Evaluation of Nigeria Institute of Advanced Legal Studies' Library

Olowu, Kemi

Principal Librarian, Nigeria

*Corresponding Author: *Olowu, Kemi,* *Principal Librarian, Nigeria*

Abstract: *Evaluation of NIALS is the theme of the paper, through the empirical method of the questionnaire and the first hand two decade experience of the researcher. The annotation on the four sections that make up the library and analysis of results and findings from the returned questionnaires were carefully laid out, valuable suggestions were made which though may be novel in the field of librarianship, may move the profession forward if adopted. Feelers via the suggestion section of the test instrument allowed users to air their expectations of this highly specialised and most well stocked library in Nigeria. Points to ponder were raised for further brainstorming on issues such as rigid acquisition policy, speedy retrospective conversion, adoption of particular software, reduction of time lag in the cataloging section and retraining of library staff. Online repository for rare or out of prints collection is also viewed.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Evaluation in ordinary parlance is a call by a corporation or stakeholders for the value of a company's real property when there is evidence that the company may become insolvent or for taxation purposes. This is done by the assessor, who must be skilled in quantity valuation and accounting methods. For the purpose of this study, however, the realm of valuation which inc1ude~analysis of market data to determine market price and the depreciation and monetization of the earnings or property would not be delved into, as such concepts are alien to librarianship. LISA (Library and Information Science Abstract 1997-2007), a serial of librarianship, suggests synonyms for evaluation which are, performance measures, quality thrusts or research, surveys, tests or appraisal or assessment. Another school of thought views it as weighing the derived value from a system, product or service alongside its aims and objectives.

It is common in the West to constantly evaluate library and information services and products so as to know, how well the system is working or otherwise. This is alien to LDCs where evaluation is not a culture, but it is actually underrated or viewed suspiciously.

Evaluation is therefore a matter for judgment, basically by scientific research. It is a feedback analysis of personnel, collection and services. Hence this work is scientific in approach by the collection, analysis, and interpretation of test instruments. Sweeney [2018] sees evaluation as all concepts of the library such as problems of finance, collection development, serials, user interaction, automation, collection and retention or disposal of stocks (weeding) . He further stresses the preservation and conservation of books, disaster management, security, manual, which according to him all constitute the collection.

Dorner (2014) opines that library evaluation should only assess existing collection strength (ECS) and current collection intensity (CCI) by this later concept, CCI, he attempts to delve into what is the rate of acquisition of relevant materials. This is a sensitive issue as unlike Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC) policy that 10% of income or allocations of parent authorities must be spent in acquiring books into university libraries, the ministry (Justice) ,which NIALS library falls, do not have any such written policy nor set time for acquisitions.

Quantitative measures have always been stressed even though they are not adequate for evaluative thrusts neither are they very meaningful. Head or tail, quantitative analysis is not to be discarded. Given that scientific approach of test instruments, coupled with user satisfaction are still the most

virile, Lancaster (l992) and all notable information workers concluded that anywhere evaluation is spoken of, it must entail quantitative and qualitative terms, and this is the stand this work shall adopt in conjunction with how well the service meets the demand of users. The user satisfaction angle is certainly a dicey terrain as men are certainly hard to please. The angle of user satisfaction cannot be ignored, this explains why there must be an audience participatory method in evaluation.

Unfortunately, the satisfaction a reader gets from finding facts in the library cannot be quantified which would have been the most ideal parameter. Evaluation in all must entail the size of collection, opening hours, staffing, levels, building design and other standards. On the insistence of council of legal education (CLE) evaluation parameters before granting accreditation to or withholding same to a law institute or faculty- to wit organizing the collection with Moy's classification scheme and headship of the library by a law graduate, the former has been complied with, while the headship is yet to fall to a law graduate.

1.1. Synopsis of Nials Library

Scholarly pursuits always playeda key role in the activities of lawyers, Taslim Elias Library is a research library patterned after the parent Instituteof Advanced Legal Studies Library, London. It is a special library serving postgraduate legal researchers, law lecturers, judges and other senior members of the learned profession,as well as its faculty. All law teachers-and postgraduates students from all law faculties in Nigeria and overseas are registrable. In exceptional cases, a handful of undergraduates are admitted.

