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DEVELOPMENT AND ROLE OF INNOVATIVE SERVICES FOR SOCIETAL REORIENTATION IN ACHIEVING NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIAN LIBRARIES

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the development and roles of innovative library services in societal reorientation. The conceptual paper gathered information from secondary sources, including textbooks, journal articles, and conference papers. The paper examines innovative library services (ILS) in the Nigerian context, highlighting their impact on societal reorientation. Furthermore, it explores the concept of innovative library services and their applications in information generation, preservation, dissemination, and library management. The goal is to deliver desired outcomes in society and contribute to achieving national development in Nigeria. Innovative library services are a continuous process aimed at improving in all areas of information creation, packaging, and dissemination to library cliental. The process leads to a change in attitudes focusing on societal development. It concludes that Innovative Library Services promote corporate values, national positive image, and respect for human life. Furthermore, these services encourage a culture of hard work and productivity, wealth creation, employment generation, entrepreneurship, intangible wealth, and healthy competition.

Keywords: Library innovative services, societal reorientation, Information delivery**,** National development

Introduction

Libraries of all types play an important and unique role in providing information and services to meet the needs of their clientele, which can be achieved through systematic selection, acquisition, storage, processing, and dissemination of information for efficient and effective library services. Innovations in libraries are those techniques, strategies, and skills that move information professionals out of libraries and create new ideas and unique models of library and information work and services. Libraries are valuable tools for societal reorientation which eventually promotes corporate values, national image, and respect for human life, with the help of libraries people would imbibe the culture of hard work and productivity, wealth creation, employment generation, entrepreneurship, intangible wealth, and competition through systematic dissemination of relevant and valuable information and services.

Libraries are affected by the developments and changes in today's information society. Like any other institution, they should respond adequately to the needs of their users and the community to which they provide their services following the changes. However, to meet the needs of library users, creativity and innovation are vital in libraries and information centers, libraries play a significant and vital role through their innovative services to ensure societal reorientation which leads to the conscious development of human and resources through planning, training, productivity and efficiency in achieving national development. Abraham and Choice (2020) viewed innovation as part of a coping strategy for the changing context of the library environment; they further stated that libraries for a long time have been incorporating innovation and creativity into their services to play a vital role in society. This ensures users access to current information resources that will impact their information needs and foster innovation in society, especially in teaching, learning, and research activities that would promote national development (Abata-Ebire, Adetayo, & Ojokuku, 2018; Joell & Ayinla, 2015).

Libraries are contributing immensely towards societal reorientation through their innovative services which improve and promote national development. This was confirmed by Priti and Jibril (2018) who opined that libraries play a significant key role in contributing towards the improvement of national development through the provision of equitable quality services and valuable information through several activities initiated by different libraries. Libraries ensure sustainable access to information on education, agriculture, public health, social issues, and capacity building, and when the information is effectively utilised would eventually promote quality education, and good health, increase production, and boost the economy of the country (Omeluzor, 2013). Libraries contribute towards the provision of the right skills to access quality information and services that would promote national development through innovation, research, and critical thinking in helping the government and civil society to actualize the goals of national development.

Innovative Services in Libraries

Libraries are established for proper management, provision, and dissemination of information such as agriculture and food security, democracy, health, population, education, economy, youth empowerment, and environment. In this situation, there is a need for libraries and information centers to provide more attractive and interactive services to their users through Innovative services. The provision and dissemination of information and services are shifting away from the traditional enterprise to the modern way using modern Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Simisaye, Salisu, and Awodoyin (2018) stated that the emergence of ICT brings tremendous changes to library services, libraries are shifting from the old traditional role as a social agency for information generation, storage, retrieval, and dissemination to modern electronic information systems. Libraries of today's information societies are using innovation to upgrade their services for societal re-orientation which eventually ensures a continuous search for valuable information that would reshape national character and image.

