

The Requirement For Worthy Attribute of Library Staff in Tertiary Institutions' Libraries in the 21st Century

Gbotosho Ajibola Sunmade (Ph.D)

*Collection Development Unit Sola Akinrinade Central Library, Osogbo, Osun State University
Nigeria*

ABSTRACT: This study focuses on the requirement for worthy attribute of library staff in tertiary institutions' library services so as to be more relevant in the new information age. This is based on the fact that institutions' libraries are set up now to extend services beyond their physical walls, provide materials accessible by electronic means and at the same time to provide unrestricted access to information. Invariably, to effectively cope with their changing roles in the library system, Librarians need to avail themselves to training and retraining programmes local, regional and international so as to keep pace with the development in the Information Communication Technologies in the 21st Century to provide optimum services for library users/clienteles. The study concludes that individuals must be preparing to make personal sacrifices towards upgrading themselves. Similarly, tertiary institutions/ organisations should as a matter of obligation develop people; it has no choice. It either helps them grow or it stunts them. It either forms them or it deforms them as opine by Drucker, Peter F (1990). This training and retraining programmes is imperative in this new Information Communication Technology dispensation as far as librarianship is concerned.

KEY WORDS: *Attribute of library staff, Tertiary institutions, Libraries, 21st Century, Training and Retraining people.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

From historical perspective, according to Israel and Babangida (2017) state that the society realised that record keeping of daily routine is not just important but very crucial for development (historical purpose). They also state that as the records continue to increase in volumes, the need to collate, arrange and preserve them in a systematic order becomes imperative for historical purpose; this results to the word library. The preservation function for historical development stimulated the existence of library and so it was referred to as a place where books are kept. The Library plays an indispensable role in the life of society since it is concerned with the collection, processing, storage and dissemination of recorded information for the purpose of reading, study and consultation.

There is no gain saying the fact that, the major labour force in the formal and organised private sectors is largely determined by various educational institution received with the tacit support of academic libraries which are the memory tank and store house of knowledge of the higher institutions of learning. Whichever name a library is called; the traditional function is preservation which still forms part of the overall role played by library in any given society. It is a collection of information in whatever format (books, globe, periodical, magazines, maps, ephemerals, C Ds, computer, webs, internet and databases etc) systematically arranged in a given order; preserved for the purpose of study, education, information, knowledge, leisure and research among others.

The library is known to have contributed immensely to the achievement of all tertiary institutions' aspirations in a number of ways: providing an environment that encourages development of library staff capabilities and skills; engaging with the university's internationalisation strategies; providing stewardship for university's research outputs through tertiary Research Repository; providing a robust, reliable and stable suite of library applications and associated information technology infrastructure in collaboration with tertiary institution's partners; promoting and providing information about the library's programmes, resources and activities; Engaging with students and staff in affiliated hospitals, teaching and research locations; Managing resources in an efficient, cost-effective and environmentally sustainable way in accordance with the tertiary institution's policies and procedures; providing high quality, welcoming research and learning environments that meet group and individual needs; providing tertiary institution lectures on-line; provide a safe and secure environments for collections, staff and students including facilities for people with special needs.

In addition, the library has equally contributed immensely to the achievement of all tertiary institutions by providing materials from other libraries and staff; Leading research data management across tertiary institutions; ensuring that collections are discoverable and accessible, regardless of format or location; providing information, lending and online reading list services for library users; partnering with faculty to ensure explicit development of information resources, learning and to develop in- and extra- curricular resources and programmes; managing tertiary institutions publishing and nurturing a culture of publishing; developing, promoting and providing access to scholarly collections and resources across multiple sites, meeting individual campus and faculty needs; providing copyright education and advice for development of programmes and resources; engaging with and providing services as appropriate for tertiary institution partnership with organisations, commercial operations and the community. It is often said that an academic institution is as distinct as its library. Hence, the main objective of this study is to look into the requirement for a worthy attribute of library staff in this 21st century, an era of Information Communication Technology (ICT).

