Green Library Initiative and Concerns of the 21st Century Librarians: A study of University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Albert Elejene Obiora

Federal Polytechnic of Oil and Gas, Bonny, Rivers State

elejenealbert2018@gmail.com

Abstract

The study is concerned with Green Library Initiative and Concerns of 21st-Century Librarians: A Study of University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The study was guided by three objectives and three research questions. The study employed a descriptive research design. The study population was 57 librarians from University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Library. Census sampling technique was used to exhaust the entire population The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled: Green Library Initiative Questionnaire (GLIQ). Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Findings revealed among others that although librarians were aware of green library initiatives, there are no sufficient facilities to sustain green library initiatives. The challenges of green library in University of Nigeria, Nsukka include; financial constraints, inadequate technological infrastructure, lack of expertise, poor maintenance and users' awareness. It was therefore recommended, among others, that libraries should be adequately funded by the parent bodies, while librarians are expected to leverage training to enable them to initiate green libraries adequately.

Keywords: Library, Green Library, Librarians, 21stCentury, University, Nigeria Nsukka.

Introduction

In the 21st century, sustainability has become a critical global concern, influencing various sectors, including library services. Libraries are always considered as a treasure of knowledge and non-profit organization. Libraries are also known as the mainstream of information and knowledge. Today, the world has changed drastically by information technologies and their associated tools. Besides these facts, libraries are closely associated with

the natural environment. The libraries are always in transition mode and they are accepting the new change for themselves as well as for their society. Libraries are always ready to accept the changes like traditional to hybrid and then hybrid to virtual then virtual to now green. Nikam (2017) mentioned that the term green library generally refers to the concept of making libraries more environmentally friendly and sustainable. This could involve a range of initiatives and practices aimed at reducing the ecological footprint of libraries. Green library is also known as sustainable library. It is a modern library that uses environmentally friendly building materials, maximizes the use of natural resources, reduces waste, maximizes the use of renewable resources, and conducts its operations in a more cost effective and efficient manner.

The movement of the green library is growing day by day worldwide and every country is striving hard to green their libraries to prevent the library resources. Meanwhile, library professionals are accepting this great change and they are taking great interest to green their library. Moreover, the green library is also known as a sustainable library. Meher and Parabhoi (2017) stated that the green library movement is expanding day by day. The green library movement came out in the 1990s and gained instigation in 2003. A green library is designed, constructed, repaired, and operated with environmental enterprises in mind. It refers to a structure that certifies the library as an environmentally friendly structure. It is concerted trouble of all mortal beings to make green earth by lessening global warming. Green libraries contribute towards supporting the natural ecological balance in the terrain and conserving the earth as well as natural coffers. It also improves the diurnal operations and processes of the library and intimates the community about responsible environmental practices (Hellsten, 2012). Green library are structures that are designed, built, rebuilt, operated, or repurposed in a way that is environmentally and resource efficient. A library designed to minimize negative impact on the natural environment and maximize household environmental quality by means of careful site

selection; use of natural structure materials and biodegradable products; maintenance of resources such as water, energy, and paper, and use of responsible waste disposal recycling system. The Online Dictionary of Library and Information Science in Pagore and Chalukya (2022) defined the green library as a library created with environmental issues in mind.

The University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN) was established by the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1955. UNN is the first indigenous university in Nigeria located in Nsukka, Enugu State, Eastern region of Nigeria. Modelled upon the American educational system, UNN is the first self–governing university in Nigeria. Its libraries consist of the Nnamdi Azikiwe library, the Enugu Campus Main Library and the Medical Library located at the College of Medicine, University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital, Enugu. The Nnamdi Azikiwe Library of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, has several divisions for the effective collection, use and administration of the library and its resources.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to investigate the concerns of 21st century librarian with respect to green library initiative. Specifically, this study seeks to;

1. Find out librarians' awareness of green library initiative in University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

2. Find out the available facilities for green library in University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

3. Examine the challenges of green library in University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed;

1. How aware are librarians of green library initiative in University of Nigeria, Nsukka?

2. What are the available facilities for green library in University of Nigeria, Nsukka?

3. What are the challenges of green library in University of Nigeria, Nsukka?

Review of Related Literature

The concept of the green library initiative has gained traction in the 21st century as libraries strive to embrace sustainability in their operations. A green library is an eco-friendly facility designed to reduce energy consumption, minimize environmental impact, and promote sustainable information services (Nikam, 2017). The initiative aligns with global sustainability goals by incorporating environmentally friendly building designs, energy-efficient lighting, and digital resources to reduce paper usage (Pradnya et al, 2013). Libraries are also adopting recycling programs and green procurement policies to support sustainability. As knowledge hubs, university libraries play a crucial role in fostering awareness and adopting green practices to promote sustainable development (Bhagat & Bhagat, 2019)/

