Libraries Are Dynamic Tools for National Development

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ABSTRACT: Building an ideal nation requires a holistic approach. All facets of human activity must be harnessed while all indices of nation building must be taken care of. In doing this, all academic and professional disciplines are involved. Libraries are not exception. This paper looks at various types of libraries and their basic functions, their roles in national development, and in particular, the challenges facing library services in Nigeria, such as inadequately trained staff to meet the increasing demands of users.

I. Introduction

The word "development" has hitherto mocked efforts at a concise and generally acceptable definition. This has resulted in a myriad of definitions by scholars. While some scholars see development as normative and synonymous with progress, others regard it as multidimensional, involving changes in structures, capacity, and output. Still others view development in terms of the growth and mastery of the natural environment by man. Thus the development of any society today has come to be measured by its military, socio-economic, political, and technological advancement. For instance, Mimiko (1998) is of the opinion that development is a process implying deep and double changes in social structure in the functioning of institutions and in the cultural values of great masses of people. Aremu (2003) sees development as a process of enhancing the productive forces of a country for the actualization of more prosperous and meaningful life for all its citizens. Thus, development emphasizes growth or advancement, with a positive cultural and socio-economic tendency towards a self-generating and self-perpetuating utilization of people's potentials.

According to *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, "national" refers to a whole nation. National development, therefore, can be described as the overall development or a collective socio-economic, political, and religious advancement of a country or nation. This is best achieved through development planning, which can be described as a country's collection of strategies mapped out by the government.

The English word "library" is derived from the Latin word "librarium", in which "liber" means "book, paper, parchment" (*Online Etymology Dictionary*) and "-arium" means "a place associated with a specified thing". In the present world, "book" could be defined as a collection of written, printed or other graphic materials, including films, slides, phonograph records and tapes, housed, organized, and interpreted to meet broad and varying needs of people for information, knowledge, recreation, and aesthetics (Ikegbune, 2003).

The library is frequently referred to as the heart of an institution, the mind of a society, the only effective repository of knowledge, the racial memory, a live depository of cultural past, a sustainer of the intellectual activities that anticipate the future, and so on. In principle, the mission of all types of libraries, such as academic, public, school, special, research, and national as well as related information centers, is to carry out information management responsibilities in the areas of acquisition, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information to users. And users are expected to utilize the information resources to satisfy their information needs.

II. Types of Libraries and their Basic Functions

It is important to note that libraries are not only repository of knowledge but has an active role to serve as a catalyst for national development. It opens up minds and inspires people to see vision because the mind is the center point where progress originates. Libraries are responsible for feeding the mind.

There are different types of libraries and each has their core functions.

1. National Libraries

These are libraries established to collect and preserve publications of a country. According to the *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*, "a library is called a national one when it is the official repository of printed works, a general access library; an information-bibliographical center and a center of coordination, planning and stimulation of the entire library system of the nation". In relation to other libraries, national libraries occupy an independent and exceptional position.

2. Public Libraries

In contrast to national libraries, public libraries are established for a region or a local community and supported substantially by public funds. The main purpose of public libraries is to make it possible for members of the community to meet their information needs. They collect materials of value to the community. Their duties are not only to meet existing demands but also to encourage and facilitate demands from more people. They have wide and varied responsibilities, ranging from promotion of individual development, commerce, technical progress, and social and cultural advancement.

3. Academic Libraries

Academic libraries are libraries in higher institutions of learning. They are varied and distinctive as the institutions they serve. These include college libraries, polytechnic libraries, and university libraries. Academic libraries are a place where students, lecturers, and researchers can seek for themselves information needed for their academic pursuit, which is the ultimate goal of education. The basic function of academic libraries is to aid the academic and research programs by acquiring and making available books, other materials, and services needed.

4. Special Libraries

Oti (2000) defined special library as those libraries in big corporations and industries as integral part of their organization. They are to serve the information needs of their parent organization, to enable them achieve their aims and objectives. Special libraries are distinguished by their characteristics, narrow subject interest coverage, and nature of services provided. They provide exhaustive and expeditious service to their users through selective dissemination of information and current awareness services.

5. School Libraries

School libraries are libraries in pre-tertiary institutions such as nursery, primary, and secondary schools with the mission of contributing to the intellectual development of pupils and students. They contain a collection of books and other learning materials, organized by trained professionals and placed in one or two big rooms in the school for the use of the pupils and teachers for learning, recreational activities, personal interest, and interpersonal relationships of children in school. School libraries encourage the development of skill in reading, support the school curriculum, and inculcate intellectual development in school children.

