

**“THE LIBRARY, THE ACADEMIC LIFE WIRE OF A
UNIVERSITY SYSTEM”**

By

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A UNIVERSITYWIDE PUBLICLECTURE DELIVERED

ON WEDNESDAY, 4TH JUNE, 2014 AT 12.30 P.M.

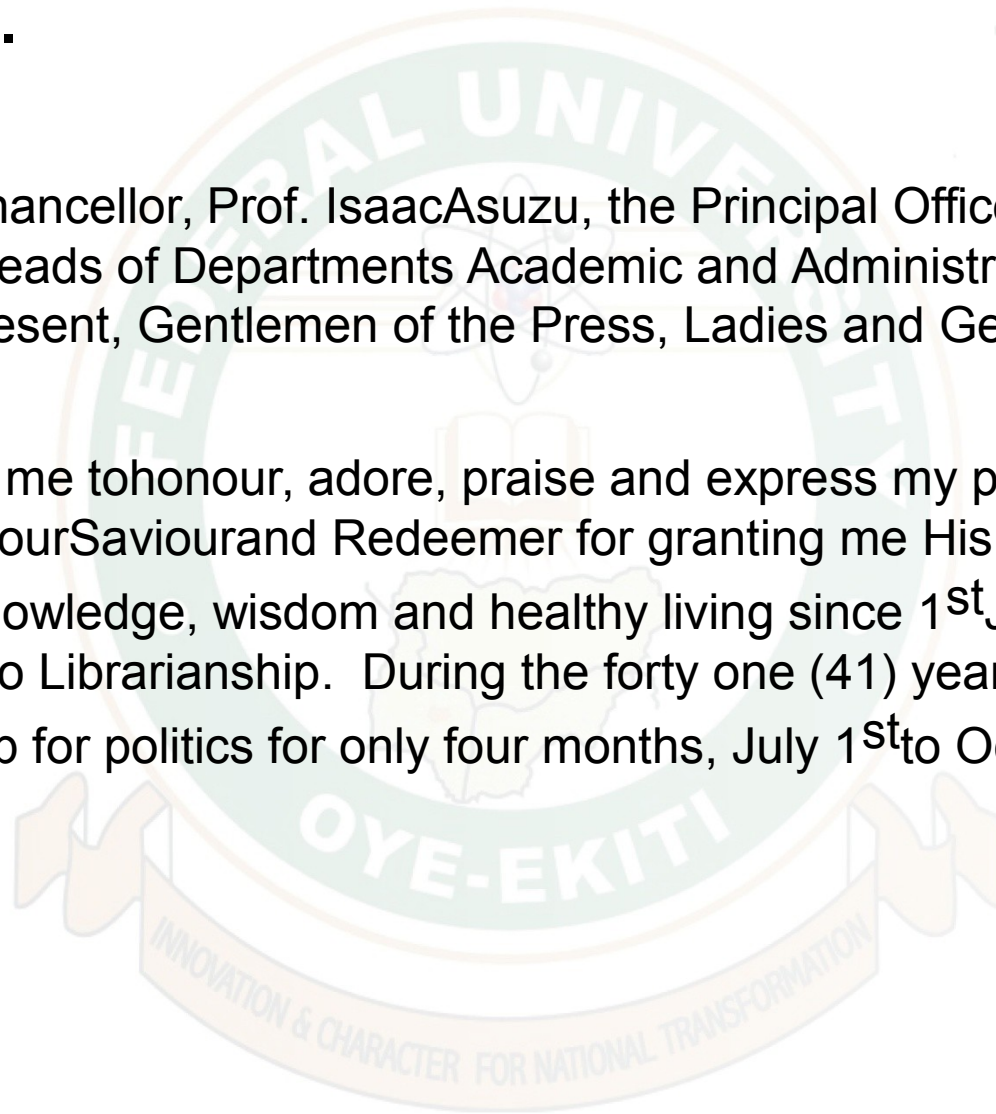
AT THE UNIVERSITY MAIN AUDITORIUM





- **Protocol.**

- The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Isaac Asuzu, the Principal Officers, Deans, Directors, Heads of Departments Academic and Administrative Staff, All Students present, Gentlemen of the Press, Ladies and Gentlemen.
- Please, join me to honour, adore, praise and express my profound gratitude to our Saviour and Redeemer for granting me His protection, direction, knowledge, wisdom and healthy living since 1st July, 1973 when I entered into Librarianship. During the forty one (41) years, I was out of Librarianship for politics for only four months, July 1st to October 30th, 1983.



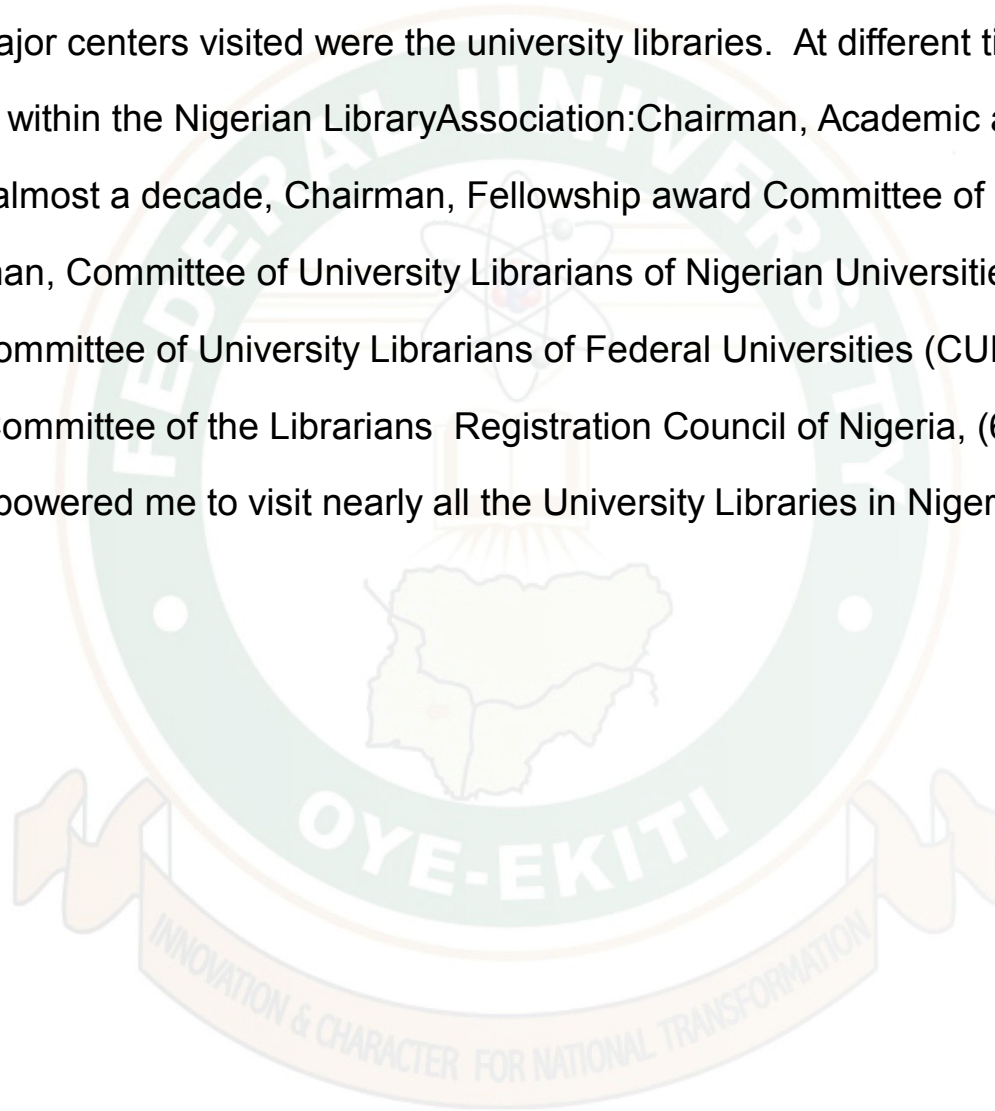
- At the initial stage of my career in Librarianship, I was privileged to be trained and be retrained outside Nigeria. I had a three months training in Librarianship at the College of Librarianship Aberystwyth, Wales from July to September 1978.
- Two years later, I had a two-month training at Pittsburg University, U.S.A. My training in Wales included visits to notable university and public libraries in Britain including British Museum. Similar visits to notable university libraries and the Library of Congress were undertaken while I was receiving training at the University of Pittsburg.



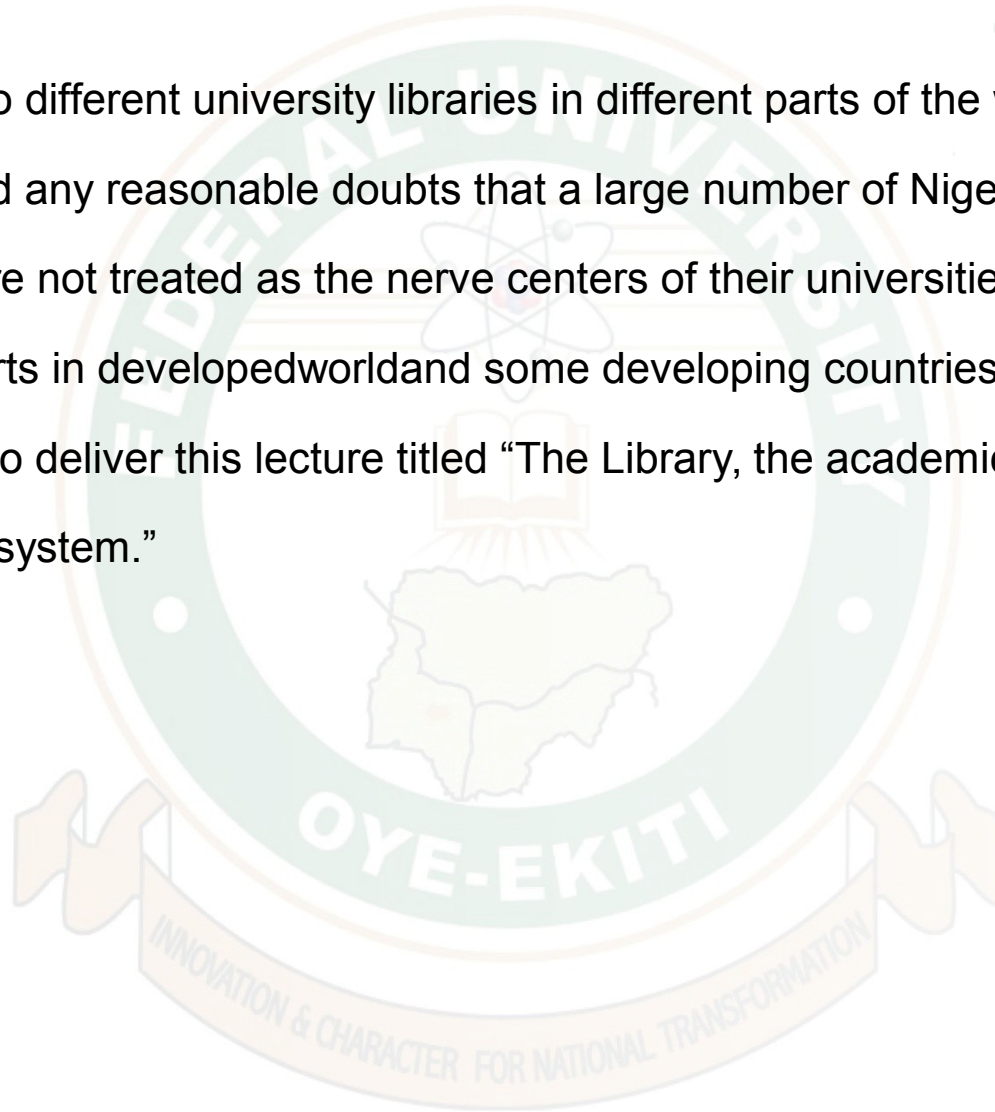
- One of my research topics, organization of African Unity, Sponsored by the University Research Committee Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, took me to about 85% of African countries, Britain, France and Belgium. Visits to university libraries and the National Libraries of the countries visited were built into the research programme.
- With effect from 2007, when Obafemi Awolowo University secured a 2.8 million U.S. dollars Carnegie Corporation of New York, Grant for the automation of its Library, I had the privilege of travelling to South Africa (2 times) South Korea, Ontario in Canada, Slovakia in Europe, Tunisia, and Israel to attend conferences, workshops and the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA).



- Among the major centers visited were the university libraries. At different times, I held some key positions within the Nigerian Library Association: Chairman, Academic and Research Libraries for almost a decade, Chairman, Fellowship award Committee of NLA for seven years, Chairman, Committee of University Librarians of Nigerian Universities, (CULNU); Chairman, Committee of University Librarians of Federal Universities (CULFUL); Chairman, Verification Committee of the Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria, (6 years) etc. These positions empowered me to visit nearly all the University Libraries in Nigeria.

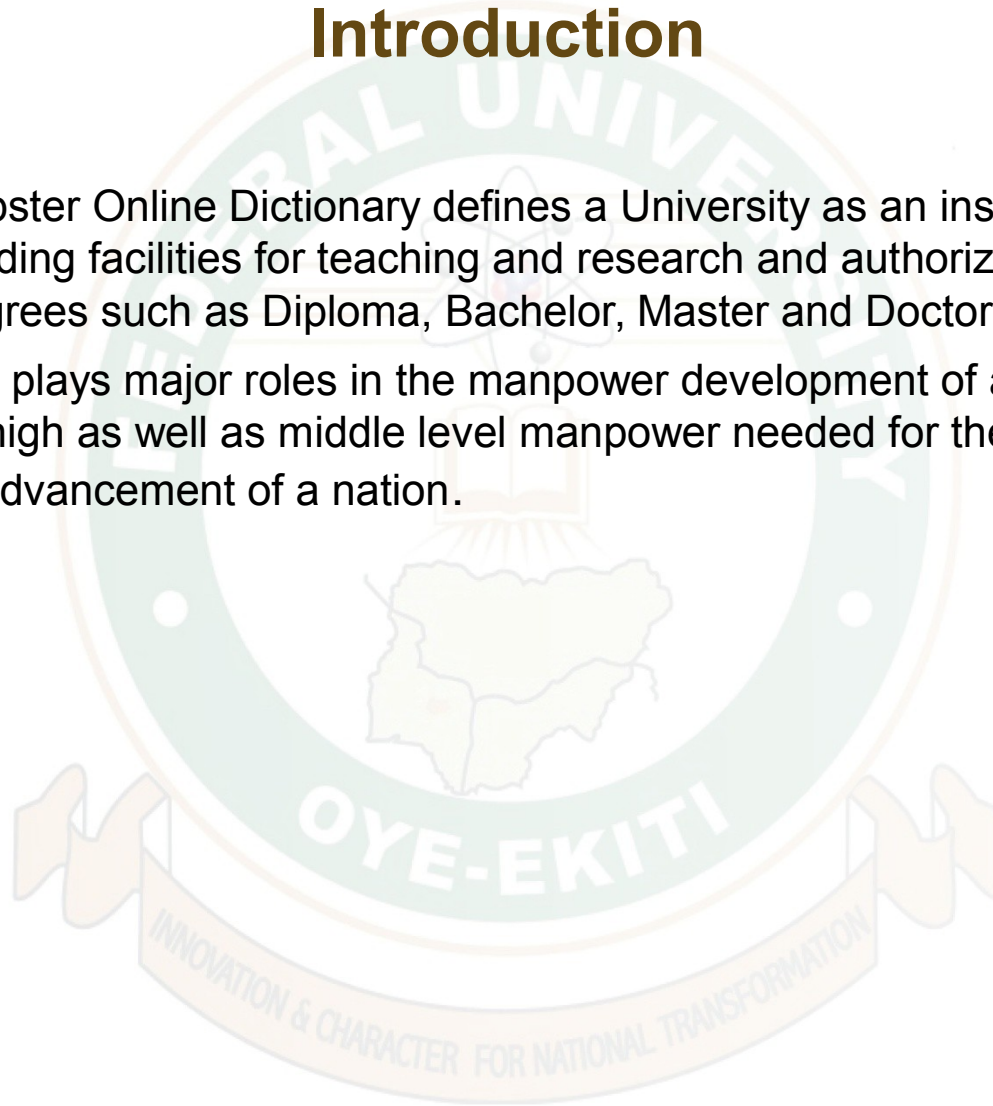


- My visits to different university libraries in different parts of the world convinced me beyond any reasonable doubts that a large number of Nigerian university libraries are not treated as the nerve centers of their universities as their counterparts in developed world and some developing countries. For this reason, I decided to deliver this lecture titled “The Library, the academic life wire of a university system.”



Introduction

- Merriam- Webster Online Dictionary defines a University as an institution of higher learning providing facilities for teaching and research and authorized to grant academic degrees such as Diploma, Bachelor, Master and Doctorates.
- The University plays major roles in the manpower development of any nation, since it provides the high as well as middle level manpower needed for the social, economic and political advancement of a nation.



