A Force in Library Development in Nigeria World Libraries **VOL. 07, NO. 2
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 Abstract

This is the first attempt to coherently document the immense contributions of one of Africa’s foremost nationalists and pan–Africanists to the development of libraries in Nigeria. Although he is best known for his achievements in politics, journalism, and sports, Dr. Azikiwe saw the library as a vehicle for the intellectual emancipation of Nigerians from colonial rule.

As President of Eastern Nigeria in the 1950s, the first and only indigenous Governor–General, and first President of Nigeria in the 1960s, he was able to wield sufficient political influence to ensure a legal basis for public library development in Nigeria, the establishment of the University of Nigeria Library – named after himself – and the eventual creation of the National Library of Nigeria.

 Introduction

Born on 16 November 1904, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the first and only indigenous Governor–General of Nigeria (1960–1963), and the first President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1963–1966), died on 11 May 1996. He was buried on what would have been his 92nd birthday, 16 November 1996. A very articulate and potent force in the achievement of Nigerian independence in 1960, and endowed with an unusual, if not a mythical, combination of enviable qualities, he was widely regarded as Nigeria’s greatest orator, and excelled in sports, journalism, politics, and authorship. He received his university education in the U.S., attending Columbia, Lincoln, and Pennsylvania Universities, where he studied anthropology, religion, economics, political science, and journalism. For a brief period (1925–1934), he was an instructor in political science at Lincoln University before returning to Africa.

An ardent nationalist as well as a pan–Africanist, Dr. Azikiwe returned to Nigeria in 1937 after a three–year sojourn in the Gold Coast (Ghana), where he had begun his journalistic career, by founding and editing the highly-influential newspaper, *African Morning Post*. This served as a springboard for nationalist agitation in the Anglophone West African countries. His two seminal works — *Liberia In World Politics* (1932) and *Renascent Africa* (1937) — embody his original thoughts on colonialism, African independence, and education. On his return to Nigeria in 1937, he set up a string of newspapers — all aimed at achieving political independence, and socio–cultural and economic transformation, in Nigeria. His highly eclectic academic background was solid preparation for his enduring political and journalistic careers.

His newspapers included the most influential one, *West African Pilot*, which he personally edited from 1937 to 1947; *The Eastern Nigerian Guardian*, published in Port Harcourt; the *Daily Comet* and *Nigerian Spokesman*, published in Onitsha, his native town; *Southern Nigerian Defender*, published in Warri and Ibadan; *The Sentinel*, published in Enugu; and the *Nigerian Monitor*, published in Uyo. As Uwujaren has noted about his career in journalism, His entrance into the profession in 1937 really changed the face of the Nigerian media, as the press became more courageous with an overt bent towards helping to loosen the noose of the oppressive colonial system and the shackles of the feet of oppression. What makes Zik’s brand of journalism unique is that he preached what he professed. His almost vitriolic writings were perfectly complemented by his political activism in the nationalist struggles. His philosophy was quite represented in the motto of his *West African Pilot*, which read, “Show the light and the people will follow the way.” Zik’s gift stands for *boldness, equity, and social justice*. His unrestrained pursuit of these values at some point brought him into conflict with the law, but it never deterred him [[1](http://www.worlib.org/vol07no2/aguolu_v07n2.shtml#1)].

Dr. Azikiwe believed in dialogue as the best instrument of settling disputes rather than resorting to violent confrontation. He spoke fluently all three of Nigeria’s major languages — Igbo, Hausa, and Yoruba — in a country marked by an enormous ethnic and cultural divergence with over 400 languages. He founded, in 1944, the first viable Nigerian political party — the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (NCNC) — with an elder nationalist, Herbert MaCaulay, who was President of the party which spear–headed the independence movement. Azikiwe, the Secretary–General of the party, became its President in 1946, on the death of Herbert MaCaulay, who was generally acknowledged as “the father of Nigerian nationalism.”

Thompson has enunciated, in *A History of Principles of Librarianship*, [[2](http://www.worlib.org/vol07no2/aguolu_v07n2.shtml#2)] these three basic principles: (1) libraries are subject to political, social, and economic processes operating in the society; (2) library development, in general, fluctuates with the rise and decline of learning; and, (3) librarians, however influential they may be, have no power over the ultimate existence of libraries they manage. The society that created the libraries may conserve or destroy them.

Thus the return of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe to Nigeria in 1937 was a turning point, not only in Nigeria’s political history, but also in its educational and library history, as shown by his words and actions from the 1930s to the 1960s. At his death in May 1996, there was a sudden deluge of writings on his contributions to politics, journalism, and sports, but there was no mention of his outstanding contributions to the development of libraries in Nigeria. The purpose of this paper is to identify and elucidate those contributions, which are still either incoherently documented or scattered in various sources. This is the first attempt at crystallizing the enormous contributions of this intellectual and political giant — Zik of Africa — to Nigerian library development.

 Public Libraries

In 1939, the Carnegie Corporation sponsored a survey of library needs of British West Africa, undertaken by Margaret Wrong and Hans Vischer, two years after the return of Dr. Azikiwe to Nigeria. The survey report [[3](http://www.worlib.org/vol07no2/aguolu_v07n2.shtml#3)] indicated the British lack of interest in library matters in Nigeria, it noted that in 1939, of the 152 subscribers to the Lagos Library, only seven were Africans and 145 were Europeans. Azikiwe had been very critical of the Lagos library service as highly discriminatory — a reminder of the racist practices he had experienced in the United States. The few Africans who could use the library were “those with sufficient Western education, social standing, and connections not to feel out of place in such a milieu… it provided valued recreation for the British administrative and professional class and for their wives, and for an even tinier group of Nigerians of similar background and mind.” [[4](http://www.worlib.org/vol07no2/aguolu_v07n2.shtml#4)]

The Carnegie Corporation, nevertheless, in 1940, made financial grants to Nigeria for library development. Table 1 gives an overview of financial grants to Nigeria from 1932 to 1959—a year before Nigerian independence [[5](http://www.worlib.org/vol07no2/aguolu_v07n2.shtml#5)].

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| **Table 1: Carnegie Grants to Nigeria, 1932 – 1959\*** |
| **Purpose of Grant** | **Date** | **Grant(in U.S.$)** |  |
| 1. Library Development | 1932 | $6,000.00 |  |
| 2. Books for Schools and Colleges | 1940 | $3,000.00 |  |
| 3. Purchase of Books for Lagos Public Libraries | 1940 | $27,323.00 |  |
| 4. Regional Libraries and Reading Rooms | 1940 | $1,412.00 |  |
| 5. Library of Congress Catalog and Supplement for University College, Ibadan | 1951 | $1,126.00 |  |
| 6. Purchase of Books for Library of Nigerian College of Arts, Science, and Technology | 1954 | $10,000 |  |
| 7. Library Training Course at the University College, Ibadan | 1959 | $88,000.00 |  |
|   | **Total:** | **$136,861.00** |  |

\*Florence Anderson, Carnegie Corporation Library Program, 1911–1961
(New York: Carnegie Corporation, 1963): 99.

Paradoxically, although the establishment in 1940 of the Standing Committee to Advise Government On Provision of Libraries by the Colonial Government could be regarded as a concession to local aspirations. Malcolm MacDonald, British Colonial Secretary, wrote on 8 November 1939 to Sir Bernard Bourdillon, Governor of Nigeria, that he would support anything that would promote literacy and intelligent reading among Nigerians, provided the necessary funds “could be made available from non–government sources — I do not wish to give the impression that I should desire colonial governments to incur themselves more than a small outlay upon the subject at the moment.”

The colonial administration was ready to spend on libraries whatever money was given by the Carnegie Corporation, but hardly any from its purse. But the special condition of the Carnegie grants was that their recipients would be prepared, after the grants were exhausted, to continue to finance the projects for which the grants were originally made. The reply of the colonial Governor in Lagos to the British Colonial Secretary inevitably brought Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe into an open confrontation.