The traditional function of the librarian is the selection, acquisition, organisation, and provision or delivery of books, information and knowledge, to a community of readers or users (Panda, 2007). A librarian is an information professional trained in library science or information science (the organisation needs). The word librarian is also used for those in charge of collection of library resources and sources. Although, librarians have been traditionally associated with books as seen by the etymologies of the word *Librarian*. Modern librarian deals with information in many formats including books, magazines, newspapers, photographs and other graphic materials, bibliographic databases and Internet resources in general. They often provide other information services including computer provisions and training co-ordinations of public programmes, basic literacy education and help in finding and using community resources. A librarian is a person who develops procedures for organising information and provides services that assist and instruct people in the most efficient way to identify and access any needed information or information resources. In addition, a librarian is a professional person who has been trained in library science and engaged in library services or a specialist in library work.

A librarian capturing information, process information, organise information, manage and disseminate information to the users' needs. As already pointed out, qualification alone cannot make a good library manager, to manage library successfully it is necessary for librarians to know what precisely he/she is managing or what he is expected to manage. The four key resources a librarian is expected to manage are people (library staff/library clientele, resources, building and finance. Each of these resources has to be managed separately but the end result of the librarian is good management-good services and users satisfaction.

For the librarians to be relevant in this new information age, they must as a matter of necessity through training improve their competence in the use of new technology in order to enhance the quality of library services, consequently, the need to handle new technology in this dispensation is all the more important and sacrosanct so as to realise the task of making available and transmitting the relevant information in their holdings. These training sessions, which concern all units of an institution or organisation, may be conducted by a specialist within the institution or by an authority brought into the institution for this purpose. The training programmes described so far are developed and presented by the institution.

Moreover, many training and educational programmes exist outside the institution; these should be available to employees. Attendance at local, regional and national conferences and workshops provides opportunities for employee development and growth. But, at the present time, when the roles and responsibilities of librarians of all types are changing, more structured forms of training or education must be available. Tertiary institutions/organisations should as a matter of obligation develop people; it has no choice. It either helps them grow or it stunts them. It either forms them or it deforms them (Peter F. Drucker, 1990). Many institutions provide tuition funds for employees who take formal courses that are job related. The need to take courses beyond the first professional degree increases as library operations may need extensive retraining to prepare them to work with a new computer system or to prepare them for new positions in other parts of the library. The fear of automation still encountered in a few librarians might be lessened if they knew that systematic plans were being made to retrain individuals displaced by automation.

Nath and Bahera (2008) opine that in order to reach an understanding of the role of librarians in the present virtual library environment, it is worthwhile examining the role librarians have played in the past. In ancient times there was little if any distinction between an archive and a library. For many centuries book collecting was an opportunity either to display one's wealth, or the results of scholarship. It was not until the nineteenth century that library collections became more universally available and library science began to codify standards for describing and organising resources and librarians began to move beyond merely keeping and preserving books (Baker, 1997).

It is of importance to know other roles of librarians that grew from that of a collector and preserver of information resources to a professional involved in very complex issues of organisation, the dissemination of and access to information. Secondly, the role of the librarian, particularly during the past two decades, has further evolved to encompass the burgeoning technological developments.

Lastly, Panda (2007) pointed out that the role of librarian today is to acquire, give access to, and safeguard carriers of knowledge and information in all forms and to provide instruction and assistance in the use of the collections to which their users have access. Libraries are about the preservation, dissemination and use of recorded knowledge in whatever form it may come.

Ikphindi (1999) states that the fundamental skills required by the librarians and other information among others include:

- Knowledge
- How the computer functions and
- Imputing and retrieval of information from it.

With the use of computer, limitless opportunities for information sourcing on the internet abound in a manner never known in the history of man's civilization.

Basic Techniques Competencies/Skills of the 21st Century Librarian are as follows:

- Ability to troubleshoot new technology,
- Ability to embrace change,
- Ability to keep on with new ideas in technology and librarianship (enthusiasm for learning,
- Comfort in the online medium,
- Ability to easily learn new technology,
- To evaluate available sources of information,

The Higher Level Competencies are as follows:

- Vision to translate traditionally library services into the online medium,
- Ability to sell ideas/library services,
- Ability to question and evaluate library services,
- Critical of technologies and ability to compare technologies,
- Project management skills,
- Ability to evaluate the needs of all stakeholders,

There are three critical issues for education and society in the 21st century to which the profession of librarianship is uniquely placed to respond and to which it must respond in the context of an unqualified commitment to intellectual freedom. The first issue is information technology. The second one is information literacy. And the third one is information service (Panda, 2007).

