CHAPTER SIX

MANAGEMENT OF LIBRARY EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES AS A CORRELATE OF EFFECTIVE LIBRARY SERVICES

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ABSTRACT

The paper examined the management of library equipment and facilities as a correlate of effective library services. Availability of all the library facilities is not useful for the library users alone; it is most useful to the librarians to facilitate their process of getting information readily available to be consulted by the users. Library services are the ongoing maintenance activities of a library's collection, including the three broad areas of collection development, cataloging, and processing. Technical services are the infrastructure that enables the user's experience of many library services. Library Services are services provided to library patrons. Also, the paper highlighted that library facility are facilities that is owned or leased by the library and which is directly managed and operated by the library. Summarily, the paper viewed that library facilities and equipment are those facilities required to be acquired by the library for the effective functioning of library services. Effective library services are activities provided by libraries to address the information needs of users. One of the recommendations in the study was that a librarian should be knowledgeable enough about all the variety of information sources and follow the new trends and advancements in computers, media, and publishing.

KEYWORDS: Management, Library Equipment and Facilities, and Effective Library Services

INTRODUCTION

Management of library equipment is the efficient and effective management of materials (information resources), machinery, and money to meet the objectives of the library. It is very important to note that libraries are basically paternalistic, service-

oriented, and not-for-profit organizations (Kapoor, 2018). Management of library equipment is accomplished by the combination of basic management functions and skills. A school library is useful in literacy work from the earliest stage because it encourages good reading habits to be formed when children are young. Nothing is as important to the quality of library services provided to library patrons, whether academic, public, special or school library, as the quality and range of resources selected, acquired, and retained by a library. A school library may be seen by some to be small and inconsequential, but if the fact that it is part of the overall school system is critically looked at, it becomes obvious that just as the collection of a university library is important to its community, so too is the collection of a school library to its pupils and staff (Badawi, 2004). It is imperative that library users should protect the equipment and facilities in the library building while accessing their information. Library management is a sub-discipline of institutional management that focuses on specific issues faced by libraries and library management professionals (Wikipedia, 2017). Library management encompasses normal managerial tasks, facilities as well as intellectual freedom and fundraising responsibilities. An important aspect of library management is planning and maintaining library facilities. More than anything else, equipment and facilities are very necessary for the utmost realization of the goals of education. In this era of accelerated technological development, modern instructional facilities and equipment such as computers, stopwatches, and photocopiers, punching machines, perforators, headphones, and recorders are expected to be available in good condition and properly utilized. Students offering LIS programmes at universities find it difficult to acquire the needed skills and competencies. This is as a result of lack of adequate equipment and facilities in schools. This situation in the teaching and learning of the LIS program has been of great concern to educators, and the decline in students' academic performance may not be unconnected with the poor learning environment created by the state of limited or unavailable equipment and facilities.

CONCEPT OF LIBRARY

A library is a collection of materials, books or media that are easily accessible for use and not just for display purposes. It is responsible for housing updated information in order to meet the user's needs on a daily basis. It is also a collection of books and other print or nonprint materials organized and maintained for use (reading, consultation, study, research, etc.) A library is a physical location or a virtual space that provides physical (hard copy documents) or digital access (soft copies) materials. A library, which may vary widely in size, may be organized for use and maintained by a public body such as a government, an institution or school, a corporation, or a private individual. A library provides convenient, physical, digital, bibliographic, or intellectual access and offers targeted services and programs with the mission of educating, informing, or entertaining a variety of audiences and the goal of stimulating individual learning and advancing society as a whole (ALA, 2019). In addition to providing materials, libraries also provide the services of librarians who are trained and experts at finding, selecting, circulating and organizing information and at interpreting information needs, navigating and analyzing very large amounts of information with a variety of resources. Hence, librarians go an extra mile to meet the user's needs by ensuring that their users are satisfied with the information provided. Rubin (2010) states that the library is now a part of a complex and dynamic educational, recreational, and informational infrastructure. Libraries as gateways to knowledge and culture play a fundamental role in society. The library has become a centre for information access and

distribution, learning and teaching activities, presentations and exhibitions, and social networking connections. The main purpose of a library is to disseminate books and information for free or close to free, to archive information, to provide a community space for people to interact around information.

