PAPER V:

REPOSITIONING OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT:
A CASE STUDY OF TWO UNIVERSITIES IN NIGER STATE

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Abstract

The study focused on the repositioning of two academic libraries in Niger State for national development. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. A total of 74 professional and para-professional staff from the two universities formed the population of the study. However, since the population was not large and manageable, the researchers used the whole population for the study. Questionnaire and observation were the instruments used for data collection. Data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency count, percentages and mean. The findings of the study revealed that

information resources such as textbooks/e-books, journals/e-journals, newspapers, magazines and many others were available. However, the availability of these resources was found to be inadequate and up to date. Services offered by the university libraries covered by this study include lending services, reference services, e-library services and OPAC. The study also revealed that inadequate funding, unstable power supply, insufficient staff training and lack of ICT facilities were the major challenges facing the repositioning of university libraries in Niger State. The study recommended that government should endeavour to provide adequate funds, libraries should source for funds to compliment government efforts, provision of alternative source of power supply; ICT facilities and staff training should be paramount in order to meet up with the current trends in Library and Information Science profession that could contribute to national development.

Keywords: Information resources, National Development, Repositioning, University libraries, Services.

5.0 Introduction

National development is a gradual advancement of a country in terms of technology, social amenities and research activities that could enhance the life of an average citizen. Itis normally regarded as a mechanism to achieve a very good future for a country. National development is also referred to as a desire for gradual change from a certain situation to a better and effective way to tackle the country's challenges. National development could mainly be achieved by a well responsible and intellectual citizen, because all sectors of governance like, social-economic, human capacity, agriculture and health are supposed to impact positively on the lives of individuals facing a lot of challenges.

In the view of Ita (2009), national development involves all attempts at alleviating poverty and enhancing the quality of life of the average citizen. He further observed that it includes the ability of the citizens to realise their potential and live a life of dignity and fulfillment. It is important to note that, the quality of manpower that possesses technical know-how to improve the standard of living depends solely on availability of information. Therefore, information plays a vital role in achieving a very bright future for national

development. Ogwu (2010) defines national development as a situation in which a nation, state or country gradually grows until it becomes advanced, stronger and prosperous in all aspects of life.

Libraries established in universities, polytechnics and colleges of education are known as academic libraries. Abubakar (2011) corroborated this view by observing that academic libraries are libraries attached to tertiary institutions such as universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, colleges of agriculture, colleges of technology and research institutes. It is the general belief that university library is the backbone of any university because of the key role it plays to support the institutional mandates and status.

For national development to be achieved in Niger State, Nigeria there is need for repositioning of university libraries located in the State. Agbo and Onyekweodiri (2014) defined academic libraries as not only repository of knowledge but have an active role to serve as a catalyst for national development. University libraries are usually referred to as reservoir of knowledge, where information resources are kept. These information resources range from books and journals to online databases.

The quality of manpower produced by any tertiary institution depends to a great extent on the strength of the information resources available in its library. Despite inadequate funding of university libraries, they have remained important catalysts that support the institutional objectives especially in training of manpower for national development. University libraries with well-equipped information resources empower the institution to produce high level intellectual manpower that are expected to contribute positively to national development. Therefore, the position of university libraries in national development cannot be over-emphasized. Hence, their repositioning is very paramount.

Repositioning actually refers to putting university libraries studied in the proper position where they are supposed to be. Ogwu (2010) defined repositioning as putting something in the correct place. By implication, it means that such a thing is not in the correct or right place anymore and requires some adjustments. Gillespie, Chaboyer, McInnes, Kent, Whitty and Thalib (2014)

stated that repositioning involves moving into a different position. Furthermore, the essence of repositioning is to identify the lapses in the library and then develop a framework to prepare for future activities and eventualities. This research therefore, was carried out to determine the ways university libraries could be repositioned to contribute positively to national development.

5.1 Statement of the Problem

University libraries are very vital in the provision of information resources and services for easy access and retrieval by its users. It is usually referred to as the hub of tertiary institution because it serves as a catalyst in training of qualified manpower that contributes to national development.

Preliminary investigation by the researchers revealed that university libraries in Niger State are not adequately effective in terms of access and retrieval of information resources and services which in turn affect the quality of manpower produced for national development. It is therefore necessary to empirically determine the ways these university libraries could be repositioned to contribute more effectively to national development.

