RIVERS STATE UNIVERSITY, PORT HARCOURT

THE VOICE OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGERS: LIBRARY SERVICES, KNOWLEDGE APPLICATION AND THE SOCIETY

AN INAUGURAL LECTURE

By

PROFESSOR BLESSING ESURU AHIAUZU,

A.L.A (Librarianship), United Kingdom, M.B.A (Management) RSUST, M.L.S. (Library and Information Science) IMSU, M.S.C, PhD(Sociology) UPH, KSMFNLA, CLN, CILIP.

Professor of Library and Information Management

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THE VOICE OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGERS: LIBRARY SERVICES, KNOWLEDGE APPLICATION AND THE SOCIETY

An Inaugural Lecture

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DEDICATION

To God Almighty
through Jesus Christ my Saviour,
Staff and students of
Library and Information Science,
Rivers State University

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PROTOCOL

The Vice-Chancellor of the Rivers State University, Professor Nlerum Sunday Okogbule;

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academics) and Former Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor (Mrs.) Opuenebo Binya Owei;

Principal Officers of the University;

Members of the Rivers State University 12th Governing Council here present;

Distinguished past Inaugural Lecturers of our great Rivers State University;

Distinguished Professors

Deans of Faculties, Directors of Institutes and Centres;

Heads of Departments and Coordinators of Units;

Heads of Academic and Administrative Departments;

Lecturers and Colleagues;

Other Staff of the University;

My Lords Spiritual and Temporal;

His Royal Highnesses here present;

Members of the Fourth Estate of the Realm;

Great Whales;

Great UWA

Great OWA, RSU Branch

Great GGSS/MGHS Alumni

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

PREAMBLE

Vice-Chancellor, Sir, the inaugural lecturer is completely humbled by this opportunity to deliver the 67th inaugural lecture of this great University. I thank God Almighty who made it possible for me to present this inaugural lecture today as a Professor. History will have it that the 67th inaugural lecture was presented by Professor Blessing Esuru Ahiauzu. It is also the first hybrid inaugural lecture hosted both physically and online via zoom. Thanks to COVID-19 protocols

The awareness of the Library and Information Science profession is relatively young in Nigeria, compared to other professions like law, engineering and medicine. However, in many other countries, especially in Europe, North America and some parts of ancient Africa, it is an age-long known profession. Evidence, from the Holy Bible, shows that the concept of Librarianship is as old as the creation of man. For instance, there were documented records in scrolls, tablets and in books maintained in worship Temples and Kings' palaces. These were referred to from time to time when such great Kings were to take major decisions. This happened in the case of King A-hasuerus and Mordecai (Esther 6:1-3).When King A-hasuerus had the burden to honour the person who saved his life, he requested for the Book of Records to support his action:

> *"That night the King could not sleep, so one was commanded to bring the **book of the records of the chronicles**; and they were read before the king. 2. Andit was found written that Mordecai had told of Big-tha-na and Te'resh, two of the king's eu-nuchs who were doorkeepers, who had sought to lay hands*

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on King A-hasuerus. Then the King said, "What honour or dignity has been bestowed on Mordecai for this? And the king's servants who attended to him said; "Nothing has been done for him" (Esther 6:1-3).

Mordecai was, therefore, honoured but the two eunuchs were hanged based on the records found in the books. This very event had to be recorded in a book as well,"...and it was written in the **book of the chronicles** in the presence of the king" (Esther, 2:23).These were called **books of chronicles.** The history of the entire human race is recorded and preserved in books. The Holy Bible (Genesis to Revelation) contains books preserved from creation.

In Exodus 32:32-33, for example, when Moses carried the burden to intercede to God on behalf of the people to forgive their sins, he prayed to God thus "Yet now, if you will forgive their sin – and if not, I pray blot me out of your **book which you have written".**(33).and the LORD said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot out of **my book**". **So, there is the LORD's book** from creation. He has a book where our joys and pains are recorded: "You number my wanderings; put my tears into your bottle; Are they not in your **book**?" (Psalm 56:8). According to David in Psalm 69:28, "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and be not written with the righteous". From this passage, **there is a book of the living and another of the righteous.** Daniel saw a vision of **a book** opened on the day of judgement: "A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: a thousand thousands ministered to Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the court was seated, and the **books** were opened" (Daniel 7:10). **This is the book of judgement**.

There is also the book of remembrance: "Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another; and the LORD listened, and heard them; So, a **book of remembrance** was written before Him for those who fear the LORD, and who meditate on His name" (Malachi 3:16). For us to have this book of remembrance, it means that the

books are already catalogued and classified by their authors, titles, subjects, facets and other forms of added entries as may be necessary for individuals and events. The import of all these, show that the Almighty God Himself had initiated the job and importance of the Librarian, Curator and Archivist. He had made known the value of record-keeping, information retrieval and dissemination from creation.

In the book of Revelation 1:3, the Bible records that: "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophesy, and keep those things which are **written** in it for the time is near". Also, in the book of Revelation 5:1, John the Beloved saw "a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals" that would be opened someday(Revelation 5:1).

When John the Beloved was in the Spirit on the Lord's day (Revelation 1:11), a voice said to him: "I am The Alpha and Omega, the First and Last" and "What you see, write (*preserve*) in a book and send it (*disseminate*) to the seven churches (*the Users*) which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos to Thyatrira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia and to Laodicea". The instruction was to write down all that he heard and saw, so that it would be preserved and disseminated beyond his immediate environment through to all generations. Consequently, the civilisation that started in Egypt soon spread to other parts of the world. As the written words, discoveries and exploits were documented and preserved in books, individual book collections grew into libraries of various sizes. Thus, the last great King of Assyria maintained close to 25,000 tablets made up of transcripts and texts from the temples in his Kingdom. The Assyrian clay tablets were found in Egypt in the 2nd millennium BC (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2013).

Prof. Dame Blessing Ahiauzu is happily and blissfully married to her dear husband, Emeritus Professor Augustine Ikechuku Ahiauzu, former Vice-Chancellor of this great Institution. The union is divinely blessed with lovely children and grand-children. Nobody expected less as God's strength (Ikechukwu) radiated His (Blessings) on the family.

"All work and no play…" is the rule Prof. runs away from as she has time for leisure and recreation. She loves cooking for her husband, engaging in gardening but most of all she enjoys dancing and tieing of gele.

The Vice Chancellor, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, permit me to delightfully present to you our lecturer for today:

> **A woman of substance**
> **A teacher**
> **A woman of great strides**
> **The beacon of light and a pathfinder**
> **A woman of many parts**
> **A successful digital migrant**
> **A lover of her profession – She is no other than**

Prof. Dame Blessing EsuruAhiauzu

examiner in the Ignatius Ajuru University of Education among many others. She also serves as an external assessor for many University Librarians and Professorial candidates. Each time her assessment is laudable. She has set up functional libraries in many organizations, the latest she has her hands on now, is a public library in her community.

Prof. Ahiauzu Blessing belongs to these learned societies and others that enhance her networking in her field of interest.

- Nigerian Library Association
- Association of University Librarians of Universities in Nigeria
- Academic and Research Library Association
- Association of Women Librarians in Nigeria
- National Association of Library and Information Science Educators
- Chattered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (UK)

Prof. does not make noise about awards, aside academic and scholarly awards, others worthy of mentioning are;

- Meritorious Service Award from Association of University Librarians of Nigerian Universities (AULNU)2017
- Fellow of Nigerian Library Association (FNLA) 2008∎ Ogba Meritorious Service Award from Oba (Eze Ogba) of Ogbaland-2013
- Woman of Valour Award by Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), Diocese of Ahoada.

Librarian's Early Qualifications

If one may ask: who were the people in charge of those books, scrolls, tablets and the collections (libraries) in temples and palaces where they were preserved? When the need to call up the records by their authors, titles, subjects and other added entries, who retrieved and disseminated same? The Inaugural lecturer humbly submits here, that these were Librarians, appointed to take charge of highly sensitive historical collections of Kingdoms. Their major qualifications were trust, integrity and confidence of the Kings and Queens. This is the origin of the nobility of the Librarianship profession. Only persons with high level of integrity and the confidence of Kings could be entrusted with the records of a Kingdom.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Sir, our lecture today is far from being on Theology. What we are trying to show from the foregoing is that the concept of Librarianship in the development and management of library collections (acquisition, cataloguing, classification and dissemination to the uttermost parts of the earth) originated from the creation of man. We can thus, conveniently, lay claims to say that Librarianship is one of the oldest recorded professions from creation and that the spread of civilisation and knowledge of the 25,000 tablets of the King of Assyria and other collections from the Greek temples would not have been known to us today without Librarians and libraries. Some committed early Librarians that added academic qualifications include the following:

➢ The Greek scholar **Eratosthene,** born 276BC, was at the age 36 appointed the Chief Librarian of the great library of Alexandria, Egypt, the most famous library in the world at that time.

➢ **David Hume (1711-1776**) is another renowned Librarian. He was the Librarian of the advocate's Library in Edinburgh, United Kingdom.

➤ **Giovanni Jacopo Casanova** (1725-1798) was also employed as Librarian of the Chateau of Count Waldstein of Bohemia.

➤ **Ambrogio Damiano AchilleRatti** (1857-1939) who became Pope XI (1929-1939), was at a time the Chief Librarian at the Milan seminary and later Vice-Prefect of the Vatican Library. As a professional librarian, he developed a classification system, and as Pope, he re-organised the Vertican Archives.

➤ **Ranganathan, Shiyali Ramamrita (1892-1972)** was a Librarian in India. Known as the Father of Librarianship, he propounded the *Five Laws of Library Science* in his classic book published in 1931. These Laws have guided library service delivery till date.

➤ **J. Edgar Hoover**, the well-known, longest serving director of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), worked at the Library of Congress for many years and was a cataloguer at the time he left the library in 1919.

➤ **Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-Tung)** the famous Chairman Mao, who led the Communist Revolution that gave rise to the People's Republic of China, was a Librarian. In 1918, he lived in Beijing (Peking) where He worked as Assistant Librarian at Peking University.

➤ **Philip Larkin**(1922-1985) studied Librarianship and became successively an Assistant Librarian at the University College of Leicester and a Librarian at the University of Hull, both in the United Kingdom

➤ **Professor J.M.M. Grey-Theriot** was the University Librarian and later Head of Department of Library Science at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria between 1960 and 1971. In 1972, he was appointed Chief Librarian to start the then

Chairman, Agency for Re-orientation, Integrity, Service and Ethics (ARISE)

Member, Post Graduate School Board   1996 – 2017

Member, Thesis Format Committee 2004 – Date

Chairman, Association of University Librarians of Nigeria Universities (AULNU) 2015 – 2018

1st Vice President, (National) Nigeria Library Association 2013 – 2016

Chairman, Nigerian Library Association, River State Branch

Prof. Blessing likes to work. Her services therefore are not limited to her immediate space. They transcend the university environment and include her community, Church and her professional bodies to which she belongs.

Hear her exploits

▪ Vice Chancellor, Omoku City Improvement Committee 2006 – 2011

▪ President, Ladies of the Knights of Christopher of the Church.

▪ Lay Reader of the Anglican Communion.

▪ 2nd Vice President of National Council of Women Societies, Rivers State Chapter.

This erudite and fine Professor of Library and Information Management is credited with more than 50 scholarly publications in forms of books, book chapters, journal articles published locally and internationally in very reputable for a – as behoves her status. She has widely travelled for professional conferences and seminars within and outside the country where she greatly contributed to knowledge through her paper presentations. Prof. has also served as both visiting lecturer and external examiner in some universities particularly, in the South-South Zone of Nigeria. She is currently an

With such qualifications and competences Prof. Blessing joined the services of the then Rivers State college now University of Science and Technology Nkpolu, Port Harcourt in 1979 as Librarian II. As a high flier with grace, she grew along the ranks both as a practicing librarian and a lecturer to attain the Principal Officer Cadre of the University Librarian a position she held for 2 tenures from 2007 to 2017 and a Professorial rank in 2016. Her astute experiences made her work in every critical unit of the library as Head of Unit and had trained and mentored many colleagues of her in all categories.

Her competences were not without administrative skills. Those skills made her hold several administrative positions in the institutions which brought to limelight her managerial abilities. Such positions, she held in the following few, among others;

- University Librarian 2007 – 2017

- Acting Vice-Chancellor 2007 (for 10 days)

- Pioneer Head of Department Library and Information Science 2017 – Date

Prof. Blessing Ahiauzu served the University community. Her services know no bounds because of her universality in a number of things aside her core professional area. Consider these very salient few out of the 30 positions held.

Member, 12th and 13th Governing Council of the Rivers State University.

Member, Finance and General Purposes Committee,Rivers State University.

Member, Ad-Hoc Committee on Review of Staff Matters 2016 –Date

Chairman, University Calendar Review Committee

Acting Chairman, Senate Committee on Curriculum and Instruction

Rivers State College of Science and Technology (R.S.C.S.T.) Library, Port Harcourt. He left the services of the R.S.C.S. Tin 1979.

The early and subsequent Librarians acquired, preserved, organized (catalogued and classified), retrieved and disseminated the recorded knowledge by titles, subjects and other added entries for us to have an organized body of knowledge as we have it today.

Brief Citation
ON
PROFESSOR DAME BLESSING ESURU AHIAUZU

Prof. Blessing Esuru Ahiauzu was born to the family of Elder Tom Masi and Madam Rose Onwusah in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State. She is the second child of six children of her mother. There was a great jubilation the day she was delivered on 14th April, 1954. This was because she came with great grace.

Professor Blessing Ahiauzu went to school when her mates did, and her early education started at the St. Michael's (Christian Missionary School) primary school Omoku. There, she finished and got her First School Leaving Certificate and immediately proceeded to Government Girls Secondary School, Harbour Road, Port Harcourt where again she obtained the then popular West African School Certificate in flying colours in 1975. Prof. Blessing's zeal and unquenchable desire for higher education took her to several institutions of higher learning both within and outside the country. She attended the Brooklyn Technical College Birmingham in United Kingdom, City of Birmingham Polytechnic (now university of central England), the then Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt and Imo State University, Owerri.

In these places she studied, finished and was awarded many degrees, diploma and certificates – which include a Ph.D in Sociology of Development, 3 Masters Degrees in Sociology, Business Administration and Library and Information Science. She has a Diploma in Computer Studies and an Associateship of Library Association (ALA). Prof. Blessing Ahiauzu is a chartered and virtual librarian adequately skilled in the digital operations of library.
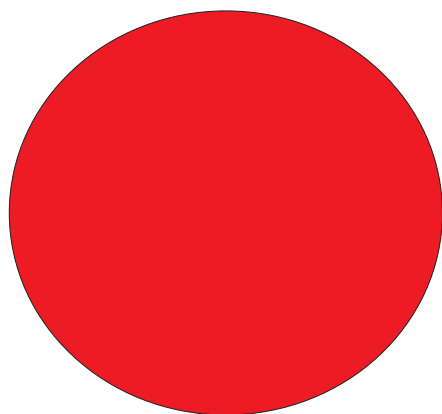
➢ **APPRECIATING GREAT AUDIENCE**

I cannot fully express my gratitude and that of my family for your presence and patience at this Inaugural. You inconvenienced yourselves to be present here as you travelled from far and near. You have surprised me and sometimes, we do not know how to say 'thank you'. Your presence added value and honour to my presentation. I do not take it for granted. You are highly appreciated. May God guide you and keep you as you go back to your homes and destinations. May God, who promoted me to this summit of scholarship as a Professor, also promote you and promote your children. May God preserve you and bless you all a million time. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN VARIOUS WAYS

Please, join me to sing this hymn of praise: "God moves in a mysterious way" (A.M. 181).

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Throughout the professional career of the inaugural lecturer from the United Kingdom to Nigeria, spanning a little over forty (40) years of theory and practice, she has consistently written articles and made presentations at different platforms, attempting to inform enthusiasts and sceptics about the place of the library and Librarian in society. She did that with a very high sense of understanding of the fact that if providence did not "plunge" her into the profession, she would have been part of the audience that needed to be convinced about the relevance to society of those "who sit behind the library counters and bookshelves arranging books". Like Apostle Paul in the Holy Bible, she was arrested to preach and die for the very ideology she once had a disdain for. When she was asked to drop her United Kingdom Law admission letter for Librarianship, the two major questions she asked were: "Do those people who arrange books in libraries go for any formal education at the tertiary level"?Do they have University degrees? It was one of the most miserable decisions she was "forced" to take at the time. The event of today proves that her eventual acquiescence was divinely motivated.

The choice of topic for this inaugural lecture *The Voice of Knowledge Managers: Library Services, Knowledge Application and the Society* is born out of the lecturer's concern for some information and knowledge gaps in the society that she could apply her professional knowledge to fill and change the narratives. These issues were of great burden to her. The issues included the spate of oil exploitation-related youth restiveness in the Niger Delta, challenges of library services delivery in Nigeria, lack of access to the book by the children and young adults of school age who hawk wares and roam the streets of major cities. Others are the disappearance of mobile libraries (University of the Poorest of the Poor) in trucks and book-boats from the streets, fishing pots and creeks; the possible extinction of some Rivers State indigenous languages and the

general paucity of knowledge application in Nigeria. Arising from these observations, some pertinent questions agitated our mind. Are there ways that librarians can apply their professional training to meet such knowledge and information communication needs in our society through collaboration and networking for the unreached groups of people in our society? for example, Can connecting the children and youths to the book reduce crime and the number of street hawkers; provide a platform for dialogue for positive change that would contribute to the much needed peace and unity in Nigeria? What roles can the Librarian play as knowledge gatekeeper in connecting these unreached members of the society to books? The inaugural lecturer attempted to seek answers to these questions through her research efforts, with a view to ameliorating the problems so identified in the society.

We have come to understand that knowledge application is what we need now in Nigeria. Many individuals and scholars have quantum stock of knowledge, but lack the application to circumstances. Our University and Research Institutes' library shelves are inundated with research reports awaiting the application of their findings. The rate of unemployment and other social anomalies are aggravated because greater percentage of the existing knowledge is not applied. As a librarian, the inaugural lecturer has theoretically and practically engaged her professional knowledge to solving identified problems of the society in terms of book-related services in order to leave her immediate environment better than she met it. We believe that more segments of the society would have been better off if our individual and collective stock of accumulated knowledge were applied to the circumstances and conditions. Librarians can make a difference in this regard. Till date, in Nigeria, there are still some misconceptions about who a Librarian is and that is part of what would be clarified today.

- ➢ The President and Members of the Government Girls Secondary School/Methodist Girls High School Harbour Road.

- ➢ Rivers State University Alumni Association.

- ➢ All of you present here and those who are connecting online with us via Zoom link due to the new social order of COVID-19, we say 'thank you' for making this event possible and memorable. May you be richly blessed.

- ➢ The best comes just in the right place and that is the place for my beloved husband children. My "Brother Booker T" who, later, turned my mentor, confidant and husband, Emeritus Prof. (Sir) Augustine Ikechuku Ahiauzu. He gave me all the freedom to actualise some of the potentials he saw in me. From my first professional qualification to Ph.D and now as a Professor were all undertaken under his roof as his wife

- ➢ The children, our jewels (silver and gold) and our pride any day, their spouses and our grandchildren gave me the needed spiritual and emotional balance to life. Their love, concern and prayers for my wellbeing and success do not have bounds. Thank you Barr. Nkiruka, Engr. Chinedu, Dr. Chioma, Barr. Isioma and Eric NkaChuku a.k.a. Ric Hassani (a world-class music Artiste). I am not ignorant of the fact that my pedigree has become a sort of high jump for you. If you can take this challenge and the discipline it imposes on you, calmly, confidently and courageously with trust in GOD, you are sure to go beyond me. Only hold on to HIM passionately with total surrender.

Rev. Can. Seth Oke Akinro and Mrs. Mercy Seth Akinro, (Yenagoa), Women's League of Christ Church Port Harcourt, Christ Church Library Board and my prayer groups. The former Resident Minister and Assistant Resident Ministers: Ven. Dr. Saturday T. Nbete and Mrs .Baridole Nbete, Very Rev. Kelechi T. Francis and his dear wife, Very Rev. Ndukwe D. Ndukwe and his dear wife. Your prayers have sustained my family. Thank you.

➢ The Rivers State Government Readers Project Board members comprising Late Prof. Tekena Tamuno (Chairman), Chief Sampson Agbaru, Prof. Otonti Nduka, Dr, (Rev. Kpoine-Tonwe (Later Acting Chairman) and Dr. Tony Enyia who was the scribe. Together, we produced the orthographies of some of the Rivers State Languages including those of Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni, Kalabari, Ogoni, Ikwerre, and others. I am grateful to the Rivers State Government for the appointment.

➢ The Ogba Language Group represented by Rev. Mike Eluozo, the family of Late Alfred Obulor Ochogba and the entire membership of this group, I thank you for your support and the collective research efforts on the sustenance of Rivers State indigenous languages. No Rivers language should go extinct anymore.

➢ Ogba Workers Association, Rivers State University. Thank you for being the pillar of emotional support throughout my sojourn in this Institution.

➢ President and members of Ogba Solidarity (OSO). Thank you for being there.

➢ My Unitech Women Association that I had the opportunity of piloting for 9 years. The Association that lunched and brought me up in the school of social life. I had real mentors and close friends in the Association who sacrificed so much to ensure we succeeded. You will not lack support in your time of need.

2.0 WHO IS A LIBRARIAN?

Let us begin with a few illustrations of the misconceptions about the Library and Information Science as a profession as well as the importance of the Librarian in society. Aina (2013) recorded how a Nigerian parent asked his son: *What is in a library that you are going to study for four years?* This parent and several others like him could not understand what their brilliant son would be doing inside a library building arranging books for a career. Something must be wrong with this son. Their young promising son must drop the "crazy" idea. Yes, he dropped the crazy idea.

