Re-structure Public Library for Public Information Needs and Services. Study of Stella Obasanjo Library, Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: Re-structure of public library is essential when its present state cannot meet the standard and objectives upon which it is been established. The purpose of the study is to know the extent of services rendered, state of information needs met and level of information resources available in Stella Obasanjo Library, Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was adopted. Instruments of data collection are questionnaire and personal interview. Questionnaire contains Table 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 which were designed to obtain data from both library staff and library users. Eight (8) library staff answered questions in table 1: services rendered in their public library while, forty-seven (47) library users responded in answering questions in Table 2: types of information needs; Table 3: information resources needed; Table 4: available of information needed; Table 5: available of information resources needed. Data were analyzed in Table 1 by the use of criterion mean where ≥ 2.50 and < 2.50 are considered significant (considerable response) and not significant (inconsiderable response) respectively. Analysis shows that it is only leisure and recreation, and reading services are rendered to great extent, others are low extent except service with disadvantage groups that is rendered at no extent. Simple percentage was used to analyze Table 2, 3, 4, and 5 where above 50% and below 50% are considered agreed and disagreed respectively. Analysis shows in Table 2 that information needs of library users cut across agriculture, sports and games, health, property, politics, social, business, education, geographical and religion. On Table 3 it was discovered that information resources needed by library users includes all the itemized resources except audio and video conferencing, as well as audio cassette. From Table 4 it was discovered that 93.6% of library users do not have their information needs while, 6.4% did. Furthermore, in Table 5 it was discovered 80.9% of information resources needed by library users are not available while, 19.1% is available. Hence, from the data analyzed, the public library understudy need to be re-structured and the proffered recommendations will be of significant if adherent to.

KEYWORDS: Public library, Information needs, Information resources, Services rendered, Stella Obasanjo library, Lokoja, Kogi state, Nigeria.

1   INTRODUCTION

For many decades, information has been the most needed resources for every man kind. It is what they use for clarity of uncertainty and decision making. Regardless of profession or activities everyone engaged in; information is a necessity product. Information is holistic product for man's survival. It is indispensable product to the functioning of every society [1]. In the same vein, information is man's accumulated knowledge in all subjects, in all forms and from all sources that could help its users to make rational decision [2]. Furthermore, one cannot but agreed that information helps in value planning, decision making and execution of programme [1]. No wonder, people required information for defensive, passive and offensive intelligence [3].

From ongoing, it can be concluded that information is a necessity for everyone. The categories of information people want cuts across all their needs. Information needs is the need of necessity of life, happiness, success or fulfillment [4]. But spectrum factors affecting information needs are age, educational level, and linguistic ability of the users of information, as well as factors related to jobs such as rank and length of experience, the nature of work, the subject field of work, the stage that project has reached, the size of any immediate work team, the nature of the institution where the user's work, the size of the institution and communication structure within it [4]. This connote that information needs of people therefore vary according to various factors responsible in perpetuating it. The factors may be background, qualification, job affiliation, social-cultural as well as political affiliation. More to these individual activities has a great effect on his information need. For instant civil servant may need relevant information to enhance his work, the company's workers may need information of a practical nature that can solve his problems promptly. Hence, information needs of everyone vary based on activities and occupations they engaged in.

To this end, it is imperative to note that information needs must be prepared, packaged into format for easy accessibility. The formats in which information needs are packaged can be referred to as information sources. "Reference [5] stated that, the carries of information can be referred to as information sources". The sources can be print or non-print formats. These include textbook, journals, television, radio, computer, video tape, internet, audio cassette tape, resources person, etc. But for everyone to have access to categories of their information needs there must be an information center that can be freely visit and accessible by information seekers. Such center is public library. This is because is a local gate way for provision of information resources to the communities populace. It is an excellent tool for lifelong learning which provide fountain of knowledge from which everybody can draw and being refreshed [6]. Public library doors are open to all kind of people regardless of gender, profession, status, race, culture and religion [7]. Relatively, public libraries are regarded as the people's university being the local gateway to knowledge, providing opportunities for life, independent decision making and cultural development of individuals and social groups [8].

