Libraries as Centre for Community Development/Transformation: A Case Study of Raji Oke-Esa Memorial Library, Iseyin, Oyo State

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Abstract
This study examined services provided by Raji-Oke Esa memorial library, Iseyin, Oyo State as centre for community development and transformation and challenges to the services. Two objectives and two research questions were raised. The population for the study were all the twelve 12 staff of the library and forty 40 library users that were randomly selected. A questionnaire developed by the researchers was the instrument used to collect data for the study. The data generated through the instrument were analyzed using the descriptive statistics of frequency count and percentage. Findings indicated that Raji-Oke Esa memorial library is rendering public services to its community such as various resources on education, employment, cultural activities and so on but faced with numerous challenges like erratic power supply, Insufficient resources, inexperienced staff and lack of supervision of the services of the libraries, inadequate work force, Lack of public enlightenment and illiteracy of community dwellers. The study therefore recommended that the government should support this type of libraries owned by individuals in the society to enable them procure sufficient current books and other information materials, staffing of qualified and experienced librarians is very important in achieving the set goals of Raji- Oke Esa memorial library, Iseyin, Oyo State, extensive public enlightenment campaign should be involved by the staff of Raji- Oke Esa memorial library, Iseyin, Oyo State to acquaint the rural dwellers on the importance of libraries in community development so that they will largely embrace their services.

Keywords: Libraries, Community Development, Transformation, Raji Oke- Esa.

Introduction
The roles of libraries in the provision of information for community development/ transformation cannot be overemphasized. No community can be developed without relevant information to drive its developmental sustainability. The business of libraries is the acquisition, selection, processing, organization, preservation, conservation, and dissemination of information for sustainable development. Information is an indispensable factor for community development. For any community to develop, it needs to have and provide relevant and adequate information on every issue. Libraries particularly public libraries can provide access to information that would enable people enjoy gainful lives as they are skilled in

disseminating information resources in diverse forms so that when they are required, they can be quickly located and utilized.
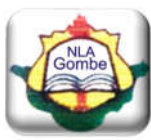
Libraries have long been crowned as knowledge institution as they provide the public with resources for information and learning. These resources are accessible to all groups of community regardless of gender, age and ethnic affiliation (IFLA, 2003). This role of libraries must be seen against the backdrop of the fact that the development of the community and individuals can only be attained through the ability of well-informed citizens to exercise their democratic rights and to play an active role in community (Davison, 2005). Public libraries have rightfully staked their claim as gateways to participation in community development through lifelong learning and information. While providing information, access is still an important function of the libraries, the past twenty years have brought a shift back to the roots of public libraries as community builders (Scott, 2011). There was agreement about the fact that public libraries in community building can help ameliorate some of today's social ills, including isolation, a lack of well-being, a lack of access, and the inability to engage (Scott, 2011).

Raji Oke – Esa Memorial library (ROML), Iseyin, Oyo State was established by Ahmed Raji, a senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) and named after his late father – Pa Raji Aderibigbe of blessed memory. The library was commissioned by the former president Olusegun Obasanjo on the 18th January, 2017. The library is privately owned and controlled by its proprietor. It performs the functions of public libraries since the proprietor was aware of the facts that, almost all the secondary school in Iseyin and its environment do not have libraries and most homes don't have facilities for children to do any meaningful revision of what was taught in school. The proprietor was of the view that where communities and schools do not have libraries, definitely it is going to hamper the development of the intellectual capacity of the students. This is the reason why he (the proprietor) felt that such facility would assist a great deal in enhancing the reading culture and building the capacity of the younger ones for them to be better equipped to contribute to the community and humanity. The library has between sixty (60) and one hundred (100) users daily. On Monday to Friday it opens between 8:00am to 5:00pm and on Saturdays, it opens between 8:00am to 1:00pm and at no cost to anybody.

Presently, the library has three thousand, four hundred and sixty (3,460) registered users and three thousand, seven hundred and ninety-seven (3,797) collections. An internet facility at no cost to anybody is also made available in the library. Hence, this paper aims at highlighting the public library as a centre for community development/transformation: A case study of Raji Oke-Esa Memorial library, Iseyin, Oyo State, Nigeria.

Statement of problem

Libraries are known as knowledge institution as they provide the public with resources for information and learning, these resources are accessible to the populace regardless of gender, age and ethnic affiliation. There is no doubt that no community can transform or develop without adequate provision of information, the development of the community and individuals can only be attained through the ability of well-informed citizens to exercise their democratic rights and to play an active role in community. Public libraries are known for provision of relevant information in various formats and learning programs to users which equip them with the necessary skills to enable them succeed in the society and promoting cultural values of the society. Despite all these benefits, it is not certain since the inception of Raji – Oke Esa library in Iseyin community of Oyo State whether the library is rendering effective services to its community and whether the library is facing any challenges in rendering the services. In the

light of this, the paper seeks to investigate services being rendered by Raji-Oke Esa Library, Iseyin, Oyo State for community development and challenges to the provision of those services to its community.

