

USE OF LIBRARY (GST 103) MANUSCRIPT

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Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of this chapter is to acquaint students with what the library is, the types of libraries that we have, the components of a library and the various methods by which library resources are acquired into the library. This would enable students to be familiar with the library setup and be able to know which library is obtainable in any particular institution.

At the end of this Chapter:

- Students should be able to explain, in their own words, what the library is
- The types of libraries that we have
- The components (stock) of the library
- The various acquisition methods etc.

What is a Library?

The term library, derived from a Latin word 'liber' which means book, has been seen differently by some scholars. Some assume that it is a mere collection of books, housed in a room without any form of organization. Others felt that the library is just a reading room where people go for one information need or the other.

The Librarians' Glossary (1977) as cited by Busayo (2004, p.1) defined the library as follows:

- A collection of books and other library materials kept for reading, study and consultation
- A place, building, room or rooms, set apart for the keeping and use of a collection of books etc
- A collection of films, photographs and other visual non-book materials, plastic or metal tapes and discs, computers, tapes and programmes.

However, Jegede (2007) opined that the library in any establishment or institution is the store house of knowledge. Kumar (2011,p.3) quoted Ranganathan as defining a library as 'a public institution or establishment charged with the care of a collection of books, the duty of making them accessible to those who require the use of them and the task of converting every person in

its neighbourhood into a habitual library goer and reader of books'. Thus, a library is regarded as a public institution, which is also expected to convert the potential readers into actual readers.

In other words, it is the repository of information and information sources. The library can therefore be seen as an educational resource centre and of course, a 'nest' where scholars are hatched. The library is a store house of knowledge for students, lecturers, researchers and other scholars that may be allowed to use the library. The major roles/functions of the library are: collection of materials, organization, storage and dissemination of information resources.

Why the study of Use of Library?

1. The use of the library keep users acquainted with library resources and how to judiciously and maximally make use of these materials for academic benefits.
2. No would be successful scholar, would ignore or alienate the library, as the resources housed are needful and helpful to be a successful scholar.
3. The Use of the Library (GST 103) is a requisite course for all undergraduates. Students are therefore expected to register for this course, write the examination and pass it before they could graduate.
4. The study of use of library, no doubt, is a good take off point (foundation), for a would be successful academic, scholar or researcher.

TYPES OF LIBRARIES

Busayo (2004) observed that there are six types of libraries in the society. He stressed that each type of library is unique and performs given roles. Some functions are common to all libraries, while others are tailored to meet the special requirements of the owners. The six (6) types of libraries are: Academic Library, National Library, Private Library, Public Library, Research or Special Library and School Library.

- **Academic Libraries**

Academic libraries are those that are attached to tertiary institutions of the status of a university, a polytechnic, a college of education or other tertiary institutions with similar standing, offering Certificate programmes, Diploma and Degree courses at various levels. Examples are FUYOYE Library, EKSU Library, Federal Polytechnic Ado-Ekiti Library, College of Education Ikere-Ekiti Library etc.

Aina (2004) observed that the main purpose of a university library (which is an academic library) is to support the objectives of a university, which are in the areas of learning, teaching, research and service. The users of a university library are students, researchers, lecturers, support staff (non-teaching staff) and members of the local community in which the university is located. The library is regarded as the heart of the intellectual system of the university. To a large extent, the quality of a university is measured by the services provided by the library, because of its unique position in the over-all university system.

- **National Libraries**

National library is defined as the apex library of any nation. It is owned by a sovereign nation or state. It caters for the information needs of the country and it has legal deposit right, which is the right to acquire publications published on the country by individuals or organizations within or overseas, no matter their nationality, for retention in its stock for use of the citizenry. It is also empowered by law to issue: International Standard Book Number (ISBN) and International Standard Serials Number (ISSN), for books and journals respectively, to intending authors and publishers on request. Examples of national libraries are the National Library of Nigeria, National Library of Kenya and the Library of Congress of the United States.

- **Private Libraries**

These are libraries owned by an individual or an organization like a Church. They are established to meet the needs of the owner and thus the collections are dictated by the fields or disciplines of the owners. For example, some lawyers have their private (personal) law library; also some medical doctors have their private medical library. Likewise some engineers, librarians etc have private (personal) library to meet their reading needs. The stock usually is based on the profession of the owner and managed accordingly by the owner.

- **Public Libraries**

Like the name suggest, public libraries take care and serves the public interest of all ages without any discrimination. It is often defined as the public or peoples' university. It is usually financed with the tax-payers money and it makes reading provision for all in the community/society where it is situated, including the children. Most public libraries make provision for children reading section.

