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PUBLIC LIBRARY OBJECTIVES AS CORRELATES TO THE FIFTEENTH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL IN NORTH-CENTRAL, NIGERIA

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Abstract
The public library are the libraries we refers to as the peoples university, because it serves diverse group of people in the society and it seems to be the main library where government program get to the citizens. It is observed that public libraries objective are not too inclined to the SDG Goal 15. There is no apparent empirical study conducted in North Central Nigerian public libraries to ascertain how the public library objectives enhance the attainment of SDG Goal 15. Therefore, this study is aimed at investigating public library objectives as correlates to the fifteenth sustainable development goal in north-central, Nigeria. The study adopts descriptive survey research design. The population of this study is 198 of all librarians in public libraries in North-Central, Nigeria. The researcher adopts total enumeration (census) to cover the entire population of library staff in the state library boards with questionnaire serving as the instrument used to collect relevant data for this study. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire. Frequency distribution, mean and percentages was used for descriptive analysis, while Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used was used to test the null hypothesis formulated at 0.05 level of significance. The finding of the study shows that there is significant relationship between the public libraries objectives and strategies adopted towards the achievement of the fifteenth sustainable goals, with the calculated p value of 0.000 lower than the 0.05 alpha level of significance and the value of correlation of 0.686 (68.6%) at df 182. The positive value of the correlation indicates that the relationship between public libraries objectives and strategies adopted towards the achievement of the fifteenth sustainable goals is directly proportional. The study concluded that the primary function of public libraries is to provide access to knowledge, encourage technology literacy, and improve cognitive abilities. These functions are in line with the overall objective of Sustainable Development Goal 15 (Life on Land and Ecosystem Preservation). Finally, the paper recommend that public library collaborate with relevant stakeholders to ensure that library goals align with the specific targets of SDG 15, emphasising the role of libraries in environmental sustainability and biodiversity conservation.
Keywords: Public Library, Sustainable Development Goal

Introduction

Libraries play a crucial role in promoting digital literacy and provide free access to information, promote innovation, and provide access to the world's knowledge for future generations. Public libraries, accessible to the general public, are essential for addressing

societal and national development goals. Libraries are essential for providing information to satisfy educational, research, information, cultural, and recreational needs. The explosive growth of knowledge and the direct relation of information to development have elevated public libraries as important centers for development.

Library professionals play a major role in advancing users' digital literacy through the provision of Internet and ICT access, as well as specialized training or formal initiatives. As access to information is key enabling right for governments to deliver quality, inclusive services to its people (Ashwill and Norton, 2015).

Libraries as information institutions are crucial to the actualisation of this global agenda and cannot afford to be docile. This corroborates the assertion of Igbinovia and Osuchukwu (2018) who opined that librarians as information professionals are rightly positioned to foster the attainment of SDG through information dissemination and knowledge sharing. Proper or adequate information dissemination services rendered through the library will help in the actualisation of all the goals and targets of the SDG. Frati *et al.* (2021) gave the definition of a conventional library as "a collection of resources in a variety of formats that is organised by information professionals or other experts who provide convenient physical, digital, bibliographic, or intellectual access and offer targeted services and programmes with the mission of educating, informing, or entertaining a variety of audiences and the goal of stimulating individual learning and advancing society as a whole". Today, the Green Library Movement is relevant to all SDG goals related to ecology (Solemanpharcy and Gaffar, 2023). Many libraries are advocating with publisher for books to be delivered without plastic wrapping. They are working with booksellers to minimise unnecessary packaging. Hence, it is important for libraries and the private individuals behind them to ensure that their own behavior and administration align with the goals they promote.

Statement of the Problem

The actualisation of the global goals (SDG) in Nigeria and most African countries is grossly slow in relation to the efforts made by other countries outside Africa and other international organisations to meet the 2030 deadline. Nigeria and other African countries are slow in realizing the global goals (SDG) due to lack of awareness and understanding of the objectives Omisore *et al*. (2017). Public libraries play a crucial role in providing information resources and acting as catalysts for social and economic development through ICT facilities. They play a key role in preserving indigenous knowledge and promoting local decision-making about fundamental aspects of life. However, there is a lack of empirical research on the services public libraries should perform to stimulate developmental actions across the fifteenth goals. Librarians, as information professionals, are expected to provide accurate and reliable information on the SDG. Despite the benefits of SDGs such as saving the national budget, conserving natural resources, and fulfilling human needs, many developing countries hardly recognize these goals. This study aims to examine public library objectives as correlates to the fifteenth sustainable development goal in North-Central, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine public library objectives as correlates to the fifteenth Sustainable development goal (SDG) in North-Central, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are designed to:

1. to determine the influence of public libraries objectives towards the achievement of the fifteenth Sustainable Development Goal in the North-Central, Nigeria
2. identify the strategies public libraries adopt to foster the attainment of the fifteenth Sustainable Development Goal

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will guide the present study and will be tested at 0.05 level of significance:

$H0_1$ There is no significance relationship between public libraries objectives and strategies adopted towards the achievement of the fifteenth sustainable goals.

Literature Review

Okojie and Okiy (2020) assessed public libraries in Nigeria and the development Agenda. The study aimed to explore public library services' adaptation to the global development agenda and improve visibility in various networks. The IFLA questionnaire was used to investigate 37 public library headquarters and the National Library of Nigeria. The most addressed SDGs were Goals 4 and 8, with 84.2% of libraries providing traditional services. The study also highlighted the need for public libraries to better align their services with community needs and facilitate the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). The research identified a gap in studies on other goals, such as goal 15, and aimed to fill this gap by focusing on North-Central Nigeria's public library objectives, staff information and communication technology competencies, and cognitive qualities.

Onwubiko (2021) investigated the role of librarians and libraries in the realisation of the United Nations' Sustainable development goal (SDG). The research questions aimed to explore the role of Public Libraries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The study involved a descriptive survey research design with 28 registered libraries, revealing low awareness of SDGs among librarians and libraries. The findings suggest that selective dissemination of information and proper information provision are crucial for the realization of SDGs. Modern library roles, advocacy programs, and community outreach can help librarians and libraries contribute meaningfully. Challenges faced by librarians and libraries include poor funding, inadequate facilities, and lack of awareness. Recommendations include involvement in advocacy programs, but lack specific examples or case studies. The study highlights the potential role of libraries in supporting the SDGs but lacks practical guidance on how to effectively leverage this role.

Opara *et al.* (2021) studied corporate social responsibility activities for public libraries engagement towards the actualisation of sustainable development goal (SDG): A survey design was used to gather data from public libraries in south-east and south-south Nigeria. The study found that libraries should contribute to corporate social responsibilities, such as disseminating timely agricultural, business, and economic information, providing relevant research resources, partnering with health workers, and promoting equitable quality education. The findings recommend library management to intensify awareness campaigns on various programs and initiatives to achieve sustainable development goals.

The study centres on the corporate social responsibility activities for public libraries engagement towards the actualisation of sustainable development goals (SDGs): A Survey of Public Libraries in South-East and South-South Nigeria by Opara, *et al.* (2021) is similar to the present study as the research is about the public libraries social responsibilities. Though, the study was conducted in the southern region of Nigeria, therefore, it is important to initiate a study in the effort of the public library management in North Central Nigeria are taking towards ensuring that there is intensive awareness campaign on various programmes and initiatives that libraries can participate towards contributing to actualisation of sustainable development goals 15th in particular.

Ogunmodede, *et'al*. (2023) study the Role of Library and Information Services in Achieving Sustainable Development: Issues and Challenges. Library serves as the nucleus of development, crucial for achieving sustainable development objectives. Information is a fundamental component in production, driving growth and distinguishing industrialized economies from developing ones. Libraries play a vital role in combining traditional factors of production, addressing challenges faced by librarians and ensuring the availability of information for successful development projections. On the other hand, Durokifa and Abdul-Wasi (2016) posited that for Nigeria to meet the MDGs goals in 2015, there is need to formulate and implement policies that will promote transparency and accountability, overcome institutional constraints, promote proper growth, bring about structural change, enhance distributive equity, engender social and cultural re-orientations, engineer political transformation and promote human development. These variables identified are some of the essential factors that should be considered as Nigeria warms up to see that SDG are actualised

The study lacks a comprehensive analysis of challenges and limitations faced by libraries in promoting sustainable development, lacks specific strategies, comparative analysis, and discusses potential barriers and limitations in implementing recommended actions, and neglects the impact of technological advancements. Jain and Jibril (2017). Achieving sustainable development through libraries: Some preliminary observations from Botswana public libraries, discusses the role of African libraries in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). African libraries, like the National Library of Uganda also provide ICT training to female farmers, develop SDGs Action Groups, and

support Goals 8, 4, and 5. Public libraries in Botswana also provide basic ICT training, homework assistance, and gender-related activities to promote social and economic development.