On 12 April 1940, the colonial Governor, Sir Bourdillon, wrote to the British Colonial Secretary in London, informing him that “the Carnegie funds had little practical value. African reading interests were considered to be limited and to be too closely associated with personal advancement to justify expenses on reading materials of broader scope.” [[6](http://www.worlib.org/vol07no2/aguolu_v07n2.shtml#6)] Dr. Azikiwe, on learning about this correspondence, denounced it as “irresponsible” and “racist” in his highly influential newspaper, the *West African Pilot*. He questioned the basis of the colonial government’s assertion on African reading interests, and contended that the government had never provided Nigerians a free public library service, or even an opportunity of reading materials of narrow scope, not to mention providing them with library materials of broader scope.

It is surprising that the colonial government depended, at that time, upon the Carnegie Corporation for the provision of any sort of library service in Nigeria. In the 1940s, there were no regional libraries. Regions, as political divisions, were only created in 1952. The British Council had arrived in Nigeria in 1943 during World War II, establishing reading rooms across the country to promote the British culture and ideas. They were filled with British newspapers, political tracts, bulletins, and radio propaganda about the on–going World War.

Towards the end of the War, some perceptive British colonial officials who recognized the inevitable progression of political events towards Nigerian independence, had begun to question the British policy on libraries in Nigeria. Thus, in 1950, J.O. Field, a colonial civil servant, criticized the colonial government’s misuse of the financial grants from the Carnegie Corporation:

The whole trouble in the past and quite clearly a considerable part of the trouble now is the failure to realize that there have got to be libraries and that part of the available public revenue has to be appropriated to their establishment. [[7](http://www.worlib.org/vol07no2/aguolu_v07n2.shtml#7)]

The UNESCO Seminar on Public Library Development In Africa, held at Ibadan in 1953, was the first international conference or seminar on libraries ever held in Africa. It gave further stimulus to Dr. Azikiwe’s quest for library services in Nigeria. It was not only a catalyst — spurring on the champions of public or national libraries in African countries like Dr. Azikiwe, and Dr. Nkrumbah of the then–Gold Coast (Ghana) — it also helped to stimulate African governments to enact public library legislations and to set up public library boards. The Seminar emphasized that “only legislation can empower the appropriate authorities to provide the services and ensure adequate financial support and efficient administration according to a national standard. Only legislation can define the functions of the providing authority, create the conditions in which it may fulfill those functions, and ensure development.” [[8](http://www.worlib.org/vol07no2/aguolu_v07n2.shtml#8)]

As the premier of Eastern Nigeria, Dr. Azikiwe ensured the enactment of the Eastern Nigeria Public Library Ordinance and the Eastern Nigeria Publications Law in 1955. Both legislations were the first of their kind in Nigeria. They helped to speed up library services in the Eastern part of the country. Before the Nigerian Civil War in 1967, public library services in the Eastern Region, based upon a clear authority of the law and controlled by a public library board, were far superior to those of all other parts of the country, where public libraries were left directly under the political umbrella of the Ministry of Education or Information.

The value of public library legislation and a publication law was so obvious that immediately after the civil war in 1970, other state governments in the country enacted public library legislations, set up library boards, and provided for legal deposit in respect of publications issued within their states. Although, the Western and Northern Regional Governments of Nigeria had passed publication laws in 1957 and 1964 respectively, they did not pass the public library board law. Today, most states in the Federation have passed public library laws and have created public library boards of varying degrees of effectiveness. Commenting on Azikiwe’s contributions to library development in Nigeria, John Harris, regarded as the “Father of Nigerian Libraries,” remarked:

As to what happened in Eastern Nigeria, that of course was of utmost significance. It is probably the most significant thing that has happened in Nigerian library development… what happened was that Dr. Azikiwe, when he did begin to come on some real power in the country, did not forget libraries; and in the Eastern Region, he very soon after coming into power there did set about establishing a regional library service ... He did consult with librarians and it developed from there. The whole library law of Eastern Nigeria was quite certainly worked out and we all know how successful its development was that it was well–based. [[10](http://www.worlib.org/vol07no2/aguolu_v07n2.shtml#10)]

No state government in Nigeria today would pass any public library board law without a provision for legal deposit requirements. Besides, in the Nigerian library profession, the success of the public library services in Eastern Nigeria in the 1950s, from the early promulgation of public library law under the premiership of Dr. Azikiwe right up to the outbreak of the Nigerian Civil War in 1967, has become a historic reference point for the librarians, justifying their pressure upon their state governments to enact public library legislation, which would provide for a library board and legal deposit.

 University Libraraies

Before the establishment of the University of Nigeria at Nsukka in 1960, based upon his educational philosophy, and drawing inspirations from the American land–grant colleges, Dr. Azikiwe had called for a democratic, functional, and broad–based university education, in contradiction to the prevailing rigid British educational pattern. He contended that Africa needed political emancipation no more than intellectual emancipation, which could only come if Africa had its own universities, rooted in the African ideology, closely reflecting Africa’s needs. Thus, in his classical work entitled, *Renascent Africa*, Azikiwe remarked:

Universities have been responsible for shaping the destinies of races and nations and individuals. They are centres where things material are made subservient to things intellectual in all shapes and forms. No matter in which field of learning at any university, there is an aristocracy of mind over matter — Black Africa has no intellectual centre where the raw materials of Africa humanity may be re–shaped into leaders in all the fields of human endeavor — with 12 million pounds there is no reason why the libraries, laboratories, professors cannot be produced right here, and continent (Africa) can become overnight “A Continent of Light.” [[11](http://www.worlib.org/vol07no2/aguolu_v07n2.shtml#11)]

It is significant that in 1937, when Azikiwe made the above statement — the year he returned to Nigeria from his study in the United States after spending some three years in Ghana (then the Gold Coast), he had realized from his experienced in the use of American university libraries that the proper equipment of any university library was the basis of quality university education.

Azikiwe’s perception of the role of libraries in African universities clearly anticipated and antedated the comments of the two British 1945 Commissions On Higher Education in the Colonies, namely, the Elliot Commission On Higher Education In West Africa and the Asquith Commission On Higher Education In the Colonies. Both commissions were set up by the British Parliament in 1943, as a decolonizing device, to establish university colleges for the preparation of high–level personnel to man the colonies when they achieved their political independence. Both commissions, which reported to Parliament in 1945, emphasized the organic role of the library in any university college to be established. The Asquith Commission specifically remarked that:

The development of the universities will depend to a large extent upon the provision of fully–equipped libraries and laboratories… we cannot emphasize too strongly the paramount importance …of the building up of a university library. [[12](http://www.worlib.org/vol07no2/aguolu_v07n2.shtml#12)]

Thus, when the University College, Ibadan, affiliated to the University of London, was set up in 1943, there was a strong emphasis on the maintenance of a good university library.

The University of Nigeria, founded by Dr. Azikiwe with the objective of restoring the dignity of the “black man,” was Nigeria’s first full–fledged indigenous university, modelled upon the American educational system. At its establishment, Ibadan University College had inherited the small library of the Yaba Higher College in 1948, in addition to the 18,000 volumes of the Henry Carr Library, which the Nigerian colonial government had purchased in 1946.

Seeing that the University of Nigeria had no such collection with which to take off, Azikiwe, who became the University’s first Chancellor, donated some 12,000 volumes of his books and 1,000 journal issues in different subject fields to the university to serve as its initial library nucleus. He also made financial donations. In addition, he secured for the university the technical assistance of the Michigan State University, which lasted from 1960 to 1969. This involved both human and material resources. The library was the first one in Nigeria to adopt the use of the U.S. Library of Congress Classification Scheme and the List of Subject Headings, thus setting the stage for Americanization of Nigerian library practices and professional ideals.

A book collector, Azikiwe was reported to have assembled over 40,000 volumes in his private library, not to mention thousands of pamphlets, journals, memorabilia, and government documents, before their destruction in the Nigerian Civil War, 1967–1970. After the war, he started to rebuild the library, which had served as an important research centre to scholars in diverse fields, especially historians, political scientists, biographers, and constitutional lawyers.