CONCEPT OF LIBRARY SERVICES

Library services are the ongoing maintenance activities of a library's collection, including the three broad areas of collection development, cataloging, and processing. Technical services are the infrastructure that enables the user's experience of many library services. Library Services are services provided to library patrons. The IFLA (2016) stated that with the rise of the Internet, online resources have become an additional library reference resource, and libraries have been at the forefront of integrating digital resources and services into their operations. They include reference and circulation. Academic libraries serve colleges and universities. There are four types of library depending on the services rendered. Public libraries serve cities and towns of all types. School libraries serve students from Kindergarten to grade 12. Special libraries are in specialized environments, such as hospitals, corporations, museums, the military, private business, and the government. According to Gladney (2004), a digital library service is an assemblage of digital computing, storage, and communications machinery together with the software needed to reproduce, emulate, and extend the services provided by conventional libraries based on paper and other material means of collecting, storing, cataloguing, finding, and disseminating information. According to Gladney (2004), the following are varieties of services offered by Digital Libraries.

- ❖ Databases for Catalogs
- ❖ Remote Information Services,
- ❖ Internet Information Sources Mirroring & Cataloguing,
- ❖ E-mail,
- ❖ Service for Bulletin Boards,
- ❖ Audio and Video Communication,
- ❖ Electronic Table of Contents,
- ❖ The Electronic Document Delivery Service,
- ❖ Theses and Dissertations in Electronic Form,
- ❖ The Reference Service,
- ❖ Electronic Publishing,
- ❖ Central storage facilities for hosting digital collections and indexes,
- ❖ Special Collections Service

CONCEPT OF LIBRARY EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

Library facilities and equipment means a Category of Necessary Public Services in which literary, musical, artistic, or reference materials are kept for commercial use by the library users. A library facility also means any facility that is owned or leased by the library and which is directly managed and operated by the library. Equipment and facilities can serve as communication media that transmit information from the teachers or lecturers to the learners with the intent of aiding learning. Ozioko (2008) stated that equipment and facilities are all the practical and skills development resources that would facilitate the process of teaching and learning. Library facilities and equipment are those facilities required to be acquired by the library for effective functioning of library services. Chiemeke (2007) finds facilities such as electronic media, radio, television, and cable satellite, the internet, and so on, as media that give wide publicity to events, objects, discoveries, scientific findings, new products, and new services. The availability of all these facilities is not useful for the users alone; it is most useful to the librarians to facilitate their process of getting information readily available to be consulted by the users. By so doing, it is pertinent for the librarian to share knowledge among themselves, which can be effective when relevant facilities such as current printed materials, printers, and photocopy facilities and so on are adequately available. Consequently, the submission of the various scholars indicates that the availability of library facilities can promote knowledge sharing among librarians, and knowledge sharing will result in effective job performance. Knowledge sharing among staff of an organization is facilitated with the availability of all the necessary resources required to perform the daily routine of such an organization, which the library is not an exception to. The International Federation of Library Association (IFLA) postulates the minimum standards of facilities that a library should provide. These include adequate reading tables and chairs to accommodate the users, book shelves, library space, fans, lighting, ventilation, flooring, restaurant, location of the exit point, notice board, bulletin, photocopy facilities, car parking space, computers, carrels, periodical racks, circulation desks, and other facilities that would ensure user comfort (IFLA, 2001).

CONCEPT OF EFFECTIVE LIBRARY SERVICES

Effective library services are activities provided by libraries to address the information needs of users. These include circulation services, reference services, online information services, inter-library loans, and information literacy skills training. Lamba (2019) reinforced this idea by observing that today's libraries have become increasingly multi-disciplinary, collaborative and networked" and that applying Web 2.0 tools to libraries would "not only connect the users with their community and enhance communication but will also help the librarians to promote their library's activities, services, and products to target both their actual and potential users. A managerial tool assisting libraries to face challenges now and in the future is effective promotion and marketing. Today, academic libraries are no longer the only choice for students, faculty, staff and other clients to go to for information. To attract clients, and raise awareness of available services and resources, libraries need to find ways to promote services and resources to clients as efficiently as possible. As such, promotional approaches are used to convey the availability and value of services and resources to target markets and should be designed to cause library users and non-users to act fast (Helinsky, 2008; Webreck Alman, 2007). A variety of techniques have been used to

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promote library services and resources. Nkanga (2002) found that promotional techniques such as personal contacts, circulars, memos, telephone calls, meetings, direct mailing, displays, talks, newsletters, library tours, and leaflets are widely used for the effective functioning of library services.