II. LIBRARIES: A CHANGING CONCEPT

The institution called "Library" had up till now served as a tangible structure where all types of documents are kept and retrieved for study, reading and consultation. These documents required the physical presence of librarians and clients in the library in order to exchange information. The Librarians in the past were solely the custodians of knowledge and no meaningful search of library materials could be made by the users without the assistance of librarians. Nevertheless, libraries, worldwide since the last two decades have undergone significant metamorphosis that is from a purely traditional modeled manual service delivery system to more dynamic technologically driven systems. In Nigeria, this change has become more manifest in the new millennium. It is now not mandatory for users to come to the library or seek the assistance of any librarian before they can keep themselves abreast with the information that is revolving round the globe.

"Doctors and executives alike complain that they cannot keep up with the latest developments in their fields. Hardly a meeting or conference takes place today without some ritualistic oratory about the challenge of change. Among many there is an uneasy mood—a suspicion that change is out of control (Alvin, 1970)." According to Akintunde (2004) the physical walls of libraries are collapsing like the collapsed Berlin wall. He continues, the librarians of today must be multi-skilled in the management of text, voice and graphics in completely new media of storage and access. He must be flexible enough to update his skills with the ever-changing technology. For instance, storage devices have undergone several changes in the last ten years from magnetic tapes to low memory hard disks, to 5¼ floppy diskettes, to 3½ floppy diskettes, compact disks (e.g. compact disk read only memory – CD ROM) to higher capacity hard disks, remote servers and now Universal Serial Bus (USB) hard and flask diskettes.

According to Mutula and Ojedokun (2008) the World Wide Web (WWW) is a powerful platform for providing access to multimedia information. Consequently, the WWW has been used as the platform for the development of digital libraries (DLs). The concept of digital library refers to collections of electronic resources consisting of text, audio, visual, graphics, and animations in nature that are accessible through the aid of digital technologies. In the real sense of it, a digital library should provide users access to electronic information resources via electronic means.

However, this definition also includes electronic resources (such as databases on stand-alone PCs, information on CD-ROMs, etc) that may not be accessible through the internet or other networks. Digital library collections may be born (digital originated or through the process of digitisation from existing print materials).

There are several examples of digital libraries, such as: Bartleby Library – Great Books Online (<http://www.bartleby.com/>) is the pre-eminent internet publisher of literature, reference and verse. Similarly, Library of Congress (<http://www.loc.gov/>) provides entrance to the catalogue and a number of collections, projects and a large directory of links. On the other hand, the Collaborative Digital Reference Service (CDRS) (<http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/digiref/>) is a DL project involving several institutions, and provides professional reference service to researchers through an international, digital network of libraries and related institutions. The other well-known digital library is the New York Public Library (<http://digital.nypl.org/>), which provides a rich site, mostly concentrating on digitised special collections of texts and images. Also, the United States National Library of Medicine (NLM) (<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/hinfo.html>) is the world's largest medical library and online system. It includes MEDLINE, MEDLINEplus, and links to numerous other health-related resources, including research programs for computational biology and medical informatics. Moreso, University of California, Berkeley (<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/>), provides a wealth of digitised collections.

From the foregoing, it is obvious libraries now gradually move from the orthodox way of keeping paper records to paper less libraries whereby all records appear in one audio-visual format or the other. Libraries and other information service centres are exciting, innovative, changing-ever-turbulent- organisations today. They offer vital services and added value to an information society by selecting a vast array of resources and access points that provide the right bit of information, at the right time, for the right seeker of information, in the right format, and at the right cost. Measuring the value of that information through acquisition, organisation, access, and delivery is vital in the life of information-oriented libraries and other information organisations, and it is the responsibility of librarians and other information professionals. This greatly enhanced goal requires human interaction and technology interplay for its success. The acceleration of change-in technology, in mobility, in urbanization, in internationalisation, in economics-has affected libraries and other information centres as much as any other organisation.

Drucker (1979) asserts that the present is a time of great entrepreneurial ferment, where old and staid instructions suddenly have to become very limber. He maintains that major changes that have affected many organisations are those related to:

- the introduction of new technologies, which creates new industries and render existing industries obsolete;
- the emergence of a world economy that involves a world market or global shopping centre;
- the development of a changing political and social matrix, involving much disenchantment with current major institutions;
- the creation of a “knowledge economy” in which about half of the funds available are spent on procuring ideas and information and in which knowledge has become the centre factor of production.

