

## **ACQUISITION, PRESERVATION AND ACCESSIBILITY OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN NIGERIA: THE PLACE OF ICT**

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### **Abstract**

*Nigerians interact well with their natural environment, culminating in the accumulation of diverse experiences. These experiences result in a body of indigenous knowledge which though unique to a given society or culture, forms part of the information needed by researchers. In spite of the place of indigenous knowledge in enriching academic libraries, its documentation and preservation for posterity have hitherto posed tremendous challenges. However, the emergence of information and communication technology (ICT) has provided opportunities for librarians to interact with their host and other communities in a bid to document various indigenous information that may be of use to the library.*

*This paper discusses various indigenous knowledge practices in Nigeria such as language, medicine, agriculture, family, marriage and highlights the benefits of indigenous knowledge which include contributions to community development, exchange of cultural information, recognition of indigenous community in the global setting, etc. The paper also discuss various ICT facilities required in documentation and preservation of indigenous knowledge like recorder, photographic camera, video camera, tapes, films, CDs, computer etc. Problems hindering the use of ICT which are discussed include lack of fund, power failure and attitude of indigenous communities and distortion of information among others. For the purpose of improvement, the paper recommends collaboration with multinational organizations and donor agencies for the purpose of fund generation, librarians' skill acquisition, respect of indigenous copyright issues, and persuading the custodians of indigenous information on the need to release information.*

### **Introduction**

Nigeria is a country with diverse ethnic groups and multiplicity of languages. The citizens are blessed with rich culture, embedded in beliefs, folklore, medicine, religion, marriage, education etc. Nigerians display a

great deal of interaction with their natural environment and this results in the acquisition of diverse knowledge, known as indigenous knowledge. Indigenous knowledge is that knowledge peculiar to a people, culture and setting. Johnson (1992) defines indigenous knowledge as a body of knowledge built up by a group of people through generations living in close contact with each other. Kargbo (2005) posits that it is stored in people's memories and is expressed in stories, songs, folklore, proverbs, myths etc. Though Nigeria has great diversity of ethnicity and languages, each ethnic group shares its experiences in relation to indigenous heritage as built up over the years through the works of indigenous farmers, herbalists, educators, musicians and weavers. Indigenous knowledge emanates from a body of knowledge which has accumulated from individuals who have lived in a community over a period of time. Ancestors orally hand over peculiar information to younger generations. An accumulation of different aspects of knowledge when documented processed and preserved can, to a large extent, form a rich library resource base for researchers and other library clientele. Ellen and Harris (1996) enumerate the features which distinguish indigenous knowledge thus:

- It is tacit knowledge and thus not easily codified since codifying it may lead to the loss of some of its properties.
- It is transmitted orally or through imitation and demonstration.
- Learning it is through experience and trial and error.
- Indigenous knowledge is also learned through repetition which is a defining characteristic of tradition even when new knowledge is added.

Over the years, indigenous knowledge has become a very useful source of information to researchers, students, teachers and the general public. As a result, libraries have felt the need to acquire them to enrich their resources. Kargbo (2005) observes that of late, indigenous knowledge is gradually gaining recognition in Sierraleone thus unleashing a flood of research. The objective is not simply to collect reels of audio or video tape information, but to catalogue such information for easy accessibility to users irrespective of their location.

Libraries are the hub on which academic activities of their mother institutions revolve. They are established to provide materials for teaching, learning and research community development. It therefore, behooves them to acquire, process, preserve and make accessible, materials in all fields of

study. It has, however, been observed that a large bulk of materials available in these libraries comprise foreign publications. There is scarcity of indigenous materials which to a greater extent constitute part of information required by users.

The acquisition of indigenous knowledge has hitherto posed a serious challenge to information professionals due to its oral nature. This accounts for its inaccessibility to researchers, development practitioners, and policy makers. Nkanu and Okon( 2010) posit that it has been marginalized, neglected and suppressed due to ignorance and arrogance, politics and the dominant ideology and particular historical period. However, the advent of ICT has played significant roles in changing the form of indigenous knowledge. Achebe (2005) quoting Ormes and Depsy defined ICT as all the technologies that enable the handling of information which facilitate different systems, and among diverse electronic systems such as radio, television, cellular phones, computer networks and satellite systems. These devices make it possible for librarians to document and preserve indigenous materials for easy accessibility.