Another illustration is the experience of someone who is today, a renowned professor of Library and Information Science, who told his colleagues that he was going in for a Postgraduate Programme at the University of Ibadan to study Library and Information Science. Hear the concern of his colleagues:

> *"How can you spend years in the University going to the Laboratory every day to perform experiments, and after graduating with a B.Sc. (Hons) in Chemistry you want to end up arranging books in the shelves?"* (Aina, 2013)

The misconception from the examples is that Librarianship is not a noble profession. One explanation for this misconception is that some people see the Library Attendants, Library Assistants and even the library janitors who do not possess any university degrees at all but work in the library as "Librarians", because most often than not, they are the first contacts with library users before meeting the actual Librarians. This explains why some Library and Information Science students are still confronted with similar questions as to why they should study Librarianship. For example, just before the commencement of the 2019/2020 academic session, a student brought a transfer form for us to sign to enable her transfer to law. When she was asked why she wanted a transfer, she simply said that

her parents asked her what she was doing studying library. Again, she said that she registered for law in her JAMB (Joint Admission and Matriculation Board) examination and not Library Science. She might have been pressured by her parents, relations and friends to make the change because of their misconception about the profession. Her request form was endorsed for the transfer.

Vice-chancellor, Sir, from the brief "theological" journey that the inaugural lecturer earlier forced this audience to embark on, as well as the events of today, who the librarian is, what they do and the place of the profession in the society are no longer in doubt. During the 14th and 15th centuries when printing press was non-existent, the Librarian was one who protected and preserved, in a library, all the books hand-copied and acquired by Kings and Monarchs. A Librarian, essentially, works in a library or information centres. The Librarian made records available for Kings and Queens to consult (Ahiauzu, 2009). A Librarian was the information and knowledge gatekeeper with no professional formal training at the time, except the confidence reposed in him to preserve and provide sensitive records. From 1454 onwards, the definition of the Librarian began to witness a robust change. Hence, the encyclopaedic World Dictionary (1971) defines the librarian as that personnel **trained in Librarianship** to be in charge of a library. The Webster's New Encyclopaedic Dictionary (2002) adds that the librarian is "**a specialist** in the care or management of a library". Librarians are those who know where everything can be found. They know who knows and point the information-seeker to the source of the information. He/she thus, knows everything about knowing. He/she also knows something about everything. This informs the importance attached to the office of the Librarian in a university system. The Librarian is one of the five (5) principal officers of a university (Ahiauzu 2009). In the absence of the Vice-Chancellor and where there is no Deputy Vice-Chancellor or provost of a

who was a father to all of us. We always looked forward to Council meetings to learn at his feet in the dexterity he displays in handling issues. Thank you, sir, for that school of life.

➤ To my colleagues, friends, all the Professors and Heads of Departments in the Faculty of Education for tirelessly relating and accepting me for whom I am. I have enjoyed a very good working relationship with all since I joined the Faculty fully in 2017.

➤ The entire staff of Library and Information Science Department, Rivers State University.

➤ The students of Library and Information Science Department of this great University that we are training to become the next generation of Knowledge Managers of the society, I want to particularly thank you for being there. I am here because you are here.

➤ My family at the International Centre for Management Research and Training (CIMRAT) represented by Prof. Seth Accra Jaja (Vice-Chancellor, Federal University, Otuoke).

➤ The Rivers State College of Science and Technology, Rivers State University of Science and Technology and now Rivers State University. God bless the University.

➤ My spiritual family at home: Diocese of Ahoada (Anglican) Communion: The Bishop, Rt. Rev. Clement Ekpeye, and his dear wife Mrs. Edna Ekpeye, the Clergy and the Knights and Ladies of Diocese of Ahoada and St. Michael's (Anglican) Church, Omoku,

➤ My Spiritual family in Port Harcourt: Christ Church Port Harcourt, the Clergy, the Laity and all the Arms of the Church. Resident Minister The Very Rev. Jonathan Nsima I. Udofia and Mrs. Ngozi Udofia, Assistant Resident Ministers: Very. Rev. (Dr.) Ivan Ekong and Mrs. Grace Ekong (Port Harcourt) and

➢ My esteemed teachers gone and alive: Prof. Gabriel A Okwandu, my M.B.A. Supervisor; Prof. Mark Anikpo (my M.Sc and PhD Supervisor), Prof. W. Belgam, Engr. G. Boma Princewill, Prof. Ekpenyong, Prof. W. Ogionwo, Prof. Eteng, were some of the lecturers that I will forever remain grateful to for nurturing me. May God reward them bountifully.

➢ My Professional Mentors: Prof. Sam E Ifidon, Late Mr.Ayebatari Jigekuma Ombu (UL, RSUST, 1980-2003), Dr. N.P. Obokoh and Prof. Charles Omekwu deserve special thanks. Late Chief J.A. Ombu (my Boss), Dr. Obokoh and Prof. Sam Ifidon put me through the rudiments of the profession, while Prof. Omekwu has been our great supporter. May God bless you all.

➢ And to those who moulded me at various stages of my academic life: my secondary school Principals at the Government Girls Secondary School, Harbour Road, Port Harcourt: Mrs Ngo Dikibo (now Mrs.Ngo Ogan) and late Mrs. Freda Abrakasa (later Dame Freda Sukuogbari). I say a special thank you.

➢ The Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the 9th Governing Council Prof. G. O. M. Tasie and members deserve special recognition. This Council interviewed and appointed me as the second University Librarian of this University on the 9th of July, 2007. From then on, the Pro-Chancellor and Council Chairman referred to me as the "University Librarian by merit". Sir, I respect your integrity. I am blessed to have been assessed by such a man who assembled the finest renowned Professors of Librarianship at the time, to conduct the interview. I am grateful.

➢ I thank the Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the 12th Governing Councils, led by the eminent former Chief Judge of Rivers State, Hon. Justice Iche N. Ndu, (rtd.) OFR, LL.D, DSSRS,

college of medicine of that institution, the University Librarian is next in command. (The inaugural lecturer, when she was the university librarian, had twice acted as the Vice-Chancellor of this University).

Till date, some members of the general public believe that a librarian is one who arranges books in a library. According to this group of people, the clerk or the security man who sits in a purpose-built library accommodation to attend to whoever walks into the library building and desires to consult or borrow a book, is a Librarian. Some people still do not think that librarians require any serious formal education as obtaining a university degree to be a Librarian. For them, once you organise a few weeks or even few days of on-the-job training for a clerk or an office messenger, he would be set to perform the job of a "librarian" and even called a "librarian" for the organisation. This is a general misconception of who the Librarian is. This informs the reason anybody in that organisation can be posted to work in the library. On the other hand, for a few informed individuals, a Librarian is professionally trained after a minimum of four years in a higher institution. This is why in a Nigerian university the academic qualifications of the Librarian are crucial factors in the actualisation of a successful accreditation of the university's academic programmes by the National Universities Commission (NUC). Specifically, the Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria Decree 12, 1995, defines the Librarian as one who is trained in "…the art and science of selecting, acquiring, organising, describing, classifying, administering, preserving, conserving, utilising books, journals, non-book materials, audio-visual, print and non-print materials .. including the dissemination of information and knowledge" (LRCN Decree 12 of 1995).

2.1 Required Qualifications of the 21ˢᵗ century librarian summarised

❖ Professionally trained after a minimum of four years in a prescribed institution of higher learning;

❖ Must be registered and certified by the Professional Body Librarians' Registration Council of Nigerian (LRCN);

❖ Must possess a Ph.D before becoming a University Librarian;

❖ Must be digitally competent (ICT compliant);

❖ Widely published and attends national and international professional conferences;

A brief guide to the various types of libraries that a Librarian works in may be necessary at this point.

3.0 TYPES OF LIBRARIES

By simple definition, a library is a place in which literary, musical, artistic, or reference materials (as books, manuscripts, recordings, or films) are kept for use and not for sale. This is the traditional definition of the library which connotes that there is a physical building housing these materials. Today, the library has become a building without walls, virtual and digital, such that one can sit at the comfort of one's home and visit any library in the world, irrespective of its physical location and time. Meanwhile, there are four basic elements that must be present before you can refer to a place as a library – Accommodation, Organised Collection, Users and Professionally qualified personnel. The role of professionally qualified personnel is key because without such a personnel, the place called a library becomes a books store. There are different types of libraries with specific aims, objectives and functions they

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This challenging new pace of work for the librarians which is intriguing requires a new pattern of professional service delivery.

Researches:

Librarians are also involved in conducting researches and as such contributing to the body of knowledge on COVID-19. Librarians also at present are networking globally seeking for best practices that will serve the society during and post-COVI-19 era. According to Whitaker, (2020), "Librarians are trying as much as possible to be thorough in their research and look in different places for answers, especially considering how detailed and complex the question is". Whitaker confirms that the COVID-19 period is a better time for librarians to carry out research on various aspects of the pandemic.

Provision of Information:

Librarians also download and send information resources on COVID-19 to social media networks (Whatsapp, Email, Twitter, etc.) according to the interests of receivers. Librarians are going out of their ways to make sure that comprehensive and authentic information is provided in order to prevent the spread of the pandemic through Current Awareness Service (CAS), Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), Document Delivery Services (DDS) and so many other professional means of information delivery. When fighting a public health crisis, for example, factual information from informed sources is crucial to educating all stakeholders including government officials, health care providers and the general public (Whitaker, 2020).

Setting the Pace

Librarians are setting the pace in the new social order of COVID-19. The inaugural lecturer today is the first in this university to deliver a hybrid inaugural lecture which combines both the traditional physical and virtual electronic (zoom link) spaces. Librarians are knowledge managers indeed.

serve. The types of libraries and their sizes differ only in depth and focus, but the basic purposes for establishing them remain the same. The function relates to what the library actually does for its users, while the type refers to a broad classification that group libraries of similar functions.

3.1 The Academic Library

This includes libraries of research and tertiary institutions as well as schools and colleges and it is headed by a Librarian. An academic librarian is institution-focused, as he selects, acquires, organises people who disseminate learning resources, bearing in mind the specific needs of the parent institution. A Librarian's role is enormous in all ramifications. As in Ahiauzu (2009), the academic Librarian ensures that all library materials are selected, acquired, organised and disseminates for teaching, learning and research in line with the specific needs of the highly intellectual clientele. The academic library collection must be lively and adequate through the process of regular stock weeding. In this technological era, the academic Librarian must be an information technologist. (Ahiauzu, 2002, 2009)

3.2 The School Library

School libraries are found in primary and secondary schools and are sometimes referred to as school media resources or instructional materials centres. They serve the pupils, students, teachers and sometimes, non-teaching staff of those schools. Their contents include books and teaching aids (including cassettes, tapes, recording, slides, maps and the equipment for viewing or listening to them). The presence of a school library encourages the children to develop reading habit, the ability to learn from books without direct supervision by a teacher and the ability to use a library from a

tender age. The school library accommodation is also used on weekends (Saturdays) or evenings of week days for story-telling. Children gain a lot from such an activity and it is very important for the child's mental and emotional development. The general sad experience (Ahiauzu & Emmanuel, 2018) here is that most of the schools that have libraries do not employ professional librarians to head those libraries. They often use English class teachers to double as "Librarians". These teachers are usually without any professional training.

3.3   The Public Library

The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) (1976) while, introducing the public library manifesto states that: "The public library, the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision-making and cultural development of the individual and social groups". In serving these functions, the library is the "University of the Poor". The public library is owned by the State Government and headed by a registered State Librarian whose role is to ensure that books and other materials are provided to cover virtually all aspects of knowledge. This is because public library-users are found in every sector of the society including prison inmates (now correctional centres), hospital patients, men, women, children of all ages, the physically and visually handicapped, rural community dwellers and others (Ahiauzu, 2002). The public library is the most heterogeneous of all types of libraries because the services are directed at every member of the society and should have branches in all local government headquarters. The public library makes extensive use of mobile library services to reach those communities or groups who for one reason or another cannot get to the physical location of the public library or community library

Compilation of Annotated Subject Bibliographies in respect of COVID-19 to aid Research:

Librarians have compiled and are still compiling bibliographies of books, articles and other documents with annotations to aid the research on COVID-19. Such subject bibliographies (annotated or not) support easy access and retrieval of information.

Reaching the most vulnerable in the society with authentic information and other relevant materials such as nose masks, sanitizers, including books for knowledge and relaxation:

Prior to this time, Public libraries have been in the business of reaching out to people who are information-disadvantaged through the use of mobile libraries and the likes. Today, libraries are utilizing this professional experience, making use of the resources at hand to reach out to the disadvantaged group. They are devising novel ways of offering services to the public-the core of their mission and mandate. As reported in *Library Connect* (2020) when libraries closed their physical doors abruptly due to COVID-19, they immediately provided virtual access to their collections, digital communications, collaborations and creative activity to reach their public in ways as novel as the virus that forced them into it. Their usual online charging and discharging system in libraries became relevant at this time. They now interact more online with their users and all their library needs are met without physical interaction. In the UK, USA and Canada, books are delivered to users' door steps according to their requests. With the use of the zoom platform and other online media, they are able to reach out to distant clientele who may be in need of one form of information or the other. Today libraries are already acting and improvising. Soon, they will be figuring out what the experience means to their future operations and their role in Nigerian community. While all hands are on deck to mitigate this present pandemic ravaging the nations and others are losing their jobs, librarians on their own part have expanded their work horizon and perspectives.

AN ADENDUM

13.0   THE LIBRARY AND SOCIETY: COVID 19 AND THE LIBRARIAN'S KNOWLEDGE APPLICATION

Mr. Vice Chancellor, Sir, my Distinguished Audience, how can I end this lecture without mentioning the trending corona virus simply referred to as COVID-19? You may then ask, what is the relationship between the work of a Librarian and COVID-19? The interconnectedness of the librarianship profession in the society has been exemplified during the global COVID-19 pandemic challenges. The librarians joined in the fight against the pandemic in several ways. For example, they rose to the occasion by going into rural communities to disseminate the correct, authentic information and create awareness. In some State Chapters of the Nigeria Library Association, in addition to the community sensitization through short lectures, talks and practical demonstration, they also distributed free face masks and hand sanitizers to the people. An example is the Anambra State Chapter. This is in line with Ranganathan's 5th Law of Librarianship which states that the library is a growing organism that identifies and grows with the immediate and remote needs of the society all the time. This also illustrates how the librarian encourages and supports knowledge application in society for economic growth and development by example. The society needs librarians and librarians need the society to apply their knowledge. Indeed, in some academic circles, librarians appear to be seen as a generalist because the librarians are visible and contribute to diverse aspects of knowledge. The librarian addresses all knowledge gaps in one way or another. It could be through researches, compilation of subject bibliographies, provision of information and advocacies, etc.

close to them. Those people are those in Homes for the elderly, children, hospitals, correctional centres and schools. The State Librarian, in selecting and acquiring resources, ensures that the library serves as the reservoir of the culture of the people. The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights established a set of principles that emphasizes the need for a sustainable and successful society to include the right of everyone to seek, receive and impart information and ideas, through any medium. The Declaration, thus, implies that the role of library services and librarians are closely aligned with the principles of fair, just and inclusive societies. The mandate of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 is "to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all". Specifically, Goal 4:6 enjoins countries to ensure that by the year 2030, all youths and a substantial portion of adults of their citizens (including the hawkers and street children), achieve literacy and numeracy. Year 2030 is just 10 years away. Unfortunately, most public libraries are yet to deliver on this goal.

3.4   The Special Library

Another type of library is the Special Library set up by organisations and industries. A registered Special Librarian heads it. Examples include the libraries set up and owned by the Nigerian Institute for International Affairs (NIIA), Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC), Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), the Ministry of Defence and the Central Bank of Nigeria. These Libraries serve the special needs of their parent bodies.

3.5   The National Library

The National Library of any country is the apex of all their libraries. For example, we have the National Library of Nigeria at the apex of all the library types mentioned so far. The National Librarian / Chief Executive Officer who must be a certified professional Librarian heads it. By a decree, it is established to have responsibility for the national bibliography and the development of bibliographic services of the country. The National Library of Nigeria superintends over the Legal Deposit Law whereby every publisher in Nigeria must deposit at least three (3) copies of each publication with the National Library. As an institution, it has the responsibility to collect publications emanating from Nigeria, publications about Nigeria and any works authored by Nigerians in any part of the world. It is the nation's giant memory bank and database of intellectual works. The National Library is also mandated to open and maintain a branch of the National Library in each State of the Federation (one has just been reactivated in Rivers State and accommodated along NTA Road in Port Harcourt). The National Library does not serve individuals directly but through special requests from a library, an individual can access materials in the National Library. The Library issues the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) and the International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) to publishing houses, institutions and to individual authors who assign the numbers to the books and periodicals they publish. The National Library also embarks on cataloguing and classification of books before they are published. Such relevant details as captured include the "cataloguing in publications" (C.I.P.) data. The National Library is under the Federal Ministry of Education and funded by the Federal Government of Nigeria.

12.0   SUMMARY

The inaugural lecturer has submitted here that knowledge is power but that the application of knowledge is more powerful. Application of knowledge has the capacity to influence change and produce results in the society. Information by itself is meaningless until it progresses to wisdom and knowledge application.

Knowledge application is key to National development. There is no alternative to it. Nigeria would have developed beyond where she is today if the bulk of knowledge possessed by her individual and corporate citizens were adequately harnessed and applied to affect the various aspects of her national development. Until knowledge is organized, harnessed and transferred (applied) to situations, such fallow knowledge is as good as not being in existence. As a Librarian, the inaugural lecturer has attempted to apply her professional knowledge to reach out and transform lives in her little corner of the society. If all Nigerians can each apply their individual knowledge and institutions utilized their cooperate knowledge, Nigeria will be that nation we all desire.

What we need urgently in Nigeria is more of knowledge application which expresses the capacity for effective action. "*If you see something, say something". If you know something, do something.* By our education and training as Librarians, the inaugural lecturer saw something (existing knowledge gaps and reading needs) in society and she said something. She knew something and she did something to effect a positive change to her immediate environment. We have proffered solutions to the problems so identified. We have also impacted our chosen profession positively by our activities and publications. We humbly implore you for the sake of our National development; apply your professional knowledge to your immediate environment.

As **The Voice of Knowledge Managers,** we have shown a link between **Library Services, Knowledge Application and the Society.** "*If you see something, say something". If you know something, do something.*

that the Law mandating schools in Rivers State to teach pupils of primaries 1-3 the language of their immediate community is implemented. SUBEB is also capable of commissioning writers to produce standard readers. If enforced, these measures would prevent further extinction of more Rivers State languages as it has happened to the O'chi-chi Etche language.

11.10 Effective development of Electronic Information Resources in University Libraries

Our studies on the deployment of Electronic Information Resources (EIRs) in Nigerian university libraries reveal higher level of interest amongst the academic staff in utilising electronic information resources in their teaching and research than in the use of traditional books, especially when they need current information. Nigerian universities should, therefore, ensure that their libraries have access through direct subscriptions to electronic information resources (online databases, etc.) in line with global trend. Generous computerisation of library services and digitization of relevant library materials should not be regarded as a luxury but of necessity in university libraries in Nigeria.

Libraries have always been repositories of all the knowledge and information accumulated by human kind. They store all kinds and forms of material and information to disseminate beyond the geographical boundaries. Today's advanced information technology is enabling libraries to accomplish this immense task. One of the most important objectives of libraries is the dissemination of information which leads to sharing of knowledge. Various systems have been developed to share and exchange the records of human knowledge, some of such are the Universal Bibliographic Control (UBC) and Universal Availability of Publications (UAP) two major programmes from IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) to exchange knowledge world over. Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) is another world leading library network in the United State of America (USA) for sharing intellectual knowledge among academic community all over the world. Librarianship, like any other profession, has branches or areas of specialisation. The librarian may wish to specialise in one or more of such areas as technical services (acquisition, cataloguing, classification, indexing and abstracting), reference services, books and non-books preservation, serials management and readers services (Ahiauzu, 2009).

4.0 CORE VALUES OF THE LIBRARIANSHIP PROFESSION

Vice-Chancellor, sir, like most professions, the Library and Information Science profession is guided by a set of core values or principles Librarians stand for. The core values are: integrity, accountability and intellectual democracy in service delivery with specified code of ethics and professional conduct. Arising from these values is the Librarian's commitment to: (i) Free access to

information, (ii) Equal treatment, (iii) Bridging the digital divide, (iv) Promoting life-long and life wide learning, (v) Promoting reading culture (vi) Supporting oral tradition and cultural heritage. These values clarify who librarians are and what they stand for. **In all, therefore, irrespective of the type of library, librarians are Generals in the war on Ignorance.** At the backdrop of these core values, the librarian is trained to identify knowledge and library service gaps and attempts to fill such gaps. At the end of this lecture today, it would be appreciated how the inaugural lecturer was able to, as a librarian; apply her professional education and knowledge to addressing societal problems so as to make a difference in her environment.

The role of any professor, therefore, is to, because of the education and training, identify problems in society and try to tackle them by proffering solutions. The inaugural lecturer's writings show a trend in this regard of identifying certain theoretical issues as well as practical problems and attempting to tackle them. Some of the problems identified in the cause of the inaugural lecturer's career are as follows:

4.1 Societal Problems Identified by the Inaugural Lecturer

1. Information, Communication and Youth restiveness in the Niger Delta

2. Challenges of library service delivery in Nigeria

3. Dearth of subject bibliographies

4. Reaching the children and young adult street hawkers with books

5. Possible extinction of some Rivers State indigenous languages

6. Paucity of knowledge application in Nigeria

Consequently, some erstwhile street children are now graduates of tertiary institutions. Others are still in various universities, including our Rivers State University Law and Engineering faculties where these erstwhile street hawkers are now undergraduates. The inaugural lecturer therefore calls on the government, other organizations and individuals to collaborate to address the issue of street children and young adult hawkers in a more humane way by connecting them to books. If ReadyRead can do it, other NGOs, individuals in collaboration with the governments can do even better.