In 1979 the Institute together with the library, was established by Decree No 18 of 1984 (LFN Cap 310 of 1990) ,was theinstrument for it. The role of its library is to complement and service the academic and research needs. The collection is estimated to be about 80,000 (eighty thousand) titles of textbooks, law reports, journals, government publications, ephemerals, etc. These are manned by highly qualified and proficient professionals who:

(a) Prepare bibliographic reading list~ indexes, abstracts; etc on topical and legal issues both on requests and Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) basis, they also provide Special Services for researchers in and outside the Institute through interlibrary loans; exchange of information, reprographic services, etc.

(b) Undertake the in-house training of both junior and new staff of other law related institutions.

Strictosenso, this library is a non-lending library (no circulation desk). Occasional lending to the Director-General; Ministry of Justice officials and other senior staff of the superior courts are by special arrangements with the Institute Librarian. Categories of registrable users had been mentioned and all readers must be registered, collect their reading cards from the Readers' Services counter, before they can make use of the 1ibrary. Registration fee is N2,000 annually while renewal of membership is N1,000. Hours of opening is Monday - Friday 0800hrs to-1800hrs. While on Saturday, it opens from 0900hrs to 1400hrs.

1.2. The Collection

The holdings of the institute are mainly on law though there are some non-legal materials in the collection formulti-disciplinary reasons. Moy's Classification Scheme specially designed-for law libraries is used for classifying the collection: The *Nigeriana* is shelved on the ground floor. This class KP (own country) is highly consulted- as majority of the law reports, Federal and state laws and other textbooks on, and about Nigeria are in this area. The journals, reviews, magazines, etc, are also shelved alphabetically in Class K also on the groundfloor. Materials inclusive in the collection are statute books, gazettees, law reports from all commonwealth countries, Nigerian law reports and court judgments, journals, reviews etc; Government publications consist of loose leaf supplements, monographs on law and other related subjects, newspaper clippings (scrap books) , publishers catalogues;theses and dissertations;gift libraries; reprints special projects and other non-legal.

1.3. Catalogue

The card catalogue is still very much in use. This classified catalogue in use is in two parts: Author/Title catalogue and the subject catalogue, where all items on a given subject are grouped together. The shelf list is kept in the workroom for usage during stocktaking majorly. There is the

STRIPDEX for the law journals and reviews,etc. In the Acquisitions section is located the KARDEX for the serials holdings. The vital record kept in the cataloguing section is the shelf list within which all cards for books and other materials in the library are filed by call marks to show the exact location of the books on the shelves.

The shelf list is a very useful tool, for it serves for the data input in the computers, for retrospective cataloguing.

1.4. Institute Publications

The frequency dictates the productivity of the institute. They are displayed in glass panes located to the right central part of the ground floor. They are the seminar, lectures, working papers and addresses of reputable scholars and the faculty. They are available for reference only, a few of the titles are available for sale at the bookstand at the entrance of the complex. Besides, the Readers' Services also publish twice a year the 'Subject index to current periodicals received'.

A very handy reading list sought after by law teachers. The publication is very relevant in that, articles of most research activities are first reported in law journals and review, etc, before finally being published in books and most often some never appear in any textbook. "New Additions" is the title of the sectional publication of the Cataloguing section. This comes out twice a year thus two numbers make a volume for the year. This is a veritable selection tool for otherlaw libraries, as NILS is the apex of legal research . It also serves as an exchange material by the library and as update to new acquisitions to readers and the faculty.

The library is made up of four sections viz:

(a) Cataloguing and classification

(b) Acquisitions

(c) Readers'services

(d) Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

1.4.1. Cataloguing And Classification

Cataloguing is the process of describing a book by giving its full bibliographical descriptions, while classification is identifying each title in a unique way by its subjects and thus assigning a mark to make its retrieval easy.

This section houses the shelf list which shows the position of each book on the shelves by arranging serially, the duplicate copy of each manual card. All catalogues, the world over are either author/title, which shows alphabetically on a card-index (3'x5'), the name of the author or the title of the book, or subject catalogue. When the book is duly processed, the call mark is inscribed on it by using a stylus pen.There is also the subject catalogue.

