

## Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and National Security: The Librarian Perspective.

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### Abstract

This paper examines the role information and communication Technology (ICT) plays in National Security and how the librarian who is the information manager can use information and Communication Technology to solve National Security challenges. There is a very close connection between ICT and National Security, which plays an important role in securing and in defence of the nation and crucial roles in the fight against national security. A country's National Security is concerned with the well-being, welfare and interest of her citizen, preservation of her sovereignty and territorial integrity against external aggression. Since security is everybody's business, it is imperative that we all, have a role to play at ensuring and enhancing our National Security. In the prevailing situation, the librarian is called upon to assume a new task like guiding, facilitating, shifting information resources, search intermediary, working as intelligent agents, and preserving the access to the information. The paper reveal the roles of librarians in National Security, effect of ICT in National Security, it also reveal the librarians as a pivotal tool in information dissemination and showcase the librarians strategies towards National Security.

**Keyword:** ICT, Security, National, Security, Information, Librarian.

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### INTRODUCTION

Over the years, it has become obvious that there exist close connections between ICT and national security, which plays an important role in securing the necessary level of national safety and defense of the nation and crucial roles in the fight against national security, and other related offences in Nigeria and the world at large. ICT have been shown to be effective in managing threats, been proven to be a powerful double edged sword with a capability for both over whelming good and devastating evil, all depending on the skills and values of the user(s) in harnessing its powers in either or both directions. Generally speaking ICT consists of hardware, software, networks and media for processing, transmission and presentation of information (Eyo,

Nkanu & Nkebem, 2011). It is a broad-based concept that encompasses the gathering (acquisition), organization (packaging), storage and retrieval for disseminating information that can be in textual or numeric (books and documents), pictorial and vocal forms (audio-visual) using the combination of all the above (multi-media), including computers and telecommunication facilities).

With the proliferation of information, information is scattered in many areas. It is obvious that there exist close connections between ICT and National security, which encompasses phenomenon that is paramount to individuals', entities, communities and even nations. The notion 'security' is explained as status of defense of the life-important interests of the personality, the society and some non-military threats-economic, information etc., are included as a destabilizing factor (Ossah-Ugah, 2013). Also, it has to do with self-preservation which is the first law of existence, of which it implies a stable, relatively predictable 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).

National security therefore embraces several elements that cut across military, economic, social, religious and political etc. a country's National security is concerned with the well-being, welfare and interest of her citizens, preservation of her sovereignty and territorial integrity against external aggression (Iredia, 2011). Therefore, everybody has a role to play at enhancing our National security. In the prevailing situation, the librarian is called upon to assume new task like guiding, facilitating, shifting information resources, search intermediary, working as intelligent agents, and preserving the access to the information. This is why librarians have to improve their service mode in order to make the library a resourceful and relevant place. Hence, the growth and development of information carriers has move from one form to another. From papyrus to clay tablets, from manuscripts to microfilms, from printed documents to electronic and online resource (Oriogu, Ogbuiyi, Etu & Umahi, 2015). Therefore, national security dwells greatly on the services of the librarian which is anchored on the provision, dissemination and smooth delivery of information for better society. However, librarians are proactive link between national interest/her users and information technology, processing, organizing, dissemination and preservation of information to the society which gears towards national interest. Therefore, librarians perspective in national security is still an issue. The worlds least developed countries are poor because of their technological isolation, inter-mediary roles by stake holders, especially in the area of ICT. Need, affordable and highly embraced information and communication technologies can give countries, especially Nigeria, the privilege to leap-frog some of the long painful stages of national security (Oloruntoyin & Adeyanju, 2013). However, if the gap between information 'haves and have-nots', within a country keeps widening, the possibility of attaining a national secured security is not certain and can be best described as 'living the object and chasing shadow''

## **Objectives**

The objectives of the paper specifically are:

- To reveal that information and communication technology have effect in National security.
- To reveal the roles of librarians in National security.
- To prescribe librarians as pivotal tool in information dissemination.