CONSTRAINTS TO ADEQUATE MANAGEMENT OF LIBRARY EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

The Library Management system helps in maintaining data of books issued to learners and books available in the library. This helps librarians to spot any particular book at any given time in the library. Many of us consider "the library" to be the collection of books and media. It is important to manage the building itself and other equipment/facilities in the library, but there are some hindrances or challenges to the adequate management of those library facilities, which are:

Lackadaisical or Nonchalant attitude of the library users: This is a result of a lack of knowledge about the use of card catalogues. It is deducible from the present result that most of the students were nonchalant concerning the library orientation, which is usually conducted at the beginning of each new session to acquaint freshers with the use of the library catalogue and other library facilities. Segun (2011) observes that the major challenge libraries had to face were their users, especially the habitual Goggle user, who expects library OPAC to match the ease of searching and information retrieval on Goggle, which gave them direct links to the full-text of resources on the web.

Inadequate training of the librarian: A librarian should be knowledgeable in a variety of information sources and follow the new trends and advancements in computers, media, and publishing (Careeroverview, 2011). The introduction of computers and new technology was a challenge to all librarians. Librarians should be ready to participate in the process of generating and distributing information and knowledge for quality of life and education for all. Librarians must unite to withstand the revolutions that will occur in the information and communication fields. Due to the advent of the Internet, the World Wide Web, and the proliferation of online catalogues, the role of the librarian has been changed. Now he is more efficient and has new roles as intermediary, facilitator, end-user trainer/educator.

Lack of proper management skills by the library administrators: The library management system helps in maintaining data on books issued to learners and books available in the library. They help librarians to spot any particular book at any given time in the library and facilitate easy repair and maintenance of other library equipment. But in situations where those functions of the library management administrators are not properly executed, it affects the adequate management of library equipment and facilities.

MANAGEMENT OF LIBRARY EQUIPMENT/FACILITIES AND EFFECTIVE LIBRARY SERVICES

According to the New International Webster's Encyclopedia Dictionary of the English Language (2003), management is the art or manner of managing, controlling or conducting. It is also the skillful use or means to accomplish a purpose. It also refers to managers or directors collectively. Assuming from the foregoing definitions, the management of library facilities could be the skillful use of means to provide effective library services; it could also be the art or manner of managing, controlling, or

conducting various resources to achieve the objectives of the library. Furthermore, the management of libraries and their facilities could also be the librarians or staff collectively managing the libraries to achieve the desired goals of the library. Infrastructural facilities and equipment are those items or services in the library that will help to achieve the effectiveness of the services rendered by the library. The library is a storehouse of knowledge. Ifidon (2005) opined that the main objective of an academic library is to provide materials and services to meet the objectives of the university. One of the primary objectives of administration in any organization is coordination of both human and material resources towards the achievement of the goals of that organization. A well-equipped library is very necessary in all institutions of learning so that immediate references can be made when the need arises. Proper etiquette and safety in the use of library facilities or taking care in using facilities and equipment in the library are very important for effective library service. Management of library equipment is accomplished by the combination of basic management functions and skills.

SUMMARY

Library facilities and equipment are those facilities required to be acquired by the library for the effective functioning of library services. Effective library services are activities provided by libraries to address the information needs of users. Also, the library has become a centre for information access and distribution, learning and teaching activities, presentations, exhibitions, and social network connections. The main purpose of a library is to disseminate books and information for free or close to free, to archive information, to provide a community space for people to interact around information. The study equally states that students offering LIS programmes in universities find it difficult to acquire the needed skills and competencies. This is as a result of lack of adequate equipment and facilities in schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A librarian should be knowledgeable enough about all the variety of information sources and follow the new trends and advancements in computers, media, and publishing.

2. The library management should strive to encourage the use of the entire library resources through an adequate user education program in and outside the library environment, although the majority of the information resources are utilized.

3. The library administrators must ensure that governing authorities are informed of new developments that may impact on library services and are also made aware that the library's services are key players in providing access to the delivery of new services.

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