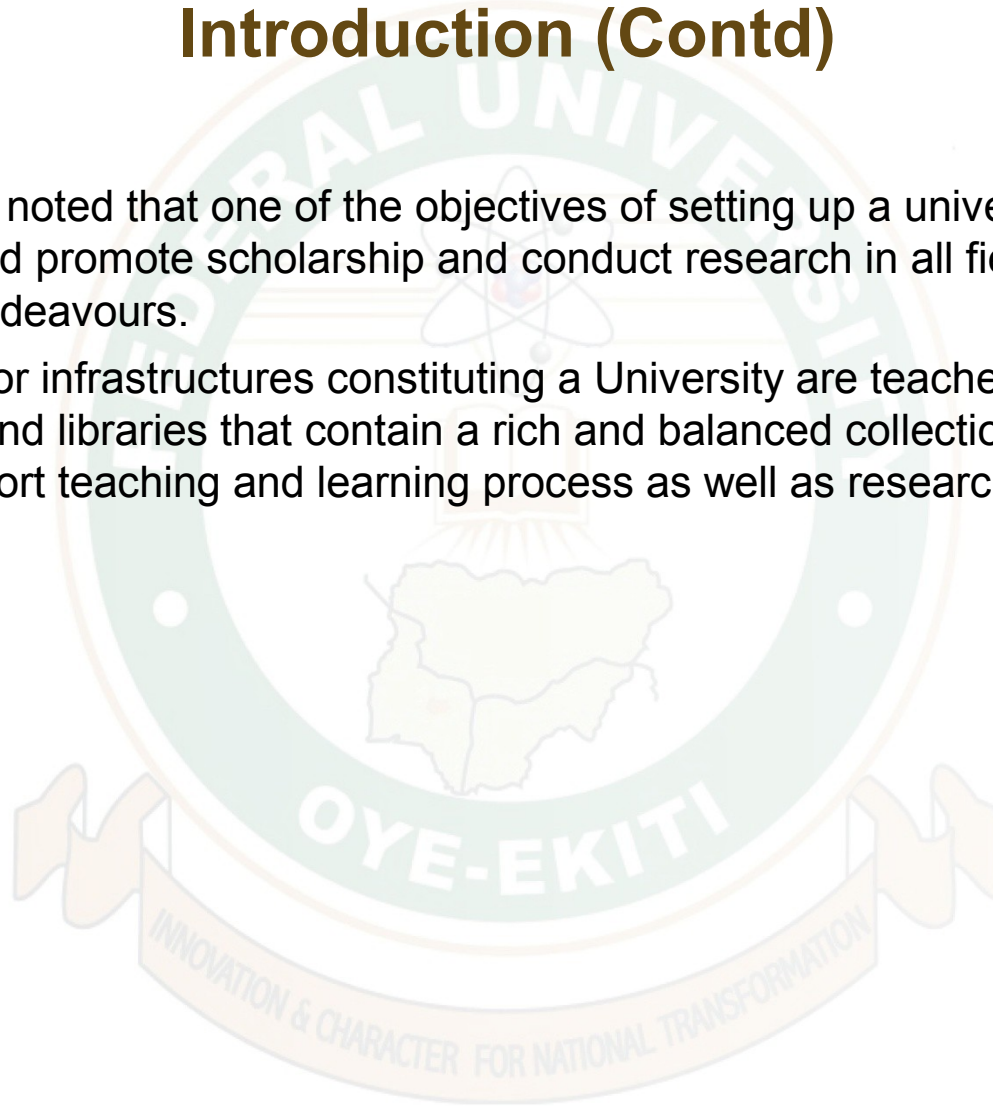
Introduction (Contd)

- According to Okiy(2010), all these are done through its programme of teaching, learning, research and community services. According to Wikipedia, the Online Encyclopedia, the word “university” is derived from the Latin Phrase *universitas magistrorum et scholarium* which roughly means “community of teachers and scholars”



Introduction (Contd)

- Ajibero(2004) noted that one of the objectives of setting up a university is to encourage and promote scholarship and conduct research in all fields of learning and humanendeavours.
- Thethree major infrastructures constituting a University are teachers/classrooms, laboratories and libraries that contain a rich and balanced collection and equipment that can support teaching and learning process as well as research.

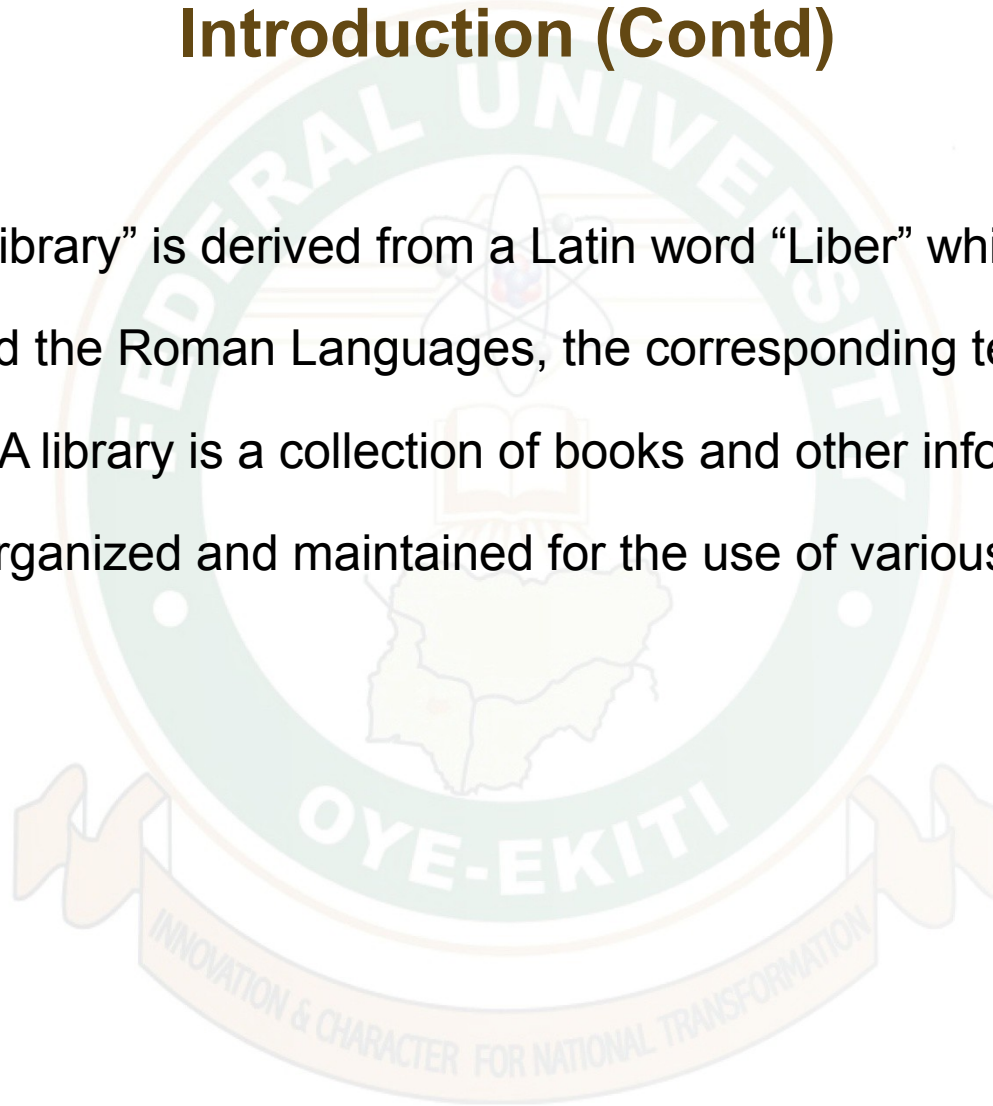


3 Major infrastructures constituting a University



Introduction (Contd)

- The word “Library” is derived from a Latin word “Liber” which means book. In Greek and the Roman Languages, the corresponding term is bibliotheca. A library is a collection of books and other information resources organized and maintained for the use of various level of library patrons.



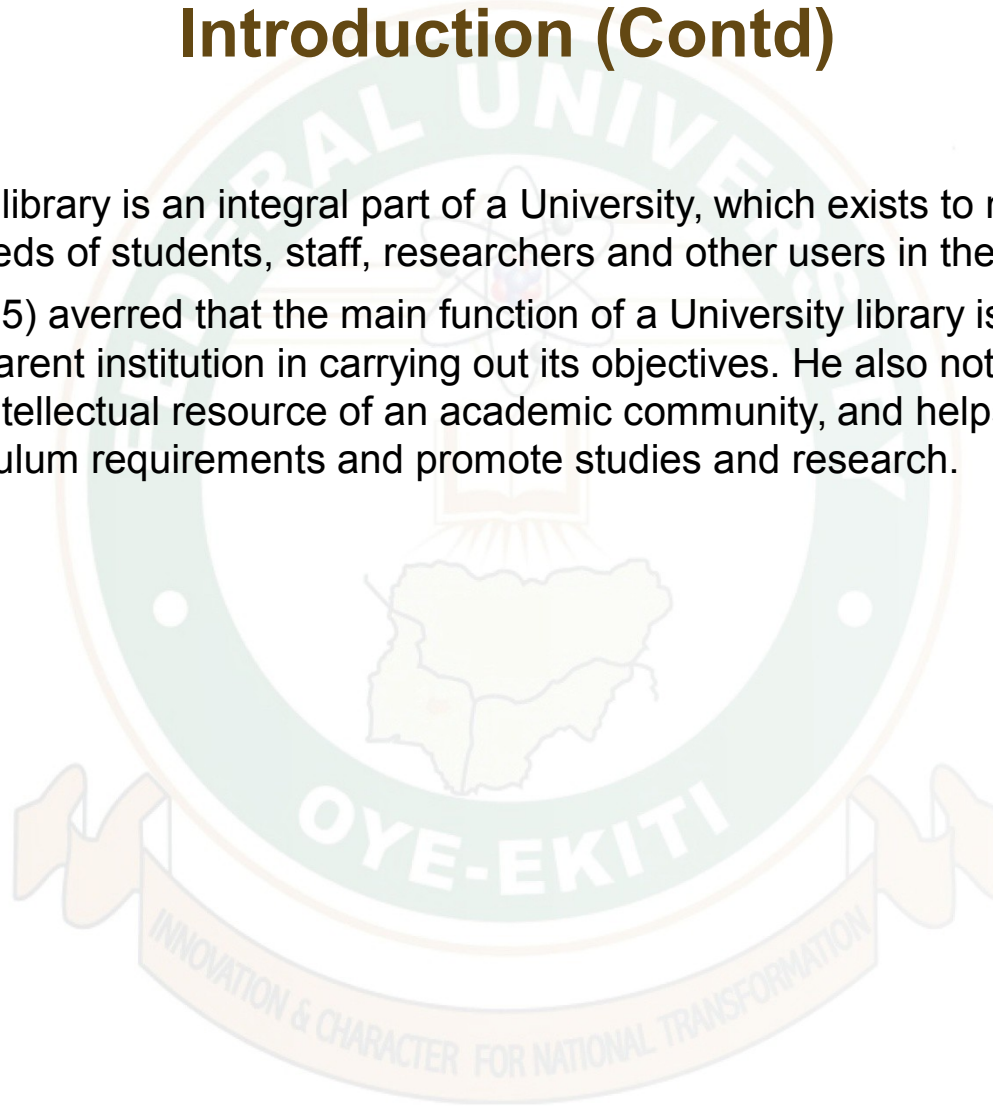
Introduction (Contd)

- Aina(2012) gave a modern definition of a library as a place where print, digital and other non- print materials are collected, organized and made available for access and use.
- The library may be made of walls, where these materials are stored; or it could be virtual, where all the information needed is stored on a computer with internet facilities, which will be accessible to its users. He further affirmed that the ultimate aim of a library is to provide information, which when accessed and used, could lead to knowledge generation and national development.



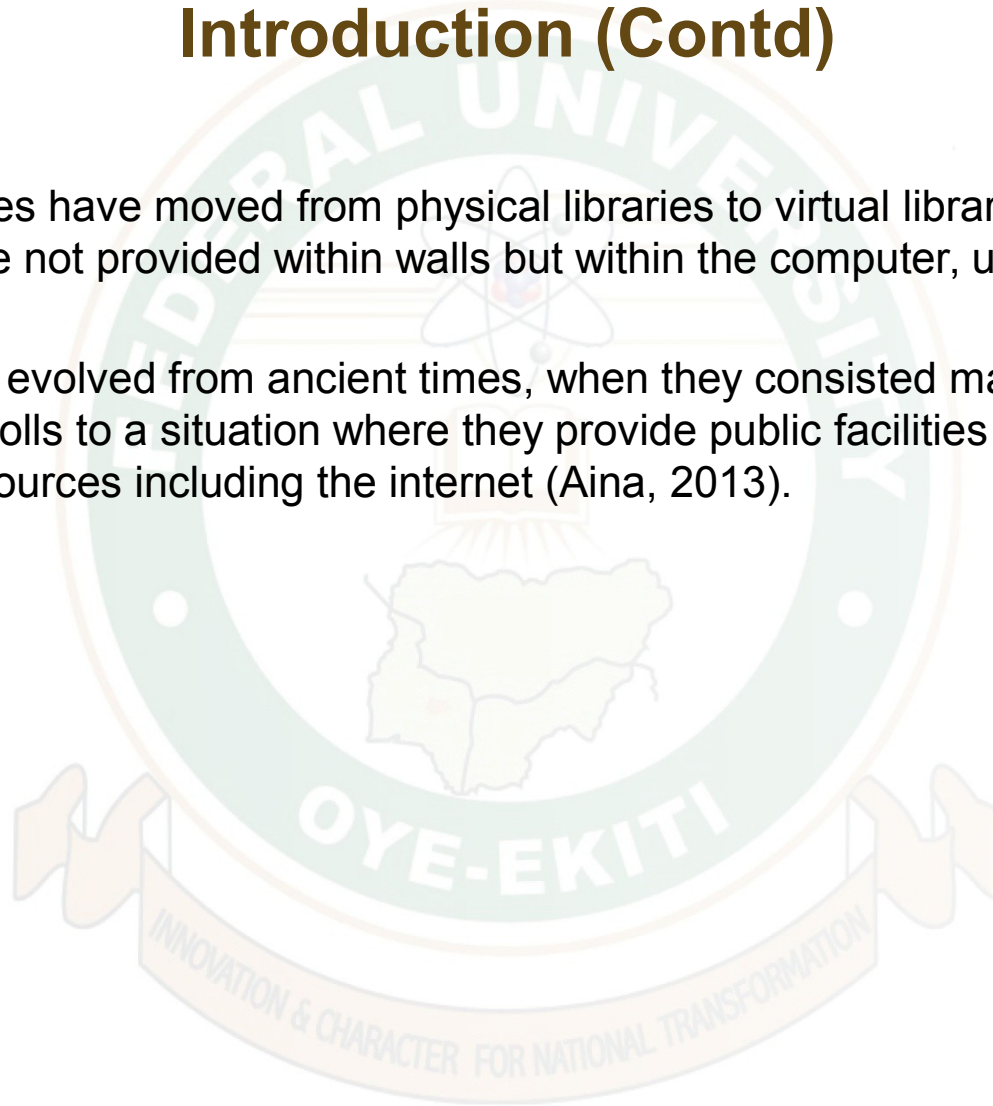
Introduction (Contd)

- The University library is an integral part of a University, which exists to meet the information needs of students, staff, researchers and other users in the community.
- Rejendran(2005) averred that the main function of a University library is to serve as an auxiliary to a parent institution in carrying out its objectives. He also noted that the library is an important intellectual resource of an academic community, and helps the university to fulfill the curriculum requirements and promote studies and research.



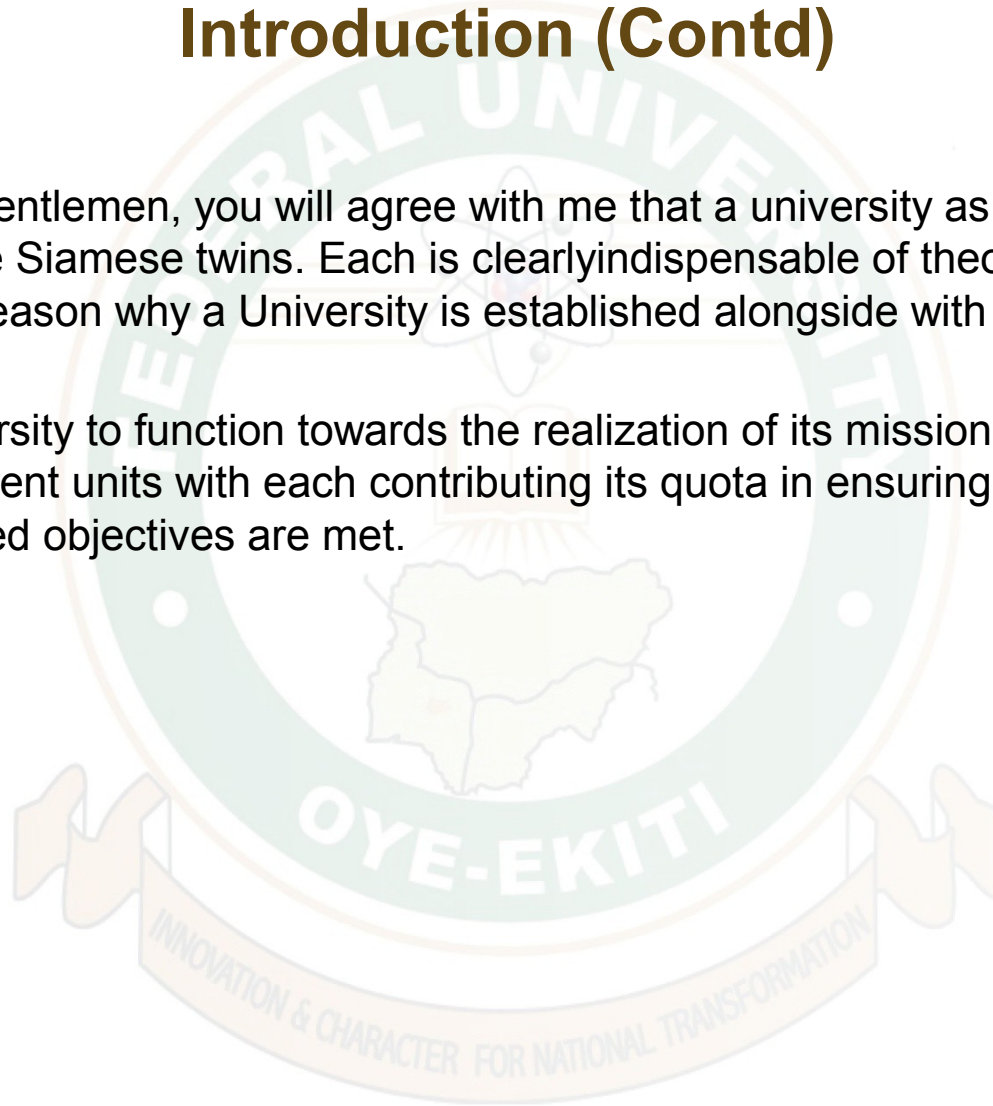
Introduction (Contd)

- Today, Libraries have moved from physical libraries to virtual libraries, where the collections are not provided within walls but within the computer, using digital resources.
- Libraries have evolved from ancient times, when they consisted mainly of clay tablets and papyrus rolls to a situation where they provide public facilities for access to their electronic resources including the internet (Aina, 2013).