- To showcase librarians strategies towards national security.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) IN NATIONAL SECURITY**

The genesis of information and communication technology can be traced around 1970s. ICT is a diverse which comprises of set of electronic technologies and technological tools and resources used to communicate, create, disseminate, store and manage information (Adomi & Kpangban, 2010). These technologies may include computers, the internet, broadcasting technologies and telephony. ICT is a crucial tool in preparing and educating the society and or citizens with the required skills for global security interest. It ensure the keeping abreast with current issues, events, internet browsing, downloading and storing information for personal use, word processing, sending and receiving mail, knowledge of other people's culture and social networking. ICT is regarded as an engine for growth, curbing insecurities and tool for empowerment, with profound implications for socio-economic development. The impact of ICT on national security is the mission that it enables currency' 'anywhere, anytime and anyhow''. With ICT, knowledge is not constrained by geographic proximity; it also offers more possibilities for sharing, archiving and retrieving knowledge. The widespread use of ICT and its resources on the internet permit librarians to provide value added information services to their clientele (Achonna and yaya, 2008). ICT is increasingly used in information provision in all sectors. To Arokoyo (2005), ICT tools have great potentials for use in national security, of which they include: radio, television, telephones, short message services (SMS), the web publishing and search engines, cameras, video, computer CD-ROM and DVD. Today, ICT tools such as internet, mobile telephony system, social media networked and the media have become veritable platforms for intelligence gathering efforts of our security agencies so long as they observe the ethics of using these technologies for intelligence gathering purposes.

In the past, Nigeria and her security agencies were at least able to contain most of the security challenges they were faced with. The situation today is totally different with the availability of the internet based data exchange applications. While in the past, law enforcement was confronted with mostly physical and traditional paper-based evidence and reports, today the vast majority of discovered material is digital. George (2011) assert that ICT integration can curb security issues by:

- Increasing awareness, motivation and engagement in positive thoughts, through video, TV & multimedia computer software (text, sound, colorful, moving images) can be used to provide challenging and authentic content that will engage security agents and the security learning process. Networked computers with internet connectivity increases awareness;
- Facilitating the acquisition of basic skills which serves as the foundation of higher order thinking skills and creativity through drill and practice;
- Enhancing national security and law enforcement. Its effective integration pre-supposes that there must be a paradigm shift from a dependent centered measures to an independent centered measures towards security tips. This forms the basis of the acquisition of knowledge and skills required for a life –long learning, so as to enable ways of combating crimes.

The wireless era of mobile phone formed another notable integration in Nigeria. Though initially big and bulky phones were used, these later transformed into small phones with so many functions 'text messages, radio broadcasts, pictures, movies, music, etc.' (Oloruntoyin and Adeyanju, 2013). Hence, Nigeria through the availability of GSM phones partially joined the ICT world leaders to effectively enhance the exchange of information vital for the development of the country, thereby creating sustainable awareness in security matters and measures.

## **ROLES OF LIBRARIANS IN NATIONAL SECURITY**

Historically, librarians have always been a key player, contributor and custodians to national interest/ issues and it is worth noting that they assume such role of national security. However, national security loosely defined refer to the protection of the interest of a country (<http://definition.reference.com/browse/national+security>). This implies that national security requirement to maintain the survival of the state through the use of economic, diplomacy power projection and political power. A nation needs to possess economic security, energy security, environment security and information security (Ameh, 2010). Hence, the ability to preserve its nature, institution, and governance from disruption and to control its borders remains the general duty of all sectors. For the librarian, this is a feasible objective which is achievable through the information and dissemination process. Failures to effectively manage organizational knowledge in an internet world whose information flows at the speed of thought can quickly define public safety organization as inept and in need of reform (Ezinwuyi, 2011).

Librarians as custodians play positive impacts as it roles in national security is not only anchored on providing timely and up-to-date information and resources but to offer a holistic measures, towards such usage for implementation, thereby rendering positive solutions towards all aspects of the policies called Nigeria. Realization of information disseminators (librarians) for information use and literacy as a means of national security remains the greatest weapon or tools in reducing or totally eliminating insecurity on restive areas (Ogunsola, 2011 cited in Ossah-Ugbah, 2013).

Librarianship has undergone a radical change in recent years, which will be continued in future. As libraries have changed so too, has the role of librarians. Increasingly librarians have assumed the role of educators to teach their users how to find information both in the library, information centers and over electronic networks. Public librarians have expanded their roles by providing local community information through publicly assessable computing systems. Some librarians are experts on computers and software. Others are concerned with how computers technologies can preserve the human cultural records of the past or assure that library collections on crumbling paper or in old computer files can still be used by people in many centuries in the future. The work of librarians has moved outside library walls. Librarians have begun to work in the information systems, researchers, and information analysts. They are also found in such field as marketing and public relations and in such organization as law firms, where staff need rapid access to information.

Social responsibility is part of librarianship (Kagan, 2005). The issue of national security is therefore a core value of 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. Thus, the responsibility of libraries and information services rests on the librarian and information scientists of which there lies the need to collaborate with the security

agencies in bringing maximum information services to the public and in this case for national security.

