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**Revitalizing School Libraries for Enhanced Service Delivery**

**By**

**Aminu Saleh**

Librarian,

Faculty of Education Library,  
Gombe State University, Gombe, Nigeria

Email: [aminusalehpantami@gmail.com](mailto:aminusalehpantami@gmail.com)

Phone no: +2347038160274

**And**

**Dr. Hussaini Suleiman**

Kashim Ibrahim Library,

Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria

Email: [hsuleimanabu@gmail.com](mailto:hsuleimanabu@gmail.com)

Phone no: +2348029153724

**Dr. Suleiman Sambo**

Kashim Ibrahim Library,

Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria

[sulebasawa@gmail.com](mailto:sulebasawa@gmail.com)

+2347068855008

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**Abstract:**

*This paper set to look into Revitalization of School libraries for enhanced service delivery. It highlighted the roles of school libraries in this present era. It captures revitalization of school libraries for the future management of information resources and the the need to review the curricula of library school towards preparing the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Librarian, Libraries and students. It captures space management in the library and shows how access to information can be enhanced by changing the mind set of librarians. It concluded that school libraries need to revitalise their services by transforming the way information is provided to users for enhanced service delivery. It provided way forward that school libraries should be equipped with high class technology to provide and compete with others libraries globally and they should provide resources and equipment that would be user friend to all categories of students irrespective of their background.*

**Keywords:** Enhancement, Revitalizing, School Libraries, Service Delivery.

## INTRODUCTION

Library and information services have undergone various stages of transformation from the inception and this date back to the pre-writing era when human brains served as the only repository of ideas and knowledge. Information was transmitted from one person to another through the word of mouth and the human brain was not able to store and retain all the knowledge available. This led to the emergence of writing in places like Egypt, Babylon, Sumerian, Persia, Assyria, Phoenicia etc. the art of writing made it possible for knowledge and information to be recorded on clay tablets, papyrus sheets, stones, parchments, vellum, papers, bark of Trees etc. The libraries in times past was seen as a collection of physical books which were accessed from shelves and used on a reading desk and a place for manual borrowing and lending. This for long has been the notion that people had about libraries. As such the libraries had little value in the eyes of the community. It was not perceived to be a place that can contribute to solving societal needs. This has been the notion particularly in Developing countries till recently with the coming of computers and advancement in technologies. **Invalid source specified.**“Change is inevitable and is a natural phenomenon. In the library and information science, this change has been brought by Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) among other factors. ICT has tremendous impact on revitalization of library operations, resources, services, library and information professionals must, of necessity, develop expert technological competencies required to make the best use of opportunity ICT offers in order to meet up needs of services change the complex information needs of the user community” libraries changed the way information and library services is provided to its patrons. These same developments has also availed library users with various ICT tools that enhance access to information, as well as changing their expectations from the libraries in different ways.

Today's library users are now more digital native and digital immigrants who are ready to leverage their digital skills to enhance their access to information to meet their information needs. The libraries have continued to play a dominant role in the educational development of the citizenry through information provision, both in an academic environment and in the public sector. In revitalizing our contemporary school libraries, services and library information science education we need to embrace the current trends in accessing information, changing libraries and changing libraries through enhanced access making the libraries relevant. This role tends to vary, depending on the user group and the level of developments in the society.

## **SCHOOL LIBRARIES**

School libraries are crucial in the teaching and learning processes. School libraries are the type of libraries established in a primary or secondary school. It is an integral part of the school community. School libraries pursue the vision, principles of the school management. Fakomogbon et al, (2012) Opined that school library helps to support the school curriculum by providing up-to-date information to keep teachers and students abreast of new development. The school library compliments the work of the classroom teacher with the ultimate goal of ensuring that each student has equitable access to resources, irrespective of home opportunities or constraints. School library reflects and encourages collaborative learning and sharing of ideas.

