The Impact of The Library and Information In Promoting National Security In Nigeria

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Abstact

The paper examines the impact of the library and information in promoting national security in Nigeria. The growing challenges of security in Nigeria are of great concern to all which necessary efforts must be employed to combat these challenges. This paper therefore discusses the concept of library and information, national security as well as the causes of insecurity in Nigeria. The paper also tries to show how the library and information can contribute effectively in the fight against terrorism, insurgent, youth restiveness, kidnapping and bad government through proper and effective collection and dissemination of information at the right time, mobilizing the citizenry through civic education, information literacy programme. The paper concludes that library and information has a social responsibility in national security and recommended that government should provide more funds to overcome the challenges, comply with the implementation of freedom of information policy so that the citizen would get the right information about their nation at the right time and in right format.

Introduction

Security is an encompassing phenomenon that is paramount to individuals, entities, communities and even nations. Security has to do with self-preservation which is the first law of existence. Security implies a stable, relatively predicable environment in which an individual or group may pursue its ends or objectives without disruption, harm, danger and fear of disturbance or injury (Dasuki, 2013)

A country's national security therefore is concerned with the well-being, welfare and interest of her citizens, preservation of her sovereignty and territorial integrity against external aggression. The importance of security to economic well-being of a country and her citizens cannot be over emphasized.

The importance attached to security was well captured in the Nigerian Constitution of 1999: Section 14 (2) (b) of the constitution states that "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government". Invariably therefore the Constitution has saddled the Government with the responsibility of safeguarding lives, property, welfare of Nigerians against both internal and external threats including other forms of danger. Thus, it is incumbent on the Government to monitor public order and safety, including law and order.

National security loosely defined refers to the protection of the interests of a country. National security therefore embraces several elements that cut across military, economic, social, religious and political sense to mention but a few. The development of any society to a large extent depends on the extent of the security of lives and property of the citizens. A secured atmosphere will encourage intellectual minds who will be a great asset to Nation building; it will also guarantee an environment for the growth of infrastructural development.

According to Ogebebe and Babatope (2012) National security is important not only to the government, but to the nation as a whole. National security serves many purposes. First of all, the armed forces are a very important aspect of national security. The Federal Republic of Nigeria has a very strong military that ensure that the nation stays safe, however Nigeria's security concerns and threat perceptions emanated from many quarters. These include the threat of extreme Islamic sects like

Boko Haram, bad leadership, high level of unemployment, Militia from the oil rich Niger Delta, ritual killings and kid napping, the widening economic gap between the poor and the rich, influx of illegal migrants from the neighbouring countries, emergence of political and regional thugs, election rigging and malpractice and injustice due to the collapse of the judiciary system. In addition, when threats are directed at the country there is an attempt to keep these threats isolated. National security is also concerned with emergency preparedness among many other things.

In order to tackle security challenges nations established the armed forces, police, security agencies and other Para-military forces. It is however to be noted that given the broader perspective of national security, government security agencies alone cannot provide the desired security to the environment or nation.

Therefore, everybody has a role to play at enhancing our national security. National security should be everybody's business. The purpose of this paper therefore is to discuss the impact of the library and information sciences in curbing Nigeria's security challenges.

The Concept of Libraries

A library can be seen as a collection books, book related and non-book materials (slide filmstrips, films, CD-ROMs, Microforms Video, etc.) which are organized, interpreted and made available for use globally. The acquisition, organization, preservation and dissemination are usually done by professionals.

A library can be also seen as a collection of organised information sources. It is primarily set up to acquire, organize, and preserve information resources as well as make them accessible to the various prospective users. Library is concerned with the collection, processing, storage and dissemination of recorded information for the purpose of reading, study, research and consultation. Information is new ideas or knowledge extracted from the environment for human use with the aim of modifying behaviour, effecting changes, and enhancing efficiency in all human endeavours (Ajegbomogun, 2008). Information helps create enlightened and responsible citizens.

The library is the gateway to information. It is a place where information is acquired, processed, repackaged, preserved, and disseminated.

Dictionary of Library and Information science defined "library as a collection or group of collections of books and /or other materials organized and maintained for use" (reading, consultation, study and research). Prytherch (2000) quoting Landau (1966) sees Library as a collection of books, book related and non-book materials housed, organized and interpreted to meet the broad and varying needs of people for information, education, knowledge, recreation and aesthetic enjoyment.

The definitions above show that a library is not just a collection of only books for reading but also include book related and non-book materials. With the advent and development of technology, the concept of library has been expanded above that line. At present we have concepts such as virtual library, digital library, online library, etc. The concept has changed from traditional library to electronic library. The formal where we visit the library building to make use of information resources has changed. Users with the aid of ICT devices can access the library materials regardless of the place or distance.

