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THE ROLE OF LIBRARIES AND LIBRARIANS IN ENSURING EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LONGLIFE LEARNING FOR SUSTAINBLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA.

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Abstract

This paper highlights the roles of libraries and librarians in ensuring equitable quality education and promotes long life learning for sustainable development in Nigeria. Quality education and promoting long life learning education for all and it showcase the libraries as a pillar for educational development and more priority would be given to it toward accessing relevant, accurate information and it served as communities access point and support centers that facilitate developmental program for learning, the paper also elaborately pointed out the roles expected of libraries/ librarians in building knowledge societies and sustainable development, the paper come up with recommendations and conclusion for sustainable development.

Key words: *Libraries, librarians, education, Sustainable development*

Introduction

Libraries around the world were regarded as consortia of information in which information of any kind of political, social, economic, socio-cultural and educational were disseminated to all. Irrespective of sex, gender, race, disability and status and class of people and the professional selection, storing, acquiring, Preserving, digitizing and dissemination to the general public. Moreover the information explosion across the globe has bring more knowledge, innovation, creativity and bring about diversification in the field of science, entrepreneurship, music, commerce and social science, arts, technology and many others to mention but few. Third world countries were battling with so many challenges despite some progress of last millennium development goals (MDG's), known for any country to grow and develop, information become centered for that growth and development. Information according to (Spankowski, 2006) is not a simply physical property of a message; it is the property of a message and the knowledge about it. Equitable quality education promote lifelong learning for all, was amongst sustainable development goals, September 25th 2015 countries adopted a set of goals to end poverty and ensure equitable quality education and promote long life for all, to mention but few.

The millennium development goals was target a series of time bound on the United Nation millennium declaration, the summit was in September 2000, of the gathering of world leaders with ^{adoption} of about eight goals, amongst the goals is education (goals two), and targeted 2015 to be achieved, despite the progress but it 3 failed, known SDG's sustainable development goals has established recently transforming the world with 2030 Agenda for the inspirational goals, goals four equitable quality education and promoting long life for all was designed to reach and redirect children out of school to attend and to have quality education and sustainable life and these cannot be achieve without quality information and the quality information cannot be deliver without a consortia, reservoirs of knowledge, libraries plays a formidable roles in ensuring access to quality and equitable information for all which enhance lifelong learning for sustainability.

This paper will highlight the roles of libraries and librarians in ensuring equitable quality education and promoting long life for all in inculcating access to information for sustainability.

Literature Review

(Chyuan *et al* 2009), A library is created to provide service to users. It has been transformed a lot in library service features by the effect of digital and networked environment change. The ubiquity of the Internet is used extensively in library surroundings and has a profound effect on library users. Users in every generation and in every stage have always wanted access to library resources. It is important to know that libraries were there to be used when required, although it was not necessary to visit them very often. The question facing us today is whether the mission libraries have performed in the past is still relevant in today's world. Yes of course, the use of information and communication technologies (ICT), transforms the services and mode of operation of libraries, numerous studies have demonstrated that the importance of library service is users oriented and the needs of meeting their demand and expectation. (Huang 2007), the proliferation of information technology (IT) brings users' needs for timelier, convenient, speedy information delivery in recent years. Libraries have to harness the technological change and use it to fulfill their mission to provide access to information when people need it. The popular use of IT also can help libraries to know what their user's need and provide right information to the right user with plenty of resources. Library plays as an interactive role to encourage users to use resources and establish a relationship with libraries; these could be done in any kind of academic, public, school and specials libraries.

However, libraries provide access to information to the generality of public which reflect the interest of all citizenry. In any information societies require information at every step, for accessing rightful information at appropriate time will bring about changes and sustainable lifelong to all. The bottleneck of some of the libraries are funding from the government, poor or lack of enough financial support, limited the libraries to have update service delivery with enough funding libraries will be able to used modern equipment that enhance effective and efficient services to all. Access to information is the basic and essential right of the citizen and pre-condition to a developed societies and nation for futurist lifelong ("Access to Information : the Role of Public Libraries in Nigerian Society," n.d.) Collaborated with (2003 world summit on society), reported access to information and knowledge is the ability for all to contribute information, ideas and knowledge are basic in information society. Indeed they reaffirm that sharing and strengthening global knowledge for development by carrying barriers away, equitable access to information for social, political, economic, socio-cultural and educational activities by facilitating access to public domain and use of information and communication technologies and internet access to all. Accessing internet properly it bridges gap between remote areas and with those living in cities and urban centers and these enable sending and sharing relevant, current and update information for the benefit of all. Added to that, as said early information is the bedrock of any power, all powers revolve around information, for example educational power.