One intriguing element of school libraries offers students' opportunity to make their choice of material which increases students' academic motivation associated with their actual academic performance; the goals of every school librarian should therefore be tailored towards helping children develop a strong desire for learning activities. The school libraries are learning center. It is a place where students get access to all kinds of reading materials, cultural and knowledge building activities. It is also a place where students engage in deep thinking and long-life

learning. In school libraries, students are given opportunity to engage in innovative, curious and problem solving activities. School library is a place for social interactions. Cross-age peer tutoring, cooperative learning groups and informal 'study groups' are the motivating and supportive social situations within the school library to improve students' academic skills. Teachers and school librarians through collaborative efforts work out such social situations to facilitate learning. In such situations, teacher librarian collaboration is very important. School library provides the opportunity for teachers and school librarians to collaborate. School librarian collaborates with subject teacher to encourage students to visit the school library to access other materials for further study and better understanding of the topic taught in the classroom. An important aspect of school library is that it offers students opportunity to make their choice of material which increases students' motivation. Students, who are allowed to make their choice of materials and participate in some activity, are highly motivated to take part in any academic activities. School librarians have always used materials, method and instructions to make learning fun in a way that engages students' interest. School library provides students the necessary learning support and teach them essential skills they need to succeed academically. Through research, technology, and information problem solving, school library excites students about the learning process and stimulate their curiosity. School library remains the power house of educational institution; any educational institution without a library is as lifeless as a motor car without an engine and a body without a soul.

## **ROLES OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES**

Today, 'Important goals of global education is to develop student's sense of belonging and instil the sense of right and wrong in children in order to be responsible citizens'. Schools are the educational institutions wherein children are guided and trained to be disciplined and

enlightened individuals. This responsibility is the onus of educators and greatly influenced by the instructional materials and facilities a school provides. The role of educators is highly regarded and recognized but equally important the school libraries. Information professionals agree that “Libraries Change Lives” which is a universal truth, for seen the kind of reference resources and the scholarly works they contain, apart from the services they offer to school community, the conservatory library is crucial as it customs the foundation on which other awareness erected upon. But it faced numerous challenges in the nations.

Libraries enrich curriculum and remain the common laboratory of a school for those in quest of knowledge. A school library exists to achieve certain objectives, which include; the parent organisations. The aim of School Library like other academic libraries support teaching – learning programme of parent body, the objectives has to be in conformity with the School. Role and function of discipline library depends on the extent of educational system of a country. Fayose (1995) stated the best learning is a situation where by trainee discover knowledge and apply for their personal benefit.

## **REVITALIZATION OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES FOR FUTURE MANAGEMENT**

Digital revolution driven by ICT innovations has changed the school libraries fundamentally. It has impacted on every sphere of school libraries activities such as form of libraries, collection development strategies, libraries building and consortia. ICT have changed the school libraries in a profound way. Computers, networked, media and electronic resources had become an integral part of the school programs for the past decade. This has been emphasized as School Library Media Centre (SLMC), School Resources Centre (SRC), or Educational Media Centre (EMC). Like its counterparts in university and other institution of

higher learning where by the phenomenon of knowledge, information common refers to a specific environment in the libraries where a designated number of PC workstations, networked to databases and other e-resources, are made available for both students and staff. All sphere of school libraries and learning facilities are being affected by ICT massively. Singh (2014) quoted Robbins and Coulter ( **CITATION HERE**) change is any alterations in people, structure or technology. Change involves moving from the current state things, the status quo, to a new state thing. It is therefore a process of moving from what is known to the unknown. School libraries are integral to instructive manner. It established to assist both pupils and teachers. It also served Centre for fostering long-life learning, experiences and changes are identified with the emergence technology. ICT has tremendous impact on the performance and services of every institution and organisation; library is not excluded from it. The impact of ICT has transformed the ‘traditional library’ into ‘automated library’. ‘digital library’ and virtual library’ are considered as birth of ICT Majority of libraries nowadays are operating as hybrid libraries due to digital library is a well organised collection of electronic resources which is a very complex and dynamic entity.