Hence, public libraries in Nigeria were not far distinct from the political history of Nigeria. Because, Dr. Nnamadi Azikwe, saw public library as a vehicle for intellectual emancipation and its political influence as Governor General in 1960-1963 and former president of Federal Republic of Nigeria in 1963-1968 led to the passage of bill that established the public libraries [9]. More to this, prior to independence the British Council established reading rooms in some Nigeria's towns and cities to serve as propaganda outfit during the Second World War; and at end of the war, the reading rooms served as a place for enlightens and spreading of British cultures. In support of this, the report from UNESCO seminar in 1953 held at Ibadan was also in support of establishment of public library in Nigeria. It is also noted that, from that period the reading room that serve as propaganda outfit was redeveloped as public libraries and new system were established in all most part of the country. Such as Bida, Sokoto, Maiduguri, Port Harcourt, Calabar, Lokoja, etc and they were given different names while some are named after people [10]. Evidently is Stella Obasanjo library. It is a public library. It was established and located in Lokoja, headquarter of Kogi State, Nigeria. Just like other libraries Stella Obasanjo library has sections which could be referred to units. This includes acquisition, cataloguing, circulation/ reader, reference, reserve/consultancy, administrative, electronic media/Information and Communication Technology units. The library is open for use throughout the week except public holidays.

2   BRIEF LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES

By standard, public libraries are established with the objectives to serve general public without discrimination. Public libraries are maintained from the public pocket while its services are offered freely. Any nations which really intend to acquire substantial knowledge must work independently in their search by using information resources and services available in their public libraries [6]. This means that public library is a great path through which communities can satisfy information needs of the various groups. Because it   major task is to disseminate information to a wide range of patrons based on their needs. "Reference [11] stated that public libraries encourage reading habit, promote cultural heritage and education agencies for people" To achieve fore-mentioned in public libraries in this information age; the libraries must be well stocked with different formats of information resources and to be buttress with rendering of services. Hence, the service roles of public libraries in contemporary age are extension services, enhance use of information and communication technology (ICT) services, recreation and crime reduction, services to disadvantages groups, civil education and community information services [6] not limited to these but include reading and consultancy services. Extension services involves, various ways by which library staff take the responsibility to assist the local dwellers to improve on their activities. Public library at the state headquarters for instance, can established local branch at different communities to rendered information services to the

dwellers based on their occupations or activities they engaged in. Upon this, they will be well established and more productive.

The use of information and communication technology (ICT) in librarianship in the contemporary time is essential. This is not because they are just similar in order of activities – acquiring, processing, storing, disseminating and archiving. But there are helpful in wide spreading of information to different location and made accessible by the information seekers [6]. One cannot but summit that the invention and introduction of ICT to library operations is of great significant to stage of virtual interaction. With this public library at headquarters can link with each other branches of libraries and share information and; while library users acquire their timely information. Furthermore, it is worthy to note that, the present world is enslaved with different anti social behaviors. However, expansion and effective rendered of services by public libraries can put a great limit to crime by engaged the communities dwellers in choice of information with recreation mode.

2.2   INFORMATION NEEDS IN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Information is an essential commodity needed by everyman kind. Though the needs might be varies based on situations at hand or at a particular point in time. It is worth noting that there are three reasons why people need information. These are: to aid professional development, leisure acquisition and to take actions. Profession is an endeavor chosen as carrier. To be successful in this information related, professionals must acquired information to buttress personal generated ideas which together could be regarded as block building to crave advance development. Information as leisure acquisition is important to a lot of people when exhausted or in dismay. These groups of people see information as energizer to stimulate their moral. For instance, some people read news papers, magazine, historical books, just among others to wipe away stress and ugly situations from their minds. Furthermore, information is use to take action. Many people find it so cumbersome to take action without relevant information that will serve as evident and guide to their decision making. However, it is imperative to note that information needs of people in public domain cut across agriculture, economy/business, health, and politics [5] not limited to these but also includes sports and games, education, social, properties, geographical, and religions. This implies there are various information needs public libraries can provide to the public; and as a result of these, information resources to be provided in public libraries should able to contains the various information needs of the public.

