

## **Provision of library and information services for political development and stability by academic libraries in Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

Libraries are saddled with the responsibilities of providing relevant, up-to-date and timely information to its target clients for an efficient and effective decision making and eliminating any forms of uncertainties. There are different types of libraries established to provide services to a defined user's community. Library and information services provided in these libraries has always connected people with information and ideas that make individuals potent resources which can be harnessed and skillfully used for national development. This paper discussed provision of library and information services for political development and stability by Academic Libraries in Nigeria. It highlights political development and stability, overview of academic libraries, functions of academic libraries, information services provided in academic libraries for political development and stability in Nigeria, and the challenges of academic libraries for political development and stability in Nigeria. The paper concluded that, there is need for academic libraries and librarian as information services agent to provide regular community information services as a strategy for political development and stability in Nigeria, and recommended that there is need for adequate funding of academic libraries; adequate support of the academic libraries from the parent institutions and training and re-training of librarians on community information services delivery among others.

**Keywords:** Academic libraries, library services, political development, stability

### **Introduction**

Library is an indispensable component in a nation, having a great role to play in community development, serving as a gateway to knowledge; via facilitating and providing relevant, current, up-to-date and reliable information resources and services for national development and stability. Nigeria as a nation is a developing one with its numerous political challenges and instabilities. Political development and stability is hinged on the progress and productivity of the citizens and this development of countries globally cannot be achieved without the development and stability of the citizens. Political

development and stability enhances the state capacity to mobilize and allocate resources, to process policy inputs into implementation outputs. This assists with problem-solving and adoption to environmental changes and goals realization. The contemporary motion of good governance also dwells on efficient, effective, and non-corrupt-public administration (Oxford Reference, 2022).

Political development is the process that takes into visions a desirable future state for human societies in which living conditions and resources use continue to meet human needs without undermining the integrity, stability and beauty of natural biotic system (Adegoke, Oyeninde &

Owolabi, 2016). It is pertinent to state that one common element that cuts across political development and stability framework is information. This implies that information services delivery deals with the way information practitioner relate and behave towards their users, colleagues, organizations and the society (Eje & Dushu, 2018). This implies that information services delivery is critical issues in any human setting and the process is vast and very important because it indicates clearly the basis of how people in such a setting be it urban or rural reach out to other parts of their immediate environment and beyond (Ogar, Duka & Atanda, 2018). This requires that adequate information is needed for the realization of political development and stability in Nigeria. Therefore, libraries and information institutions are critical to the realization of political development and stability. This corroborates the assertion of Igbinouia and Osuchuckwu (2018), that librarians as information professionals are highly positioned to foster the attainment of political development and stability through information and knowledge sharing.

Rajurkur (2017), stated that the main objective of academic libraries is to collect, process, organize, disseminate, store, and utilize information to provide information sources to the host community. In the same vein, academic libraries are information centers established in support of the mission of their parent institutions to generate knowledge and people equipped with knowledge in order to serve the community and advance the well-being of mankind. Also, the academic libraries are services oriented organizations established for the provision of relevant information needs (Andeniran, 2011).

There is need for the academic libraries to stand up to their responsibilities of not just providing information resources

and services to their parent institution, but as a catalyst to social and political development in providing information services delivery to their host community for the realization of political development and stability in Nigeria as an agent societal development.

### **Political development and stability**

Political development is the development of institutions, attitudes, and values that from the political power system of the society. Ultimately, political development is ascertained as an increase in national political unity and an increase in political participation. It involves increase of structures, institutions, divisions of labour, specialization, followed by ultimate sense of integration. Political development touches not just on formal constitutional and organizational arrangement but also on such informal institutions as actual political relationship. Thus, changes in attitude and the political culture are relevant too. All these place limits on how far political development can be imparted or imposed from within (Oxford Reference, 2022).

Political development involves mass participation and popular involvement in political activities. The level at which people are voluntary involved in political activities of a country goes a long way in determining the level of development and stability. Political development and stability when the right personnel is placed in the best areas of specialization. There are level of political culture that enhances political development and stability. This involves division of Labour and specialization in the realm of government and citizens. One institution of government should not usurp the powers of another among the institutions of government (Ayeni, 2019).