Perhaps, Educational systems around the world are under increasing pressure to use the new information and communication technologies (ICTs) to teach students the knowledge and skills they need in the 21st century. The (UNESCO World Education Report, 2002) *Teachers and Teaching in a Changing World*, describes the radical implications of the new information and communication technologies have conventional teaching and learning. It predicts the transformation of the teaching learning process and the way teachers and learners gain access to knowledge and information. In view of this, new possibilities are emerging which already show a powerful impact on meeting basic learning needs, and it is clear that the educational potential of these new possibilities has barely been tapped. These new possibilities exist largely as the result of two converging forces, both recent by-products of the general development process. The quantity of information available all over the world much of it relevant to survival and basic wellbeing is exponentially greater than that available only some years ago, and the rate of its growth is geometrically.

The opportunity exists to harness this force and use it positively, consciously, and with design in order to contribute to meeting defined learning needs (UNESCO World Education Report, 2002). Equal educational opportunity for all Learning is a lifelong process, the nation have to establish the legislative and policy framework, together with sufficient resources in libraries to fulfill the educational right for every citizen right from early childhood, to achieve this all learning environment must be conducive physically and economically accessible to all, more importantly the marginalized one. It is significant to notices and recognizing accessing to schooling to every child without any barriers or discrimination, why because having equal access for all, it enhance the full potentiality to them and ensure quality education. According to (UNICEF, 2007) ‘Quality education during the early years plays a vital part in promoting readiness for school and is also the best guarantee of promoting sustainable economic and social development, and attaining the Millennium Development Goals and the Education for All and a World Fit for Children goals. A study of children in Nepal shows that more than 95 percent of children who had attended a non-formal preschool facility enrolled in primary school, where they also performed better than those who had not attended. Around 80 per cent of the first group passed grade one, compared to around 60 percent of the group without preschool experience.’

According to (Federal Ministry of Education, 2008) the driving aspiration of education in Nigeria include politico-historical which indicated imbalance between the regions in the country, Geometrical increase in social demand for educational chance for a population of about one hundred an seventy million and the economic and development wellbeing of individual and further say’s leadership style and its commitment at international level. Also, a clear indication was the achievement through MDG’s of free universal basic education Act, by National Assembly of federal republic of Nigeria in 2004 and National action plan. Taking a look at sustainable development goals which goals four is the target on this write up, re-strategize and more practical will be focus to meet up goals.

Access to information particularly in remote areas can be considered through libraries and information centers and then librarians. And they have many roles to play to target these goals.

Libraries

Libraries are the reservoirs of knowledge which support teaching and learning at universities, faculties, and tertiary, primaries and post-primaries level and inculcate reading culture and awareness to entire public. (Rakeshkumar, 2013). The vantage culture and custom of the people of different place of living were kept, stored in the libraries which promote long life of the people. In developing countries access to information becomes serious bottleneck, because lack of infrastructure and political reason which denied freedom to access the information, in Nigeria freedom of information Act was enacted by National Assembly of the federal republic of Nigeria, Act (3) (4) (2011) “A public institution shall ensure that information referred to in this section is widely disseminated and made readily available to members of the public through various means, including print, electronic and online sources, and at the offices of such public institutions.”

Education and Libraries ensure futurist society

Right to educate all and access information for quality education are amongst the fundamental human rights of section four (4) of the 1999 constitution of federal republic of Nigeria. Education at the life beginning is very significant to the formation of intelligence, personality and social behavior of a child, of the viewed of this point (Sooter, 2013). Child of the age of kindergarten among the critical in his or her life to influence. One good thing about developed societies much concern was given to child at this stage for a successful lifelong education. However the situation in third world countries is so pathetic, child are out of school in 1999 to 2012 about 58million children of age of primary school are out of the school must of them from sub-Saharan Africa (Report, 2015) these indicated that, over half of all out of school children live in sub-Saharan African and situation continue to increase poverty, hunger, disease and other epidemics become serious issues despite MDG's failed its target. Although sustainable development goals come up with new strategy which some goals were moving hand in hand, you cannot educate child with poverty and hunger (NO poverty, ZERO hunger,) are goal one and two, 'Vanguard Newspaper reported of 12th January, 2017 former president of Nigeria Olusengun Obasanjo made a call at laugh of 'Nigeria zero hunger strategic review of 2030 to promote quality education for all, poverty and hunger must be eradicated.

During Sule Lamido's administration in 1st August, 2009 VanguardNewspaper with case of Jigawa State, Nigeria gave free education right from primary to university level particularly girls (child), to bridge the gap between boys and girls and cement wider distance of those cannot afford to educate their children, of course these has increase number going school and when you educate women, you educate the entire society, you cannot educate children without teaching, reading materials that support learning and the curriculum enhance sustainable equitable quality education that promote lifelong for all.

Libraries at the various levels of teaching and learning play vital roles in improving the relevant, accurate, available and current update information that will promote, develop skills and acquire knowledge long life environment. In traditional form school librarians were promoting reading leisure and reading story telling for children in the absent of class teachers.