2.3   INFORMATION RESOURCES IN PUBLIC LIBRARY

The fact remains that, public libraries are established to meet total populace information needs. But it is worth to understand that information needs cannot be met or provided without resources where the information is been packaged. The package formats comprises of electronic, print and non-print. They can also be referred to as book and non-book format [12]. However, books and print format usually refereed to information package in book or paper form. Non-books or and electronics format are often use interchangeably. Because most time both involve the use of electricity before the information there in can be accessed. But the bottom line is, regardless of the formats information resources are where information is been stored for utilization.

To this end, it is worth to understand that if public library can house the following information resources it will be of great advantage for information seekers. Among the print information resources are books, serials publication, reference materials, patent, standard, bibliographies of bibliography, guide to literatures, just among others; and while the electronic format could be dedicated or   enhancement. These include audio cassettes tapes, radio, video tapes, CD-ROM and DVD, internet, audio conferencing, audio graphics, and video conferencing [13].   Audio-cassette tapes it is use to communicate oral information. It provides permanent and flexible storage of information that can convey information that may be easier to illustrate with sound than text and diagrams. Audio-cassette tape can accompany other means of instruction such as print-based materials and also, provide detailed information step-by-step [14]. That is, information available in audio cassette can help the blind individuals who are also part of the people that lives in a community to acquire detail information on their needs.

Radios are an information broadcast devices. It has different channels with frequency of which information can be retrieved from.   Using radio in public libraries should be encouraged. This is because is a device for information acquisition. Some radios have antennal while some did not. However, there are different types of radio. They include transistor radios, battery-powered radios and solar-powered crank radio [15]. Hence, all the types of radios are good and having them in the public library will be a plus to acquire information on hourly bases as network news in Nigeria context and BBC news just among others in worldwide context.

Video tape is another information resource that made available for use in the public libraries. "Reference [13] recommends that information provided therein should not be too long to avoid fatigue". It is an opinion that, video tapes

should not be longer than 10minute with short segments of less than three minutes [16]. With these, one cannot but agreed that information to be prepared and stored in video tape should be concise. Video tape can accommodate and present information prepare in both audio and visual. For information acquisition in public library, the library patrons can acquired preamble knowledge about a phenomena through watching of video tape contains information on their area of concerned.

Progressively, Compact Disc (CD) is of different types which are available in the market today. Such as rewriteable, read access memory, read only memory. Compact disc is information storage device that can store information digitally which cannot be changed. It is a device that requires computer system or CD player before information stored in can be accessed. Relatively, Digital Video Discs / Digital Versatile Disc perform the same function with CD but just that it is a latest version and requires more sophisticated technology in building it and usage. If properly handle it can retain information stored there in more than 50 years. Furthermore, most CD has 650 or 700 megabytes storage space where as most DVDs has room for 4.7 gigabytes. Hence, in public libraries, CD and DVD are use to store large information and data on different needs kept for library patrons for utilization.

Internet is one of the most recent information resource adopted in the contemporary libraries. It is a virtual resource that involves the connection of various computers in virtual worlds. It availability in the library enable library patrons and staff to acquire information needs remotely with the aid of boarding the actual or related into the virtual central remote computer through appropriate website or browsers. Similar to this, is intranet. It availability in public libraries can enable public library at state headquarters to get link with other branches of public libraries in within the state. With this confidential information regarding the works in the library can be communicated. It is worth to note that, in most recent time audio conferencing and video conferencing they have information roles play in the public library. Audio conferencing that involves the use of telephone lines can be use for communication on subject matters among the professionals and library clienteles. The number of telephone lines depends on the numbers of participates involved in the communication at the same time. Audio conferencing can also be carried out using the internet as a resource where, digitized voice packets are sent between individuals over the internet. Precisely, programmes like yahoo messager, whatapp, facebook, 2go, skpe, AOL instant messenger, Microsoft Net meeting just among others. While; video conferencing allows participates individuals in different locations to see and hear each other in real-time [17]. Video conferencing can be enabling with the use computer and webcam.