Political development and stability is the state of quality of being politically stable and it involves the active involvement of

citizens in the political process and participation. The level of active participation of citizens in political activities in Nigeria is low. The actualization of political development and stability depends on political values system (PVS) and having partial value system enhances change and development among citizens and the nation. Political value system entails principles, equity, justice, honesty, peace, which one core values that bring about unity for political development and stability among citizens and nation

### **Overview of academic libraries**

Academic libraries are libraries that are found in higher institutions of learning which cater for teaching, learning, and research needs of the institutional members. Like universities, polytechnics and college of education. The academic libraries are integral parts of the institutions of higher learning in which they are located in the institutions. It is a centre of academic excellence in any academic institution. Its functions is to satisfy the institutional teaching, learning and research objectives. The funding and controlling authority of the library is the parent institutions. Some of the professional services provided by the academic library are selections, acquisitions, processing and development of the library collections mainly on the educational aims and objectives of the parent institutions (Adeyoyin, 2011).

Academic library are libraries that are attached to higher educational institutions and they serve two complementary purpose: to support the school curriculum, and to support the research of the academic institutions, faculties, students and the host community. Almost each tertiary institution in Nigeria owns at least one academic library. The importance of an academic librarians cannot

be overruled in the sense that they provides information resources and sources to the students, lecturers and researchers (David, 2018).

According to Iroka & Ndulaka (2018), National development in relation to its achievement in education is the library. Libraries and education are inseparable. Information made available by libraries play vital role in educational planning and has become a global phenomenon of great importance and concern in all spheres of human endeavors and development, especially in the educational sector. It is an integral part and the main player and achievement of educational activities. They stated further that for education to be effective and efficient, it is essential to have a well-equipped libraries. Without academic libraries, no meaningful educational effort can be achieved, as library services involve knowledge and skills for positive productivity, as a tool for economic development.

To a large extent, the quality of an academic institution is measured by the quality of information resources and services provided by the library, because of its unique position in the overall academic system. The library provides the platform for users and the community access to different information resources and information in different format in order to meet their information needs. The academic library is established to foster learning, teaching, research and development in the society by rendering different quality of information resources and related sources to the citizens to enable them informed and make decisions and solve societal problems as well as enable the citizens play active role in the society (Drotner, 2015).

### **Functions of academic libraries**

The academic libraries are libraries that are attached to high educational institutions and they serve two complementary purpose: to support the school curriculum, and to support the research activities of the institutions facility, students, leaders and the host community. Almost every tertiary institution in Nigeria owns at least one academic library (David, 2018). Adedoyin (2011) stated that the main function of academic libraries is to support the objective of teaching, learning, research and services of the parent institutions, and stated further that others include:

- i. Provision of information materials required for academic programme of the parent institutions.
- ii. Provision of all required information materials that are needed for learning.
- iii. Provision of information resources for recreation and personal self-development of users.
- iv. Provision of information resources needed for learning and research activities of the students.
- v. Provision of information resources to support teaching and research activities of the teaching staff.
- vi. Provision of information resources for learning and other purposes, for staff of the academic institutions.
- vii. Provision of local materials collected by the institution for consultation and use by the community in which the library is located.
- viii. Provision of information resources for the purpose of

extra-moral students, recreation, entertainment and general knowledge.

- ix. Provision of protection and security for library materials.
- x. Cooperation with other libraries at appropriate levels for improved information services.

The academic library also serves as a depository of their parent institutions' publications or in some cases, national publication.

### **Library and information services provided by academic libraries for political development and stability in Nigeria**

Academic libraries, as information-based institutions, can also contribute significantly towards the realization of sustainable political development and stability in Nigeria. Over the years, academic libraries have contributed to the paradigm shift in the Nigeria higher institutions of learning begin teaching-centered to learning-centered (Okuonghae & Igbinovia, 2019). In addition to the functions of academic libraries. Mohammed & Sale (2018) stated that academic libraries promote reading, creativity, innovative thinking, liberality and constructive participation in nation building and emergence of information society for political development and stability through the following information services:

- i. *Advocacy*: Advocacy is public support for a particular cause or policy. The academic library need to sensitize its users and the community on their roles, services delivered and sources provided. The advocacy could be talked up through a special appeals to the community as well as its leaders to sensitize the people on the importance of political development and stability. This