11.8 Resuscitation of State Mobile Library Services

While it is acknowledged that the phenomenon of street children and young adults on the streets and hawking on the streets of major cities in Nigeria is partly caused by inadequate family planning by the parents, governments should properly fund the State Library Boards and provide them with mobile library service facilities such as trucks and boats to resuscitate their mobile services to those who do not have a public library close to them or cannot visit a public library for one reason or the other. This will help in a no small measure in connecting every strata of the society, including the street children, young adult street hawkers and the vibrant restive youths of the Niger Delta to books.

11.9 Reactivation of the Rivers State Readers Project Board

The State government should revive the currently moribund (as at the time of writing) Rivers State Readers Project Board given the responsibility of ensuring that materials are produced for the teaching, learning and studying of indigenous languages in all primary schools. The State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) should ensure

support the efficiency and global competitiveness of the female librarian in a technologically-driven library service environment.

11.6 Adequate Allocation of funds specifically to Public Secondary School Libraries

For the secondary schools in Rivers State that lacked school libraries due to poor resource allocation, we recommend that they should, as a duty, continue to prepare and submit their annual budgets to the State Government whether or not they receive what was budgeted for. The Rivers State Government should re-visit and monitor implementation of the budget allocated to the schools to ensure that the schools provide well-equipped school libraries. This will have a ripple effect which in turn, will reduce number of children dropping out of school due to the inability of their parents to provide text books for them. The school authorities should intensify efforts at ways of generating funds internally to compliment the government's funding. Judicious application of allocated resources is advocated.

11.7 Street Children and Young Adult Hawkers should Have Right of Access To Books

The street children and young adult hawkers should have right of access to books. The government, NGOs and individuals globally, should collaborate to get these children out of the streets through educational empowerment. It is everybody's responsibility. Every human being has a gift that can better the society. The society, therefore, owes them that care, protection, love and respect accorded to other "better placed" members of the society. ReadyRead Free Street Library in partnership with other individuals had been able to provide free books and alternative form of life to street life.

4.2 Proffered/Attempted Solutions by the Inaugural Lecturer

1. Publications and recommendations on the researched areas.

2. Advocacy and Sensitisation to relevant stakeholders through workshops and seminars

3. Production of books for the study, teaching and reading of indigenous Rivers State languages

4. Provision of free books and other activities to reach out to the street children and young adult street hawkers in Port Harcourt City.

5. The Vanguard Agent Theory (Ahiauzu, 1997, 2002)

4.3 Results/Impact of our Professional Knowledge Application

1. Our contributions and impact on our professional body are visible both at the local as well as at the national levels. This is attested by our numerous appointments and awards. We have been part of the mainstream of the Librarianship profession in Nigeria, including being the National Vice-President of Nigerian Library Association (NLA), State Chairman of the NLA and Chairman of Association of University Librarians of Nigerian Universities (A.U.L.N.U.), just to mention a few. Recently, through our efforts, National Library of Nigeria sent books and library shelves to Omoku, home town of the Lecturer, as a nucleus of a community library.

2. Since 1997, our publication on: *A Cataloguing Manual for Libraries* (1992) was used as the recommended text on cataloguing in most institutions in Nigeria having Library Schools. (e.g. Federal Polytechnic, Oko). Our second book *"A Bibliography on Legal Materials (*1996) has remained a pioneer work in that area till date.

3. Digital University Library services delivery in Nigeria

4. Our Ogba language books are being used to aid teaching, learning and research by students and teaching in churches in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State. (The language department of the Federal College of Education (Technical) Omoku use our language books as texts for teaching and research).

5. Some of the Port Harcourt City street children and hawkers whose lives we have touched are now off the street and in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions within and outside Rivers State. One graduated from Delta State University, Abraka, and another from the Federal University of Technology, Owerri. One has just gained the 2019/2020 academic session admission into the Faculty of Engineering in Rivers State University.

6. Our predictions on the outcome of the early warning signs of youth restiveness, community conflicts with oil companies and others reported in our studies over twenty years ago, have all manifested and some are still manifesting today.

11.5   Librarians Need Constant Re-Tooling

Librarians and libraries of the 21st century should constantly up-date their skills and knowledge through regular attendance at conferences, workshops, seminars and structured self development to keep abreast of global best practices. With the challenges that emerge from the integration of ICT into the library service provision, the inaugural lecturer recommends that librarians today must be proficient in navigating the web, creating web pages, communicating and interacting comfortably within the virtual environment while performing their traditional functions giving way to the hybrid library service delivery. Notices to staff, students and faculty members are now done more through electronic than print mails. The use of WhatsApp, Twitter, blogs, facebook, instagram, zoom, etc, for staff interactions have become a common place, unlike the sole dependence on physical meetings. The Electronic Library Space (ELS) provides greater opportunity for the library and faculty members to interact and collaborate more through the virtual space.

Libraries should exchange knowledge and information with users beyond their geographical boundaries, beyond passive repository for books and other printed materials by deploying library-based ICT technologies. Libraries should be properly funded to enable them to upgrade their services by digitizing their resources for global access and visibility. Public libraries if properly funded can through a variety of ways provide a good reading culture, education and quality knowledge application. Integral to the effective performance of the 21st century female librarian is the need to maintain and upgrade the infrastructural facilities of their libraries. Training and retraining arrangements to improve on their skills and competences are essential. These and other efforts should

all Local Government Headquarters supported with mobile libraries. The Public Library is the University of the Poor and the Mobile Library the University of the Poorest of the Poor. Rivers State can do better on public library service provision in Nigeria than lagging behind other states.

11.4 Employment of Qualified Professional Librarians for Knowledge organization

All government parastatals should employ qualified professional Librarians to manage their records since all such agencies are expected to maintain one form of record or another for future access and dissemination. This recommendation is drawn out of our research experience in one government ministry where basic information needed by the researcher was lacking because there was no librarian in that establishment to take charge of that unit. The vital records from that ministry to aid research and national development were not available. Simple bibliographic compilation of women in positions of authority, in politics, education, commerce and industry and others were the data needed. The reason for not having the data was that their librarian retired and nobody had been able to continue from where the librarian stopped.

Based on our research and the personal experiences over the years, we strongly recommend the engagement of qualified, registered librarians in all government establishments, if Nigeria should move forward in her quest for global knowledge visibility. We lack organised statistics for national planning because we lack the records. Employ the professional services of Librarians in all establishments, both public and private organisations, and Nigeria would be better for it.

5.0 THE CONCEPTS OF INFORMATION, KNOWLEDGE APPLICATION AND SOCIETY

Let us now briefly explain the concepts of information and knowledge application and why we believe that application of knowledge is a major solution to Nigeria's social and economic problems. Figure 1 below is a pyramid from raw data leading to knowledge application. The pyramid summarises at a glance, the difference as well as the relationship between data, information and knowledge application. Here, data are discrete objective facts about an event and contextualised, condensed with timeless relevance but mean nothing without analysis. Raw data requires interpretation to be meaningful. On the other hand, information is a message that is meant to affect the receiver's perception of a situation or phenomenon. When the receiver of this message utilises what is received and makes it action-oriented, it becomes knowledge applied. Collective knowledge application transcends to collective wisdom of an organisation or a nation. To illustrate further, Francis Bacon (in Kwakpovwe, 2019) once said: "knowledge is power". While this opinion seem to be generally accepted, our argument here is that in a knowledge-based age and society (Ahiauzu, 2006), the application of knowledge is greater power. In this regard, Kwakpovwe (2019) also makes it clear that:

> "...POWER that you cannot tap into is useless. This means that if you have knowledge, and you don't apply it, you are as weak and hopeless as the most ignorant person in the world. It is knowledge that is applied that brings results. If you want to see more results in your life, then you need to apply what you know more effectively. You need to learn more, know more and apply more".

Kwakpovwe's (2019) argument agrees with our position. Having information and knowledge about something is not the same thing as bringing that information and knowledge to bear on issues or problems. We are inclined to believe that it is against this line of thought that Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Information and Culture initiated and launched the slogan: *"If you see something say something"*. This foregrounds the importance of knowledge application in the society.

5.1   The Concept of Information

Information is a message meant to change the receiver's perception of an event. As a concept, information exists everywhere and at all times. However, what is considered information at a particular time and to an individual is dependent on the value attached to that piece of information by that person at that particular period. This means that what is information to Mr A at time "T", may not be so to Mr B at same time "T". Hence, information is data with relevance to the receiver's immediate situation (Senge et al, 1999). As humans, when we come across a datum, we immediately interpret it as either noise that should be ignored and discarded or as information because it is important to us in solving a problem in some ways. This means that a piece of data that does not make any meaning to us at a particular point in time is not information. Corroborating this view, Mohammed (2017) notes that it is only when human beings ascribe meaning to a piece of information then it becomes knowledge. Similarly, Westbrook (2000) in Muhammed (2017) also posits that it is by dissecting information that it becomes knowledge which can result in some form of action. In their contribution, Capurro and Holand (2013) believe that information is used to instruct and to gain knowledge for application. In this sense, **Information is not knowledge until meaning is assigned to it and it becomes transferable.**

11.0   SUBMISSIONS

Vice-Chancellor Sir, the inaugural lecturer would like to humbly, make the following submissions resulting from our research work spanning over forty (40) years on library service delivery, knowledge application and the society, with the hope that they would benefit the relevant stakeholders for us to have a better Nigeria.

11.1   Support System for Knowledge Application

Librarians as well as other professionals possess the knowledge that, if harnessed, can transform Nigeria. What is lacking is the support system for knowledge application. Government at all levels and foundations should therefore encourage Universities, Research institutions, individuals and NGOs with adequate infrastructure and environment system for knowledge application.

11.2   Conflict Management (Resolution & Prevention) as Panacea for National Development

To curb youth restiveness, oil companies, other organizations and their host communities should not ignore early warning signals in conflict management for peaceful coexistence and National Development. Information, communication and knowledge application are veritable tools for conflict resolution and prevention. Organisations, governments and individuals should deploy these tools to their fullest advantage.

11.3   Provision of Public, Community and Mobile Libraries

As a matter of right of the tax-payers and every citizen, Government should generously provide more public and community libraries in the city of Port Harcourt as well as in

10.2.2 Advocacy and Sensitization of Authors and Publishers on Book Donations

Authors and publishers shall be sensitized on the need to donate copies of their books to the Rivers State Public Library Board and other public libraries for greater use.

10.2.3 Connecting Children to their Mother-Tongue

As a continuation of sustaining our indigenous languages, we shall extend our work to include "**connecting children to their mother-tongue**". Children should fluently speak, read and write in their mother tongues. When we presented a paper in this regard in South Africa in 2015, we discovered that the subject was of global concern. The international community is interested in connecting the children to their mother tongues.

❖ We shall continue to be resourceful Knowledge Managers, applying our skill to fill knowledge gaps where they exist and where our knowledge is relevant. As life permits, we shall strive to apply the knowledge and experience we have gained to better the society by way of writing, educational sponsorship of less privileged and (street children) in the society, and advocacy for the restoration of hope. Create avenue for

5.2 The Concept of Knowledge

Knowledge is experience, value and context applied to a message. When information is processed from a set of data, it becomes knowledge. We agree with Mohammed (2018) who notes that, "**conceptually, knowledge is domesticated information**". It is the skill to apply accumulated, and domesticated information that results in the transformation of a given phenomenon or situation. Drucker (1993) thus argues that knowledge is an essential resource for establishing competitive advantage. Managers of organizations need more knowledge about knowledge and about how to manage it (Drucker, 1993). In this way, knowledge management focuses on the utilisation of knowledge by organisations to improve performance (Cummings & Worley, 2009).

5.3 The Concept of Knowledge Application

The application of knowledge is wisdom and such wisdom is the principal factor for national development. Miles Kington (1941-2008) once remarked "Knowledge is knowing that a tomato is a fruit. Knowledge application (wisdom) is putting it in a fruit salad". Information or knowledge is as good as dead if not harnessed for productive purposes. Knowledge application is action-oriented. It adds value with measurable efficiency. Tomato in a fruit salad is value added to the tomato and the salad. Knowledge application leads to wiser decision. There is no wealth like it and there is no poverty like lack of it. It produces experts and gurus in fields of endeavours. Kwakpovwe (2018) identifies some notable individuals produced by knowledge application. According to him, these individuals include Nigeria's Aliko Dangote, chairman of Dangote Group. Knowledge application shows visible results. In other words, there could have been richer people in

more countries than the world ever got to know if more knowledge was applied to affect human society. That is why as librarians, we believe that a community library is lost when an elder of that community dies without impacting the community with his accumulated stock of knowledge because such knowledge was never harnessed and preserved. Thus, Kwakpovwe (2018) continues to argue that the wealthiest place on planet earth is the cemetery! According to this view, the graveyards accommodate and indeed, bury treasures of untapped potentials, inventions that were never made, bestselling books that were never written, masterpieces that were never painted and knowledge never applied! These losses are due to the failure of the society to harness and apply individual and corporate knowledge to solve societal problems. Hence, Carson et al (2004) add that the dominant component of today's business is neither found in agriculture nor factories, but in intellectual services. Intellectual service is application of knowledge. The library, as the repository of assembled knowledge, is the gateway.

The concept of knowledge application is succinctly explained with an illustration provided by Bill Wolf (1950-2000). According to him, "*A light bulb in the socket is worth two in the pocket*". In other words, an individual may possess as much information as possible but if none is put to use, he is as good as someone who is ignorant. Consequently, the society cannot gain any feasible impact of that individual's knowledge. Of what use is accumulated knowledge if it is not put to tangible visible use, just like a light bulb in one's pocket? Drucker (1993) also observes that "knowledge is abundant, but its usability [application] is scarce". To buttress the importance of knowledge application, Davenport and Prusak (1998), posit that "an organisation only gains suitable

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restructuring activities fully engaged our financial resources, time and energy. This was closely followed by the preparations for the successful National Universities Commission (NUC) Resource Verification exercise on Monday 30th October, 2017. Based on that visit, the new Department was mandated to run full-time programme.

10.2 Future engagement

10.2.1 Mentorship, Teaching and Research

❖ Pursuit of Excellence in Mentoring our young professionals including co-authorship with staff and students

❖ Teaching and research. We are currently engaged, essentially, in teaching and research

❖ Lighting the candle for others

❖ Professorial position as a beacon of light

❖ Providing a ladder for others to climb

❖ Pursuit of greater Institutional impact factor of our activities

❖ Supervision of students

❖ More Work on the preservation of Rivers State indigenous languages

❖ Together with the LIS students in the department, we shall demonstrate how institutions in Nigeria can leverage on the potentials and benefits of the interconnectedness of libraries without walls

❖ Giving back to the society through library and books-related activities. More work on street children.

❖ Member: Committee on Minimum Standards for Academic Libraries in Nigeria (Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria 2014).

❖ Member, Committee on: "Standards and Guidelines on E-Library for Nigeria Committee" Organised by the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) of the Federal Ministry of Communication Technology, Held at the Hotel Presidential, Port Harcourt 9–10 December, 2013

10.0   PRESENT AND FUTURE ENGAGEMENTS

10.1.   Present engagement

10.1.1   Head of Department of Library and Information Science, RSU

On 25th of August, 2016, at the 232nd meeting of the Senate of this University, under the chairmanship of Prof. Blessing Chimezie Didia and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Prof. Boma Oruwari, approval was given for the establishment of the Department of Library and Information Science in the Faculty of Technical and Science Education,(now Faculty of Education).When the new Law establishing the Rivers State University came into force in May 2017, which necessitated the inaugural lecturer vacating office as University Librarian, having served for fourteen (14) years as at that date, the Vice-Chancellor then appointed her as the pioneer Head of Department on 31st May 2017 to midwife the new Department of Library and Information Science. The young Department was allocated a stand-alone building (requiring serious renovations and restructuring as it was lying fallow for over five years). The renovation and

advances from what it knows collectively, and how it quickly acquires and uses new knowledge". Knowledge management interventions help organisations develop and apply accumulated knowledge to enable them adapt to change. The library system is one of such organisations that, recently, have been confronted with series of changes emanating from the advances in Information and Communications Technology (ICT). Through skills re-engineering and application of accumulated knowledge, the library, as a living organism, has effectively adapted to the changes. The library as a system is designed to promote effective learning process meant to create a continuous stream of valuable knowledge over time.
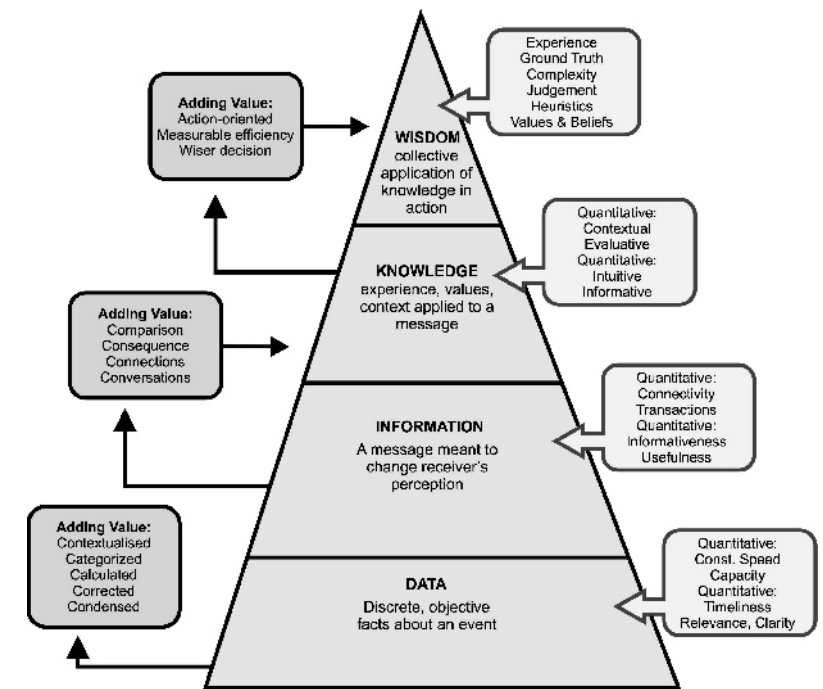
Fig. 1: The Relationship between Data, Information and Knowledge Application.
Source: Liebowitz (2003)

Table 1: The Relationship between Data, Information and Knowledge Application Explained

S/N	ITEM	SMEANING
1	Data	Discrete, objective facts about an event. (**Quantitative:** constant speed capacity, timeliness, relevance, clarity. **Adding value:** contextualised, categorized, calculated, corrected, condensed)
2	Information	A Message meant to change receiver's perception. (**Quantitative:** connectivity, transactions, informativeness, usefulness. **Adding value:** comparison, consequence, connection, conversations).
3	Knowledge	Experience, values, context applied to a message. (**Quantitative:** contextual, evaluative, intuitive, and informative. **Adding value:** action oriented, measurable, efficiency; wiser decision, comparison, consequence, connections, conversation.)
4	Wisdom	Collective application of knowledge in action. (**Quantitative:** experience, ground truth, complexity, judgement, heuristics, values and beliefs. **Adding value:** action-oriented, measurable efficiency, wiser decision).

5.4   Concept of Society

According to Appelbaum and Chambliss (1995) and in line with the purpose of this lecture, the term society is used to mean **interacting people** who share a common culture - that is, any group of people who speak a common language, share common beliefs and customs, belong to the same institutions and organizations**,** use the same tools and technology, and **consume the same goods** (emphasis mine).   The term "society" sometimes may be used to refer to people with a

9.2   Establishment of the Library and Information Science Department in Rivers State University

Vice-chancellor, sir, all the contributions highlighted above did not elucidate as much joy and a sense of fulfilment as that of the establishment of a Library and Information Science Department in Rivers State University after ten (10) years of struggle. A project which finally came to fruition was as a result of the support given to us by the then Vice-chancellor, Prof. Blessing Chimezie Didia. The inaugural lecturer is the pioneer Head of Department from 2017 to date. We were to graduate our first batch in 2020 but delayed by the effects of COVID-19 lockdown. Today, as we give this inaugural lecture, we do so with a complete sense of fulfilment, having paid all our dues with none outstanding. To further encourage the students to aspire to excellence and creativity, we have attracted an endowment fund of one hundred thousand naira (N100,000.00) only to the **Best Graduating Student in Library and Information Science.** This endowment is in perpetuity. The Library and Information Science Department now has five (5) years full accreditation from the national universities commission beginning from November 12, 2019 to 2024, under the headship of the inaugural lecturer.

9.3   Other Professional Activities

As the State Chairperson of the Nigerian Library Association, Rivers State Chapter (2005-2011), the Association witnessed an unprecedented growth and advocacy which climaxed in the ownership of a brand new Hiace bus, donated by the Rivers State Government, under the leadership of His Excellency, Sir Celestine Omehia, and his dear Librarian wife, Her Excellency Dr. (Lady) Anthonia Omehia. Other professional activities include:

iv.   In 1992, she authored the first indigenous textbook on cataloguing and classification of library materials. The work was informed by the Federal Government's then policy on importation based on the Second-Tier Foreign Exchange Market (SFEM). The approval for foreign exchange for libraries to import books and other library materials became very difficult under SFEM. Our production of this book brought an innovation whereby the imported mimeograph stencils and catalogue cards used on microforms and microfiche machines were replaced with our innovation. It became a manual of operation and a textbook for Library Science students and practicing librarians in Nigeria.

v.   **Chairmanship of Some Senate Committees**

The inaugural lecturer had chaired and served as a member in a good number of Senate committee including Curriculum and Instructions Committee (C&I), Calendar committee, Chairman, Ad-Hoc Committee on Review of Conditions of Service of Junior Staff (CONTISS 1-5), Chairman, Staff School Management Committee, Joint Council/Senate Selection Committee for the appointment of Principal Officers of the university, 12th Governing Council of the Rivers State University, representing Senate, 12th Governing Council Committee on Review of Financial   Regulations of the Rivers State University, 12th Governing Council Committee on Movement of a New   Faculty to Ahoada Campus, 12th Governing Council Committee (F & GPC) on Council Fact- finding Committee on Allegations of Sorting, etc, Ad-hoc Committee on the Review of staff matters, Senate Ceremonial Committee on 2[7th] Convocation, Conditions of Service for RSUST Staff on Grade Levels 06 to16 and several other committees.

common culture and share the same territory. Recently, this geographical dimension has become increasingly less important in modern technologically-driven society where people who are geographically dispersed can still share a common culture. The idea of discrete "cultures" and "societies" now holds less validity than in the past. Today, due to the influence of modern communications, industry and the virtual space, people interact with others miles away as if in a village; our lives are touched daily by ideas and products produced across the globe. Library services have largely been affected by this virtual space technology phenomenon. Hence, we have emphasized the "interacting people who … use the same tools and consume the same goods" to define the society of all our studies referred to in this lecture.