Using of computer system for information works in the library became more essential as a result of information glut that led to high volume of publications to meet the information needs of the seekers [18]. "Reference [19] referred to computer system is a programmable, multiuse machine that accepts data – raw facts and figures- and processes, or manipulates its function we can use, such as summaries, totals or reports". This implies that computer system is a devices that can also accept input data, process it according to programmed logical and arithmetical rules, store and output data/ or calculate results. Its purpose is to speed up problem solving and increase productivity regardless of its classification: super computer mainframes, mini- computers and macro-computer [4]. Generally, the uses of computer system in the library are grouped into four- word processing, spread sheet, data base management and information networking [18].

3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The outcomes of the study will be of importance to groups of people such as state government, friends, staff, users of public libraries and library students. To state government and library friends the study will help them to know where to come in for provision of information resources needed in the library. To library staff, the study will help them to know how to render effective services. To library users, the study will help to know their information needs and information resources needed, which to be provided in the library for their uses. The study will also serve as reference material to library students.

4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following objectives guide the study;

1. To know the extent of services render in library understudy
2. To identify the information needs of library users in library understudy
3. To identify the information resources needed by library users in library understudy
4. To know if the information needed by library users are available in library understudy
5. To know if the information resources needed by library users are available in library understudy

5   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey research was adopted. Questionnaire and personal interview were used as instrument for data collection. Questionnaire were designed to obtained data from eight (8) library staff and forty seven (47) library users within a week respectively in the library under study. Precaution was taken to ensure respondents do not fill more than a copy of questionnaire; by asking them, have you fill this questionnaire before. Data collected with personal interview from both library staff and library users were used to buttress the discussion of the findings. While; data collected with questionnaire are presented in Table 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. In table 1, Data were analyzed using Likert Mean response rate to determine the extent of services rendered. The acceptable Mean is 2.50 and above. Where, ≥ 2.50 is Significant (considerable response) and < 2.50 is not Significant (inconsiderable response). Specifically, for each items in Table 1 real limit of numbers was used to determine the decision level as follows: Very Great Extent (VGE): 3.50 and above; Great Extent (GE): 2.50 – 3.49; Low Extent (LE): 1.50 – 2.49; No Extent (NE): 0.00- 1.49. Relatively, for table 2, 3, 4, and 5 their data were analyzed using simple percentage where 50% and above is considered agreed while, below 50% is considered disagreed. More to this, data analyzed in table 3, 4 and 5 are presented with chart for more clarity.

6   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

For decades societies at different organizations have depends solely on information for their survivor. Having public library established in a community is an important access for information services to be rendered and meet information needs of the public. Identify information needs of public, and provide necessary information resources in the public library will serve as knowledge facilitator and guide to perfection on public needs. On the contrary, if there is established public library without knowing the information needs and resources needed by public as well as library staff not rendering enough services requires of them is as bad as not having public library. This is because, the public will not be illuminated on their needs and making progress in this contemporary time will be very cumbersome. This justify the current study and the question put in view is; what is the state of public library for public information needs and services render in Stella Obasanjo library, Lokoja, Kogi State?