Ikphahindi (2007) states that libraries are duty bound to acquire, preserve, and disseminate information irrespective of source. Such sources include indigenous materials. The resource- information base of our academic libraries is sure to improve in the area of indigenous materials if the use of ICT is fully deployed in this direction. This paper therefore seeks to:

- discover various areas of indigenous practices inherent in Nigeria
- highlight the benefits of indigenous knowledge
- discuss the place of ICT in the acquisition, preservation and accessibility of indigenous knowledge in academic libraries
- examine the factors that inhibit the use of ICT in the acquisition, preservation and accessibility of Indigenous knowledge
- make suggestions that will contribute to a more viable result in the use of ICT for acquisition, preservation and accessibility of indigenous knowledge in Nigerian academic libraries.

### **Literature Review**

Indigenous knowledge is an indispensable part of study. It embraces various experiences which are brought to bear in an attempt to improve their daily life. Lwoga et al (2010) maintain that indigenous knowledge is a



cumulative body of knowledge created over decades , representing generations of creative thought and actions, in an effort to cope with an ever-changing agro-ecological and socio-economic environment. World Bank (1998) calls indigenous knowledge the key element for the social capital of the poor, and their main asset to invest in the struggle for survival to produce food, provide shelter or to achieve control of their own lives. Communities express their various cultures, language and other unique aspects of knowledge acquired as a result of different interactions with the environment. Indigenous knowledge is of great importance in the lives of Nigerians.

Indigenous knowledge useful to the poor who find it very relevant for in solving challenges connected with health, education, food provision among others. Emery (1996) comments on researchers who discovered categories of indigenous knowledge which are of interest. These include agriculture, water management and the gathering of wild food; classification systems for plants, animals, soils, water and weather; empirical knowledge about flora, and inanimate resources and their practical uses; and the way the local group perceives its relationship to the natural world. In a similar way, Lwoga et al (2010) posits that it is a social capital for the poor and a source of their social strategies. It is continually dynamic and influenced by experimentation and contacts with external systems. Apart from its relevance to immediate communities, it plays a key role in the development of a nation. Okoro (2010) quoting Jones (1965) posits that oral information is directly linked with efficiency, development and progress. It is therefore a risk to ignore any authentic and reliable information, be it in oral or printed format. In the emerging global knowledge economy, a country's ability to build and mobilize knowledge capital, is equally essential for sustainable development as the availability of physical and financial capital. (World Bank, 1998). The basic component of any country's knowledge system is its indigenous knowledge. Indigenous knowledge comprises of the skills, experiences and insights of people, applied to maintain or improve their livelihood in their communities.

Indigenous knowledge constitutes a vital source of information to libraries. As custodians of information, libraries are expected to acquire and process indigenous materials alongside other library resources in a bid to provide a comprehensive and robust store of information for users. Hitherto, acquisition of indigenous knowledge has been a herculean task

owing to its oral nature. Its transmission from the elders to the younger generation is through story telling, observation and experiments. Indigenous knowledge was not documented in any form. Young boys and girls learnt from their elders through experiments. Nevertheless, the advent of ICT has eliminated the difficulty hitherto associated with the acquisition and processing of indigenous knowledge. Miltwa (2007) reiterates that ICT will change the method of acquisition and accessibility of knowledge while Bryson (1990) observes that the introduction of modern technologies, particularly information technology has had far-reaching effects upon organizations such as libraries.

The use of ICT for acquisition, preservation and accessibility of indigenous knowledge in the library is a step by step process, requiring various kinds of facilities at each stage. Kennedy and Davies (2006) emphasize the importance of digital technology in the gathering, storage, evaluation and retrieval of information. The initial step is to gather information on different indigenous activities existing in the communities of interest. To this effect, it behooves the librarian to implore the use of facilities required for documentation. Kargbo (2005) posits that information on indigenous knowledge such as folklore, customs, etiquette and music can be recorded on tapes. He further avers that public libraries should secure documentation of research carried out in such areas as local languages, agricultural practices, herbal medicine, and traditional birth practices. Efforts must be made to ensure that indigenous materials are converted to electronic format in order to make them easily available to users (Stevens, 2008). The emergence of ICT, has however eliminated the major constraints associated with the acquisition, preservation and accessibility of indigenous materials in libraries. When indigenous materials are acquired in libraries, they need to be preserved electronically in a bid to stand the wears and tears of the environment. ICT has given rise to storage devices such as flash drive, hard discs, mp3, mp4, mobile phones, CDROM, computer hard disc etc. Ola (2004) reiterates that preservation extends beyond the traditional book to all vehicles for communicating information which include microforms, compact discs, videodisc, official digital systems and other forms of non-book media.