However, libraries all over the world have solemn responsibility to ensure the transmission of the people culture from one generation to another in addition to the preservation of these cultures. Libraries, Museums and Archives are important providers of information and knowledge required by the people on a daily basis.

Concept of National Securities

National security can be defined as the actions and policies taken by a nation against all internal and external threats to its borders, economy, and stability. It doesn't have to be terrorism or an enemy nation, though it often is.

The security interest includes safety of life and property, economic, physiological, mental well-being and the freedom to pursue the attainment of legitimate objectives without hindrance.

This definition is holistic and most relevant to us as it sees the objective of national security as elimination of all distractions in order to bring about growth and

development of the society and its constituents. In other words, every national security structure must be seen in the light of its two core obligations of preserving the safety of its citizens at home and abroad, and preserving the integrity of the borders and assets of the country. The assets of the country include physical objects such as the infrastructure and other tangible assets that support the economy. Intangible things such as national values, the political ability to project power and authority, including national cohesion of citizens, are treasured assets any country would desire to have.

Causes of Security Challenges in Nigeria

Causes of Security challenges in Nigeria are as follow:

Youth restiveness: Youth restiveness may be caused by a number of factors. Chukwuemeka (2008) observed that composite unemployment in Nigeria increased from 3.8% in 2006 to 4.2% in the first half of 2011. He further stated that structural unemployment results in talents not being used where they are available. Hence the adage that the'' idle mind is definitely the devil's workshop''. Similarly, Coleman (1996) observed that psychological variables and deprivation is the basic product of conflict and restiveness of any kind. He further argued that the more widespread and intense deprivation is among members of a population, the greater the magnitude of violence in one form or the other. In the foregoing therefore, one can argue that the unequal socio-economic development of the various ethnic groups in Nigeria led to inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts. For instance, Chukwuemeka, Anazodo and Nzewi (2011) found that dissatisfaction of the people of South-South especially the youths on the level of attention given to development of their region and the damages to their ecology by oil spillage are the major causes of the alarming rate of youth restiveness. The obvious effects of youth restiveness on the Nigerian society are loss of lives and property, which constitute a major threat to security of the State as well as its corporate existence. It also discourages genuine economic and democratic development. Strategies employed include mass agitations, protests, demonstrations, looting, vandalism, cultism, ethnic militia, political thuggery among others. This trend

of events demands for urgent and timely intervention. Therefore, counselling intervention becomes a compelling necessity for the Nigerian youths, Igbo and Ikpa (2013).

Nigeria's Security Challenges

No nation is free of security challenges. These challenges also vary from one country to the other. Thus, Nigeria's security challenges are as follow:

Terrorism

Perhaps the greatest and predominant security challenge in Nigeria today is terrorism or terrorism related issues. Islamic fundamentalist group, popularly known as Boko Haram is the harbinger of terrorism in Nigeria today. The sect, which is predominately based in the' Northern Eastern part of the country, has an ideology that is averse to western education and anything it represents.

The sect also seeks an enthronement of Islamic (Sharia) government in the whole of Northern Nigeria. Frequently Boko Haram attacks churches, government institutions, the police and military barracks as well as the media through armed attacks, suicide bombing.

Some notable attacks carried out by the sect are the Mogadishu Barracks bombing in Abuja in December 2010, the Police Headquarters in Abuja in June 2011, and the UN office bombing in Abuja in August 2011 SaintTheresaCatholicChurchMadalla, bombing of December 2011to mention. They have demonstrated capability by taking people of different countries hostage.

Insurgent

The insecurity in Nigeria's maritime environment is a major challenge to our national security. These occur in many forms such as piracy, illegal oil bunkering, oil theft illegal fishing and hijacking.

Youth restiveness

Elegbeleye (2005) defined youth restiveness as "a sustained protestation embarked upon to enforce desired outcome from a constituted authority by an organized body of youths." It is marked by violence and disruption of lawful activities.

The obvious effects of youth restiveness on the Nigerian society are loss of lives and property which constitute a major threat to security of the State as well as its corporate existence. It also discourages genuine economic and democratic development. Strategies employed include mass agitations, protests, demonstrations, looting, vandalism, cultism, ethnic militia, political thuggery among others.

Militancy

Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) activities of the group spread across kidnapping of people; blowing up oil pipelines and hostage taking to draw the attention of State and Federal Governments to lack of development and environmental degradation of the Niger Delta region of Nigeria Dasuki (2013), listed the security challenges in Nigeria to include: terrorism, maritime security, Niger Delta militancy, kidnapping, illegal bunkering, pipeline vandalism, armed robbery, youth unemployment and climate change.

