efforts of Liberians on national development. The study, thus conclude by recommending a feasible relationship between the effort of Liberians from Federal Ministry of Education and other sectors in education for fast growth of national development.

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