1.4.2. Acquisitions

This section ought to be guided by the acquisitions policy that International Federation of Library and Institutions (IFLA) in its section in 2001 stipulated that written policies must be in place. This should be the framework and parameter within which, staff and users work to meet tasks. Aside guiding for selection, it helps to curtail censorship, individual enthusiasm, and aids cancellations of stock perceived as 'weeds'.

Having established which books to acquire and this often is based on the aims of the parent body, the modus operandi of acquiring books into the library are either by:

(a) Purchases

(b) Donations (Gifts)

(c) Exchanges

(d) Legal deposit (State/National/International)

Interdisciplinary approaches must feature too. Budgetary uncertainties and contrary importation orders on books have adversely affected all libraries. In those guidelines for a collective development

policy using conspectus models (2001), IFLA advises in the introduction that a collective policy is a must to prevent the library from being driven by purchases that will not support the mission statement. Bostic (1988) echoes that written collection development policies help to stick to the goals and will ever serve as guiding principles even when there is a changeof guards.

Gifts and Bequeathals

These are the collections of Late Adetokunbo Ademola, Nigeria's first CJN and those of his son, Justice Adenekan Ademola (Rtd) and ephemerals from Late DejiSasegbon. Like Oliver Twist, NIALS solicits for more of such bequethals from philanthropists. These gifts as collections were duly catalogued, and like late Gani Fawehimi always requested, made accessible to all users.

1.4.3. Readers' Services

Here, service consists of professional personal assistance to individual users. A reference librarian hand leads users to get bettervalue from the library, while not spoon feeding though. It is the public relations unit of the library as it is the portion that the users should normally come in contact with. Here the librarian provides information sought by the user, ideally a complete, accurate answers to his queries. This contact should be initiated by issuing out a library guide/manual, upon due registration, this user education is not yet in existence. It is ideal that the various reference works should be current, if there is a lag, the librarian will be ill-equipped. "A man can not give what he does not have". Efficient services are end-products of effective acquisition of relevant and current materials.

Librarians should be well versed on their collection. This is called local knowledge. The American Library Association's (ALA) Ethics is available to regulate the conduct of all staff of this 'section. Among others, interpersonal communication skills, that is good oral English, humility, empathy and mandatory knowledge ofICT- to aid OPAC and online search.

Dearthof resources exists as no library can have all but hitherto, the internet has helped.

1.4.4. Information Communiction Technology (Ict)

Information and communication technology section (ICT) showcases packet switching networks/ software, workplace terrorism like hacking, etc. These have impeded greatly the ICT invasion of libraries. Ill-considered and inappropriate ICT packages have been forced on LDCs by the western world where cost of systems often exceeded the education budget of some nations. Forensic analysis of infringements are never provided for, neither is a system librarian feasible in most libraries!Librarians lately realize that funding cannot cope with purchase, housing, maintenance of library software and attendant imported, expensive systems, staff and programmes. The fact that this terrain is a high risk online environment is rehearsed in the reported cases of cybercrime,a.k.a. 'yahoo-yahoo'. University computer centre often decline modifying programmes within its sophisticated environment.

Table1. *2007 results: "Highest risk areas for e-commerce"*

Countries	Percentage
Nigeria	27 % of mentions (down from 31 %)
UK	8% UP from 6%
Ghana	7% up from 4%
Indonesia	6 % same as 2006
China	5% up from 3%

Source: *cyber-source/Punch 21/02/08*

This library has deployed TINLIB, Alice FOR WINDOWS, (Afw), KOHA and none of the softwarehas given a headway! Irrespective of the fact that circulation is nonexistent, Retrospective conversion which is to turn to machine readable form, the collection or its data, already catalogued is on in the library, using KOHA now. As the efforts by the libraries of University of Lagos and University of Jos have shown, converting library catalogue to a machine readable form is head or tail, an odious task not only on the readers, but on staff to ensure data input correlates with existing records.

Nevertheless retrospective conversion of the present database continues unabated and has created 28,023 records in the database. Much as twenty years are enough to get enough, if not all into the database, the achievement is far from desirable.Retrospective conversation of existing collection is herculean for even experienced data processing managers. This ICT unit has been delineated from the library since January 2022, a private public partnership (PPP) is being worked out.