Information is crucial factor in national security. Information remains the only means through which the real integration of people living in political, economic, religious and ideological poles could be brought together, which is through the actual cooperation and exchange of vital information between the two: the terrorist and the terrorized (Terfa, Kwaghga & Ashibi, 2014). There is urgent need for provision of right information, in the right format, for the people, at the right time, and in the right place to stem the tide of ignoramus decadence. Increasingly, librarians have assumed the role of information analysts, information educators and information brokers. The 21<sup>st</sup> century librarians play the role of information broker for both prints and electronic media, who selects, acquires, organizes, repackages and provides access to both digital and print information sources, a change agent', that is a technology application leader who leases with the computer scientist to design and manage cyber security system.

Librarians play another important role as data scientist. To Swan and Brown (2008), data scientists are domain experts with high level technical skills, or computing specialists with in-depth domain knowledge, and whose jobs may cover a range of functions, from organizing, annotating and enhancing raw data to storing, securing and preserving datasets at the end of a project. This supports the librarians focus on people, a social justice orientation, ethical and philosophical underpinnings and promotion of national security. However, in bid to help create a sustainable society, analyzing, organizing and managing information and data will increase peaceful co-existence, and harmonious, and bid as agents of promotion of communal peace and reconciliation. Notably, librarians protect information seekers rights to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed (loaned), acquired or transmitted. The role of the librarians in data-intensive research is important and a strategic repositioning; providing archiving and presentation services for data within the institution through societal repositories towards a viable national security and developing a new professional strand of practice in the form of data librarianship.

## **PROSPECT OF LIBRARIANS IN INFORMATION DISSEMINATION**

Historically, the astronomy librarians' role has been to gather and preserve, and to store and retrieve the organization knowledge. We live today in an information age that has transformed by the world wide web. It has contributed to an increased demand for the librarians skills in effectively organization and distributing this information. Librarians are natural candidates for playing a supportive role min national security because of their experience of promoting viable and up to date information. Though, the rate of technological information techniques and adoption in developing countries cannot be compared to the rate of technological information techniques in developed countries. Hali (2003) is of the view that developing countries are also facing an information explosion and relatively high number of information seekers who desire information on an everyday basis. Therefore, efficiency and effectiveness of information distribution by information specialist (librarians) and access by information users will potentially help developing countries to eliminate extreme insecurity.

Librarians and other information specialists are professionals tasked with the mandate to manage information or document throughout their life cycle; thus from time, information is created to the time it is disposed or discarded. In this information age, librarians create and disseminate information as it is treated as an economic resource or as a catalyst to national

security, development and for making good decision. Martins (1995) confirms this by defining information society as a society in which the quality of life as well as prospects for social change and economic development depends upon access to information to meet their needs and requirement whether the resources are in print, non-print/electronic or in any format. The 21<sup>st</sup> century librarian's prospects and skills according to include:

- Knowledge workers/brokers.
- Digital curators.
- End users trainer/educators.
- Web organizer and designer, interface designer.
- Knowledge manager/knowledge broker, knowledge mapping skills.
- Researcher.
- Change agents.
- Website builder and publisher.
- Sifter of information resources.
- Content manager.
- Consortia manager, strategic planning, systems development and project management.
- Marketing and presentation skills.
- Technical, management and information technology skills.
- Advocate (act as a lawyer e.g. concerning issues such as copyright law and intellectual property rights).
- Consultant, service orientation, collaborator.
- Mentor, leader, financial manager.

Therefore, librarians are expected to provide and disseminate information that is essential to create peace, stability and development. However, information dissemination as such constitutes an important and critical factor for the success of peace. More often than not, some perceive information dissemination to be a one way form of communication, circulating information and advice mainly through mass media in a cost effective and timely manner. In some cases, the media are posters and pamphlets, while some others reliance is exclusively on text based print medium. Societal desire for information might be driven by diverse desires; a story or by simple curiosity (Terfa, Kwaghga, Hajaratu & Ashibi, 2014). Curiosity and the desire to learn about the world can be protected and nurtured by librarians. The freedom to explore and read about other cultures is vital to national security, especially as a tool to mitigate and prevent radicalization.

## **STRATEGIES OF LIBRARIANS TOWARDS NATIONAL SECURITY**

Over time, librarians have successfully established practices and skills to handle the processing, organizing, preservation, retrieval and dissemination of information. Therefore in order to fulfill the present age, libraries require professional and personal competencies to contribute and survive in any nation. George (2011) asserts that librarians' strategies towards national security among others, include:

**Strengthening of intelligence capabilities:** seeking to timely identify and effectively eliminate threats to national security, the librarian(s) will ensure development of human and technical

capabilities of intelligence institutions, which they will develop abilities for reducing vulnerability of the country by active counter intelligence measures, strengthen protection of classified information to seek to identify security gaps and consistently increase the facilitation and implementation of intelligence institutions.