- advocacy will go a long way in changing the perception of the people of the community.
- ii. *Outreach:* These are library programmes and services designed to meet the information needs of users who are unserved or underserved. The academic library carry out outreaches to educate the community of the importance of political development and stability for the growth and development of their community.
  - iii. *Provision of community information literacy skills:* The academic libraries need to provide community information literacy skills to the host community as a fundamental prerequisite for lifelong learning, and basic requirement for the information to the society. The provision of community information literacy skills will enable the citizens to evaluate the needed information, required, have the ability to locate and use the right information in solving community/societal problems for development and stability.
  - iv. *Extension services:* The academic libraries provide extension services to the host community for them to be informed about the importance of the library to the community and how to can be educated on issues that are of well-being to the community for the development and stability of the people and their community. This are library assistance to individuals, organizations, and communities outside the library.
  - v. *Community information services:* The host community also needs to benefit from the academic libraries where they are located by ways of

- community information services delivery. The academic libraries also organize training and public enlightenment programme to educate the people of current trend and events by extension building of classroom or building of community libraries for the host community.
- vi. *Talk-show:* Libraries also promote access to indigenous knowledge by creating an environment which permits face-to-face forums and networks formation to discuss and debate on issues that might be of use to members of the communities (Anyira, 2010). For example, libraries can organize talk shows involving to gather and talk on matters that one related to the development of the community.

#### **Challenges faced by academic libraries in providing information services for political development and stability in Nigeria**

Nigerian academic libraries are plagued by several challenges that hinder the provision of information services which are required for communities for political development and stability. Drotier (2015) ascertained that the difficulties in the provision of information resources and services for political development and stability are related to inadequate funding, inadequate support from the parent institutions, inadequate infrastructural facilities and inadequate training of staff are top among the challenges faced by academic libraries as discussed as follows:

1. *Inadequate funding:* One of the major challenges faced by academic library in Nigeria is inadequate funding. Most libraries are partly funded because they depend majorly on the subvention of the parent

organization. In most cases the issue of funding has been inadequate as it is usually not enough to equip the libraries to meet the standard.

2. *Inadequate support from the parent institutions:* Lack of support of the library is another Major challenged faced by most academic libraries in Nigeria. Most leaders of the academic institutions do not have interest for library development and most homes cut down budgets appropriated to the libraries. And this has affected the delivery of Information Services.
3. *Inadequate infrastructure facilities:* Most academic libraries in Nigeria lack adequate infrastructure facilities to enable them carry out the findings and information services efficiently. So also, some of the academic libraries lack up-to-date library materials and insufficient storage devices. These challenges has disordered the growth and development of the nation by hampering the reading culture and information services.
4. *Lack of professional skills on community information services:* Most Libraries in academic libraries are not familiar with community information services. Community information services by extension provision of library services to the host community. And providing enlightenment programmes to educate the citizens to be informed.
5. *Lack of training and re-training on community information services delivery:* Training and retraining is required in every organization to enable the organization meet the current trend in their services. But in academic libraries, the reverse is the

case. Even where there is training and re-training most-at times is majority on interval need and not community needs.

### **Conclusion**

Libraries all over the world have an important role to play in the development and maintenance of any democratic society. They provide opportunities for citizens to participate actively in the country political development and stability in a democratic society. Library and information services play unquestionable role in political development and stability through providing and integral components-information-required in decision making and mapping the way forward in the societies. However, political development implies active participation of the citizens as a whole in the political activities of the nation which bring about stability. Therefore, there is need for academic libraries and librarians as information services provider to provide regular community information services as a strategy for political development and stability in Nigeria.

The following are recommended in the light of what has been prented in the paper:

1. *Adequate funding:* There should be adequate funding of academic libraries by the government and the parent institutions especially with the 10% appropriation of annual budget allocated to libraries to meet up with the required standard to effectively perform their responsibilities. The academic libraries should engage stakeholders, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and other international agencies and solicit for grants to support the academic libraries in the provision of library and information services delivery

their parent organisations and the host communities.

2. *Adequate support from the parent institutions:* There is need for the parent institutions to provide the required support an enabling environment for the academic libraries to provide the required facilities as the parent institutions provide the required facilities as information agent of the change for political development. If libraries will go a long way to carry out their functions and services effectively.
3. *Adequate infrastructural facilities:* There is need for government to provide adequate infrastructural facilities in academic institutions especially the academic libraries and facilities that will enable the libraries perform their responsibilities effectively in an conducive environment and perform the functions and services for the development of the nation.
4. *Provision of professional skills in community information service delivery:* There is need for academic skills to enable them provide community information services delivery to their host community as the need requires and when necessary.
5. *Training and re-training of librarians on community information services delivery:* There is need for regular training and re-training of librarians in academic libraries to be familiar with community information service delivery to enable them have the required skills in providing community information services delivery to their host community as the need arise.

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