5.5   Attributes of a Knowledge-Driven Society

In a knowledge-driven society, knowledge application is more important as a key resource than mere possession of data, information, raw material, physical labour and even intellectual capital. As technology outdates and products proliferate, the only surviving organisations would be those that manage their stock of knowledge.   Succeeding and thriving societies are knowledge-driven (Audretsch & Thurik, 2000; Drucker, 2001). Their strength is derived from knowledge application and utilisation as the engine of growth. From the Library and Information Science perspective, Azubuike (2007) also identifies four pillars as the attributes of a knowledge-based society to include:

a.   The presence of educated and skilled individuals who create, share and apply knowledge.

b. An institutional regime that provides incentives for the efficient utilisation of available and new knowledge. This regime enhances entrepreneurship.

c. Possession of infrastructure that can facilitate the effective communication, processing and dissemination of information.

d. The possession of efficient systems in organisations, universities, libraries, research centres, that should tap into the growing stock of global knowledge, assimilate and adapt it to local needs.

Based on these four pillars, the society will increase in the quality of its available knowledge if professionally handled. It is only a systematic organisation of knowledge acquisition, application, and dissemination that can increase productivity, foster economic growth and development (Chen & Dahlman, 2004). Libraries and archival centres are the core sources of fundamental stock of knowledge. Libraries are the main repositories of information resources and knowledge assemblage. Azubuike, (2007) insists that libraries and librarians are, therefore, technically and professionally trained to:

a. Organise information and knowledge applying their professional skills of processing, storage and dissemination;

b. Provide access, in all its ramifications, to new ideas, knowledge and information resources to the fullest extent;

c. Bridge the digital information divide by providing access to electronic library services to all strata of the population including the poor, the elderly, the physically challenged, the unemployed, the sick in

papers with the library staff. One of such Mentees and the library staff became a University Librarian elsewhere. For cross-fertilisation of ideas and for the first time in the history of the RSU Library, we engaged five (5) Librarians on Sabbatical Leave to the RSU Library. The inaugural lecturer also went on one (1) year Sabbatical leave.

iii. The RSU Digital Library System

The inaugural lecturer attracted the support of ELF-Nigeria PLC and Total E&P to donate the Rivers State University (RSU) Virtual (electronic) Library facilities in 2005 and in 2014. RSU Library achieved the hybrid library System that combines the traditional with the digital service delivery. The RSU Library now has over 80 networked computers, OPAC (Online public access catalogue) and a dedicated Postgraduate Library. In 2004, the Rivers State University of Science and Technology (now Rivers State University) Library under our leadership became a pioneer virtual library in the South-South region of Nigeria. The University, under Professor S.C. Achinewhu as Vice Chancellor, attracted the support of ELF-Nigeria PLC and Total E&P to donate the facilities that were used to set up our first virtual library. Other university librarians in the Niger Delta and the South-East consulted us and visited our library to enable them to set up their virtual libraries. As a result of our papers (Ahiauzu 2005; Ahiauzu and Okon, 2008) on virtual libraries in Nigeria, the inaugural lecturer was nominated to serve on the Think-Tank Group on the Establishment of Electronic Libraries in Nigeria.

could only be imagined than realised. (4.) Several years of non-utilisation this further deteriorated the structure. However, despite these reasons, one morning in early 2003, we had to leave the temporary library at the Old Site to the present permanent structure at the new site of the University campus. During one of the days of our movement, it rained heavily; as a result, we lost most of our valued books, processing tools and furniture. The inaugural lecturer was appointed University Librarian amidst the transition challenges in October 2003.

ii. Human Capital Development.

We championed the growth and development of other members of the University Library through staff promotion when due, attendance and paper presentations at professional local and international conferences, seminars and workshops and educational support. For example, in 2003, we had zero international conference attendance; the inaugural lecturer was the only PhD on the Library staff. At the end of our tenure as University Librarian, despite the inadequacy in staff strength, mass transfer of library staff to Bayelsa State and state-wide ban on additional employment, there were 6 (six) PhDs (one became a University Librarian elsewhere and we lost one to death).Two (2) were enrolled for Ph.Ds. Three (3) First Degree holders got their Masters degrees; four (4) junior staff converted to senior staff as they acquired First Degrees and for some, the inaugural lecturer supported their education by paying their school fees. The Library staffs now participate and present papers at local, national and international conferences of which the lecturer attended well over eighty (80) and presented papers in fifty-three (53) of the conferences including those held in France, South Africa and the United States of America. We mentored and co-authored

hospital, those in the prisons and the homeless street children and youths who cannot afford to provide such access on their own.

d.   Contribute to the effectiveness of the education process and the country's human capital development through the provision of relevant resources to deepen learning and knowledge;

e.   Engender improved productivity and good decision-making of organisations by providing relevant

6.0   LIBRARY SERVICES, KNOWLEDGE APPLICATION AND THE SOCIETY

To better understand the relevance of library service to society, we shall refer to *The Five Laws of Library Science* propounded by S.R. Ranganathan (1892-1972), to explain how and why applying knowledge of librarianship can affect our society in several ways for the better. In 1931, Ranganathan proposed the five laws that should guide library service delivery. He conceived the idea of the five laws in 1924, while the statements embodying the laws were formulated in 1928 and published in his classic book entitled *Five Laws of Library Science* in 1931. These laws have, over the years proved relevant, guided librarians' application of their knowledge to transform the society, in general and the knowledge world, in particular.

6.1   Five Laws of Librarianship

The laws are:

1.   *Books are for use*

2.   *Every Person his or her Book*

3.   *Every Book its Reader*

4.   *Save the Time of the Reader*

5. *The Library is a growing Organism*

These laws are the five pillars that guide the teaching, learning and the practice of Library and Information Science. Our experience in the practice, teaching and research in librarianship, shows that these principles and what they stand for remain valid in substance today as they were in 1924 when they were first conceived. These five laws were used to apply our Librarianship knowledge in identifying and addressing the reading needs of the children and young adult street hawkers in Port Harcourt city.

1st Law: Books are for Use

This principle argues that any printed material in the form of a book is meant for public use. Every book attempts to fill a gap in knowledge and leisure. Until the book is made available and put to use, that gap continues to yawn. Again, without access to the book by a user, that book remains valueless. Ranganathan (1931) observed that books were often chained for restricted access with emphasis on storage and preservation rather than use. To break away from such unprofitable tradition, while not rejecting the need for storage and preservation, the librarian has to ensure that the location of the library, hours and days of operation, collection development and loan policies as well as the quality of staff are right. The location of the library emphasises proximity to users. This informs the location of a public library within a walking distance of the users. Applying the First Law principle to our research project, titled *ReadyRead Free Street Library*, we provide free books to the street children and hawkers in Port Harcourt city thereby, bridging the gap between them and where to find the book. Also, the

Institutions (IFLA) to serve on the implementation committee. This privilege does not easily come around countries and cities and so Nigeria or a Nigerian City may not hold that position of UNESCO Book Capital City again until 20 to 30 years to come. Again, the inaugural lecturer was the only librarian from Nigeria nominated to serve in the committee.

9.1 Our Impact Factor on the Growth of the Rivers State University Library

The Rivers State University (formerly Rivers State University of Science and Technology), through the University Library, the enabling leadership environment for research and the scholar's contribution to the growth of the Institution have been pivotal to the attainment of the summit of scholarship being celebrated today. She held the position of the University Librarian for fourteen years (2003-2017). The inaugural lecturer has attempted to note some of her impact factor on the development of the Rivers State University Library elsewhere in a book entitled: *Legacy investments at the workplace,* which is one of the souvenirs at this inaugural.

i. The University Library

She supervised the transformation of the new Central Library from a dilapidated structure to what it is today. The present Central Library structure was lying fallow for over ten years due to several reasons. There were doubts if the movement from the Old Site of the University main campus was ever going to take place. Both the Management and the library staff shared this doubt due to some of the following reasons: (1.) structurally, the building was apparently unsafe and uninhabitable; (2) Lack of funds to provide the necessary furniture and renovate the building (3.) Maintenance cost

9.0 OUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE GROWTH OF LIBRARIANSHIP IN NIGERIA

❖ The inaugural lecturer authored the "History of the Rivers State chapter of the Nigerian Library Association 1972-2013".

❖ Chairperson, Association of University Librarians of Nigerian Universities (AULNU formerly CULNU) 2015 to 2017.

❖ National Vice-President, Nigerian Library Association (NLA) 2013 to 2016 & served in Key committees of NLA.

❖ Fellow, Nigerian Library Association (FNLA) (2008-),

❖ Chattered Librarian of Nigeria (CLN),

❖ Chattered, CILIP (UK), Library Association (1982-),

❖ Member, American Library Association,

❖ Council member, Nigerian Library Association 2002 to 2016.

❖ Member, Nigerian Library Association National Awards Committee 2010 to 2014.

❖ State Secretary, Nigerian Library Association, Rivers State, 1980 to 1993

❖ National Co-ordinator, Association of Women Librarians in Nigeria Rivers State, (1991 to 1992).

❖ **UNESCO World Book Capital City 2014 IFLA Representative Librarian**: Each year, cities around the globe contest to become the UNESCO World Book Capital City. The winner attracts many opportunities within and outside her borders. In 2012, Rivers State bided for and won the hosting right, using Port Harcourt City. To kick-start the activities in Nigeria, the inaugural lecturer was nominated by the International Federation of Library Associations and

loan policies, the reading hours/periods and days of operation are tailored to suit their itinerant life-style. Some of the staffs of *ReadyRead Free Street Library* are drawn from among the street children. The furniture, brightly coloured book-kiosks, are made to attract their attention. The project team and research assistants are friendly and within the age range of the street children and hawkers, so they easily identify with them. In this way, they are motivated to read, develop a reading culture and look forward to their educational empowerment which should eventually take them off the streets.
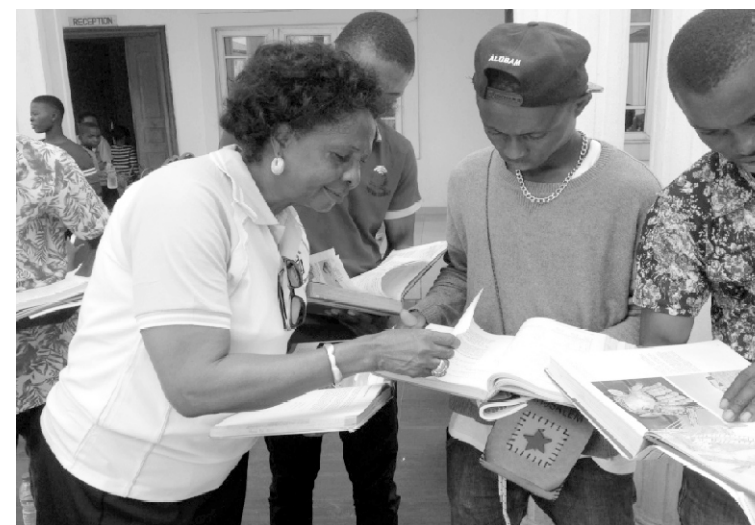
Figure 2: Books are for Use

2nd Law: Every Person His or Her Book

The librarian as a professional and knowledge manager understands that the social environment comprises individuals of varying categories and persuasions: the high and the low, men and women, prisoners and

freemen, the healthy and the sick, the physically challenged including the blind, the old, young adults and the children. This Second Law considers and acknowledges universal and unlimited democracy of library services. Hence, every member of a community should be able to access a book suitable for his or her needs and interests. This law encourages resource sharing, collaborations and library legislation for the funding of free library services. *ReadyRead* book selection is evidence-based to ensure that every street child and young adult hawker had a suitable book connecting them to finding pleasure in reading. Using a structured questionnaire and interactive sessions, we identified the nature and categories of books needed. The street children and hawkers were free to choose what to read. Their tastes and differences were respected.

Fig. 3: Every Person his/her Book

3. *Kids Need To Read*

Fig. 20: Kids Need To Read.   **Source:** https://www.kidsneedtoread.org/ on17/11/2020

Kids Need to Read aims to create a culture of reading for children, particularly those in underfunded schools. As funding for libraries is often one of the first causalities whenever there is the need to reduce funding.

4. *Milk and Bookies*

Milk and Bookies get the children and young adult to be involved in the process of bringing books to children in underserved sectors of their communities, thereby spreading the love of reading to those who cannot afford books of their own.

Source: https://www.guidestar.org/profile/26-3245228 accessed on 17/11/2020

8.0   SIMILAR FREE STREET LIBRARIES GLOBALLY

Examples of similar free street libraries around the globe that address the reading needs of the young adults and children on the streets includes the followings.

1.   *Little Free Library*

Fig. 18: Little Free Library.   **Source:** https://littlefreelibrary.org/ on 17/11/2020

Little Free Library is a model of schoolhouse, filled with books, and mounted in front of a house for neighbours to exchange reading materials with the motto "Take a book and leave a book".

2.   *Pajama Program*

Fig. 19: Pajama Program. Source: pajamaprogram.org on 17/11/2020

Pajama Program is based in New York. It donates new books and pajamas to kids living in group homes, shelters and temporary housing facilities, such as we have in internally displaced persons(IDP's) camps in some parts of Nigeria.

3rd Law: Every book its' Reader

This Law focuses on open access system, publicity, mobile library services and book selection policies. It argues that every book or item in a library has an individual who would find it useful. Through publicity and advocacy, the librarian ensures that each book is found by its appropriate reader. To illustrate this point, when the inaugural lecturer was the University Librarian, a group of good spirited Rivers State indigenes donated more than three lorry-loads of books to the University, but majority of the books were not suitable to the needs of university undergraduate and post graduate studies. We had to find users for the books by distributing them to the Rivers State University Staff School and the International Secondary School libraries where they were very useful. Again, all the books and library materials that philanthropists donated to *ReadyRead Free Street Library* found their users on the street

Fig. 4: Every book its' Reader

4th Law: Save the Time of the Reader

Here, the law enjoins us to serve the reader as quickly and smartly as possible because the reader does not have to spend all his/her time in the library or engaged by the librarian just for one piece of information. The librarian too does not have all the time to spend serving one reader. Both the reader and the librarian require minimum time and effort to locate, retrieve and access needed information irrespective of the format and the location. This equally applies to serving the street children.

5th Law: The Library is a growing Organism

It is evident today that the library is a growing organism. They are no longer limited to the physical location of the library building. The library has transformed from the traditional static building to the electronic, virtual environment, without walls or bricks. The geographical location of the library is now immaterial. This is the dynamism accommodating varieties of emerging library service delivery paradigms.

6.2 The Place of the Librarian and Knowledge Application in the Society

Vice-Chancellor, sir, what the inaugural lecturer is presenting here has been her professional impact on the society as a Librarian. Librarians are educators. Without Librarian's user education and dissemination, the stock of knowledge in various libraries and collections right from the ancient Greek, would not be available to this generation. Librarians also make important contributions to society through the process

iv. Distribute free books to the street children (Fig. 9, 10 & 11).

v. An assessment of reading ability progress test conducted by *ReadyRead Free Street Library* found that 60% of our study population had improved on their reading ability. Those who had never read have been able to read a book in 6 weeks. Some 39% of the 60% agreed that they were able to achieve that feat because the books were given to them free of charge.

vi. Our team of research assistants (Fig. 11) now embark on periodic assessment on the progress of the reading habits of young adult street hawkers.

In the course of our research, we found out that for many of these children and street hawkers, exposure to books and reading enrichment opportunities were new and something that could offer the real hope for their future. Moreover, the participants (street children and hawkers) improved their vocabulary, literacy behaviours and skills because the free little library story times contributed to their reading achievements. Some that are rescued from the street are taken to the centre run by the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent De Paul also known as De-Marilac Centre have been able to prepare for a better future built on exposure to reading activities. Some of them now possess university degrees, practical skills in tailoring, barbing, hair-dressing and others. These ones have left the streets; thus, reducing the rate of crime and city nuisance. Agreed, books cannot be the sole answer to taking all of the street hawkers off the street and guaranteeing them a bright future, but books can prepare them for that. So far, *ReadyRead Free Street Library* has restored hope to some of the street children and hawkers.

life on the street. Table 15 shows that on their access to the book and reading, 226 (84%) have never owned a book aside school exercise books, 230 (85%) have never read a book cover to cover. Interestingly, 100% desired to own a book if given to them free. Others 230 (85%) said that they have difficulty in reading fluently and they would be happy to listen if someone reads a book to them (Table 15). These results support the importance of our *ReadyRead Free Street Library Initiative* that donates free books to the street children (figure 9, 10 & 11). Several other reasons were responsible for their being on the streets (Table 12 refers). Amongst the reasons include death of both parents 60 (22%) (Table 12) and the parents' inability to fund their educations 54 (20%).When asked for their opinion of the free book initiative, to them it was a welcomed idea but they would prefer financial support and the opportunity to acquire a skill to sustain themselves and their families.

7.7 *ReadyRead Free Street Library Initiative: Achievements*

Our project on Port Harcourt City Free Street Library which aims at restoring hope to Port Harcourt City street children through free books, has been able to achieve the followings:

i.   Aroused good reading culture in the street children and young adult street hawkers in Port Harcourt city (Fig. 2, 3 & 4)

ii. Restored the hope of a better future than that of life on the street (Fig. 7a & 7b)

iii. Took some of the children off the street to the Ivory Tower (this has produced lawyers, engineers, information scientist and so on) (Fig. 7a).

of identifying information and knowledge gaps. Consequently, they attempt to fill such gaps, harnessing, disseminating and applying the knowledge so acquired to solve problems. They, thus, affect the society by such identification, information gathering, knowledge management and knowledge application to fill the gaps. Librarians are "knowledge managers" of the society.

The absence of access to information and knowledge application can be responsible for the unavailability of more goods and services to meet basic needs of the society. The traditional factors of production: land, labour and capital require data gathering, knowledge management and information dissemination on the effective and right ways to use them. Factors of production are meaningless in themselves without knowledge application. Reiterating the importance of knowledge application, the World Bank (1999) notes that poor countries and poor people are left behind by the rich ones, not because they have less capital but because they have less capacity for knowledge application to their circumstances. The realisation of this truth supports the current decision by the National Universities Commission (N.U.C.) that academic research reports from tertiary institutions should be harnessed and their findings and recommendations implemented (i.e. their knowledge applied). The knowledge-bearing materials should not gather dusts on library shelves.

In this connection, librarians are trained to have the passion for advocacy and dissemination of assembled stock of knowledge in their libraries and information centres because every book in a library has a reader and every reader in a community has a book (Raganathan, 1931). The inability to apply current discoveries in science and technology to grow

 knowledge has left some countries in a near-permanent state of dependency that would have been avoided. This emphasises the importance of town-gown-industry relationship that encourages synergy and partnership between industries, tertiary and research institutions. Knowledge application is required at all levels of an information-driven economy. Librarians are the pivotal agents using their skills to provide information and knowledge services. This informs the need for sensitization and information literacy among the members of a community. Librarians are trained to do this for the society.

6.3   Information Literacy

Information literacy is a phenomenon that is common to all disciplines. According to the Presidential Committee on Information Literacy Skills (1989), information literacy is defined as: "The capacity to be aware of an information need and being able to identify, locate, evaluate, synthesise and effectively use the information gathered to solve existing issue or problems The emphasis is to reiterate the importance of knowledge application. Similarly, the American Library Association (2000) identifies with the importance of the relationship between information literacy and effective utilisation of such information. The United States National Forum on Information Literacy (NFIL) (*2012)* adds that **information literacy** is "the hyper ability to know" when information is needed. Johnston and Webber (2003) in their contribution argue that "information literacy has to do with the adoption of appropriate information behavior to obtain, through whatever channel or medium, information well fitted to information needs, together with critical awareness of the importance of wise and ethical use of information in society". In summary, it is, knowing when, why, where to find it, how to

Table 16: Respondent's Interest in Book Activities on the Street

ITEM	YES	NO	TOTAL
If you were tired and resting, would you love to join people reading or engaged in book activities along the road?	190 (70%)	80 (30%)	270 (100%)

Source: Fieldwork conducted between August and September, 2018

The Respondents were asked to make suggestions on how better to help them leave the streets. Box 1 below is what their spokesman said:

Box 1:
"You people should not only give us free books that will encourage us to read but should also provide us employment like skills acquisition, equip the public library with the books that will help us to read and write, and provide other educational support to make us leave the street. Many of us don't like this street hustle life."

