Advocacy and Relevance of Embedded Librarianship by Librarians at the University of Maiduguri Nigeria

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Abstract
The research study was undertaken to determine the advocacy and relevance of embedded librarianship by academic librarians at the University of Maiduguri. In the University of Maiduguri, interest in embedded librarianship services model has been increasing but there is no study that explores the advocacy and relevance of embedded librarianship in the university. The objective of the study is to explore the advocacy and relevance of embedded librarianship in the University of Maiduguri. Qualitative technique was used in analysing the data collected. Purposive sampling was employed to select the participants who are either embedded with faculties/ academic departments or directly involved in collaboration with faculties or partners with other stakeholders. Semi-structured interview was used for the data collection. The findings of the study revealed that the library/university management advocate embedded librarianship through Marketing and promotion, physical proximity, budgetary allocation, increase in staff strength, and Public enlightenment program. In terms of relevance, the study found that embedded librarianship is relevance to underground students, postgraduate students, academics, library, and the university as a whole. Most published works discuss librarians embedding services in an online course management system. A few notable cases describe the physical and cultural integration of librarians into the library user environs. This paper demonstrated how embedded librarianship is advocated and its relevance to the University of Maiduguri. However, future research using valid quantitative methods is needed to explore the role of embedded librarianship in information literacy in the university. The library management should also improve the library ICT in order to implement online-embedded librarianship.

Key words: embedded librarianship, advocacy, relevance, academic librarians.

Introduction

The phrase-embedded librarianship comes from "embedded journalists," and places a reference librarian right in the midst of where the user is to teach research skills whenever and wherever instruction is needed. Embedded librarianship moves a librarian out of the library building and places him at the faculty or with the customer groups, which facilitates close coordination and collaboration (McCluskey, 2013). In another study, Schulte (2012) have examined embedded academic librarianship and the findings revealed the activities of embedded librarianship in America among which include online subject guides, discussion board/forum participation, collaboration on course design/Assignments, co-teaching course (face-to-face or online) as well as in depth research to support student research. Similarly, Shumaker (2009) examined that at a campus of Penn State University, embedded librarianship have taken librarians to the role of providing library bibliographic instruction lectures, arranged to attend every class meeting of the first-year "Effective Speech" course. As a result, student research skills and the quality of their speeches showed a marked improvement, and this further increase the role of the instructor the next time the class is taught. According to Mensah and Owusu (2018), embedded librarianship in Africa are being adopted in many academic libraries to integrate librarians in the research agenda of their institutions. The purpose of the study was to explore the changing role of embedded
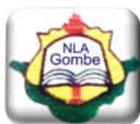
librarians in academic libraries and how African academic libraries, particularly, in Uganda, Ghana, and Nigeria are exploiting this practice to promote their expertise. In United Kingdom, Drewes and Hoffman (2010) carried out a study on Academic Embedded Librarianship: An Introduction. The findings indicated that embedded librarianship is successfully integrating into the community through communication and socializing. When librarians hold office hours within faculty or student lounges and meeting rooms, make house calls, and attend social as well as official functions. The findings also revealed that embedded librarianship is about collaboration. Several articles in the literature advocate programs integrating embedded services through collaboration within almost every aspect of the academic institution (Dewey, 2005; Kesselman & Watstein, 2009). Increased collaboration is important to maintaining the library's prominence within the institution and is usually welcomed by the greater campus community. Academic institutions are becoming more community focused, and libraries look less like places to store hard-to-find materials and more like social spaces for multitasking, group work, and expert assistance.

However, the studies failed to explore the advocacy and relevance of embedded librarianship in higher institutions of learning. Therefore, the study on the advocacy and relevance of embedded librarianship becomes necessary, which has created a vacuum that is needed to be filled.

Literature review
Embedded librarianship is a recommended approach to showcasing the value of academic librarians outside the library walls. There are many studies that examine the growth of embedded librarianship, its multiple meanings and activities in practice (Drewes & Hoffman, 2010; Henry, 2013; N. Hoffman et al., 2017; S. Hoffman, 2011; S. Hoffman & Ramin, 2010; Ibrahim & Omar, 2015; Inuwa & Abrizah, 2018; Kleinveldt, Schutte, & Stilwell, 2016). However embedded librarianship are not limited to involvement of course development and teaching information literacy skills (Drewes & Hoffman, 2010; Gunn, Hearne, & Sibthorpe, 2011). One of the other valued contributions to embedded librarianship is advocacy and its relevance; this is ripe for embedded librarianship program.

