Chapter 107
Transformational Leadership for Academic Libraries in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The institutional environment confronting leaders of academic libraries has never been more complex and challenging in Nigeria. With advancement in technology, the core role, purpose, and function of the academic library has changed drastically. Newly emerging information services and capabilities frequently outstrip available resources. There is an increasing need for library leaders to provide articulate, strategic leadership that will not only motivate subordinates to be totally committed to their jobs but also ensure that the relevance of the services offered by the library remains above board. The focus of this chapter is to explore the current changes evident in academic libraries and identify the practices of transformational leaders. The chapter also focuses on three areas where transformational leadership can apply in academic libraries in Nigeria as well as suggestions on how the future transformational leaders in librarianship can be nurtured.

INTRODUCTION

Rapid changes brought about by the information age have required that libraries re-invent themselves in order to maintain their relevance in the academic community. Specifically, libraries have had to contend with changes such as dramatic increases in the cost of library materials while budgets continue to decrease; new digital formats and communication technologies and improvements in information availability (Weiner, 2003).

The university librarian, who is the head in every academic library is required to be the executive administrator, in charge of the planning, administrative and budgetary functions of the library. However, times have changed and there is an increased call for leaders who possess, communicate, and implement a vision for transformed and improved academic libraries. It is believed that the approach the university librarian adopt in directing, guiding and controlling the staff under him/her determines the pace of progress in their libraries. However, not all leadership styles are suitable for the task of provoking or fostering innovations within the academic library.

Objectives

It is the objective of this chapter to:

1. Explore the current changes evident in academic libraries;
2. Define transformational leadership;
3. Identify the practices of transformational leaders;
4. Focus on three areas where transformational leadership can apply in academic libraries in Nigeria and;
5. Suggestions on how the future transformational leaders in librarianship can be nurtured.

BACKGROUND

It is a well-known fact that the traditional mission of academic libraries has from the beginning been to select, collect, preserve and create access to intellectual resources that can promote academic studies and research. "As a result, it occupies a central and primary place in the university, because it supports all the functions of a university with respect to teaching, research, extension of the frontiers of knowledge and the transmission to posterity the learning culture of the present and past" (Lippincolt, 2005).

However, the demand and expectation placed on academic libraries have changed over time. Reasons being that technology has changed the expectations of library patrons; today, people expect to be able to find and access information from wherever they are. Libraries are now hubs of technology while offering services that have become extremely complex and sophisticated (Afolabi, 2014). Bazillion (2001) stated that electronic information sources have quickly established a formidable presence in academic libraries.

Furthermore, libraries have to implement increasingly complex solutions that involve distributed networking and access to remote information resources. The use of information technology in libraries has tremendously increased due to its enhanced user satisfaction, cost effectiveness, faster and simpler programs, rapid communicative interaction and easier operational procedures (Storey, 1995). Another typical change that has evolved in today's academic library is in the form of library access. A library card today gives more than just access to books and periodicals at the local library; it gives access to the world just about any location. It also gives access to computing and networking technologies, in all their various forms. Some latest technologies used in academic libraries include internet access and web access to library resources which are an integral part of almost all library services (Rendon, 2014).

In the light of the glaring proliferation of information and information technologies, Germano (2011) pointed out that library managers now grapple with the demands of an increasingly complex and change-laden information landscape which offers patrons seemingly unlimited choices. Most libraries now risk becoming competitively-disadvantaged when compared to other technologically-mediated, user-defined information retrieval choices that are newly available. Critical to this seeming shift in the academic library's identity is leadership.

Townley (2003) defined leadership as mobilizing people to get things done. It involves motivating people and managing resources. Martin (2015) believes that leadership is the link between "intention and outcome. Yukl (1998) gave a comprehensive definition of leadership as the process whereby an individual member in a group or organization influences the interpretation of events, the choices of objectives, strategies, the organization of activities, the maintenance of cooperative relationships, the

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