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Statement of Responsibility: What is the State of Youth Adults Service Inclusion by Libraries

By

KASA, M. Gabriel, GOSHIE, W. Rhoda and JIMADA Aisha¹

Abstract

This paper focuses on effective service delivery to youth adults as library strives to fulfill her responsibilities and installs the loss of trust; confidence and commitment of youths. It attempts to resolve where the library got it wrong. Ideals of librarianship which constituted the statement of responsibility were enumerated; conceptual issues on youth services, professionalism to complement effective service delivery were deliberated to correct misconceptions that the library has abandoned the plight of the youth. In conclusion, it was clear that librarians could make the youth utilize the library effectively through establishments of youth consultations corners and other advisory services that makes them bonafide stakeholders. Ways were suggested as recommendations to overcome complexities that defy the conformity with the unifying mission and vision establishing libraries for youth adults' development.

Introduction

Libraries all over the world are proposing ways to overcome poor reading habits, plagiarism, scholarship cheating and other deviance which are posing as severe challenges to effective use of libraries particularly by the youth. Other threatened foundation of the library is its core library values and services. It is observed that these menace influenced the statement of responsibility of the library which is fashioned out of its core value of making access to information a

right for all and instituting measures for effective and efficient library service delivery. It is very sad that these disintegration is universal and of great concern which must not be spared. Therefore, the need to quickly arrest the situation cannot be overemphasized and as a library thing. It is logical to begin with library's patrons and of particular interest is with the youth who can pivot the image of the library in the future as citadel of education. It is also important to investigate what the states of youth services are by libraries to ascertain the extent of their inclusion and paths during decision making. These could light up youth participation and change the negating apathy towards libraries, services and policies. The act could further ignite trust and eventual submissions of suggestions and recommendations on ways the library can continually influence the environment, state of technological perversion and youth diversity for sustainable development, and operate an all-inclusive process.

Accordingly, IFLA (2010) reiterates the statement of responsibility to the youth adults through its goals and objectives of youth library services to include promotions of international cooperation in the fields of library services and encouraging the exchange of experience, education, training and research in all aspect through access to information, providing literacy and promoting reading in different cultures and traditions. These by implications required that librarians oblige to the public holistically and develop the youths literacy. And to take note that the task will not be easy as they respond to questions of their motives, during actions and working to justify and influence the youth and enhance their reputations as important members of the society and leaders of tomorrow.

The paper is divided into themes to facilitate the discourse on statement of responsibility: Factoring the state of youth adult services inclusion by libraries.

Conceptual Issues of Youth Adults as Perceived by Professional Librarians

IFLA (2010) defined young adult (youth) as a group of people in-between childhood and adulthood. Earlier, the UNESCO manifesto (1995) proclaimed that youth adult can better be described as teenagers, and that these teenagers need special attention because it is a critical stage when many abandon voluntary reading in their lives. Arresting the situation can facilitate introduction to a wide array of books and information resources that are compatible with their changing interests, and enhance their psychological and emotional growth.

The relativity of these definitions could be due to differences in cultural and religious perspectives on the matter of who constitute a youth. This could be attributable for the necessity by IFLA on the matter of youth as they encourage and support each library (micro-unit) to set a befitting age range of what they consider to be youth adult. Generally speaking, IFLA suggested the years between twelve and eighteen are often used as a range for young adults. Depending on the culture or country, this range may be extended past eighteen years and includes all members regardless of race, religion, cultural background, intellectual, or physical ability.

The numerous definitions of youth adults by librarians and why it is worth addressing could be traced to the residual effects of neglecting these categories of groups have on the community and society. as it connect them to information that influences positively and arraigns all the prestigious elements of education (Evetts, 2006, Crook, 2008). According to Webster's International Dictionary (1993) professionalism is a calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive preparation including instruction in skills and methods as well as in the scientific, historical, or scholarly principles underlying such skills and methods, maintaining by force or

organization or concerned opinion high standards of achievement and conduct, and committing its members to continued study and to a kind of work which has for its prime purpose the rendering of a public service.

In Nigeria, status and bargains about working conditions and professional autonomy as clearly deployed since the establishment of the Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria established through an Act in 1995. And when it became functional in 2003 has inducted qualified candidates. In addition, council has periodically sensitized the public on the role of the libraries and librarians, organized trainings, workshops and seminars to resolve challenges affecting the profession.

Understanding and Putting Library's Statement of Responsibility to Use

Library's statement of responsibility is a huge concept, it is multi-facet and tasking. First it is a reminder of possession of professional etiquette which must stem from having command of an extensive body of knowledge. The knowledge required is highly specialized, characterized in abstract, theoretical and applications. Possession of such distinguishing field requires lengthy instruction in the underlying scientific and historical principles of library and information science of bridging all information gaps.