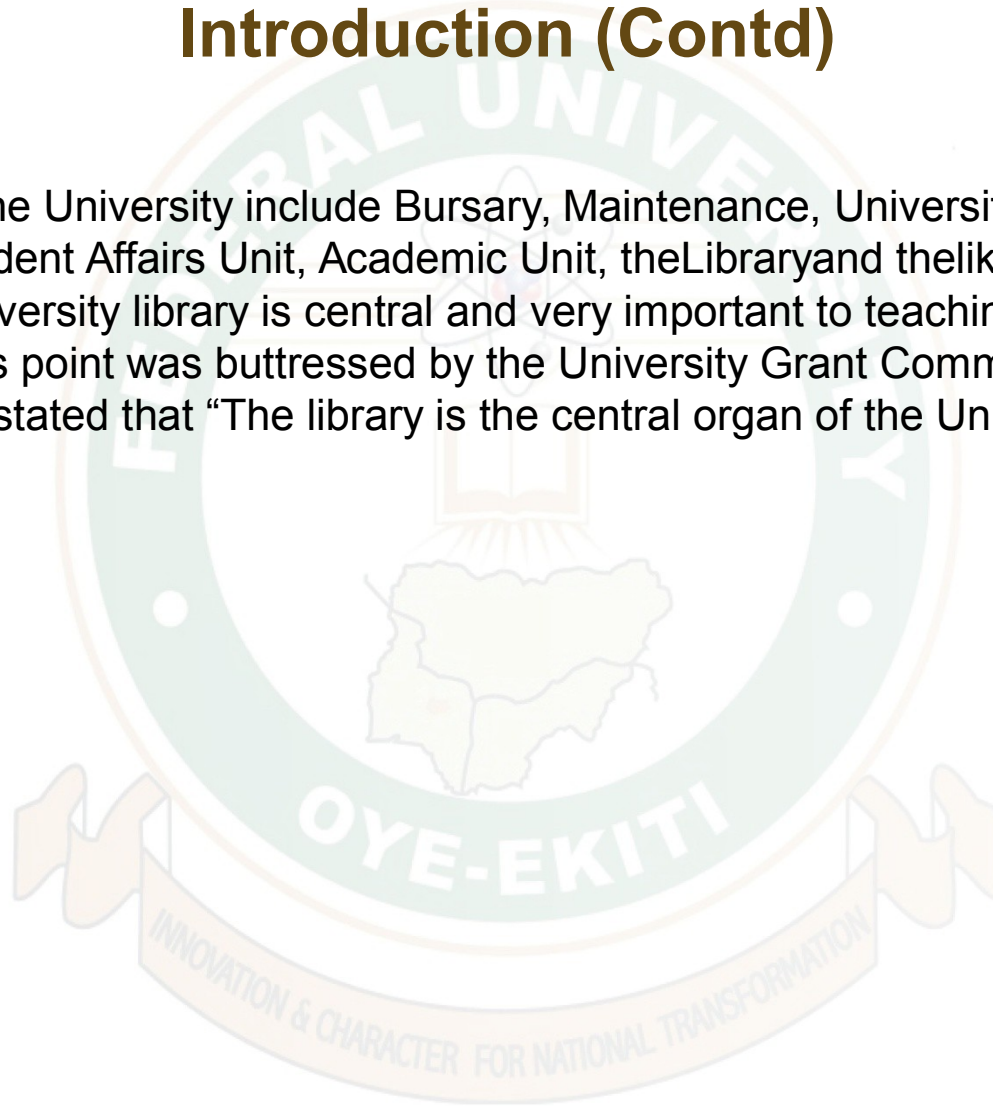
Introduction (Contd)

- Ladies and Gentlemen, you will agree with me that a university as an institution and library are like Siamese twins. Each is clearly indispensable of the other and this is the singular reason why a University is established alongside with its library at all costs.
- For the University to function towards the realization of its mission and vision, it is made of different units with each contributing its quota in ensuring that the institutionalized objectives are met.



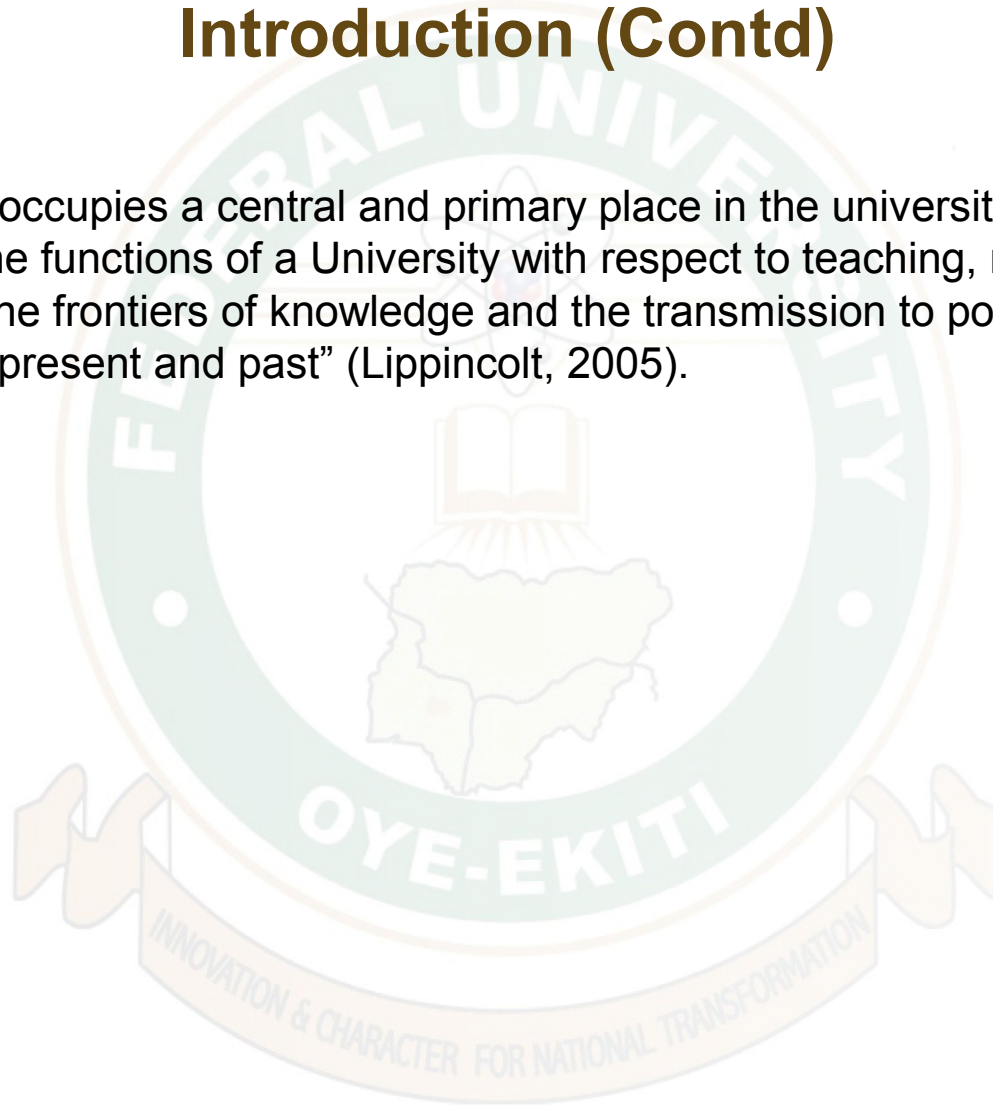
Introduction (Contd)

- The units in the University include Bursary, Maintenance, University Health Services, Student Affairs Unit, Academic Unit, the Library and the like. Out of all the Units, the University library is central and very important to teaching, learning and research. This point was buttressed by the University Grant Committee of Great Britain which stated that “The library is the central organ of the University.



Introduction (Contd)

- As a result, it occupies a central and primary place in the university, because it supports all the functions of a University with respect to teaching, research, extension of the frontiers of knowledge and the transmission to posterity the learning culture of the present and past” (Lippincott, 2005).



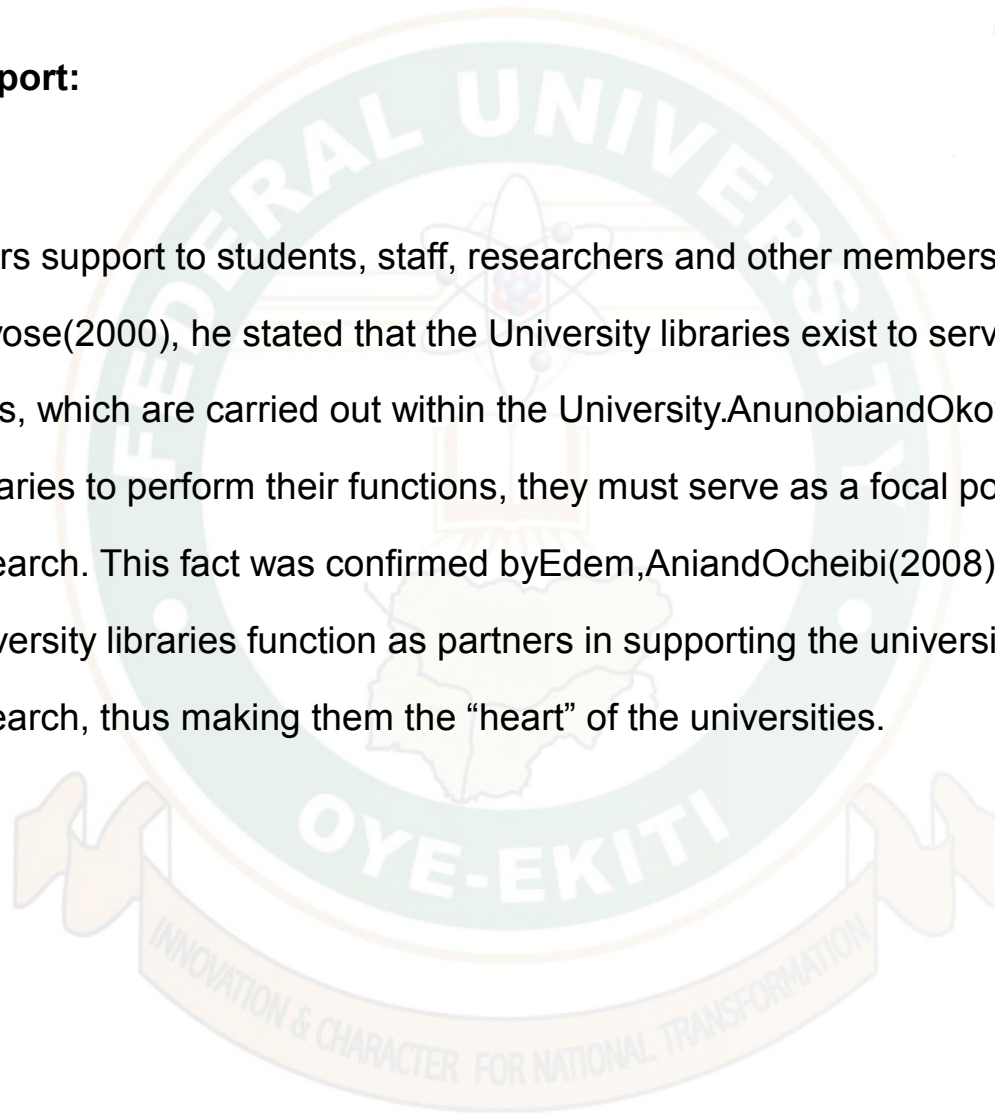
IMPORTANCE OF THE LIBRARY IN THE UNIVERSITY SETTING

- The library is indeed the life wire of a university system for it performs myriads of functions in assisting the university to achieve the various goals set out in her mission and vision statements. Generally, the usefulness of library in the life of a university cannot be discussed exhaustively in a forum like this, but I will like to bring into mention the following salient roles:



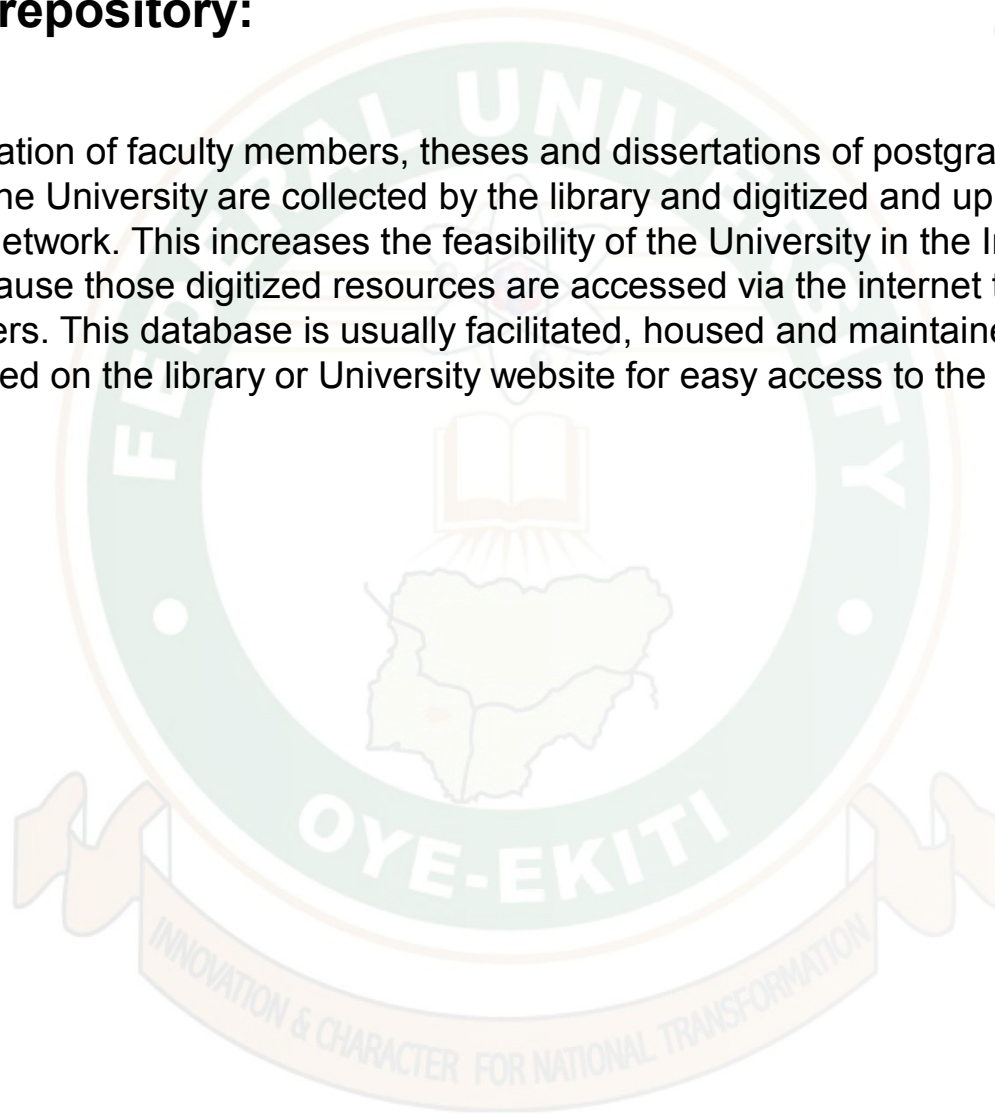
1. Academicsupport:

- The library renders support to students, staff, researchers and other members of user community. As posited byFayose(2000), he stated that the University libraries exist to serve the teaching and research activities, which are carried out within the University.AnunobiandOkoye(2008) noted that for University libraries to perform their functions, they must serve as a focal point for teaching, learning and research. This fact was confirmed byEdem,AniandOcheibi(2008), as they expressed the idea that University libraries function as partners in supporting the university in teaching, learning and research, thus making them the “heart” of the universities.