5.2 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to determine how university libraries could be repositioned to contribute more effectively to national development with reference to Federal University of Technology, Minna (FUTM) and Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai (IBBUL). The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Ascertain the types of information resources that are available in the university libraries studied for national development.
2. find out the types of services that are provided by the university libraries studied for national development.
3. determine the level of users' satisfaction with the library resources and services for national development.
4. determine the factors militating against university libraries' effective contribution to national development.

5.3 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What types of information resources are available in the university libr[ary] studied for national development?
2. What types of services are provided by the university libraries for nat[ional] development?
3. What is the level of users' satisfaction with the libraries' resources [and] services for national development?
4. What are the factors militating against university libraries' effe[ctive] contribution to national development?

5.4 Literature Review

Academic library is vital and crucial in tertiary institution, especially i[n] university system. It is usually referred to as the nerve centre of any instit[ute] because of the role it plays to support the attainment of the goals [and] objectives of the institutions. No university can carry out its functions pro[perly] without an effective library to support the mandate for which it was establi[shed]. Adeniran (2013) defined university library as that which is attached to acad[emic] institutions of learning to serve teaching and research needs of students [and] staff. These libraries serve two complementary purposes: to suppor[t the] university curriculum, and to support research of the university faculty [and] students. According to Yacom (2011), university libraries are institutions [that] are established to take care of the information needs of students, lectu[rers,] researchers and other community of scholars. In the view of Joel and A[jegbomogun] (2015), university library is an institution that is well established to take ca[re of] the information needs of students, lecturers, researchers and other comm[unity] of scholars. The library is continuously bringing the user in contact wit[h the] world in the fulfillment of its functions as a repository for knowledge i[n all] forms and shapes

Furthermore, Kiondo (2004) supported this view when the author iden[tified] gross under funding of libraries as a major obstacle in the acquisition [and] application of information technology in their services. This is a major pro[blem] that should be addressed since adequate funding is at the core of the prov[ision] of the facilities required to equip the electronic libraries of the 21st cen[tury] being advocated for education and national development in Nigeria.

5   Research Methodology

For the purpose of this study, descriptive survey research design was adopted. A total of 86 professional and para-professional library staff from two university libraries formed the target population of the study. However, since the population was not large and manageable, the researcher used the whole population for the study. Bernard (2012) supported this by asserting that if a population of a study is less than two hundred (200) the entire population could be used for the study. Questionnaire and observation were the instruments used for data collection. A total of 86copies of questionnaire were drafted and distributed out of which 74 were returned and found usable. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentages and mean in tables.

6   Data Presentation

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
University		
FUTM	54	73
IBBUL	20	27
TOTAL	**74**	**100**
Gender		
Male	51	69
Female	23	31
TOTAL	**74**	**100**
Qualification		
PhD	4	6
MLIS	25	33
BLIS	14	19
DIPLOMA	31	33
TOTAL	**74**	**100**

Table 1 shows that 54 (73%) of the respondents were from Federal University of Technology Minna Library, while 20 (27%) of the respondents were from Ibrahim Badamasi Babagida Lapai Library. In terms of gender, 51(69%) of the respondents were males, while 23(31%) of them were females. It is also

revealed that4 (6%) of the respondents were PhD holders in Library Science,25(33%) were Master's degree holders (MLIS), 14(19%) were holders of Bachelors in Library and Information Science (BLIS), while 31 (42%) were Diploma holders.

Table 2: Types of Information Resources Available in the University Libraries

To respond to this question, the respondents were advised to use one (1) representing
availability or use zero (0) representing unavailability.

S/N	Information resources	FUTM	IBBUL
1	Textbooks	1	1
2	Journals	1	1
3	E-books	1	1
4	E-journals	1	1
5	Newspapers	1	1
6	Magazines	1	1
7	Bulletins	1	1
8	Maps	1	1
9	Handbooks	1	1
10	Memos	1	1
11	Directories	1	1
12	Atlases	1	1
13	Encyclopaedias	1	1
14	Dictionaries	1	1
15	Stand-alone computers	1	1
16	Annual reports	1	1
17	CD Rom	1	1
	TOTAL	**17**	**17**

Key: 1= Available 0= Not Available

Table 2 shows that the two universities have all the 17 types of information resources listed in the checklist in their libraries. These include textbooks/e-books, journals/e-journals, newspapers, magazines, bulletins, maps, handbooks, memos, directories, atlases and many others listed on the checklist