Awareness of the green library initiative in universities is gradually increasing due to the integration of sustainability into academic policies and research agendas. Studies indicate that librarians are increasingly recognizing the importance of sustainable library practices (Khalid et al. 2021). Awareness campaigns, workshops, and training programs on green library initiatives help librarians and users understand their role in conserving resources. Some universities have incorporated environmental literacy programs into their library services to educate students and faculty on sustainability (Fedorowicz-Kruszewska, 2021). However, despite these efforts, a significant number of university stakeholders remain unaware of green library concepts, necessitating more structured awareness programs.

University libraries that have embraced the green library initiative have invested in various facilities to support sustainability. These include energy-efficient buildings, solar panels for renewable energy, and automated lighting systems to reduce electricity consumption (Noh, 2014). Other facilities include digital repositories to minimize paper use, water conservation systems, and eco-friendly furniture. Libraries have also introduced green roofs and indoor plants to improve air quality and create

a conducive reading environment. Despite these developments, the availability of green facilities varies across universities, with some institutions lagging due to financial constraints and lack of institutional commitment.

The implementation of green library initiatives in universities faces several challenges, including inadequate funding, lack of awareness, and resistance to change. Many universities struggle with financial constraints, making it difficult to invest in sustainable infrastructure (Khalid, et al., 2021). Additionally, some librarians and university administrators lack adequate knowledge of green library practices, leading to slow adoption rates. Resistance to change among library users and staff also hinders the transition to green practices, as some prefer traditional methods of library service delivery. Overcoming these challenges requires strategic planning, policy formulation, and increased funding to support green initiatives in university libraries.

Methodology

The study employed a descriptive research design. The study population was 57 librarians from University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Library. The study adopted census sampling technique to select the entire population since the sample size was not too large to exhaust. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled: Green Library Initiative, Questionnaire (GLIQ). Data for the study were collected by the researcher and one research assistant through google form. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Items with the Criterion Mean of 2.50 and above were accepted while items below the Criterion Mean of 2.50 were rejected.

Results

Research Question 1: Are librarians aware of green library initiative in University of Nigeria, Nsukka?

Table 1: Mean and standard devotion of librarians' awareness of green library initiative

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	X	SD	Remark
1	I have heard about the concept of green library before participating in this survey	27	0	1	24	2.61	.775	Agree
2	I am familiar with the concept of green library	26	0	1	25	2.52	.629	Agree
3	I can provide specific examples of green initiatives implemented in the library	29	0	1	22	2.71	.868	Agree
4	I am aware of professional development opportunities related to green practices in the library	36	1	0	15	3.11	.835	Agree
5	I can provide detailed instances of green practices employed in my library	29	0	1	22	2.69	.955	Agree
6	I have participated in workshops related to green library initiatives	32	0	1	19	2.89	.751	Agree
	Weighted Mean					2.75	.802	Agree

*Criterion Mean 2.50

Table 1 shows the summary of mean and standard deviation of librarians' awareness of green library initiative in University of Nigeria, Nsukka, with a weighted mean of 2.75. The data analyzed indicates that the six items on the table were accepted between the mean of 3.11 and 2.52. The weighted mean of 2.75 indicate that the respondents were aware of green library initiatives. The finding of this study is in line with Meher and Parabhoi (2017), they mentioned that the green library movement is expanding day by day and as such librarians are fully aware of its concept. Hellsten (2012) is of the view that the green library movement came out in the 1990s and gained instigation in 2003. By this, it is clear that the green library has come stay and librarians are to embrace the changes associated with it.

Research Question 2: What are the available facilities for green library in University of Nigeria, Nsukka?

Table 2: Mean and standard devotion of the Available Facilities for Green Library

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	X	Sd	Remark
7	Solar panels	27	0	1	24	2.61	.915	Agree
8	Wind turbines	26	0	1	25	2.52	.828	Agree
9	Rainwater harvesting systems	29	0	1	22	2.71	.772	Agree
10	Flexible furniture	19	0	1	32	2.12	.761	Disagree
11	Drought-resistant facilities	22	0	1	29	2.32	.715	Disagree
	Weighted Mean					**2.45**	**.798**	**Disagree**

*Criterion Mean 2.50

Table 2 shows the summary of mean and standard deviation of the available facilities for green library in University of Nigeria, Nsukka, with a grand mean of 2.45. The data analyzed indicates that three items on the table were accepted between the mean of 2.71 and 2.52, while two items between the mean of 2.12 and 2.32 were rejected. The weighted mean of 2.45 indicates that there are no sufficient facilities to sustain green library initiatives. The finding of this study is in line with Nikam (2017), who conducted a research study on the availability of green library facilities and stated that every fictional green library much contain facilities such as; wind turbines, solar panels and rainwater harvesting including flexible furniture. He further affirmed that these facilities are very essential to the functionality of every typical green library.