The role of the librarian as an intermediary between the indigenous community and the information consumers will be incomplete if adequate accessibility of preserved materials is not guaranteed. Nkanu and Okon (2010) quoting Ajibero (2002) observes that computers provide the

processing, storage and retrieval capabilities for the transfer of information in the library. Atinmo (2005) maintains that library emphasis is shifting from book collection and storage to access and provision of electronic information services.

### **Areas of Application of Indigenous Knowledge in Nigeria**

All over the world, man interacts so much with the natural and social environment to the extent that great wealth of indigenous experience becomes the essence of their existence. Mabawonku (2005) posits that indigenous knowledge is the basis for local level decision making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, music, arts, crafts, natural resources management, and a host of other activities in the communities. Indigenous practices in Nigeria are inherent in such areas as : Medicine.

The place of indigenous knowledge in health care delivery is manifested in the use of indigenous medicine. It presupposes the use of plants, herbs, roots or their combination for the treatment of all kinds of ailments. Some of the indigenous medical practices prevalent in the Nigerian society include heat therapy for treatment of fever, bone setting, use of 'obialu-ofuu' leaves for malaria treatment, chewing of bitter leaf to quell stomach problems etc. It is also displayed in surgical practices as exhibited by indigenous surgeons who combine surgery and herbs to deliver pregnant women of their babies. Other aspects of surgery is carried out on individuals with swellings on any part of their bodies. In such cases, incision is made on the swollen part of the body in a bid to get rid of bad water or blood after which herbs are applied on the body. Ajuwon et al(1995) describes the act of indigenous surgery in the Western part of the country where the 'Olola'(surgeons) specialize in circumcision and making traditional facial marks, while the Oniseguri performs 'gbere', that is making incision into which medicinal herbs are rubbed. The 'Oniseguri' who uses clean blades for his tribal mark procedures rubs the herb into the cuts with his bare hands. As for the Olola, he uses the same knife for all operations and cleans it simply by rinsing it in a bowl of water. Indigenous societies often transfer knowledge of herbal medicine from older to young generation through inheritance. Lwoga et al (2010) maintain that knowledge of local herbs is normally transmitted in indigenous communities from grandparents to children, especially those who show interest in such a practice.

## **Religion**

Ancestral worship is the core of Nigerian indigenous religious belief. Various communities and their belief are reflected in the worship of ancestral spirits. It is believed that these spirits act as intermediaries between the community and God. They also hold a strong belief that ancestors communicate with individuals. As a result, indigenous communities engage in some practices like pouring libation during naming ceremonies, throwing kola lobes on the ground for ancestors to eat. Others include killing and spilling the blood of animals on the ground during burials so that their dead will be received by their ancestors. Animals are also used in cleansing as a way of making atonement for sins.

## **Agricultural Practices**

Indigenous knowledge facilitates agriculture and its practices in Nigeria. With this knowledge, communities are able to decide the most appropriate time to clear the bush for farming. Farmers are able to determine the best periods for land clearing and other preparations required before planting of crops. They also engage in indigenous methods of weeding, pest control and the use of household manure to enrich the soil. Indigenous agriculture involves manual practices. Bamigboye and Kuponiyi (2010) describe indigenous agricultural practices in the cultivation of rice in Ekiti, South West of Nigeria where rice farmers engage in indigenous knowledge practices. They discovered that the most patronized indigenous knowledge under land preparation and management is bush slashing without burning, bush fallow, shifting cultivation, use of hoe and cutlass for weeding. For the control of termites, the most utilized methods are burying of carbide on the farm and the use of effluent of locust bean solution. For grass cutter control, the farmers set traps and use mixture of lime and gun powder. Birds are controlled through the use of scare crows and use of traditional medicine.