III. Rationale for National Development

Development is critical and essential to the sustenance and growth of any nation. A country is classified as developed when it is able to provide qualitative life for its citizenry. A large majority of the world's population are in the developing world. The problems of urban population, rural stagnation, unemployment, and growing inequalities continue to face less developed countries, which Nigeria belongs to. Hopes of accelerated development are difficult to realize. This gloomy situation is of great concern to stakeholders and the concerned citizenry. Nigeria has not been able to engender meaningful development in spite of her huge human, material, and natural resource endowments. This has greatly affected her quest for improved quality of life of her citizens. Poverty, unemployment, and starvation still pervade the nook and cranny of the country. National development is essential and critical to the growth and sustenance of a country in order to successfully enhance the meaningful standard of living among the populace.

IV. Library as the Engine of National Development

Development has to do with qualitative and sometimes quantitative changes in the life of a people or an individual. At the national level, there is an improvement in the general well-being of the people while at the individual level, development implies activity, increased skill and capacity, self-discipline, greater freedom, responsibility, and material well-being.

For some people, libraries are so abstract that it cannot have any impact on their practical life. Consequently, such people believe that libraries are irrelevant to the development. This misconception persists because of people's ignorance of what libraries are all about. They fail to realize that libraries are one of the most (if not the most) useful enterprises ever undertaken by man. This is evidence by human development, which shows that libraries have been the greatest force that has contributed in shaping human civilization. Hence, Owen Meredith, as quoted by Ireland (1884), argued that "It is, however, not to the museum, or the lecture-room, or the drawing-school, but to the library that we must go for the completion of our humanity. It is books that bear from age to age the intellectual wealth of the world."

There have been enormous advances in human knowledge since the last century. Every field of human endeavor has had a quantum leap in advancement, leading to many discoveries and inventions, two of which are the internet and cloning, with their use and abuse. Along with the new knowledge have come new challenges. And these new developments have presented to the average citizen with a spectacle of the greatest confusion. People seldom stop to ponder that it is the business of libraries to bring order, clarity, and consistency into all this confusion. Here, libraries become "an instrument used to organize knowledge, proffer a focus and then give the individual a sense of direction out of a maze of confusion" (Anyika, 2005; p. 131).

Even at the individual level, libraries are a tool for the satisfaction of man's curiosity. There is a great desire by man to know things. This urge motivates them to satisfy their curiosity. Their curiosity is extended everywhere and into everything. It is bounded only by the limitations of their imagination.

> Sometimes, one makes a breakthrough and finds answer to one's enquiries but human progress does not consist in finding the answers and so ending the search, rather, it is in adjustment to the search itself. Life becomes nothing but a perpetual enquiry. We live by the results of the enquiry but we are never satisfied with them, and so while we accept them in order to exist, we also endeavour to continue the enquiry. (Anyika, 2005; p. 131)

And library is "the working tool of inquisitive men. This then gives credence to the Socratic dictum that 'an unexamined life is not worth living'" (Anyika, 2005; p. 131). Library makes people more rational in their actions because one who knows the rational means will usually act in accordance with that means. "This is equally in tandem with the Platonic maxim that 'knowledge is virtue' while vice is due to ignorance." (Anyika, 2005; p. 131) Therefore, the presence of libraries in a society will certainly enhance positive human activity in that society.

Libraries are also germane in educational development of a nation. This is done through their services and programs, introducing children to the habit and joy of reading and aiding scholastic and researchers in contributing their quota to the development. Students are supported with the aid of books and other relevant information to perform well in their academic work while teachers and lecturers get teaching aids from libraries to prepare useful lesson notes that will help them pass useful knowledge to their students.

Library service "has been championing the provision of relevant information materials to different communities through the establishment of rural libraries with the element of supporting adult literacy as well as helping in the establishment of an informed society" (Achitabwino, 2007). Through such libraries,

> people who were deprived of information are now capable of reading and writing. High above all, having come across a wide range of information pertaining to issues affecting their societies, they have been able to make informed decisions that have been helping in implementing socio-economic growth. (Achitabwino, 2007)

The role of libraries in promoting the marketing of the tourism sector cannot be underestimated. Libraries as reservoirs of information are the most reliable information reference centers where tourists can seek information on hotels, motels, national parks, mountains, and other interesting places. Libraries also play a vital role in the health sector. A vibrant health sector needs well-documented and organized health information meant for dissemination to users and potential users in order to consolidate health records, planning and management. Libraries provide people with appropriate information on diseases and prevention measures, health care, side effects of premarital affairs, dangers of early pregnancies, and any other health related information.

