

## REVAMPING ACADEMIC LIBRARIES FOR EFFECTIVE UTILIZATION AND EFFICIENT SERVICE DELIVERY IN NIGERIA

**Prof. Posigha, Bassil Ebiwolate**

Nigeria Maritime University, Okerenkoko

PMB 1005, Warri, Delta State, Nigeria

Phone No. 08037792619

E-mail: basilpublication@gmail.com; basil.posigha@nmu.edu.ng,

**Barr. Idiedo O. Víctor PhD**

Bayelsa Medical University, Yenagoa

PMB 178, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

Pone No. 08038753529

Email: [Victor.idiedo@bmu.edu.ng](mailto:Victor.idiedo@bmu.edu.ng); evergreenvictor@yahoo.com

### Abstract

*Revamping of academic libraries and information centres is a prerequisite to gratify the increasing anxiety and dynamic needs of digital and print information users. This study centered its discussion on revamping of academic libraries for effective utilization of academic libraries and efficient services delivery in academic libraries in Nigeria. The study specifically, examined the development of academic libraries, the justification for revamping academic libraries, revamping of academic building, technology used in academic libraries, training and development of librarians, revamping of staff development programmes, funding, the role of librarians in revamping, and challenges in revamping academic libraries in Nigeria. Following the discussion, some recommendations were made to include; Nigerian Library Association (NLA) should engage and collaborate with federal and state governments to ensure that academic libraries are regularly revamped to serve their clients satisfactorily, due to rapid obsolescence of cutting-edge technologies, constant depreciation and worn out of library buildings and facilities, increase advancement of knowledge, etc., Also, librarians in academic libraries should develop policy that will consistently address revamping in their respective academic libraries, and Librarians should regularly upgrade themselves to lead revamping activities to ensure the right steps and procedures are strictly adopted, promote advocacy, collaboration and partnership with private institutions. Engaged individuals, and government and their agencies to consider revamping as their mandatory responsibility and, well support and fund revamping activities in academic libraries.*

**KEYWORDS:** Revamping Libraries; Academic Libraries; Academic Library Building; Revamping library facilities; Nigeria.

## Introduction

Over the years, there has been a steady increase in the number of universities established by both government and private individuals. Today in Nigeria, there are 298 universities, of which 72(24.2%) and 67(24.4%) are owned by federal and state governments and, 149 (53.4%) private individuals (NUC, 2025). As a standard or one of the basic requirements, universities are mandated to establish academic libraries, that are integral part of the universities. The main reason of establishing academic library is to provide unlimited access to information resources (print and non-print) to support the achievement of the aims and objectives of the parent institution, that is basically teaching, learning and research. As of the year 2025 when this study was carried out, there are 298 academic libraries saddled with the responsibility of providing information and library services to staff, students and the entire university's communities. The university library by its characteristic is noted to provide a wide range of resources in all the areas of knowledge as taught in the parent university (Nwofor, et. al, 2023).

Academic libraries are established by universities to build a dynamic collection of information resources that are organized, stored and preserved in a unique order for quick access to cater for the information needs of faculty members, students, researchers and the university community. The importance of academic library cannot be over-emphasized particularly in the areas of National Universities Commission (NUC) accreditation of learning programmes, accelerated provision of print and non-print information resources, users' education/orientation programmes, information literacy programmes, current awareness, quick and accelerated access to e-resources, e-mail, Internet services, etc.

Globally, academic libraries are known for quality and current information delivery, to all categories of users, old and young, and as well the physical challenge. That makes academic libraries to be recognized universally as service-oriented institution. The libraries in their plight to served larger communities with information resources embraces collaboration and partnership with other relevant institutions. Perhaps, it is on this account that, libraries are referred to as information and research hub where information gathering, knowledge management and research promotion is fundamental. As academic libraries transits from traditional to modern as a result of the emergency and wide adoption of cutting-edge technologies, the methods of selection, organization, storage and dissemination, and as well information and library services have drastically changed. These changes also affected the information seeking behaviour of users, means of accessing information, information needs of users, etc. Information users have become more curious and active in accessing, retrieving and using information resources to meet their dynamic information needs.