In the Eastern part of Nigeria, indigenous food preservation and storage practices are also in place. Specific farm products are preserved till the next planting season. Particular species of cocoyam when harvested are cooked, peeled and sundried. In the course of the year, it is ground with mortar, soaked in hot water, tied in wet plantain leaves, cooked and eaten with fresh palm oil and vegetable. It is preserved to serve as a relief between planting and next harvesting season



### **The Family**

In the indigenous Nigerian system, the family is at the centre of indigenous social system. Relations outside the nuclear family are still treated with due care and given attention when in need. Sisters, brothers, grand and great-grand parents, uncles, aunts, cousins, sisters, in-laws, step-brothers and sisters all participate as members of the indigenous family. Mutual respect exists, even though seniority and hierarchy serve as guiding principles. Social standing and recognition are achieved through extended families. The behavior of individual members of the family brings honour or dishonour to the entire family as the case may be. The family has the responsibility of caring for individual members as the need arises.

### **Marriage.**

The marriage institution is very important in Nigeria. It is an integral part of every indigenous community. It is an affair which later brings two families together. Indigenous communities have different ways of giving out their children in marriage. Nigerian marriage remains a family affair where the family gets involved in all activities ranging from the introduction to the time the woman gets settled in her new home. Polygamy is dominant in Nigerian indigenous marriage. However, many men still resolve to marry and live with only one woman throughout their lifetime. A mature male and female who love each other and have agreed to get married always need to get their parents involved. In the South Eastern part of Nigeria, marriage starts when a man is mature and desires to have a wife. Such a man tells his parents that he has seen a good person to marry or asks them to help him search for one. Whether it is the man or his parents that first finds one, the girl's family is informed. The families begin to make enquiries as to the antecedents and genealogy of each other. Indigenous inquiries may include consulting some elderly people whom it is believed have information about the past. While the girl's parents make serious investigations about the boy's family, the boy's family members carry out their own investigation in the opposite direction.

If the investigations prove successful, the parents of the boy and some elders, at this initial contact go with kola nuts and palm wine to meet the girl's parents. This is called 'manyá ajuju' (investigation wine). In the process of this initial visit, if the would be bride drinks part of the palm wine, and gives the remaining part to her suitor, it means that she has accepted the suitor and so the two parties can go ahead to talk about the bride price and other marriage rites. The next important stage is the "manyá



nna" (father's wine). This is strictly for the bride's father and immediate family members. Thereafter, a date is fixed for the big wine (manya shinne). On the set day, friends and relations of the bridegroom on one hand and the would-be-bride's relations on the other are invited to witness the great occasion. The would-be groom and his parents carry several pots of palm wine, kola nuts, snuff to the would-be-in-laws family. The wine is drunk by the bride and groom's extended families, relations and friends. At the end of the day, the girl is free to follow her husband to know her new home.

### **Music and Dance**

Indigenous music and dance is characterized by powerful rhythm. This rhythm emanates from indigenous instruments which include the metal gong, drum, ichaka and music pot. Music is performed during public functions, coronations, traditional marriage funerals, naming ceremonies, festivals. Different ethnic groups perform various kinds of dances. Gbagbankolobia dance is a very popular one by Udi indigenes of Enugu State. As they stretch their two hands in front of them, they wriggle their waist and jump up and down to people's admiration. It shows their value system and children also imbibe this as they grow. In Tivland, women have a major dance used in the resolution of conflicts which involve members of their ethnic groups or those from other ethnic groups.

### **Communication**

Important information relating to life in the community such as farming, festivals, customs, taboos, etc is often conveyed during well organized feasts and communal festivals. Though the major reasons for organizing such festivals are to entertain the community, it is also used as a forum to pass relevant information across to the entire community. Drama, poems, music and songs used in education and entertainment also become means of passing information on the methods of cooking, better ways of living, dressing, peace keeping and all other information required for proper co-existence in the society. Indigenous method of communication also serves as a means of correcting some ills inherent in the society. Town criers also cry round the community to disseminate information especially those that require urgent attention. They move round the community in the evenings when the indigenes have returned from their farms and market. Sometimes, village markets are the points of contacts where indigenes get information through the town criers.