 The National Library

Although the quest for a national library in Nigeria dates back to the 1940s, it was not until 1964 that one was legally established in Lagos. Dr. Azikiwe’s perception of a national library in the 1950s and 1960s chimed in with that of his contemporary pan–Africanist, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, who in 1961, on the opening of the George Padmore Research Library, declared:

A good national library is at once the repository of a nation’s culture and wisdom and an intellectual stimulant. In this library there shall be no national frontiers, for here shall be stored the cumulative experience, the collective wisdom and knowledge about the entire continent of Africa, and the assessment, revaluations and studies of observers from all over the world. [[13](http://www.worlib.org/vol07no2/aguolu_v07n2.shtml#13)]

Azikiwe understood the value of such a library as a depository of cultural heritage and as a research centre where authentic studies on Africa could be conducted.

Unfortunately, some Nigerian nationalists, like the colonial administrators, thought of a national library largely as a magnificent, monumental edifice, with the best architectural design, involving an enormous financial outlay. Azikiwe also perceived the national library as a living agency of progress, intellectual enrichment, and public enlightenment, not as a repository of artifacts or archival documents of the past.

The 1953 UNESCO Seminar on the Development of the Public Libraries In Africa, held at Ibadan, not only encouraged Azikiwe to press for a national library for Nigeria, but also helped to crystallize the national library concept on Africa. Before the seminar was held in Nigeria, the Nigerian Council of Ministers — Nigeria’s first representative government — had rejected the national library concept, contending that all library matters should be relegated to the regional governments, and to local and private organisations. The council was unable to see that while the regional governments would cater for the public libraries, it was the responsibility of the central government to establish a national library for the country [[14](http://www.worlib.org/vol07no2/aguolu_v07n2.shtml#14)].

To be fair to the colonial government, it had purchased the Henry Carr Library in 1946, probably to serve as the nucleus for the national library. Dr. Can, a renowned educationist and the earliest and best–known Nigerian book collector, was the first African Commissioner for the Lagos Colony, and Chief Inspector of Schools in the Southern Provinces of Nigeria. His collection, numbering over 18,000 volumes, covering the humanities and social sciences, was the largest private library ever assembled by any West African. When Ibadan University College opened in 1948, is Principal, Kenneth Mellanby, persuaded the colonial government to deposit the collection, unused for two years and faced the grim physical deterioration, with the University College Library on loan [[15](http://www.worlib.org/vol07no2/aguolu_v07n2.shtml#15)]. It has remained there ever since. An opportunity of establishing a national library appeared then to have been lost.

The national library concept originated in the early 1960s, when Dr. Azikiwe was the first indigenous Governor–General in 1960 and later the first President of Nigeria when it achieved republican status in 1963. He helped to ensure that a feasibility study was conducted on the national library by Dr. Frank Rogers, Director of the U.S. National Library of Medicine, sponsored by the Ford Foundation of America in 1961.

On the attainment on Nigerian independence in 1960, the perception of the national library by the Council of Ministers, which had rejected in 1952 the participation of the central government in any library matter, had taken a nationalist turn. The Council, along with the Nigeria Branch of the West African Library Association, established in 1954, quickly accepted the Rogers Report, recommending the establishment of a national library.

At the request of the Nigerian government, the Ford Foundation sent Professor Carl White, former Dean of the School of Library Science, Columbia University, to serve as Library Advisor to the Nigerian government on setting up the National Library of Nigeria. On his arrival in Nigeria in March 1962, Dr. White was shocked to learn that there was no budgetary provision for the newly proposed library in the first post–independence National Development Plan, 1962–1968.

The immediate personal intervention of the Governor–General, Dr. Azikiwe, and the Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar, saved the day. They asked Professor White to prepare a special report on his financial needs and on the objectives, scope, and structure of the library. His report, known as the “May 1962 Report,” was accepted by the government without delay. By the end of 1962, work on the National Library had begun in Lagos, with three American librarians and Professor White as the Federal Government’s Library Adviser. The National Library Act, drafted by the Adviser, was enacted in 1964, which set the library on a legal footing, and on 6 November 1964 the National Library was opened to the public.

 Conclusion

It is intriguing to know that the National Library, whose movement dates from the 1940s, could only be established four years after Nigerian independence, when Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe had enough political clout as the Governor–General to win the support of the Prime Minister of Nigeria, who was the executive head of the government. At every turn of events in the Library’s evolution, as the political influence of Dr. Azikiwe grew, the impact of his support on establishing the Library was discernable. An astute, enigmatic politician, he saw the National Library as an evergreen tree of knowledge which could, in such a complex, pluralistic society as Nigeria, contribute to building a richer and better social order, thus serving as a principal instrument in weaving the tapestry of the country’s multi–ethnic and cultural pluralism.

Many of the national libraries in Europe had sprung out of the royal libraries, but in Africa, as demonstrated in the case of Nigeria, the national library, although its scope of responsibilities may vary from country to country, has grown out of the awakening national consciousness, embodied in Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and powerfully expressed, from 1937 when he returned to Nigeria from the United States to 1964 when the National Library of Nigeria was legally established while he served as the first President of the Republic of Nigeria.

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**The Role of Library Services in Adult Literacy Education**

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**Introduction**

The importance of the library in the service of adult education cannot be overestimated.[Akinpelu (1994)](http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/~mbolin/onohwakpor.htm#akinpelu)describes books as, "the shrines where the saint is believed to be, and having built an ark to save learning from the deluge, deserve in propriety any new instrument or engine whereby learning should be advanced." Libraries are regarded as one of the institutions that have a role in advancing literacy and education in the society.

While the library is essential to any formal educational system, the facilities offered by the library are also required by the adult who is a wage-earner but who is engaged in improving his or her education, whether at the remedial, functional or higher educational level.[(Ogunsheye 1981).](http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/~mbolin/onohwakpor.htm#ogunsheye)This paper examines the role of the library as one of the essential ancillary services to the functions, activities, and operations of literacy education with specific reference to Nigerian adult learner.

**The Role of the Library in Adult Literacy Education**

Education has been defined as a complex of social processes for acquiring knowledge and experience, formally or otherwise.[Ogunsheye (1981)](http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/~mbolin/onohwakpor.htm#ogunsheye) states that it involves the total apparatus used for the development of the individual. In this paper an adult is someone of fifteen years plus who is responsible for himself and others, and who probably missed the opportunity of attending formal school due to financial problems or other factors, or had gone to school but dropped out after spending one, two, or three years. In Nigeria, the majority of illiterates belong to this group. The purpose of adult education is to continue the education of the adult so that:

* A State of literacy may be attained and maintained;
* The adult may continuously improve his knowledge and skills;
* The individual is enabled to adjust to existing social, political, and economic systems;
* The adult may be made aware of the common citizenship, cultural heritage, and social values, and thus adapt to changing roles in adult life;
* The individual may develop his personality and full potential, widening the range of his perception, interest and skills. (Ogunseye 1981, pp. 232)

The library enables the individual to obtain spiritual, inspirational, and recreational activity through reading, and therefore the opportunity of interacting with the society’s wealth and accumulated knowledge[(Omojuwa 1993)](http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/~mbolin/onohwakpor.htm%22%20%5Cl%20%22omojuwa). The library can be seen as an extension of adult education. One part of the mission of the library is the same as the mission of adult education (Omolewa 1981).

**The Need for Library Services**

The recognition of the need for library in Nigeria is as old as the Nigerian history. The first library, which was called “town library,” according to[Oyegade, Nassarawa, and Mokogwe (2003)](http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/~mbolin/onohwakpor.htm#oyegade), was founded in 1879. Among its objectives were the maintenance and the establishment of books and materials to lend to the public for self improvement. The investment in libraries by early Christian missionaries in Nigeria showed the importance attached to library services, including public lectures. Libraries play a major role in adult education, including:

* Helping literacy to become permanent
* The improvement of knowledge and skills for positive, productivity
* Assisting to adjust to existing social, political spiritual and economic activities of the community.
* Giving personal awareness to adult learners of their rights in the society and to appreciate the social values and be able to change for easy adaptation into the expected roles within the society.
* Enabling the individual to develop its full potentials and widening the range of its perception, interests and skills (Metzger 1991).