Source: Fieldwork conducted between August and September, 2018

Street Children and Street Hawkers study Analysis Summarised (N=270)

Briefly summarising the results of the above empirical study of 270 out-of-school children and young-adult street hawkers in Port Harcourt city, the study reveals that 160 (59%) are males while 111(41%) are females and 136 (50%) are aged between 19 years and above. Some of many possible explanations include the high rate of out-of-school children with no functional skill or basic education. Another striking revelation is that 13 (5%) of the participants are aged between 5 and 10 years. It was pathetic when we saw and interviewed a 6 (six) year old girl-child selling sachet water along the Olu Obasanjo road in Port Harcourt. A society that allows children of this age group to be seen on the streets hawking is not on the right track for the future generation. It is important to note that these are not the Almajiris whose culture may permit the children to be on the street to beg for alms. We also found that (40%) of them are indifferent on the issue of visiting their parents after living home. In other words, they have settled for

THE NEED FOR FREE STREET LIBRARIES

Table 13: The Last Time Respondent Read a Book

S/N	ITEM: When last did you read a book?	No. of Items (%)
1	Last week	0
2	Six months ago	25 (9%)
3	A year ago	45 (17 %)
4	More than a year ago	150 (55%)
5	Never	50 (19 %)
	TOTAL	270 (100%)

Source: Fieldwork conducted between August and September, 2018

Table14: Respondent's Access to Books

SN	Statement	Yes (%)	No (%)	TOTAL
1.	Have you ever owned a book (Not school exercise book or notebook)?	44 (16%)	226 (84%)	270 (100%)
2.	Has anyone given you a book to read before (Not your school book)?	19 (7%)	251 (93%)	270 (100%)
3.	Would you like to read a book if it is given to you?	257 (95%)	13 (5%)	270 (100%)
4.	Would you like to listen to somebody read a book to you?	230 (85%)	40 (15%)	270 (100%)
5.	Have you ever read through a book (cover-to-cover) before (Not your school textbooks)?	40 (15%)	230 (85%)	270 (100%)
6.	Would you like to read a book if it was given to you free of charge?	270 (100%)	0	270 (100%)
7.	Would you like to own a book if it was given to you free of charge?	270 (100%)	0	270 (100%)
8.	Have you ever visited/used a public library?	15 (6%)	255 (94%)	270 (100%)

Source: Fieldwork conducted between August and September, 2018

Table 15: Need for the Free Street Library

S/N	ITEMS: What do you usually do when you are tired of chasing after moving cars for buyers of your wares?	No. of Items (%)
1	I find somewhere to rest/sleep	0
2	I rest/sleep on the corner of the street	50 (19 %)
3	I rest/sleep on the pavements by the corner of the road	150 (55 %)
4	Others	70 (26%)
	TOTAL	270 (100%)

Source: Fieldwork conducted between August and September, 2018

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evaluate it, use and communicate it in an ethical manner (CILIP, 2005). Information literacy is an important tool in learning and knowledge application.

We have attempted to explain the concepts of data, information, knowledge, information literacy and knowledge application that results to collective wisdom. Knowledge application is what influences a situation. We illustrated how one powered bulb is more valuable than ten bulbs stocked in a pocket. What follows below is our humble contribution to knowledge application that led to our Professorship.

7.0 OUR CONTRIBUTIONS AND KNOWLEDGE APPLICATION IN THE SOCIETY

Vice-Chancellor Sir, some of our contributions to Knowledge Application can be summarised to include the following:

➢ Youth restiveness, Information, Communication and Conflict Prevention (Ahiauzu, 1997, 2003, etc)

➢ Production of Bibliographies (Ahiauzu 1996, etc)

➢ Promotion of Reading culture (Ahiauzu & Oladipupo, 2018, Ahiauzu& Emmanuel, 2018)

➢ ReadyRead Free Street Library initiative for children and young adults to promote reading culture, and take the children, young adults and hawkers off the streets.

➢ Digital library service delivery (Ahiauzu & Ani, 2008; 2015, Ahiauzu & Echem, 2019, etc)

➢ Promotion of preservation and use of indigenous languages (Ahiauzu,2003a, 2003b, etc)

7.1 Youth Restiveness, Information, Communication and Conflict Prevention

Vice-Chancellor Sir, in 1997, the inaugural lecturer conducted a research on oil-related restiveness and conflict amongst the youths of the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The research involved 60 communities and 300 respondents spread across Rivers, Bayelsa, Edo and Delta States (Ahiauzu, 1997). We identified three categories of restiveness in three zone-types of communities (See Tables 1a to 1c). Our concern was to investigate how to curb oil-related exploitation and youth restiveness in the Niger Delta. The research was based on our PhD thesis entitled: "The State, Oil Exploitation and Social Consciousness among the Peasantry in Nigeria: A Study of Conflict in Selected Oil-Producing Communities of The Niger Delta (1956-1995)".

The field-survey was based on sixty (60) oil-producing communities across the Niger Delta and four (4) out of the six (6) major oil operators in Nigeria. Three hundred (300) respondents from the oil-producing communities were clustered into three study zones namely: Mainland (Zone A), Riverine (Zone B) and Mixed: Mainland and Riverine (Zone C) communities. The results revealed oil-related crises among peasants in the oil-producing area of the Niger-Delta. Again, there was extreme imbalance in the exchange relationship between the state, the oil operators, the host communities, non-oil industries, and social amenities. We found that a major trigger of crises was the evidence of what we referred to as a **Peasant Deprivation Strategy** (PDS) which operated in a distorted exchange relationship and perpetrated exploitation and injustice. PDS occasioned loss of entitlement by the oil-host communities. We also found that the undefined and unclear exchange entitlement set for
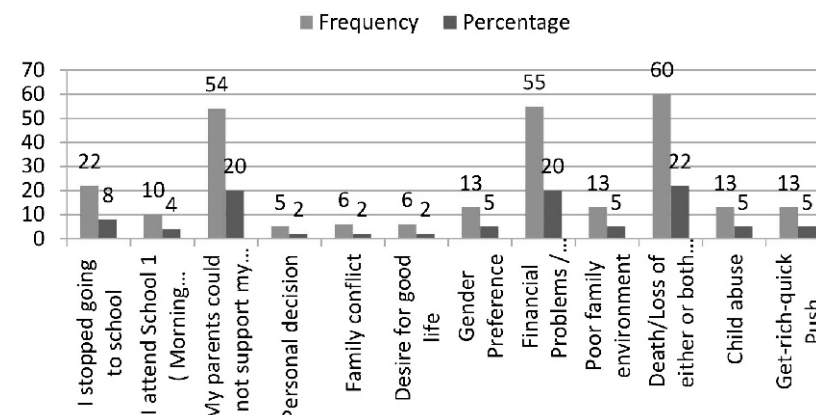
Fig.16: Chart on Respondent's Absence from School

Source: Fieldwork conducted between August and September, 2018

Table 12: Time spent so far in hawking

S/N	ITEM: How long have you been hawking on the street?	No. of Items (%)
1	1 month to 11 months	96 (36%)
2	1 year to 5 years	120 (44%)
3	5 years and above	54 (20%)
4	I do not know	0
	TOTAL	**270 (100%)**

Source: Fieldwork conducted between August and September, 2018
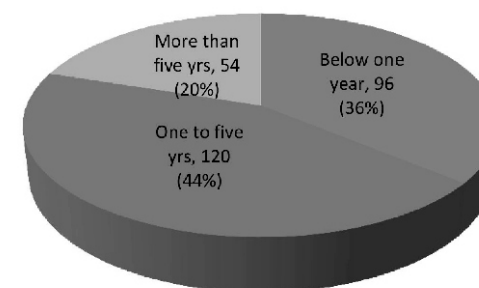
Fig. 17: Chart on time spent so far Hawking

Source: Fieldwork conducted between August and September, 2018
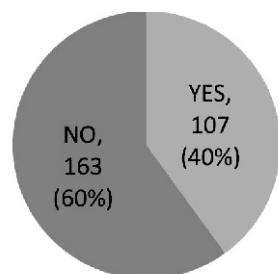
Fig. 15: Chart on Respondents Current Residence

Source: Fieldwork conducted between August and September, 2018

Table 10: Street Hawkers Starting Age

ITEM:	How old were you when you started hawking on the street of Port Harcourt?	No. of Items / %
	05- 10 years	10 (4%)
	11 - 14 years	70 (26%)
	15 - 20 years	136 (50%)
	20 - 25 years	28 (10%)
	25 years and Above	13 (5%)
	I do no know	13 (5%)
	TOTAL	**270 (100%)**

Source: Fieldwork conducted between August and September, 2018

Table 11: Respondent's Absence from School

S/N	ITEMS: Why are you not in school at this time of the day?	Frequency (%)
1	I stopped going to school	22(8%)
2	I attend School 1 (Morning Session)	10 (4%)
3	My parents could not support my education	54(20%)
4	Personal decision	5 (2%)
5	Family conflict	6(2%)
6	Desire for good life	6(2%)
7	Gender Preference	13 (5%)
8	Financial Problems / Parental poverty	55(20%)
9	Poor family environment	13(5%)
10	Death/Loss of either or both parents	60(22%)
11	Child abuse	13 (5%)
12	Get-rich-quick Push	13(5%)
	TOTAL	**270 (100%)**

Source: Fieldwork conducted between August and September,

the oil-host communities provided the opportunity for the host communities to act like Oliver Twist in their demands. There was no limit to the kind of things they asked for. Some communities even demanded payment of "salaries" to their unemployed youths, women and the aged. Some of the oil operators bowed to this demand and employed stay-home "staff" with full pay.

The major contribution of the study is the identification of the critical variable which is responsible for turning an erstwhile dormant peasant group into a fighting force, the point at which compromise turns to conflict. This is because while many other exploited peasant groups attacked oil companies, some others did not. We found out, from the five case studies that in each case, in addition to severe deprivations which tend to raise the level of the peasants' socio-economic consciousness, there was the emergence of **Vocal Leadership/ Group** which acted as a vanguard to sensitize the peasants into riotous actions. The role of the vocal leadership or organisation is vital in the final emergence of conflict in these communities. The conflict (i.e. critical turning point) emerges quicker and lasts longer in those communities where the people hold the vocal leadership in high esteem. This finding led us to conceptualise the "**Vanguard Agent Theory**" in the study of socio-political consciousness among peasants in Nigeria.

We found the need for a conscious commitment and actual manifestation of same, on the part of the State and the oil operators to the welfare and protection of the environment of the oil-host communities. The entitlement set for the oil-host areas must be clearly specified in the instruments guiding the exchange relationship between the State, oil operators, and the host areas. Non-oil industries, including health,

agricultural and educational programmes should be sited in the oil producing areas. Early warning signals of crises should be responded to, with minimum delay before it gets to the critical turning point when a vocal leader surfaces to hijack the situation and ignite violent action. Moreover, the oil operators need to establish monitoring departments and enshrine the process of dialogue and regular interaction (both formal and informal) with their host communities to anticipate and prevent unhealthy consequences of certain actions. It would afford the oil-operators the opportunity of monitoring the level of articulation of issues, and the perception of justice or otherwise in the exchange relationship prevalent in a particular host community. The host communities must exercise restraint in their confrontational approach. They must learn to present their demands in a well-articulated and realistic manner, while keenly watching out for unpatriotic self-appointed community leaders or situational/conditional patriots whose occupation thrives only on such conflicts. These were few of our recommendations, some of which were implemented by the oil operators.

7.2 Information and Conflict Resolutions in Niger Delta Region

This study (Ifidon & Ahiauzu, 2005) was designed to find alternative methods of conflict management in the Niger Delta Region where there had been long-standing tension, restiveness and conflict. Both the oil companies and the government had capital development projects in the areas of agriculture, education, health and infrastructure to pacify the oil-producing communities; and half-hearted dialogues have been used-all to no avail. Through interviews and participant observation methods, the principal actors in the conflict and

Biological Family Background of the Street Hawkers
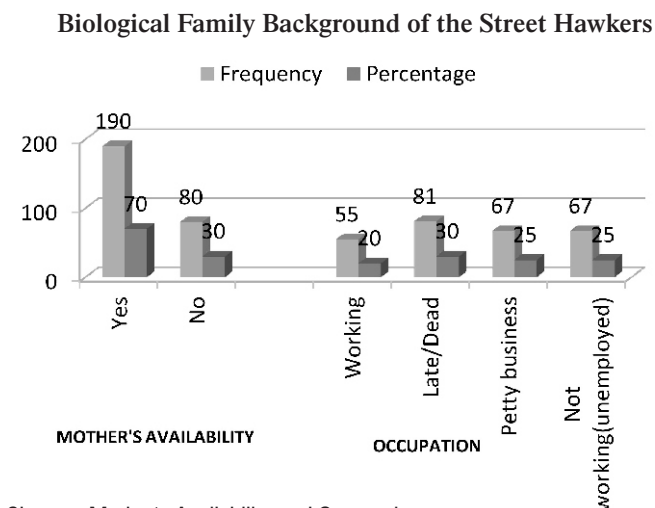
Fig 14: Chart on Mother's Availability and Occupation
Source: Fieldwork conducted between August and September, 2018

Mother's availability and occupation as shown in table 6b reveals that 30% of the participants lost their mothers to death while 25% are engaged in petty trading and are unemployed respectively.

Table 8: Street Hawkers' Parents' Residence N=270

S/N	ITEM: Where are your parents?	No. of Items (%)
1	In Port Harcourt	90 (33%)
2	In my village/Hometown	108 (40%)
3	I do not know	13 (5%)
4	Dead / Late	59 (22%)
	TOTAL	**270 (100%)**

Table 9: Respondents' Current Residence

S/N	ITEM: Are you living with your parents?	No. of Items (%)
1	Yes	107 (40%)
2	No	163 (60%)
	TOTAL	**270 (100%)**

7.6 Empirical Study on Children and Young-Adult Street Hawkers in Port Harcourt

Street Children and Young Adults Hawkers' Demographic Data
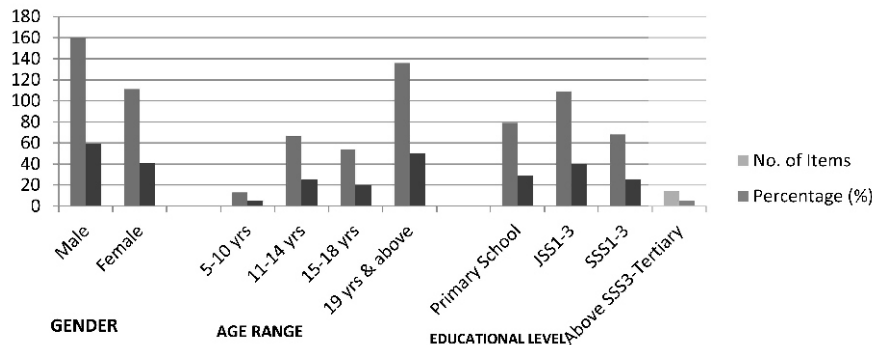
Fig. 12: Chart on Street Children and Young Adults Hawkers' Demographic Data

Source: Ahiauzu, 2019: Fieldwork conducted between August and September, 2018

Biological Family Background of the Street Hawkers
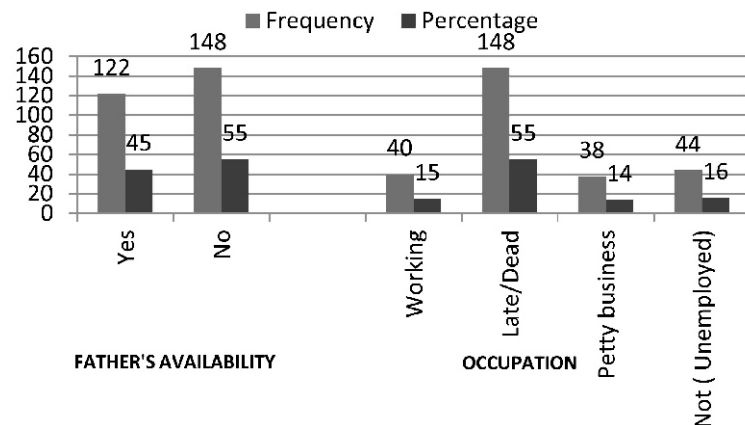
Fig 13: Chart on Father's Availability and Occupation

Source: Fieldwork conducted between August and September, 2018

their methods of conflict resolution were examined based on 60 randomly selected communities in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria. These were divided into 3 study zones. Sequel to this study, Ifidon & Ahiauzu, (2006) investigated the relationship between the availability of information to stakeholders about a phenomenon, the brewing of tension and the emergence of actual conflict. The Niger-Delta States of Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo and Rivers (comprising six States) provided the setting and data for the study.

The fieldwork was done in the early 1990s when oil exploitation-related tension between the oil companies and the youths of host communities was assuming alarming dimensions. Although oil was discovered in the region in 1958, there was relative peace until 1970 after the civil war. Why? The explanation is the intensified activities of the multi-national oil companies, which adversely affected farming and fishing, the predominant occupation of the people. Incessant oil spillages and years of gas flaring impacted negatively on the environment, thereby making the inhabitants to demand for remediation and strategies to resuscitate the rich ecosystems of the region. Failure to achieve this led to a volatile atmosphere characterized by protest, agitation and common conflicts.

Between 1956 and 1970 oil-related communal clashes recorded were almost non-existent in all the three (3) zones studied. But between 1971 and 1981, the figure rose drastically to twenty two (22) incidents and between 1982 and 1992, the phenomenon had attracted international concern such that by 1998, the Niger-Delta had become a "lawless" "boiling" zone where youths disrupted oil production activities and lives lost at will. We identified some early

indicators of this manifest conflict to include written petitions, and peaceful demonstrations, where these were not attended to early enough, they graduated to violent protests as Tables 1 to 4 below show.

EARLY WARNING INDICATORS OF CONFLICT IN THE THREE STUDY ZONES OF THE NIGER DELTA (Ahiauzu, 1997)

Table 2: Incidents of Conflict in the Niger-Delta Region of Nigeria

Zone A Communities: N=20

S/N	YEAR	1956 - 1966	1967 - 1970	1971- 1981	1982 - 1992	1993 - 1988
	Evidence of Conflict	Frequency	Civil War	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
1	Written Petition	—	—	4	6	13
2	Delegation	1	—	5	9	8
3	Peaceful Demonstration	—	—	1	4	5
4	Violent Demonstration	—	—	1	8	16
	TOTAL	1	—	11	27	46

Source: Ahiauzu (1997) Field Work Conducted between 1995 and 1998

Table 3: Incidents of Conflict in the Niger-Delta Region of Nigeria

Zone B Communities: N=20

S/N	YEAR	1956 - 1966	1967 - 1970	1971- 1981	1982 - 1992	1993 - 1988
	Evidence of Conflict	Frequency	Civil War	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
1	Written Petition	1	—	2	2	7
2	Delegation	1	—	1	2	5
3	Peaceful Demonstration	—	—	—	1	2
4	Violent Demonstration	—	—	—	—	1
	TOTAL	2	—	3	5	15

Ahiauzu (1997) Field Work Conducted between 1995 and 1998

7.5.7 Factors Responsible for Young Adults' Street Hawking in Port Harcourt City

After several investigations over the years, we have identified some factors responsible for the rising spate of street hawking by young adults in Port Harcourt city (Ahiauzu, 2019). They include parents' and guardians' inability to support the respondent's education (78%); other young hawkers (45%) simply said they did not want to continue in school. One could safely group this category among those who had conflicts with their parents (including those pushed out of home by parents) due to insubordination and outright rebellion. So, they personally decided to be out of school. Moreover, 35% of street hawkers do so because of the death of either or both parents. Ihejirika's (2013) study also found other factors to include poor family environment, parental poverty, appalling state of the economy, gender preference by parents, migration, child abuse and neglect. In line with our discourse so far, Ihejirika (2013) recommends that the use of non-formal educational activities (such as the proximity of library services) could be located close to the life and work of the street hawkers. This is because their lifestyles are antithetical to the lifestyles in the formal education system. Connecting them to books while on the street will help to transform them, thereby motivating them to leave the streets for an alternative better livelihood. The international community acknowledges the hardship faced by the street hawkers and street children. The International Day of the Street Child is one of recognitions which draw global attention to the fact that those out-of-school-children on the streets have rights too. They are humans.

Fig.10: Books Donated to *ReadyRead Free Street Library* Initiative for distribution to the Street Children and Young-Adult Hawkers in Port Harcourt City.

Fig 11: *ReadyRead Free Street Library Initiative* Research Assistants

Table 4: Incidents of Conflict in the Niger-Delta Region of Nigeria

Zone B Communities: N=20

S/N	YEAR	1956 - 1966	1967 - 1970	1971- 1981	1982 - 1992	1993 - 1988
	Evidence of Conflict	Frequency	Civil War	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
1	Written Petition	—	—	2	4	7
2	Delegation	—	—	1	5	8
3	Peaceful Demonstration	—	—	—	1	1
4	Violent Demonstration	—	—	1	1	2
	TOTAL	—	—	4	11	18

Ahiauzu (1997) Field Work Conducted between 1995 and 1998

These studies reveal that one of the major causes of conflict was lack of information and communication. Where there was any communication at all, it was disseminated by a group or vocal leader we termed as the "Vanguard Agent", who naturally transmitted the information in their own terms. Within the same period, some communities in the same zone were comparatively peaceful because they did not have a Vanguard Agent to ignite the actions. These communities were thrown into chaos and avoidable conflicts due to lack of information and communication. Most of the communities did not have access to the memorandum of understanding (MOU) or the actual arrangement or sharing formula between the Federal Government, host communities and the oil companies. Information is here confirmed as one critical instrument for conflict resolution and prevention. The major conclusion, therefore, is that information and communication are viable options as instruments of conflict resolution.

7.3 Challenges of Library Service Delivery in Nigeria

Vice-Chancellor, sir, library service delivery in Nigeria, like in any other part of the world, is constantly confronted with myriads of challenges, mostly as a result of technological advances that have altered the way and manner information is presented. As the information is now packaged and delivered in diverse formats, so has the users' means of access to them expanded. The library users' information literacy level has accordingly increased unlike, in the past, when the clientele depended solely on the library staff for direction. Today, by the time a user enters the library, they are already familiar with one or more access points such as Google, Whikipedia, WhatsApp, Twitter, blogs, facebook, instagram and so on, through his mobile devices. In what follows, we shall explain some of our research efforts aimed at identifying some of these challenges with a view to proffering solutions.