Experience shows that due to the rapid advancement and increased adoption of digital technologies, information and communication technologies, availability of e-resources, online services, etc. academic libraries are experiencing decline in visitation of libraries. Perhaps, majority of members in the university's communities prefer Google, AI, mobile devices, etc. to the traditional libraries. Similarly, many users prefer to access and use library resources particularly, digital and e-resources at their comfort zones. Therefore, to meet the new trend of the curious and active users of information, there is urgent need to immediately revamp libraries across the breath and length of Nigeria and other parts of Africa.

Revamping of library simply denote, repositioning or remodeling of the entirety of the library system. According to Ranganathan, "library is a growing organism" therefore, libraries are bound to evolve with dynamics of model innovations that are transforming the information space in the society. Specifically, revamping of library obviously involves several areas, cutting across physical design of the library building, technology integration, training and development of staff, users-centered service delivery, etc. To be relevant and justify budgetary allocation from the government, parent institution, private individuals, etc. academic libraries must look inward to move from traditional to modern method operations that required holistic revamping. The objective is to meet the changing information needs of our digital technologies-oriented information users and also to change the negative belief of faculty members that academic libraries are only fundamental requirement for accreditation of learning programmes but, not essential for teaching, learning and research activities (Arumuru, 2020).

### **Academic Libraries**

In literary term, revamping could mean repositing or remodeling of an object or substance. English Dictionary described revamping as a remaking or renovation or reconstruction of an object. In the library context, revamping could simply mean, repositioning, renovating, remodeling and redesigning the library. Arumuru (2020) opined that, the need to reposition the modern-day university libraries by introducing innovative services has gone beyond national, regional to a worldwide discourse due to the prevalent circumstance of the constant advancement of computers and its accompanying technologies in the creation, access and eventual dissemination of information to the end users in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Revamping of academic libraries is a broad approach that involves all areas of library, such as the physical building and equipment, technologies used in the library, programmes and services rendered in the library, access to the physical building and resources, etc. Revamping of academic libraries projects are capital intensive. It requires the attention and support of the government and government agencies, and private individuals that are

responsible for the establishment universities, also the governing councils, university management and librarians working in university libraries. Experience has shown that academic libraries are experiencing declined visitations and low utilization of expensive databases subscribed with limited funds of the university libraries. This is a call for immediate repositioning of academic libraries in Nigeria.

### **Justification for Revamping of Academic Libraries**

The emergence and advancement of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and their widely adoption in libraries and information centres have drastically changed even the concept of academic library, usefulness of traditional academic libraries, library resources, mode and means of accessing library resources, collaboration and partnership, training and development of library staff, services and mode of service delivery, the roles and responsibilities of the librarians working in academic libraries, etc. The existence and justification of academic libraries are to be in accordance with the above dynamism through revamping the entirety of the academic library system. Obviously, the revamping of academic libraries will no doubt give a new image or picture to the academic libraries that will as well promote patronage, visitation, usage, add value, collaboration, etc. to a large extend. This is the fact that library is growing organism.

### **Revamping of Library Services Delivery**

Academic library services comprise selection, acquisition, organization, storage and dissemination of information resources and information, users-education, abstracting and indexing services, online services (e-mail, Internet, social media networking sites) etc. However, some of these services are not directly delivered to users but there are fundamental to the provision of services that are directly delivered to users. In other words, according to Nwofor, et al (2023) library services are those services delivery that support the users' accessibility of information from physical to virtual resources; current awareness services; selective dissemination of information; document delivery services; repackaging services; facsimile services delivery; binding services; and referral services. These services can be revamped to reflect the dynamic and personalized information needs of digital age users. To attract users and as well justify the subscription of expensive databases, revamping or repositioning of academic libraries should focus towards user-centered services that requires the understanding of the changing needs of users and as well engaging the users. Academic libraries as matter urgency, have to reposition their services to fit into digital and online environment. The transition of library services from hybrid to entirely online makes library authorities more inclusive and competent to nurture their existence (Vaidya, 2021).

Therefore, revamping of services delivery should be tailored towards users' satisfaction, migration from hardcopies to e-resources, e-repository, etc. that will facilitate current and accurate information delivery to physical and distance users. Repositioning should also be target on how to evaluate users' satisfaction and as well designing appropriate feedback mechanism that will enable librarians to improve on service delivery. The methods or means of service delivery also need to be revamp to suit the present digital information age that is influence by digital devices, mobile devices, social media, web technologies, etc. Musangi cited in Odongo (2020) stressed that traditional library model that were used in providing information to patron are no longer working for the current generation of patrons. The new generation of users are more demanding and turning out to be digital natives. These and more have called for immediate revamping service delivery that encompasses packaging services, mode of disseminating services and mode of receiving feedback from the users.

