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Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS) In Nigeria: The Roles of Libraries

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Abstract

The sustainable development goals are 17goals set up by the world leaders to be achieved by 2020 that respond to the world's main development challenges. This paper although an opinion paper emphasizes the roles of libraries in achieving the sustainable development goals. Libraries as important resources for achieving these goals must provide relevant and adequate information to the public in an accessible way .This paper, therefore, maps out the roles that library play towards achieving the sustainable development goals. This paper also highlighted the problems militating against libraries towards achieving sustainable development goals and made recommendations. The study proffer recommendations that libraries should regularly organize seminars, Government should ensure that libraries and information centre are fully integrated into the scheme of activities at both the local and national level, government and the parent institution should support the library and information centres financially etc.

Keywords: Libraries, Sustainable development, Nigeria

1.1 Introduction

The United Nations launched the seventeen sustainable development goals in 2015 to create a common set of development goals for all communities in every country with a deadline for attainment of 2030 vision. These goals are focused on some special areas of the country economy. However, the actualization of the SDGs will be feasible, provided all the essential infrastructures, including information agencies, are given the desired attention to contribute their quota in that direction (Onah, Urom, &Unagha, 2015).

In the era of Millennium Development Goals, the roles of the libraries and information centre were not highly pronounced. However, looking at our society today, the library and information centres is an important institution that serves as a channel to knowledge, provides information literacy skills, long life learning, research and learning development of an individual. In the opinion of Okoro, Akidi & Arua (2014), libraries are tools for the development of society. Thus, in order to enable the people to live responsibly, library must be able to meet their needs at the appropriate time. Lozano (2002) agreed that the general library' roles are to provide information to its community, therefore

acquisition of knowledge dispels ignorance, as such the general objective of the library is to serve as a centre for information where people acquire the needed knowledge to reduce their ignorance and level of uncertainty about their environment.

2.1 Review of Related Literature

Information in the development of any nation cannot be left behind because it is a vital factor for a sustainable development. A nation needs to provide sustainable development goals for its citizens to meet their ever-increasing demands. To accomplish this, the library has to play an important role to create, organize, process, store, disseminate and provide access to information. This information to be provided will reduce the level of ignorance and help people to gain a living. Ezekwe & Muokebe (2012) in their study observed that libraries with various resources are best heritages that humanity can claim to have. This signifies that any nation without a library and information centre is not worth its development.

In view of the foregoing, the library and information centres is the bedrock for the development of any nation and serve as an institution that store and preserves the information of the people and disseminates the information needed at the appropriate time. Hence, there is need to find out the role of libraries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Nigeria.

2.2 Sustainable Development: A Conceptual Overview

Recent studies described Sustainable development as the process of transformation of a country's economic, social, political, educational, religious and cultural value towards improvement in human dignity and the general well-being of its citizens. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a global decision aimed at making the world a better place to live. Sustainable development is a programme that is developed to meets the needs of the present generation and also those of the future generation. According to Nicholas & Perpetual (2015), Sustainable development is the overall change and improvement in any given society as related to individual progress. Sustainable development covers a wide range of interrelated issues in the areas of environmental, economic, social, and political, all within the limits of the world's natural resources to ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by the year 2030. Furthermore, sustainable development the development that provides a better quality of life for both the present and future generations (Shah, 2012).

Sustainable development goals were chosen from a global consultation processing in 2015 and the 17 goals were built on the success of the MDG of the year 2000-2015. The goals include:

Goal1 :	No Poverty
Goal 2 :	Zero Hunger ;
Goal 3 :	Good Health & Well - being ;
Goal 4 :	Quality Education ;
Goal 5 :	Gender Equality ;
Goal 6 :	Clean Water & Sanitation ;
Goal 7 :	Affordable & Clean Energy ;
Goal 8 :	Decent Work & Economic Growth ;
Goal 9 :	Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure;
Goal 10 :	Reduce in - equalit y
Goal 11 :	Sustainable Cities & Communities ;
Goal 12 :	Responsible Consumptio n
Goal 13 :	Protect the Planet
Goal 14 :	Life below water
Goal 15 :	Life on Land
Goal 16 :	Peace and Justice
Goal 17 :	Partnership for the goal

2.3 Libraries and Sustainable Development

Libraries play an important role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. It is globally considered as a centre of research and a place of information empowerment which role can never be over emphasized, as the public benefit immensely from it. Library and information centres is an institution that is responsible for the selection, ordering, acquisition, processing, storing, preservation of resources in diverse formats to users at the appropriate time. Similarly, Nicholas and Perpetual (2015) pointed out libraryas an information centre that acquire process, organize, store, retrieve and disseminate information to users.

Adesoji (2007) posit that the culture of continuous learning and reading is intertwined with libraries, which in still in students the culture of reading. The role of information in any nation cannot be left behindbecause libraries are seen as the custodians of knowledge and the most reliable information centre that deals with the acquisition, organization, dissemination and preservation of information all for actualizing sustainable development.
The roles of the library in achieving sustainable development goals can be grouped as appeared in Table 1

Roles of the Library in Achieving Sustainable Development Goals

S/N	Goals	Library and Information centre rolesin sustainable development
1.	No Poverty	Information is key to poverty eradication and library and information centre serve as the hub to make information available. Therefore, they should provide meaningful information on poverty alleviation and eradication in a packaged format. Also they must ensure that both the rich and the poor should have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance
2.	Zero Hunger	Library and information centres should use their resources to eradicate extreme hunger and ensure proper functioning of food commodity by creating awareness and providing an enabling environment where information on sustainable agricultural practices in all its form can be accessed and use.
3.	Good Health & Well-being	Library and information centres should provide information both in print and electronic format that will the public to eradicate child mortality and improve maternal health. The effect of bad dietary on health should be emphasized by providing information on the cause of diseases and the natural ways to prevent diseases. Also, they should ensure a universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive
4.	Quality Education	Library and information centre should provide information literacy skills and long life learning for the public by educating and enlightening youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship. More so, they must organize and disseminate information that society will access and use to inform themselves on various issues of life and by empowering communities through knowledge and the ability to access information for themselves.

