

## **The Role of Polytechnic Libraries in The Provision and Dissemination of Information to Users Toward Sustainable Development in Nigeria**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper examines the role played by libraries in information dissemination. The Polytechnics libraries are treated as integral and active part of tertiary educational process. The aims of the polytechnic's education were highlighted vice versa, the function of polytechnics library enhancing educational developments of its present institution. Study went further to suggest ways in which Polytechnic libraries make more valuable and beneficially to Nigeria society through a systematic process of selecting, acquiring, organizing, preserving and disseminating of information in various formats to the academic community on Nigerian Polytechnics. This is an information method of acquiring new intakes with library rules and regulations as well as how to retrieve materials from the various collections of the library. This orientation normally allows the user to make independent use of the library with all necessarily depending on the library staff. Normally the first week of the assumption of academic activities is reserved for exercise and it is made compulsory on students to attend.

**Keywords** *dissemination of information, library orientation, current awareness.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Tertiary education occupies a strategic position in Nigeria's educational system because it equips individuals with the knowledge, technical skills, and competencies required for national development. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014), tertiary education refers to education provided after secondary education in universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, monotronics, and other institutions offering post-secondary academic and professional programmes. The primary objective of tertiary education is to produce skilled manpower, promote innovation and research, and contribute to the socio-economic and technological development of the nation. Polytechnics, in particular, focus on technical and vocational education through the award of the National Diploma (ND) and Higher National Diploma (HND), preparing graduates with practical and entrepreneurial skills needed in various sectors of the economy (National Board for Technical Education [NBTE], 2024).

Polytechnics play a significant role in achieving Nigeria's developmental aspirations by producing technically competent graduates capable of solving societal and industrial problems. The National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014) identifies the goals of tertiary education as contributing to national development through high-level manpower training, developing intellectual capacity, promoting scholarship and community service, inculcating appropriate values, and fostering national and international cooperation. The realization of these objectives depends largely on the availability of adequate educational resources, among which the library occupies a central position. Academic libraries are widely recognized as the intellectual hub of higher institutions because they provide access to books,

scholarly journals, electronic databases, institutional repositories, multimedia resources, and other information materials that support teaching, learning, research, and innovation (Aina, 2021; Reitz, 2023).

Polytechnic libraries are established primarily to support the academic programmes and institutional objectives of their parent institutions. They provide organized information resources and services that facilitate curriculum implementation, independent learning, research activities, and professional development of students and staff. Beyond traditional print collections, contemporary polytechnic libraries increasingly provide access to electronic books, online journals, digital repositories, institutional databases, internet services, and information literacy programmes that enable users to locate, evaluate, and effectively utilize information resources. The integration of information and communication technology (ICT) into library operations has transformed academic libraries into digital learning environments that support both physical and remote access to information resources (Anene, 2024; IFLA, 2023).

The objectives of polytechnic libraries therefore extend beyond the acquisition and preservation of information resources. They include providing adequate collections that support teaching, learning, research, and community service; creating conducive environments for study and collaborative learning; promoting information literacy and lifelong learning skills; facilitating access to current scholarly information; and supporting innovation through the provision of modern information services (IFLA, 2023). These objectives are consistent with global standards for academic libraries, which emphasize equitable access to quality information resources as an essential requirement for educational excellence.

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Furthermore, polytechnic libraries perform indispensable functions in supporting institutional goals by acquiring, organizing, preserving, and disseminating information in both print and electronic formats. They assist students in developing independent study habits, critical thinking, research competence, and lifelong learning skills while providing lecturers and researchers with access to current literature needed for teaching, curriculum development, consultancy, and scholarly research. Through resource sharing, digital library services, institutional repositories, and electronic information services, polytechnic libraries continue to expand access to knowledge despite increasing financial and technological challenges facing higher education institutions in Nigeria (Anene, 2024; Isebe & Ejedafiru, 2024).

In the contemporary knowledge economy, the effectiveness of any tertiary institution is closely linked to the quality of its library services. A functional polytechnic library not only supports classroom instruction but also promotes research productivity, innovation, entrepreneurship, and evidence-based learning. Consequently, polytechnic libraries must continually adapt to emerging technologies, changing user information needs, and global best practices to remain relevant in supporting teaching, learning, research, and national development. Their continued development through adequate funding, ICT integration, qualified personnel, and effective resource management remains essential for achieving the objectives of tertiary education in Nigeria (Aina, 2021; Anene, 2024; IFLA, 2023).