### **Arts and Craft**

Nigeria is blessed with a rich cultural heritage. This manifests in indigenous art and craft, and practices like bead making, pottery, knitting, basket making, molding, jewelry. Others include brass and iron work, crafts, jewellery, leather textiles, pottery and ceramics. Apart from weaving, Nigerians produce very beautiful and colourful textiles through the art of tie and dye. The city of Ife is famous for bronze carvings. Similarly, Abeokuta town in Ogun State is well known for its beautiful designs on tie and dye. These unique works of art are being preserved in major world museums till date. Major Nigerian artworks are preserved in various National Museums. Different countries of the world also acquire and preserve same in their museums.

### **Education**

Indigenous communities believe so much in imparting what is worth-while to the younger generation through imitation. Traditional beliefs and life styles as well as other aspects of their cultures are passed on to younger generations. Through observation and imitation, they learn respect for elders, weather forecasting, animal husbandry, wrestling, building techniques. Girls imbibe the culture of personal hygiene, child care, dancing steps, cooking and home care from their mothers. All these constitute education but outside the formal school environment.

### **Importance of Indigenous knowledge**

Development agents like governments, donors, non-governmental organizations and private sectors can incorporate indigenous knowledge into development processes. Thrupp (1989) posits that incorporating indigenous knowledge into research projects can contribute to local empowerment and development and can also increase self sufficiency and strengthen self determination .

Indigenous knowledge provides opportunity for indigenous communities to be recognized globally with their cultural heritage. It equips members of the community with relevant information needed to eke a living. Anyira and Nwabueze (2010) observes that indigenous knowledge helps Niger Delta indigenous communities produce food, acquire education and vocational skills, and conserve their natural environment. Indigenous knowledge enables members of the society to acquire skills needed to live a

better life and adapt effectively to their local environment and environmental changes.

It helps in cross-pollination of ideas about cultural information between one indigenous community and the other. Through sharing, specific communities are able to imbibe ideal practices prevalent in other communities but relevant to them.

Documentation of indigenous knowledge plays vital role in bringing indigenous communities to the fore. In their framework for action, World Bank (1998) posits that investigating what the local communities know and have improves understanding of local conditions and provides a productive context for activities designed to help the communities.

### **The Place of ICT in Indigenous Knowledge Acquisition, Preservation and Accessibility in Academic Libraries**

ICT has brought a tremendous turnaround to all fields of life. It has been applied to such areas as banking, education, health, commerce etc. Similarly, ICT plays key role in information generation and accessibility especially in the following areas

#### **Acquisition**

Okore, et al (2009) posits that though there is indigenous knowledge in different communities of the developing world, the availability of such knowledge does not mean its accessibility for use. Indigenous communities are faced with the challenge of preserving their culture for posterity. Libraries are the custodians of knowledge. By this responsibility, they are expected to render useful advice to indigenous communities, as well as take the lead in the acquisition, organization, and provision of indigenous information to those who may find it useful. Though every indigenous community has its peculiar knowledge, scarcely is it available to those who may want to benefit from it. For librarians to be able to acquire indigenous knowledge, they should often create an environment which permits face-to-face forum and network formation to discuss unique practices inherent in the community. They can organize talk shows involving traditional rulers, elderly people, and professionals in a bid to gather and record information on different subjects ranging from agriculture to medicare, marriage, communication, religion, conflict resolution, arts and crafts.

Activities which are relevant to researchers take place in indigenous communities where young boys imitate the act of building houses, making mats, wine tapping, milking of cows, wine tapping, etc. Girls are introduced to knitting, cooking, jewelry, dress making and personal hygiene. In most communities, culture and tradition define the extent to which men, women and strangers can access information. In some Nigerian communities, the masquerade society does not allow women access to any form of its information especially in the South Eastern part of the country. However, researchers still require relevant materials on these issues. Special interactive periods with indigenous communities give librarians opportunity to observe, ask questions and communicate extensively with the indigenes and the environment.