*According to **Invalid source specified.** ICT has brought phenomenal change in the information collection, preservation and dissemination scene of the world. It is a complex entity because it is completely based on ICT and the concept is of recent origin. Its main aim is to provide ready access to the required information at the right time to the right user with right information. The collection of digital library are not limited to the document surrogates they extend to digital artefacts which cannot be represented or distributed in printed formats. Therefore, digital library is not a single unit, but a complex and multiple units that provide instant access to all information, for all sector of society, from anywhere in the world.*

In view of **Invalid source specified.** Librarians will need to add skills from knowledge management, social media, participatory communication and information technology to their existing core focus on content. *So also, as cited in **Invalid source specified.** believed that future libraries will play a wider range of roles. They will be more active in opening access to*

*information and knowledge in dissemination (not just for collecting and documenting) global goods in catalysing knowledge sharing among people ... and in providing a range of targeted services and product. He further, added that future libraries will be more and more e-libraries providing access to current and archival knowledge in a wide range of digital format*

Therefore, in these context libraries, librarians, library information science education and services rendered in all part of the world must be revitalized in order to cope up with current trend of technology in information seeking behaviour of its users, etc. The day has come to adopt change in operation and services of libraries. Beside, that libraries manager can emulate management at par with information management in the library remotely.

Modern information management therefore requires a lot of flexibility in terms of library space and services Freeman (2005) conceptualising the library of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, viewed it as the only centralised location where new and emerging information technologies can be combined with traditional knowledge resources in a user-focused, services-rich environment that supports today's social and pattern of learning, teaching and research as to the internet that isolate people. He proposes a library that will offer 24 hour access with critical services and technology provided and located when and where they are needed. **Invalid source specified.** Assert that application of computers and other ICT to perform traditional library house-keeping operations such as acquisition, cataloguing, circulation, references and serial control is viewed as the library automation while, the uses of platform where by librarians can generate, store, retrieve, preserve and transmit information within and outside libraries have increased the information processing capacity of the economy at the exponential rate and simultaneously enhance the salience of knowledge-based inputs in every aspect of production. It also enables libraries to dramatically reduce the cost of generating, storing, transmitting and processing information throughout for

effective and efficient management. Chisenga (1999) advice information professionals to make valuable contribution to the growth of the global information infrastructures. Therefore, in view of these Information managers in this age should be proactive, visionary and be aware of the happening in the new information environment.

## **CHANGING SCHOOL LIBRARY ENVIRONMENT**

The changing global information has brought with it changing concept, function and services of the traditional libraries. The role of libraries has equally broadened beyond the traditional libraries model with it emphasize on physical resources. The concept of libraries as a physical structure is rapidly changing to that of a digital environment. While the “brick and mortar” library has not disappeared completely, we are moving closer to physical and virtual information hub. *Invalid source specified.* With the advent of technology going, into the libraries no longer requires physical visit but virtually. Libraries management and resources are increasingly being expanded to include digital formats to support user’s expectations. Other notable changes on the library scene are that librarians are becoming information and knowledge professional. Librarians have hitherto pride themselves as they measure the effectiveness of their library collections in terms of volume of books and journal titles. This emphasise has shifted to accessibility to collections/database in some distant locations. It is no longer ownership but accessibility to desired information that now counts. User information demands are increasing in terms of access to facilities at their desktop.

The explosive information revolution has placed information at people’s finger tips. A click at a button on the computer can unearth enormous amount of information. In such a scenario, the tendency is to rely on self rather than the librarian in the search of information. If

information can be obtain so effortlessly, why should user want to come into a library instead of obtaining same at home or in the convenience of an office.

## **THE NEED TO REVIEW THE CURRICULA OF LIBRARY SCHOOLS**

One of the key to focus is on the curricula of the library schools. The curricula of library schools need surgical overhauled and geared towards preparing students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century librarians and information professional taking into account, the skills, the trends and the competencies. The current curricula need to be more geared towards information and system management to strengthening students' knowledge in ICT's in addition to have a solid foundation in library science. The present curricula for the Bachelor degree in library science especially in developing countries need to be beefed up and strengthening further in the elective courses with more credit units to enable the graduate function effectively and efficiently in the discipline.

