Chapter 36

Positioning Library and Information Services for User Satisfaction through ICT Policy Formulation in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This chapter focuses on how user satisfaction can be enhanced in library and information centers through the formulation and implementation of effective ICT policies in Nigeria. It describes the benefits of ICT to users especially in the library and information service, failure of the Nigerian National ICT Policy to address ICT needs of library section and the difficulties this would pose to the library and information service in the satisfaction of the user's needs. The chapter therefore suggests policy line of action that can address this gap. Recommendations geared towards achieving user satisfaction in the library and information service are set forth.

INTRODUCTION

There is no gainsaying the fact that the advent and growth of *Information and Communication Technology (ICTs)* have impacted tremendously upon human society and revolutionalized information and communication transfer. The application of ICT has greatly transformed the society by influencing the way people live, play, interact, communicate, seek Information and do business.

ICTs are used to capture, process, organize, retrieve and provide information in library and information service centers. Grace, Kenny and Quang (2004) posit that the impact of ICTs on library services has profound implication for social and economic development of Nigeria. ICT components used in libraries include computers, internet, e-mail, websites, portals, blogs, podcasts, vodcasts, videoconferencing telecommunication, etc. Librarians now communicate with library users through internet, e-mail telephone, chats etc.

that help meet users information needs without physical contact (Ukachi, 2008).

Though the deployment of ICTs greatly enhances service provision, these potentials are yet to be fully exploited and enjoyed in libraries and other sectors of Nigeria. In their studies on the extent of ICT user satisfaction, Ehikhamenor, (2003)Eke (2006) Okwilagwe (2004) found out that there is only a moderate user satisfaction in the use of ICT facilities in tertiary institutions in the country.

Some of the threats and challenges to optimal utilization of ICT facilities which invariably cause dissatisfaction to users include, inaccessibility, inadequate facilities irregular power supply, frequent computer breakdown, frequent down time of server, digital illiteracy, high cost of procurement of computer, lack of information policy, funding etc (Anaeme 2006, Eke 2006, & Ukachi 2008). Abulihmen (2005) identified low teledensity, insufficient trunk leading to congestion, unreliable network design, power interconnectivity insufficient bandwidth, insufficient human resource development, poor maintenance culture, vandalization of facilities, exorbitant and sometimes unjustifiable billing as problems militating against ICT use in Nigeria. These factors could be a result of dysfunctional ICT policies as well as absence of well articulated proactive national policy on ICT which reflects which can meet the needs of the populace. Haarhoff (2002) and Anaeme (2006) observed that Nigeria lacks formal ICT policies at the national level. The absence of library ICT policies to guide ICT application could make it difficult for the library to reap the enormous benefits of ICT in service delivery.

Consequently an appropriate positioning of library and information service and ICT via a viable proactive national ICT polices which takes congnissance of our prevailing social, economic, political and cultural environment and aimed at achieving and sustaining user satisfaction from the main thrust of this work. It focuses on issues and challenges to library Information Service ICT and User Satisfaction, ICT policies in Nigeria and makes recommendations that could facilitate adoption of ICT policies to enhance library service provision.

BACKGROUND

Information and communication technology (ICT) is any technology, which enables communication and the electronic capture, processing, and transmission of information (Parliament Office of Science and Technology, 2006).It is a generic name used to refer to a number of communication hardware adopted in ensuring instantaneous dissemination of information and social values across the globe (Nwodu, 2003 cited by Onwuama, 2006). ICTs have become very essential to contemporary societies Whether one is talking on the phone, sending e-mail, going to the bank, using a library, listening to sports coverage on the radio, watching the news on television, working in an office or in the fields, and so forth, one is using ICTs. However these ICTS do not operate in isolations from one another (APC, n.d.). The characteristics of ICT include faster response to enquiries, accuracy in data accessibility, and sophistication in use complex in nature, more durable, resilient, effective and efficient. (Barlett, 2002) ICT facilities consist of computers, radio, television system, compact disc (CD) video compact disc (VCD) calculators Mobil phone among others.

Following the gains of industrial revolution and advance in technology, information growth and development witnessed an unprecedented progress through the instrucementality of ICT facilities. Anaeme (2006) confirming this observed that the concept of information society is the product of rapid technological advances in information technology sector which saw the wide spread recognition that computers can be used to communicate and process information. ICT has brought the world into a global village through the efficiency, sophiscaltion and reli-

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