The effects of change are not limited to any one country, developed or emerging, or one type of setting, whether it is a public, academic, school, or special library or information centre. Library and other information centres in every part of the world are experiencing the challenging phenomenon that enables a paradigm shift in information-orientated organisations: from an ownership mentality, obsessed with in-house activities, to a universal information-access attitude, collaborating and sharing resources and services.

Nevertheless, many workers and managers in those information organisations/institutions discount change as a force in the organisation's/institution's life, while they might embrace it in their personal lives. For instance, almost a third of all American workers are *discounters*, who routinely reject the significance of potential future change; another 40% are *extrapolators*, who believe that the trends of the recent past will continue into the foreseeable future. However, 40% of the discounters and extrapolators indicate that they are currently going through a major, self-initiated change in their own life or careers, and another 40% are actively planning to undertake such a change (Yankelovich, 1981). How can this dichotomy of attitudes be explained, this initiation of change in personal lives but resistance to change in the organisational/institutional life? Perhaps the answer lies in the organisational culture and value system as barriers to change.

Moreso, education, information and involving knowledge workers is the first step in any planned change process. Information about needed change helps individuals and organisations/ institutions adjust to the inevitable. The *looking around* aspect of the planning process, the performance evaluation and motivational aspects of the staffing function, the leadership effectiveness training of the directing functions and the feedback options and budgeting applications of the controlling endeavour provide important information about both external and internal forces promoting and facilitating change and they offer options for making tough choices, decisions about future directions of the information organisation. In actual fact, risk is the primary factor in this equation. But what is the alternative? According to Curzon (1989) the global information network creates a complex and intense dimension for librarians unknown to their predecessors.

The amount, diversity and speed of information available through state-of-the-art technology have surrounded library managers with a continual flow of new directions and opportunities.

III. HUMAN RESOURCES IN THE LIBRARY

It is veritable fact that professional librarians play a central role in the execution of any educational programme since libraries are meant to support and help in fulfilling the stated objectives of the parent institutions. Thus, it is part of librarian duties to teach and help students to learn. Akihgbé (1997) states that library building may represent 5% of successful library service and the book collection 20% but staff represents 75% of what it takes to make a good library. In the light of the above, for the purpose of having a sustainable library in high institutions of learning, there must be a key figure, a man (librarian) who must be in a position to manipulate and control the technologies to package information for the users.

As opined by Bhatnagar (2008) that today the walls of library have very little meaning except for security purposes because the library is getting shaped on the internet and the different networks around the world. Each individual library is acting as a place for storage and service to the users. Although a number of libraries have Internet connectivity and access to other electronic resources. This scene is going to grow quite fast in 21st century and the librarians have to face the challenge of this changing scene, or otherwise they can get replaced by the professionals who are able to disseminate information through the Internet and other electronic sources. The duties of a librarian towards his institution will compel him to change his role as an information gatherer and information provider, not only of what has been stored in his library but what is available anywhere in the world. This brings him closer to the needs of the users and he therefore should have the capacity to evaluate the precise requirements of the users besides having complete access to the world resources.

In a similar manner Agaja (1997) puts it thus: “as a professional librarian who has been properly tutored in his trade, the twenty-first century Librarianship expects the librarian to be skillful in the complex arts of managing human and material resources, information packaging, library repository, strategic planning, budgeting and effective allocation of funds among competing needs” It is highly imperative that a professional librarian must keep pace with the latest development in the profession. The concept of “traditional librarian” is no longer fashionable. Changes, according to Aina (2004), in the profession are happening both in magnitude and diversity. It could be deduced from the assertion of Aina that the role of the librarians is changing, hence to meet up with the new-fangled expectations of the day, the librarians must transform themselves through training programmes.