Objectives of the study

The study broadly examined the library as a centre for community development/ transformation: A case study of Raji Oke-Esa Memorial library, Iseyin, Oyo State, Nigeria. It specifically sought to;

1. identify the services rendered by Raji Oke-Esa Memorial library towards community development and transformation.
2. examine the challenges facing Raji Oke-Esa Memorial library towards community development and transformation.

Research Questions

Towards achieving the research objectives, the following research questions were posed to guide the study;

1. What are the services rendered by Raji Oke-Esa Memorial library towards community development and transformation?
2. What are the challenges facing Raji Oke-Esa Memorial library towards rendering services for community development and transformation?
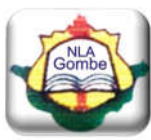
LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Community Development/Transformation

The concept of "community development" derives strength from the two basic words "community" and "development". Hence in gaining proper and profound understanding of the concept we should rely on the explication of the terms community and development. A careful review of the literature on this subject would reveal that the term "community" is not static. It entails the interaction of several elements whose geographic boundaries are a clear function of time, place and context or issue under consideration (Osuji, 2004). Community can still be seen as an organic, natural set of relationships, a group in which membership is valued as an end in itself; which concerns itself with many significant aspects of the lives of members which allows competing functions, whose members share commitment to a common purpose whose members share responsibility for actions of the group, and whose members have an enduring and extensive personal contact with each other.

However, development as a term is perceived in different perspectives by different scholars in different field of knowledge. For instance, Todaro (2009) describes development as the multidimensional process involving changes in structures, attitudes and institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and eradication of poverty. This way, development implies remarkable and sustained improvement of the socio-economic welfare of the people. Transformation is a change in form, appearance, nature, or character, also transformation is defined as a marked change in appearance or character, especially for the better (www.dictionary.com), the above definitions show that transformation and development are similar in meaning.

Based on the above discussion, the compound word "community development/ transformation" has undergone some form of semantic metamorphosis over the years and has, therefore, been used in distinct contexts to refer to mutually related development activities and situations. According to Sanders (2000) community development is viewed as a process, a method, a

programme, or a movement. When community development is viewed as a programme, emphasis is shifted to how such subject matter specialty as health, welfare, agriculture, industries, recreation, librarianship, among others, could be integrated in an effort to promote the development of people and their communities (Sanders, 2000). The issue here is how the sets of activities can be accomplished. Community development as a movement according to Sanders (2000) tends to become institutionalized, building up its own organizational structure, accepted procedures, and professional practitioners. It stresses and promotes the idea of community development as interpreted by its devotees and has its charismatic leaders who can enunciate its ideology in forthright terms. However, in whichever angle community development is viewed, the fact is that it has to aim at rapid development of community and people. In community development, public library is pretty essential because it facilitates the provision of useful information for the development of the community. As such community cannot develop without the involvement of public library.
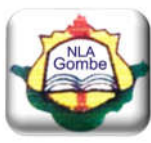
Public Library and Community Development/Transformation
Public library is a social institution established to collect, organize, preserve and conserve information resources in a conducive atmosphere and disseminate them to the community within which the library is located. Similarly, public library can be described as the peoples' socio-educational centre where the recorded knowledge of the society is kept in various formats and in a systematic way for them to read or consult at their pleasure (Aguolu, 2004).

However, public libraries function generally as; recreational centre for the people to refresh their memories; educational centre for self-education (that is people's University); training centre for the inculcation of good reading habits; saloons for the people leisure time; avenues for information dissemination and centre for academic pursue. Public libraries play a leading role in the literacy programs of the community by supporting educational programs within the community. The educational development of the community cannot succeed without the aid of the public library which is regarded as vital to socio-educational establishment of the community.

In order to allow developments to take place within the community, its educational needs must be satisfied through the provision of public libraries. According to Nasri (2016) public libraries should serve as vehicles for furthering mass education, that is mass literacy, adult education and so on. Public libraries should be set up in strategic places, and where this is not possible, book boxes and mobile library services should be established. Hence, public library should provide the best means (i.e forum or avenue) for self-education and self-improvement (Nasri, 2016). Farmers, traders, craftsmen, civil servants, law enforcement agents, politicians, lawyers, doctors, engineers, nurses, pupils, students, teachers, housewives, among others are expected to satisfy their various information needs within the public library. The implications of the educational needs of the community on the development of public library services are therefore quite enormous. It should be noted at this point that the educational needs of pupils, students and other groups within the community are catered for by the statutory provision of public libraries which serve them exclusively. The satisfaction of the educational needs of these people falls within the limits (i.e. services) of the public library within the community.