The economic realities of the present world are making libraries re-examine their services through creativity and innovation to be relevant in society. Abraham and Choice (2020) opine that, the changes in the economic scenario due to globalization are making libraries and other information centers adopt innovative approaches to become more relevant to patrons' needs. As a result of these realities, libraries are coming up with innovative services for users and evolving new ways of disseminating and managing information and services. Several efforts have been put in place by libraries in the provision of innovative information and services that cut across education, public healthcare, agriculture and commercial activities which are key to national development and the provision of information resources and collaborating with governmental and non-governmental institutions to ensure sustainable access to information on education, public health, agriculture, social issues and capacity building for national development has assisted the library to close the gaps in the effective service delivery (Obizue & Obizue, 2016).

Libraries have adopted various innovative services to enhance user experience, promote information access, and foster community engagement. According to Omeluzor, Ugochi, and Kelechi (2020), Innovative library services include: library mobile applications, research consultation and instruction, social media platforms, Web OPAC, websites, repositories, online chat/virtual reference services, and community information and awareness services. Innovation in the library covers all

processes that are conducted to develop new or improved library services, or storage and disseminating methods, and to make this useful. Developing new and improved library services comes from new ideas. Innovation is a continuous activity in the library of today's information society. to completely modify their central services, these innovations are digital.

Multiple highly innovative technological advancements in today's 21st century prompted libraries to completely modify their central services, these innovations are, digital library platforms, artificial intelligence, machine learning, mobile applications, social media, community engagement tools, and virtual and augmented reality. These innovative technologies enhance user experience and provide expanded information access (Olayinka, Taiwo, & Ajayi, 2025). Tylor (2018) stated that innovative methods of engaging library resources lead users to the library while expanding learning potentials from library materials. LeDuc (2021) validates that virtual reality, together with augmented reality, improves educational results by creating real-world connections between library resources, which traditional presentations often fail to establish. Innovative library services according to Kumar (2023) frequently include technologies that enable group projects, presentations, online group debates, and interactive learning activities. Desmarchelier (2025) opined that library brings together core and peripheral services, and mobilises competences and technologies to generate utilities.

Library are embracing innovative technologies and services to enhance user experiences and stay relevant in the digital age, the scholars in the field have identified different innovative services which included, virtual reality and augmented reality, video streaming services, Artificial intelligence, Block chain technologies and Internet of things, these innovative technologies are transforming libraries in to dynamic hubs of learning, creativity, and community engagement.

Understanding Societal Reorientation

Society is a group of people living together and sharing common interests, values, norms, and institutions. Njoku (2015) stated that society refers to people living together in a community sharing common interest and maybe having distinctive customs and institution. Society according to Murugan and Krishna (2018) refer to various distinctive cultural group of people, it is an aggregate of individual living together as interdependent members in a highly structured system of communities. Consequently, society plays a crucial role in shaping individual and collective experiences. Reorientation according to Pantaleon (2021) is the action of changing the focus and direction of something, it is the act of figuring out again where you are in relation to your environmental or changing direction. Reorientation is the process of changing one's direction, focus, or perspective. It involves adjusting to new information, circumstances, or priorities.

Societal reorientation is a changing focus of the society that would reshape national character and image, is the process of transforming societal values, norms, and institutions to address emerging challenges, promote sustainable development and improve the well-being of individuals and communities. However, societal reorientation according to Balraj (2023) refers to the process of transforming or redirecting societal value, norms, and behaviours towards a new direction or perspective, this involve changes in cultural, economic, or political aspect of society. It is a complex and multifaceted process that requires effort and commitment from individuals, organisations, and institutions.

Libraries according to Murugan and Krishna (2018) play a vital role in societal reorientation by linking people to relevant knowledge and information sources, promoting literacy and education, fostering community engagement, supporting economic development, advancing digital inclusion, encouraging critical thinking, and preserving cultural heritage. However, by playing these role libraries contribute to societal reorientation, driving positive changes and promoting a more informed, engaged and inclusive society. Libraries can play a vital role in societal reorientation according to Emiri (2023) by promoting literacy and education through literacy programmes, providing resources programmes for science, technology, engineering and math education. Fostering community engagement, supporting sustainable development, encouraging diversity and inclusion, and leveraging technology, by playing these roles, libraries can contribute to societal reorientation and promote positive chance in their communities.