2. Institutional repository:

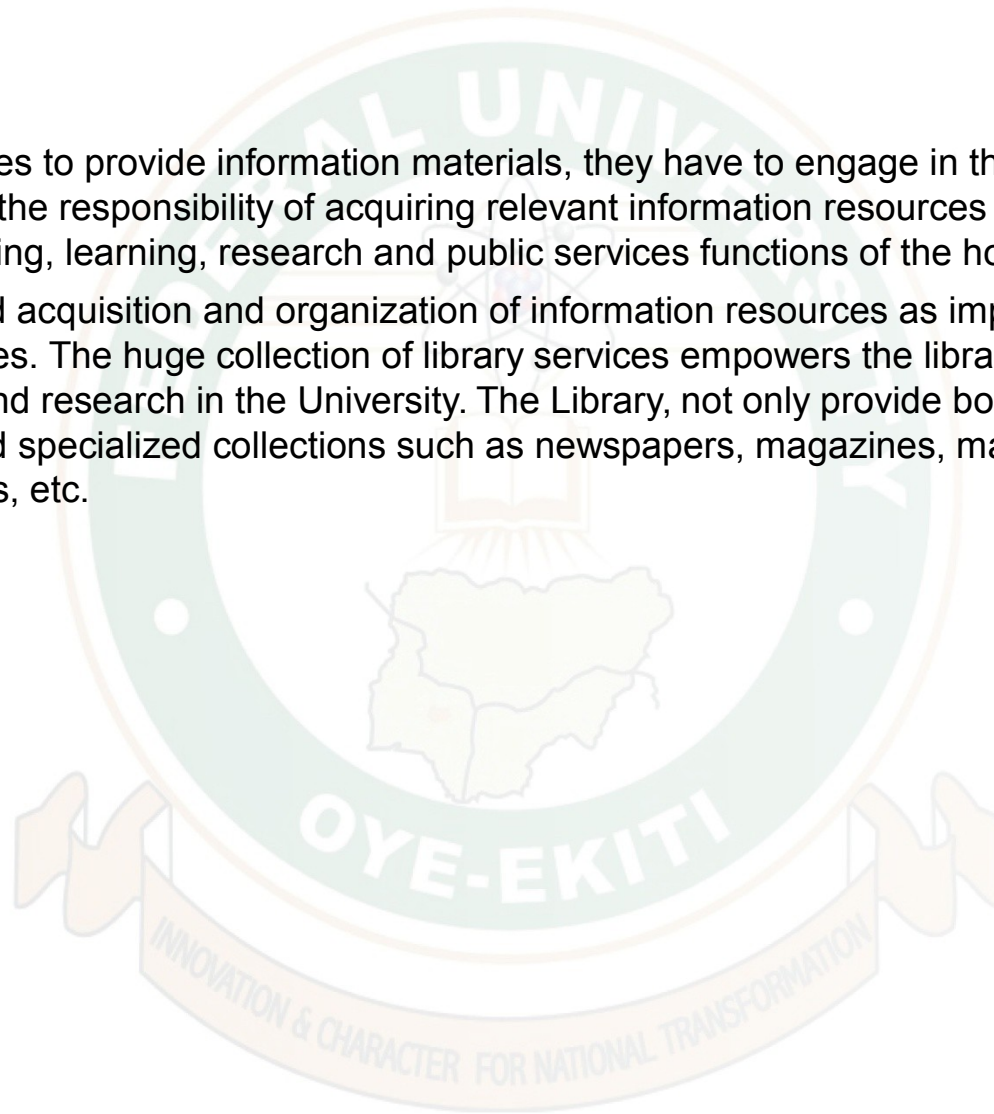
- Scholarly publication of faculty members, theses and dissertations of postgraduate students, and publications of the University are collected by the library and digitized and uploaded into a database on a network. This increases the feasibility of the University in the International Community because those digitized resources are accessed via the internet to both local and international users. This database is usually facilitated, housed and maintained in the library. A link is usually provided on the library or University website for easy access to the resources.



3. Acquisition of Information resources like books, journals, electronic databases:

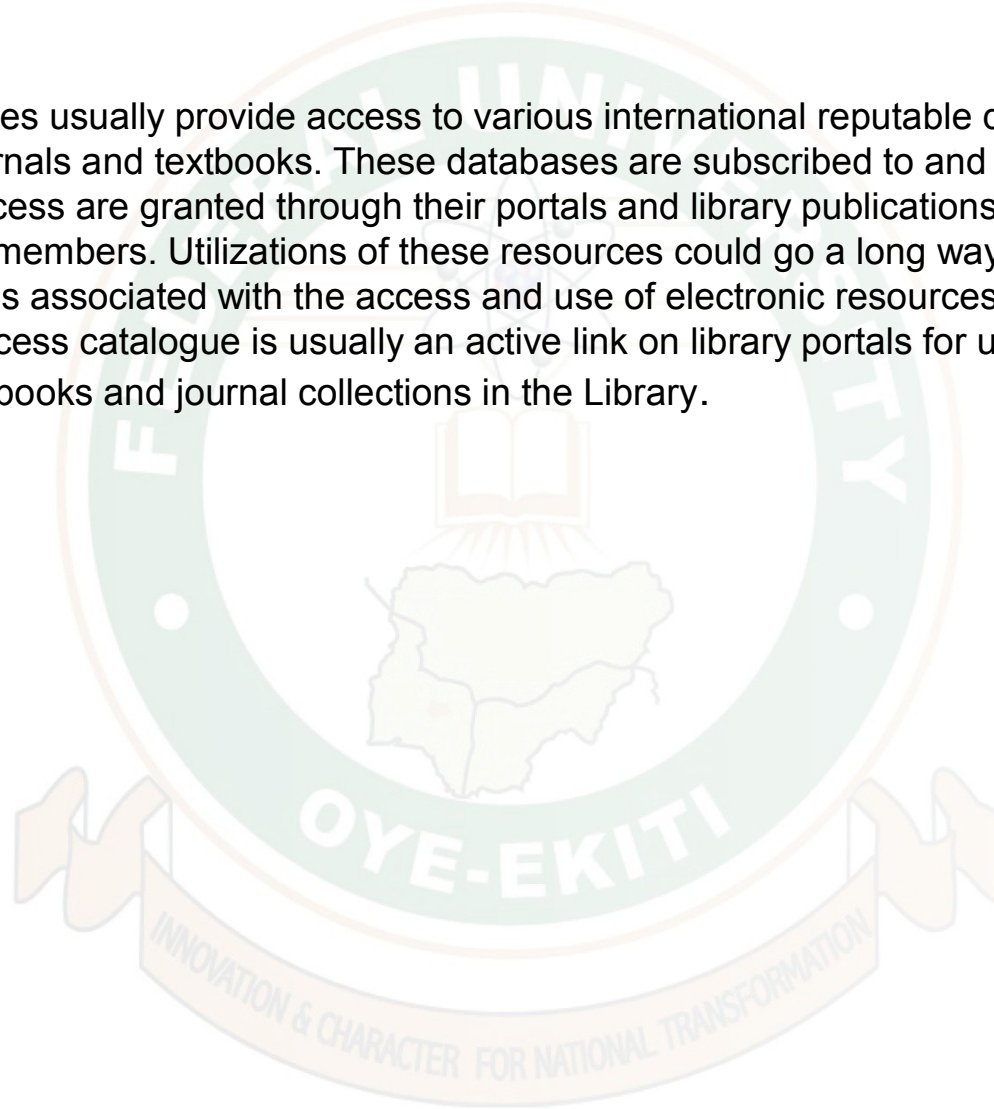
For University libraries to provide information materials, they have to engage in the acquisition function. They have the responsibility of acquiring relevant information resources needed for sustaining the teaching, learning, research and public services functions of the host Universities.

Ifijeh(2011) identified acquisition and organization of information resources as important activities of the University libraries. The huge collection of library services empowers the library to support the learning, teaching and research in the University. The Library, not only provide books and journals, but also generalized and specialized collections such as newspapers, magazines, manuscripts, museum objects, photographs, etc.



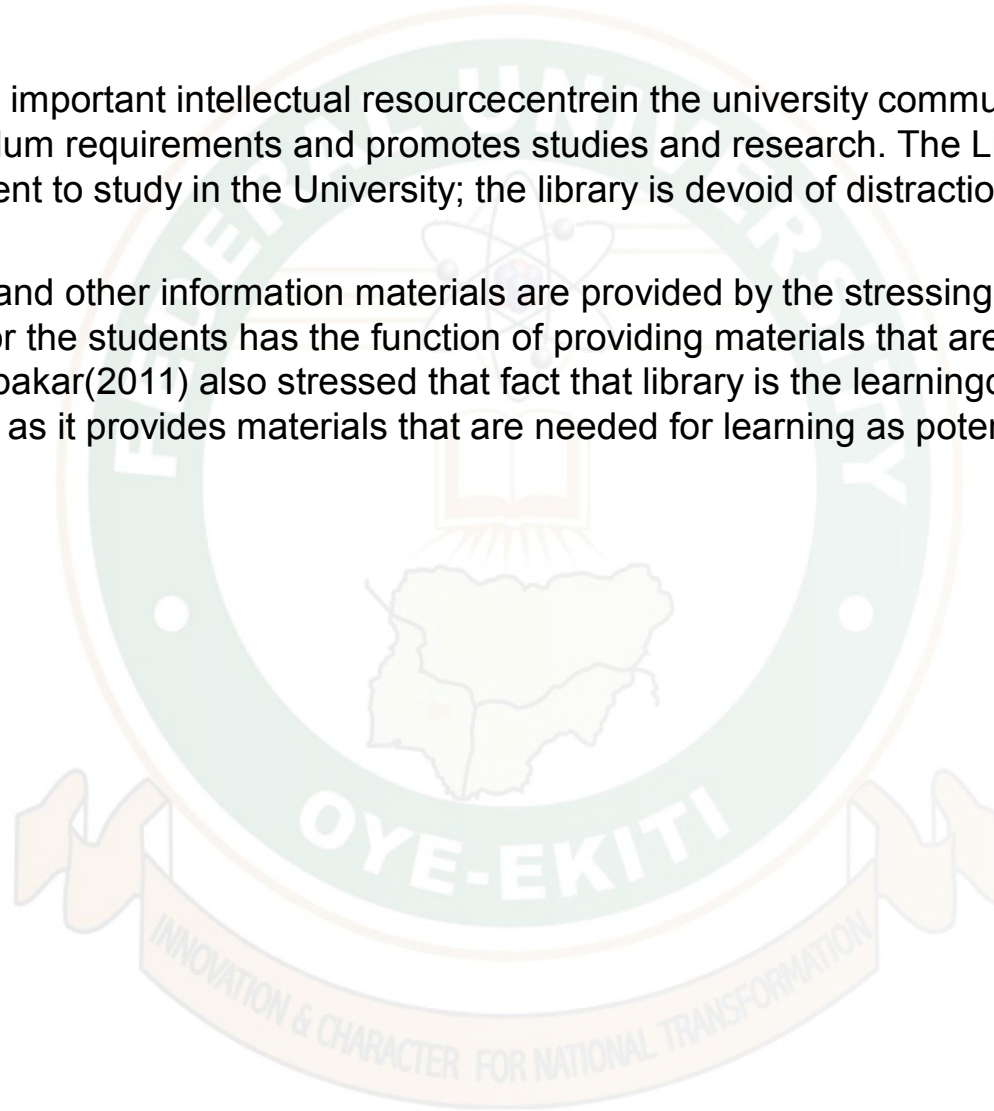
4. Gateway to access electronic resources:

- University libraries usually provide access to various international reputable database of electronic database of journals and textbooks. These databases are subscribed to and paid for by university libraries and access are granted through their portals and library publications like bulletin and e-mails to faculty members. Utilizations of these resources could go a long way in surmounting various problems associated with the access and use of electronic resources via the internet. The online public access catalogue is usually an active link on library portals for users to access the various titles of books and journal collections in the Library.



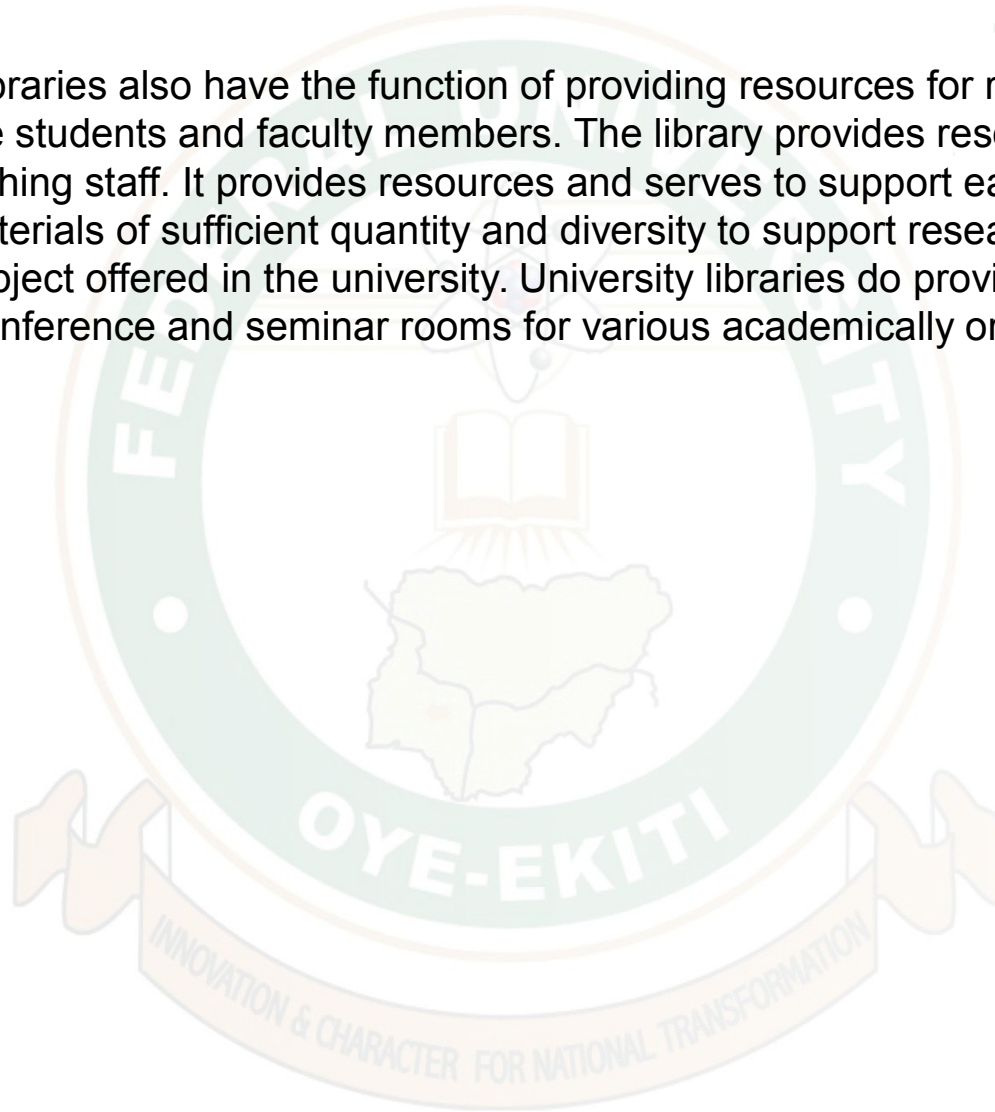
5. Library as a Learning centre for students:

- The library is an important intellectual resource centre in the university community and helps to fulfill the curriculum requirements and promotes studies and research. The Library is the best place for a student to study in the University; the library is devoid of distractions associated with classrooms.
- Relevant books and other information materials are provided by the stressing that library as a learning centre for the students has the function of providing materials that are needed for learning all courses. Abubakar (2011) also stressed that fact that library is the learning centre to the undergraduates as it provides materials that are needed for learning as potential courses that may be offered.



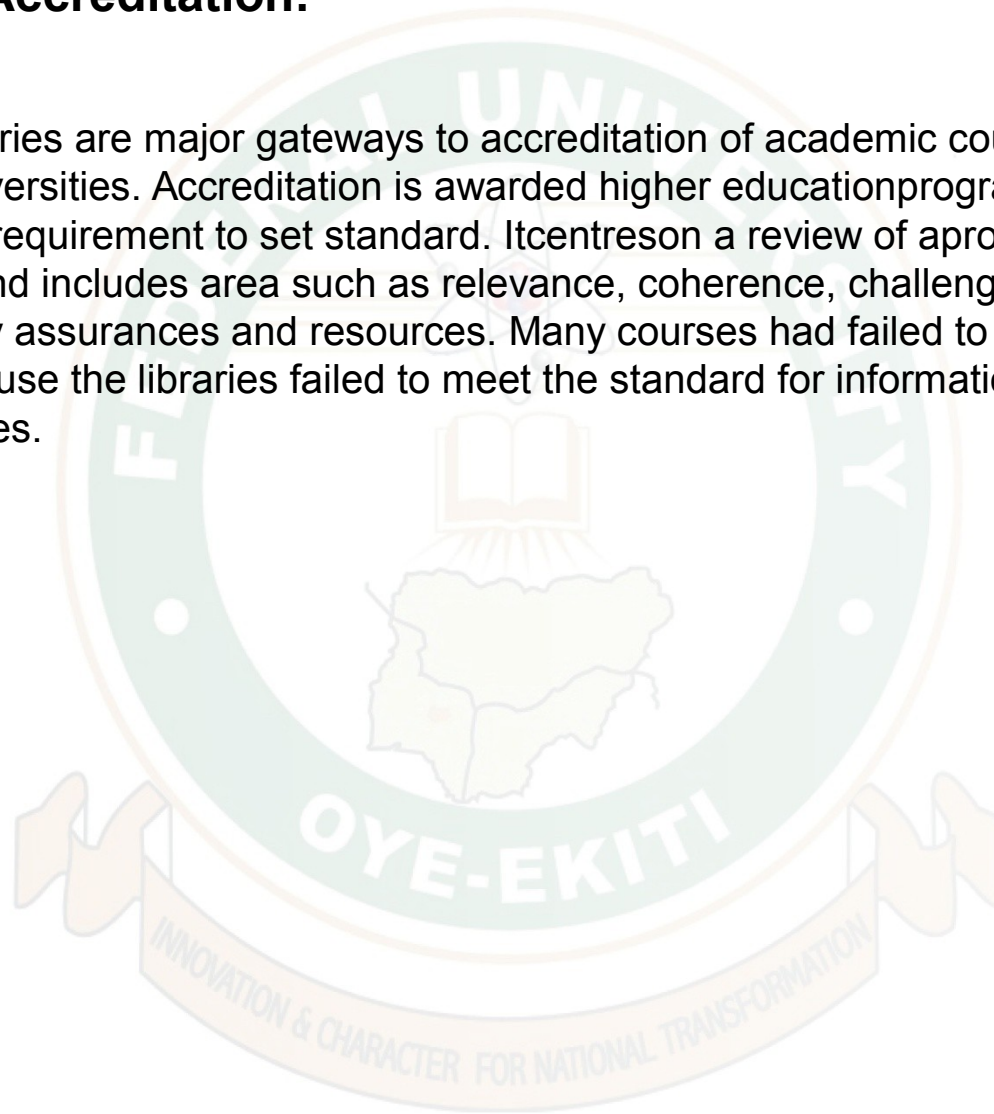
6. Provision of conducive environment for researchers

The University libraries also have the function of providing resources for research, especially for postgraduate students and faculty members. The library provides resources to support each of the teaching staff. It provides resources and serves to support each of the research projects and materials of sufficient quantity and diversity to support research of whatever kind in every subject offered in the university. University libraries do provide carrels for private study, conference and seminar rooms for various academically oriented functions.