People need to have access to recorded knowledge and information. The provision of access to knowledge and information through the establishment of public libraries constitutes an educational process. According to Shera (2012), the education of the community is very essential in every nation for the following reasons: to enable the citizens share in the breadth of knowledge and information in order to function appropriately within the community and the

world in general; to study the importance of good citizenship and to accept social and political responsibility; to be in a better position to contribute effectively to the creation, functioning and systemization of a modern technological advanced society; to preserve the cultural heritage of the nation and at the same time appreciate other cultures of the world; for effective and democratic governance of the people. Educated people are said to be pretty easy to govern; the transfer of knowledge and information leading to industrial development could only take place if the people are educated; education will make people to appreciate the value of a clean environment, which will lead to good health, long life and prosperity; it will also enable the people to drop their old ideas about farming which will lead to self-sufficiency in food production; through the education of the people, communication will be enhanced leading to progress; with education, the community and indeed the entire country will be in a better position to interact effectively and efficiently with other neighboring communities as well as the outside countries, in areas of mutual interest.

Public libraries are integral to community development as they provide access to information and works of imagination in a variety of formats. In a similar review, Zondi (2014) stresses that public libraries go beyond formal education; they encourage and sustain literacy and support development. Joel, Ugah and Savic (2009) stated that the co-operation and assistance of public libraries is a basis for any community to gain development. By this cooperation and the provision of useful information in economic, cultural, social and political contexts, sustainable development becomes possible. Public library services can be harnessed to bring about unity that can promote community development (Sokari, Abdullahi and Umar, 2017). Roper (2005) highlights the dynamism of the role of librarianship when he posits that public libraries and librarians have evolved to become facilitators of information and lifelong learning opportunities with an emphasis on service, identifying users' needs and communicating solutions. Librarians as information carriers are identified with splendid qualities.

Edoka (2000) stated that the purpose of public library is community development through the provision of equal access to the community dwellers on educational resources and on all range of human activities such as agriculture, crafts commerce and industry. He further stressed that public libraries provide the resources that empowers community people to accelerate and advance socially, politically and economically.

Roles Played by Libraries in Community Development/Transformation

Public libraries play significant roles in facilitating community development. Achitabwino (2017) emphasizes that libraries contribute towards community development through the support they offer to the educational sector by supplying relevant information in multiple formats. Perhaps this is because the role of libraries is to collect, repackage and disseminate information that will enhance community development. Uhegbu and Igwe (2006) assert that public libraries have greater responsibility in the development of community by acquiring, packaging, organizing and disseminating knowledge and experience to the people. The library is essentially a means for promoting educational development in the community. The public libraries provide information for planning, education, politics, researches, economic activities and enlightenment which are inevitable and indispensible in community development.

Public library is an information agency that assists and guides its clientele in their choice of reading information resources. It affords the community especially the students the opportunity to acquire learning experiences at little or no cost. Public library also links the immediate community to the outside world as regards acquisition of knowledge. It also enriches the educational development programs of the society by supporting continuous education program,

such as adult education program. Therefore, public libraries have helped develop society and its citizens by facilitating and planning implementation of learning programs to clients like farmers and market women which equip them with the necessary skills to enable them succeed in a changing society.

The development of community also lies on economic activities. Nwokocha (2002) defines economics as the science of the production and distribution of wealth, the condition of a country, community or individual, with regard to material prosperity. In economic classification, Nwokocha (2002) further reported that the establishment of a public library is regarded as a social service which is an investment that does not produce tangible goods but provides useful information.

However, public libraries play important role in the economic well-being of the society as it provides information on goods and services. Also, it distributes books and film within the communities. Public library at this level is making its contributions to the economic development of the community. Public libraries could also develop local economic capabilities by making available necessary information on income generating projects, self-employment activities, credit facilities, state assistance schemes and so on. Therefore public library closely identifies itself with the aspiration of economic development of a community.