A librarian cannot face the challenges unless he is trained well to have access to the new information resources that are present now and are becoming available globally through Internet. If we look at the courses being taught in high institutions, most especially in the universities today, we find that we are still rooted in a major way in the 19th century principles of classification and library administration whereas in the advanced countries like USA, there has been a total transformation of the syllabi. As such, unless the syllabi are totally changed, keeping in view the requirements of the 21st century librarian, we are not only deceiving the students that are passing each year from the departments of Library Science in the Universities but we are laying no foundations for creating proper manpower for the 21st century. In addition to the existing courses in the departments of Library Services we need to create new courses in *Information Technology* and *Networking* which are at par with the university courses or preferably far better than them so that the acute shortage of good manpower today does not hamper the modernization of libraries in the country.

Ojo-Igbinoba (1995) has stated that continuing education/professional development is important for librarians because it may be the only avenue for upward mobility. Training, as observed by Thampisa (1999), should of necessity, provide the learner with the knowledge and skills and attitudes necessary to carry out specific tasks and abilities. And it should be based on what can or should be done at workplace rather than wholly on what can be demonstrated in the examination room.

During the past three decades, the application of information technology in the libraries was treated by most of the librarians as a threat to them. As such, in many cases they did not equip themselves with the knowledge about hardware, software and the standards but also in some other cases; they did not cooperate with the younger staff with such knowledge who had the whole life ahead of them and needed to change and contribute to the society. It is now time for us to understand that information technology is going to stay forever. Our attitudes need to be changed. The communication infrastructure all over the world is one side increasing in its bandwidth to handle electronic traffic and on the other more and more data in electronic form is getting exchanged through these channels, thus increasing the traffic. It is likely that the fibre optic lines the old telegraph lines are going to be spread all over the world unless better communication medium emerges, thus making communication between individuals broad based and fast.

According to Bhatnagar (2008) states that the recent experiments in Canada reveal that Internet access in transfer of electronic data is possible through electric wires and as the experiments are being made it is likely that in the 21st century in addition to telephones radiowave, satellite and fibre optic communication modes, the ordinary electronic wires may revolutionise access to electronic information. This put the librarians in a very difficult situation, because the user is going to access information from his home and will not use the libraries except for the use of archival material not available in machine readable form. This will direct the librarian to undertake, on one hand, working only as a guide for providing information to the users who do not know how to use it and on the other, begin creating databases of information which are not available electronically on the networks. Advances in multimedia applications are going to add a new dimension to a librarian's job. The librarian will have to qualify to provide greater inputs for the creations of multimedia editions of books.

It is a known fact that the World Wide Web (www) is going to be more interactive and multi-dimensional, incorporating multimedia presentations. And all this data will be accessible through the Information Super Highways; microcomputers will have the capacity to process more than 40 million instructions per second. As data grows beyond the controlling capacities, librarians will be using compression and other techniques of optical storage. Also, the technology is changing fast. Copying with the technology is going to remain a continuous challenge.

“Jain (1999) echoes the fact that “well-trained individual know the scope, expectations and depth of their job and will be able to add building blocks to their professionalism as they progress through their careers, training is therefore critical for human resource planning and development” In order to further buttress this, Castelyn (1981) has stated the objectives of further training as to:

- Keep abreast and up to date with new development
- Increase promotion prospects
- Develop and maintain competence
- Be educated in the special field of the professional
- Widen experience and practical knowledge in the practice of librarianship
- Promote personal job satisfaction
- Enhance existing qualifications.

It is observed from the submission of Castelyn (1981) that for information professional to keep abreast with the various changes, lifelong training in the form of continuing education or professional development must be put in place.

Institutions/organisations could not exist without people. An institution's employees are the key to its success or failure. In highly automated settings, people are required to coordinate and control the automated functions. Digital information libraries have human resource requirements that are only now beginning to come clear (Young, 1998). While libraries and other information agencies are becoming more automated, they are still highly labour intensive organisations, with most of them devoting between 50 and 60% of their budgets to employee costs (Stueart and Moran, 1998). In such labour-intensive organisations/institutions, the human resources are especially critical to success, because almost everything else in the organisation depends on them.

A library can have an outstanding collection of print and electronic materials, access to a wealth of online resources, cutting-edge automated systems, and an award-winning building, but if it does not have a well-trained, competent staff, the patrons/clientele using the library will not be served effectively. Thus, in libraries and information centres as in most other organisations, one of the manager's most critical functions is to provide the human resources needed to carry out the functions of the organisation/institution. The function of staffing encompasses all the tasks associated with obtaining and retraining the human resources of an organisation. These tasks include recruitment, selection, training, evaluation, compensation and development of employees.