Owino (1995) further discusses the need for library services that will help to develop a habit of continuous reading even after literacy classes are completed. Library services are needed to keep the skills that have been required through literacy classes alive by the provision of good literature. If adult education is to have a greater share in the molding and building of a happier individual and a better society, the providers of adult education must go beyond their roles as literacy facilitators to a more practical role of providing libraries for sustaining the newly acquired skills of adult learners.

**Organization of Library Services for Adult Education**

In Nigerian society where there is still a low literacy rate, where written records are still very few, and oral tradition predominates, in the absence of books in the native languages, particularly in science and technology, libraries should not only serve the literate minority but should encourage the illiterate to become literate by providing easy–to–read material, audiobooks, and adult education facilities[(Batubo 1986)](http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/~mbolin/onohwakpor.htm#batubo). Literate people, especially Nigerian public library boards, have trying to do this[(Ojo-Igbinoba 1985).](http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/~mbolin/onohwakpor.htm%22%20%5Cl%20%22ojo)

Organizing a library to aid adult education calls for an atmosphere of friendliness and a useful collection. The first thing to consider when organizing a library to aid adult education programme is the need of the clientele. The characteristics of the clientele (age, population, occupation, marital status, economic and cultural levels) are considerations. Facilities and furniture are other important aspects of organizing a library for this purpose. Book selection is crucial, especially when budgets are small. It is good encourage to choose books that will use the newly-acquired skills of adult learners. Adult education facilitators should involve librarians in planning adult education programmes. Adult learners should be given library instruction.

**Conclusion**

Organizing a library for an adult education programme is not difficult. Library services are of paramount importance to the success of the goals of adult literacy education. Adult educaters should incorporate library services into adult education programmes to complete the process of helping adults become literate and sustain that literacy.

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Diffussion of ICT in Nigerian Libraries & Information Profession

Ani E.O. (2005). Evolution of virtual libraries in Nigeria ; myth or reality. Journal of Information Science, 31(1) 2005, pp 67-70. Retrieved on 04/22/2005, from <http://jis.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/31/1/67>.

The article is the result of a survey study conducted by Ani, E.O who investigated the extent of availability of relevant information infrastructure; human capacity building and ICT skills acquisition programmes available in Nigeria university libraries and their level of funding that will enhance the evolution of virtual library project. The approval and establishment of the Nigeria Virtual Library project in early 2002 by the federal government of Nigeria and the National workshop organized by UNESCO on the pilot virtual library project in May 2003 were also highlighted. The study revealed that 64% of the surveyed university libraries have relevant information infrastructure such as telephone, VSAT and radio link to support the evolution of virtual libraries, and only 29 percent had a website on the internet and 86 percent of them were involved in human capacity building and ICT skills acquisition programmes. The author concluded that the Nigeria virtual library project is not a myth but rather feasible and real and recommended that the federal government, through the NUC, should increase the current level of funding of university libraries to support the effective evolution and implementation of the Nigeria virtual library project.

**Authority of author** : The author is a faculty member of Library Department, University, of Calabar , Nigeria .

**Relevance:** Virtual library is one of the infrastructures that enables, the academia benefits from the rich resources available on the Internet and also have a representation on the internet.

**Coverage:** The study covered concept and evolution of virtual library in Nigeria and human capacity building and skills acquisition in ICT for the evolution of the virtual library.

**Contribution to our understanding of the GII:** The virtual library is a vital tool for the GII particularly in the academia and having realized this the Nigerian government is making effort to provide one for its high institutions.

Ya'u Z.Y (2003) Towards a virtual library for Nigeria . Retrieved [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\_ID=16043&URL\_DO=DO\_PRINTPAGE&URL\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID%3D16043%26URL_DO%3DDO_PRINTPAGE%26URL_SECTION%3D201.html)

The paper examined the establishment of a virtual library for Nigeria . The author stated that following a request by the President of Nigeria during the 31 st General conference of the UNESCO in October 2001, the organization agreed to refocus its special plan action programme for Nigeria towards establishing a Virtual Library for higher education institutions. It was identified that with the inability of the government to stock libraries with relevant books and literature particularly in the academic institution, it was imperative to exploit information and communication technology to provide solution to this problem. The process of the establishment of the virtual library, as noted by the author started with feasibility study coordinated by staff of UNESCO through a workshop. The workshop involved various stakeholders and professionals from all the sectors of the tertiary institutions; libraries and IT professionals, educational administrators as well as IT companies that are operating in the electronic library sectors were all involved in the process. The representatives of donor organizations such as the MarAthur Foundation, Open Society Initiative for West Africa and US public Information System were also represented in the workshop. The author noted that some of the thorny issues identified in the workshop were poor ICT infrastructure, inadequate ICT skill and the financial implication of connectivity and access to electronic database. Questions were raised as to who bears the cost and who funds the infrastructure development. Having identified numerous initiatives by different educational institution to establish their own virtual library, the author recommended that national virtual library should integrated all the virtual library project so as to avoid duplication of cost and efforts. In conclusion the author argued that building the national virtual library should not be left to donor magnanimity but must involve the government of Nigeria

**Authority of author** : Ya'u Z.Y is a consultant with the Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD), Kano .

**Relevance:** The paper examines the journey of Nigerian virtual library, which is an important infrastructure particularly given the lack of educational material in most Nigerian libraries.

**Coverage:** The paper highlighted the role of UNESCO in the establishment of a national virtual library and acknowledge the initiative of other high institutions in developing a virtual library.

**Contribution to our understanding of the GII:** The participatory approach used by UNESCO, which involved the various stakeholders and professionals is particularly important for the successful implementation of any GII

Ogunsola A.L. (2004). Nigerian University Libraries and the challenges of globalization: The Way Forward. *Electronic Journal of Academic and Special Librarianship* V.5 no. 2-3. Retrieved on 04/21/2005, from <http://southernlibrarianship.icaap.org/content/v05n02/ogunsola_l01.htm>

The author of this paper looked at the historical development and role of the Nigerian university libraries in globalization. Specifically he examined the implications and opportunities of ICT, as a panacea for the poor state of academic libraries in Nigeria . While identifying the mitigating factors to the implementation and development of ICT in Nigeria the author also sensitize the Nigerian universities to the need of globalization of information for their educational development. Shortage of manpower, frequent computer breakdown due to electric power surge, erratic power supply and lack of spare parts, were identified as the major problems Nigerian libraries face in the implementation of ICT. The paper also identified the role of the library in supporting teaching, learning, research and cultural development in the Universities. In conclusion the author acknowledged that the current ICT infrastructure in Nigeria can not enable Nigerians be part of the global Information Society. Finally efforts by the government of Nigeria to established a National virtual library to enhance access to national and international library and information resources and to share locally available resources with libraries all over the world using digital technology was highlighted.

**Authority of author** : The author is a Librarian at Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Libraru, Obafemi Awolowo University , Ile-ife , Nigeria .

**Relevance:** Published in 2004, the paper looked at role and level of the Nigerian University Libraries in the challenges of globalization.

**Coverage:** The article covered Nigerian university libraries and globalization and identify the problems and the way forward for the diffusion of ICT in academic library

**Contribution to our understanding of the GII:** The paper recognized the library as the life blood of higher education institutions which can benefit tremendously from the facilities provided by ICT. The enormous benefits of ICT can also transform the university libraries into a new information services centre, providing access to information not limited to time and place for the development and sustenance of ICT in other sectors.

