

## **LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES: A PANACEA FOR PROMOTING TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN NIGERIA TO MEET GLOBAL DEMANDS**

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**ABSTRACT:** *Teacher education programmes in Nigeria have come under heavy criticism these past decades; with government and stakeholders expressing so much concern as to why the graduates are not excelling, despite the huge resources expended in the programme. The paper discussed the concept of education, teacher education programmes, the quite essential role libraries and librarians play in the advancement of teacher education programmes to meet the global demand. The paper identified some challenges facing the teacher education programme ranging from inadequate information resource, poor information utilization due to lack of information literacy skills, poor integration of new technologies in library service delivery in teacher education libraries, poor internet subscription in the E-library, and poor library services for teacher education programme. Given the fact that libraries are known as knowledge and information centres for the dissemination of information, referral, consultancy, and advocacy services. Suggestions on how libraries can advance TE programme by providing adequate print, non-print resources, effective e-resources and functional e-library and teach information literacy skills for trainee teachers to enhance teacher education programmes and students in the utilization of information for learning and researches to meet global demands.*

**KEYWORDS:** library, information, teacher, education, programme, global.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Education is a veritable tool for sustainable development and a vehicle for advancing the frontier of knowledge which is vast and expanding rapidly. The potency in education is more evident in its globalization trends where citizens are impacted with skills for development within the auspices of school by teachers. Education has been globally adopted as an agent of change and development; it serves as a weapon against ignorance and other social vices. It is also acknowledged to be the steppingstone for wealth creation and human resource development. Onwuka (2012) defines education as a powerful weapon of acquiring the strength of the society as it influences the installation of needed values and also help people to be equipped with ideas for the resolutions of the problems confronting them and reach the informed decisions on time. Ogunyinka, Okeke,&

Adedoyin (2015) asserts that education unlocks the door to modernization and that the teachers are the custodians of the keys to the door. Olorunyomi (2014) also defines education as any process by which an individual can gain knowledge or insight or develop attitudes and skills. Inadvertently education can generally be defined as a congregation of processes that enhances positive value in a society, through the instilling of knowledge, abilities and attitudes within the auspices of school. From the foregoing, it simply means that education encourages a critical evaluation of attitudes and behaviours. Therefore, the importance of education must be the prerogative of the 21<sup>st</sup> century educators as reflected in the monumental role of the teacher, which necessitates the need for quality teacher education programme to train professionals to meet global expectations. Lewin (2009) supported the views that education is the instrument that bridges the gap between individuals with innovative minds, and the application of technology for social advancement in every society. It is imperative to note, that Global development is anchored on education and capable human resource to drive its effectiveness to achieve desirable changes especially in developing countries like Nigeria.

Modern society's demands adequate and knowledgeable human resource to improve its social, economic and political sphere, which are achievable through quality education given to its citizen. Buttressing the fact that Education creates the pathway to imparting knowledge, skills and attitudes on learners through teachers, it can therefore be argued that teachers are the drivers of educational objectives and there is no nation that can rise above its teachers, the slogan 'No teacher, No nation' reaffirms the essential role of teachers in nation building. Education cannot exist on its own without a library support and the library is redundant if it cannot support education. The implication that modern teachers are challenged by emerging technologies, innovation and creativity to meet the ever changing dynamics raises no doubt. Teacher education according to Osuji (2009) refers to professional education given to teachers towards the attainment of attitudes, skills and knowledge considered desirable to make them efficient and effective in their work in accordance with the need of society at every point in time. Ani (2019) earlier opines that teacher education is the programme meant to prepare and produce school teachers. Ogunyinka, Okeke, & Adedoyin (2015) views teacher education as policies and procedures designed to equip prospective teachers with knowledge, attitudes, behaviours and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively. For the purpose of this paper a review of the objectives of teacher education in Nigeria will help to streamline this discourse, as stipulated in the National Policy of Education (2004) as follows to:

- a) produce highly motivated conscientious and efficient classroom teacher for all levels
- b) encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers
- c) help teachers fit into social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals
- d) provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situations; and

- e) enhance teachers commitment to the teaching profession

Analysing this objectives, teachers need adequate information in whatever format to function as a conscientious, creative and innovative teacher in this era where information is transmitted instantaneously. In addition to the above, the attainment of knowledge and skills are determining factors in teacher education, these desired knowledge are entrenched in books stored in the library to influence the right attitude to learning for trainee teachers. Oyekan (2006) maintained that the purpose of teacher education is to train qualified professionals that can adjust to the changing needs of the students and developmental prospect of the modern society. These needs are embedded in information and communication technology utilisation by students.