Challenges facing public libraries towards community development services in Nigeria.
Onyemaechi (2017) observed that a public library is a library that provides opportunities that positively affect community development but it has suffered some challenges to the extent that successive governments and organizations in Nigeria often overlook and neglect them as institutions that foster community development. According to Opara (2008), poor funding, lack of electricity supply, inexperienced and inadequate work force, illiteracy of community dwellers and lack of public enlightenment have contributed to the poor functioning and non-attainment of the community development expectation of the public libraries in Nigeria. Amaechi (2014) alerted that it is important to note that most of the public libraries in Nigeria lack digital service opportunities and do not have current books and resource materials that are needed to facilitate the slow pace of community development in the communities. There is no modern technology awareness in most of the public libraries and most staff are non-professional while some others are not computer literate and cannot afford to give adequate research or reference assistance to the users.

METHODOLOGY
Research Design
Descriptive survey research was adopted for the study. The population of this study comprises of all the twelve (12) library staff members and forty (40) users that were randomly selected. The total population is fifty-two (52). The instrument used for this study was self-structured questionnaire on the public library as a centre for community development/transformation: A case study of Raji Oke-Esa Memorial library, Iseyin, Oyo State of Nigeria. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A contains the demographic characteristics of the respondents while section B contains questions relevant to the research questions. The researcher ascertained the content and face validity by giving out the questionnaire to experts in the field. All forms of biases were eliminated and irrelevant items from the questionnaire were expunged. Data were analyzed using frequency counts and percentage.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS
Demographic Information of the respondents
The demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in this Section A.

Descriptive Analysis.
Distribution of Respondents by Demographic Characteristics.

S/N	Demographic Characteristics	Options	Frequency	Percentages (%)
1.	Gender	Male	38	73.08
		Female	14	26.92
		Total	**52**	**100.00**
2.	Age	20 – 25 years	5	9.62
		26 – 30 years	17	32.69
		31 – 35 years	26	50.00
		36 – 40years	4	07.69
		Total	**52**	**100.00**
3.	Marital status	Single	21	40.38
		Married	28	53.85
		Divorced	03	5.77
		Total	**52**	**100.00**
4.	Religion	Islam	39	75.00
		Christianity	13	25.00
		Others	-	-
		Total	**52**	**100.00**

Source: *Field survey, 2021.*

From Table above, it was revealed that 73.08% of the respondents were male while 26.92% were female youths. This implies that there were more men participating in this research analysis. Also, the table shows that 9.62% of the respondents fell within age 20 – 25 years, 32.69% of ages were between 26 – 30 years, 50.00% of the age were between 31 – 35 years and 7.69% are 36 - 40 years.

Furthermore, it also revealed that 40.38% of the respondents were single, 53.85% of the respondents were married while 5.77% have divorce. This implies that majority of the respondents were married. The table finally showed that 75.00% of the respondents practicing Islam while 25.00% of the respondents were Christian. This implies that majority of the respondents were Muslim.

Research Question 1: What are the services rendered by Raji Oke-Esa Memorial Library towards community development and transformation?

Table 2:

S/N	ITEMS	YES	NO	TOTAL
1	Raji Oke-Esa memorial library provide books, periodicals, internet facilities and other materials for community users for their reference and research work.	52 (100)	00	52 (100)
2	Instrument of Social Change and cultural awareness were also provided by Raji Oke-Esa memorial library.	52 (100)	00	52 (100)
3	Do Raji Oke-Esa memorial library serve as community centres, public space and classroom for reading, studying, formal and informal public meeting space?	50 (96.15)	02 (3.85)	52 (100)
4	Raji Oke-Esa memorial library strengthen democratic spirit among the community dwellers.	40 (76.92)	12 (23.08)	52 (100)
5	Provides employment and current information for the people in community.	48 (92.31)	4 (7.69)	52 (100)

Source: *Field survey, 2021.*

In the research question one, the result obtained revealed that all the respondents agreed that Raji Oke – Esa memorial library provide books, periodicals, internet facilities and other material for community, users for their reference and research work. Instrument of social change and cultural awareness provided by the library were also embraced by all the respondents. 96.15% of the respondents agreed that Raji Oke- Esa memorial library serve as community centres, public space and classroom for reading, studying, formal and informal public meeting space while only 3.85% disagreed. 76.92% of the respondents also agreed that the library strength democratic spirit among the community dwellers but 23.08% did not agree. While 92.31% of the respondents believed that the library provides employment opportunities and current information for the people in the community, 7.69% of them did not believe. The services of public libraries are important and contributory to the community development strides in Nigeria. This result agrees with the views of Parameswaran and Vimal (2008) regarding the important roles and services of public libraries in community development in Nigeria as provision of books, periodicals, internet facilities and other materials, instrument of social change and cultural awareness, searching as community centres, public space and classroom for reading, studying and strengthening democratic spirit among the community dwellers.
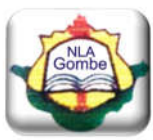
Research Question 2: What are the challenges facing Raji Oke-Esa Memorial Library (ROML) towards community development and transformation?