7.3.1 Emergence of Electronic Information Resources (EIRs)

We made some significant contributions in the area of electronic information resources development in university libraries in Nigeria (Ahiauzu, 2003; Ahiauzu, 2008; Ahiauzu 1989; Ani & Ahiauzu, 2008; Ahiauzu & Ani, 2015; Ahiauzu & Agundu, 2014). The emergence of Electronic Information Resources (EIRs), simply referred to as electronic resources, has tremendously transformed information-seeking, information-handling and information management in Nigerian academic environments and university libraries, in particular. The studies provided the framework for effective development of electronic information resources in university libraries in Nigeria. EIRs have succeeded in shrinking the distance between people, knowledge and information. EIRs have

Fig. 9: Poster Presentation on the *ReadyRead Free Street Library* Initiative prepared for 2019 International Federation of Library Association and Institutions (IFLA) Conference, Athens, Greece, August, 21st, 2019.

others, that it is majorly the responsibility of the government to make the environment safe and inclusive for all by providing functional public and mobile libraries in all the local government headquarters. While local writers and publishers should be supported to produce indigenous, quality books at moderate costs.
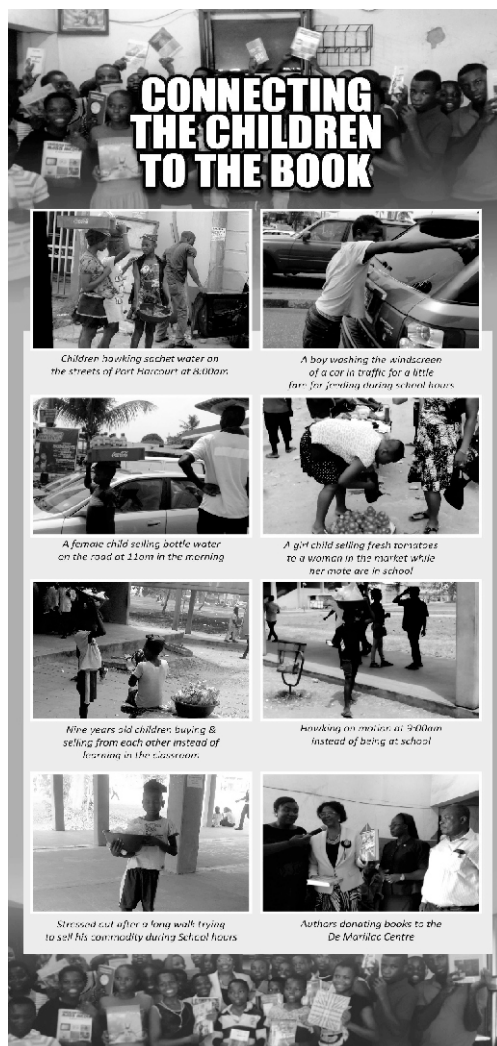
Fig 8: Connecting Children to Book. Poster Presentation at the 82nd IFLA World Conference held in Columbus, Ohio, USA, August 13 to 19th, 2016.

facilitated access to vast collection of books and journal titles from as far back in time and geographical location as possible. University Library collections have become several times richer and more current with EIRs direct subscriptions to online database, e-books, e-journals and bibliographies through the Internet or CD-ROMS. Maximum benefit of EIRs development in a university library is derived from the availability of the Internet, digitalization which is the process of converting information and all library resources into digital format. The Internet, on the other hand, provides a wider access to global online databases. It has become a multimedia for the development of electronic resources for quality learning, teaching and research in universities. In trying to deploy electronic information resources (EIRs) in the Rivers State University library in 2004, we discovered that EIRs, if deployed, would affect the earlier orientation of the traditional library service delivery (Ani & Ahiauzu, 2008). Our study revealed that the move from print information to electronic information resources in Nigerian university libraries is dramatic through library computerization, digitalization, Internet connectivity and subscription to electronic database.

The Internet has been the major source of developing EIRs in Nigerian universities as 89.5% of the surveyed libraries had Internet connectivity. This is followed by subscription to electronic databases, online databases (68.4%) and Compact Disc-Read Only Memorys (CD-ROMS) had 57.9%; other university libraries (52.6%) developed their EIRs through the acquisition of electronic journals while 52.6% did it through library computerization as only 15.8% started the process of developing their EIRs through digitization of library materials. The studies (Ani & Ahiauzu, 2008; Ahiauzu & Agundu, 2014) concluded that there is high level of interest for developing EIRs in

Nigerian university libraries through direct subscription to electronic information (online databases, CD-ROMS etc.) than conversion of information into electronic form in the library through computerization and digitization. There is a dire need to encourage local research in Nigeria by improving on the current level of conversion of local information for national and international access by clientele. Mass computerisation of library services and digitization of relevant library materials should be encouraged in university libraries in Nigeria to support global visibility.

The digital-age library users' information-seeking behaviour has provided a new vista of library service provision platform, challenging the older tradition of service delivery. Our study (Ahiauzu & Ani, 2015) was specifically on this area. Information-seeking behaviour refers to the way library users search for and utilize information. Information-seeking behaviour is also seen as a process in which researchers purposefully engage in order to change their state of knowledge. It results from the recognitions of some needs, perceived by the users, who then make demands on the formal library system (Ahiauzu & Ani, 2015). We surveyed the information-seeking behaviour pattern of the academics in a Nigerian University in the emerging electronic information environment. We found that the behaviour is in favour of electronic information sources on the internet. The internet was the most frequently used information source (31.5%), closely followed by personal contacts/collections (23.98%), workshops/conferences/seminars (23.72%) than the traditional library (20.71%). This finding makes it imperative for university managements to give priority to the provision of internet access facilities and virtual libraries connectivity in the University libraries to meet the changing information-seeking behaviour of their academic

are so engaged, they will naturally leave the streets for a better life in the society. Connecting them to books while on the street is an alternative way of meeting their social inclusion, educational as well as library service needs.

Before and soon after the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970, the public library served as the university of the poor and for the poorest of the poor. Graduates of this university are in positions of power and influence today. Access to non-formal education is acclaimed by UNESCO General Assembly (1976) as a way of harnessing the citizens' educational potential outside the four walls of the formal educational school system. Furthermore, taking public library service to the street is a strategy that can positively engage their minds and prepare them for participation in formal education, if and when they find such opportunity. Meeting the reading needs of the children and young adults on the street emphasises the role which the library plays in society.

7.5.6 Connecting the Individual to Life-long and Life-wide Reading Culture in Nigeria

Our study here (Ahiauzu & Oladipupo, 2018) highlights the connection between the individual, lifelong learning and life-wide reading culture against the imperatives of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4. The Goal 4 talks about an effective learning in a safe environment and how that affects the individual's capacity to sustain a lifelong learning and the promotion of a sustained reading habit. Life-long learning is learning how to continue learning throughout one's life cycle. It is learning from cradle to grave. The paper is theoretical and reviews the relevant literature on the variables. It concludes that there is a nexus between a reading habit and the characteristics of a safe environment comprising the actions or inactions of the others. It recommends, amongst

such access important? According to Nwosu (2017), the conceptual interpretation of the library's role in the society includes satisfying the individual information needs as well as meeting the sociological and educational needs of the society. For the librarian to achieve this, information service gap and how to fill it must be identified. In Iraq, when the need to attract and connect the larger society to books was identified, they decided to expose and take books to the people by leaving books in the street at night because, they argued, that:"the reader does not steal and the thief **does not read**". This philosophy encouraged a lot of Iraqis to have free access to books. Can this approach be adapted to suit the reading needs of the Port Harcourt street children? Is it feasible? Having identified the factors that are responsible for the young adults' living on the street, it is clear that such street lifestyle will not meet the demands of core academic way of life. By their itinerant lifestyle, some are not likely to congregate and concentrate for a serious academic exercise as in the regular classroom. This was confirmed during our fieldwork interaction. They do not have the capacity and cannot afford such luxury of time and comfort as they must "*hustle*" and "*harmer*" to get a morsel of food or something to eat for the day. In fact, attempts have been made by various governments of Nigeria to forcefully get them off the street and enrol them in some formal schools. Such efforts include the Almajiri and the fishing ports itinerant education policy where the "classroom" is taken to their grazing areas and fishing ports in the creeks, respectively. Similarly, books must be taken to the young-adult street children and hawkers in line with their lifestyle, if they must have access to them. Such an exposure has the capacity of introducing them to good reading culture, and possibly, motivating them to enrol for self-development programmes or formal education that may require more intense reading and writing. When they

staff and enhance efficiency in research. This will also make the university libraries more effective.

Nigerian universities are witnessing tremendous transformation and innovations in the conduct of academic research. This is attributable to the emergence of the digital age and the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) revolution, which has influenced the ways in which information is accessed and retrieved by the academic community. Indeed, there is a paradigm shift in the pattern of information-seeking behaviour of academic staff in Nigerian universities due to the accessibility of emerging digital technologies. Libraries are responding to the challenges of meeting the information needs of their patrons in the era of advancing electronic information environment and globalized research community. In the past, information and knowledge packaging in the libraries were defined by quantum of print collections and literary collectibles available to users. Consequently, space, and book shelves took pride of place, projecting the library as print material storehouse and preservation centre. Today, e-resource and digital library service delivery hold sway in most part of the world, and Nigeria's higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are efficiently bracing up in this regard. To this end, our study (Ahiauzu & Agundu, 2014), sought to demonstratively track topical resources on finance which are operationally catalytic to reinventing strategic financial management research in the Nigerian university system. Essentially, the inquest results based on Pro-Quest database were presented using relative statistics, tables and graphic highlights for better appreciation of the search outcomes. With greater social media innovative instrumentality and the attendant boom in digital capacity, Higher Institutions in Nigeria should leverage on the many thriving e-access databases to reinvent and promote trans-disciplines collaborative research. This should result in

greater intellectual and effectual productive synergy amongst the academics across the globe. The study, thus confirmed that the academic staff of Nigerian universities tend to appreciate and utilise electronic databases in preference to the hardcopy for current information. This is a paradigm shift in their information-seeking behaviour.

7.3.2   Collections Development

Another aspect of challenges of University Library service delivery in Nigeria has to do with the problem of collections development in an economy that does not appear to be friendly to books and intellectual enterprise. Collection development involves the entire library operations and activities, including the selection of resources; the acquisition of those resources selected and dissemination. It involves the development of plans for sharing resources, gifts and exchanges decision, weeding and evaluation. Collection development is the hub of success or failure of any library type. It succeeds only where there is a well-developed collection policy for the library. Our study (Ahiauzu, 1989) examined the problems faced by university libraries in trying to develop and maintain their library collections. We identified the problems to include inadequate staff to handle an effective weeding and stocktaking exercises, which are a major part of library collections development. Weeding exercise needs professional librarians who can take decisions on what to take out of the library shelves irrespective of the date of publication of such material. This professional must have the capacity to convince a lecturer not to insist on recommending superseded texts where more up-to-date editions or related publication exists. Personnel are needed to effectively handle gifts and exchanges policy. Only experienced professionals can decipher between a gift that salves the conscience of the giver but burdens the receiver.
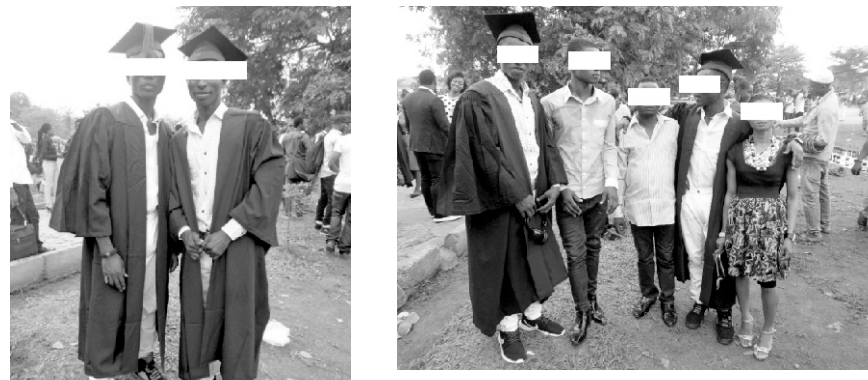
Fig. 7a: Former Street Children at their University Matriculation Ceremony in one of the Universities in Port-Harcourt, Nigeria.

Courtesy: De Marilac Centre (2019)

Fig. 7b: Former Street Child Reunited with the Mother and Newly Rescued street child

Courtesy: De Marilac Centre, (2019)

7.5.5   Meeting the Book Need of Children and Young-Adult Street Hawkers in Port Harcourt

Meeting the book needs of children and young adults street hawkers in Port Harcourt, in our presentation (Ahiauzu, 2016) at the 82nd international federation of library association and institutions (IFLA) in Ohio, Columbus, United States of America (Fig. 8), it was clear that street children's access to the book was of global interest. Why is

institutional care, placement with relative or group home care) can hamper children's early literacy and is correlated with an increase in behavioural problems both in school and in interpersonal relationships (Ahiauzu 2018; Walker-Dalhouse & Risko, 2008). Many Nigerian street children who are under age five have no access to free books (Ahiauzu, 2016). Among these street children, nearly 40% do not attend school and many others only attend intermittently, which invariably, negatively affects their potential performance and makes them prone to lagging behind their peers.

Gloria Parez-Salmerion, the president of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), reiterates the belief that libraries and librarians have a unique relationship with human rights. Librarians rely on such human rights declaration principles to apply their professional knowledge to solving societal problems. Without protection against discrimination or censorship and without freedom of speech, librarians cannot perform their jobs of information and knowledge dissemination. These protocols give credence to librarians' mission of drawing the attention of the public, policy makers and all stakeholders to ways of improving lives and building informed literate societies through books. Such protocols empowered *ReadyRead Free Street Library,* a non-governmental organisation (NGO),to reach the unreached street hawkers and children with books so as to initiate the desired change in the immediate community. *ReadyRead Free Street Library* has already made and is still making some modest impacts in the lives of street children.

Another problem is that some university librarians may prefer quantity to quality in their collection development approach in an attempt to capture every reader's interest. For example, in the early 1980s, the Rivers State University (then Rivers State University of Science and Technology) acquired books written in Polish, German, French and even in Chinese because a few of the faculty members were from those countries. These collections, no doubt, helped to swell our accessions record but they were rarely consulted even by those targeted faculty staff, until they left Nigeria. When the university library had to employ a Librarian with a French background, she could only interpret the title, verso and other relevant pages for the Chief Cataloguer to process the French language books. She was only able to handle a few titles out of the large French collection by the time she left the services of the university,. Book selection procedure in Nigerian university libraries pose a challenge due to issues relating to their collection development policies (where such policy exists). Book selections exercises make up the decision-making process concerned with implementing the goals of collection development. Criteria and methodology for the identification and selection of library materials should be seen from the collection development plan where the focus should be on achieving the best reading for the largest number at the least cost.

The local publishers and the publishing industry in Nigeria have problems that affect collection development. The number of books they publish each year on each subject seem to be increasing, while the quality of production leaves much to be desired. Most of the books produced do not have library shelve versions/editions (i.e. hard copies) that can stand the test of time and heavy usage. Most of the books do not have library-shelf life hence, University libraries, generally, are reluctant in fully patronising them.

Another challenge is inadequate funding to acquire sufficient library books and other materials to meet the users' needs as it was shown that the number of students admitted each academic session far exceeds the number of books acquired per session by the university libraries. In other words, libraries are not funded according to the growth-rate of students and teaching staff. Students' growth rate and the rate of growth of teaching staff that do not correspond with that of increase in library materials' vote in the universities pose a great problem. Shared resources and strengthening of gifts and exchanges programmes between institutions would be a viable survival strategy, amongst other initiatives.

7.3.3 The Globalisation of Library Services

In recent times, libraries of all types have witnessed a great metamorphosis due to technological advances, giving rise to the advent of the digital library. The terms "digital library", "virtual library" and "library without walls" are used interchangeably to refer to an unlimited collection of information to which people can gain access using the Internet, cable television or some other types of remote electronic connection (Ahiauzu, 2003). Information and communications technology (ICT) have changed the way people live, and do business so much so that nearly all electronic gadgets these days have computers. These machines range from wristwatches, pocket calculators, typewriters, television, microwave ovens, video games to electronic toys and cars. The implication of this is that there is a computer of some sort in every home as there is no neighbourhood without one person possessing at least a wristwatch, a calculator and radio. This is the major characteristic of the knowledge or information technology-driven age. Members of this age have no choice but to use those technologies else, they perish or

On 30th March, 2007, the Nigerian government signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In our view, the street children should be considered as belonging to persons with disability, because by broad implication, they are disabled by social exclusion. This social exclusion renders them invisible to the conscience of the world.

7.5.4 Street Children's Access to Books

Why does connecting the children to the book matter? Research (Evans M.D.R, et al, 2010) has shown that academically, children growing up in homes without books are, on the average, three (3) years behind children in homes where they have access to books. Hence, the most successful ways to improve the reading and educational achievement of a child is to increase his/her access to books. The Ohio presentation on connecting the children to the book (Ahiauzu, 2016) and the one for Athens, Greece (2019) on connecting the city street hawkers in Nigeria to the book: a presentation of Port Harcourt city (figure 9) informed our initiative to embark on the *ReadyRead Free Street Library* project to provide access to books for street children and encourage them to cultivate a good reading culture. This segment of the society feels that there is no future for them. So, having nothing to gain or lose in life, they can afford to engage in life-threatening activities against the society that they perceive has ill-treated them.

In the USA, the average age of children (persons) experiencing homelessness is 9 years (Terrile Vikki, 2009). At age 9, the child is exposed to greater risks of behavioural problems, literacy deficits and developmental setbacks (Noll and Watkins, 2003). Studies have shown that "out-of-home placement experiences" (students and young persons living in homeless shelters such as the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps in Nigeria, foster care,

parents? What do they do for a living? These and other questions led us to probing into their socio-economic backgrounds to know the factors responsible for their living and hawking on the streets.

7.5.3 World International Day of the Street Child (IDSC)/UN General Comment (No. 21) on Children in Street Situations

Surprisingly, the United Nations accords human rights status to the children and young adults hawking on streets. The 12th of April each year is celebrated as the International Day for Street Children. Since 2012, globally, the day is set aside to recognise the strength and resilience of the street child. It draws global attention to their humanity and dignity in the face of unimaginable hardships. The 2019 theme for the IDSC was **Celebrating the Strength of the Street Children around the World**. The United Nations Child Rights Convention also provides for equal rights for all children whether or not on the street. Specifically, in 2017, the UN produced a document called the **General Comment (No. 21) on Children in Street Situations** to acknowledge the rights of street children. The document specifies how governments should treat these vulnerable children and accord them the same human rights protection as other children. In other to achieve this, in 2018, a 5-year "4 Steps to Equality" campaign based on the UN General Comment (No.21) was launched. These self-explanatory achievable 4 Steps are as follows:

1. Commit to equality

2. Protect every child

3. Provide access to services

4. Create specialised solutions

render themselves helpless (Ahiauzu, 2003). Nigeria is part of this ICT society. The implication for library service provision is the need for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of the librarians (Ahiauzu, 2008). CPD is a systematic ongoing process by which librarians update, broaden their knowledge base and sharpen their skills in addition to improving on personal qualities necessary for efficient service delivery throughout one's working life. A characteristic of CPD has to do with workplace learning in which librarians continue to learn while carrying out their daily routine activities (Ahiauzu, 2008).

The wider access to global information resources is a feature of the digital age. Globalisation of library services is a concept that describes the ever-growing cooperation and integration among different libraries in the world in terms of both human and material resources. It is an increased magnitude of interactions between libraries, irrespective of location. Globalization enables marketing of library and information services, shared resources and cost reduction in terms of service delivery (Ahiauzu, 2008). Many university libraries in Nigeria are already active participants in the global information arena.

7.3.4 Partnership for Access to books and Libraries for Young People

The inaugural lecturer presented a paper (Ahiauzu, 2014) on the gains of partnership for the provision of reading materials, access and transformation in libraries for young people, especially in Port-Harcourt city. The paper was an offshoot from the UNESCO 2014 World Book Capital City (WBCC) programme of activities. It examined how a non-Governmental organization (NGO) could collaborate with libraries, individuals and institutions to provide access to

books and libraries for young people in Nigeria. An NGO, the Rainbow Book Club a.k.a the Club, with support from the then President of Nigeria and the government of Rivers State won the 2014 UNESCO, WBCC for Port Harcourt city. By that winning, Port Harcourt City became the first city in Sub-Saharan Africa to win the prestigious title. Leveraging on the Club's pedigree from 2005, the State Government was able to make remarkable impact as touching books provision, promoting reading and encouraging reading habits in children. The partnership positively affected access to books and other reading materials, library-related activities and transformed libraries for the young people in the city of Port Harcourt and its environs. It gave birth to the planting of seed libraries, book clubs, book donations, renovations and building of new public libraries and other literary activities identified in the paper. Port Harcourt as the capital of Rivers State has a population of about 5.6 million people. One of the seed libraries at Mgbuoba along Choba / Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) road is today accommodating the National Library of Nigeria. This is one of the gains of the WBCC.

7.3.5 Lack of Children's Literature in Public and School libraries

Our study (Ahiauzu, 2016) revealed that public and school libraries in Rivers State do not have the books and other information resources, both in quantity and quality, for children, teenagers and adolescents. In another study, Ahiauzu & Emmanuel (2018) we discovered that out of the 379 schools in Rivers State studied, 86 did not have school libraries in proper terms of the word. Investigating the availability of children and adolescents' literature in our public libraries, the result was appalling as the few titles found on the shelves of the Rivers State public library at

have the street as their home where they eat, sleep, play and make friends. They never go back to their parents. In most cases, they are abandoned or driven away by poverty in their homes, while in other cases, they voluntarily leave home. There are other children and young adults who collect wares from big traders inside markets, shopping malls and ware-houses to sell on the streets for a commission. We call this group "young adult street traders". At the end of each day, they return to their *Oga* and *Madam* to summit the proceeds, after deducting their commissions or any amount above what they are meant to sell the items.

It is only through the efforts of NGOs, and other well-meaning individuals and organisations that these young people can be connected to reading books and given a better life other than life on the street. The regular public libraries are ill-equipped to extend their services to these street children and young adults. The government rarely addresses their educational and reading empowerment needs in any permanent way as NGOs would do. NGOs do individual follow-ups and rehabilitation of the victims. Some of them have been rescued and supported by our *ReadyRead free street library* initiative to receive education from primary to University levels. Some are empowered with skills as hair dressers and so on. Others have been rehabilitated and re-united with their families. This effort has also eliminated the crimes that would have emanated through them.