Table 3: Types of Services provided by the University Libraries

S/No	Library services	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean	Decision
1	Lending services	32	42	0	0	3.43	High
2	Reference services	32	42	0	0	3.43	High
3	Bibliographic services	0	0	40	34	1.45	Low
4	Audio visual services	0	0	43	31	1.41	Low
5	Marketing services	0	0	41	33	1.44	Low
6	Abstracting and indexing			27	47	1.63	Low
7	Current awareness	55	19	0	0	3.74	High
8	OPAC	47	27	0	0	3.63	High
9	E-library services	34	40	0	0	3.45	High

Key: VHE=Very High Extent; HE=High Extent; LE=Low Extent; VLE=Very Low Extent

Table 3 reveals that out of the 9 items listed on the types of services rendered in the university libraries studied, 5 had high mean score above 2.50 mark on the 4 -point likert scale. These items are current awareness services $\bar{x}$ =3.74, Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) $\bar{x}$ =3.65, e-library services $\bar{x}$ =3.45, lending and reference services had the same value of $\bar{x}$ =3.43. The other four (4) items produced low values and these are: bibliographic services $\bar{x}$ =1.45, audio-visual services $\bar{x}$ =1.41, marketing services $\bar{x}$ =1.44 and abstracting and indexing services $\bar{x}$ =1.63

Table 4: Level of Users Satisfaction with Information Resources and Services Available in the Universities.

S/No	Statement	VH	H	L	VL	Mean	Decision
1	Textbook/ e -books	0	0	36	38	1.51	Low
2	Journals/e-journals	0	0	31	43	1.58	Low
3	Newspapers	15	37	10	12	3.40	High

4	Magazines	25	20	9	20	3.52	High
5	Bulletins	0	0	63	11	1.40	Low
6	Directories/handbooks	0	0	29	45	1.39	Low
7	Atlases/maps	14	14	20	26	1.55	Low
8	Dictionaries	14	14	26	20	2.21	Low
9	Encyclopedia	6	8	19	41	1.68	Low
10	Annual reports	0	0	22	52	1.29	Low
11	CD Rom	0	0	13	61	1.17	Low
12	Lending services		16	34	34	1.89	Low
13	Reference services	8	16	27	23	2.12	Low
14	Current awareness services	29	45	0	0	3.39	High
15	OPAC	0	0	42	32	1.56	Low
16	E-library services	0	0	36	38	1.48	Low
17	Abstracting and indexing	0	0	35	36	1.51	Low
18	Bibliographic services	0	0	27	47	1.36	Low
19	Audio visual	0	0	38	36	1.51	Low

Key: VH= Very High, H= High, L=Low, VL= Very Low

Table 4 shows that majority of the respondents indicated that they were highly satisfied with the use of3items. These include high level of satisfaction with magazines $\bar{x}$ =3.54, newspapers $\bar{x}$ =3.40 and current awareness services $\bar{x}$ =3.39. In the same vein, some of the respondents indicated their dissatisfaction with 16 items provided for their use by their university libraries. These include: journals/e-journals $\bar{x}$ =1.58, OPAC $\bar{x}$ =1.56, textbooks/e-books, audio visual, abstracting and indexing with $\bar{x}$ =1.51 respectively. Others are e-library services $\bar{x}$ =1.48, bulletins $\bar{x}$ =1.40, directories/handbooks $\bar{x}$ =1.39, bibliographic services $\bar{x}$ =1.36, annual reports $\bar{x}$ =1.29 and CD ROM $\bar{x}$ =1.17. Also, some of the respondents indicated lending services $\bar{x}$ =1.89 and reference services $\bar{x}$ =2.12, dictionaries $\bar{x}$ =2.21, encyclopedia $\bar{x}$ =1.68 and map/atlases $\bar{x}$ =1.55.