2. DATA ANALYSIS

Any library worth its salt should evaluate its stock and services by marrying both qualitative and quantitative surveys. Without quivering, the number of books in the library is more than sufficient,the quality however is to be measured by user satisfaction represented in the questionnaires, which carried well set out questions to gather information. It saved costs as only clients that visited the library were giventhe thirty questionnaires which they frankly, answered at their convenience. It is about one percent of the population of its registered users.

Data analysis below featured the frequency tables and percentages.

Table2. *Users' convenience of library location*

N= 30

	Frequency	%
Very convenient	30	100
Convenient	-	-
Poor Location	-	-
Don't Know	-	-
Total	**30**	**100**

From Table 2 above, the location of the library is convenient, itsaccessibility, noiselessness and standard architectural design were attested to.

Table3. *Consultation of library resources*

N = 30

	Frequency	%
Journals	20	66.6
Books	18	60
Encyclopaedia	-	-
Manual & Handbooks	-	-
ICT::CDrom,Jstor, legalpaedia etc.	21	70
Total	**30**	**100**

Almost all users agreed that journals, local or foreign reports, and other serials are their delight. This attests to the fact that the journals top the frequently consulted volumes in the daily statistics of the readers' services section. Though, they use other resources. Monographs are equally highly consulted because of peer review authority, Serials like encyclopaedia, manuals and handbooks record zero because their presence is quite negligible. At any rate, reading interest of every sector of the user community must be catered for. A lotl use the laptops, either for CD- ROM of books, web search or email.

Table4. *Functions of library staff*

Users' satisfaction with librarian's conduct.N-30

	Frequency	%
Very Satisfied	15	50.0
Satisfied	11	36.67
Dissatisfied	4	13.33
Very Dissatisfied	-	-
Total	**30**	**100**

Table 4 shows that librarians' assistance and conduct are above average, though 13.33% are dissatisfied. While librarians are not doing badly, there is room for improvement.

Table5. *User Satisfaction about organization of resources*

N = 30

	Frequency	%
Properly organized	16	53.3
Fair	12	40.0
Not properly organized	2	6.7
Total	**30**	**100**

Staffareto shelve read daily, 53.3% agreed that there is much sense in the way the library is laid out. 40 % believed its fair and the 6.7% indicate that one may not totally win the war of mis-shelving and other criminal creativity on library resources, especially in the journal section.

Table6. *Users' most consulted resources*

N = 30

	Frequency	%
Personal text books & other resources	18	60
Monographs	27	90
Reference books	2	6.7
Journals & Reports	24	80

Bearing in mind that the average user consults a myriad of resources to solve a particular querry, 60% confirmed the use of personal resources such as texts, jottings, e-resources and residual knowledge. 90% read books while 6.6% use quick reference books. 80% use journals, Nigerian Weekly Law Reports (NWLR) mostly and foreign reports. Finally, a space was provided to allow a free range of suggestions on how to improvement.

2.1. Biannual Library Workshop

Since 1989,a bi-annual workshop is organized by the library, to aid continued legal education. The objectives are grooming of librarians on:

1) Introduction of participants from external law libraries to the methods for evaluating and selecting legal materials.
2) Organizing materials to enable members of the legal profession to explore more.
3) Effective readers' services such as compilation of bibliographies, indexing and abstracting, current awareness services, communication skills, standards for collections.
4) Provision of remote access and visibility of resources via digitalization.

This course content should be updated who listically, as Moy's is now online at: www.adelaide.edu.online. Teaching it physically is now anachronistic. Librarians should think out of the box to bring in current contents into librarianship. Survival after career life, cooperative acquisitions, and so on should lead now.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Pondering through the findings and measures for improvement, further recommendations might be needless, but research must have whatever will spur all concerned to think.

- **Cataloguing Skills:** The curricula of librarianship in the library schools leave much to be desired, manifestation of present crop of professionals in all fields of knowledge is detestable. Every professional should be grounded in the nitty gritty of the schemes, he is to work with later, and with scientific exactitude be able to catalogue books in order to shorten the time lag and class mark variations.Though extension services via the bi-annual workshops may be reaching out. For instance, the subject headings and jurisdictional considerations in placing books, atimes are controversial.