By simple logic, the children that are out-of-school must be somewhere either on the streets or in the creeks. They are often, extremely vulnerable to physical and emotional trauma. Life on the street is energy-sapping and is harsh by all standards. So, why are they there all the same? Why is their number rising each day? Who and where are their

7.5.2 The Concept of Street Children and Young-Adult Street Hawkers

The concept: "young-adult street hawkers" is used to explain those children and young-adults who for one reason or another live the major part of their lives on the streets, hawking various wares amidst diverse hazards. Other young adults that fall within this category as identified by UNESCO (2005) are refugee children and youths, prisoners, almajiris found in some parts of Nigeria, out-of-school girls and boys, street beggars, children and young-adults that are physically challenged. These young citizens roam the streets and are often found in markets, car parks, recreational and entertainment centres. Their wares or articles of trade include foodstuffs such as doughnuts, soft drinks, roasted meats and fruits. They also sell electronics such as pocket transistor radios, phone chargers, extension cables, television antennas, light touch and batteries. They even carry household cleaning agents such as detergents, scoring brush, fumigation chemicals, buckets, mops, and brooms. Sometimes they indulge in scavenging, begging, prostitution, and theft in order to make ends meet. In the name of scavenging, they enter lonely premises to steal valuable and useful metals, building materials and household items. Besides, some of them carry and hide drugs, guns and other weapons for criminals.

Ebigbo (1986) identified two categories of street children. Our study of the Port Harcourt city hawkers also confirmed this categorization. According to Ebigbo there are "Children on the Street" and "Children of the Street". We found yet a third group as "Children Traders on the Street". "Children on the Street" are out-of-school children who hawk goods, render menial services to residents along their streets, and thereafter, return to their homes or families at night or at the "close of work". "Children of the Street"

Bernard Carr Street and those of the Jubilee Library at Kaduna Street, all in Port Harcourt, were out-dated and mostly foreign-based publications. Books by Nigerian authors and publishers were scarcely found on the shelves in those public libraries. Yet, these are the libraries that should meet the reading needs of the youths and street children in Rivers State in addition to the use of their mobile library services.

7.3.6 The Disappearance of Mobile Libraries (The University of the Poorest of the Poor)

In the past (early 1970s and 1980s), public libraries in Nigeria used their mobile library services to provide books to reach the housebound, children, youths, the elderly and other groups who could not visit the public libraries for one reason or another. In Rivers State, for example, the Library Board had efficient mobile library service with a fleet of trucks and book boats that regularly, traversed several upland and riverine communities in Rivers State to provide books to them. We could recall the MV Knowledge I and MV Knowledge II Rivers State Public Library Book Boats that went as far as Nembe and Brass for people living in those communities to select and borrow books like those who visited the public library in Port Harcourt. Their loan period used to be four (4) to six (6) weeks within which the boats would return to collect due books while offering them new arrivals. These riverine communities looked forward to welcoming the Boats. The mobile library trucks went to all primary and secondary schools, hospitals, remand homes, homes for the elderly, prisons (now Correctional Centres), rural communities and to the streets of Port Harcourt. Children living along those streets were expectant of the mobile library trucks. Secondary school students, especially those in the boarding houses, benefitted immensely from the novels they borrowed from

the State mobile library. Our argument here is that if the State mobile library services were operational, some of the restive youths in the Niger Delta, the street children and young adult hawkers could have had the opportunity of regular access to the book to support their self-actualization. It is a common knowledge that, through the mobile library services, some convicts have left the Correctional centres as Open University graduates because they had access to books. Some in hospitals and homes for the elderly have sat for and passed examinations through access to books from mobile libraries. This is known as bibliotherapy. Books here serve as components of healing agents. Elsewhere, outside Nigeria, mobile libraries until date, routinely visit streets to sustain the reading needs of those living along such streets.

What these illustrations portend is that for now, there are no other ways of reaching these groups of people with the opportunity of self-development through access to the book without mobile library service, whether in digital or traditional delivery formats. Digital mobile library service is becoming more popular in those countries with public internet access. Digital mobile library service is when the vulnerable citizens make requests online from where they are and the book is delivered to them at their doorstep and retrieved at date due by the library staff. This is how the mobile public library is bibliotherapic (Book healing or healing through the Book) as well as the University of the Poor. Today, both the trucks and boat mobile libraries have disappeared from the services of most public libraries in Nigeria, including that of the Rivers State Public Libraries. On further investigation, (Ahiauzu, 2012), it was found that, poor funding and inadequate staff strength were their major challenges.

2014 and 2019, By the same token, Rivers State now has about 444,000 out-of-school children, leaving Port Harcourt city alone with over 19,304 out-of-school children, by simply dividing 444,000 by 23 local government areas in Rivers State. Of course, Port Harcourt city will definitely have a higher figure with more visitors and itinerant non-indigenes that carry out businesses in Port Harcourt daily than in other local government areas of the State. These 19,304 children and young adults who are out-of-school, logically, translate to the number of street children and hawkers in Port Harcourt city. UNESCO (2007) categorically confirms that the street children phenomenon in Nigeria is gradually assuming an alarming proportion, especially, in urban areas.
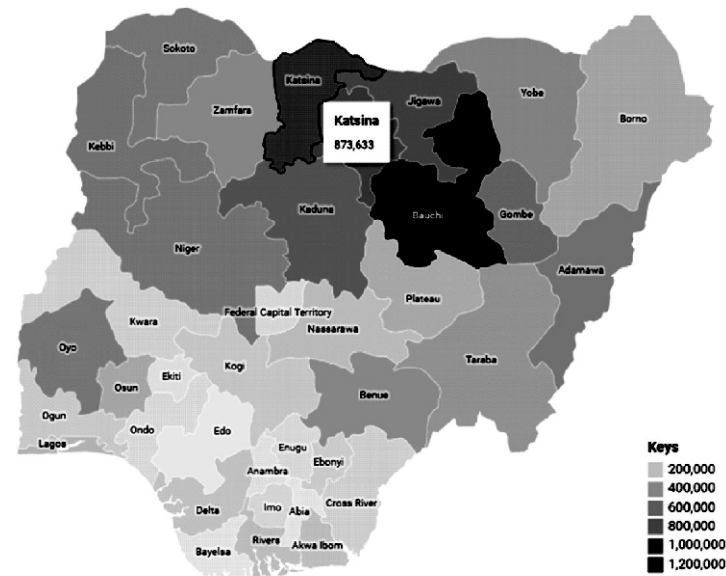

Fig. 6: Map of Nigeria Showing Number of Out-of-School Children
Source: Ojetunde, (2018)

Nigeria, while a later report by same body in 2017 shows that 13 million Nigerian children were out of school. More recently (on July, 25, 2019), the former Minister of Education, Adamu Adamu, informed Nigeria's Senate that: "The number of out-of-school children in the country now stands at over 16 million based on a February 2019 census. According to him, out-of-**primary**-school children stood at 10 million, while children out-of-**secondary**-school is 6 million. These figures portend serious dangers and point to continuous rise in the number of street children.

Table 7: Number of Out-of-School Children in Some African Countries (In Millions)

S/N	COUNTRY	NUMBER OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL (IN MILLIONS)
1	Nigeria	7.0 (now over 16 million) (Adamu, 2019)
2	Ethiopia	7.0
3	Sudan	3.9
4	DRC	3.5
5	Kenya	2.4
6	Ghana	1.5
7	Mozambique	1.5
8	Burkina Faso	1.3
9	Tanzania	1.2
10	Niger	1.2
11	South Africa	1.1
12	Mali	1.0
13	Cote D'Ivoire	1.0
TOTAL		33.6 Million

Source: Country Data for World Education Forum (Falase, 2006) and reported in Ihejirika (2013)

In Rivers State, there were over 400,000 children that were   out-of-school as at 2014 when the figure was 13 million children (National Bureau of Statistics, 2014). By February, 2019, the number of Nigeria's out-of-school children escalated to 16 million children representing an increase of 3 million children between

The inaugural lecturer conducted a study (Ahiauzu, 2013) on matching the number of the public libraries in some States of the Federal Republic of Nigeria with their associated population figures. The purpose was to ascertain the availability of public libraries in Nigeria in relation to the human population they serve. Table 8 bellow, shows that Rivers State is one of the States in Nigeria with the least number of public libraries serving a population of over five million. This is despite the UNESCO 2014 World Book Capital City activities. The study revealed as Table 8 shows that Delta State with a population of about 4 million (4,112,445) people has the highest number of public libraries with a total of 27 public libraries, while Edo with a population of about 3 million (3,233,366) has 26 public libraries. Ekiti with a little over 2 million (2,398,357) population has 20 public libraries and Kano (9,401,288 population), has 19 public libraries. Then, Rivers State with a population of 5 million (5,198,716) has 3 public libraries only. This can, partly, explain the rise in the number of out-of-school children and street hawkers in Port Harcourt.

Table 5: Divisional, Central Public and Branch Libraries in Some States of Nigeria with their Associated Population Figures and Rank in Population

	Name of State	No. of Divisional Public Libraries	No. of Central Public Libraries	No. of Branch Libraries	Population	Rank in Population
1	Abia	1	1	3	2,845,370	28
2	Adamawa		1	4	3,178,950	26
3	Akwalbom		1	6	3,902,051	15
4	Anambra	3	1	7	4,177,828	10
5	Borno	1	1	4	4,171,104	11
6	Delta		1	26	4,112,445	12
7	Eboyi		1	14	2,156,947	34
8	Edo		1	25	3,233,366	24
9	Ekiti	14	1	5	2,398,357	29
10	Enugu		1	6	3,267,837	22
11	Imo	1	1	10	3,927,563	13
12	Kaduna		1	9	6,113,503	17
13	Kano	18	1	18	9,401,288	1
14	Kebbi		1	7	3,256,541	23
15	Kogi		1		3,314,043	20
16	Lagos	1	1	13	9,113,605	2
17	Nassarawa		1	1	1,869,377	35
18	Oyo		1	5	5,580,894	5
19	Rivers		1	2	5198716	6
20	Sokoto	1	1	1	3702676	17
	Total	40	20	148	84942461	
	Mean	4	1	8.2	4,247,123.05	

Source: Ahiauzu, B. (2013). *History of the Rivers State Chapter of the Nigerian Library Association: 1972-2012*. Springfield Publishers,Pp 52-53.

our fieldwork, the average age range of the street child and young adult hawkers in Nigeria is 9 to 25 years. If within this age brackets, they are not in school but on the streets hawking wares or roaming aimlessly while others are in schools, we safely refer to them as street children and young adult street hawkers. They may sometimes be referred to as "street hawkers", "street urchins" ("off the street" and "on the street" urchins), "street children" and "homeless children". They are often considered as miscreants and nuisance to the society. Our argument here is that they can be connected to the book to encourage them to read for self-development and educational empowerment. As we write, we have succeeded in getting five (5) of them up to the university level. As graduates, they are today, off the street for good. Even those of them that had been in schools would not have had access to children's literature, novels or simple reading materials outside their exercise note books because most of the public schools investigated in Rivers State do not have school libraries (Ahiauzu & Emmanuel, 2018). The implication of that scenario is that any child who is not able to purchase all the required books cannot get to read or use such books from the school library that does not exist. Consequently and most likely, when the child drops out of school, he or she would not have access to any leisure reading due to lack of materials outside school text books.

In 2006, by the United Nation's definition of out-of-school children, the figure was 7.0million as it captured only those aged 6–11 years. These figures, as at then, placed Nigeria's out-of-school children higher than most other countries in Africa. Nigeria and Ethiopia share the ugly position of the countries that have the highest number of out-of-school children in some African countries (Table 7). In 2013 survey by the Nigerian National Bureau of Statistics, the figure had gone up to 9.1 million children out of school in

7.5 Connecting Out-of-School Children to the Book

What follows is a continuation of how we applied our knowledge as librarians to identify and address the reading needs of a segment of the society: the unreached children and young adult hawkers on the streets of Port Harcourt city, with a view to providing them with free books for a lifelong reading culture, learning, education, empowerment and eventually, getting them out of the streets. Our research efforts (Ahiauzu, 1997, 2014, 2018; Ahiauzu & Emmanuel, 2018) revealed that majority of this group as identified here are chronic street children, jobless youths, school dropouts or simply referred to as "Out-of-School" children and young adult street hawkers. Who are these out-of-school children?

7.5.1 The Out-of-School Children: Who are they?

The phenomenon of out-of-school children is already of global concern. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2019) defines out-of-school children as those kids who are yet to be enrolled in any formal education, excluding pre-primary education. The age-range for those out-of-school children, according to the UNESCO is 6-11 years. The United Nations UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) data reports that about 258 million children and youths are out of school globally for the school year ending in 2018 alone. This total includes 59 million children of primary school age, 62 million of lower secondary school age and 138 million of upper secondary age (UNESCO UIS, 2019). For our purposes here, the out-of-school children are not just those who are yet to be enrolled in any formal education, but also those who had been in school but had to leave school due to several factors, including financial, truancy or similar reasons. Our definition also includes children that are withdrawn from schools for one reason or another. From

The school, public and community libraries are directly in charge of addressing the reading needs of the society through the provision of literature for the appropriate segments of that society. Experience has shown that most State Library Boards in Nigeria are not fulfilling this mandate. Most of them, as at today, no longer have mobile library delivery trucks, thereby denying the public this all-important aspect of their services. Again, due to general economic constraints, few parents are able to buy recommended textbooks. Leisure books (outside school textbooks) are not a priority to such parents. Yet, leisure reading is what is necessary for the development of the reading habit of children and young adults at their various stages of mental development. This is one reason why the number of out-of school children will continue to be alarmingly on the increase in Nigeria just as the number of young adult street hawkers is also rising.

Children and youths who hawk for economic reasons are particularly vulnerable to reading and writing inability syndromes. Children and young people generally face marginalization and more so if found in certain demographic groups, including those in refugee camps, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, migrants, and so on. Due to a level of marginalization they are exposed to, their rights are not protected, their sense of acceptability is negatively impacted and they become exposed to all forms of exploitation and manipulations. Criminals lure them into all forms of crimes: rape, kidnapping, drugs and armed robbery. When they take to these crimes and other societal ills, they become a threat to the peace and stability of the society in which they live.

No social, political or economic service provider or NGO remembers or mentions them in their vision and mission statements or political campaigns. If any mention is made, it is how to get them off the streets without alternative employment arrangement. When very important personalities are to visit any city, security agents are usually deployed to evacuate them off the streets like dirt. Yet, by their commercial activities of hawking on the streets, they are reducing unemployment, albeit indirectly. There is no public discussion concerning extending public library services to them as it is to the prisons (Correctional centres) and hospitals. Consequently, they feel neglected, with the resultant reactions of anger, rebellion, hate, bitterness and aggression towards the system. Moreover, these traits are deepened when they watch their counterparts from wealthy homes being driven in cars daily to and from primary, secondary and tertiary institutions; they tend to consider such an experience a far-fetched dream. Their immediate concern is their daily bread which, at best, comes once a day and is far from being balanced. More often than not, they feed on a loaf of bread and water or soft drink. During one of our fieldwork interactions, a young adult hawker asked us this question: *"abeg wetin I de take book do? Make una give me work make I get food eat"* (meaning; what am I doing with book? Please, you people should give me a job so I can feed myself) (Ahiauzu, 2018). This scenario is so real that an NGO identified this need and offers a meal a day to those of them that can find their way to the NGO's premises in the course of the day's hustle. There is no doubt that the above picture creates indelible negative impressions in their minds about their society. Will they ever forgive the society if it continues to ignore them in all forms of service provision?

ceremony was supervised by the Secretary to the Board, Dr. Tony Enyia and Dr. Isaac Ngulube who anchored the Orthography. The work is a result of the Rivers State Law on the Teaching of Indigenous Language, as stated in the Official Gazette of Rivers State of Nigeria, Volume 38, No. 2 of 12th January, 2006. Supplement to No. 4 of 2003.

It is likely that our contributions to the growth of Rivers State indigenous languages informed our appointment into the Rivers State Government Readers Project Board for the reading and writing of indigenous languages on June 9, 2008. The Board was chaired by late Emeritus Professor Tekena N. Tamuno and continued by Rev. Dr. S. Kpoine-Tonwe. Other members were Chief Samson Agbaru, JP, Emeritus Professor Otonti Nduka and Dr. Tony Enyia as secretary. Late Prof. Israel Owate was then the Honourable Commissioner of Education. The Project supported the works of Mr. Sam Wugo and other authors to produce reading materials in Rivers State languages.

7.4.2   Member, Ogba Kingdom Tourism Committee

The influences of Western culture and lifestyle have become so pervasive that no community in Rivers State can claim to be unaffected. For example, the rich and almost ceremonious Ogba people's greeting is gradually giving way to "Hi" or "Hello". The African process of marriage introduction is being eroded by some traditions alien to Ogba culture. Internet friendship and marriage online now happen amongst the children. Purely, Rivers music, song, dance, and drums are also gradually polluted. It is now popular to hear of African rap, reggae, pop or song. Even in the country side, moonlight storytelling is giving way to watching of crime, war and romance videos. So, being made a member of the Tourism Committee of the Ogba Kingdom to identify the tourism potentials in sights and sounds of the Ogba people was a welcome development.

2. *Okwuekwnuru L'oluOgba* (An Anthology of Idiomatic Expressions in Ogba Language).

This is a collection of one hundred and fifteen (115) idioms used by the Ogba people.

3. *Igbaelul'Ogba* (An Anthology of Ogba Proverbs):

We produced and published a volume containing four hundred and twelve (412) Ogba proverbs and interpreted same in the English language. The work is today a major reference material in that area and it has been made available to some students (on request) from the Department of Linguistics, University of Port Harcourt, for their research endeavours.

These modest efforts at documenting the Ogba language has given birth to other works on the language including: "Ogba: New monetary counting, short story and poems" by Nwokocha (2013). In 2013 in appreciation of these contributors, the inaugural lecturer was honoured by the Oba (EzeOgba) of Ogba land, His Eminence, Sir (Dr) Chukwumela Nnam Obi, II (OON, FFCR, FNATT, FIBMAN, JP) for our contributions to the growth of Ogba language. Today, there is a department at the Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku, where Ogba language is being taught at the HND level. Our books are the major texts used.

7.4.1 Production of Ogba Orthography & Appointment into Rivers State Readers Project Board

Language Orthography ensures that a language can be developed. We are also part of the team from the Rivers State Readers Project Board that produced the Ogba language orthography presented on Friday, 2nd February, 2012, and approved for use by the Ogba people. The

Our research fieldwork reveals that currently, there is no private or public library service provision targeted at addressing the book and reading needs of street hawkers in Nigeria. There is no positive public discussion either in the print, electronic or social media concerning them. Terrile (2009) reports similar neglect of the homeless population in the United States of America. This makes it a phenomenon that is not peculiar to Nigeria. Any mention of this segment of society would usually deal with strategies to achieve proper clean-up operations. Oftentimes, public libraries bemoan their inability to effectively serve the needs of prison in-mates, the elderly in homes and hospital in-patients. There is a dearth of information and work done for these groups with respect to the provision of library services. This is what has engaged our interest over the past four years as we drive round the streets of Port Harcourt to see street children and young hawkers running after moving vehicles in a bid to sell their wares.

7.3.7 Budgeting and Resource Allocation in Public Secondary Schools

The challenges of budgeting and financial resource allocation in public secondary school libraries in Rivers State were identified in a study (Ahiauzu & Emmanuel, 2019). The study investigated the budgeting and resource allocation in public Junior Secondary Schools levels 1 to 3 (JSS 1-3) in Rivers State, Nigeria. As at the time of study, two hundred and eighty- eight (288) Junior Secondary Schools were identified, out of which two hundred (200) were studied with one hundred and sixty-two (162) questionnaires returned and analysed, representing 81%. The questionnaires were administered and oral interview conducted by the researchers on the library staff and teachers in the schools under study. Direct observation of

the school library activities formed part of the exercise. Data were analysed using percentages, frequencies, tables, bar and pie charts. The results reveal that most of the school libraries had some form of "budgeting". The State Government provided 74.19% of the funding and only 16% and 3% from other sources such as donations and gifts respectively. The 'school librarian' made requests to the Principals of the school of needs as they arise. The Principals agreed that they submit annual budgets to their Proprietor (The State Government) but do not receive up to one quarter (1/4) of what is submitted (of their requests).

7.3.8   Reference Sources and Services

Librarianship is dynamic because it is constantly challenged by the various sources of information associated with the technological advances. Librarians in general and the reference librarians in particular, have to keep abreast of these changes if they have to remain relevant in the profession. As earlier noted, evidence has shown that most library users come to the library already familiar with one source of information or another because of the popularity of the computer and its related gadgets already in homes. Hence our work on Reference Sources and Services (Ahiauzu, 2004) examined the nature of reference sources available in the University Library system using the Rivers State University to illustrate. The aim of the study was to marry the nature of these sources and services with some identifiable qualities reminiscent of a good reference librarian. The paper also provides pointers on how best to re-train the 21st century reference librarians to serve their clients better. In the cause of the study, it was observed that library schools where the librarians are trained might be deficient in the inclusion of interpersonal and moral courses in their curricula. Based on this observation it is recommended that the reference

was done quickly as fewer families and children were speaking, reading, and writing in Ogba language (Ogba is the inaugural lecturers' mother-tongue). We, thus, developed the interest to do something about it. We started the research while teaching some Post-graduate students of the Faculty of Technical and Science Education (now Faculty of Education), Rivers State University. One of the students and former Registrar of Federal College of Technology, Omoku, Dr. Azubuike Idu (Late) was instrumental to the collaborative work we did with Elder Obulor Alfred Ochogba (Late), who shared the vision of preserving Ogba language. Unfortunately, Elder Ochogba passed on in the course of the research. However, the inaugural lecturer continued with the project to fruition.