Roles of Libraries and Information Science In National Security

The fight against terrorism and insecurity can be better fought and won through employing the services of information managers like Librarians.

Traditionally, libraries were collections of books, manuscripts, journals, and other sources of recorded information. In the last 50 years, libraries have increasingly developed into a provider of information resources and services that do not even require a building (Ogunsola, 2011). The primary role of the library is to acquire, process, preserve, and disseminate recorded information. It is therefore the responsibility of the library to enlighten the youths and other members of the community it serves by presenting them with factual information that will guide their actions and help make good conclusions that will promote peace. Since knowledge

and information are so vital for all round human development, libraries and other institutions that handle and manage knowledge and information are indeed invaluable in national security. According to John (1998), of all the roles that librarians and libraries play two are critical to modern society as we know it. The first is the access role of the library as the place where the information seeker can access information without restriction. The access has been the world-wide effort of libraries to archive, protect and provide on-going access to information and the world's cultural heritage for the long term - access .These two fundamental roles have differentiated libraries from all other institutions." This is where the civic and social responsibility of the library takes center stage. Social responsibility is a part of librarianship (Kagan, 2005). According to Ossai-Ugbah(2013), the issue of national security is therefore core value of librarianship. Since no meaningful learning, education and development can take place in a context of insecurity and brazen destruction of lives and property, the onus lies on the library for responsible librarianship through dissemination of information that can contribute to peace and national security in Nigeria by helping the citizens to understand their roles in national security. The library as a storehouse of information has positively altered its scope of influence across time to become not only a collection books, book related and non-book materials but also a gateway through which information can be conveyed to people irrespective of location. Omotayo (2005) observed that:

In war situations in enlightened societies, use of libraries increases as users flock to libraries to find information to guide them. Information that can promote peace, unity, progress, peaceful co-existence, and harmonious relationship among all the communities must therefore be available in libraries. Librarians, therefore, in promoting access to this information, act as agents of the promotion of communal peace and reconciliation.

Mostly all the conflicts in the society are caused by lack of information or inadequate information. Information is a vital tool to the development of every individual or nation. Information is of paramount importance as it relates to the environment which in turn affects the totality of human's life. The library serve the

most appropriate channel in disseminating information across to people of all work of life.

The library importance is clearly reflected in the six major roles with which it is associated and to which it is committed with respect to providing information. These roles include custodial of knowledge for present and future heritage; educational role like long live education, adults education, building of mind; research information; informational; cultural and recreational.

Today modern libraries with the help of modern technologies perform these roles in accelerated speed. Libraries stand as the appropriate channel in the rural area to provide the right information at the right time and in the right format.

Many Nigerian see libraries as a warehouse or store house of book and should be consulted for only examination purpose but it goes beyond that. It is an instrument, tool and weapon that can be used effectively to resolve conflicts by providing timely and adequate information to the general public and individuals in particular.

According to Olili (2008) library is a useful instrument for combating illiteracy and erasing ignorance in the society. It is an educational organization where persons visit mainly to gain knowledge, keep the people abreast about the customs and arts produced by a particular society, improve on their reading habits and most especially earn a better living in their respective endeavor.

The library promotes the culture of peace. The youths in many countries have become agents of conflict, in the pursuit of narrow interests or the instigation or manipulation of narrow minded leaders. Of course, the youths have not been given any good training in peace education because there is no programme for that. This is coupled with the hopelessness of the situation of millions of unemployed and angry youths. Libraries can be used as instrument for conflict resolution. Libraries serve as a means for providing the required information and enlighten the communities to reduce the tension and uncertainty that translate to crises. This will go a long way in training or educating youths and social leaders on their role in promoting the culture of peace, and then enjoin citizens to naturally prefer pacific methods of settling disputes to violence or fighting (Oghuvwu, 2007)

The society should encourage the development of knowledge house (libraries and information centres), encourage the use of libraries in society to reduce the rate of literacy and deviant in the society and inform the youths on the significance of education in human life and activities which can be achieved through library peace education programme. Libraries are positioned as hubs for formal and informal learning. School libraries, academic libraries, and public libraries support the education of the youths. Information obtained from libraries can change the behaviour, attitudes, and mind-set of youths. According to Ugulu and Erimieleagbon (2009), the educational process occupies the mind of man with pursuits that are uplifting. Whether it is by facilitating or the direct dispensing of knowledge through teaching, the efforts of man in this endeavour remains noble. To them, the library in a sense, is a kind of insurance against social disintegration, curb vices and prevention of decay that ignorance, fear and apathy bring about in careless societies or home. Such libraries should not only be stocked with educational materials, they should have recreational facilities where pent-up energies and emotions can be dissipated.