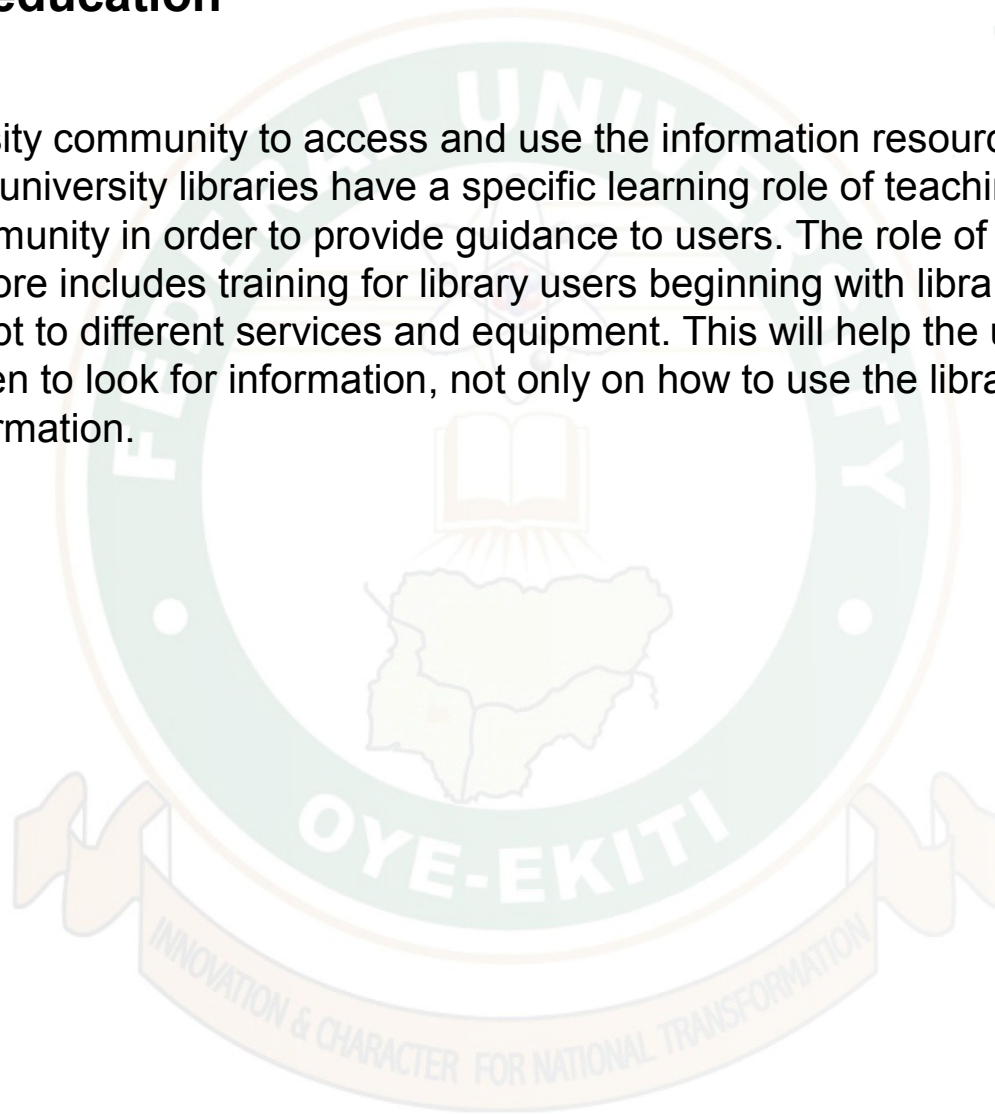
7. Programme Accreditation:

- University libraries are major gateways to accreditation of academic courses in their respective universities. Accreditation is awarded higher education programmes that meet the education requirement to set standard. It centres on a review of a programme's content and delivery and includes areas such as relevance, coherence, challenge, assessment, staffing, quality assurances and resources. Many courses had failed to be approved by NUC just because the libraries failed to meet the standard for information materials in those disciplines.



8. Library user education

- For the university community to access and use the information resources efficiently and effectively, the university libraries have a specific learning role of teaching members of the university community in order to provide guidance to users. The role of the university libraries therefore includes training for library users beginning with library orientation to help them adapt to different services and equipment. This will help the users on how, where and when to look for information, not only on how to use the library but also to search for information.



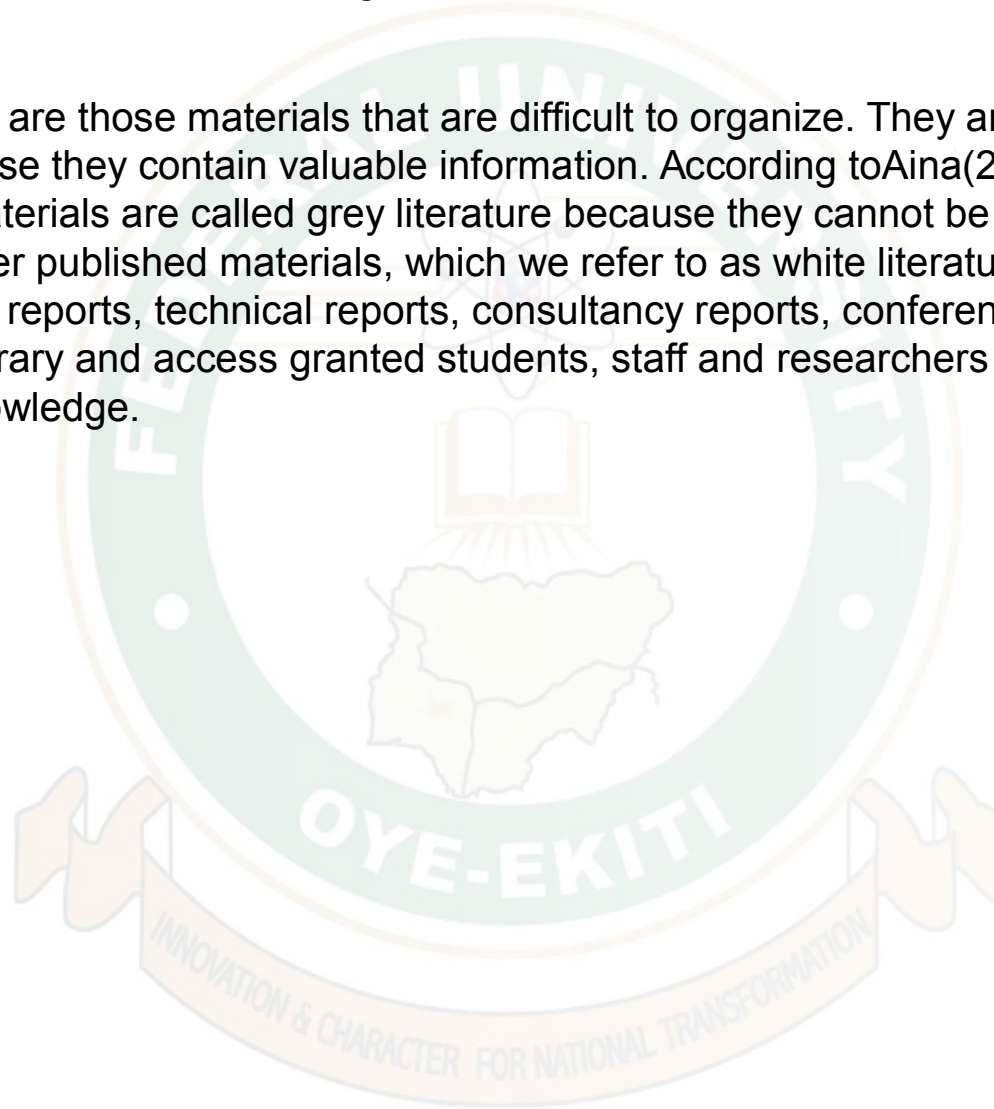
9. Training of staff and students:

- Library provides users with a range of information communication technologies necessary for retrieving information quickly from both immediate and electronic databases. So, university libraries do create avenues for the trainings of the user communities on how to access various electronic databases. Abubakar(2011) posited that with advent of the information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), the role and position of the University libraries have changed because the global trend reflects a shift from the traditional information sources to an e-environment.



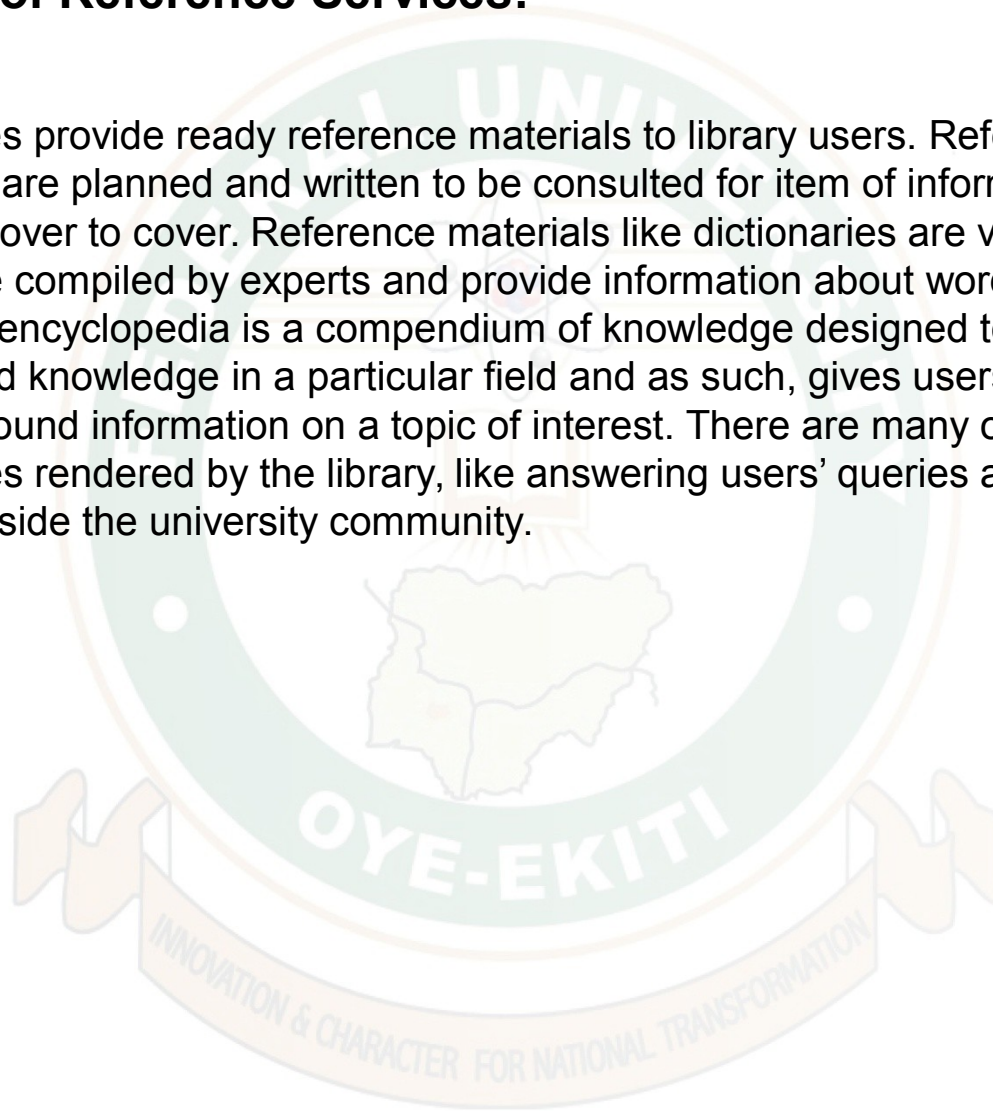
10. Provision of Access to Grey materials:

- Grey materials are those materials that are difficult to organize. They are collected by libraries because they contain valuable information. According to Aina (2013), these type of information materials are called grey literature because they cannot be easily obtained like books and other published materials, which we refer to as white literature. Grey literature include annual reports, technical reports, consultancy reports, conference proceeding acquired by library and access granted students, staff and researchers to extend their frontiers of knowledge.



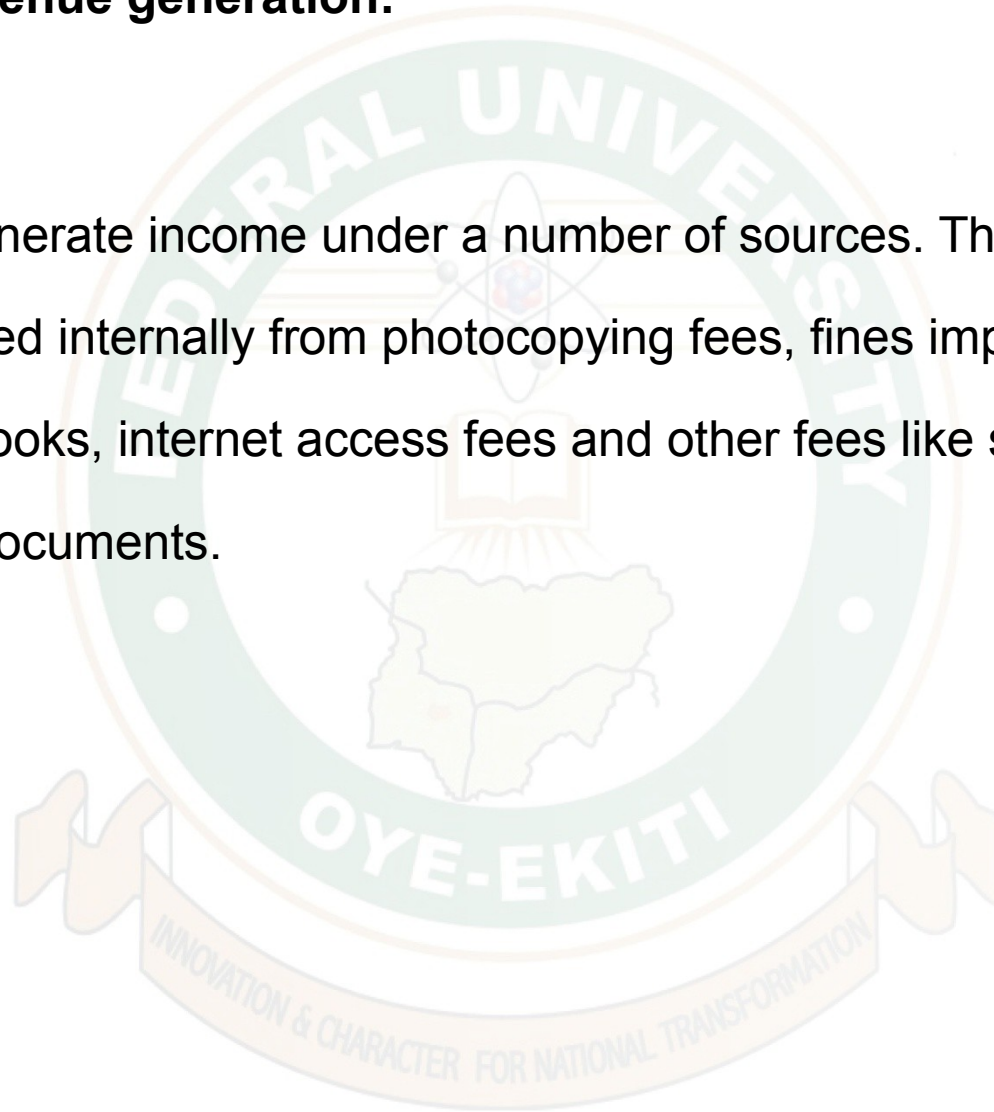
11. Provision of Reference Services:

University libraries provide ready reference materials to library users. Reference books are those books that are planned and written to be consulted for item of information rather than to be read from cover to cover. Reference materials like dictionaries are very important because they are compiled by experts and provide information about words of language. Materials like an encyclopedia is a compendium of knowledge designed to give a summary of the background knowledge in a particular field and as such, gives users useful ideas, facts and background information on a topic of interest. There are many other number of reference services rendered by the library, like answering users' queries and giving supports to users from outside the university community.