The outcome of that research has positively impacted on the speaking, reading, and writing of Ogba language. We also initiated the greeting: *Ali Ogba* – with the response: "*Nganga Kie/Kem*". Like every other indigenous minority language, Ogba language is disappearing from daily use in most urban homes. Our children are fast-losing track of the moral training and instruction embedded in the proverbs and idiomatic expressions of the Ogba people. Today, while the Ogba Kingdom is just recovering from a demonic siege, these documentations will remain with the people wherever they may be found. In all, the three well-researched and painstaking works have become the products of our efforts to save our Ogba language from extinction:

1.   *Ka yesu Olu Ogba* (Lets Speak Ogba Language)

This book is used in many schools teaching local languages like the ***Federal*** College of Education (Technical), ***Omoku,*** where Rivers State indigenous languages are taught.

Table 7: The 27 Endangered Languages in Nigeria

S/N	LANGUAGE	CURRENT STATE
1.	Akum language	Critically endangered
2.	Bade language	Vulnerable
3.	Bakpinka language	Critically endangered
4.	Defaka language	Critically endangered
5.	Duguza language	Definitely endangered
6.	Dulbu language	Critically endangered
7.	Fyem language	Severely endangered
8.	Geji cluster	Severely endangered
9.	Gera language	Vulnerable
10.	Gura language	Severely endangered
11.	Gurdu-Mbaaru language	Severely endangered
12.	Gyem language	Critically endangered
13.	Hya language	Severely endangered
14.	Ilue language	Critically endangered
15.	Jilbe language	Critically endangered
16.	Kiong language	Critically endangered
17.	Kona language	Severely endangered
18.	Kudu-Camo language	Critically endangered
19.	Luri language	Critically endangered
20.	Mvanip language	Critically endangered
21.	Ndunda language	Severely endangered
22.	Ngwaba language	Severely endangered
23.	Polci cluster	Definitely endangered
24.	Reshe language	Vulnerable
25.	Sambe language	Critically endangered
26.	Somyev language	Critically endangered
27.	Yangkam language	Critically endangered

Source: www.pulsenews.com, Accessed 28th May, 2019

As knowledge managers, librarians are quick to identifying yawning knowledge gaps and how they can apply their education and training to filling such gaps. In this regard, we observed that the Ogba language spoken by one of the ethnic nationalities in Rivers State is already endangered if nothing

librarians should access regular training and skills-re-tooling opportunities, while library schools should consider, as a matter of urgency, the inclusion of psychology and sociology courses in their curricula. In another study (Ahiauzu, 1989) where bibliographic sources available to the researcher were examined, the reference librarian did not have enough subject-based bibliographies to support the reference service delivery.

A reference source is anywhere or anything from which a piece of information could be gotten so as to meet the information needs of the library clientele. This is why when speaking of the generic sources it connotes everything including the human mind. However, the library acquires specific materials or tools in order to facilitate access to sources of information in the library. These sources include the library, library catalogues, bibliographies, indexes and other listings. The library sources also include the generic book and the human interactive mind. The human mind is a major, if not the most critical reference tool in carrying out reference work. The reference Librarians should be seen as pivotal in getting information across to the public. For example, if a library user approaches a Reference Librarian for information from the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) documentary which was aired two days earlier, if that documentary film or CD is not readily available in the library in question but, the enquirer was directed to where they got the CD, the Reference Librarian has actually utilized the human mind without referring to the "traditional book" sources to meet that user's demand. In this way, the reference librarian has played a catalytic role in the handling of enquiries. This is why we advocate for more robust curricula for the Library Schools in Nigeria to take the issue of training the minds of librarians more seriously.

7.3.9 The Evolving Role of the University Librarian in Nigeria: What we need to do.

In a paper (Ahiauzu, 2012), we identified the evolving roles of the University Librarian in Nigeria and what need to be done. Prior to the emergence of high level technology, the university libraries in Nigeria depended mainly on manual procedures to acquire, process and organize their library resources in a way that they could be available and accessible to the patrons. These manual procedures were tedious and laborious. The development of good Collection Development Policy was emphasized. For example, the Rivers State University library system had to ensure that there was a written policy guiding the direction of its collections growth. In the Rivers State University library for example, various activity-based sections such as acquisition, cataloguing and classification, circulation, reference, bindery and reprographics were clearly demarcated. The sections were beehives of activities, with all the relevant massive volumes of tools (Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme (DDC), Library of Congress Classification Scheme (LC) volumes A-Z, LC subject headings, Books in Print, British Books in Print, and in-house authority files) to process the materials. The cataloguers were literary buried in these volumes and the frustration of not being able to get the main subject, title and classification numbers or reach author and subject decisions about a book could make the inexperienced cataloguer to have sleepless nights. The intervention of the technological change moving globally at a jet speed and affecting everything on its way greatly influenced the general operations of university libraries. The inaugural lecturer examined (Ahiauzu, 2012), the point of convergence of the Traditional Physical Library Space (TPLS) and Electronic Library Space (ELS) services that tend to create the changing roles of the

In Nigeria, there are over five hundred and twenty (520) indigenous languages spoken. About twenty-seven (27) are already critically endangered and close to extinction. Odumale (2018) fears that in less than one hundred years to come, nearly half of the languages as we know them today would be lost forever. Which one of these will be among the first to go? Which is most endangered? An endangered language is a language that is at the risk of falling out of use, generally, because it has few surviving speakers. If it loses all of its native speakers, it becomes an extinct language. That is what is about to happen to many Nigerian languages, including some in Rivers State. The lecturer's native language, Ogba language, also appears to be one of such endangered ones, as the native speakers are becoming fewer each day. This is what has happened to a language known as *O'chi 'Chi'* spoken by people from Ikwerengwo and Umuebulu communities of Rivers State. As at today, the language has gone extinct. The four dangerous levels of language extinction as identified by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2019) are categorised in four levels of extinction as follows: (1) Vulnerable (2) Definitely Endangered (3) Severely Endangered (4) Critically Endangered (Table 4).

7.4 Preservation of Rivers State Indigenous Languages

According to the UNESCO (2019), there are approximately 7,000 living languages in the world. Unfortunately, UNESCO (2019) predicts that more than half of this number will go extinct by the end of this century. About 46% of the world's language is already endangered to becoming extinct. To avert this impending doom, the UNESCO at its General Conference held in 1999 approved the celebration of the International Mother Language Day on the 21st of February each year. This took effect from 2000. During the 2019 celebration, with the theme "Indigenous Languages as a Factor in Development, Peace and Reconciliations", the need for education in indigenous languages as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was observed, as 40% of the global community do not have access to education in their mother tongues.

Learning in mother tongue is key to better understanding of concepts. Using a local language for education is a means to foster development, peace, reconciliation and harmony. In such learning environments, local proverbs can be utilised to convey life-changing messages to the learners. Since such local proverbs and idiomatic expressions are used in daily discussions, the young learners will retain what is taught them in the classroom, thereby creating a social link between the children, young adults and elders of the community. We saw this harmony during our work on the use of proverbs and idiomatic expressions amongst the Ogba peoples of Rivers State. In the Ogba, proverbs and idiomatic expressions are often used to aid conflict resolution between individuals and groups.

librarian. Adeogun (2008), in her model of a hybrid library depicts the changing environment of the library more clearly. "Hybrid" here is defined as an offspring of two diverse library traditions performing essentially the same functions. The model captures what is conceptualized as the evolved role expectations of the university librarian in eleven boxes located within the Physical and Electronic Library Space (ELS). Out of these eleven boxes, eight (8) are in the new electronic library space (ELS) and have to do with the new roles and only three (3) boxes are found in the traditional physical library space (TPLS). This exposition is instructive and confirms the paradigm shift of the information-seeking behaviour of users towards electronic libraries and the roles of the 21st century librarian. Figure 5 below depicts the relationship between TPLS and ELS in the evolving demands of the Librarian.
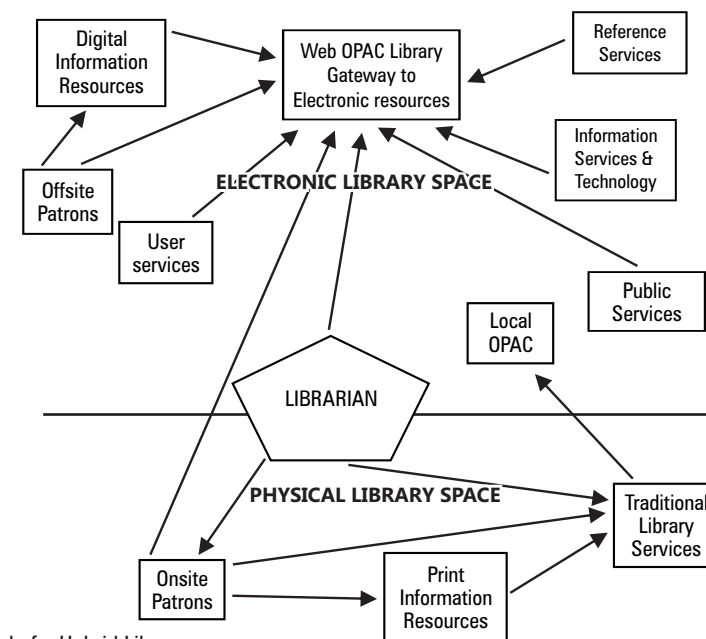

Fig. 5: Model of a Hybrid Library;
Source: Adeogun, Margaret (2008:8)

The role of the 21ˢᵗ century librarian in a higher institution in Nigeria was further re-visited (Ahiauzu & Echem, 2019). The focus here was on the role of the female librarian in effective library service delivery in Nigeria. A survey method was used to obtain data from respondents drawn from academic libraries in Rivers State, namely; Rivers State University, University of Port-Harcourt, the Ignatus Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic. Data was collected with the structured questionnaire and analysed by applying descriptive statistics. The study shows that the female librarian plays essential additional roles to play in the areas of advisory/counselling service, library advocacy, better interpersonal relations and Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) and current awareness services (CAS) services. The most common challenges hindering performance of female librarians include the poorly maintained facilities in their libraries, epileptic electricity supply; inadequate number of computers and office tools; poorly equipped e-library, low maintenance culture and poor perception of female librarians by most patrons.

In another paper, Ahiauzu & Orokor (2014) on the role of the 21ˢᵗ century academic libraries examined the challenges faced by the libraries. The research shows how libraries in higher institutions through their functions and services are dedicated to creating literate society. Based on their role, libraries are the potent key instrument for empowering people to build a virile society. It went further to trace the historical development, mission and mandate of academic libraries, its re-invigorating capacity on the society through training to produce relevant skilled work force. It avers that an adequately funded and well-established library system is essential for any academic institution to continue with its critical and unique mandate of teaching and research.

*matching application, and impliedly practice, is more than useless to a profession". This work which may be described as a down-to-earth practical step-by-step manual for cataloguers could go a long way to help the practice of the library profession…and would be of immense assistance to practitioners, both beginners and the experienced. The method of practical approach embodied in the work [and relating to aspects of the Library profession] **is rare to come by**… Blessing Ahiauzu's present work is, therefore, to be recommended **for filling this obvious lacuna in the literature of modern Librarianship…***

The library is a storehouse of information and the seat of knowledge in an academic environment (Ahiauzu, 1992). But if this "storehouse" of knowledge is not properly organised and its information disseminated in an organised manner, it becomes a junk-house for books and suchlike materials. Computers and the Online Public Access Catalogues (OPAC) have simply come in handy to enhance these age-long traditional practices. Another pioneering landmark contribution to our noble profession is the publication on the *History of the Rivers State Chapter of the Nigerian Library Association 1972-2013.* To date, it is still the only publication in that regard. This work traced the history and the personalities that piloted the affairs of the body within the period under review.

The third bibliography is titled: *Okwuekwnuru l' Ogba (An Anthology of Ogba Idiomatic Expressions)* (2003). Here, we collected several idiomatic expressions in Ogba language, interpreted same and published in 2003. This material became a veritable reference material for the Ogba Council of Chiefs.

7.3.15   A Cataloguing Manual for Libraries

Having been a Cataloguer for eighteen (18) years, the inaugural lecturer produced a procedure manual for use by cataloguers, library schools and their lecturers in Nigeria. The manual acquaints the students, cataloguers and staff members with the work flow and details involved in the cataloguing and classification of books and other library materials. It describes, step-by-step, the processing of newly acquired publications and how to produce the cards as well as generate the records for the various catalogues maintained in a library system. This book marked a watershed in library systems in Nigeria, at the time it was published. It was novel. Library schools and libraries from other tertiary institutions acquired several copies, as it became the only text used in library schools and as cataloguers' guide manual for book processing. In his forward to the Manual, my late boss and mentor of blessed memory, who was a professional per excellence, Ombu (1992), said:

> *Latter-day Librarians have often placed undue emphasis on the theories related to the various processes in libraries, to the detriment of the practical aspects of the profession. We talk about the theories of bibliometrics, Information Retrieval Systems, Computerisation, Man-Machine interface and so forth, without giving equal emphasis to the practical applications of these and similar concepts in the Library environment… but a theory without*

7.3.10   Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) Service and Special Needs of Users

Addressing the issue of meeting the enquiries of users, without wasting their time, as the father of Librarianship Ranganathan (1931) would argue, we (Ahiauzu, 1990), are of the opinion that the libraries, particularly, the university libraries, should re-invent the traditional method of Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) service which matched available library resources to individual user's needs. This service marries users with their information needs. In this way, both the reference librarians and library users will save time of service. Both would be satisfied at the end of the day. This is the position taken in our paper titled "Modified Selective Dissemination of Information Service to Teaching and Research Staff of the Rivers State University of Science and Technology" (Ahiauzu, 1990). In the paper, the inaugural lecturer specifically, recommended a model that would be adopted by librarians in meeting the individual needs of their clientele. In another article on strengthening Nigerian University libraries to meet the special information needs of the global age, we (Ahiauzu, 2009) looked at those material resources that are basic features on the shelves of any university library if they meet the globally emerging information needs of the library user. In that study, we identified those technological imperatives on University library service delivery.

7.3.11   Stress Management amongst University Librarians in Nigeria

In 2007, we observed the high incidence level of stress-related health challenges, occasionally, leading to stroke and even death amongst University Librarians in Nigeria. The spate at which negative stress impacted on the health of university librarians between 2006 and 2007 was

alarming, such that one of such librarians collapsed inside the office; another while climbing a stair case leading to the office; yet, a particular one died after a management meeting in preparation for accreditations (Ahiauzu, 2007). The study found that the University librarians were not able to manage their stress levels, using Role Theory as it applies to the library work environment. It identified maximum and minimum units of stress an individual could cope with at a given time. The coping strategies available to the librarians were also identified to include close monitoring of stress levels, clear definition of roles and delegation of authority. The study further revealed that librarians, generally, focused more attention on the challenges of the job and bottled up the stress accompanying it than on taking care of their health by engaging in healthy habits, including regular exercises and rests. It was, therefore, recommended, amongst others, that University librarians should make regular health checks a routine part of their activities to avoid serious health challenges that can lead to sudden death.

7.3.12 Employee Performance Appraisals and Labour Alienation in Nigerian Organisations

This is an area of concern to managers in organisations including heads of libraries and information centres: the appraisal of their workers and labour alienation. The study (Ahiauzu, 1989), examines the key purposes employee performance appraisal systems serve in Nigerian organisations. The fieldwork was carried out in six manufacturing firms located in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. They were all reasonably matched for size and type of technology employed. Our findings show that of all the purposes listed, by the managers and the workers, the dominant one is "to assess future potential/ career progression" of the worker. Another reason for appraising

students. In view of all these challenges, it became a major contribution and of immense value that an assemblage of about 2,500 titles of books and Law reports and 110 core journals titles can be found in a single volume. Professor Amechi Uchegbu, a former Dean of the Faculty of Law, Rivers Sate University of Science and Technology (now Rivers State University) had this to say while acknowledging the value of this bibliography:

> Law books are usually intimidating to non-lawyers but the outlay of this bibliography is friendly, easy and simple. It is strongly recommended it that University Law Libraries and Law Libraries of other institutions, Law firms, Lawyers and non-Lawyers should have copies in their libraries (Uchegbu in Ahiauzu, 1994).

Igbaelu l' Ogba (An Anthology of Ogba Proverbs) (2012) was another tasking compilation which was done in collaboration with an Ogba language legend, Mr.Obulor Alfred Ochogba of blessed memory. This work involved an assemblage of four hundred and twenty (420) annotated Ogba language proverbs with accompanying English language interpretations. It took us two years to conclude. While appreciating the contribution and value of this compilation in his foreword to the Anthology, the Oba (Eze Ogba of Ogba land) Sir (Dr.) Chukwumela Nnam Obi II, (OON, FFCE, FNATT, FIBMAN, JP) said:

> I must say that this collection and the interpretation of Ogba proverbs have created a history and a challenge to future generations who should not have any reason for not preserving this language, having been provided with this pioneer work as a springboard. The work is rich and goes several years through the memory lane.

investigation on subject bibliographic sources in Nigeria (Ahiauzu, 1986) revealed that the desired subject-based bibliographic sources were lacking on the shelves of the libraries studied. The study focused on education and relied on general reference sources such as general encyclopaedia and indexes. The dearth of subject-based bibliographic sources aroused my interest to do something. When you know something, do something. In our contribution to librarianship in this regard, we produced and published three (3) bibliographies. These are: "A Bibliography on Legal Materials (1996); Igbaelu l' Ogba *(An Anthology of Ogba Proverbs) (2012); and An Anthology of Idiomatic Expressions in Ogba Language (2003)"*.

The compilation of *"A Bibliography on Legal Materials"* (1994) was informed, primarily by the desire to meet the needs of our Law Faculty students, especially the freshmen, who are often lost in the vast array of volumes in an ideal Law Library such as we have in Rivers State University. Very often, some of the first-year students usually join the lectures after the university-wide and the library orientation programmes would have been concluded. Studies (Dekor, 1989) have revealed that as high as 76.82% of students who matriculated in a particular academic session did not participate in the Library orientation. The study also revealed that 66% of the Law Library users get frustrated in finding their way around the sea of law library collection. The National Universities Commission (NUC) further insists that Law students should be familiar with the use of source materials, including bibliographies and legal research indexing to enable the students make maximum use of the available resources. Accreditation panels also require first-hand listing of the entire library collection to help them do speedy assessment of what the university has for the

workers is "to build a job-based behavioural data of employees for necessary management use" and "to assist career planning decisions". It was also revealed that one method of employee performance appraisal is used for more than one purpose. One of the lessons the study organisations learnt from this study is that appraisal interview sessions must form an integral part of the performance appraisal exercise. We are pleased to report here that they implemented our recommendation of having interview sessions as part of their appraisal exercises. Following from this, the inaugural lecturer, went further to examine how effective the employee performance appraisal methods adopted by the organisations have been (Ahiauzu, 1997). The results reveal, amongst others, that both the workers and the management do not share a common view as to what constitutes effectiveness in respect of the methods adopted. We found and concluded that the reason for this disagreement was poor or lack of communication between the parties. In an earlier study (Ahiauzu, 1993), on labour alienation, lack of open channels of communication between Management and workers alienated the workers further from the organisations' mission and vision. The workers in those organisations studied see themselves as powerless and isolated (84.4%) at the workplace and that is why 85% want to change or leave their paid employment.

7.3.13 Capacity Building for Knowledge Management in a Knowledge-Driven Society

In 2018, the inaugural lecturer carried out a research in collaboration with Echem on capacity building for knowledge management. The study (Ahiauzu & Echem, 2018) aimed at ascertaining the level of infrastructure (equipment, source of electricity power supply, Internet accessibility and other facilities) available in the academic institutions studied to enable personnel capacity building

for knowledge management in the present knowledge-driven world economies. The extent of capacity building activities embraced by organisations in Nigeria will determine their level of preparedness to face the challenges of the emerging knowledge economy. The data was collected using a simple structured questionnaire and analyzed using simple percentage. The eight (8) academic institutions in Rivers and Bayelsa States studied showed signs of preparedness as they had reasonable number of computers with Internet access, regular staff training for re-tooling and re-skilling. However, the electricity power supply was still a nagging issue in those institutions. Some are challenged with inadequate number of computers, staff access to the Internet, staff conference attendance and re-training. Thus, we recommend that since the concept of knowledge management in a knowledge-driven economy has come to stay in service provision, capacity building is critical for the library staff so as to enhance the quality of library service delivery in Nigeria. Management of the libraries should ensure adequate personnel recruitment and provision for continuous training and re-training of all existing staff for effective and efficient service delivery. Furthermore, university-wide broadband Internet bandwidth should be provided to address the issue of low speed internet connectivity; every staff should have free internet access and adequate computers should be made available and maintained as obtainable in other parts of the world. Thus, international best practices for knowledge sharing also engaged our research attention (Ahiauzu & Emmanuel, 2019).

The Library and Information Science Education in Nigeria today cannot be relevant without effective preparation of new generation of librarians and this can be achieved through the identification of best practices and making it known to others through knowledge sharing

(collaboration). The paper defines the concepts of best practices and knowledge sharing. It also describes the strategy for application of best practices among library and information science educators. It discusses the importance of introducing best practices in library and information schools and how it will enable them to improve their activities so as to produce quality graduates. It also reviews the attempts made by Nigerian Library Association (NLA) and Nigerian Association of Library and Information Science Educators (NALISE) to develop best practices among library and information science educators. The paper suggested and listed the characteristics of best practices. It made a case for "Experiential Learning in Library and Information Science Education through Out-Campus Practicum". Practices with flexibility to change and improvement can lead the library and information graduates to optimally maximize their potential. The learning experiences of Library and Information Science (LIS) students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria have been discussed based on their project reports. It concludes that the best practices are not something to achieve in one instance, but through a continuous process. We, thus, concluded that the sense of inquisitiveness, inclination to change and learning from experiences of others through knowledge sharing and pursuit of superior performance can lead to achieving best practices among Library and Information Science educators and practitioners. This is one way of producing the right librarians for the knowledge-driven economy.

7.3.14   Production of Bibliographies

Compilation of bibliographies is a core professional activity of a librarian. Compilation of bibliographies, painstakingly carried out, published, marketed by standard publishers, book vendors and placed on library shelves is a major contribution to the field of librarianship. Our