In addition to providing job opportunities, many libraries create an environment for acquiring skills and for career development. Libraries may go beyond collecting books on various professions to organizing seminars and workshops on career development. . Ndagana and Ogunrombi (2006) pointed out that libraries create opportunities for youths to be employed especially in restive communities which in turn are background for national security. These programmes provide career guidance and counselling and will help reduce the number of idle, frustrated youths who roam the streets aimlessly, and who might at the least provocation take recourse to violence. Issa (2003) pointed out that economic and national power and status for instance are leveraged on the widespread use of information and knowledge which the library provides. Agreed that the responsibility of library and information services rests on the librarian and information scientists, there is also the need to collaborate with the security agencies in bringing maximum information services to the public and in this case for national security.

The role of the library in national security is not just to spread information in a particular area but to offer a holistic approach, around all aspects of the policies of the country called Nigeria. Currently, the war on terror and terrorism is not only fought by the armed forces but the whole nation is engaged in the economic, scientific, political and social activities and happenings in all practicable fields of life. For the library, this is a feasible objective, which is achievable through the information and dissemination process of the library (Hali, 2003). Information is therefore a crucial factor in national security. This is because the line between security and insecurity lie in information given or information withheld. The ability to use information and its associated tools is a source of power for any nation which the library and librarians are best equipped to do. In Nigeria's current security challenge, citizens and government must recognize this need for information use and literacy as a means of national security (Noruzi, 2006). Information remains one of the only products which the library handles and this includes all media in which the information is shaped.

Anasi (2010) citing Sokari (2006) agrees that "information is necessary for people to be liberated from the shackles of ignorance, misconceptions, economic stagnation, social unrest, and political instability. Social cohesion cannot be achieved without timely, accurate, and relevant information." This is because information is fresh ideas or facts taken out of a person's surrounding for use with the objective of transforming behaviour in all areas of human life (Ajegbomogun, 2008). Information helps create enlightened and responsible citizenry. The library is the gateway to information. It is a place where information is acquired, processed, repackaged, preserved, and disseminated (Anasi, 2010). Thus, the role played by the library and librarians is a morale-boosting role. "In the military parlance, morale is the will to fight for the national cause to the last" (Hussain, 2008). Thus, in the war on terror, psychological operation is not the only function which the library can perform in the context of national security; it can also act as a bridge between the armed forces and the people (Hali, 2003). Omotayo (2005) noted that: "in war situations in enlightened societies, use of libraries increases as users flock to libraries to find information to guide them.'' Information that can promote peace, unity, progress, peaceful co-existence,

and harmonious relationship among all the communities must therefore be available in libraries. The freedom to explore and read about other cultures is vital to national security, especially as a tool to mitigate and prevent radicalization. The library and information indeed have roles to play in national security.

Finally, there are values and principles that are peculiar to societies which are highly moral and humanistic. These values and principles have been suppressed and eroded by years of slavery, colonialism, foreign religion, and others. Yet, these values are yearning to be done through libraries acquire, process, store and provide them to the general public ant time the needs arises.

Recommendations

This paper recommends that:

1. Security agencies should as a matter of deliberate government policy work closely with librarians in the war against terror.

2. The society should encourage the development of knowledge house (libraries and information centres) and also encourage the use of libraries in society to reduce the rate of literacy and deviant in the society.

3. Libraries and librarians should be in the forefront of national security discourses through sponsorship, guiding principle and act that can further the country's national security.

4. Adequate information, education and enlightenment through libraries will lay a solid foundation in people for conflict prevention and resolution as well as make for a more peaceful society.

5. The library in the rural areas should help distribute literacy materials that will help people to be better functional information managers and also encourage the people to make use of the library.

6. Librarians and libraries should design a blueprint for security consciousness.

Conclusions

The library and librarians as information collectors and disseminators have a role to play in the war on national security. To adequately address Nigerian security challenges, modern intelligence information gathering devices must be acquired and stored by libraries and information centres to assist security services, like the police, the State Security Services, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, Civil Defence Corps and the general public . The issue of national security is therefore core value of librarianship. Since no meaningful learning, education and development can take place in a context of insecurity and brazen destruction of lives and property, the onus lies on the library for responsible librarianship through dissemination of information that can contribute to peace and national security in Nigeria by helping the citizens to understand their role in national security. The library as a storehouse of information has positively altered its scope of influence across time to become not only a place that houses information resources but a gateway through which information can be conveyed to people irrespective of location. Libraries and librarians should be seen as important tools in national security. National security is possible through the utilization and collaboration of library, human, and material resources. Libraries play crucial roles in inculcating positive values, attitudes, and behaviours that promote harmonious relationships. Libraries help ensure that people have access to information that will help them make informed judgments and decisions.

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