Ashcroft L. and Watts C. (2004). ICT Skills for Information professionals in developing countries: perspective from a study of the electronic information environment in Nigeria . Retrieved on 04/30/2005 from: <http://ww/.ifla.org/V/iflaj/IFLA-Journal-1-2005.pdf>

The paper is a product of a research project carried out at Liverpool John Moores University into the provision of electronic information in Nigeria . The authors identified that in recent years, work for the information profession has become characterized by fast-paced change and new skills requirements due to the constant emergence of relevant new technologies. They therefore stated that there is a need for additional training to augment the traditional skills knowledge base with a competency in ICT use. The study through response from questionnaires administered established the nature of digital information within information resources, information providers, awareness and uptake of national and international initiatives, digital resource users, expenditure, collaboration, and barriers to provision of electronic resources. It was identified that there is shortage of technology literate staff in libraries, lack of skilled human resources to install and manage technology and networks for electronic resources. Lack of collaboration amongst the information agencies was also identified as major hindrances to the formation of a consortium that will enable them rationalize and share the cost of electronic resources. The need for institutions and libraries to be aware of free electronic resources available through international initiative was recommended.

**Authority of authors** : The authors are Professors at the School of Business Information Liverpool John Moores University UK

**Relevance:** The paper highlights the important of ICT skills as an important tool for the information professionals

**Coverage:** The paper discussed the need for ICT skills in the information age, ICT skills and reference services and the impact of the digital divide on skills development. The importance of collaboration amongst information institutions was highlighted

**Contribution to our understanding of the GII:** Nigerian Information profession lack the necessary ICT skills to play a serious role in the development and implementation of ICT in Nigeria . Without the skills they will not be able to provide patrons particularly teachers and students access to relevant electronic resources for research and development.

Igwe O.U. (2005). Harnessing Information Technology for the 21 st Century: Library Education in Nigeria . Retrieved on 04/30/2005 from <http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/~mbolin/igwe.htm>

The paper examined library schools in Nigeria and how they have harness information and communication technology for their teaching and research. The author states that providing opportunities to meet the basic learning needs for information professionals is first step toward preparing library schools in Nigeria for the emerging global society. He identified inadequate infrastructure, outdated curricula, poor human and financial resources, lack of access to necessary information and resources for learning, and communication among key players in the library schools as contending issues faced by the library schools in Nigeria . He also highlighted that UNESCO (1998b) stated that to effectively harness the power of the new information and communication technology to improve library education is Nigeria, the following essential conditions must be met: students and teachers must have sufficient access to digital technologies and the internet in their classrooms, laboratories and workshops; high quality, meaningful, and culturally responsive digital content must be available for teachers and learners; and teachers must have the knowledge and skills to use the new digital tools and resources to help all students achieve high academic standards. In conclusion he recommended that Nigeria library school have to link up with other library schools in other countries.

**Authority of author** : The author is professor in Library Science and also the Ag. Director, Centre for Learning Resources, Covenant University Ogun State Nigeria

**Relevance:** Information and communications technology is a powerful tool that would link Nigerian library schools with library schools in developed countries and help in the training of professional that will assist the academia and community in general access on-line resources

**Coverage:** The paper covered the practice of librarianship and innovations of ICT in library education in the 21 st century. The problems faced by the library schools in terms of ICT skills were discussed

**Contribution to our understanding of the GII:** Some of the challenges librarians in Nigerian will be facing in the 21 st century is how to assist people use on-line resources. The library school has the role to training the future librarian for this new role and must also equip themselves with ICT skills.

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| Electronic Journal of Academic and Special Librarianshipv.5 no.2-3 (Fall 2004)Nigerian University Libraries and the Challenges of Globalization: The Way Forward | Back to  Contents |

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### Abstract

The main aim of this paper is to examine the importance, implications, and opportunities opened to Nigerian libraries in the current Information Age as related to the concept of globalization. This paper shall attempt to address possible areas of importance and advantages that can propel Nigerian universities and their libraries into being a respective player in the global IT revolution and enhance their status in what is now widely called as Global Village. This paper stresses the necessity for Nigerian universities to be part of the new and emerging technologies which are challenging the traditional process of teaching and learning and the way education is managed. Strategies of leap-frogging Nigerian libraries in to an enviable position of Information Technology will be carefully articulated in this paper.

### Introduction

The history of university library development in Nigeria dates back to pre-independence time when the University of Ibadan and its library were established in 1948. As pointed out by Aguolu (1996), since independence in 1960, there has been an unrelenting upsurge in the establishment of educational institutions at all levels, especially university education. Successive Nigerian governments have continued to invest strongly in education. It must be realized that university libraries, being integral academic parts of the universities, generally emerged simultaneously with their parent institutions. Hence there are as many university libraries as there are universities. The proliferation of universities, despite the economic recession in the country since the 1980s, has increased the problems of the universities and their libraries so much that now their future seems uncertain. Added to these problems are the problems of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in Nigerian universities as related to library development. Ever since the problem of the literature explosion became noticeable in the 1970s, the developed world has devised various systems to facilitate the flow of information both within and across the countries, and developing countries are invited to take advantage of these devices. However, this invitation is not often readily accepted by the developing nations like Nigeria because of some mitigating factors. These include the human factors, fear, and the level of development-cum infrastructure of the nation and so on. The case of application of modern technology in the library should start with the acceptance of the new technology as vital to the effective performance of the functions of the library.

Perhaps in any discussion of application of modern technology in the library, as revealed by Ukoh (1984), the first thing that comes to mind is the computer. The librarian does not have to be literate in the various technologies before employing them. In other words, he does not have to be a technical expert before using any form of technology or a programmer before using a computer. However, he still is required to possess some technological knowledge, albeit at an abstract and intellectual level. Whatever we choose to call it, the computer has made such a tremendous impact on the organization, management, and dissemination of information that it readily commends itself to any library ready to accept it. The computer has become such a household word in the developed world that university libraries should see it as a great opportunity which should be taken up as soon as possible. For the library, several systems have been developed for their various house-keeping chores and more still are being designed and refined, thanks to the technology of large-scale integration. These are known as mini or micro computers designed to handle any of the library processes, be it acquisitions, cataloguing, serials, or circulation control. The use of communication tools such as e-mail, fax, computer, and videoconferencing overcomes barriers of space and time, and opens new possibilities for learning. The use of such technology is increasing and it is now possible to deliver training to a widely dispersed audience by means of on-demand two way video over terrestrial broadband networks. Many students and lecturers can gain experience of communications through e-mail and electronic conferencing systems that run over the telephone network. College and university libraries should continue to make increasing use of the Internet. They should be using the Internet both to access materials, people, and resources and to display their own Web pages created by teachers and students. These developments are not only giving learners access to vast libraries and multimedia resources, but give access to tutors and natural phenomena throughout the world; hence the whole world is regarded as global village. The boundaries between one institution and other and between institutions and the outside world will become less important. Crucially, technology will remove the barriers between school and home. Many nations have used audio-visual devices to transmit educational materials over long distances.

The objective of this paper is to examine the implications and opportunities of ICT, which is one of the forces behind the concept of globalization for higher education as a panacea for the poor state of academic libraries in Nigeria. The paper attempts to sensitize the Nigerian universities to the need of globalization of information for their educational development and the fact that Nigeria cannot afford to stand aloof.

### Globalization and the Information Age

In the year 2000 the media were full of references to globalization of economy and communications, even politics, education, and military affairs. Globalization can then be described as a phenomenon involving the integration of economies, cultures, governmental policies, political movements, and even education. Internationalization is nothing new. What is now called globalization, however, represents an exponential acceleration of the integration process. As early as 1962, the Canadian visionary Marshall McLuhan wrote that the electronic age was turning all humanity into a "global tribe" and the term global village is attributed to him. The BBC, CNN, MTV, and the Internet have accelerated the integration of global culture. With globalization the world as a whole also becomes a social space in its own right. The new information and communications technologies, from e-mail to cellular telephony to teleconferencing, let more and more people share knowledge without having to be in the same place. From the above, globalization might be characterized as the rise of "supraterritoriality". Through globalization, people become more able, physically, legally, culturally, and psychologically, to engage with each other in "one world". Global connections take many forms. For example, jet aeroplanes transport passengers and cargoes across any distance on the planet within a day. Telephone and computer networks effect near instantaneous interpersonal communication between points all over the Earth. Electronic mass media broadcasts messages to the world audiences. Globalization is the trend whereby these various kinds of global relations emerge, proliferate, and expand. As a result of globalization, social geography gains a planetary dimension.