Research Question 3: What are the challenges of green library in University of Nigeria, Nsukka?

Table 3: Mean and standard devotion of the challenges of green library

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	X	SD	Remark

12	Financial constraints	29	0	1	22	2.70	.998	Agree
13	Technological challenge	27	0	1	24	2.58	.833	Agree
14	Lack of expertise	32	0	1	19	2.90	.734	Agree
15	Maintenance challenge	31	0	1	20	2.84	.674	Agree
16	Poor knowledge of green library among librarians	21	0	1	30	2.23	.731	Disagree
17	Poor users awareness	33	0	1	18	2.95	.801	Agree
	Weighted Mean					2.70	.787	Agree

*Criterion Mean 2.50

Table 3 shows the summary of mean and standard deviation of the challenges of green library in University of Nigeria, Nsukka, with a weighted mean of 2.70. The data analyzed indicates that five items on the table were accepted between the mean of 2.95 and 2.58 while an item was rejected with a mean of 2.23. The finding of this study is in support of Asim and Ahmad (2022), they affirmed that green library face challenges which include; lack of awareness on the part of users, financial constraints, lack of expertise, maintenance challenge and technologies challenges.

Conclusion

Green library is also known as sustainable library. It is a modern library that uses environmentally friendly building materials, maximizes the use of natural resources, reduces waste, maximizes the use of renewable resources, and conducts its operations in a more cost effective and efficient manner. Greening the library initiative is an essential aspect of sustainable development in university libraries. Awareness of green library practices is gradually improving, but more efforts are needed to educate librarians, students, and administrators. Universities that

have adopted the initiative benefit from energy-efficient facilities and digital resources that promote sustainability. However, challenges such as financial constraints, lack of awareness, and resistance to change hinder widespread implementation. Addressing these challenges through policy support, funding, and training programs will enhance the sustainability of university libraries in the 21st century.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made

1. The library should carefully plan and collaborate with experts for proper creation of green library.

2. For Nigerian libraries to make it in this technological age, they must ensure that library staff are adequately trained and retrained to initiate and manage technological tools.

3. Libraries should be adequately funded by the parent bodies.

4. User education programmes should be provided to users of the libraryon green library services.

References

Asim, M., &Ahmad, P. (2022). Adopting green practices: Challenges for university libraries of Pakistan. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/7153

Bhagat, P. A., & Bhagat, A. A. (2019). Green library: An innovative approach. Aayushi *International Interdisciplinary Research Journal* 6(5), 194–197. https://www.aiirjournal.com/uploads/Articles/2019/06/3832_40

Fedorowicz-Kruszewska, M. (2021). Green libraries and green librarianship–Towards conceptualization. *Journal of librarianship and information science*, *53*(4), 645-654.

Hellsten, I. (2012). From burning library to green medicine: The role of metaphors in communicating biodiversity. Science Communication, 24(2), 229-45. https://doi.org/10.1177/107554702237848

Hong, S., &Noh, Y. (2014). A study on green library construction status and awareness. Journal of the Korean Society for Library and Information Science, 25(4), 79-08. https://doi.org/10.14699/KBIBLIA.2014.25.4.079

Khalid, A., Malik, G. F., & Mahmood, K. (2021). Sustainable development challenges in libraries: A systematic literature review (2000–2020). *The Journal of academic librarianship*, *47*(3), 102347.

Liu, X., Adebayo, T. S., Ramzan, M., Ullah, S., Abbas, S., & Olanrewaju, V. O. (2023). Do coal efficiency, climate policy uncertainty and green energy consumption promote environmental sustainability in the United States? An application of novel wavelet tools. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *417*, 137851.

Meher, P., & Parabhoi, L. (2017). Green library: An overview, issues with special reference to Indian libraries. International Journal of Digital Library Services, 7(2), 62–69. http://www.ijodls.in/uploads/3/6/0/3/3603729/7ijodls217.pdf

Nikam, S. (2017). Green library: An emerging concept. *Knowledge Librarian*, 4(6), 190-198.

Pagore, R., & Chalukya, B. V. (2022). Green library: An overview. Indian Journal of Library Science, 6(5), 24-32.

Pradnya, A., Bhagat, N., &Arvind, A. (2013). Green libraries are more than just buildings. Electronic Green Journal, 1(35), 34-39. https://doi.org/10.5070/G313514058