- **Research or Special Libraries**

Research or special libraries are designed for a defined or a unique group of users with similar needs. The users of research or special libraries are specialist-users, like the Law Libraries for Lawyers, Medical Libraries for Doctors and Engineering Libraries for Engineers etc. Organizations with such libraries are International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) Ibadan, Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Abuja, Nigeria Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) Lagos, Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria (CRIN) Ibadan, Nigeria Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER) Ibadan etc.

- **School Libraries**

School libraries are libraries attached to Nursery, Primary and Secondary Schools. It is intended to encourage reading habit and to develop in pupils, the ability to learn from books with or without the aid of a teacher. The importance of school libraries cannot be over-emphasized as it helps to develop reading skills and the love for books in children, early in their educational career. This is in line with the adage that says that habits die hard and that

Biblical phrase, 'Teach a child the way he should go, and when he is grown up, he will not depart'.

ATTRIBUTES OF A LIBRARY

Some attributes/conditions/qualifications are required to be fulfilled or met before a place can indeed be seen or described as a library. Nwalo (2000) observed that many people in Nigeria abuse the use of the term 'library'. Often, one notices that rooms or personal offices in Nigerian schools or other public organizations are labeled 'libraries' simply because a few books or serials, no matter how old and irrespective of whether or not they are needed by anybody within the school or organization, are kept there.

What a layman in our society calls library is no library but mere collection of books, often acquired with no specific policy and administered in a manner in contradiction of the purpose of the collection. Likewise, once a collection is administered by a person, who, no matter, his qualifications and position in society, has no formal education and training in librarianship, it cannot be regarded as a library. Such a person has neither the competence to acquire and organize library collections nor the competence to provide readers services.

Below are the known attributes of a library

1. There must be a convenient space or accommodation set-aside for no other purpose but library operations.
2. There must be a dynamic collection of books and other ephemeral materials in the library space.
3. The materials must be systematically organized in a useful order, stored and preserved for posterity.
4. Only a person who has undergone formal education and training in librarianship (Librarian, Library Officer or Teacher-Librarian) must be in charge of the library.
5. People must be allowed to use the library at specified time. In other words, there must be opening and closing hours and library users.

Keeping a collection, no matter the quality and quantity, out of the reach of prospective users negates the concept of library. Libraries have a common objective of acquiring information materials such as books, newspapers, journals, magazines, photographs, maps, films, microfilms, CD-ROMS and other forms of records. These are systematically organized, processed, preserved and disseminated to users in order to meet their educational, research, information and recreational needs.

COMPONENTS OF THE LIBRARY

A typical library is made up of four (4) components namely:

- Books, Serials and Non-Book Materials
- Building or Room or Rooms
- Personnel (Staff)
- Clientele (Users)

BOOKS, SERIALS AND NON-BOOK MATERIALS

- **Books** are printed materials of not less than 49pages, apart from the cover pages, that are fastened together for ease of reading, consultation or reference. When it is less than 49pages, it's known as a pamphlet.
- **Serials** are periodical publications which are issued in successive parts and they are intended to be continued indefinitely. Serials are either published at regular or an irregular interval, which could be daily, weekly, bi-monthly, monthly, quarterly or yearly. Serials usually bear volume, number and year ie 60 (2) 2016 eg daily newspapers, journals, magazines, annuals etc. It is more current than books and it is useful for research.
- **Non-book materials** are otherwise known as audio-visual materials. These are information resources that can be seen and or heard. They are not printed in readable form like books. Examples are:
 - Computers
 - Films
 - Video-cameras
 - Televisions
 - Radios
 - Slides
 - Maps, Charts, Photographs etc

BUILDING OR ROOM OR ROOMS

Building or Room is an important component of a library. There should be a designated building or room or rooms set aside as the library, where the books (collections) can be safely kept, where staff can function effectively and which users can conveniently make use of, without any form of

noise or distractions, for maximum concentration and assimilation. The building or room must be conducive to reading, with good lighting, well ventilated, with air conditioners or fans etc

PERSONNEL (STAFF)

Books, serials and non-book materials (collections) and building or room alone do not make a good/complete library. The personnel constitute an important component of a library. The staff mans the library and translates all the policies of the library into action, that is, they ensure the smooth administration of the library.

(1) The core library personnel consist of:

- Academic Librarians
- The Para-professional staff- The Library Officers.

(2) The supportive library personnel are:

- Library Attendants/Assistants, Porters, Clerical Officers etc.
- Technical Staff of different categories

CLIENTELE (USERS)

- Clientele, users, readers and patrons are terms that are used interchangeably to mean the same thing.
- The library is expected to provide information, to be disseminated by the personnel and used by the clientele.
- The library serves different users depending on the type of library and the need of the users. An academic library for example would serve students (undergraduate and post-graduate), lecturers, non-teaching staff and other researchers who may be allowed to use the library for reference services only.