Drewes and Hoffman (2010) examines the Academic Embedded Librarianship: An Introduction whose findings revealed that although embedded librarianship has received recent attention, but it has not been well-defined within academic literature. Embedded librarianship focus in area of education as well as in areas of corporate and special librarianship but are most commonly linked with undergraduate instruction and distance education. Literature about embedded librarianship is so diverse that the definition of this term, as well as related goals and methods when embedding services and programs, can be difficult to define. In another study Inuwa and Abrizah (2018) carried a study on Embedded Librarianship in Research in Nigerian Universities: Practices and Sources of Practice Knowledge, whose findings indicated that embedded librarianship in Nigeria involves doing research and publishing papers as well as being editor of a national journal/reviewing manuscripts of publication. Other activities include managing the life cycle of data; disseminating research output; providing scholarly publication service and conducting research method course. Due to the difference in terrain and non-similarities in the nature of embedded librarianship with regards to advocacy as well as its relevance in educational institution a study of this nature, becomes necessary to fill in the missing gap. Madu and Dawha (2019) carried out a study on the analyses of Awareness, Perception and Attitude towards Embedded Librarianship among Librarians in North-Eastern Universities, Nigeria. The findings indicated that academic librarians in the study area have a high awareness level,
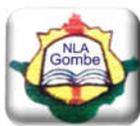
positive attitude and perception about embedded librarianship. However, the actual practice of the term is still low from the practical assessment. Similarly, Studies have indicated the presence of embedded librarianship in some Nigerian university libraries (Inuwa & Abrizah, 2018; Agboola, Manuwa & Aduku, 2018; Igbinovia, 2017; Emezie, 2018), however, the situation analyses are nothing compared to the scenario in most developed and developing countries. Available studies are deficient in empirical evidence, moreover, the advocacy and relevance of embedded librarianship have not been investigated empirically, and this created a lacuna for this study. These are some of the missing gaps that this study intends to cover. In addition, the period covered by previous studies is long overdue, and needs to be reviewed because so many incidences have occurred over time, and this constitutes another lacuna, which this study wants to fill.

Problem statement
The need to embark on embedded librarianship practice has become necessary than ever as students, researchers and academic staff need information at their fingertips. In response to these demands, academic librarians in the university of Maiduguri are deployed to faculties and departments to address the information needs of the students, offer research assistance, and participate in research as well as teaching information literacy. Literature revealed that academic librarians across the globe begin to face challenges of the new roles of embedded librarianship. Si, Xing, Zhou, and Liu (2012) argues that librarians seems to be unfamiliar about embedded services, level of awareness about embedded librarianship is low, and therefore the concept need to be promoted and advocated more widely. Similarly, Sheingold and Harrod (2013) maintains that no extensive approach has been carried out in advocating embedded librarianship in many University libraries. The scenario outlined above depicts the general pattern.

In the context of Nigeria, (Ugah, 2012) stated that academic librarians are given faculty status, they engaged in publication and research activities, training, and development, teaching and related activities, membership of learned societies and academic board; and community service. They also enjoyed equality with their teaching colleagues, enjoyed memberships of convocation and could vote or be voted for as well as enjoyed membership of academic faculty boards or committees in their universities. This status qualifies the academic librarians to engage in embedded librarianship. A few Nigerian university libraries have implored their academic librarians to engage in embedded librarianship practices (Madu, A., & Dawha, E; 2019; Inuwa, S., & Abrizah, A. 2018. However, at the University of Maiduguri, there is no definite established empirical research on advocacy and relevance of embedded librarianship. To what extent is the embedded librarianship advocated and how relevance is it to the university. This under-researched topic becomes a matter of concern. The literature indicated that the university management is critical in the advocacy of embedded librarianship (Evans & Alire, 2013; Moorman, 2009; Shumaker, 2011). In the University of Maiduguri, there is no evidence to show how the management advocates or supports the practice of embedded librarianship. Similarly, the relevance of embedded librarianship to the university and stakeholders have not been investigated, there is need to find out whether what they do is relevant to the library, university, or other stakeholders. Studies on embedded librarianship are mostly America and Europe based, very few studies were conducted from the developing world in general and Nigeria in particular. The very few studies on embedded librarianship in Nigeria did not explore significantly the advocacy and relevance of embedded librarianship in the Universities. This situation is a problem considered worthy of investigation.
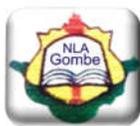
Objective
The objective of the study is to explore the advocacy and relevance of embedded librarianship in the University of Maiduguri.
The research questions posed are twofold:
a) How do the library management and the faculty advocate embedded librarianship in the University of Maiduguri?
b) What is the relevance of embedded librarianship in the university?