7   DATA ANALYSIS

7.1   SERVICES RENDERED IN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Table 1: Services Rendered in Public Library

S/N	Items	X	Rank	Decision
1	Leisure and recreation services	2.53	2nd	GE
2	Services to disadvantaged groups	1.28	8th	NE
3	Extension services	2.34	7th	LE
4	Services with Information and Communication Technology	2.42	4th	LE
5	Information consultancy services	2.47	3rd	LE
6	Educational services	2.39	5th	LE
7	Reading services	2.61	1st	GE
8	Community information Services	2.37	6th	LE

Source: Field survey

From table 1 above, "reading services" has mean weight of 2.61, "leisure and recreation services" has mean weight of 2.53, "information consultancy services" has mean weight of 2.47, "Services with information and communication technology" has mean weight of 2.42, "educational services" has mean weight of 2.39, "community information services" has mean weight of 2.37, "extension service" has mean weight has mean weight of 2.34 and "services to disadvantaged groups has mean weight of 1.28. It can be concluded that, "reading services" and "leisure and recreation services has mean weight of above 2.50 as criterion mean, thereby considered great extent while others are below 2.50 as criterion mean thereby considered low extent and the least of all is "services to disadvantaged groups" which as mean weight of 1.28, thereby considered no extent.

7.2   INFORMATION NEEDS OF LIBRARY USERS

Table 2: Information Needs of Library Users

S/N	Items	Yes	No
1	Agriculture information needs	√	
2.	Sports and games Information needs	√	
3.	Health information needs	√	
4.	Property information needs	√	
5.	Politics information needs	√	
6.	Social information needs	√	
7.	Business / economy information needs	√	
8.	Educational information needs	√	
9.	Geographical information needs	√	
10.	Religion information needs	√	
	Total	**100%**	**0%**

Source: Field survey

From table 2 above, option "Yes" has 100% while, option "No" has 0%. It can be concludes that library users information needs cut across all itemized needs. This is because; option "Yes" is above 50%.

7.3   INFORMATION RESOURCES NEEDED BY LIBRARY USERS

Table 3: Information Resources Needed by Library Users

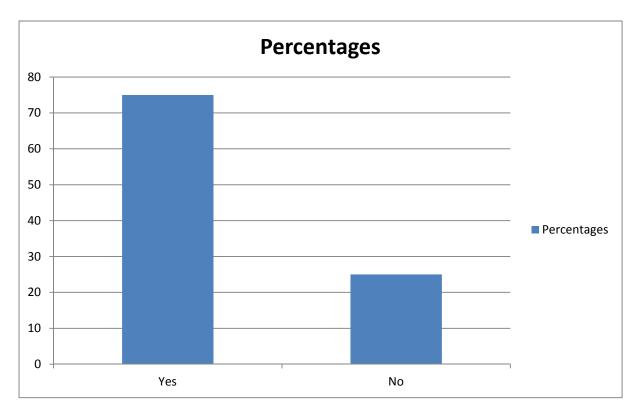| S/N	Items	Yes	No
1	Journals	√	
2	Text books	√	
3	News paper	√	
4	Magazine	√	
5	Reference materials	√	
6	Computers	√	
7	Radios	√	
8	Audio cassette		√
9	Internet	√	
10	Compact disc and Digital versatile disc	√	
11	Audio conferencing tools		√
12	Video conferencing tools		√
	Total	**75%**	**25%**

Source: Field survey

Fig. 1: Bar chart showing Percentages of Information Resources Needed by Library Users

From table 3 and its chart above, option "Yes" has 75% while, option "No" has 25%. It can be concluded that most of the itemized information resources are needed by library users. This is because option "Yes" is above 50%.

7.4   AVAILABLE OF INFORMATION NEEDED BY LIBRARY USERS

Table 4: Available of Information Needed by Library Users

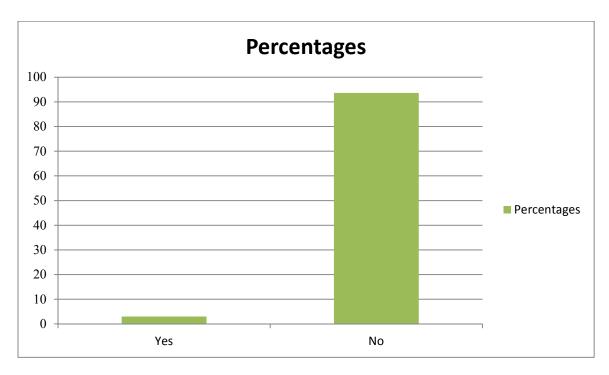| S/N	Items	Respondents No	Percentages (%)
1	Yes	3	6.4
2	No	44	93.6
	Total	**47**	**100%**