Technological innovation has contributed to globalization by supplying infrastructure for trans-world connections. As pointed out by Ajayi (2000) the revolution taking place in information and communication technologies have been the central and driving force for the globalization process. One of the key by-products of the globalization period of rapid technological development and on-going information revolution is dynamic change, which is occurring in nearly all facets of human existence and affecting the underlying structure of the society. The global village has removed geographical barriers and led to the shrinking of the frame. In particular, developments in the means of transportation, communications, and data processing have allowed global links to become denser, faster, more reliable, and much cheaper. According to Scholte (2000) large-scale and rapid globalization has depended on a host of innovations relating to coaxial and later fibre-optic cables, jet engines, packaging and preservation techniques, semiconductor devices, computer software, and so on. In other words, global relations could not develop without physical tools to effect cross-planetary contacts.

### Nigerian University Libraries and Globalization

The university libraries have long been recognized as the "hearts" of their universities. To fulfill their mission of supporting the educational objectives of their parent bodies, which include teaching, learning, research, and cultural development, the libraries had to develop and maintain standard books, journals, and audio-visual collections and services. During the "oil boom" era, the libraries flourished--they were busy filling their shelves with learning materials in order to sustain the main academic disciplines established by their parent universities. Today, the story is very different. University libraries have problems even in maintaining core collections which represent their universities' curricula and activities because of lack of money and high inflation. Coupled with this is the emergence of ICTs in the educational system worldwide. As revealed by Aguolu (1996), since the onset of the current recession the governments have been giving the universities grants that are not commensurate with their rapid growth in numbers, faculties, departments, staff, and students. The resultant underfunding of the libraries has become perennial and may remain so if the national economy does not improve significantly. It must be pointed out that university libraries have not been isolated from the financial problems of their parent bodies.

By the second half of the 19th century, Western countries had experienced such a proliferation of books of all sorts that the nature of the librarian's work was radically altered; being well-read no longer a sufficient characteristic for the post. The librarian needed some means of easy and rapid identification as well as strong organizational and administrative skills, and the necessity for specialized training soon become clear. The library of today should no longer be a library of the 17th century image. Today's library, especially university and special libraries, must be information systems. As pointed out by Osundina (1973) the library of today should not merely store documents and preserve them, it must also devise means by which the contents of such documents can be rapidly and effectively transmitted for use. Information has always played a very important part in human life. However, in the mid-20th century, the role of information increased immeasurably as a result of social progress and the vigorous development in science and technology. In addition, as Trostinikov (1970) has pointed out, rapid expansion of a mass of diversified information is occurring, which has received the name "information explosion". As a result, the need has arisen for a scientific approach to information and for elucidation of its most characteristic properties which has led to two principal changes in interpretation of the concept of information. First, it was broadened to include information exchange not only between man and man but also between machine and machine, as well as the exchange of signals in the animal and plant worlds. The pace of change brought by new technologies has had a significant effect on the way people live, work, and play worldwide. New and emerging technologies challenge the traditional process of teaching and learning and the way education is managed. Many higher education institutions have also exploited the potential of new information and communication technologies to develop new approaches to distance education, especially in business and management of computing. These new forms of globalization are beginning to replace more conventional types of academic exchange among the world's universities. Although traditional channels of communication will remain important, the new information and communications technologies hold great potential for broadly disseminating knowledge at low cost, and for reducing knowledge gaps within countries and between industrial and developing countries. In a broad sense, access to the right information at the right time gives people greater control over their destinies.

As a result of all these global changes, the purposes of higher education have been transformed. As revealed by Capron (2000), mail, telephone, TV and radio, books, newspapers and periodicals are the traditional ways users send and received information. However, data communications system--computer system that transmits data over communications lines such as telephone lines or cables--have been evolving since the mid-1960s. The use of Internet has revolutionized access to information for the business world, libraries, education, and individuals. A few of the most popular include e-mail, World Wide Web, FTP (File Transfer Protocol), Usenet, and Telnet. All these technological devices can be regarded as backbones of the concept of globalization. The Internet and its technology continues to have a profound effect in promoting the sharing of information especially in academic world, making possible rapid transactions among businesses and supporting global collaboration among individuals and organizations. Learning Resource Centres now often contain learning materials published on CD-ROM and most colleges and universities are connected to the Internet. These technologies have the potentials to develop "virtual campuses" and "virtual libraries" and thus increase students' access and participation. According to Daniel (2000) Nancy Schiller was one of the first writers to use the expression "virtual library" which she defined in 1992, simply as "libraries in which computer and telecommunications technologies make access to a wide range of information resources possible." Today this same concept is referred to variously as 'digital library', 'electronic library', 'community network', or simply as 'library without walls'. It is called 'virtual' because in a good electronic wide area networked library, the user enjoys the euphoria of being in distant libraries and yet he has not physically moved. It is an experience of 'virtual reality'. One of its features is that its emphasis is access over ownership of collections. This stems from assumption that the whole universe of the global information superhighway is a human resource and heritage, which all who have the necessary infrastructure capabilities can tap for their own development. The Virtual Library is a child of necessity arising from the need to use technologies in accessing the world information overload, or information explosion, for human survival and development. The need for a virtual library system has therefore become a most urgent necessity in the Nigerian universities and colleges.

World Wide Web resources are organized in such a way that users can easily move from one resource to another. Using IT, students can absorb more information and take less time to do so. Librarians or any member of the academic community at Obafemi Awolowo University Library can now easily find out any information concerning any book in the Library of Congress in United States of America within a couple of minutes--thanks to the concept of globalization. It must be realized that Information Science is indispensable to the progress of librarianship and it comprises that set of research necessary to support the profession now being called librarianship.

Nigerian libraries are now gradually being computerized especially in the universities. Online catalogues provide additional searching possibilities. Such systems can communicate with one another about which books are held in the libraries and use the computer to borrow various materials from many other libraries through interlibrary loan systems. The global information technology has been called "the world's largest machine", complex and difficult to visualize and understand in its different hardware and software subsystems. The moves toward a global knowledge society require a fundamental shift in thinking about the methodology of education. Information Communication Technologies have already begun to exert massive transformation of education systems in developed countries--distance education universities are now quoted on the stock exchange; the best teachers in the world are becoming available anywhere at the click of a button. The library as the life blood of higher education institutions can benefit tremendously from the facilities provided by the ICT. The university libraries can be transformed in to a new information services unit, providing electronic cataloguing, electronic on-line public access catalogue, electronic acquisition and serials control, electronic inter-library loan, and electronic circulation functions. But it must be realized that many university libraries in Nigeria are yet to take advantages of modern ICT.

In some of the first generation universities in Nigeria like Obafemi Awolowo University Library and a few others, digitalization is taking place in many of their libraries and library information networks established with connectivity through the university campus network to the Internet. Some Nigerian university campuses are now jam-packed with information technology facilities. It is no longer strange to see lecturers and students doing their researches and other academic works using various IT devices like e-mail and the Internet. Apart from the goodwill and support that Nigeria enjoys from international community, it is widely recognized that the country has manpower and financial resources to be in the forefront of the information technology race in Africa. It must be realized that Nigeria is blessed with a large army of telecommunication experts and information technology professional residents both inside and outside the country whose knowledge can be tapped to move the country forward. This is a task in which all hands must be on deck. The private sector and the civil society must be actively involved to ensure the needed competition and its attendant efficiency. No one can deny the fact that Nigerians deserve a better telecommunication and information delivery service than they are getting at the moment. With a suitable national information and communication infrastructure policy, Nigeria has the potential to utilize informatics and telematics as effective tools for national development.