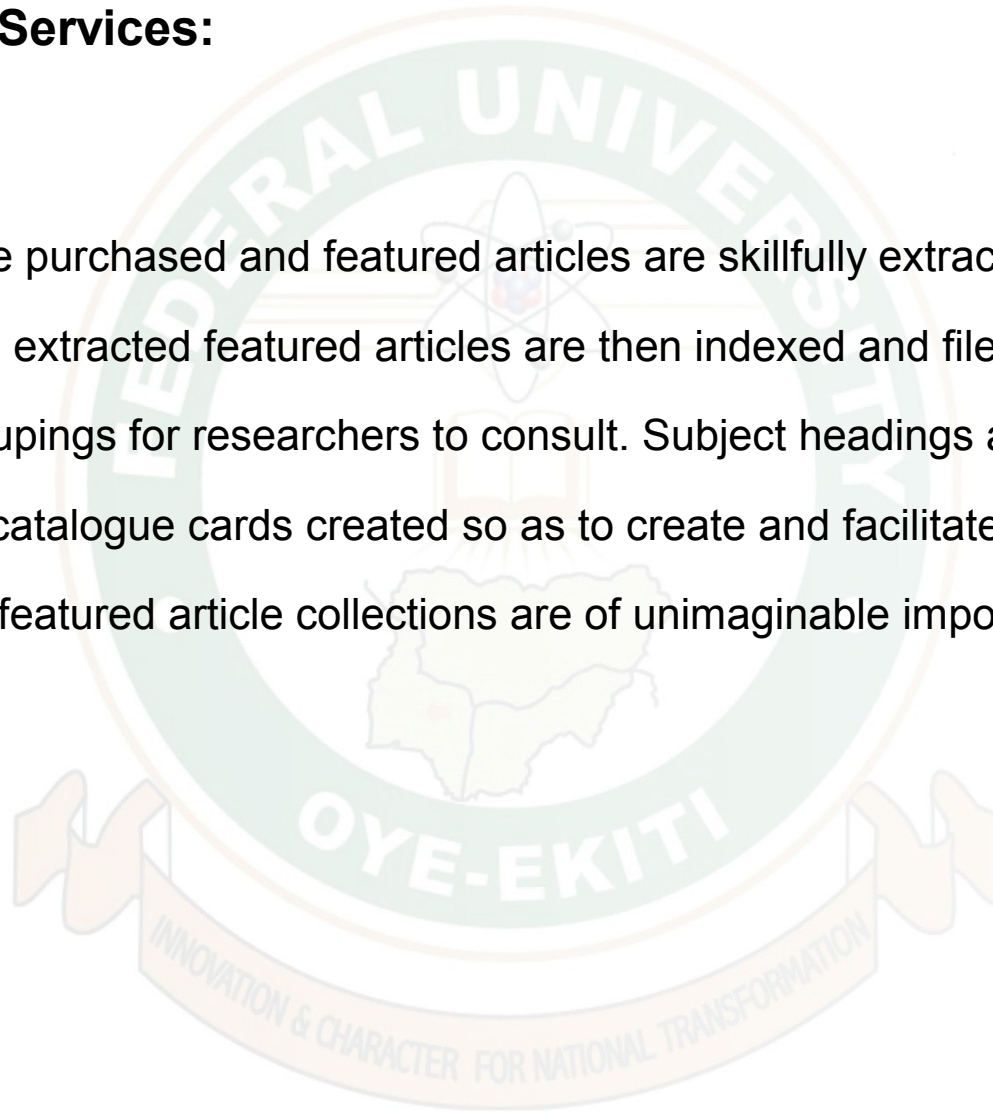
12. Internal revenue generation:

- Libraries generate income under a number of sources. These incomes are generated internally from photocopying fees, fines imposed for late returns of books, internet access fees and other fees like scanning and printing of documents.



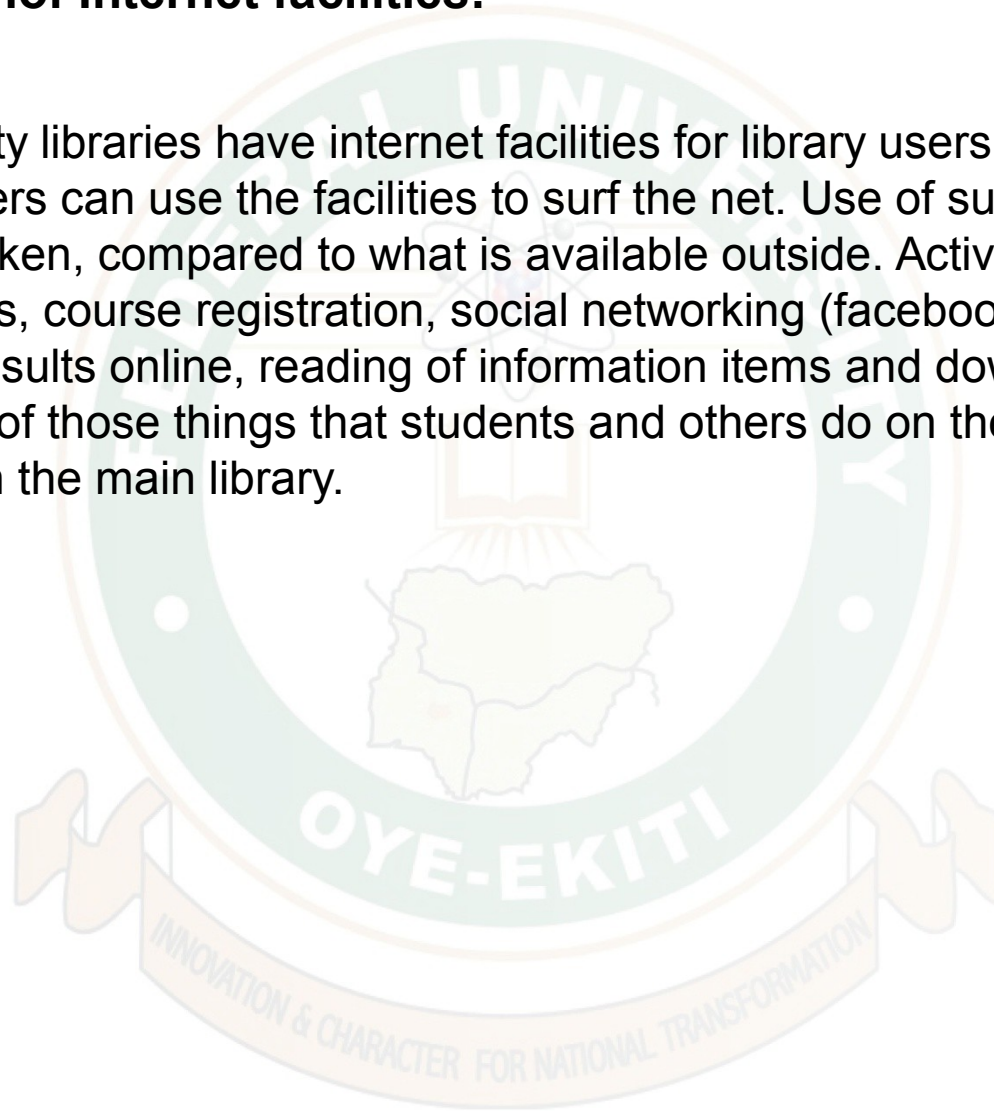
13. Indexing Services:

Newspapers are purchased and featured articles are skillfully extracted and mounted on papers. The extracted featured articles are then indexed and filed based on some predefined groupings for researchers to consult. Subject headings are created for such files and catalogue cards created so as to create and facilitate access to the materials. The featured article collections are of unimaginable importance to researchers.



14. Provision of Internet facilities:

Most University libraries have internet facilities for library users. Students, staff and researchers can use the facilities to surf the net. Use of such facility is usually at a token, compared to what is available outside. Activities, such as checking mails, course registration, social networking (facebook, twitter, etc), checking of results online, reading of information items and downloading are usually some of those things that students and others do on the net through e-libraries within the main library.



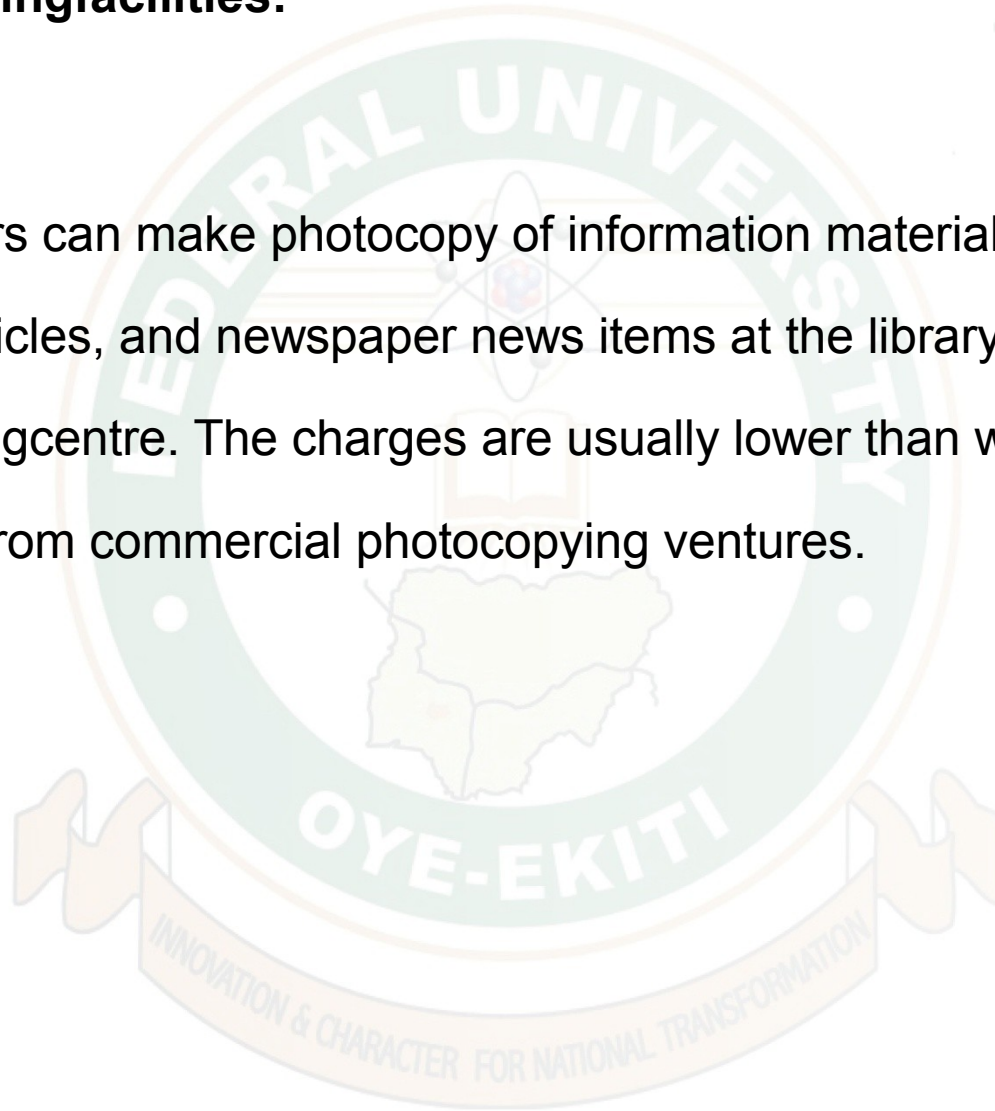
15. Newspaper and Magazines for readers:

- Libraries do buy newspaper and magazines for library user to read. Such newspapers and magazines are displayed at a designated place in the Library where library staff could monitor them.



16. Photocopying facilities:

- Library Users can make photocopy of information materials, like books, journals, articles, and newspaper news items at the library photocopying centre. The charges are usually lower than what are obtainable from commercial photocopying ventures.



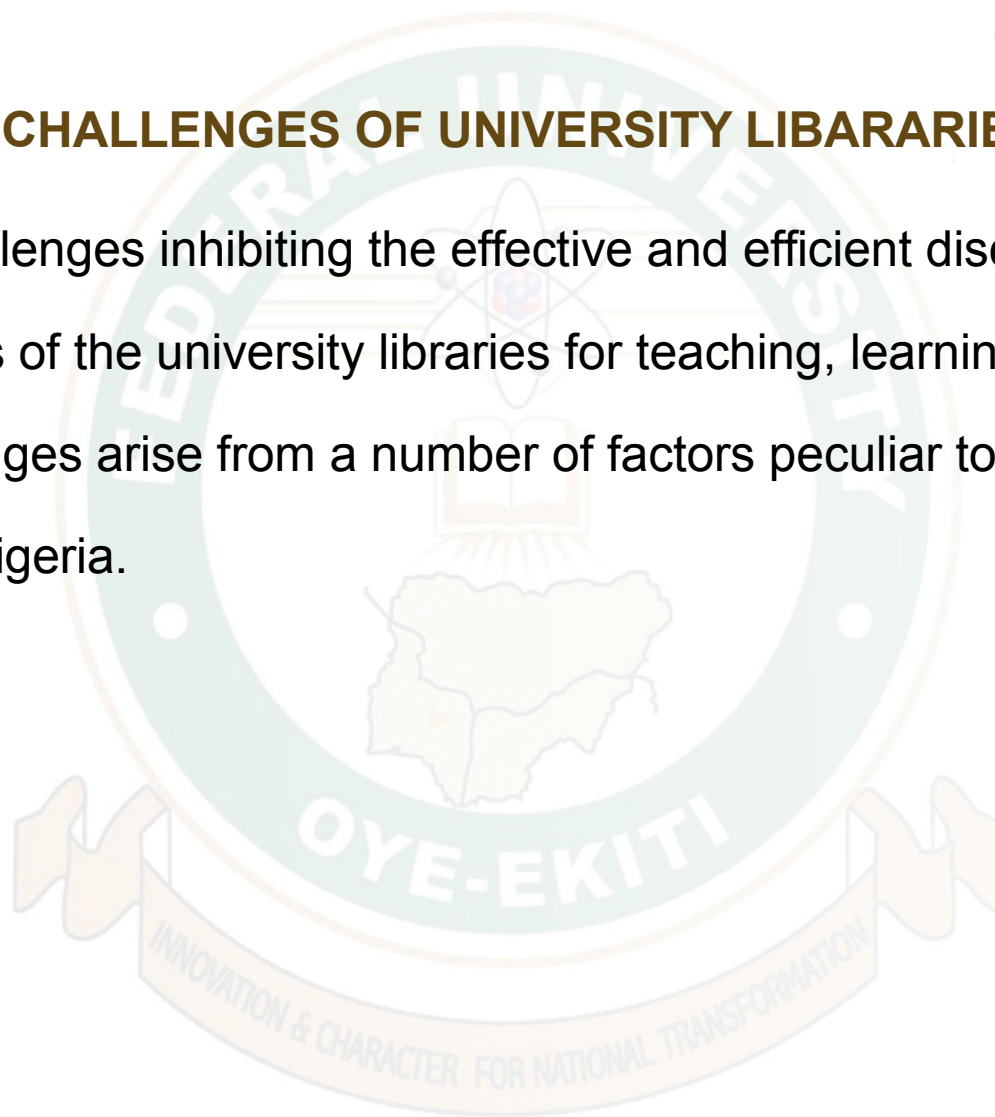


CHALLENGES OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES



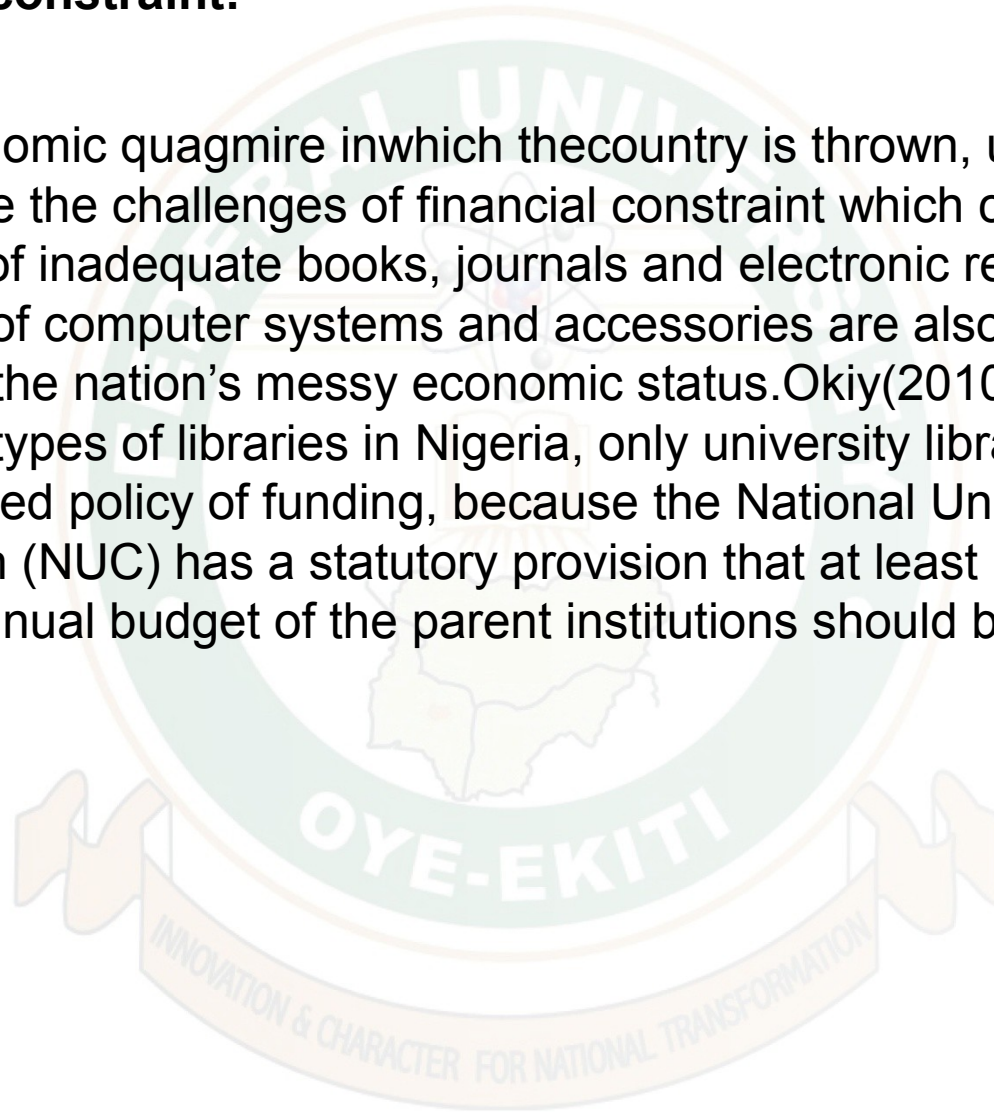
CHALLENGES OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

There are challenges inhibiting the effective and efficient discharge of the statutory roles of the university libraries for teaching, learning and research. These challenges arise from a number of factors peculiar to a developing country like Nigeria.