Libraries and National Development

Development is critical and essential to the sustenance and advancement of any nation. It is the advancement with a positive cultural and socio-economic tendency towards a self-generating and self-perpetuating utilisation of people's potential. National development is essential and critical to the growth and sustenance of a country to successfully enhance the meaningful standard of living among the populace. National development, according to Agbo and Onyekwediri (2014) can be described as the overall development or a collective socio-economic, political, and religious advancement of a country or nation. This is best achieved through development planning, which can be described as a country's collection of strategies mapped out by the government. National development according to Ofodu and Okwoli (2023) is a remarkable change in all the sectors of a nation as well a transformation in its human resources.

Libraries as a social institution have considered being an integral part of the society. Library and society are interconnected and dependent each other. We all are living in an information age and recognisedd its significant role in the all-round human development, enabling people to develop their full potential with appropriate education and skills preparing them for a paradigm shift from education stage to work stage. It is to be noted that libraries provide the basic conditions for life**-**long learning, independent decision making and cultural development of the individuals and groups of the society (Manjunath & Mariraj, 2022). Nigerian libraries according to Eyerinmene and Chinwe (2023) contributed immensely in economic, political and social development by disseminating information inculcating entrepreneurial drive political information promotion, political participation and accountability in governance which promote national development.

Libraries play a crucial role in national development by providing access to information, promoting literacy, and supporting education, research, and innovation. Study by Priti and Jibril (2018), confirmed that, libraries play a significant key role in contributing towards the improvement of national development through the provision of equitable quality education through a number of activities initiated by different libraries. Libraries now contribute towards sustainable national development especially in promoting universal literacy, media, information, and digital literacy skills towards quality information service delivery. Libraries play a vital role in national development by supporting education, economic growth, social development, and innovation, by investing in libraries, governments can promote literacy, education, and economic development, ultimately contributing to national growth and prosperity (Ofodu & Okwoli, 2023).

Innovative Services for National Development in Nigerian Libraries

Through the process of obtaining information from the library, people are expected to obtain relevant and valuable knowledge and skills, it is these knowledge and skills that allows people to contribute meaningfully to national development. According to Friday, and Ekeuche (2023), the general roles of libraries are informational, educational, research, recreational, and custodial, these roles ultimately result in economic, political, social, manpower, and entrepreneurial development, which consequently leads to national development.

Libraries transmit information and ideas in all areas that are necessary for a community's well-being and future progress. The amount and exact nature of the services provided by these libraries to contribute towards the national's development vary depending on the library itself and the services rendered (Igwela, & Nsirim, 2017)**.** Library can efficiently handle virtually all the activities that can enhance the development of the people, Ebiwolate (2017), confirmed that, creative, innovative and effective library services in Nigeria can ensure national development and improve better human living standard.

Libraries acquire, process, store and disseminate valuable information thereby sustaining research, readership, and publishing output, creation, publishing and promotion of digital content through electronic databases, repositories, digital commons which can enhances sustainability of education, science and technology, public health and environmental issues in any nation, and enhancing access to information, and knowledge sharing. Igwela and Nsirim (2017) opine that, for a nation to develop, it needs to have and provide relevant, updated and adequate information on agriculture and food security, health, democracy, population, education, family planning, youth empowerment, gender equality,

environment etc. Through the process of obtaining and disseminating these information libraries acquire, process, store and provide relevant and up-to-date information for users and community.

Libraries are key determinants for national developmental activities since it engages training citizens in various capacities to enable them become problem solvers, critical thinkers, lifelong learner and independent information seekers. Therefore, communities with quality and functional libraries have better quality education, health care, improved agriculture, poverty eradication and equality, thus, lead to national development (Oyinloye, Tabawa, & Aku, 2017; Omeluzor & Ogo, 2018). Libraries as a catalyst for national development have through all sectors been promoting national development.

A well informed society contributes significantly to the development of the nation as the availability of information resources would promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels (Bradley, 2014). Manjunath and Mariaj (2022) opine that, In order to grow more efficiently in all aspects of society, developing countries must collect and provide access to adequate and up-to-date information on health, democracy, food security, population, environment, education, youth empowerment, gender equality, etc. In this regard, it is imperative that all hands must be on deck toward establishing effective libraries with effective innovative services for the proper management, provision, and dissemination of information.