For effective pursuit of youth into the library, credibility, competence and the confidence of the librarian, character and integrity to serve the youth professionally is depended upon. This imposes a duty upon the library management and upon individual librarians to justify the trust needed from the youth. Significant knowledge is also required and can be acquired through years of work experience to be able to exercise of reasoned judgement in the application of this knowledge (Hargreaves, 2000, Atlas, 2005, Whitty, 2008). Therefore, to

be a professional on youth adult library service should be one is guided by the youth so as to be able to make judgements based on knowledge and understanding of the dynamics of youths as it affect their socio-economic, technological, psychological and educational dispositions as they patronize the services of the library. According to Gorman (2005), the inclusion of youths builds trust and accepting responsibilities and being accountable to them by librarians help the librarians to govern themselves and as well as to attract public interest which the librarian statement of responsibility portrays as paramount for and effective and efficient service delivery. Therefore, it is only apt that librarians see it as a duty to be engaged in all information provision activities that support the lifelong learning activities of the youth adult. These opinions were also shared by Intner (1998) and Fletcher (2001) who reported librarians' commitment through willingness to expend time and energy to explore information resources, available technologies, promote library growth, expansion and involving the youth to proffer solutions to challenges of effective and efficient service delivery.

Procedural Requirements for the Inclusion of Youth Adults in Library Services

Operating the library as a system is done consciously and following a deliberate procedure which can ensure that information resources acquired are accessible, protected, stored and preserved. Conscious of the challenges that may militate against youth adults inclusion in library services, IFLA, the highest governing body of Librarians the world over recommended the acceptance of legal and ethical responsibility for library work which is universally accepted because it has provisions for the inclusion of all interest, particularly that of the public and society (Lunt, 2008).

The IFLA (2010) framework for libraries to follow in developing services for young adults supports the following:

1. That each library establishes clear policy statements concerning the right to free access by young adults to library resources and information sources; and respect for the rights of young adults to select materials appropriate to their needs without censorship.
2. The library program for young adults be effectively managed according to best practices.
3. There should be equitable distribution of resources to support programs and services for young adults.
4. Library staff should be knowledgeable about adolescent development and age appropriate resources for young adults, inclusive of those with special needs.
5. The library provides a wide spectrum of current materials of interest to young adults to encourage lifelong learning, literacy, reading motivation, and reader development.
6. The library provides resources to support the educational needs of young adults.
7. The library assists young adults in acquiring the skills to effectively access all library resources and become information and computer literate.
8. The library fosters youth development by providing opportunities for young adults to participate in planning and implementing library programs and services for themselves; and volunteer opportunities for helping others.
9. The library creates an area just for young adults that is attractive and that reflects their lifestyle.
10. The library works in partnership with other community agencies and organizations to support all aspects of healthy, successful youth development.

Accordingly, professionalism in youth adult library service extends beyond what these code of ethics requires, librarians must embark on

constant library service reviews, collection development, use of technologies, investigations and participate in activities that attracts youth participation and engage them on matters of scholarships and other social activities which the library can support, and clarifying the misperception that the library space is dogmatic.

In What Ways Has the Library's Statement of Responsibility Provided for Effective Youth Adult Library Services?

The statement requires no discrimination to access to information and the only ways to achieving this fit is librarians continuously developing their skills – such as effective communication, team work and ready to support and supervise these youths in ways that they see themselves as partners of the library. The levity of the statement implore librarians could identify with success stories affecting youth involvement and satisfactory library service as they lead discussions and engaging the youth while at the same time adapt new techniques, practices, and materials that enriches the youth to arouse acceptance (Crowley, 2004).

Negative Misperception of Library Services to the Youth that Must Be Addressed

The desire of the librarian to uphold high standard has been disconcerted by the youths as irresponsibility of the library and librarians towards their information needs. Which only youth engagement can resolve.

Youth sometimes misperceived library service as being monopolized. They complained about lack of convenience and difficult operating interfaces. That librarian wants to control information resources by limiting access and retrieval (Freidson, 2001). Unfortunately, these youth lack awareness of the fact that every activity of the library is structured to offer everybody equal

opportunity without exception. Continue education could resolve the misconception.

As the library tries to ensure that public as well as the youth welfare are protected, it is misconceived as difficult and non-compromising; nevertheless the library cannot do otherwise because as an institution the library requires adherence to ethics, laws and orders such as author suffrages, copy rights, code of professional conducts and fair use. So that it becomes subconscious act and the aim of helping the youth to inculcate sound scholarship, competitiveness and self-specialization educationally are achieved.