From the fore going, the library has some central and sensitive roles in the actualisation of these educational objectives because it houses enormous resources, published or unpublished, audio-visual resources and electronic formats managed by a professional for research and recreation. Ogunsola (2008) opined that the development of education is synonymous with the development of library and library services. Therefore, libraries are very relevant in the development and success of teacher education programme globally.

### **Concept of the Library**

According to Akinlubi and Agbato (2016) Libraries in tertiary institutions are known as academic libraries, they have grown along side with the institutions of learning. The library is principally concern with the collection, processing, storage and dissemination of recorded information for use. With the global trend of information and communication technology ICT there are significant changes from traditional repository, manual service delivery to a more dynamic technology driven environment where information is transmitted instantaneously. creating conducive environments for education and promoting literacy by offering relevant and attractive reading material (printed and electronic) for all ages in the society are functions of effective libraries (Omehia, 2018). Education is an quintessential commodity linked to social and education development which must be exploited to advance man's progress in all fields of human learning especially teacher education programme. The relevance of library and information service delivery cannot be quantified, as well as being a driving force for teacher education in effective training of teachers to meet global demand. The essential role of teachers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is not mere teaching the subject matter, rather acts as a liaison manager that brings together learners and subject matter, this implies that the teacher needs a wealth of information to enable him navigate through the vast information world. Akintunde (2004) argued that libraries have always served as tools for educational advancement at all levels of education especially teacher education and that no education can thrive without books or information.

### **Libraries and information Services in Technology Era**

Reiterating the role of libraries in teacher education programme, Boucher and lance (1992) identified the core roles of libraries to include provision of access to information by teaching information literacy skills to all library users especially teacher education students, ensuring equity in education by providing access to information for all, no matter the age, ethnic or religious background, as well as Free and equal access to information without geographical constraints. Lawal (2004) equally affirms the role of the library in teacher education to include support for research, teaching and learning in the creation of new knowledge, and promotion of current information regardless of underfunding of educational institution.

Remarkably, changes in library service delivery is exerted by emerging technologies, it is worthy of mention, that the vast nature of information resources on the internet are not catalogued or processed for academic purpose which poses problems for libraries and librarians. In contemporary librarianship, the most contentious service is centred on technology which is the utilisation of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for library services. Notably, Virtual library or E-Library has come to stay with its benefits and attending problems, according to Aina (2004) that the use of computers and communication technologies in information handling and processing in the library arose out of increased workload for students coping with global information explosion and the urgent need for institution to furnish the library with ICT infrastructure for ease of E- resources for quick information and the increasing demand for electronic information. Kumar & Kaur (2005) describe ICT as constantly modernising the process of teaching, learning and research which is compelling most universities to comply as the situation demands. In the study of Ajala, Adeogun, Adetunji, & Oyewumi (2010) equally revealed that major ity of the students in universities use the internet to access research materials. It is pertinent to mention that electronic resources and services have become the most popular tools students use for research and academic activities. This therefore implies that deliberate attempt must be made to improve academic libraries collections, IT infrastructure and the e-library resources for teacher education.

There is huge utilisation of mobile or wireless network by trainee teachers in teacher education institution, some libraries and librarians are using the latest technology to provide services for students by incorporating Quick Response Codes QR codes into library services for provision of quick access to information. According to Ashford (2010) QR codes are very adaptable to library environment and users, because of the two- dimensional (2D) matrix barcodes that are readable, scanned using exploitation sensible and web smart phones to access the web site address and details. The librarians must do the needful so that barcodes can be put on all the shelves or library

entrance or materials for students' easy access to information by using the cameras on their smart phones.