Source: Field survey

Fig. 2: Bar Chart showing the Percentages of Available of Information Needed by Library Users

From table 4 and its chart above, item "Yes" has 6.4% while item "No" has 93.6%. It can be deduced that information needed by majority of respondents are not available. This is because item "No" is above 50%.

7.5   AVAILABLE OF INFORMATION RESOURCES NEEDED BY LIBRARY USERS

Table 5: Available of Information Resources Needed by Library Users

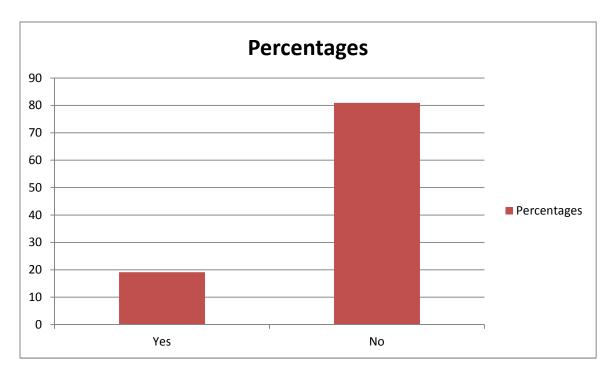| S/N	Items	Respondents	Percentages (%)
1	Yes	9	19.1
2	No	38	80.9
	Total	**47**	**100%**

Source: Field survey

Fig. 3: Bar Chart showing the Percentages of Information Resources Needed by Library Users

From table 5 and its chart above, item "Yes" has 19.1% while item "No" has 80.9%. It can be concluded that majority of information resources needed by library users are not available. This is because item "No" is above 50%.

8   DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Beyond establishment or erect of build called public library. It is expected to render significant services to very great extent to the public where is located. From data analyzed it is observed that, services rendered in the public library understudy are not efficient. It is only reading, and leisure and recreation services that are great extent. Others are low extent but, least of all is services to disadvantaged groups which indicate no extent. Though, information acquired through interview illuminate that the library need a lot funds, information resources and staff motivation. Precisely, the library does not have capable vehicles to operate their extension services, and also information and communication technology infrastructures of reputable and good quantities are needed. More to these, it was discovered that almost information needed by library users are not available. This might be as a result of obsolete information resources that are available in the library. Though, information acquired through interview show that, some library friends such as neighboring banks and institutions use to donate few journals and magazines once in a while. But it is observed that the library do not have good numbers of information resources. It is imperative to note that, any public library that cannot rendered full primary services as noted by [6]; need to be restructure and guided. Furthermore, for public library not to meet the information needs of the public is not edifying; because information is a holistic product for survivor [1]. However, recommendations proffered should be cognizant of.

9   SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

Based on data analyzed the following findings are summarized;

- Among the services rendered only reading, and leisure and recreation services are rendered at great extent. Information consultancy services, services with Information and Communication Technology, educational services, community information services, and extension services are rendered at low extent. While, services to disadvantaged groups is rendered at no extent.
- The information needs of library users includes agriculture, sports and games, health, property, political, social, business and economy, educational, geographical and religions.

- Needed information resources of library users are journals, text books, news papers, magazines, reference materials, computer system, radios, internet, and Compact disc-ROM and digital versatile disc-ROM
- 93.6% of respondents agreed, that, their information needed are not available in the library.
- 80.9% of respondents agreed, that, information resources needed are not available in the library.