The major concern for capacity building on library schools are for the 21<sup>st</sup> library information science job market that is changing in Nano seconds, a job market that is highly dynamic, competitive and challenging with diversified requirements and demands. How the library schools prepare their students for this universal market? The strong belief is that our library school have no other choice than to change now because it can no longer be business as usual. Invalid source specified. Posit that in the unfolding scenario, it is important to emphasize the need to prepare the 21<sup>st</sup> century library and information professionals, because not to prepare is to prepare to fail. It is mandatory on school libraries to revitalise the profession to take up the 21<sup>st</sup> century role. Libraries Schools will require carefully and timely preparations. A preparation becomes a key to content knowledge and the related skills, especially survival skill including the

teaching approach, assessment method. Apart from the survival skills, the 21<sup>st</sup> century librarian and information professionals must be equipped, taught and developed more on the effective skills and characteristics especially enthusiasm for long life learning. Again, the ‘will-power’ will be fundamental as nothing will come easily because people always resist change. Similarly assertiveness and creative thinking as well as self-confidence and innovativeness are traits that must be taught and imbibed in-order to adapt these new roles. Libraries do not have much choice now than to take account of the changes and the implied ramifications in developing the programmes of studies and curricula which must be guards towards graduating librarians and information professionals adequate for the global village setting.

## **SPACE MANAGEMENT IN LIBRARIES**

Library as a space refers to, the study of libraries as built environments including their cultural, geographical, and historical contexts, as well as their representative properties as social, political and informational space. **Invalid source specified.** Describe library place as: Physical entities where a complex mix of activities, processes, actions, and performances occur on a daily basis. **Invalid source specified.** Added that we know that they acquire an ever-changing array of cultural resources for public use.... Accordingly, a wide variety of people (users of all kind) visit libraries, bringing their individual values, beliefs, expectations, assumptions, daily practices, and cultural awareness. How does this complicated set of characteristics, including elements from the personal, the private, the public, the physical, the intellectual, and the cultural, coalesce into the space or place we call the library. The libraries proposed to manage its space in the light of 21<sup>st</sup> century dynamic. It highlighted strategies for meeting users’ needs and expectations using the notion of library space. Libraries are applying the concept of learning space to re-adjusting its services in line with the 21<sup>st</sup> century dynamics in education. “**Invalid source specified.** pose that

space saving and management technology has made it easier to store very large information in a very small and easy to bear on compact disk and micro-chips, technology has given another score on revitalization of libraries. Large volumes of text and reference materials such as encyclopedia are stored on those media to save library space.” The concept of learning landscapes has become ubiquitous in any sector of education, encourages to create networks of ‘discovery, and discourse between students, faculty, staff, and a wider community’, with a clear recognition that libraries need to use space more effectively as well as efficiently. The deployment of technological tools ascertain the progress in libraries space management, whereby information centers, information service providers and managers, which are librarians, have progressively transformed their information systems and services to provide additional apart from the traditional approaches, by digitized information and online services of all sorts in real time at 24/7 running to meet the information needs and expectations of their teaming customers remotely. Library space management inspired by the following philosophy in revitalizing libraries space is guided by:

- Library as a learning common
- Library as scholarly common

### **ENHANCE ACCESSING TO INFORMATION**

The benefit of ICT enhanced access to information resources and services. Libraries can expose it users to a much larger collection than it can be house physically, because users can access information remotely. The capacity to manage, access information and services has further been made easier with the emergence of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT’s) and more particularly the Internet. The Internet represents the application of varieties of software platforms, resources, and services which enable information accesses in dual modes

(physical/direct and remote) regardless of the time of need. The popular ICT-based products and platforms for information management in public and private organisations/institutions and for individuals include the e-publications and documents, software application packages and online databases. Whereas, the popular ICT-based service platforms for information access, communication, distribution/transfer in public and private organisations/institutions and for individuals include automated systems, online networks and e-services of varied nature and structures such as e-publishing and printing, emailing and correspondences, teleconferencing, list Serves, and social media/networks and platforms.