Utilisation of Web 2.0 tools in some academic libraries to reach out to students, advertise new arrivals, opening time, new services; referrals, training, seminars, new websites etc are also trendy.

Academic libraries equally supports part time teacher education programme organised by institutions like the National Teachers Institute (NTI), this again buttress its role as it provides access to information and ideas unimpeded by social, cultural or economic constraints. In this time and era, teachers cannot be effective without ample information; undoubtedly, the library stands to help in sieving through the huge wealth of information available for trainee teachers.

The library also gives unwavering support for open or closed teacher education programmes in tertiary institutions, by providing the platform for a life-long education, through supportive role in researches. On the importance of libraries, Ogunsola (2008) commented that research studies, have established libraries unwavering contribution to education development in Nigeria. The conviction is on emphasis on independent study in education, the critical need to access information becomes paramount. However, the role of the library clearly demonstrates the consciousness of its pursuit of teacher education goals because it provides the information services that would facilitate the realisation of the set goals.

Aina (2004) highlighted some specialised library services to support teacher education programme to include lending services, inter-library loans and document delivery, current awareness service, reference service, exhibitions and displays, reservation service, selective dissemination of information, consultancy and referral service, translation service, literature search, extension and outreach services, user education and the information literacy programme. In addition to the above, Nkanu (2007) listed internet service, reprographic service bindery services and recreational services amongst others.

### **Restructuring Teacher Education to meet Global Demands**

It is no gain saying that most of the teacher education programmes in tertiary institution are in dire need of restructuring, from the curriculum, infrastructure, personnel, ICT, and learning resources to effective teaching. Teacher education is an old discipline which is guided by the Curriculum design and implementation, in fact, the content of TE curriculum determines the quality of the graduates to be produced; and can invariably be influenced by the type of information the teacher is exposed to. This therefore, warrants the need of introducing information literacy skills IL in all teacher education institutions, which are of course inevitable especially in this knowledge society where information is sought from every available media. However, there is need for TE to incorporate library and information literacy skills to enhance trainee teachers' utilization of

information resources in and beyond the library walls. With information inundating every sphere of life, teacher education should embrace the tsunami of change and infuse information literacy (IL) in the curriculum for better training and utilisation of information for teacher training because the growing demand for qualified teachers who are information literate has become a thing of concern.

The contention that teachers are everywhere but lack information to answer daily queries posed by the digital children, this therefore raises the concern on the type of education given to teachers. With technology taking over the education sphere, the curriculum of teacher education have no choice than to weave information literacy education ILE into its curriculum, to enable teacher trainee access the enormous resources in the library in hard and soft copies to its advantage. Technology has made people desperate for knowledge more than ever before, therefore the need to focus on knowledge acquisition becomes paramount because knowledge has now become the intellectual capital needed for mans advancement in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Supporting the views Uzuegbu (2014) asserts that central to knowledge acquisition must be the ability to understand the need for new knowledge, the nature of knowledge, where to find and how to retrieve such knowledge, which poses another question because knowledge is very crucial in today's world, whether explicit or implicit knowledge. Teachers must strive to acquire the necessary knowledge whether tacit or implicit knowledge as the case demands, without infringing on the authors right. This affirms the need for information literacy skills for teacher education programmes so that they can access the information wherever it resides.

Again, the complex nature of information, couple with the exponential growth of all forms of publications on the web and the shift in the information behaviour of teachers to the electronic environment has also challenged the need for information literacy skills. According to Uzuegbu (2014) claims that Paul Zurkowski (1974) first proposed the concept information literacy(IL)also known as information competencies when he was President of the United States Information Industry Association to the National Commission of Libraries and information science to train people, users, students on the techniques and skills of utilizing the vast information in diverse formats. With so many nomenclatures as library orientation, use of library, library practice and all are meaning the same, but the ILS are way beyond library use course. Prasana (2014) distinguish information literacy from literacy which merely means the ability to read and write, whilst information literacy entails print literacy, audio-visual literacy, computer literacy, media literacy, web literacy, functional literacy, as well as library literacy which is broad and more encompassing. In the same vein, Bent and Stubbings (2011) described information literacy as a set of seven skills;

- i. identifying (recognize information need)
- ii. scoping (distinguish ways of addressing information gap),
- iii. planning (construct strategies for locating information),

- iv. gathering (locate and access information),
- v. evaluating (compare and evaluate information),
- vi. managing(organize, apply and communicate information)
- vii. presenting (synthesize and create information) information.

