

# THE MODELS OF LIBRARY ESTABLISHMENT AND PROVISION OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BY PUBLIC INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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## Abstract

*The provision of access to information is a fundamental human right and critical for exercising essential right by the citizen in the society. Libraries exist and function for the society. This paper discusses the origin, needs and purpose of the establishment of libraries in the country. The need for the establishment of libraries is explained in models as to the objectives attached to it at a given period of time. The third model is with the perception that libraries are performing different social functions and services in meeting the needs of the various sectors of the society, which is regarded as for the purpose of development. The provision of information by the public libraries is an important right that serves and benefits both the government and the citizen; it helps to increase citizen's confidence over the government as decision making is becoming transparent. More so, it accelerates the level of individuals' advancement by allowing them to have access to the mass resources and wealth of the nation, and become self-reliant. In conclusion, this study found that the models at which the library services were built upon is ultimate to nation development as information, ideas and knowledge are impetus for societal problems. This paper, among other things, recommends for the provision adequate funds for the public library system in the country for facilitation of their services to the society.*

## Introduction

Public library is one of the social institutions responsible for acquisition, organizing, preserving and dissemination of information from variety of forms and sources. Its fundamental goal is to extend its sources and services to the residents of its community in which it is located and beyond. That is the provision of access and retrieval of information to all, which is a fundamental human right and critical for exercising so many essential rights by the citizens, such as health, safe environment and education among others. Access to information by the citizens at all levels of life serves as a great tool that would facilitate meaningful participation in public life, or societies as having a meaningful voice, and a powerful instrument for greater socio-economic development, harmony and hold government accountable. However, the basic needs of information by man is for addressing various issues affecting his life, such as personal, family, recreation, informal learning, formal education as a student or teacher, workplace activities and some information are needed for entertainment. According to Mohammed (2011), information is anything that adds to our existing knowledge, ideas, skills and experiences positive or negative that enables us to take decisions or react to situations immediately or later at an appropriate period of time. By this, information is a vital resource which provides impetus for nation's social, cultural, spiritual, political, economic, scientific and technological advancement, greater socio-political equality and effective and efficient governance, power and followership. Development is considered here as the process of improving the quality of human lives with three fold aspects; to raise people's levels in term of incomes and consumption, food, medical services, education through relevant growth processes. Creating condition conducive to the growth of peoples' self-esteem through establishment of social, political and economic systems and institutions and increasing people's freedom to choose by enlarging the range of their choice variables

through variety of goods and services. Mohammed (2017) stated that paradoxically, development is continuum with no static end, but it subsequently triggers the need to move further for attainment of much better, much higher level or stage of developmental achievement all in the process to get things better and continue to maintain an ever progressing life.

For attainment of any measurable success in the society, the human factor and the provision of relevant information services by library and information centres are the basic factors for the successful development in the society. Human factor by their nature and characteristics are having the capability and ability to decide how to meet their expectation or otherwise because it is the stakeholders that initiate, strategize and implement, support, promote any national and societal developmental agenda.

It is in recognition of the potentials and significance of the library services and human factor for the provision of relevant information resource and services for the development that this paper makes a discourse on the models of library establishment in Nigeria. Attempt is made to evaluate the models, the purpose and ways through which the establishment of libraries and their services become reality in Nigeria.

### **The models of Libraries for Education in Nigeria**

Libraries exist and function for the society. The present library does not exist in the pre-colonial times. Nevertheless, as the library service being the provision of information for the citizenry, then, every society and community have their system of information for their people. The developmental process of library services in the developing countries like Nigeria could be perceived from three distinctive dimensions for their establishment. In considering these models and what each entails as their development levels, Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) described these models thus, the first model could refer back as the colonial period, the period that takes no cognizance of the socio-economic, cultural environmental differences between the developing and industrialized societies. In this period, the type of library practice and services were established to perpetually serve as conduits through which European culture is transmitted to the westernized elites of the former colony. At that period of time, the monumental library buildings found in the developed countries and the literature, which they stock are considered totally suitable for the developing countries, regardless of whether or not they are alien and inappropriate to the cultural needs of the people (Ojo – Igbino, 1995).

The second model was the equating of the librarianship in developing countries with its equivalent in highly industrialized societies. At this stage, the emphasis given to library services were only of high technology and its information requirements. While totally ignoring the fact that libraries can play a very vital role in face-to-face educational transactions, which was the need of the majority of the population for them to adapt to the on-going process of social changes.

The model of the library role is on the rational perception which is ecumenical and poly-dimensional in nature. This model does not identify librarianship with the provision of information only, but perceived library as to perform different social functions. This model recognizes that the library is to meet the information needs of groups, individual and various sectors of the society as to their educational, socio-economic, political and cultural development. It is on this model that the present librarianship and its activities formed their basis, which brought about designation and establishment of various libraries with different services to serve the information needs of various sectors in the society, such as school libraries, college libraries, public libraries with different roles based on their set of objectives, purpose or mission for their establishment.