**Proactive links between the ruler and the ruled:** in order to reduce threats posed by organized crime and corruption to public security, economic and political life of the state. The librarians as information gateway will:

- Strengthen prevention and control of the organized crime, with a particular focus on organized criminal groups and terrorist sect with links to the intelligence services of the other countries or terrorist organization, as well as crimes that cause the most harm or pose the latest threat to the society or the state.
- Ensure the spread of information of state/national borders and strengthen information of illegal migration, maintain constant readiness to reintroduce control of all borders.
- Develop capacity and capabilities of public security sub-units or department in her national library to identify and reduce crimes threats of national security by strengthening co-ordination of activities among different parastatals, organizations, institutions and operational inter-institutional and cross border co-operation and by increasing investment in advanced technologies.
- Develop and transmit policies on anti-corruption and corruption prevention measures focused on enhancing transparency and responsibility in the public sector, publicity of the legislative process and decisions, elimination of unnecessary regulation, improve instruments for investigation of corruption crimes and imposing of sanctions.

**Ensuring of information security and security of the Nigeria political system;** in order to create a secure information environment, the librarian will:

- Implement national public awareness and education policy; strengthen media literacy so as to increase public resilience to information threats.
- Promote country-wide dissemination and accessibility of media content which is of adequate quality and based on objective information increase financial transparency of the media.
- Seek to prevent by legal means, the dissemination of information which incites to change the constitutional order of the republic of Nigeria by force and encroaches on its sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence, which spreads war propaganda and instigates war or hatred.
- Strengthen strategic communication capacity of libraries (public, school, academic, and e-library) and develop mechanism for co-ordination of strategic communication carried out by the institutions of the Republic of Nigeria.
- Inform the society and community about information threats and their impact, as well as other partner countries in bilateral and multi-lateral formats in order to prevent information threats and share best practice and experience.

**Strengthening of the preparedness of the society for state defense, strengthening of civil society and the country's cultural and national identity:** in order to enhance the preparedness

of the society in relation to threats arising to the state, promote active citizenship and patriotism of the population, the country's cultural and national identity, the librarian will:

- Enhance integration of diverse union into the state defense system, organize non-violent resistance support roles in civic and patriotic education.
- Foster the society's racial, ethnic and religious tolerance and intolerance of violations of human rights and freedom.
- Seek comprehensive participation of ethnic communities in public life, ensuring cohesive national relations.
- Assist in developing a modern, efficient education system, fostering active citizenry.

**Strengthening of cyber security;** in order to fully strengthen national cyber security, librarians will:

- Develop the national cyber security system, with a particular focus on implementation of cyber security requirements and ensuring of cyber security of the critical information infrastructure and state institutions.
- Facilitate national capabilities to identify and respond to Cyber security incidents and eliminate their consequences.
- Strengthen cyber-security culture through development of co-operation between public, private, non-governmental and academic sectors and cooperation with international partners.
- Alert and create awareness of cyber security issues.
- Improve the system of social support and social services by focusing on the reduction of social exclusion.
- Strengthening of social security, improving of demographic situation, in order to promote the social development, social cohesion and improve the demographic situation.

## **CONCLUSION**

Librarians should be seen as important tools in national security. To adequately address Nigerian security challenges, librarians stand point on security issues must be given attention and modern intelligence information gathering devices must be acquired in which information specialist (librarians) must be deeply involved so as to assist security services, like the state security services, the Army, the Air forces, the Police, Civil Defense corps, the public and other Paramilitary agencies. The issue of national security is everybody business and as such the core value of librarianship, as it also fulfills her custodian and dissemination role. With her inherent nature as information specialist, librarian pave way for peace, stability and helping the society in understanding the essence of national security without which meaningful development and effective and efficient access to information linkage in all sectors will not be meaningful. However, despite the challenges facing the availability and usability of ICTs in Nigeria, librarians must find means of making the facilities and resources available to combat insecurity. It may be noted that if librarians are proactive in her quest in utilizing ICT, insecurity will be combated.

## Recommendation

The following are recommended:

- Librarian should be made to acquire and store modern information technologies resources.
- Librarians should master the art and science in their work environment.
- Recognizing the increasing rate and nature of information, librarians should be make themselves more relevant in knowledge acquisition and dissemination.
- Librarians should re-design a blue print for security consciousness.
- The institutional libraries should create additional department in the library so as to accommodate issues on national security for library staff and students.
- Librarians should be at the fore front of creating security awareness.
- Security agencies should be made to understand the information effect of librarians and work hand in hand with them, towards national security.

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