Methodology
This is a qualitative study, and it is about understanding the meaning of the participants, interpreting the words of the participants and giving research participants the right of their voice. Purposive sampling was employed and concentrated on academic librarians who are embedded with faculties or academic departments and directly involved in collaboration with faculties or partners in relation to research or information literacy. The deans whose faculties are embedded with academic librarians and the library management were also sampled. The academic librarians sampled were physically located at the faculties or departments. For anonymity, the letter UL, DN, and AL were assigned to the participants involving 11 participants. The participants were chosen base on the following criteria:

a) Academic librarians who are physically located at the faculties.
b) The deans whose faculties are embedded with academic librarians
c) The library management that initiated the practice of embedded librarianship.
d) The respondents that expressed willingness to participate in the study.

The researcher interviewed the respondents for 60-90 minutes. The interview took place within the main library as well as at the faculty where the academic librarians are situated. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis.

Based on the responses made by the participants, interview transcripts were transcribed exactly as revealed by the participants, each participant interviewed was coded to guarantee secrecy. Findings were structured around ten (10) themes that emerged from the interviews, as described in the results section. There are five themes emerged under advocacy as well as five themes under relevance of embedded librarianship. Themes under advocacy of embedded librarianship include marketing and promotion, physical proximity, budgetary allocation, increase in staff strength, and public enlightenment program. With regards to relevance of embedded librarianship, five themes also emerged; these are relevant to undergraduate, relevant to postgraduate, relevant to the library, relevant to the University and to the faculty academics.

Results
This study explores the Advocacy and Relevance of embedded librarianship in the university of Maiduguri. The study found ten key themes relating to Advocacy and Relevance of embedded librarianship: (a) marketing and promotion; (b) physical proximity (c) budgetary allocation; (d) increase in staff strength; (e) public enlightenment program (f) relevant to undergraduate; (g) relevant to postgraduate; (h) relevant to the library; (i) relevant to the University; and (j) relevant to the academics.

Advocacy
 (a) Marketing and promotion
Participants of the study disclosed how they advocate embedded librarianship in the university under study. Effective marketing and promotion is considered as an important approach to build relationship in embedded librarianship. All the participants disclosed that the library management and the faculties advocate embedded librarianship practices through marketing and promotion (UL, DNLw, and DNEng, DNSci, and DNCm). The UL stated that the library authority promote the services of embedded librarianship at faculty meetings. Other participants such as DNSc, DNPh, DNLw also revealed that they invited the academic librarians in the faculties to present the embedded librarianship activities at annual events of the faculties. DNPh revealed that he organized seven hours workshop recently, and the academic librarian was invited to participate in the workshop. In his own words, "*I initiated seven hours workshop recently which I invited the academic librarian to be one of the resource persons. I told the audience about embedded librarianship and the efforts of the academic librarian in the faculty with regard to providing information at the point of needs, assisting students and staff while doing research as well as teaching information literacy. Is just to tell you the length at which the faculty is working in collaboration with the academic librarian*".