10 IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

Knowing the extent of services rendered, information needs met and provided information resources needed by library users in library understudy is essential. It is very unfortunate to note that essential services of public library are not rendered to very great extent despite values attached by [6]. It is also discovered that most information needed by library users are not acquired. This might result from not having available of information resources needed despite the importance attached to information and information resources [1]. To this end, it is important to note that if the essential services are not rendered to very great extent and needed information resources not made available in the library understudy; it roles as information facilitator and enabler will be eroded.

11 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In structuring public library for the benefit of general public; three aspects must be considered. These are: Service rendered, information needs and information resources to meet the needs. In the course of this study, it was discovered that services rendered in the public library understudy is not efficient neither there is sufficient information resources to meet the information needs of the library users. However, for public library to serve the general public effectively, the library most be well funded to run sundry activities and errant, library staff must be motivated with evidence of job satisfaction as well as proffered recommendations in Table 6 should be considered for services rendered while, information resources to be provided in the library should contains varieties of information as grouped for different information needs in Table 7.

Table 6: Public Library Services

S/N	Public Library Services	Activities in services
1	Leisure and recreation services	Setup Cinema shows *soccer's shows *selling of snack for refreshment *display of exhibition *local and foreign games play
2	Services to disadvantages groups	*Identify the categories of advantages groups such as hear impairment, blind, deaf and dump *Based on the groups provide them information resources to meet the needs. That is; visual information resources for hear impairment, audio information resources for blind, and while print and pictorial information resources for deaf and dump.
3	Extension services	*Visit villages to advertized the available of public library and its importance *Paste of information resources media such as postal, bills, letters and news paper cut on new issues or availability of information resources in the library *Paste information regarding information needs.
4	Services with Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	*Computer information works *Snapping and printing of digital passport and photographs *Cyber works * audio and video conferencing activities *Information package and repackaging
5	Information Consultancy Services	*Accept direct and indirect quires *Search for appropriate information based queries *Process, analyzed and disseminate information to seekers
6	Educational services	*Embrace information literacy *Make teaching and learning resources available and organize and set them for use
7	Reading services	*Display information resource on shelves at different rooms where specific information needs can be acquired *serve library users with specific information and information resources on request.
8	Community information services	*Cut and pastes information resources at strategic places and areas in the community *Send information to the public through religions houses such as churches and mosque *Broadcast important and urgent information to the public through radios and television stations, as well as town criers

Sources: Authors' experiences

Table 7: Information needs and the variables

S/N	Groups of Information needs	Information variables
1	Agricultural information needs	*Animal and birds' production *Plants and crops production (annual, bi-annual and perennial) *Animals, birds, plants, and crops diseases: causative agents, symptoms, preservation and controls *Products monetary values
2	Sports and games information needs	*Agility *Vaulting *Track events *Field events *soft games *Sport messages: pre-events, inter-events, and post-events
3	Health information needs	*Drugs *Nutrinetion *Foods *Body systems * Sickness *Human diseases: causative agents, symptoms, preservation and controls
4	Property information needs	*Lands and forestry *Buildings and materials *Vehicles *Wears
5	Political information needs	*Political parties *Systems of government *Political news and history *Political analyses and results *Political leaders
6	Social information needs	*Fashion *Recreation *Leisure *Friendships *Loves and affections *Social movies *Gender and genders differences
7	Business information needs	* Market and marketing *New products advertisement *Business polities *Entrepreneurships and practices *Gross domestic products *Gross national product *Banking and profit making
8	Educational information needs	*Education and comparative practices *Teaching, learning and research practice *Educational system and issues *Educational system and government involvement *Perspectives in pre-primary, primary, secondary and post secondary institutions. *Educational resources and finance
9	Geographical information needs	*Water bodies *Mountainous bodies *Vegetations *Planetary bodies *Climate and weather distributions*Continentals *Latitude and longitude differences *Population distributions *Maps *Transportation *Mineral resources and locations
10.	Religion information needs	*Christianity *Islam *Traditional god worship *Naturalist

Sources: Authors' experiences

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