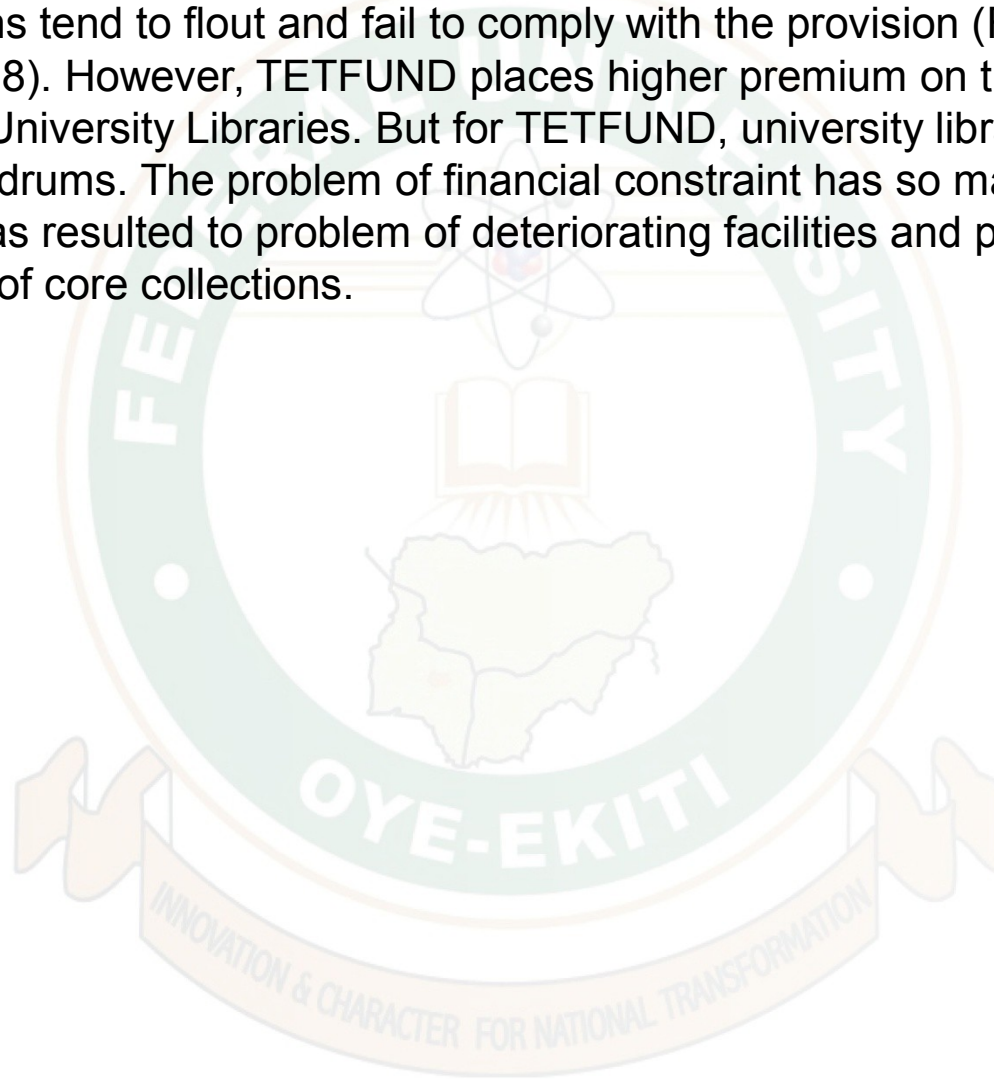


1. Financial constraint:

- Due to economic quagmire in which the country is thrown, university libraries face the challenges of financial constraint which causes the acquisition of inadequate books, journals and electronic resources. Acquisition of computer systems and accessories are also grossly affected by the nation's messy economic status. Okiy (2010) noted that of all different types of libraries in Nigeria, only university libraries have a clearly defined policy of funding, because the National Universities Commission (NUC) has a statutory provision that at least 10% of the recurrent annual budget of the parent institutions should be allocated to the library.



- However, it is regrettable that such monies are not forthcoming as most university administrations tend to flout and fail to comply with the provision (Fabunmi, 2004; Okiy2008). However, TETFUND places higher premium on the financial provision for University Libraries. But for TETFUND, university libraries could have become a doldrums. The problem of financial constraint has so many attendant effects and has resulted to problem of deteriorating facilities and problems in maintenance of core collections.



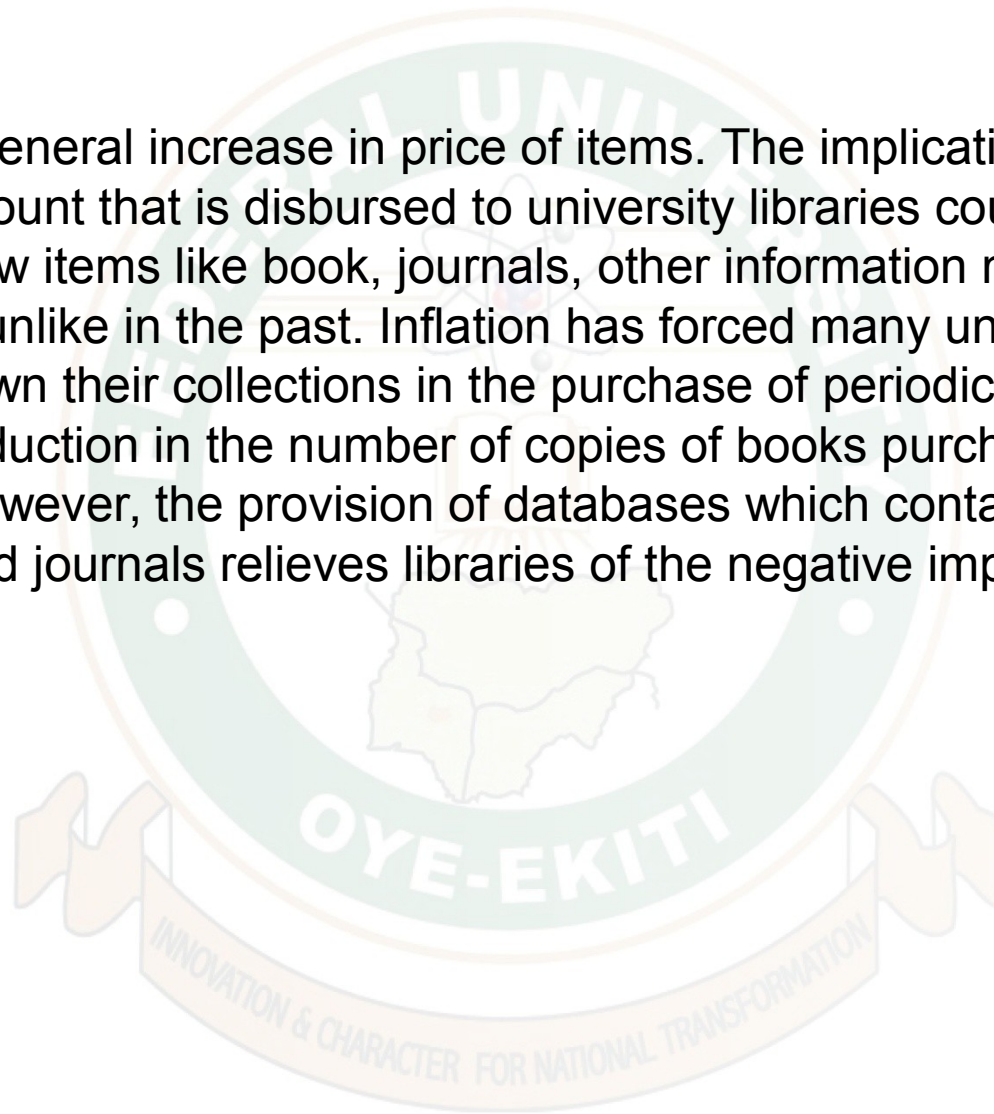


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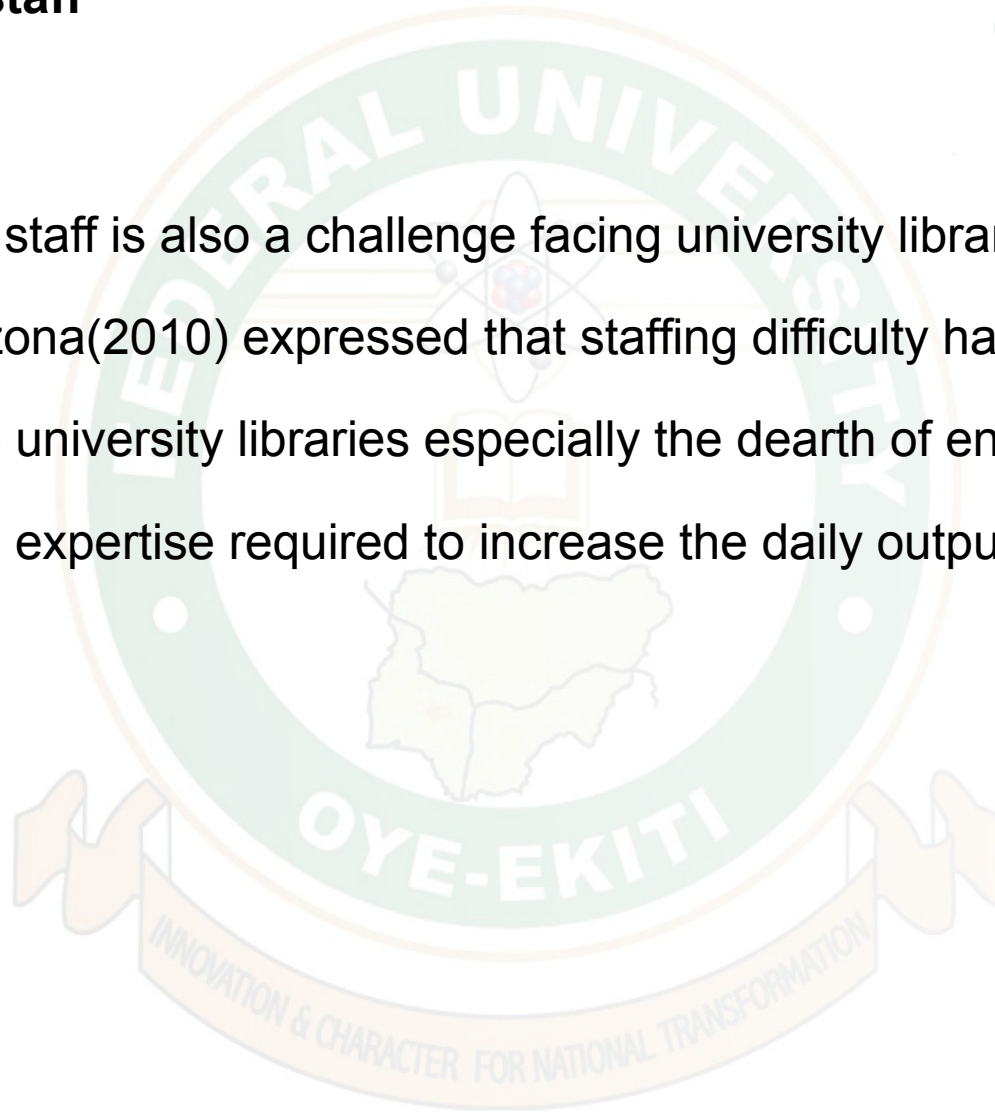
2. Inflation:

- There is a general increase in price of items. The implication of this is that the little amount that is disbursed to university libraries could only purchase few items like book, journals, other information materials and equipment unlike in the past. Inflation has forced many university libraries to prune down their collections in the purchase of periodicals/ journals and also reduction in the number of copies of books purchased in the libraries. However, the provision of databases which contains thousands of books and journals relieves libraries of the negative impacts of inflation.



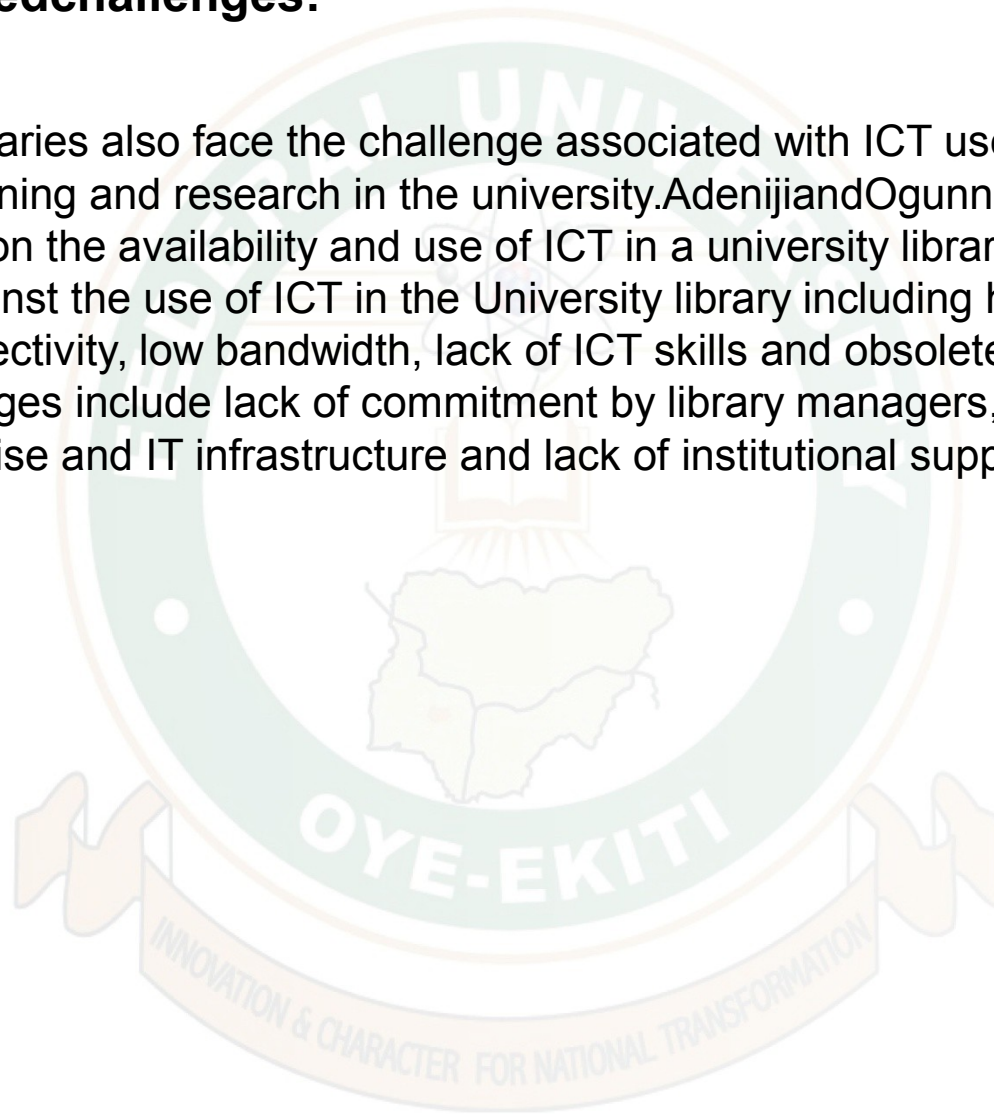
3. Shortage of staff

- Shortage of staff is also a challenge facing university libraries today. Echezona (2010) expressed that staffing difficulty has presented a challenge to university libraries especially the dearth of enough professional expertise required to increase the daily output of the library.