Some of the participants presented their views that the physical presence of the academic librarians in the faculties is also an advocacy of the embedded librarianship practice. DNSc is of the opinion that the physical presence of the academic librarian in the faculty was the beginning of the students to develop interest in the library services. AL 2 indicated that *"I participate in faculty orientations, regularly hold individual meetings with academics in the faculty, and discuss on embedded librarianship activities which assist greatly in promoting embedded librarianship."*

Physical proximity
Physical proximity in the context of this study refers to the closeness of the academic librarians to the faculties and academic departments. The offices of the academic librarians are located in the faculties/academic departments. The interview data revealed that proximity of the academic librarians to the faculty empowered them to offer intensive assistance to the undergraduate students, postgraduate students, as well as to the faculties and to develop a deeper relationship. A participant of the study (DNLw) stated that "The relocation of the academic librarians' offices to the faculties is commendable, it gives them the benefit in understanding the students and staff information need." Similarly, DNSc is of the opinion that academic librarian' proximity and physical presence in the faculty is the key to success. The academic librarians facilitate the learning process." The UL explained that proximity encourages interaction between individual and groups. Similarly, the DNEng confirms that physical proximity can encourage research collaboration. He explained that academic librarians located in the faculties were likely to collaborate with students and faculty academics in research work more easily than academic librarians who are apart. Therefore, there is connection between academic librarian's proximity and research collaboration. AL 6 maintained that proximity has shown an impact on research. In his own words, "*our physical proximity to our collaborators has positively associated with the impact of publication in the faculties*". *We have been collaborating on research and proximity really permits better collaboration, resulting in advanced quality research that tends to be cited time and again."*

(b) Budgetary allocation

Management support of the embedded librarianship practices comes from the budgetary allocation. Based on the data collected, financial support received by academic librarians comes from the library management. The embedded librarianship practices is funded from the library budget, moreover, it has been pointed out that some faculties fund conference attendance for the academic librarians, this is to enable the academic librarians acquire appropriate knowledge and improve in discharging their official responsibilities. For instance, DNLw revealed that he has sponsored the academic librarians of his faculty to go for workshops and conferences related to his area severally. The UL disclosed that funds are earmarked to demonstrate support for embedded librarianship.

(c) Public enlightenment program

The data collected revealed that public enlightenment program was designed to support embedded librarianship practices and to improve the awareness of the customer group on embedded librarianship. The findings of the interview revealed that academic librarians advocate embedded librarianship through public enlightenment programs such as workshops and conferences. AL 3 explained that the academic librarians organize research support programs and user education program such as bibliographic instruction, information skills, teaching and instructional methods.

Relevance of embedded librarianship

The study sought to know the relevance of embedded librarianship in the University of Maiduguri. Five sub-themes emerged. These are:

(a) Relevance of embedded librarianship to the undergraduate students

Some of the participants revealed that the embedded librarianship program enables academic librarians to save time of the undergraduate students by providing information at the point of needs and equip undergraduate students with skills and knowledge (AL 2, AL 3, and AL 5). They participants indicated that they conduct literature review for specific research group, summarize the literature, and teach library instructional program to undergraduate students.

(b) Relevance of Embedded Librarianship to Postgraduate Students

The findings of the study indicated that embedded librarianship is relevant to postgraduate students. UL holds the view that "the academic librarians meet with postgraduate students to discuss their information needs and services required." This is very important, as the information needs of the postgraduate students need to be identified and addressed by the academic librarians. Similarly, other relevance of embedded librarianship program to the postgraduate students as disclose by AL 2 include informing postgraduate students about the type of journals available in respective discipline both print and non-print journals. AL 3 indicated that the academic librarians promote scholarly communication such as selective dissemination of services to researchers. Similarly, AL 6 indicated that the embedded librarianship is relevant to both staff and students. It helps in providing information to customers, and even facilitate in publishing papers.

(c) Relevance of Embedded Librarianship to the Library

It has been reported by the participants that embedded librarianship is relevant to the library. The library management moved out the academic librarians to some faculties in order to provide information to students, staff, and scholars at the point of needs and at their fingertips. Academic librarian offers information resources that patrons can obtain either physically in the library or virtually from academic offices. The growth in online information resources means that information materials are no longer restrained within the library walls
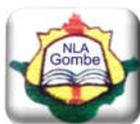
and academic librarians re-strategize on how their customer group's information needs are being addressed. This demonstrate the relevance of embedded librarianship to the library. AL 6 reported that "in this age of digital era, librarians need to reinforce the relevance of the library by encouraging the mission to provide user-centric services through embedded librarianship practices. Similarly, AL 5 is of the opinion that embedded librarianship is relevant to the library because academic librarians' role in research and teaching through collaboration has strengthened the presence of the library in the University under study. According to him, embedded librarianship practice ensures that academic librarians reposition the library. The academic librarians are less library-centered and more user-sensitive this why is embedded librarianship is relevant to the library.