Table 3:

S/N	ITEMS	YES	NO	TOTAL
1	Do poor funding and insufficient books and other resource are the challenges facing Raji Oke-Esa memorial library?	46 (88.46)	06 (11.54)	52 (100)
2	Inexperienced and inadequate work force are the major problem facing Raji Oke-Esa memorial library towards community development and transformation.	20 (38.46)	32 (61.54)	52 (100)
3	Lack of proper supervision of the services of Raji Oke-Esa memorial library decreases their usefulness to community development.	37 (71.15)	15 (28.84)	52 (100)
4	Lack of public enlightenment and illiteracy of community dwellers affect the development and uses of Raji Oke-Esa memorial library in the community.	47 (90.38)	5 (9.61)	52 (100)
5	Irregular electric power supply affect library operations in the community	32 (61.53)	20 (38.46)	52 (100)

Source: *Field survey, 2021.*

The result in table 3 concerning research question two showed the challenges facing Raji Oke - Esa Memorial Library towards community development service in Nigeria as revealed by the study are as follows; 88.4% of the respondents agreed that insufficient books other resources are the challenges facing Raji Oke - Esa Memorial Library while 1.54% did not. 38.46% of the respondents support the fact that inexperienced and inadequate work force are the major problem facing Raji Oke - Esa Memorial Library but 61.54% did not support that view. While 71.15% of the respondents believed that lack of proper supervision of the library decreases its usefulness of to the community but 28.84% of them did not believe. 90.38% of the respondents agreed that lack of public enlightenment and illiteracy of the community dwellers affects the development and use of the library while 9.61% disagreed. 61.53% of the respondents agreed

that irregular electric power supply affects library operations in the community but 38.46% did not agree. These findings is validated by the assertion of Opera (2008), as he enumerated that poor funding, lack of electricity power supply, inexperienced and inadequate work force, illiteracy of the community dwellers and lack of public enlightenment have contributed have contributed to the poor functioning and non-attainment of the community development expectation of the library in Nigeria. Again, the finding receives further credence from the study findings of Amachi (2014) which reveled and alerted that it is important to note that most of the public libraries in Nigeria lack digital services opportunities and do not have current books and other resources materials that are needed to facilitate the slow pace of the community development. The results from the analysis of the hypothesis did not reflect any hypotheses did not reflect any significant difference in between the mean rating of Pubic Librarians and Community Dwellers on the services and challenges of public libraries towards community development services in Nigeria.

The result in tables three concerning research question two showed the various challenges facing the Raji Oke-Esa memorial library towards community development services in Iseyin, Oyo state. The challenges facing the Raji Oke-Esa memorial library towards community development services in Nigeria as revealed in the study are as follows; Insufficient resources, inexperienced and proper supervision of the services of the libraries, inadequate work force, Lack of public enlightenment and illiteracy of community dwellers and Irregular electric power supply affect library operations in the community was agreed upon by 88% of the respondents as a various challenges facing the libraries towards community development services in Nigeria. This finding is validated by the assertion of Opara (2008), as he enumerated that poor funding, lack of electricity power supply, inexperienced and inadequate work force, illiteracy of community dwellers and lack of public enlightenment have contributed to the poor functioning and non-attainment of the community development expectation of the library in Nigeria. Again, this finding receives further credence from the study findings of Amaechi (2014) which revealed and alerted that it is important to note that most of the public libraries in Nigeria lack digital service opportunities and do not have current books and other resource materials that are needed to facilitate the slow pace of community development in the communities.

Conclusion

This study concluded that public libraries are indispensable in our community because of numerous benefits and impacts on education, social, political, cultural, religious and other aspect of life. Realizing the usefulness of public libraries in our society, the study found out services rendering by Raji- Oke Esa memorial library, Iseyin , Oyo state and challenges facing the library in rendering services to the community. It is therefore, established that if all the challenges were eradicated, Raji Oke Esa memorial library will be able to provide effective and efficient services to the community.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommend as follows;

1. The government should support libraries owned by individuals in the society that are serving community to enable them procure sufficient current books and other information materials.

2. Staffing of qualified and experienced librarians is very important in achieving the set goals of Raji- Oke Esa memorial library, Iseyin, Oyo state.

3.   The government should adopt regular supervision of the operations of the public libraries as this will go a long way in facilitating effective service delivery on the part of the staff towards achieving the targeted goals.

4.   Extensive public enlightenment campaign should be involved by the staff og Raji- Oke Esa memorial library, Iseyin, Oyo state to acquaint the rural dweller on the importance of libraries in community development so that they will largely embrace their services.

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