**Invalid source specified.** Added that these evolving Information Technology gadgets which enables access to information resources through new platforms such as iPads, e-readers, smart phones and personal computers. More importantly however, physical location is no longer a necessary as pre-requisite for access and use. Thus in the digital age, the library is now defined not by the number of books held in the collection, but by how electronic resources can be accessed across platforms and from remote locations. Digital technologies allow users to access to information without being physically available in the library and this has revitalized libraries to the fact that information can be accessed 24/7 digitally regardless of physical wall boundaries.

Changing libraries through enhanced access, Grouping the entire matters hence, we can says that as world is dynamic as changes occurs time to time likewise, “Change has occurred in Libraries” that is to say Technology has revitalized libraries, librarianship and library information science education around the whole world. If libraries and librarians want to be relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, repositioning libraries must begin with how they relate to and provide access to information resources for their changed users. In a nut shell, we should look forward solve our prospect users problems in the nearby future.

So the question poses here – what librarians need to do to remain relevant in revitalizing libraries.

\ First, we must acquaint ourselves with technology and accept digital libraries that house e-formats as what will re-define the future libraries. In trying to revitalize the traditional concept of library as a physical building where by any user that need to access information resources and services must make their self-available in the library. We must embrace the fact that the information resources cautiously guard can no longer be confined in printed materials accessible only in a single, physical location, but from a web-based platform which provides access to as many people as would require the service which can be accessed 24/7 digitally regardless of physical wall boundaries.

Secondly, – the next generation of libraries will be hosted on the evolving technology of the internet. Unfortunately, this technology is not defined wholly by people who share vision of access. To be part of this revitalization, librarians must take special interest on how this technology is developing and ensure that we make inputs to the process.

Thirdly, users are no longer patient enough to wait for information. They need urgent information. If we cannot provide them with up-to-date and most accurate information, then we run at the risk of irrelevance in our profession. This result to unfortunate reality where by pretenders are hanging just across the corner to take over the profession image.

Fourthly, the curriculum of library training requires a surgical overhaul. All Academics, professors, wanting to keep their jobs and prestige are woefully failing to reinvent themselves and the curriculum of instruction.

We need to focus and look forwards at how we can enhance access to the library. To do this involves a simple skill – to monitor changing evolutions in technology and societal habits.

The concept of a learning hub has been implemented with the library providing access to digital formats through the internet and making the reading space much more relaxed and hospitable. Not only so, the library has become a hotspot where readers can connect to the web across different technological platforms.

To round it up therefore, we owe this profession a supreme duty to understand that things have changed, and that, very drastically too. This understanding is what will change the way we offer our services and how we reinvent ourselves to remain relevant in this crowded world of information provision and use. Our job profile must now be to provide access to information resources using the digital platform.

According to Jimba, 'Information is Power'. "Nobody gives up power easily". Librarians must not be the exception. If Libraries and librarianship are the holders of information, then we are the holders of power. In the game of power, if you lose, you're never going to gain it again. We don't need to look forward to a day when librarians will have lost power and their prime position taken over by those who do not understand the basics of cataloging and classification.

Revitalization of libraries with modern innovative services that are necessary to bring libraries to the users to encourage independent learning and lifelong education, and ways they could be incorporated into the services delivery of our libraries as a way of repositioning libraries in the whole world.

## **CONCLUSION**

It concluded that revitalization of libraries with modern innovative services that are necessary to bring libraries to the users to encourage independent learning and lifelong education would help schools libraries to provide effective service delivery to it users. School libraries need to

revitalise their services by transforming the way information is provided to users for enhanced service delivery.

## **WAY FORWARD**

School libraries should be equipped with high class technology to provide and compete with others libraries globally and they should provide resources and equipments that would be user friendly to all categories of students irrespective of their background.

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