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Commerce

SERVICE DELIVERY AND DYNAMIC OF CHANGE IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN NIGERIA: AN OVERVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Information has an entropic character; it does not organize itself, rather it has a tendency toward randomness. The primary purpose of organizing library collections is to meet the various information needs of library users and library fundamental purpose. is to acquire, store, organize, preserve, disseminate, or otherwise provide access to the vast bodies of knowledge already produced. This article deals with the present changes in the library environment due to the information revolution which has taken over all human professions. It highlights the librarian and change, management of change, change model, need for change in the library and library services. It concludes that for change to be effective, planning and task should be given to those who can perform certain task effectively in order to achieve the desired goals and objectives; this will boost staff moral and users, survey should be conducted so that librarians would know the structure to put in place to achieve the need of the users and the staff services delivery.

INTRODUCTION

Library is an old institution of the society. It dates back to history of man and it's old as man himself. Historically, the introduction of new technology from the electric typewriter to the duplicating machine and from the fax machine to the computer with all of the peripheral developments has been a driving force and has resulted in major changes in the organisation of information work. Changes come as society progresses from a simple to more complex society.

Changes is inevitable in life, it happens to individual, organisation, countries and nations. If any one can claim not to have experienced a significant charging challenge, such individual is yet to be born. As they say, the only constant thing in life is change and change has an adjustment period which varies on the individual organisation or person. Change is also inequitable, not a respecter of persons, therefore it is for the better or for the worst, depending on where one may view it. The above statement is holding on the library more than any organisation. "Change, therefore can be said to be a situation in which performance of job functions requires most people throughout the organisation to learn new behaviours and skills". This development has both encouraged and enabled partnerships, consortia and collaborative alliances that are now transforming theories and principles of organisational development into systems and services in a faster and more comprehensive manner. As information webs link information workers with users of information/ seekers of knowledge. This universal revolution affects library and information services perhaps more than any other profession.

Librarian and Change

Change is the law of life and therefore, there are ways to cope or manage with any eventual change in our libraries. However, some changes are dramatic while some are subtle, similarly, some library cope with changes than others. Presently, the application of computer as an arrowhead in Library Services in the North-East a key point on ground when libraries are compared. In some libraries, most Librarians perceive changes as threatening their status quo, that is in term of management position. Library, accepting the inevitable of change must by the way meeting change in term of physical, services, management and libraries with full computerization will have a management structure different from another library without full computerization.

Change demands that we let go of some security blankets in our ways of doing things in order to embrace new challenges and opportunity for growth. Gandhi once said you must be the change you wish to see in the world. Library changes can truly only be managed by the Librarians within themselves. They must strive to develop an open mind and flexibility in the face of change, is the most effective way of dealing with it. By relaxing their mind hold on the past, they cannot learn new ways. However, one must not let fear of surviving change cripple one's courage to move on, once there is slight adjustment in organisation or personal life.

MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE

In managing changes effectively in any organisation, what is most vital is having a right attitude with positive out look. This will provide the flexibility factor in the face of change. Library in this 21st century is faced with tremendous impact on all aspect of Library Services and day to day activities ranging from acquisition, organisation, preservation, reference service, cataloguing and classification, inter library network and with the designation of the Librarians etc.

The activities or changes that need management in the library include Network Management, Database Management, Data Capturing inter net exploitation searching and retrieval of information. On the area of designation; librarian were known to be book keepers but the changes in the information service delivery, they are now seen as information service officer, information consultant, communication officer. Infact, the nature of jobs description is drastically changing for effective ser vices. In addition, several global changes have affected knowledge-based libraries and information centres as stated by Stewart and Moran, primary among them are:

- The emergence of a global complex that enable information services centres, as a part of the information economy, to offer a greater variety services, in-h o u s e , online, consortia and virtual access project.
- The development of a changing political and social matrix that enable seekers of information to express disencha ntment with the status quo and demand alternative.

• The creation of a so-called knowledge economy is which greater effort is spent on procuring ideas and information in a global society in which knowledge has become an important central factor in development.

These initiatives present new challenges because, information services organisation cannot control much of the changing world around them. Organisation or libraries can choose to view change as a cause or a condition and thereby become reactive or proactive.