### **Academic Library Building**

There is no gainsaying the fact that majority of academic libraries buildings are old structures that are poorly designed, and completely not attractive to new generation of library users. Many academic library structures in Nigeria are becoming obsolete, as they struggle to satisfy the changing demands and expectations of 21<sup>st</sup> century users (Omotayo & AbdulRasaq, 2020). Experience reveals that most academic libraries building, outward and inward look do not truly reflect a modern academic environment. The equipment and furniture are outdated, individual study room, group study room, flexible space, twenty-fours study space are not available. In this twenty-first century, students and lectures in Nigeria want libraries to provide collaboration spaces, quiet study areas, technology-equipped rooms and conducive learning environment as in developed countries. However, present traditional library layouts frequently fail to accommodate these varying requirement (Akande, et.al, 2024).

If librarians must capture the attention of their users and adequately satisfy their dynamic information needs, they must step up action to embrace revamping of the academic libraries they are working. In the past, many academic libraries building designers focused on expanding print collections and large space that eventually resulted to poor lightings, unsuitable sitting arrangement, inadequate ventilation and outdated interior design. The reverse should be the case if academic libraries are to stand the taste of time and compete with other subsectors in information and communication sector. The present academic libraries design should focus on environment that will promote aesthetic, provide space for group study and collaboration, beautiful seating arrangement, bringing people together, virtual conference room, relaxation rooms, refreshment area, etc. through compressive

revamping. Such revamping should also focus on self-services, video conferencing facilities, aesthetics, accessibility, facilities for physically challenge person, refreshment room, etc. To be inclusive, academic library management can seek for more information or contribution from their users through survey or organize library's week or book exhibition programmes.

### **Technology Use in Academic Libraries**

The rapid influx of digital technologies that is currently changing the academic library environment are pushing for regular revamping of technologies adopted in digital libraries. The present emphasis on knowledge and information sharing globally, e-learning, collaboration and partnership, e-resources, application of digital and mobile devices, technology integration, etc. are all evidence that is calling the attention of librarians to redesign or revamp their digital libraries. To gratify the demand of online clients, libraries must be equipped with standard technological infrastructure and as well human expertise. According to Njuku (2021) technological infrastructure needed to provide effective information services are a stable electricity and upgrading or installation of a high-speed Internet connection to support a variety of servers such as a webserver, proxy servers for remote access, FTP server for uploading and downloading large file with appropriate digital library software. It is very unfortunate to observe that majority of academic libraries in Nigeria are yet to fully address technology integration, technological infrastructure, and other basic tools to enable digital libraries to meet the expectation of digital age users. Though, some libraries have started to address the changes. It is with utmost believe that, revamping will give the needed opportunity to rearticulate policy, motivate investment on ICT infrastructure and other resources to promote knowledge sharing, improve creativity and innovation, training and re-training of expertise, etc.

### **Training and Development of Librarians**

Revamping methods, procedures, policies, funding of training and development of librarians and other library staff in academic libraries in Nigeria have to be made compulsory, if librarians are to meet the changing information needs of curious library user. In addition, for the fact that technologies are evolving rapidly, demanding regular training and development of librarians to be relevant and as well enable librarians to integrate technologies in library activities. Similarly, the provision of a well-organized continue training and development on requisite skills, such as installation and implementation, operation of modern devices, technical knowledge, etc. of both old and new technologies is essential in promoting application and integration of innovative technologies in library activities. It must be acknowledged that the whole essence of training and manpower development is to enhance the knowledge stock in the library and help staff to understand

their responsibilities towards attainment of the goals, mission and vision statement of the library (Popoola, et al (2021). It is as well to be efficient and productive in services delivery, outreach programmes, promoting research activities, accessibility and visibility, etc.

However, the successful retraining and development of librarians and other library staff depends on the various management of the universities. The university management plays essential role in making policy, funding, sponsoring and directing staff members to actively engaged in training and continue development programmes within and outside the country. Notwithstanding, this should not discourage University librarians not to advocate for such programmes. Not forgetting that without the training and continues development programmes, many academic librarian's knowledge and skills will become obsolete particularly with the influx and application of new technologies that are changing the role and responsibilities of librarians globally.