### Problems and the Way Forward

Perhaps in any discussion of the application of modern technology in the library, the first thing that comes to mind is the computer. As pointed out by Ukoh (1988) the computer has become such a household word in the developed world that libraries should see it as a great opportunity which should be taken up as soon as possible. Libraries in Nigeria, and indeed in other Third World countries, should not give the impression either that we do not know of the capabilities and potentials of the ICT or that we do not need ICT to improve our services. There is no area of library operations to which the computer has not been applied with tremendous gains. At this juncture, one can ask how much of these technological devices are in use in Nigerian libraries. In the past decades, whatever has been done in terms of modern technological applications or automation has not gone deeply enough to make any appreciable impact. The inability of Ibadan University Library to update its Serials Catalogue produced by computer in 1975 has cast doubts in the minds of many librarians as to how vigorously the library will pursue its other computerization and information technology programmes. It must be realized that many Nigerian libraries, especially in the universities, face various problems in their attempts to computerize their library operations. These problems are not really of the library's making but it is the usual problem confronting most of the computer installations all over the country today - the shortage of manpower and lack of spare parts. Coupled with this is the problem of constant computer breakdowns and low level of electricity supply. This problem has really slowed down the activities of Nigerian university libraries in utilizing the global information and technological innovations for the services of their clientele. Erratic power supply resulted in the burning of some components which could not easily be replaced. Many other university libraries had at one time or another planned to automate their activities. These plans had to be dropped mid-way as a result of a shortage of both personnel and equipment for an effective completion of the projects. It must be realized that without proper automation of these university libraries the global technological and information explosion would be a mirage.

The demand for distant education in Nigeria is increasing, although this is still based on the traditional technology of print media. There is therefore the need to integrate IT into the distant education programme. The majority of the higher institutions in Nigeria, even those with good Internet connectivity, are still at a low level of the integration of ICT in teaching, learning, research, library, information and managerial services. There is a need for professional development in the integration of information technology into education and learning. The global trend is towards the use of ICT in all spheres of human endeavour, such as e-commerce, e-governance, e-finance, e-libraries, etc. In the educational sector, the trend has been the integration of ICT into all spheres of education, such as on-line courses, tele-education, tele-medicine, distance education, virtual learning, virtual laboratory, etc. Digital libraries and virtual universities are also trends in the use of ICT for higher education. In all these global developments, Nigeria should not be left behind and the government must be committed to seeing that ICT devices are encouraged and well established in the country. Digital libraries would offer facilities for on-line access to an ocean of academic informations by higher education institutions in Nigeria and the world in general. A large number of libraries in higher education institutions in the developed countries are now digital with the availability of electronic books, journals, and other periodicals. It must be realized that Nigerian university libraries should not be left out of this global educational revolution. The diffusion of ICT into Africa and Nigeria in general has been at a snail's pace such that the gap between information-rich developed countries and African countries continues to widen everyday. For the way forward, many international funding agencies like Carnegie Corporation of New York, Ford Foundation, and Rockefeller Foundation should be involved in the general development of ICT in Nigeria. Such assistance would complement the efforts of Nigerian government in order to leapfrog the higher education institutions and Nigeria in general to the global information society. For instance, UNESCO is supporting a Pilot Virtual University and Virtual Laboratory Project to link initially six Nigerian universities in each of the six geographical zones and the Nigerian Universities Commission. Later, this project will help to link all universities, teachers' colleges, and research institutions in the country.

The new impact of globalization should be recognized; while a "borderless" world has been universally accepted as consequence of globalization (electronic world) both the universities and the government must tackle the new emerging trends. The western countries have started to recruit beyond their border; their immigration laws have been changed to open their doors to well trained talented IT professionals from anywhere especially developing countries like Nigeria. This has a lot of implications for us in developing countries. We have to pay attention to training and research to be able to survive in the information age. Policies should be modified in various areas accordingly.

For the way forward both the government and the university managements should set up ICT Research Institutes in Nigeria; there should be linkages between universities, Research Institutes, and governmental agencies. In addition, it is advisable for the government to introduce monitoring bodies which are made up of experts for ICT development, and financial support should be encouraged from bodies, the government, and agencies. The Ministry of Education should integrate IT into secondary schools and colleges of education. From the above, it is highly recommended that for the survival and relevance of university libraries in Nigeria, ICT should be declared an institutional priority with adequate funding and support. Nigeria cannot be truly part of the Information Age or Global Village without active participation of the higher institutions in the use and development of ICT. Infrastructural, institutional as well as human capital capacities must be developed in other to face the challenge. In this regard, as pointed out by Ndiaye (2000) the tools of computer science must be perceived and considered as a 21st century universal language.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Nigerian educational institutions face the challenge of globalization and the information age for the transformation of the academic system from the traditional role of teaching, learning, research, and development technologies to those driven by the information technology, which is the latest revolution changing all aspects of human endeavour. It must be realized that the current ICT infrastructure in Nigeria can not enable Nigerians or the universities to be part of the Global Information Society. The poor telecommunication infrastructure, quantity and quality, constitute a major problem to ICT development in many Nigerian universities. However, the situation will start to change with the wind of deregulation blowing across the country. One is happy to note that in the past five years things have been changing for the better as far as information technology in library operations in Nigeria is concerned. Until a few years ago, it was generally assumed that computer technology was not viable in Nigerian libraries. However some university libraries are now either computerizing their activities through their respective university's Computer Centres or installing these computers in their own libraries. One is also happy to note that both the Federal Government of Nigeria and International funding agencies are now interested in the general development of ICT in Nigerian universities. For example, the Federal Ministry of Education has embarked on the establishment of the National Virtual (Digital) Library Project. One of the objectives of this is to provide, in an equitable and cost effective manner, enhanced access to national and international library and information resources and to share locally available resources with libraries all over the world using digital technology. A Model Virtual (Digital) Library at National Universities Commission (NUC) will be the hub of the university-based libraries. The delivery of the Virtual Library will be through the Internet, CD-ROM, and Wide Area Network (WAN). When this is finally materialized, it will definitely be a boost to the development of ICT in Nigerian educational system. There is the need for all universities to be interconnected by a network to facilitate cross breeding of research efforts. Also all Nigerian universities must be connected by a network to all national laboratories and to the National Universities Commission. But it must be realized that those who will benefit from this IT globalization revolution first are those who will master them first. From this perspective, Nigerian university libraries which have started late must seek to understand the stakes in order to make up for lagging behind. To do this one needs first, after a strong political will, to have equipment that should facilitate the significant and irreversible introduction of these new technologies in the educational system.

The use of IT as a strategic management and cognitive tools is critically important if Nigerian universities wish to be run efficiently, access information through worldwide networks, and be globally competitive. The issue of a realistic National Information and Communication Infrastructure Policy is one that should no longer be allowed to linger unresolved. Nigeria needs a goal-oriented policy as well as well-thought-out plans and strategies to harness the potential of information and communication technologies for national development. The truth is that no country, small or big, can afford to be isolated in the information and knowledge-based society of the 21st century. In any case, every country needs to develop its information and communication facilities not only for its own sake but also for the sake of other countries that might wish to communicate or relate with it. It must be emphasized that this country is not short of ideals on what to be done or how it should be done on virtually on any topic of national interest. What is generally lacking is the ability to implement and follow through the plans and strategies beautifully crafted and documented. It is hoped that the outcome of a series of workshops and professional advice from ICT experts would be an exception to the rule and all our tardiness, slip-shoddiness, lack of political will, and commitment had indeed ended with the last century and the last millennium. Let this 21st century, this third millennium, propels us onto the super-highway of the new information technology age.

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Special curricular themes for library education in Nigeria

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**Abstract**

The Nigerian society has cultural and social differences from those of people in developed countries from which educational programmes and practices have been borrowed. The differences are reflected in the peculiarities in the majority of Nigerian citizens' need for educational and informational services in libraries. In responding to these peculiar needs of a people whose majority has had no tradition of using books, the librarian who administers their needs may require education and training which must differ in content from the conventional library programmes as currently borrowed from developed countries.

Core courses for the training of librarians who are expected to provide information which may not be recorded in print form, have been suggested for preparing these librarians for the kind of service that would sustain the interest and appreciation of their clientele in the use of libraries. The selected courses, based on the culture and structure of the people, will involve the production of literacy resources, information gathering and dissemination for non-literates, book publishing to conform with local demands and public relations activities which would ensure the social relevance of the library school programmes to the needs of the society.