Another essential role of libraries "is the propounding and propagation of a political ideology for national development and cohesion". (Anyika, 2005; p. 134) Effective citizen action is possible only where citizens know how to gain access to information of all kinds and have the skills to become responsible and informed participants in democracies. This is especially so as e-government evolves. Libraries offer real and virtual civic spaces where citizens can speak freely, share similar interests and concerns, and pursue what they believe are in their public interest. Ultimately, free discourse among informed citizens assures civil society and civil society, in turn, provides the social capital necessary to achieve common goals. Lady Bird Johnson, as quoted by Ogbonna (2013; p. 70), observed that "Perhaps no place in any community is so totally democratic as the town library. The only entrance requirement is interest". Wright (2001), as quoted by Bhatti (2010), opined that

> Information promotes and empowers citizens' participation in the democratic process; it maintains the Rule of Law and creates a viable outlet for the injection of public opinion. Information informs the policy-making process of political leadership, all of which nurtures the building of sustainable peace for the enhancement of the state.

It is equally incontrovertible that libraries have the greatest impact on agricultural development of a nation. Libraries provide relevant information on agricultural improvement to all agricultural officers, extension workers, researchers, peasant farmers, policy makers, etc. on the new method of improving livestock and better farming practices that will meet the increasing need of the population. Libraries make such information available and also provide positive steps towards improving the declining food security of a country.

V. Conclusion

Information "is a vital tool in all forms of human endeavour. It is the link pin of national development" (Achitabwino, 2007). In order to grow more efficiently in all aspects of society, developing countries must collect and provide access to adequate and up-to-date "information on food security, health, democracy, population, education, family planning, youth empowerment, gender equality, environment, etc." (Achitabwino, 2007). In this regard, it is imperative that all hands must be on deck toward establishing effective libraries for the proper management, provision, and dissemination of information.

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The dynamic library takes things a bit further. What if we were going to a job 5 days a week, and rather than bringing our toolbox back and forth every day, we just left it there? We save a lot of weight an energy every day by not lugging that heavy toolbox to and from the job site. Also, what if there were multiple people on the job site that could simply share one toolbox, rather than each bringing their own? Instead of weighing our executable program with a giant toolbox of tools it may or may not use, we tell it to look for a toolbox already there. How does this work? A static library is like having a refrigerator next to you in the living room, while a dynamic library is like walking to the kitchen every time you want something. Both have their benefits depending on what you value. FAT! You may use dynamic libraries as dependent libraries (by specifying them in your product's link line) or as runtime loaded libraries (by loading them when they are needed, using dlopen(3) OS X Developer Tools Manual Page). This article describes the process of installing and using dynamic libraries. It's based on the Ratings dynamic library and the StarMeals, StarMeals2, and Grades programs, which are included in this document's companion-file package. Before you can use a dynamic library as a dependent library, the library and its header files must be installed on your computer. The standard locations for header files are ~/include, /usr/local/include and /usr/include. The standard locations for dynamic libraries are ~/lib, /usr/local/lib, and /usr/lib. Modern web development is more than just HTML and CSS. Programmers rely on a wide scope of tools for setting up dynamic sites with interactive content. Basic tools for web development. Users have many different possibilities for creating their own websites if the given web project has been set up in the form of a hosting package or a server. From intuitive website software with limited design features, to flexible CMSs (content management systems) and custom-written source code, the scope of creative possibilities for developing a website is wide. Running dynamic websites that use complex content management systems benefit from quick loading times. This is because they ensure good performance and therefore increase user-friendliness.

This article introduces dynamic libraries and shows how using dynamic libraries instead of static libraries reduces both the file size and initial memory footprint of the apps that use them. This article also provides an overview of the dynamic loader compatibility functions apps use to work with dynamic libraries at runtime. What Are Dynamic Libraries? Most of an app's functionality is implemented in libraries of executable code. When an app is linked with a library using a static linker, the code that the app uses is copied to the generated executable file. Agbo, A.D. and Onyekweodiri, N.E. (2014) Libraries Are Dynamic Tools for National Development. Chinese Librarianship: An International Electronic Journal, 38, 29-35. has been cited by the following article These dynamics have posed challenges and consequences for socio-economic development for academic libraries in Ghana. This study analyses and assesses research data management policies and practices in academic libraries in order to develop a strategic and comprehensive framework that depicts real time coordination among stakeholders for socio-economic development, thus asetting a strong agenda for national development in Ghana.