(d) Relevance of Embedded Librarianship to the University

With regards to the relevance of embedded librarianship to the University of Maiduguri, DNPh stated, "actually, the program is relevant because the academic librarians contribute in the governance of the University by serving on various committees. The academic librarians not only contribute in the educational development of the University but also participate in decision-making and governance of the University through participating in committees. DNCm maintain that "the University is among top research Universities in Nigeria and it was attributed to the quality of research carried out in the institution, which academic librarians' contribution cannot be neglected." By implication, the ranking of the University is attributed to the quality of library services to the researchers and patrons, of which academic librarians are at the vanguard. The library establishes and implements policies, strategies, practices and processes in order to manage the information lifecycle of the University in an efficient way.

(e) Relevance of Embedded Librarianship to the Academics

The study found that embedded librarianship practice in the university has created an enabling environment for the academic staff and the academic librarians to work in partnership in order to offer a productive learning experience. According to AL 5, Embedded librarianship have facilitated collective partnerships among librarians and academics, especially collaborative teaching partnerships, and the development of information literacy programs, which improve students' information literacy awareness. AL 5 further revealed that the academic librarians provide advice regarding research and publication policies.

Discussion

This study discusses the advocacy and relevance of embedded librarianship in a community of practice. It has been revealed that some strategies were taken to ensure that the embedded librarianship receive support from the library management. This includes marketing and promotion, participation in the faculty orientations, workshops, and public presentations of the academic librarians to the faculties are some of the advocacy of embedded librarianship. Moreover, physical proximity was indicated as an advocacy of embedded librarianship. The participants revealed that there is connection between academic librarians' physical proximity and research collaboration. There is good opportunity of meeting someone, connecting, and working together if you are close. Budgetary allocation and public enlightenment program are forms of advocating embedded librarianship. Some of the participants indicated that some of the deans of faculties fund conference attendance of the academic librarians, while the UL revealed that there is budget allocation for embedded librarianship programs. Some of these findings are congruent with the study of (Shumaker & Talley, 2009). They pointed out that advocacy of embedded librarianship involves faculty orientation, physical location of the librarians with their customer groups as well as publicity of the program.
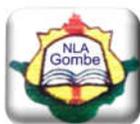
However, with regards to relevance of embedded librarianship, five sub-themes were identified. These are relevance to undergraduate, relevance to postgraduate, relevance to the library, relevance to the university and relevance to the academics. It is relevant to the undergraduate because it provides information to the students at the point of needs and equips the students with skills and knowledge. This finding is in line with the finding of Sunderbrink (2013). According to Sunderbrink (2013), librarians have a historically, unprecedented opportunity to increase their relevance and participation through assisting faculty and other academic staff with student instruction in the various types of literacies (i.e., computer, media) or information fluency.

Embedded librarianship is relevant to the library because it promotes and advocate services of the library, the academic librarians participate in generating research assessment statistics. The program of embedded librarianship is relevant to the university because the academic librarians participate in the governance of the university by serving on various committees.

Conclusion
The purpose of conducting this study was to explore the advocacy and relevance of embedded librarianship in the university of Maiduguri. The findings demonstrate the value of advocating embedded librarianship through marketing and promotion, physical proximity, budgetary allocation, increase in staff strength, and public enlightenment program. The findings of this study also highlight the relevance of embedded librarianship to the university and stakeholders. The study found that the program of embedded librarianship is relevant to undergraduate students, postgraduate students, library, to the university and to the academics.

Recommendation
    (a) The University of Maiduguri should sponsor the academic librarians embedded in the faculties and academic departments to tour advanced university libraries that have established embedded librarianship program. This will enable the academic librarians to be exposed to the ways in which advanced universities are offering better-embedded librarianship services.
    (b) The library management should improve the library ICT in order to implement online-embedded librarianship.
    (c) Further study need to be carried out on embedded librarianship in information literacy in the University of Maiduguri.

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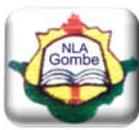
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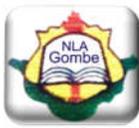
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