Consequent upon that, sustainable development goals was a new agenda which identify and target to address their sustainability, there is no universally agreed definition on what sustainability means some scholars are of the views on what it is and how it can be target and achieved despite the MDG's failed and Now SDG's is new phenomena with clear goals to be achieve, the ideas of the word sustainability comes from concept of sustainable development which become common language at the world's first Earth summit in Rio in 1992 (HEC Global learning, 2009) development that meet the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own (Bruntland report for world commission in 1992) as 2009 global learning collaborated added to that, 'A process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change are all in harmony and enhance both current and future potentials to meet human needs and aspiration' the world commission on environment and development.'

Role of librarians

with available, current, relevant and accurate information in libraries , the librarians as information professional, a reservoir of knowledge, a disseminator of information for all. Maintaining equitable quality education for all in many ways as follows; educational lifelong through friendlier services for all.

- With use of information and communication technologies (ICT) which enable to create a platform of awareness, advocacy campaign for remote and distant areas to be aware of sources and useful resources for futurist environment.
- Providing information literacy skills for all, librarians are in the forefront of equipping skills for users at any level, that assist them in identify what, how, when the information they need, known are the information age, accessing, sharing, disseminating of resources are become rampant, librarians before doing that, has to scrutinize qualitative and sustainable information for educational standard for long life.
- Librarians work in close cooperation with different group's agencies and individuals belonging to the community served by their library, this provide window opportunities to inform, educate and made all to be aware of available and usefulness of different libraries service for all without restriction.
- Country with Wider network coverage of libraries in literate environment a professional librarian is changing the world there is no longer passive perverse and books keepers. They have evolved to

become facilitators of information and lifelong learning opportunities with an emphasis on service, identifying user needs and communicating solutions.

The method applied in this write up, was the reviewed of important literature review of the recent articles in relation to this work, particularly on MDG's, of libraries, access information and education in Nigeria, its success and way forward, this give clear impetus in achieving sustainable goals, the used of Google search and e-library data base was adopted to retrieved materials and medley desktop apps was used to kept the materials retrieved and consulted. Through that, the study comes up with the following and suggestion, recommendation and conclusion in achieving sustainable development goals.

Challenges Facing Libraries

Libraries in Nigeria are faced with a number of challenges. These challenges have affected the impact libraries can make on the SDGs. The challenges include inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, inadequate staffing, inadequate facilities etc.

Apotiade (2002) laments that libraries are not adequately funded. Krolak (2005) advises that libraries have to be appropriately funded if they are to be effective and attractive. Another challenge of libraries is poor infrastructure. Krolak (2005) posits that appropriate buildings are needed to provide protection to library materials. He avers that books, computers, and audio-visual materials are very sensitive and have to be protected from extreme weather conditions. Apotiade (2002) agrees when he asserts that most library buildings are dilapidated especially at the local level.

Inadequate staffing is another challenge of libraries. Apotiade (2002) argues that many libraries do not have qualified personnel to run them. Krolak (2005) gave the nod when he asserts that many libraries are run by non-professional staff. Poor and inadequate facilities have also become an undermining issue for libraries to meet their goals of providing information for development. Apotiade (2002) argues that libraries need sufficient space and facilities to accommodate new types of materials such as computers, CD-ROM etc. Also, adequate space is needed for staff and readers as well.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Having pinpointed the stated objectives with focus of the work of libraries and librarians is given more priority of access information for all will be an enabler in promoting equitable quality education in promoting sustainable development in education also, the role of libraries in the provision of information for development is pertinent challenges that libraries face in provision of information has also been highlighted. Based on these, the following recommendations are made:

- The need to support the libraries from international communities, libraries in the third world countries have less or poor government attention at both local, state and central government

particularly in Nigeria, donors agencies will assist to establish modern library system for all and everyone will have access to information, a good example (CPD) Carnegie co-operation development program for librarians across Sub-Sahara Africans.

- Libraries and librarians should take part in information policies framework, decision and implementation at various levels for long life societal development, why because libraries are logical access point and support center for community base development literacy program for all.
- And also libraries have to offer a wide range of activities, with a special focus on reaching out to marginalized groups, the target of the SDG's goals four is to have equitable education, these will achieve through that.
- Finally, policies that will promote sustainability should be in place by the government of Nigeria, which are consistent with international policies, in order to achieve overall global sustainable development.
- The government on their own side should establish public libraries in each Local Government of the various states and also ensure that the already existing libraries are well equipped with skilled manpower and infra-structures needed for its service delivery..

Having pinpointed the stated objectives with focus of the work of libraries and librarians in given more priority of access information for all will be an enabler in promoting equitable quality education in promoting sustainable development in education.

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