Librarians apply different methods to source for information. The major devices include audio, visual or audio visual equipment. Oppeneer, M. ( n.d.) observes the sustenance of indigenous knowledge through analog and digital video and audio recording devices, as well as constellation as computer, mobile and internet related technologies to capture, store and make important aspects of languages and culture for understanding.

In acquiring information on indigenous knowledge, it behooves the librarian to engage in the use of tools that will most appropriately capture the required information. Audio tapes, mobile phones with recording devices are used to record music, stories, tales and idioms, all of which constitute an integral part of indigenous knowledge. Audio recorders, including cell phones with recorders also play vital roles in recording information while video cameras are vital in capturing different forms of arts and other physical objects. Digital and analog cameras also play important roles in recording and acquiring information for the library.

Information on marriage as obtained in different cultures constitutes an integral part of the library's resource *base*. They serve as a source of rich cultural heritage required by researchers in different parts of the globe. Information on arts and crafts is also needed in the library especially in the area of entrepreneurial studies. In order to document relevant information in this field, the librarian equips himself with relevant ICT devices which include digital and video cameras, tape recorders, camera phones etc. Under strict arrangement with the village heads and custodians of the arts and craft of such community, the librarian is able to ask important questions that will enable him to harness and document information relevant to library clients.



In documenting information on agricultural practices, the librarian aims at acquiring information on farm tools, weeding methods, crop propagation, farm practices etc. Audio recorder as well as camera is relevant in documenting information on the above practices. Other relevant information is that of indigenous manure, pest control etc. Digital camera will be relevant in capturing the farm tools, manure types and farm equipment. Cell phones can also be of help in communicating ideas on agricultural practices between the librarian and custodian of agricultural information in the indigenous community. Lwoga et al (2010) observed that cell phones were used by pastoralists in Kilosa to communicate with the livestock headers to know the conditions of their animals in the grazing field and advise them in case of any challenge. Libraries require information on indigenous marriage as carried out by different cultures. These include information on initial negotiations, dowry and wine carrying. To document this, audio recorder, video camera and digital camera constitute the bulk of devices used. In acquiring materials in the area of settlement of disputes, the help of village heads, community leaders and traditional chiefs is required because they are saddled with peacekeeping responsibilities. Conflicts are resolved at family, community and village levels. However, more complex conflicts are settled in the customary courts. Camera, tape recorder, video camera are relevant ICT devices needed for the acquisition of information on conflict resolution. Salanje (2005) maintains that the use of electronic media has made the process of gathering data extensively efficient.

### **Preservation**

Acquisition of indigenous knowledge will be a complete failure if the materials acquired are not adequately preserved for accessibility. Lwoga et al (2010) in a study discovered that indigenous knowledge was limited by knowledge loss due to lack of prescribed structures and rules to facilitate its preservation. The emergence of ICT has brought devices for the preservation and accessibility of indigenous knowledge. These include video tapes, magnetic tapes, diskettes, flash drives, microfilms, CDROMs, DVDs, VCDs, microforms, etc. They are suitable for storing large volumes of still and moving images. Documented information can also be stored in mp4 devices, mobile phones and computers. Where the computer and mobile phones have internet facilities, stored information can be sent as attachments to the mail boxes of researchers outside the library. Information

can also be converted to 'you tube' file and thereafter placed on the 'you tube' for researcher's access. Video and audio tapes also serve as relevant storage devices. Pictures can also be stored and preserved in video CD while music, folktales, riddles are preserved in audio tapes. Both contents can be copied, compressed and uploaded.

### **Accessibility**

Computer is the major equipment required to access the storage devices. Adesope (2001) reported that the world over, communication system of information has made access to information relatively easier. Ehikhamenor (1993) posits that computers provide the processing, storage and retrieval facilities while telecommunications provide facilities for the transfer of information in indigenous knowledge. Storage devices CD ROM, VCD, audiotapes, databases all depend on computer and wired equipment for accessibility. The computer is needed to access databases, edit files, connect to the internet, upload and download acquired materials. The internet is a global network which connects millions of computers and databases. It is important in sending and receiving mails, file transfer, education research activities and sharing of ideas and resources. When computer is connected to the internet, it serves in the exchange of mails, provides access to the library's web PAC via the internet and functions during online referencing services. New acquisitions and abstracts are communicated to users through mail via the internet. Selective dissemination of information (SDI) for interested researchers is enhanced through the internet. Relevant Indigenous information can be sent to researchers and other external users who have registered for such services. Nkanu and Okon (2010) observes that the growth of the internet in the digital age has created information search convenience for information seekers in Nigerian libraries. Apart from selective dissemination of information, ICT enables users to access indexes, abstracts and other online databases in other world libraries. Documentaries in form of tapes, sounds, and slides videos can also be uploaded on the internet. Users are informed of relevant information through telephones-internal communication and cell phones. IC T has also brought about the use of socio networking which is relevant in information dissemination. Notable among these are My space which provides opportunities for librarians to publicize their new collections on the internet. New collections in the library can be posted on this site for users of information. Blog is another