These components are of equal importance. In other words, all of the four components work jointly and are inseparable from one another. The roles are complimentary (Symbiotic).

STOCK OF THE LIBRARY

The stock of a library refers to the various resources that the library house (keep) and makes available to the library users on demand. Thus, Library stock, like books, serials and non-book materials are acquired through different methods/channels namely:

- Purchase
- Gift or Donation

- Exchange
- Bequeath/Will

Purchase

This is otherwise referred to as ‘cash and carry’. The librarian can decide to visit the book vendor directly and make his purchases or invite the book seller to his institution library for selection of needed titles to be made and then bought. Some book vendors also hawk, that is, they go from institution to institution, introducing their collections to libraries for direct purchases to be made.

Gift or Donation

Some philanthropist, authors, institutions, organizations etc donate books and other learning resources to library at will or when they are being solicited for. Such method/channel of acquisitions is referred to as gift or donation. These categories of materials come freely to the library without being bought.

Exchange

Exchange is another method/channel of acquisitions. That is, another way by which materials is being acquired into the library. It is not all gift or donated items that are of direct relevance to the beneficiary, hence an institution who received gifts or donations in a discipline that is outside her curriculum would politely accept such, and can decide to exchange such materials with other sister institution that offers the course and needs the materials. Usually, gift or donation is not normally rejected as there could be exchange with other institutions.

Bequeath (Will)

Bequeath (Will) is another method/channel of acquisitions. Some educationist or learned people in the society normally indicate in their will, that their entire library holdings should be donated to certain institution, may be, their alma mater or others, after their death. Such an arrangement is known as bequeath/will. For example, the Late Chief Obafemi Awolowo bequeathed his entire law collections to Ogun State University now Olabisi Onabanjo University in his will, before his death and this came into effect when he died in 1987.

LIBRARY SKILLS AND LIBRARY RULES AND REGULATIONS

Library users are expected to possess some basic skills in the use of the library and be accustomed with the ethics of the library. The library as an institution is governed by rules and regulations which are intended to guide the conduct and behaviour of users. Hence, users are expected to be familiar with the rules and regulations and abide by them. Usually, where there is no law, there is no offence. Therefore, users who violate any of these rules and regulations are liable to being sanctioned or penalized.

Some of these rules, which equally enable the library to achieve its set goals and objectives, are:

1. Every library user must be registered with the library to be able to make use of the library resources.
2. Registered library users are issued library identity card which grants them access to the library.
3. Silence must be maintained in and around the library premises.
4. Users must show their identity card to the library officials for identification, at the entry point while coming to the library.
5. Orderly conduct must be maintained at all times in all sections of the library.
6. The use of naked light is prohibited in the library.
7. Smoking, eating or drinking is not permitted in the library.
8. Marking or defacing of library books or any other library materials is not allowed.
9. All readers must show any books and papers they are carrying out, to the library officials at the control point (entrance) for checking.
10. Seats cannot be reserved by users for other users.
11. Pets cannot be brought into the library.
12. Indecent dressing is not allowed in the library
13. Materials leaving the library on loan must follow due procedure and be properly loaned out.
14. Legally borrowed materials must be returned on or before the date specified on the book card.
15. Returned (discharged) books must be delivered at the loan or circulation desk for proper documentation.
16. It is an offence to keep library books beyond the date specified for return as this would attract fine.
17. No materials in the reference, serials or reserved sections may be borrowed out of the library.
18. All consulted books must be left on the reading table. On no account should any library user shelve any book.
19. Any person who is suspected to be a security risk may be ordered out of the library.
20. Users are not normally allowed into the section of the library marked, 'For Staff Only', 'Private' or 'Reserved' except by permission
21. The use and charging of cell phones is not allowed in the library.

Sanctions for violation of Library rules and regulations

Users who violate any of the library rules and regulations are liable to being sanctioned or penalized. However, sanction or penalty would depend on the gravity of the offence committed. Users who committed grievous offences, would be summoned before the Library

Disciplinary Committee for interrogation and thereafter, recommended for appropriate disciplinary action or sanctions. Such measures would normally serve as deterrent to other users.

Sanctions, fines or penalties could range from:

1. Writing of a letter of undertaking by users, to be well behaved
2. Replacement of book lost or payment in lieu.
3. Suspension from the use of the library for certain period of time
4. Dismissal from the university after being tried and found guilty

Revision Questions

1. In your own words, define a library
2. What is an academic library?
3. Distinguish between an academic and a school library
4. Define a book
5. What are serials?
6. Identify 5 components of a library
7. Name 3 methods by which resources can be acquired into the library
8. Explain the term Bequeath
9. Explain the importance of the circulation section of the library
10. Who is the Circulation librarian?

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