Research Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research design which enabled the researchers to use questionnaire to collect relevant data for the study by giving the respondents the freedom of expression so as to attain the aim of the study.

The population of this study is 198 consisting of all librarians in North-Central public libraries, Nigeria comprising: Benue State Public Library, Kogi State Public Library, Kwara State Public Library, Nasarawa State Public Library, Niger State Public Library, Abuja Public Library, Wuse and Plateau State Public Library respectively. The researcher will adopt total enumeration (census) to cover the entire population of library staff in the state library boards. This is because the population size of librarians in all the state library boards is manageable. Questionnaire is the instrument that will be used to collect relevant data for this study. The instrument was subjected to face validation by sustainable development experts from the Department of Library and Information Science, Federal University of Technology, Minna and an expert in Test and Measurement from Statistics Department, from same institution. These experts were requested to make necessary observations, corrections, suggestions and recommendations necessary to improve the validity of the research instrument. Suggestions made by the experts was used to modify and refine the instrument. Their criticisms serve as improvement of items in the format of the research instrument in order to enable the questionnaire address urgent and emerging issues on public library objectives towards the implementation of the fifteenth Sustainable development goal.

The researchers later on personally administered the questionnaire alongside the help of seven other research assistants who were selected from the six public libraries under study. The respondents were given one month to fill the questionnaire which was later retrieved by the researcher.

Frequency distribution, mean and percentages was used for descriptive analysis, while t-test tool was used to test all the null hypothesis formulated at 0.05 level of significance.

Result and Discussion

The study was mainly meant to determine the influence of public libraries objectives towards the achievement of the fifteenth Sustainable Development Goal in the North-Central, Nigeria; identify the strategies public libraries adopt to foster the attainment of the fifteenth Sustainable Development Goal; The response rate from the public libraries in North Central Nigeria are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Response Rate

State	Total Shared	Total Returned	Percent
Benue State Public Library	27	27	100%
Niger State Public Library	31	26	84%
Nasarawa State Public Library	29	26	90%
Kogi State Public Library	33	33	100%
Plateau State Public Library	38	36	95%
Kwara State Public Library	36	31	86%
Abuja Public Library, Wuse	4	4	100%
Total	198	183	92%

Table 1 showed the response rate of the respondents and the following are the responses: 27 questionnaires were distributed to Benue State public library and 27(100%) response rate was achieved. 31 questionnaires were administered to Niger State public library with 26(84%) response rate. Nasarawa State public library on its part had 29 questionnaires distributed there and 26(90%) of the questionnaire were fully filled and returned. At Plateau State public library, 38 questionnaires were distributed and 36(95%) response achieved. Kogi State public library had total number of 33 questionnaire administered there and recorded 100% response rate. Furthermore, 36 questionnaires was administered within Kwara State public library and 31(86%) was successfully returned while Abuja Public Library, Wuse, had all the 4 questionnaire administered completely returned back.

Objective One: To determine the influence of public libraries objectives towards the achievement of the fifteenth Sustainable Development Goal in the North-Central, Nigeria.

Several items were considered on the views of the librarians were sought on the items concerning the objective. The decision was based on a benchmark of 3.00 with their responses presented in mean and standard deviation in Table 2.

Table 2: Influence of public libraries objectives towards the achievement of the fifteenth Sustainable Development Goal in the North-Central, Nigeria