Table 5: Factors Militating Against Repositioning of University Libraries

S/N	Statement	SA	A	SD	D	Mean	Decision
1	Lack of adequate funding of university libraries	39	35	0	0	3.52	Agreed
2	Lack of stable power supply	22	52	0	0	3.29	Agreed
3	Attitude of staff to adjust to new development in the library	41	33	0	0	3.56	Agreed
4	Insufficient training and retraining of library staff	43	31	0	0	3.58	Agreed
5	Lack of adequate ICT facilities in the library	30	44	0	0	3.40	Agreed
6	Lack of competency of library staff	11	14	35	14	2.01	Disagreed

Key: SA=Strongly Agree; A=Agree; D=Disagree; SD= Strongly Disagree $\bar{x}$ = **Mean**

Table 5reveals that some factors militate against repositioning of university libraries for national development. These include: insufficient training and retraining of library staff $\bar{x}$ =3.58, attitude of staff to adjust to new development in the library $\bar{x}$ =3.56, and lack of adequate funding of university libraries $\bar{x}$ =3.52 are major factors militating against repositioning university

libraries in contributing to national development. Other statements agreed by the respondents are: lack of adequate ICT facilities in their libraries $\bar{x}$ =3.40 and lack of stable power supply $\bar{x}$ =3.29, while lack of competency of library staff $\bar{x}$ =2.01 have low value indicating that it does not militate against university library's contribution to national development.

5.7 Discussion of Findings

Table 1 revealed that majority of the respondents were from Federal University of Technology Minna. This could be attributed to the fact that Federal University of Technology Minna has been in existence before IBBUL and could have more library staff than IBBUL.

Table 2 showed that information resources such as textbooks/e-books, journals/e-journals, newspapers, magazines, bulletins, maps, handbooks, memos, directories, atlases and many others are available in the two university libraries studied. However, the availability of information resources were observed to be obsolete and inadequate. This could be attributed to the fact that the funds allocated to the university libraries is inadequate and cannot acquire current information resources, since they are expensive. This finding corroborates with the findings of Isola and Olurotimi (2014) who recommended that librarians should ensure constant funding of their libraries in order to increase availability of current information resources. Kendo (2004) also observed that funding should be addressed since it is the core of the provision of the facilities required to equip university libraries.

Table 3 revealed that services provided by the university libraries include lending services, reference services, current awareness services, e-library services and OPAC services. This could be because these services provided by the university libraries are important services that have direct impact to library users. However, there is need for these services to be improved upon. This finding is similar to the findings of Nwachukwu, Abdulsalami and Salami (2014) who revealed that lending services, information services, reference services, bibliographic services, audio visual, abstracting and indexing services were services provided by Nasarawa State Public Library.

Table 4 showed that users were not satisfied with the information resources and services offered by the university libraries studied. This could be because the information resources are not up to date and also inadequate to satisfy their information needs. Iwhiwhu (2008) observed that for libraries to be more effective in national development there is need to map out a well-planned information resources and services, which include provision of adequate information resources and also improve on the existing services rendered to users.

Table 5 revealed that lack of funding, ICT facilities, unstable power supply and staff training were the major challenges towards repositioning of university libraries for national development. This finding collaborates with that of Okiy (2012) who discovered that poor state of funding of libraries in Nigeria and the subsequent inadequate provision of information resources and services are the great handicaps towards using libraries as effective tools for education and national development in Nigeria.

5.8 Summary of the Major Findings

1. The findings of the study revealed that information resources such as textbooks/e-books, journals/e-journals, newspapers, magazines, bulletins, maps, handbooks, memos, directories, atlases and many others are available in the two university libraries studied. However, the availability of information resources were observed to be inadequate.

2. The findings also revealed that services provided by the university libraries include lending services, reference services, current awareness services, e-library and OPAC services.

3. The study showed that users were not satisfied with the information resources and services offered by the university libraries studied.

4. The study also revealed that inadequate funding and ICT facilities, unstable power supply, and staff training are the major challenges militating against repositioning of university libraries for national development.

5.9   Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is very important for government to provide adequate funding while university library management should also seek for alternative funding to complement government efforts for university libraries to be repositioned for effective national development. There is need to provide alternative power supply, constant training of library staff, provision of adequate ICT facilities and most importantly provide current information resources both in print and electronic form. Once these issues are adequately addressed, it is expected that the contribution of university libraries toward national development will tremendously be improved upon.

5.10   Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following are recommended:

1. Government should endeavour to provide adequate funds for repositioning of university libraries and make sure that these funds are utilised only for the library, while the university libraries should collaborate with each other through consortia agreements in order to acquire relevant electronic resources to compliment the hard copies available.
2. Library management of these universities should have alternative source of power supply that would supplement the lighting system of the libraries.
3. Provision of ICT facilities and staff training in the university libraries should be paramount in order to meet up with the current trends in Library and Information profession

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