S/N	Goals	Library and Information centre rolesin sustainable development
5.	Gender Equality	Library and information centres should encourage gender equality and when selecting information resources, the use of enabling technology should be adopted by libraries, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women
6.	Clean Water & Sanitation	Library and information centres should facilitate access to hygiene-related information through raising awareness, campaigns, and symposiums. Also, they should support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management
7	Affordable & Clean Energy	Library and information centres should provide public access to ICT, study rooms, and classes on using mobile phones and ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services through library campaigns
8.	Decent Work & Economic Growth	Libraries should provide education and training for both the young and old to make sure that they have access to information in an affordable way. It is also their responsibility to make sure that people find jobs through their public library and this will allow the Public access to ICT and skills enables people to apply for jobs, as the application process for all jobs has moved online.
9.	Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure	Library and information centres should provide access to information technology and endeavor to provide affordable access to Internet facilities to less developed areas. This can be achieved by engaging in lively debates, quizzes and spelling competitions through smart phone, laptop and video conferencing project.
10	Reduce inequality Goal	Library and information centres should encourage safe and dependable mobility of citizens through a reliable migration policy that is well planned and managed. Library Services including information and support about legal, childcare, housing, health, education; providing support with applications for citizenship, residence, subsidized housing, government benefits.
11	Sustainable Cities & Communities	Libraries should provide and protect the nation's cultural and natural heritage for posterity. It is the responsibility of the public library to develop and implement Disaster Risk management at all levels in the community
12	Responsible Consumption	Libraries should encourage organizations to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainable information into their reporting cycle. Libraries can come together to ensure that all countries have access to information.
13	Climate Action	Climate Information awareness and access program should be conducted. This should include resources on climate change and action; it is early warning, mitigation, adaptation, and impact reduction.
14	Life below Water	Libraries and information centres should provide scientific information on preservation and conservation techniques that can sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

S/N	Goals	Library and Information centre rolesin sustainable development
15.	Life on Land	The threats from man and nature to land can be safeguarded by libraries through educating people with the skill set on the management of forest, land and ecosystem; its degradation and recovery.
16.	Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions	Libraries make Internet access available to the community at no or low cost and ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements
17.	Partnership for the Goals	In support of this Uhegbu & Igwe (2006) asserts that librarians, whether in school, university, public or in special libraries have a greater responsibility in the development of a global partnership for development by acquiring, packaging, organizing and disseminating knowledge and experience to Nigerians. Librarians, therefore, can foster understanding and communication through library awareness campaign strategy, and this brings together some of the ideas for global development.

2.4 Challenges facing Libraries towards Achieving Sustainable Development Goals:

i) Inadequate Fund- Libraries in Nigeria are not properly funded to serve the purpose for which they are meant to render and this will not enable them to be effective and attractive in the achievement of sustainable development goal in Nigeria

ii) Inadequate Staff- This is another challenge facing the library and information centres. Most libraries do not have experienced and well-trained staff to run the system (Apotiade, 2002).Because of this, the achievement of the goals could be jeopardized or slowed down.

iii) Inadequate Facilities- This has also become another militating factor that affects libraries and information centres. It has limited the services and information provided by libraries and librarians for a sustainable development. There is a need for the provision of contemporary facilities to meet the growing demands of millennials in the 21st century.

v) Poor Infrastructure-Library materials are liable to damages and therefore appropriate structures should be put in place to protect them (Krolak, 2005). However, this is mostly not the case, as books, computers, and audiovisual materials are not been protected from getting damage which in turn hinders librarians in providing services to patrons.

Other Challenges facing Libraries towards Achieving Sustainable Development Goals are:
- Negligence of library and information centres by Nigeria governments –
- Low self-esteem among library and Information professionals-
- Poor lobbying and advocacy skills among librarians
- Non-challant attitude of Nigerian policy makers
- Low level of partnership drive among librarians
- Inconsistent government policies

Conclusion

Libraries are essentials tools in the society and they play an important role in achieving sustainable development goals. If sustainable development goal in Nigeria is to be sustained, citizens need to be well informed and this can be done through information selection, processing, organizing and dissemination of resources taking into account the development indicators raised in the sustainable development goals (SDGs), hosting local forums where people can discuss problems such as community health, education, environmental issues, climate change etc. If the nation can give serious attention on library and information centres, to some extent the nation will be able to overcome some of the challenges militating against information provision and will be among the top countries' economies in the world in the year 2020

Recommendations

- Government should ensure that libraries and information centreare fully integrated into the scheme of activities at both the local and national level.
- Library and information centres should regularly organize seminars, workshops; symposium that will serve as an educational forum where citizens irrespective of gender, age, and profession can listen to information on social, economic, health agriculture or education to enable them to develop themselves physically and mentally.
- The government and the parent institution should support the library and information centres financially in order to end challenges of inadequate infrastructure and facilities, poor network distribution and would also assist in the publishing of research findings conducted by researcher

- Adequate Staffing with professional qualification needs to be provided so that they will give quality contributions to national development in spheres of life.
- Engaging in effective lobbying and advocacy programmes: Heads of libraries should endeavour to engage in sustainable lobbying and advocacy programmes. Librarians should acquire lobbying and advocacy skills at all costs to ensure that they contribute their own quota to the reality of the SDGs.

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