## **2. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF POLYTECHNIC LIBRARIES IN NIGERIA**

Polytechnics are part of tertiary education. Polytechnic libraries are established to help the Polytechnic institution in achieving the goals of tertiary education in Nigeria, by providing services based on layed down objective. Polytechnic libraries are established to provide information in support of the academic and cultural goals of its parent institution.

According to Aigbiremoh (2004) in Naomi, (2010) the library is regarded as the heart or lifeline of the parent institution. Also, according to Abdullahi (2009) in Naomi (2010) has this to say, the central role of libraries in any education institution particularly that of the tertiary level is only as good as the library. This is because information relevant to all the discipline pursued in the institution is contained in various information sources in the library. The extend of such materials and their up to datedness, therefore, will be determine to a large extend the quality of products of such institution.

The main purpose of an academic library is to support the objectives of the institution.

### **Information dissemination**

The information dissemination is as follows: -

1. Library orientation.
2. Selective dissemination of information (S.D.I.)
3. Current awareness.
4. Exhibition and displays.
5. Library guide.
6. Library catalogue.

#### **1. Library Orientation**

This is an information method of acquiring new intakes with library rules and regulations as well as how to retrieve materials from the various collections of the library. This orientation normally allows the user to make independent use of the library with all necessarily depending on

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the library staff. Normally the first week of the assumption of academic activities is reserved for exercise and it is made compulsory on students to attend. It is so because “there are advantages to be deserved from these orientation courses. The singular attendance of library courses plants your fact on path to basic independent study which in variably may lead you to your successful career in life.

## 2. Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)

Individual users are informed of the materials, current or retrospective, of value to their specific needs. The library staff keeps an interest profile of every researcher, and information is brought to researchers on the availability of certain publications in accordance with their subject interest. These techniques, like the current awareness services, are most effective in a special library serving relatively homogeneous groups, small in number.

Computer/store bibliographic data base on now available in many subject fields, especially in science and technology. Computers have enormous capacity record manipulate, select and called up data and demand. Computers searching for relevant bibliographic information such as citations to journal articles is usually based upon the principle of selective dissemination of information.

## 3. Current awareness

These services are mostly found in special and higher institution libraries, they are aimed at keeping researchers informed on new developments in their field, by constantly circulating among them list of new publications of interest to them. These services are usually rendered by these methods:

1. Photocopies of content pages of current journals are distributed among  
  
Department or individuals are likely to be interested in them, or made available for consultation the library.
2. Weekly or bi-weekly bulletins of new publications added to the library. Usually arranged in broad subject grouping is sent to academic department or individual researchers.
3. Selective lists of interesting articles in special fields may be forwarded to the potential users.
4. Notification of individual researchers or department of new materials of interest to them.

## 4. Exhibition and Displays

This can simply refer to a display of pictures or materials which can give pictures of all the former events. Which acquires for a long time, which the users may go through it. Display usually provides current information in the users area of interest unlike exhibition allows users to locate materials relating to their various areas of specialization.

## 5. Library Catalogue

The library catalogue is an index list of books, maps, or other items, arrange in same definite order. A catalogue is a detailed list or record of books, maps, audio-visuals and other information items in the library.

Each entry bears details of class numbers or call numbers to enable the items to be found, as well as sufficient details (such as Author, title, date of publication, editorship, illustration, paginations) and edition to identify and describe the books.

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### 3. SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE POLYTECHNIC LIBRARIES

The role of the Polytechnic libraries is necessary dependent upon the education objectives of the institution (Allen in Bature 2010). In a similar development Ode Omokaro (2007) in Bature (2010 identified some of these roles as follows:

- (i) Provide reference and information services to lecturers and students. The lecturers and students rely mainly on the laboratories for the provision of the needed information.
- (ii) The preservation of library materials to ensure their availability for generation users.
- (iii) The organization of the materials through bibliographical records to aid in their location and maximum use.
- (iv) The preservation of library materials to ensure their availability for future generation users. Furthermore, Polytechnic in Nigeria, in addition to the provision and dissemination of information have more ahead to participant in virtual library project. The development of education is synonymous with the development of libraries and their service. Thus, the role of Polytechnic libraries cut across the overall academic performance in the tertiary education system. In this information age, the library goes to include the totality of human and organized materials available in both book and non-book form for providing and obtaining needed information, depend to a large extent the way libraries are being handled by the organization.