### **Staff Development Programmes**

There is a belief that in the absence of a conventional university, libraries are regarded as academic institutions that provide opportunity for the general public to education and develop themselves independently. As an academic library, the revamping of the entire library system is to target beyond conventional library users' education, library orientation, information literacy programmes to more advance programmes such as e-learning activities, digital literacy, online tutorials, technical know-how of ICTs and other related technologies used in libraries. With the help of revamping, these programmes can be packaged and delivered through workshops, conferences, continue education that are directly focus on addressing the changing role of librarians and other emerging issues pertaining to digital technologies, and access and relevancy of academic libraries.

### **Academic Libraries Funding**

Revamping of academic libraries depends on availability of funds. All areas, from the revamping of building, services delivery, technologies, etc. requires fund. Unfortunately, academic libraries are not profit-making institutions. Their main source of fund is their parent institutions. Experience shows that, in Nigeria today, all public academic institutions are experiencing persistent budget cut, leaving the institutions financially handicap. The question is that, with such financial predicament, how will the academic libraries be properly revamped to meet the information needs of her teaming curious digital information users. Although, almost all the academic institutions have library development levy as part of their school fees paid by the students. Unfortunately, this amount is not made available for the library development. This is one of the utmost reasons why university librarians should revamp their libraries to secure inclusiveness, collaboration and

partnership, sustainable government and individuals support, fund raising, grants and any other available means.

In repositioning academic libraries funding, the library management should develop short- and long-term sustainable plans to regularly maintain and upgrade library resources and services. For academic libraries to overcome funding deficiencies, library management have to rely more on grants, internal generated revenue (IGR), collaboration with non-governmental organisations and private organisations than the government.

### **The Role of Librarians in Revamping Academic Libraries**

Globally, librarians play pivotal to the development of libraries. Therefore, librarians' role in revamping or repositioning academic libraries is paramount, from planning to implementation. More especially, they are the end users of the buildings, facilities, electronics, etc. that made up the library. In spite of the professional competence, administrative and academic experience and skills of university librarians, experience shows that in Nigeria particularly, some Vice-chancellors and their team take over responsibilities of the University librarians to designed academic libraries buildings, acquired furniture and information systems, and as well library resources without the input of the University librarians for reasons best known to them.

As a matter fact, librarians are critical stakeholders in education sector. They knows almost all aspects of education by the virtue of their training and engagement in educational activities. In other words, librarians being academic staff specialized in academic activities (teaching, learning and research) and as well granted in library activities, in respect of their dual honour. In this magnitude, librarians have several roles in libraries revamping. These roles include; adequate appropriation of available funds, critical assessment to indicate areas of urgent attention and prioritize them according to available funds, designing of the physical structure, prioritizing of technologies to reposition, advocacy for the development of the entire library system, advocacy for collaboration and partnership in revamping the library when the need arises.

In addition, according to Ramos, and Emezie and Nwaohiri as cited in Arumuru (2020) in repositioning the 21st century university libraries, the following are some of the roles that must be assumed by librarians:

Advocates: where they will seize every given opportunity to reach out to library users in order to keep them abreast on the innovative services and current acquisitions of the library rather than wait for them to visit the library before they get to know of what is happening in the library

**Collaborators:** librarians should expand their tentacles beyond inter library collaboration and liaise with other information professionals, seasoned IT experts and other establishments that provide information services.

**Web site designers/ managers:** Librarians should seize the bull by the horn by engaging in the design/ creation/ development of library's web site, decide and constantly partake in what should be included in the web site instead looking for already made web sites to purchase.

**Educators:** The 21st Century librarian should assume the role of training library users on how to use modern technologies, use of search engines for accessing electronic information, e mail, etc. A section in the university library manned by competent librarian(s) who is or are vast in the use of computers and other modern technologies should be in charge to train library users on various search strategies and different search engines available online from where electronic sources can be accessed.

**Pace setters or image makers:** The 21st Century university libraries need librarians who are creative, passionate and adds value to librarianship in order to win or gain university management's support and project a positive image of the library to the outside world.

### **Challenges of Revamping Academic Libraries**

Revamping academic libraries may not be completely successful without some challenges. This is because revamping involves several processes and activities that requires funding, redesigning, procurement, etc. Therefore, the following are some challenges outlined in this paper:

**Funding:** Revamping requires a lot of funds. Unfortunately, at present almost all academic institutions are facing in adequacy in funding as a result of consistent budget cut.