Reviewing International Federation of Library Association IFLA definition of Information literacy as the knowledge and skills necessary to correctly identify information needed to perform a specific task. These simply reflect that information literacy are broad skills that overlap other skills taught by librarians for effective information accessibility and utilisation.

Education system today especially teacher education is anchored on the commitment to help students advance in their quest for information and learning, that is to reiterate independent learning and innovation from critical discourse, which is the new direction for teaching and learning, which is now more of learner center than teacher centered. The advantages of ILE in teacher education is to train teachers who will become effective information seekers and users, it will assist the teachers in negotiating their ways into familiarity and become knowledgeable in the research process, more analytical and critical thinker.

Therefore, there can be no education advancement unless the teachers are exposed to current trends in the teaching and learning process, which is fundamentally anchored on information technology and information utilisation. Consequently, libraries are known to be established basically to gather or assemble information, disseminate, train users on how to access the information that will assist teachers/users in their information quest for relevant literatures now and in future.

### **Benefits of Information Literacy Education for Teacher Education trainee**

The difficulty of searching for information and the processing of search requires a great skill which IL provides. Hence, the innovation and benefits to trainee teachers for lifelong living suffices. Uzuegbu (2014) highlighted some of ILE benefits as follows

- i. IL education exposes students to the various categories and sources of information for knowledge creation.
- ii. IL education inculcates the ability to evaluate and determine the right information for knowledge problem,
- iii. IL inculcates in students the knowledge of how to use information, elegantly and coherently to create new knowledge.
- iv. IL education inculcates and improves research skills in students.
- v. IL education teaches students how to extract credible information from increasing variety of both print and digital information sources.

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- vi. IL education imparts in students the abilities to identify and source for the most up-date and authoritative information that would assist in their class work
  - vii. IL education imparts the ability to expand their knowledge and become lifelong learners, broaden their thinking horizon vis-a vis their quest to know how to know and learn how to learn.

From the fore going, it is evident that there is information overload because of the accelerating pace of technology and the ever growing literatures, global network that provides wide access to information. The infusing of information literacy skills into the curriculum of teacher education will enhance the innovations and creativity of the 21<sup>st</sup> century teachers. Therefore, Uzuegbu assertion and benefits are highly recommended for TE, to ensure that information literacy skills are taught at all levels of education especially to teachers and trainee in teacher education institutions to meet global demand.

### Challenges

With enormous emphasis placed on teachers' training, there exist some challenges hindering teachers from attaining to global standard in this part of the world

- i. **Curriculum review and implementation:** In Nigeria, National University Commission (NUC), National Teachers' Institute (NTI) and other relevent stakeholders holds the responsibility of planning and designing teachers education curriculum. These stakeholders are answerable to reviews of these curriculum based on the education trends. Unfortunately, there are always delays in curriculum implementation reviewed curriculum because of funds, capacity to adapt to new changes due to poor capacity building, the vastness of the country, and poor resources personnel amongst others. Most significantly, the infrastructures for libraries to operate at their maximal level are basically limited.
- ii. **Poor funding:** The teacher education programmes are still poorly funded in this part of the world, especially the academic libraries which serve as information bank and knowledge centre. With knowledge serving as the intellectual capital for innovative drive and development in this age. Poor funding of academic libraries would adversely affect teacher education programme. The inimical happening may be out of sheer ignorance on the part of management or economic recession, or attitude. It becomes very difficult to plan because of fund constrain.
- iii. **Poor library services and obsolete resources in the teacher education institution:** One of the most disturbing phenomena in academic libraries in Nigeria is limited stock in libraries for students and lecturers alike to do researches, assignment and teaching. the parent institution where this libraries are domicile are incapacitated due to poor subvention



from government, or corruption within and these have obvious adverse effects on the collections of the library, and the e library resources which are capital demanding. The question is how creditable teaching and learning can take place in an environment devoid of books? Uhegbu (2001) had argued that the teacher is as good as the information and resources exposed to, especially information in print, non-print and electronic resources.