Statement	SA 5	A 4	U 3	D 2	SD 1	N	FX	MEAN	Sd	DECISION
Public libraries and librarians are to bridge the gap of awareness and information on SDG among members of the society	93	55	25	5	5	183	775	4.23	0.97	AGREED
Public libraries and librarians are to support the fifteenth goals through their mandate, function, and provision of information to users on SDG	72	68	19	21	3	183	734	4.00	1.08	AGREED
Public librarians are to provide timely information in the right format on SDG	66	77	17	18	5	183	730	3.99	1.05	AGREED
Public librarians are to facilitate information and lifelong learning opportunities to users on SDG	60	76	22	20	5	183	715	3.91	1.06	AGREED
Public librarians should host local forum from time to time where people can talk through problems	38	84	42	9	10	183	680	3.72	1.03	AGREED
Public libraries and librarians are to raise awareness on various development issues spelt out of SDG	47	60	35	35	6	183	656	3.82	3.20	AGREED
Public librarians should offer ideas and services for attainment of SDG	52	53	26	38	14	183	640	3.50	1.30	AGREED
Public libraries and librarians are to convert information on SDG to knowledge through very rudimentary information services	53	77	18	22	13	183	684	3.74	1.20	AGREED
Public libraries are to partner with other agencies in promoting changes needed to meet the SDG	51	60	45	13	14	183	670	3.66	1.18	AGREED
Save earth resources and contribute to maintenance of the environment through sharing, contributing into the attainment of SDG	57	52	43	22	9	183	675	3.69	1.17	AGREED
Sharing of resources within the communities to ensure that everyone have knowledge of SDG	38	74	39	23	9	183	658	3.60	1.10	AGREED
Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services such as organising programme on health, information and education	41	74	46	17	5	183	678	3.70	1.01	AGREED
Collaboration internationally to ensure that all countries have access to information	40	76	41	21	5	183	674	3.68	1.03	AGREED
Partnering with other agencies in promoting changes needed to meet SDG	57	47	53	21	5	183	679	3.71	1.11	AGREED
Provision of public access to ICT, study rooms and classes on SDG	57	60	44	13	9	183	692	3.78	1.11	AGREED
Average Weighted Mean								**3.78**	**1.24**	

Key: SA: Strongly Agreed; A: Agreed; U: Undecided; D: Disagreed; SD: Strongly Disagreed; Sd: Standard Deviation

Public libraries and librarians play a crucial role in bridging the gap in knowledge and information on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) among society. They provide timely, accurate information, facilitate lifelong learning opportunities, host local forums, raise awareness on development issues related to SDG, offer ideas and services for SDG attainment, convert information into knowledge, partner with other agencies, save earth resources, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services, collaborate internationally, and provide public access to ICT, study rooms, and classes on SDG. The weighted mean of 3.78 and standard deviation of 1.24 suggests that public

libraries' objectives support the achievement of the 15th SDG goal in North-Central, Nigeria.

Objective Two: To identify the strategies public libraries adopt to foster the attainment of the fifteenth Sustainable Development Goal.

In determining the strategies adopted by public libraries towards the attainment of the fifteenth Sustainable Development Goal in response to the second objective of the study, a number of items were assessed. The views of the librarians were sought on the items in relation to the strategies public libraries adopt to foster the attainment of the fifteenth Sustainable Development Goal. Table 3 shows the result from 183 respondents from the seven public libraries. The result shows that all items listed were agreed and have their mean scores greater than the benchmark mean of 3.00 on a five-point scale.

Table 3: The strategies public libraries adopt to foster the attainment of the fifteenth Sustainable Development Goal.

Statement	SA 5	A 4	U 3	D 2	SD 1	N	FX	MEAN	Sd	Decision
My library have a policy to ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services.	81	74	10	5	13	183	754	4.12	1.11	AGREED
My library promote the implication of sustainable management of all types of forest, hallt deforestation, restore degraded forest	48	73	40	9	13	183	683	3.73	1.12	AGREED
My library have resources to help in combating desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods.	42	92	22	13	14	183	684	3.74	1.12	AGREED
My library have resources to help to ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefit that are essential for sustainable development	49	94	17	9	14	183	704	3.85	1.11	AGREED
My library have resources to help take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitat, halt the loss of biodiversity and by, 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species	40	46	58	26	13	183	623	3.40	1.18	AGREED
My library promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefit arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed	70	40	55	13	5	183	706	3.86	1.1	AGREED
My library encourages urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of wildlife product	30	71	56	21	5	183	649	3.55	0.99	AGREED
My library introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystem	54	83	19	22	5	183	708	3.87	1.06	AGREED
Average Weighted Mea								**3.76**	**1.1**	

Key: SA: Strongly Agreed; A: Agreed; U: Undecided; D: Disagreed; SD: Strongly Disagreed; Sd: Standard Deviation

The library promotes sustainable development by ensuring the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems. They also promote sustainable forest management, combat desertification, and conserve mountain

ecosystems. They take urgent action to reduce habitat degradation, protect threatened species, and promote fair sharing of genetic resource benefits. They also encourage action against poaching and trafficking of protected species, and introduce measures to prevent invasive alien species from affecting land and water ecosystems. These strategies align with the fifteenth Sustainable Development Goal, demonstrating the library's commitment to achieving sustainable development.