important ICT social tool relevant in providing access to users. Users are updated on new collections through the library's blog. Videos and pictures of relevant indigenous information can be uploaded on face book.

### **Problems of Using ICT in the Acquisition, Preservation and Accessibility of Indigenous Knowledge**

Although ICT has brought a turnaround in the information industry, efficiency of its use in information handling is hampered by some bottlenecks. Prominent among these are:

#### **Lack of adequate fund**

There is need for availability of fund for the purchase of devices needed for documentation. Such devices include digital camera, video camera, tape recorders, audio recorders, mobile phones etc. Preservation and accessibility of materials are also expensive. CDS, microfilms, computers, telephone, and internet connectivity all need fund both for purchase and maintenance. Many libraries in the country operate on a very low budget and this negatively affects the use of ICT for indigenous knowledge documentation, preservation and accessibility.

#### **Incessant power failure**

Incessant power outage which characterizes Nigerian libraries constitutes great setback in the use of computer and its peripherals in the acquisition and distribution of indigenous information. Standby generators are needed to power and sustain the computer and internet in order to maximize the acquisition and accessibility of indigenous information. However, most of the equipment needed are not available in Nigerian libraries and this hampers the use of ICT in the acquisition, processing and provision of indigenous information.

#### **ICT Skills**

Lack of ICT skills by librarians hinders the acquisition and utilization of indigenous materials. Librarians need computer skills, communication skills, internet skills to be able to maximize the use of ICT while interacting with members of indigenous community. The librarian requires specific ICT tools for information documentation. In a similar vein, library patrons require a high degree of computer, communication and internet search skills to be able to access the information stored in CDs,

mp3, mp4, camera phone, and computer. They also need skills to navigate the internet and explore the avalanche of indigenous information sent to their mail boxes and those available on the social network tools. Many librarians and users in the developing countries battle with the skills required to derive maximum use of ICT in accessing library resources. Invariably, lack of ICT skills hinders their maximum use of indigenous knowledge in libraries.

### **Attitude of Indigenous Communities**

One major challenge with the use of ICT in documenting and disseminating information is that indigenous communities tend to monopolize some information relevant to libraries. Originators view specific knowledge as a cult whose information must circulate only within the members of such a group. As a result, librarians are denied access to specific indigenous information needed in the libraries.

Distortion of information is rampant in acquisition of indigenous knowledge. Information is transmitted orally from one generation to another. As the originators advance in age, information is transmitted to the younger generations by word of mouth. Oral information is distorted in the course of transmission. Sometimes, the important elements are omitted in the course of the transmission.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

The place of indigenous information in boosting the resource base of libraries is a non-negotiable issue. In spite of the indispensability of indigenous information in libraries, the acquisition, preservation and accessibility remain in jeopardy. In order to do exploits, librarians should develop personal skills required to handle ICT devices. Ilo (2008) enjoins librarians to be provoked towards self-development on computer and ICT related skills so as to become conversant with best practices. This will make it easy for them to handle ICT devices and apply them efficiently in information acquisition and dissemination.

Libraries should form linkages and collaborations with multinational organizations and public-spirited individuals. Through such consortium, they will be able to raise fund needed for the acquisition and documentation of indigenous knowledge

There is need to persuade key persons and traditional institutions entrusted with indigenous information in the communities to share it with



the libraries so that such knowledge can be preserved for the present and future generation. Libraries should as a matter of responsibility try to sort out and respect copyright issues pertaining to indigenous knowledge before embarking on documentation.

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