- **Due Process and Librarianship:** Dada (2007) adduces that books are unique among all other wares of commerce and this makes the purchase require special consideration and handling. He briefly mentioned "due process" designed by Nigeria to basically control spending and promote accountability in all ministries. One may then ask rhetorically, has this been able to curtail corruption or spending? No.

The modicum of red tape bureaucracy in the public service where, for example a newly employed officer who applied for certain benefits, got the approval for same when he was to retire after thirty five years in service, makes classifying books under this process abysmal. Prints are carriers of information that are produced at exponential rates which necessitates amendments at times. If through officialdom, the edition ordered comes in belated.

- **For Fee or for Free:** The incessant complaint about funds makes the advocates of fee-based library services reasonable. It is a point to ponder that clients should be made to pay for services which are sure to increase efficiency and overall performance. This may be a ground for brainstorming as Nigerians are not compulsive readers ordinarily.

- **Users' Consultative Forum:** Readers should be consulted formally or informally about development likely to affect them before such acts areeffected. Certain staff members are often preferred by users, to others and a few users have complained about random postings that negatively affect advisory roles. The practice of book fetching is often unsatisfactory. The closed access volumes are housed away from public glare and staff members are reluctant to thoroughly search for the desired books. Whatsapp group of readers can be formed, so as to get feedback on services. Book selection can also entail ample consultation with users or a form for suggested titles can be created.

- **Electronic Corners:** Presently there is an electronic corner for legal databases and OPAC, though no constant internet yet. No product (databases) is of any relevance if it lies fallow, and since access to information stored electronically is ruling the world, *ad infinitum,* electronic corners as a matter of urgency should be created where the internet can be accessed at a fee and OPAC (online public access catalogue),where at a glance the entire print stock in the library can be seen. In Estonia, all libraries have internet points accessible to all free.

- **Adequate Reprographic Services:** The temptation to pilfer resources by pulling out pages is rampant. Though this is greatly minimized, but it still occurs. If more units of photocopy services are provided, and alternative power source steps in during power outages, monopoly will be broken and easily users can have the desired pages reproduced.

- **Headship of Law Libraries:** The Council of Legal Education (CLE) legislated that a lawyer librarian should head this library. He must possess a librarianship qualification, as well as hold a law degree. He is a specialist, with a good knowledge of law and its literature. He must be conversant with law and its machinery-grades of courts, legal entities/ students, practitioners and peculiarities of law. In foreign lands, law librarians are only appointed after consultations with the head of the law school.

REFERENCES

Akintunde, S. A. Say it again; we just took off: Nigeria Libraries. Vol.36. 1 - 14.

Bostic, Mary (2018) A written collection development policy: To Have or Have not. Collection Management, Vol.110 (3/4). 96 - 97.

Dada T. O. In National Workshop on Technical Services in Law Libraries, NIALS Lagos 26th - 28th June, 2007.112 - 128 (Unpublished)

Davies, J. E. In what's the use of a library: Assessing Performance and outcome Law Librarian 31(3) Autumn 2000.166 - 174.

Dorner, D. E. In Evaluation Library Information Science Research 16(4) Fall 2004.279 - 297.

Owasanoye, B., Technology and legal education in Nigeria In Legal Education for twenty First Century, NIALS. 2000. 160 - 176.

Packham, K.Installing LANs in British libraries. Library research.Vol.89(3). 45-47.

, Peter (ed) End-user searching: Effective gateway to published information ASLIB, October 2019, 12-14.

IFLA: The public library service guidelines for development 64th IFLA Netherlands 17th August, 1998. IFLA Vol. 24, (5/6)   301.

IFLA: Guideline for collection development: Using the conspectus model 2001.1-3

Lancaster, F. W. If you want to event your library,London Library Association, 2012. 345

Teasley, B. E.,Leventhal, L. &Rohman D., In I.C.T *International Journal of Human computer studies* 4(5) November 2004. 717 – 749.

Sweeney, J. (2018) Library and Information work worldwide, London, Bowker-Saur 18. 121 - 150.

Zaid, Y. A. Automating library records using GLAS software. The UNILAG experience.*Nigerian Libraries* .Vol.38. 56. - 67.