- iv. **Poor infrastructure:** Infrastructural developments in most universities are nothing to write home about. The NUC which is the accrediting body overseeing the activities of the institutions in most cases recommends as appropriate, but non-compliance is very prevalent in Nigeria institutions. Most faculties of education do not own libraries, or E-libraries whereas, NUC requirement clearly stipulates that teacher education institutes must have a faculty library away from the general university library. Another disturbing issue are poor E-library facilities, dearth of librarians, whereas some institutions have managed to establish an e-Library unit, but cannot afford the subscription fee.
- vi. **Poor Information and communication technology utilisation:** Challenges of library and information service delivery in information age are enormous especially with the ICT to meet the daily needs of teacher trainee in teacher education programme. Most tertiary institutions have installed the infrastructure through the help of TETFund, but poor maintenance culture is affecting utilisation. Poor funding is affecting the purchase of the IT consumables, and the inability to keep abreast with constant changes in emerging technologies poses another challenge. The expensive subscription and lack of personnel to man the facility are huge constrain.
- vii. **Poor Information literacy skills:** The poor utilisation of library resources both print and electronic resources have been linked to lack of skills to understand when and where information resides. There have been many users programmes initiated to eradicate information utilisation problems in teacher education, they died on arrival, due to poor teaching of the course, subsuming the course under study skills and computer science, lack of funds or incentives for the facilitators.

### Way forward

Libraries must provide forum for global education network of information resources, and as well inculcate in the users' information literacy skills that will enhance independent learning.

- i. The NUC policy rightly stipulates that academic libraries must have E Library with E resources for teacher education at all cost, because the central focus on information is on digital library. It is imperative to mention, that the future of teacher education lies on the virtual library. There is therefore, the need to open functional libraries with e-

- library resources in the faculty of education alongside the main university library as applicable in the developed world. This is to ensure that all resources are fully exploited and enhanced improve teacher trainee future task as teachers and information users. Teacher trainee must be taught in the ILE Class to collaborate with peers in other universities abroad.
- ii. There should be constant review of teacher education curriculum to include courses that will impart positively on teacher trainee to meet global demands. One of such is the Information Literacy Education ILE which has a broader content and could be weaved into the curriculum, because the use of library course taught over the past years had considerable influence on users (Hepworth, 2000). It is also proposed that information literacy education be taught at all levels of learning, which will help to instil information skills early in life, so that Utilization of library resources in print, non-print and electronic formats will never be a thing of concern.
  - iii. Quality services: With information revolution and emerging technologies, Librarians are compel to provide quality services to support teacher education using electronic means such as web 2.0 for referral services for teachers and student teachers who need speedy resources as well as reprographic services. Libraries to introduce the Quick Response Codes QR codes to facilitate resources and services optimum use. There should be provision of physical and soft copies for users, inter library loan services, on line searches and selective dissemination of information (SDI) as well as design of faculty newsletter and distribute accordingly.

## CONCLUSION

The study conclude that curriculum review and implementation, poor funding, poor library services and obsolete resources, poor infrastructure, poor ICT utilization, and poor information literacy are the challenges hindering teacher education programme in Nigeria to meet the world global demand.

Librarians and teachers must work together as partners in the teaching and learning process, to ensure that the trainee teachers acquire the necessary information literacy skills, to get the best of training with the provision of adequate information resources. In addition, Librarians as information liaison officers must ensure that information in different formats such as newsletters, displays, posters or other contemporary media or channels of information gets to the teachers and trainee teachers to achieve the global demand for effective teacher.

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