**Undue Vice chancellor intervention:** Experience shows that in Nigeria, most Vice chancellor claimed to know all about the academic library. As a result, they designed library buildings, procured equipment and facilities for libraries without the knowledge or input of the University librarians. This is one of the most destructive challenges university librarians are facing in Nigeria.

**Inadequate skills:** Majority of librarians lacks the requisite skills to properly address issues regarding to revamping of academic libraries. Librarians are expected to have knowledge on designing library building to satisfy the needs of users; skills in operating some of the modern technologies applied in their libraries; to have the capacity to manage unlimited funds available to the university libraries, etc.

**In ability to forecast the immediate future:** The ability to forecast the future demands or needs of their potential and future users is a key component of revamping. This is because highly demand resources or facilities today may not be useful in the future. This is more common with technologies, skills, designs of building, etc.

## Conclusion

Libraries are dynamic and ever-growing institutions. Due to rapid influx and obsolescence of technologies, depreciation of physical structures and equipment, and the persistent dynamic users of information needs required regular repositioning or revamping of all categories of libraries. Therefore, to achieve the aims and objectives of academic libraries particularly, and ever-increasing information users' needs and anxiety, revamping involves all the entire academic library systems such as library building, technologies, furniture, equipment, collaboration and partnership, capacity development, etc.

## Recommendations

Arising from the discussion the following recommendations were made:

1. Nigerian Library Association (NLA), the apex decision making body that regulate the activities and actions of librarians and libraries in Nigeria should engage and collaborate with federal and state governments to ensure that academic libraries are regularly revamp to serve her client satisfactorily.
2. The rapid obsolescence of cutting-edge technologies adopted in academic libraries, constant depreciation and worn out of buildings and facilities, increase advancement of knowledge, etc. experienced globally, librarians in academic libraries should develop policy that will consistently address revamping in their respective academic libraries.
3. Librarians should regularly upgrade themselves to lead revamping activities to ensure the right steps and procedures are strictly adopted, promote advocacy, collaboration and partnership private institutions. Engaged individuals, and government and her agencies to consider revamping as their mandatory responsibility and, well support and fund revamping activities in academic libraries.

## References

Akande, O. K., Adegbeniga, A. O., Igbayemi, D., Gambo, A. H., Emmanuel, M. A., Charles, Y. M. & Okonta, E. D. (2024). Towards sustainable redesign of academic library buildings in Nigeria: case for remodeling higher institution library buildings to meet 21st century users' expectations. *Semarak International Journal of Design, Built*

*Environment and Sustainability* 1 (1), 40-71. <https://doi.org/10.37934/sijdbes.1.1.4071a>.

Arumuru, L. (2020). Re-positioning the 21st century university libraries in Nigeria: The role of librarians and the need for innovative services for sustainable development. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. 3936. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/3936>.

Njuku, S. U. (2021). Revamping information services through digital libraries and mobile technological based library services to meet the needs and challenges of e-learning. *Journal of Qualitative Education*, 141), 1 – 13.

NUC (2025). Total number of universities in Nigeria. <https://www.nuc.edu.ng>

Nwofor, F. A., Chikaodi, H. C. & Nwaede, V. U. (2023). Capacity building for effective services delivery of library staff in Festus Aghagbo Nwako library (FANL), Nnamdi Azikiwe university, Awka. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)*, VII(V), 1081 – 1098.

Odongo, S. O. (2020). Staff Retooling for Service Delivery at University of Nairobi Main Campus Library, Kenya. *International Journal of professional Practice (IJPP)* 8(1), 64 -72.

Omotayo, F. O. & AbdulRasaq, H. (2020). Perception of task-technology fit of digital library among undergraduates in selected universities in Nigeria. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 45(1). <https://dio.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2019.102097>.

Popoola, A. A., Opele, J. K. & Adeboye, R. A. (2021). Staff development program and service delivery in academic library: implication for knowledge management in the university of Lagos, Nigeria. *Global Journal of Applied, Management and Social Sciences (GOJAMSS)*; 21, 273 – 279. ISSN: 2276 – 9013).

Vaidja, P. (2021). Redesigning library services during: Experiences of ‘re-tuned normal librarians amid pandemic in India. *Kelpro Bulletin*, 25 (2), 78 -95. First Prize Winner - KELPRO Best Student Paper – 2021.