CHANGE MODEL
Cassey and Savastinak (1979) in their Library 2.0, a guide to participatory library service provide three branches of change model, which are investigation team, planning team and review team. They said that, the change model allowed all staff to contribute in the change process, that is from the cleaner to the librarian. In the model every customer or staff idea for new or improved service offering and procedures goes through the investigative team for trial consideration. They further say that for possible implementation, a planning team is then created and charged with gathering data to determine feasibility. In the case when the idea is determined to be feasible, plan is set in place for implementation and plan for reviewing the services after implementation. The review team uses the review plan criteria set to evaluate the service at regular intervals.

Change Model by Cassey and Savastinak
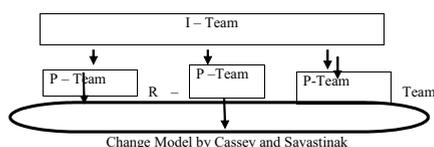
I – Investigation Team
P – Planning Team
R – Review Team

What is Library Management
Management has been existing in library organisation just like any other organisations. Library management is a recent development in librarianship literature, proper search will reveal that literature of librarianship management is full of articles of library administration. The changes in the society has now changed the course of administration to 'management' and management is thought in library schools.

Management generally follow the same pattern in every organisation. It needs the intellectual and professional services of men and women who have been trained for such purpose. Therefore, the aim of management in any organisation is to solve problems and ensure that the mission or objectives of the organisation is attained.

Need for Change
The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English define 'change' as the process or result of some thing becoming different or a situation experience that is different from what happened before and is usually interesting or enjoyable. From the above definition, the situation of library management and services has changed from manual system to electronic system and has become more interesting and enjoyable to the users and staff in organising their information need and retrieval.

Every librarian is keenly aware of and concerned about change. Kolasa (1969) summarizes the facts of the inevitability of change. He says that, we may not recognize it or otherwise be cognizant of it, we may oppose it or we may try even to accelerate it. No matter what our position may be, change make it course in the evaluation of human effort and that change may take place slowly that it is not perceptible in one generation or even two or it may occur with such rapidity

that we are left some what breathless in the wake of the wave.

Libraries, mostly in the developing countries are now faced with the situation as observed above, especially in the North-East Zone of Nigeria, libraries in academic environment are vibrating from the force of change and a wide variety of forces bombarding the modern library. These forces can be summarized into four broad areas of technological change; The knowledge explosion, product and services, obsolesce and social change.

The above force by implication pose a serious problem to libraries in Nigeria with particular reference to the North East Zone Libraries. Academic Libraries, therefore to be relevant must be ready to accommodate a higher percentage of change. Opeyemi (2005) in her contribution says that library and information science is part of the environment that is very much subjected to both incremental and discontinuous change. She went further to say that for change to be effective there are lot of issues to be put into consideration and she highlighted on political reason and fund. She place emphasis on the two aspects as they form the cardinal point to technological change. Chang in organisation follows with reorganisation in order create room for both materials and human resource for effective and organized change. Library materials has now change to e-resources ie e-books, e-journals etc and the designation of staff also changes e.g we have computer analysis, information managers, software developer or designers, website maintenance officers, data analyst and cyber librarians etc. All these are created due to changes in the services delivery.

Library services ranges from acquisition, dissemination preservation, organisation, reference services, cataloguing and classification which standout as very important aspect of all the services in the library. Hunter and Bakewll (1991) see it as an art of describing and listing library materials in such a way that it will make possible to discover the nature and the extent of what is available and if possible, where they may be located or obtained. The function are performed to have access to myrial of information sources hold in a particular information centre or library. Ajibero (2001) opined that ''the end product of cataloguing and classification provide the much-needed access to library collection'' and the knowledge organisation describes the content of each item.

The emerging information society will require the skills of librarian to help organised information resources using modern tools and before the introduction of the tools, the mission statement must be there when thinking about changing to meet the need of the users. The mission will drive the library services as a guide when selecting services for user and a library without a clear mission is like a boat without a captain. The mission statements create ways the libraries publicly declare their core value and purpose within the community or organisation service.

Library services:
Cataloguing and Classification are seen as control mechanism that provides orderliness in the library. It is also observed that knowledge organisation describes the content of each items, organizes those descriptions into coherent structure of relationship. Therefore, the need to trained and retrained the cataloguers to meet with the changing patterner of the work. For example, today's digital collection may be the major contribution from the print media to the internet and vice versa. In the same vein net cataloguing can only be carried out if the library is fully automated.