Another important task of the Polytechnic libraries is to make people realize the need and utilized the library resources provided for

learning, teaching and research, in the same way Polytechnics libraries are established to provide materials to support the learning, teaching and research processes. Also, a well establish Polytechnic library is essential for any academic institution: As a focal point for teaching, learning and research, and how users seek and access information.

### 4. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a documentary research design based on a review of relevant literature. Data for the study were obtained exclusively from secondary sources, including textbooks, peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, government policy documents, reports of professional organizations, and publications from the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), and the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The collected literature was critically reviewed, synthesized, and analyzed to examine the historical development, roles, information dissemination practices, challenges, and prospects of polytechnic libraries in Nigeria. The findings and recommendations were drawn from the synthesis of existing scholarly and policy literature.

### 5. THE PROBLEMS ON THE PROVISION AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION IN POLYTECHNIC LIBRARIES

These are various factors that hinder information effective dissemination of information in Polytechnic libraries:

#### 1. Inadequate Funds

Mostly of Polytechnics library in Nigeria are adequately funding. This causes a very serious

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problems in their effort to provide materials needed to meet the research and information needs of its cherits. Most of the Polytechnics libraries usually depend on same donor national and international organization such as the world bank, book aids international, UNESCO etc in order to argument their collections.

## **2. Lack of Professional Staff**

Some of the Polytechnic libraries lack some category of Staff; they usually relied on some paraprofessional staff to render some services. This greatly affects their ability to provide qualitative and refined information to their clients. The need to provide more qualified staff to run the affairs of the library need not to be underemphasized.

## **3. Lack of Resources**

This is another serious problem, because most the materials are very expensive to acquire or purchase them, it is mostly you can buy them in dollars, secondly, most of the writers or authors are not indigenous one. So to purchase is not easy because of the expensive.

## **6. SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS ON THE PROVISION AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION IN POLYTECHNIC LIBRARIES**

The solutions to the problems are as follows:

1. The Government should provide adequate fund to the Polytechnic. So that it would ease the library of the Polytechnic to purchase all the needed materials, to cater the needs of the Polytechnic students and staff. Because without the funding of the Polytechnic the library would not grow as needed.

2. The Polytechnic should employ the professional librarian to run the activities of the library than employed mare non-professional staff. Because with the employed professional librarian they should use their skill to government run he activities of the library. Secondly, the Polytechnic should sponsor the non-professional librarian to go and acquire more knowledge.
3. The Government should reduce the forces of all the materials purchase outside the country, so that the Polytechnic may get easier to purchase the materials. Secondly the Government also should encourage the indigenous writers to write and purchase them. Or the Government makes the laws that, it should be mandatory for the library to purchase indigenous books.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

This paper discusses the role of Polytechnic libraries in information disseminations. It is obvious that Polytechnic libraries exist mainly to ensure the educational need of the Polytechnic population, by making available in the form of printed and non-printed books, published and unpublished materials with useful information details. The value of Polytechnic libraries to its parent institution cannot be over emphasized but reflects in the day-to-day activities and educational pursuit of the school curriculum.

The role of the Polytechnic libraries in information dissemination cut across the overall academic performance in the tertiary education system. In this information age, the library goes to include the totality of human and organized materials available in both book and non-book from for providing and obtaining need information.

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Finally, the Polytechnic library is a central and local unit in any academic institution. They are indeed vital to the achievement of any meaningful academic progress information dissemination.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Increase Funding for Library Development

Government and polytechnic management should provide adequate and sustainable funding for library development. Increased funding will support the acquisition of current print and electronic resources, subscription to online databases, modernization of library facilities, and improvement of ICT infrastructure needed for effective information dissemination.

### 2. Strengthening Professional Capacity

Polytechnic authorities should recruit qualified professional librarians and provide continuous training for library personnel in digital librarianship, information literacy instruction, electronic resource management, and emerging technologies. Regular professional development will improve the quality and efficiency of library services.

### 3. Enhance Digital Library Services

Polytechnic libraries should expand the adoption of information and communication technology by automating library operations, strengthening institutional repositories, providing remote access to electronic resources, and improving internet connectivity. These measures will increase access to scholarly information and support teaching, learning, and research in line with the best global practices.

### 4. Promote Information Literacy and Quality Collections

Polytechnic libraries should strengthen user education and information literacy programmes to equip students with the skills required to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information resources. At the same time, libraries should adopt effective collection development policies that ensure a balanced acquisition of current indigenous and international publications to support academic programmes and research.

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