**Article Outline**

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## The Role of School Libraries in Nigeria's New Education Policy

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**Need for Information and Educational Technologies in Nigerian Schools**

**By**

**Victor E.Dike**

As thesociety struggles to restore sanity to Nigeria’s tertiary institutions, it is pertinent for the people to understand the role of modern information and educational technologies in the educational development of the nation. Development-conscious societies are constantly restructuring, updating and equipping their educational institutions with modern technologies, but Nigeria is still lagging too far behind in acquiring the rudimentary technologies for its educational institutions. The engineering departments of the nation’s tertiary institutions are sorely lacking the basic tools for effective teaching and learning. Thus, the problems facing the nation today emanate from the paucity of information and educational technologies in the nation’s citadel of learning from where ideas for national development emanate. Therefore, there is need for modern information and educational technologies at all levels of Nigeria’s educational institutions.

In ‘knowledge’ societies -‘a knowledge society is a society of mobility’ and one ‘in which many more people than ever before can be successful’ (Drucker, Nov 1994), students should begin to build up their technology skills from primary and secondary schools. As mentioned earlier, this is not the case in Nigeria. Thus, information and educational technologies would empower teachers and enable students to acquire the skills they need to become productive citizens and compete effectively in the emerging computerized global marketplace. But how would the educational institutions catch up with other institutions in the world without adequate funding? There is therefore need to take politics out of the efforts in finding lasting solutions to the problems facing the nations’ educational institutions, without which the society will continue to lag behind socially, politically and economically.

Many devices provide multiple ways to connect an educational institution to the ‘learning community.’ The ‘learning community’ begins with students, teaching staff and administrative staff; it extends to parents and families, states, regional and local community members, educational offices and agencies and professional associations. As noted in the *American Association of School Libraries, and Association for Education Communication and Technology* (1998), the ‘learning community’ encompasses international institutions. However, it requires money, skill and dedication to link up this group. In retrospect, the devices to link up the group include the computers, local area networks, electronic mail, cable and satellite hookups, TV and ‘electronic whiteboards and presenter stations’ (Barrett, May 1999). The two-way audio and video communication equipment is among other important teaching tools that would enable schools in Nigeria to be connected and get valuable information from renowned educational institutions all over the world. Without the necessary technology Nigeria’s much-lauded long distant educational program would be unattainable, because a baby would crawl first before walking. In other words, the society should acquire the basic technological infrastructures before venturing into the *Space*.

At this period of information revolution, no school or nation would survive in isolation. Therefore, to avoid its teachers from being cut off completely from the global academic community, Nigeria should begin now to invest in modern information and educational technologies for the future. With the provision of modern information and educational technologies and commitment from the stakeholders (and cooperation with scholars across the world), the nation’s educational institutions could turn around for good. Thus, modern technologies would ‘provide a foundation for an innovative learning environment where students and teachers could reach beyond the confines of a school building for information, interaction and enrichment.’ In addition, they would ensure that the teachers and students maintain currency with the latest technological developments around the world and respond with changes in their educational programs at home and disseminate current knowledge and research works to the public. Therefore, research conducted at a distance institution could be used to solve local problems if the necessary tools are provided. Thus, to thrive in today’s modern workplace students in Nigeria must have the necessary skills and ‘good under-standing of how technology works, and what it can do.’

The primary goal of any educational institution is learning to push back the frontier of ignorance. But this noble objective would be difficult to accomplish without the necessary learning tools. And having the appropriate information is central to meeting the opportunities and challenges of day-to-day activities in any modern society. For that, any information conscious and literate society would appreciate the importance of information technology to a democratic society. The Nigerian society should realize that the inability (or refusal) of the leaders to utilize modern information technologies in the 2003 politics contributed to the rampant election frauds. It’s hoped therefore that the heat generated by the elections is a good lesson for the politicians; and that the experience would enable the INEC to adopt better strategies and employ the necessary technologies for future elections in the society. Without this, the frightening anomalies that occurred during the 2003 electoral process could re-occur in future elections.

Appropriate technologies would assist to determine the authenticity of personal IDs and create instant new IDs for those who need them; it could help to verify fingerprints, addresses and other personal information. And it would expedite voting, collation of votes and announcement of winners or losers, thereby reducing election frauds. In addition, modern technologies would dramatically enhance the ability of the educational institutions to prepare students for the realities of modern workplace and help to design and manage database (birth and death, etc) crime control and collect revenue. Economic planning, population projection and control of resource mismanagement are among other benefits of modern technologies. And with the necessary tool, schools, which serve as laboratories in serious societies, would "produce bold and innovative solutions" to solve the problems that confront a nation (Carlin (Nov 5, 1999). The creative and ‘innovative’ steps could enlarge a nation’s *economic pie*, create more jobs and reduce poverty and crime, because poverty could lead to fraudulent and criminal activities.

And appropriate learning environment improves students’ rate of understanding in schools. Thus, to fully restore sanity to the nation’s higher institutions of learning, academic research should be encouraged with the necessary funding and improved working conditions for the teachers. If teachers are properly motivated, students will equally be motivated to learn and participate in national development programs, as the condition in one area often affects the other. This was amply demonstrated in the recent FG/ASUU face off that kept students at home for many months. Space constraint wouldn’t allow us catalog all the benefits a society derives from modern technologies. However, technology, education and training have vital role to play in any sustainable economic development process of a nation. According to the "United Nations’ World Commission on Environmental Development" ‘sustainability’ means ‘meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs’ (Scully, Jan 28, 2000). This means that a society should not deplete its natural resources for short-term benefits. This, unfortunately, has been the trend in Nigeria-a place where the leaders often embezzle the funds budgeted for community development without minding the effects of their actions on the people. Therefore, the problem with Nigeria is that its leaders are often insensitive to the peoples’ sufferings. Although some of the problems facing Nigeria would require common sense solutions, many of them require sophisticated framework of ideas and modern technologies.

For instance, allowing the private sector to build modern refineries to refine enough crude oil and good network of roads and railroads to distribute petroleum products would solve the perennial fuel scarcity crisis in Nigeria. This means introducing true competition into the oil sector to make petroleum products available and drive down the price of fuel. Resort to frequent irrational fuel prices increases means applying wrong economic *medicine* to the nation’s myriad socio-economic problems. Thus, the *voodoo* economic policy and the nation’s obsolete technologies would not solve the fuel crisis. According to Albert Einstein, ‘The specific problems we face today cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them" (Dike, Feb 1, 2000 in nigeriaworld.com/feature/publication/dike/computerized\_economy.html). Thus, visionless leadership is the main problem with Nigeria, because it has destroyed the nation’s tertiary institutions and created gullies on the roads, the epileptic NEPA and the *brain-drain* phenomenon in the society. And it is presently causing the youths to vacillate between hope and despair, because they lack the necessary skills to compete effectively in the *New* *World* without *Boundaries*.

However, let is pertinent to mention that the mere provision of information and educational technologies would not solve Nigeria’s socioeconomic, political and educational problems. For the technologies to serve their purpose the users (the ‘learning community’), should be continually and properly trained in their use. More importantly, well-trained and on-site support technicians should be made available to assist the users in taking care of their day-to-day technology problems, because without technical support the technologies would become cog in the wheel to teaching, learning and national planning. And technology should not substitute for human connections that are central to effective learning and teaching.

However, given Nigeria’s poor maintenance culture, preventive maintenance is likely to pose a serious problem, because the technologies could be left to rot away like the Roads, NITEL, NEPA and the Refineries and other infrastructures in the society. In fact, it is already causing a lot problem! For instance, the Servers at the educational institutions, government offices and business organizations that are lucky to have a couple of computers connected to the Internet would go down and often remain unattended for months. Under this condition, learning and communication, which were the reasons for acquiring the technologies, would be disrupted. Thus, to transform Nigeria into an information and technology-conscious society, the nation must first appreciate the need for information and educational technologies and make the necessary funds available, because no society can achieve much at this technology age without investing copiously in modern information and educational technologies.

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