Services, Facilities, and Programmes Required For Youth Adult Library Services In Libraries

Youth expectations from librarians and their respective libraries have greatly increased. This desires of the youth for a responsive service is imperative to meet youth expectations (Evetts, 2006). Care must be taken not to leave out conduct and expectations of the youth and for adequately and clearly stating the library's responsibilities, the legal, ethical, and practical limitations of the service provided. Youth expects the following services:

- i. Free access to the Internet
- ii. Providing reference information to support educational pursuits and personal development.
- iii. Conducting library orientations that can support self-sufficiency and comfort level in using the library.
- iv. Training for literacy and information finding skills, using both print and electronic resources.
- v. Offering readers advisory services for individuals and groups
- vi. Encouraging the use of the collection in all formats
- vii. Providing finding aids and other supporting materials

- viii. Facilitating access to resources outside the collection when necessary, such as referrals and inter-library loans.
- ix. Promoting services to young adults within the community
- x. Co-operating with other information and service providers in the community
- xi. Providing services to special groups such as young adults with disabilities, teen parents, and teens who may be incarcerated or unable to come to the library for a variety of reasons.

Librarian can provide the aforementioned services when such facilities that aid the services are provided. Most libraries suffer from budget cuts, inflation and neglect which constitute setbacks and capability to provide these facilities and/or maintain them. This could imply that librarians are not entirely to be blame of poor service provision and delivery to the youth particularly when funds are insufficient or not available. Facilities ensure that information needs are treated accordingly to gain satisfaction, for personal achievement and opportunities for advancement (Perlow & Williams, 2003).

According to Lowe and Schellenberg (2002) organization housing libraries must make their respective libraries realistic workplace through adequate funding, policies on staff fair performance appraisals, equitable treatments, provide an atmosphere of respect, challenge and accomplishment, good communication and teamwork, and job security. For instance, a supportive climate may be seriously compromised if organizational needs and professional responsibility conflict.

Libraries who wish to offer effective and meaningful programs for young adults must seek out their participation at all stages of the program process. Young adults should be recognized as experts that can provide programs that will be appealing and useful to them,

therefore, the programs must be such that they give. Examples of recommended programmes are:

- Book talks, storytelling, and book promotion
- Discussion groups and clubs
- Information programs on topics of interest such as health, careers, current issues
- Celebrity visits of authors, athletes, and persons of local interest
- Performances of a cultural nature such as music, art, and drama
- Co-operative programming with community institutions and groups
- Young adult productions (drama, publications, TV, video)
- Workshops designed to teach a skill or for creative expression
- Reading debates
- Book promotions

Necessities for the Promotions Youth Adults Inclusion in Library Service by Library Staff

Library staff who must work with young adults should have the following skills and competencies:

- Understanding of the unique developmental needs of young adults
 - Respect for young adults as individuals
 - Knowledge of young adult culture and interests
 - Ability to create partnerships among other groups in the community that address needs of young adults
 - Flexibility to follow the changing needs and interests of young adults
 - Ability to advocate for young adults within the library and in the wider community
 - Ability to work in partnership with young adults
 - Knowledge of all media, including books and resources in all formats
 - Creative thinking skills
- The quality of library services for young adults demands a good network with other professional or voluntary institutions in the local community. The young adults' activities in culture, education and social life must be co-ordinated so that the local institutions do not compete but co-operate for the benefit of the

young adults. Many librarians have the resources and the knowhow to be the professional co-ordinators for the benefit of young adults.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it was revealed that librarian can comply with the statement of responsibility that information is made accessible to all without any form of discrimination, censorship or abuse. A majority that must be included in the affairs of information service provision by libraries are the youth adults who are the future of the world and its prosperity. Services, facilities and programmes that affect them must come on board after deliberate consideration and 'youth consultation', which is necessary to understand and appreciate youth plights – tendencies, technological affiliations and dynamics to bridge the gaps with the library services provided for their use.

Recommendations

To meet youth needs, the paper recommends that:

1. the only ways information provision can be appreciated on matters concerning the youth is engaging them periodically to suggest ways that can ensure effective and efficient service provision;
2. support the continuing interest to 'catch them young' through arousal of interest and participation in scholarship and education requires adequate funding in order to provide befitting facilities and corresponding services for the young adults;
3. to include a more robust professionals within and outside the library during outreaches and specialty services can go a long way to show that the library is not monopolistic but such that is concern with stabilizing and growing a mature and well informed populations;
4. the library must time to time retool to address changing roles and skill sets for functional areas that provide service delivery to an

- increasingly technologically savvy public while time mindful of maintaining services and roles that are offered “traditionally” to promote access and utilization of information resources as prescribed by the statement of responsibility; and
5. the need for dedicated unit in every library to adept at youth adult is imperative to respond to diversity.

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