Presenting Hypotheses

$H0_1$ There is no significance relationship between public libraries objectives and strategies adopted towards the achievement of the fifteenth sustainable goals.

To test the hypothesis and analyse the data, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used. A correlation test was carried out by associating both the public libraries objectives and strategies adopted towards the achievement of the fifteenth sustainable goals. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 4 below:

Table 4 Relationship between public libraries objectives and strategies adopted towards the achievement of the fifteenth sustainable goals

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	DF	R	P
Public libraries objectives	3.85	0.86	183			
strategies for achieving SDG	3.87	0.86	183	182	0.686	0.000

P < 0.05, R=correlation index, df: degree of freedom

Outcome of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics above showed that there is significant relationship between the public libraries objectives and strategies adopted towards the achievement of the fifteenth sustainable goals. This is because the calculated p value of 0.000 is lower than the 0.05 alpha level of significance and the value of correlation of 0.686 (68.6%) at df 182. The positive value of the correlation indicates that the relationship between public libraries objectives and strategies adopted towards the achievement of the fifteenth sustainable goals is directly proportional. This shows that the higher the level of the public library objectives, the higher the achievement of fifteenth sustainable goal and vice versa. Therefore, the hypothesis which state that there is no significant relationship between the public libraries objectives and strategies adopted towards the achievement of the fifteenth sustainable goals is hereby rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The study aimed to evaluate the impact of public libraries on achieving the fifteenth Sustainable Development Goal in North-Central, Nigeria. Findings revealed that libraries bridge awareness gaps, provide timely information, host local forums, preserve

resources, enhance community knowledge, collaborate internationally, and provide public access to ICT. The result is against the findings of *Okojie and Okiy (2020). The author results showed that* that many of the libraries were still providing traditional library services and many countries have uploaded stories on IFLA Library Map of the World (LMoW), there is no story from North Central Nigeria, in spite of the fact that a lot is being done by the public libraries in North Central Nigeria. The findings of Onwubiko (2021) also showed that the level of awareness of SDG and selective dissemination of information (SDI) among librarians and libraries was low and therefore suggested that proper information provision will contribute immensely to the realisation of SDG whereas, modern library roles like advocacy programs, community outreach and engagements will aid librarians and libraries to contribute meaningfully towards the realisation of these goals.

It was revealed by the study that public libraries focused on conserving freshwater ecosystems, promoting forest management, combating desertification, drought, floods, conserving mountain ecosystems, and promoting equitable utilization of genetic resources. The findings was supported by Durokifa and Abdul-Wasi (2016). The authors asserted that there is need to formulate and implement policies that will promote transparency and accountability, overcome institutional constraints, promote proper growth, bring about structural change, enhance distributive equity, engender social and cultural re-orientations, engineer political transformation and promote human development as these variables are some of the essential factors in the actulisation of the fifteenth sustainable development goal.

Conclusion

North-Central Nigeria's public libraries play a critical role in achieving the fifteenth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). They provide access to knowledge, promote technology literacy, and enhance cognitive abilities, aligning with the overall objective of SDG 15. Collaboration with regional associations and governmental bodies is essential for sustainable land-use methods.

Recommendations

The study recommends the following:

1. **Integration of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into library policies by public libraries**: advocate for the integration of SDG principles into the policies and objectives of public libraries in North-Central Nigeria. Also, collaborate with relevant stakeholders to ensure that library goals align with the specific targets of SDG 15, emphasising the role of libraries in environmental sustainability and biodiversity conservation.
2. **Training and Development Programmes for Library Staff by the Management**: Develop and implement training programmes to enhance the information and communication technology competencies of library staff. Also, there should be the

incorporation of workshops or courses that focus on environmental sustainability, ecological awareness, and the role libraries can play in achieving SDG 15.

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