In most organisations/institutions human resource specialists have moved away from being considered paper-pushing, clerical workers to being thought of as a strategic part of management. Today they spend a large part of their time matching organisational problems with human resource solutions, demonstrating the impact that human resources have on the bottom line of the organisation (Sharon, 1997). In almost all modern organisations, there is a realisation that the organisation is the people who work there. Hence those specialists who work with employees are recognised as an essential part of the organisation. Some large libraries and information centres have specially trained individuals who work exclusively on the staffing aspects of management. These individuals, usually called human resources or personnel directors, are responsible for directing the human resource functions. Other information centres or special libraries located within larger organisations use the human resources services of the parents' organisation. In a larger organisation, the human resources department consists of a director and possibly other professional level workers and support staff members who perform the clerical functions. In libraries, the human resources or personnel directors sometimes have MLS degrees, with additional coursework and experience in human resources management, but often this person is not a librarian.

It is crystal clear that Library is a convergence for both staff and students most especially in the Tertiary Institutions.

Libraries have either earned the Institutions accreditation or failed them since Librarian's are regarded as pivot for academic excellence as well as the promotion of cultural and social integration. However, the effectiveness of the Library is dependent on the resourcefulness and intellectual capabilities of Librarians in charge of the information. Thus, there is a need for Librarians to see themselves as leading light in the use of ICT so as to help in the development of bull by the horn so as to remain relevant in the discharging of their duties by updating their knowledge and deploy their skills accordingly. Librarians require training from time to time to keep pace with current ICT technology and resources since we are in the age of information technologies. However, in Nigeria, the teaching-learning process is still so rigid and teacher centered. And most teachers are still untrained for the information age, hence, student are not taught how to seek, interact process and utilize information. Consequently, the modern day librarians should be ready to bridge this gap and help the students to navigate the ocean of information, it is said, is the life wire of not only an organization but also a nation. Also, the Nigeria Library Association should set standard and for training and retraining of heads of Libraries and other Library Staff on ICT development. Modern day Librarians should be alive to the fact that ICT can no longer be divorced from their profiles.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Librarians should either embrace the new technology with open arms or risk being ineffective in the new dispensation for fast and prompt dissemination of information.
 - An enabling environment conducive for professional development must be provided by the various Institutions. Staff training must be an integral part of the overall plan for the automation project.
 - Tertiary institutions librarians should endeavour to meet the provision of NCCE (1994) in its guidelines for the running of libraries in College of education where it categorically stated that "the College Library shall strive to computerize some or all of its operation as soon as individual circumstances permit."
- Thus, all libraries must have computers with internet access and should be made available to all Librarians in that organisation.
- Many training and educational programmes exist outside the institution; should be made available to employees, such as attendance at local, regional and national conferences and workshops which provides opportunities for employee development and growth should majorly, as a matter of obligation sponsored by the employer(s). Similarly, self sponsored is as well encouraged.
 - Tertiary institutions/organisations should as a matter of obligation develop people most especially library staff; it has no choice. It either helps them grow or it stunts them. It either forms them or it deforms them at the present time, when the roles and responsibilities of librarians of all types are changing. More structured forms of training or education must be available.
 - Skills development of the existing staff and any other strategy is required if they are to remain relevant in the technological age.
 - Sponsoring library staff to conferences, workshops and seminars should cut across all cadre of library personnel either on monthly or annual basis. This will motivate library personnel to develop positive attitude towards work.

V. CONCLUSION

This paper concludes that individual, institution/organisation must be prepared to make personal sacrifices towards upgrading their knowledge in their various organisations for an efficient and effective dissemination of information. Also, institution/organisation must as well be prepared and involved in the training of their staff. As at present, no professional Librarian can survive outside the knowledge age in a world that is now run by digital knowledge. The way out of this doleddrum is the integration of computer knowledge awareness, computer appreciation, computer literacy and computer application into the library services. Diversion of funds meant for the libraries development should be avoided to ensure better structures and facilities for enhancing information dissemination. It is imperative that issues raised in this study are noted; and immediate action taken by appropriate quarters to ameliorate challenges facing 21st century staff in tertiary institutions' libraries, to allow for feasible, effective and efficient services in Nigeria.

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