### **Provision of Access to Information by Public Libraries**

The provision of access to information by the public libraries is one of the tools for the social and economic development in the society. The public library is designated to provide resources and services in a variety of media to meet the needs of individuals and groups for education, information and personal development including recreation and leisure. The public library, rather public information system, allows and ensures that services are available to minority groups who for some reason are not able to use the mainstream of its services, for example, language barriers, physical and sensory disabilities or those in the remote areas.

Access to information is an important right that serves and benefits both the government and the citizens. For the government, side access to information helps to increase citizen confidence as decision making becomes more transparent, and assist public administration to be efficient and effective as public record keeping systems

are organized. And procedures are articulated and established to allow access, retrieval and the utilization of information recorded. According to Sundgred (2005), access to public information systems (public libraries) is making public data and other utility data available to the public, for example; official statistics, maps, directories, encyclopaedias, catalogues of goods and services, events, standards, patents among others.

Information, as an essential commodity which accelerates the level of individual enlightenment and knowledge, allows an individual to discharge his basic responsibilities as a citizen and a member in a given society. Having access to information by citizens will enable them engage in public life, to understand policies, determine public priorities and also for them to exercise other human rights. These will assist them to have access to the mass resources and wealth of the nation as stakeholders. More so, it will allow each citizen to know his right, the right of others upon him and vice versa and that of the government.

The objectives at which public library is built upon is to maintain cordial and mutual understanding through provision of variety of information resources and services for the development and maintenance of a vibrant self-reliant and democratic society by giving individual access to a wide and varied range of knowledge, ideas and opinions.

The free flow of information that reaches all in the society by the public library provides meaningful participation through advancement of knowledge. This is critical to both national socio-economic and political empowerment, as the skills acquired will be put into practice. The acquisition of various information and skills will definitely enable the individuals in the society who perceives business opportunities to organize the available resources within their disposal and engage business activity for self-reliance. In other words, this is what we know as entrepreneurship. Fasua (2006) maintained that entrepreneurship is the willingness and ability by an individual to seek out investment opportunities in an environment and be able to establish and run enterprises successfully based on the identifiable opportunities. Oyeronke (2016), in his assertion, confirmed that libraries help in facilitating the planning and implementation of learning programmes that will equip users with the skills necessary to succeed in a constantly changing social and economic environment. Mchombu (2016) observed that information services that address economic and business issues serve as a hub to all other services because without economic development, recreational, cultural and educational pursuits become very difficult.

### **Educational Role of the Public Library**

Education is an instrument per excellence for national development. It involves the intellectual, psychological, social, vocational, religion and moral development of a complete and all reasoning person. Education is the process through which people are formally and informally trained and acquire knowledge and skills. It is an integral part of national development, however, for a national development to be realistic, it involves economic growth, modernization, equitable distribution of income, resources and socio-economic transformation for improved living standards of people in the society.

The greatest resource for development is human resource and no nation can develop without human resources. It is, therefore, very imperative that all people at all levels of education should have access to information, and under the umbrella of information commons within the community where information can be provided for all in the society. Mohammed (2017) described community information commons as an integrated melting pot media where all and sundry in the society irrespective of their socio-economic, political, cultural and educational strata will have equal opportunity and conveniently access and utilize information in a variety of format. This is with the objective that each citizen to give his/her own quota for national development.

Public library system is a local gateway centrally established for the provision of knowledge that provides basic condition for life-long learning, independent decision, and cultural development of individual and social groups. The public library is instrumental for those in search of knowledge, or information by providing information resources in the appropriate media to support formal and non-formal learning processes. This is helping users to make use of the learning resources effectively and facilities that enable people in their studies, the ability to access information and make effective use of it is vital to successful education.

The public library services are fundamentally contributing to people daily survival, social and economic development by providing information to the developing communities. These include basic life skills, adult basic education and AIDS and information on general health and environmental sanitation. The public library

system is striving towards meeting the information needs of all groups and individual in the community regardless of age, economic or social circumstances.

Despite the enormous importance of the public library system in Nigeria, since its evolution in the 1946, it is under used today by less than 1% of the population. Olden (2010) asserts that the main constraints of the public library system in Nigeria are lack of professional leadership, government legislation, backing and financial support in certain states; staffing problems; and the difficulty of extending service outside the urban areas.

### **Conclusion**

The models at which library services were built and established upon is ultimate to the national development of any nation, while information, ideas and knowledge are impetus for the social, economic, political, religious, cultural and as well as security problem of society. Public library system, as a worldwide phenomenon, have become the local gateway for meeting the information needs of the local community. In a nut shell, it is providing the basic conditions for lifelong learning, independent decision – making and socio – economic and cultural development of the individuals and groups.

### **Recommendations**

1. Adequate and sufficient funds should be given to the public libraries to enable the Librarians put in place the necessary facilities and information resources in the libraries to solve the users information needs.
2. Librarians should pay more attention on the need to sensitize people in various communities to know the value and importance of public library in the society.
3. The information resources to be acquired by the librarians should be relevant to the needs of the society
4. Librarians should be given the opportunity to further their educational standard for the provision of qualitative services.
5. The National Library of Nigeria should provide a means of inspecting and evaluating the various public libraries in the states and local governments as a means of checkmating their activities towards the stipulated aims and objectives of their establishment.

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