Barriers to Innovative Services in Nigerian Libraries

There are obstacles, or hindrances that limit libraries from providing modern, effective, and user-centered services, the barriers can be physical, social, cultural, economic, technological or policy-related. Simisaye, Salisu, and Awodoyin (2018) statedthat, there are various potential barriers to innovative library services, which can be infrastructural-related barriers (inadequate funding, poor Internet connectivity, inadequate of digital infrastructure), Human resource-related barriers (lack of trained librarians, limited staff development opportunities), technological barriers (outdated technologies, insufficient access to modern technologies, cyber security concern), societal and cultural barriers (limited awareness of library services, cultural attitudes towards technology, language barriers), policy and regulatory barriers (outdated policies and regulations, lack of national library policy, intellectual property rights issues).

Sheme, Yahaya, and Bappa (2017) opined that most libraries do not have access to modern ICT infrastructure, such as telephone lines, computers and Internet connectivity. Where these facilities are available there is always electricity power failures which inhibit their optimum usage. It was revealed by the study of Eyerinmene and Ekeruche (2023) that inadequate funding is a major challenge in implementing innovative library services by librarians and information professionals in Nigeria. There are so many challenges facing innovation in library profession. It is not out of place to conclude that the level of innovations amongst library professionals is an offshoot of the advent of ICT into library services (Fagbemiro, Ajibare & Akinola, 2022.).

Aderibigbe and Farouk (2017) reported that only a small number of Nigerian libraries are fully computerized and automated. This has been identified as one of the problems affecting Nigerian libraries. With this, Nigerian libraries cannot provide effectively the innovative services that contribute to national development, because there is an exponential growth in information needs of library users, which requires ICT to manage effectively. Eyerinmene and Ekeruche (2023) noted that lack of professional library personnel hinders the performance of the basic operations of Nigerian libraries. It is, therefore, required of librarians in Nigerian libraries to acquire skill needed to render modern library services.

The Nigerian government is yet to attach importance to the libraries in the country. This prevents the nation's libraries from receiving the needed attention from the government. As a result, the libraries cannot fully developed innovative services which subsequently allowed libraries to play their role in national development (Eyerinmene & Ekeruche, 2023). Igwela, and Nsirim (2017)stated barriers to innovative library services to include lack of trained personnel in librarianship, lack of resources, financial constraints, inadequate library services, poor distribution network of libraries, lack of viable publishing industry that can be publishing and providing survey reports, workshop reports, etc. on local democratic and socio-economic issues.

Conclusion

The primary role of the library is to acquire, process, preserve, and disseminate recorded information, it is therefore the responsibility of the library to enlighten the users and other members of the community it serves by presenting them with current, accurate, reliable and factual information that will guide their actions and help make good steps that will promote national development. More flattened structures and transformational styles that empower organisation members will undoubtedly create a more innovative environment in the library and increase the flow of new ideas. To sustain this environment, library leadership will need to create strategies that support both traditional services and exploratory activities that hold the promise for creating totally new services. Consequently, innovative library services promote corporate values, positive national image, and respect for human life. Furthermore, these services encourage a culture of hard work and productivity, wealth creation, employment generation, entrepreneurship, intangible wealth, and healthy competition.

Recommendations

In the light of the obstacles to the innovative services in Nigerian libraries, the following recommendations were made:

1. Libraries should develop digital literacy programmes, offering training sessions and workshops to enhance digital skills among library users.
2. Libraries should implement innovative technologies like virtual reality, augmented reality, and artificial intelligence to create immersive learning experience.
3. The libraries should also host events, workshops, and programmes that promote social cohesion, cultural preservation, and community development.
4. Libraries should ensure equal access to information resources, including digital collections, to support education and research.
5. The libraries should collaborate with stakeholders, like government agencies, private sector organisation, and community groups to support national development initiatives.
6. Policy makers should develop policies and guidelines for implementing innovative services in Nigerian libraries.

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