Secondly, Reference Services in a Library is regarded as one of the most interesting and stimulating library services. It is the root of librarianship. These services are also seen as personal assistance given to library patrons. The provision of reference services in a library or information centre therefore

be seen as and recognized as a serious aspect of library services, which seeks to satisfy the user's needs. Bopp (1995) cited Rachel, argued that the best reference services combines mediate searching, formal and informal instruction in information skills (using hard copy source, non-print media and automated system) and assistance in the use of reference sources. Reference service takes different forms but central to them is the provision of assistance to individuals seeking information. Library orientation/instruction takes the form of teaching on how to use the library. In some academic library this is conducted by the Reference Librarian on group of library patrons.

The advent of computer technology has also changed the reference services in many academic libraries in form of face-to-face services to electronic services, example e-mail internet and on-line page, with other social media. These types of services create a change in both services and management of the reference services. The library at this stage will make ways for skilful personnel and equipment to enable the library meet with demand of the patron. Here are some of the Database for Reference services:

i) Eric (Educational Resource Information Centre)
ii) Agois (Agricultural Information System)
iii) Agricola (Agricultural On-line Access)
iv) Popline
v) Lisa Abstracts (Library and Information Science Abstract)
vi) Medlars (Medicine)
vii) Tropag and Rural
viii) Abi/Inform Global, etc.

The services are changing each day as the library work to meet the needs of their patrons. From the few databases listed above, it can all be said that information services organisations are now finding beneficial to embrace change and many factors also drive strategic initiative for change in library and information services globally.

Adaptation to Changes

The library of today can be considered an open system that receive input from out side, absorbs it, and transforms that information and then transmits it back into the environment. This proactive type of organisation includes a number of sub-systems that in turn respond to this change cycle. However, adapting to change can be treated or require re-organisation in the following areas;
• Reordering of priorities
• Retraining of staff
• Reorganising of space
• Renewing equipment
• Restructuring the hierarchy and
• Redirecting financial resources.

More importantly, adapting to changes will strongly be base on the choice of software and the choice depends largely on several factors; cost, functions, flexibilities, maintenance (after sale/service), upgrade and integration with other libraries for the purpose of resources sharing e.g. (ultra library services and networking, agreement: types of licence, commercial or open source).

The next stage: The library administrators or managers should put emphasis upon the work groups; such as: software designer, software maintenance, data analysis; and the participation of the change agent, the vendor who his third party to be contacted.

Impedance to Change

Most change initiatives that fails are due to human factors that are not taken into account adequately and resistance occurs for a variety of reasons:

• People do not understand or do not want to understand the need for the change.
• People are satisfied with the status quo
• People's habits and securities are threatened
• People are sceptical about the success of the effort
• The organisation may not be ready for change
• Rapidly changing technology and societal condition render some individuals obsolete.
• Change is difficult to implement. Any type of transform ation or transition is difficult.

In many cases, resistance to change is inevitable therefore; resistance must be recognised, valued and managed. The library must find out sources of resistance, its existence and try to reduce its impact through understanding and problem solving.

CONCLUSION/SUGGESTION

As earlier remarked, change means or represents different meaning to individuals depending on how it is being perceived. Libraries are presently undergoing a very demanding exercise to enable them meet with the present day of information dissemination. An effective measure should be devised whereby fund could be available for carrying out any new initiatives. Procedures for managing change should be set out to serve as guide in the day to day activities. Task should be given to those who can perform certain task effectively in order to achieve the desired goals. Infact, this will boost staff morale. Users, survey should be conducted so that libraries would know the structures to put in place to achieve the desired goals. More importantly staff internal survey should also be conducted to know how well they are ready and see how they will react when the change is eventually put in place. Group planning must be put in place since working together normally brings out better outcomes. Meeting with experts from various institutions that have undergone such change will bring in first hand information on how things could be done. All concerned should be well educated on the various types of electronic devices which are available so that they have idea on what to do whenever needs arise. More importantly, to ease some of the constraints, linkage should be established with some foundations such as Carnegie, Macarthur and some of our local donors such CBN, NNPC etc who can help donate help with some computer units and other electronic devices for the library to help set pace in meeting the require service delivery of today's library users and training and retraining of cataloguers must always be in focus since they are behind of information dissemination service delivery.

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