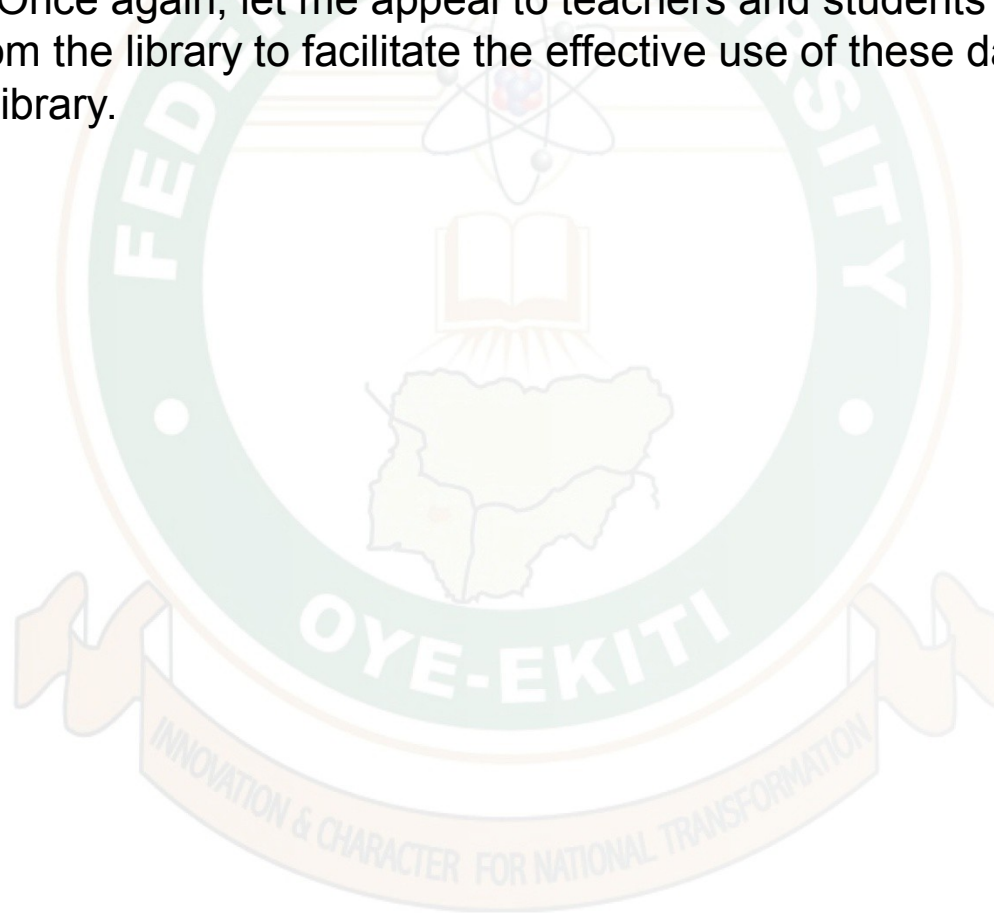


4. ICT associated challenges:

- University libraries also face the challenge associated with ICT use in facilitating teaching, learning and research in the university. Adeniji and Ogunniyi (2011) reported from a study on the availability and use of ICT in a university library that factors militating against the use of ICT in the University library including high cost of internet connectivity, low bandwidth, lack of ICT skills and obsolete equipment. Other challenges include lack of commitment by library managers, lack of funds, lack of expertise and IT infrastructure and lack of institutional support.

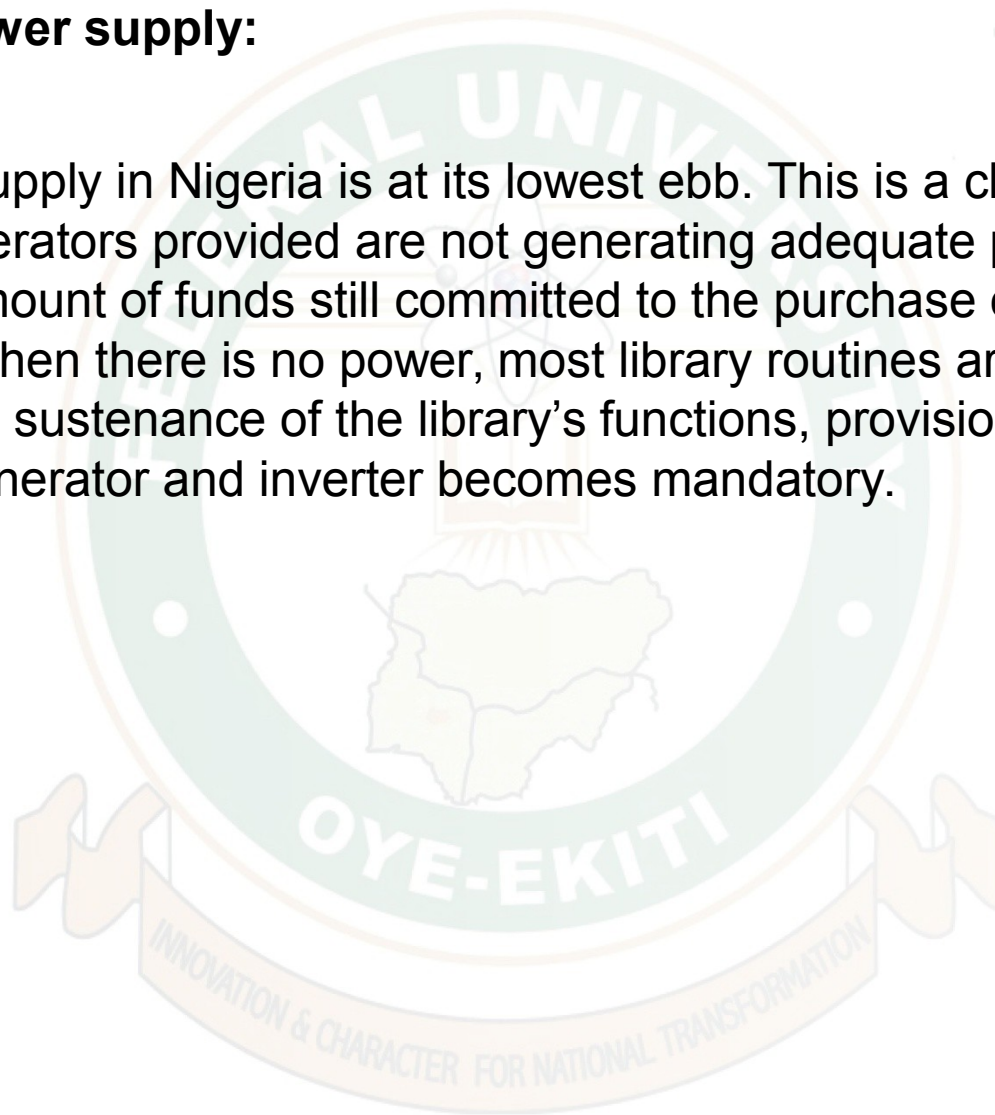


- The above submission is very true but FUYOYE is extremely fortunate with the ICT unit. The unit within one year provides the libraries with good internet connectivity. Right now FUYOYE Libraries subscribe to the following databases HINARI, MIT, E-Granary, OARE, AGORA, TEEAL. This is very spectacular. The achievement is unparalleled. Once again, let me appeal to teachers and students to obtain passwords from the library to facilitate the effective use of these databases and the NUC Virtual Library.



5. Epileptic power supply:

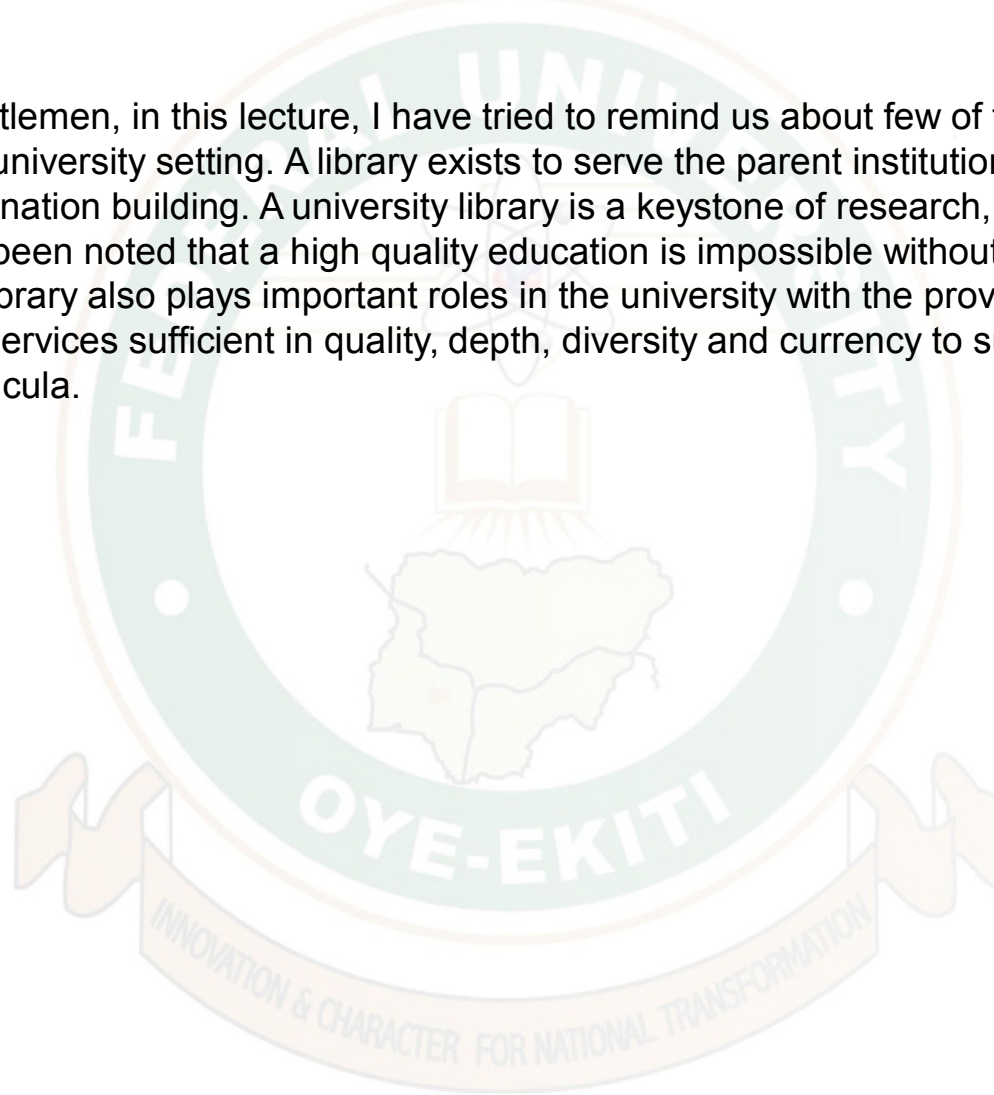
- Electricity supply in Nigeria is at its lowest ebb. This is a clog in the wheel of ICT. Generators provided are not generating adequate power. Even then, the amount of funds still committed to the purchase of fuel is alarming. When there is no power, most library routines are grounded. For the effective sustenance of the library's functions, provision of high powered generator and inverter becomes mandatory.





CONCLUSION

- Ladies and Gentlemen, in this lecture, I have tried to remind us about few of the various functions of a library in a university setting. A library exists to serve the parent institution in discharging her statutory role in nation building. A university library is a keystone of research, teaching and learning. It has been noted that a high quality education is impossible without a high quality library. The university library also plays important roles in the university with the provision of library resources and services sufficient in quality, depth, diversity and currency to support the institution's curricula.



CONCLUSION (Contd)

- The ranking of a university depends, to a large extent, on its library. It is the repository of information and knowledge (Aina, 2013). As a result of this, university libraries are often considered the most important resource centre of an academic institution (oyewusiet al, 2009) Despite the fact that a library is a major contributor to the success of any university system, it is being threatened by a number of factors as enumerated above. I do hope that the government and the university management of respective universities would wake up to its rescue and bring sanity to library institution so that its functions as catalyst to nation building would not be impaired.



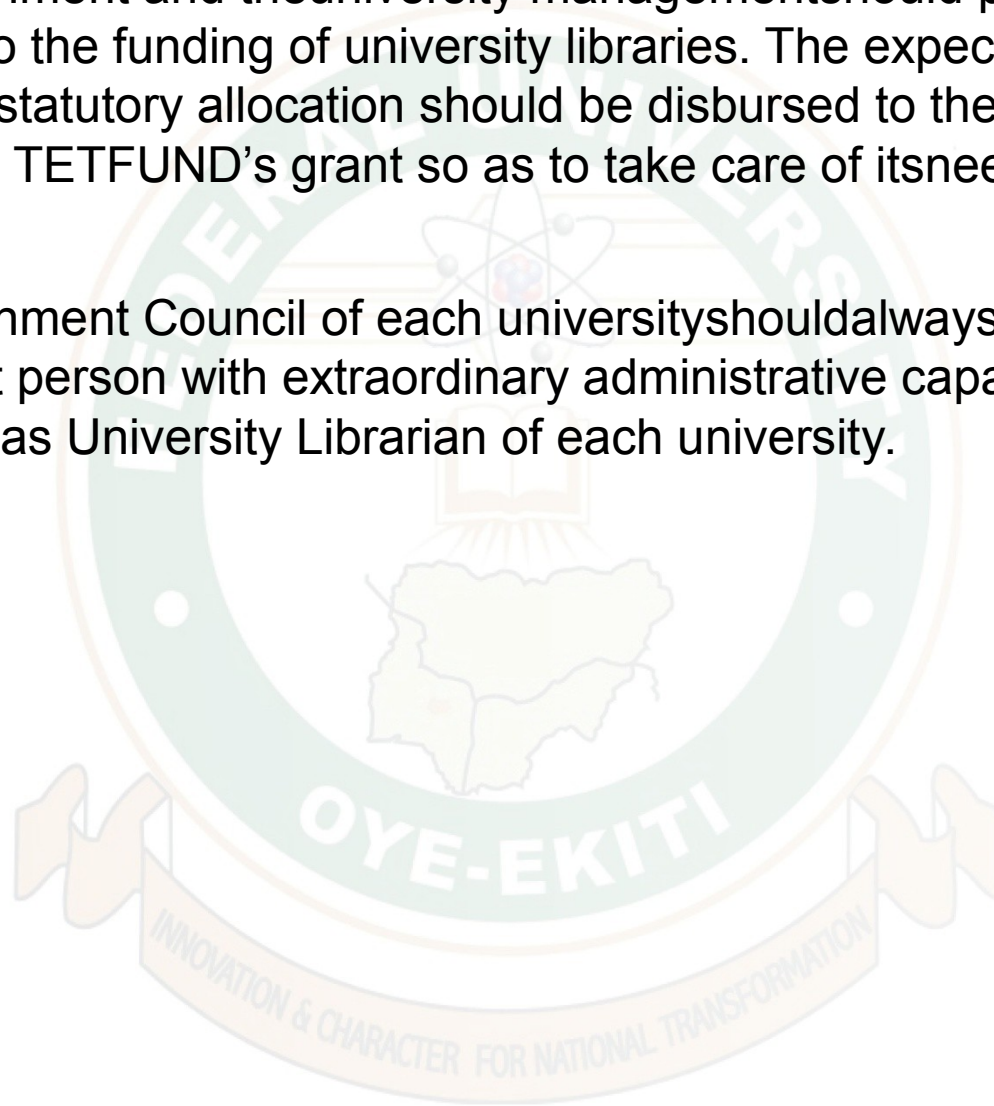
RECOMMENDATIONS

The importance of any library cannot be overlooked in any university system.

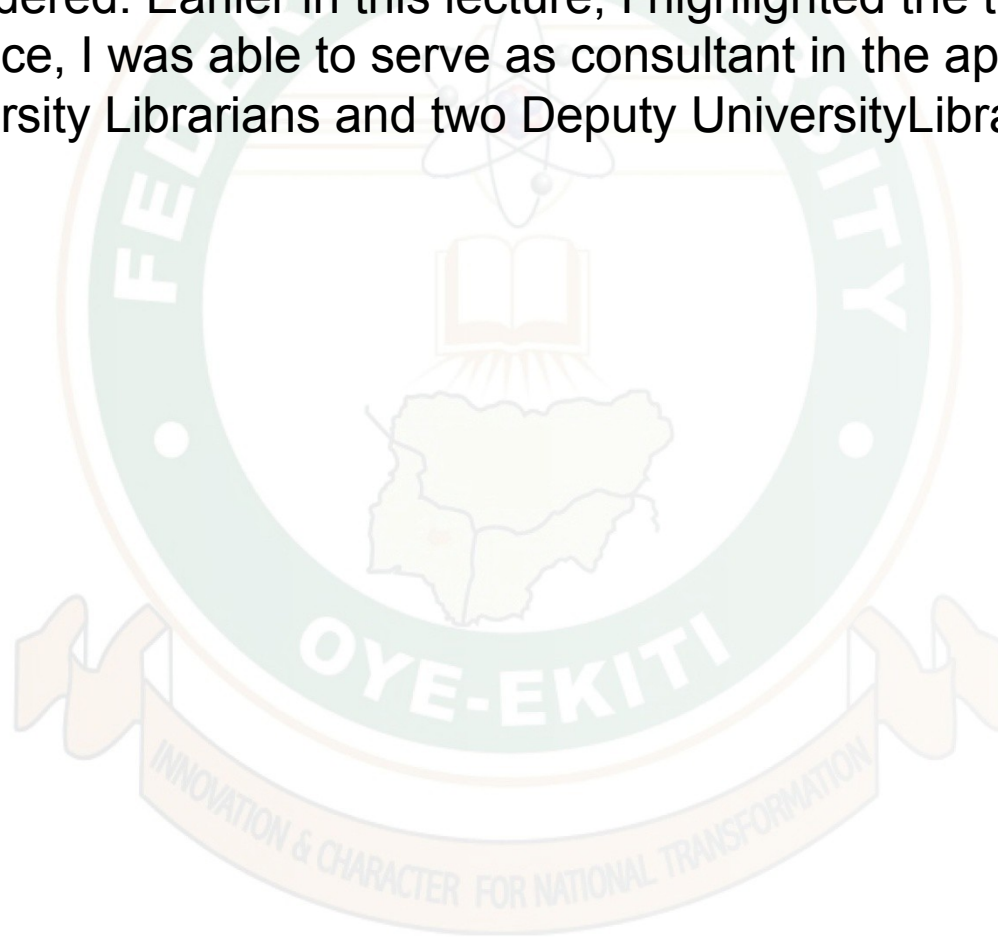
Universities and their libraries are partners in progress. To bring back the glory of libraries so as to function optimally in research, learning and teaching, I therefore make the following recommendations:



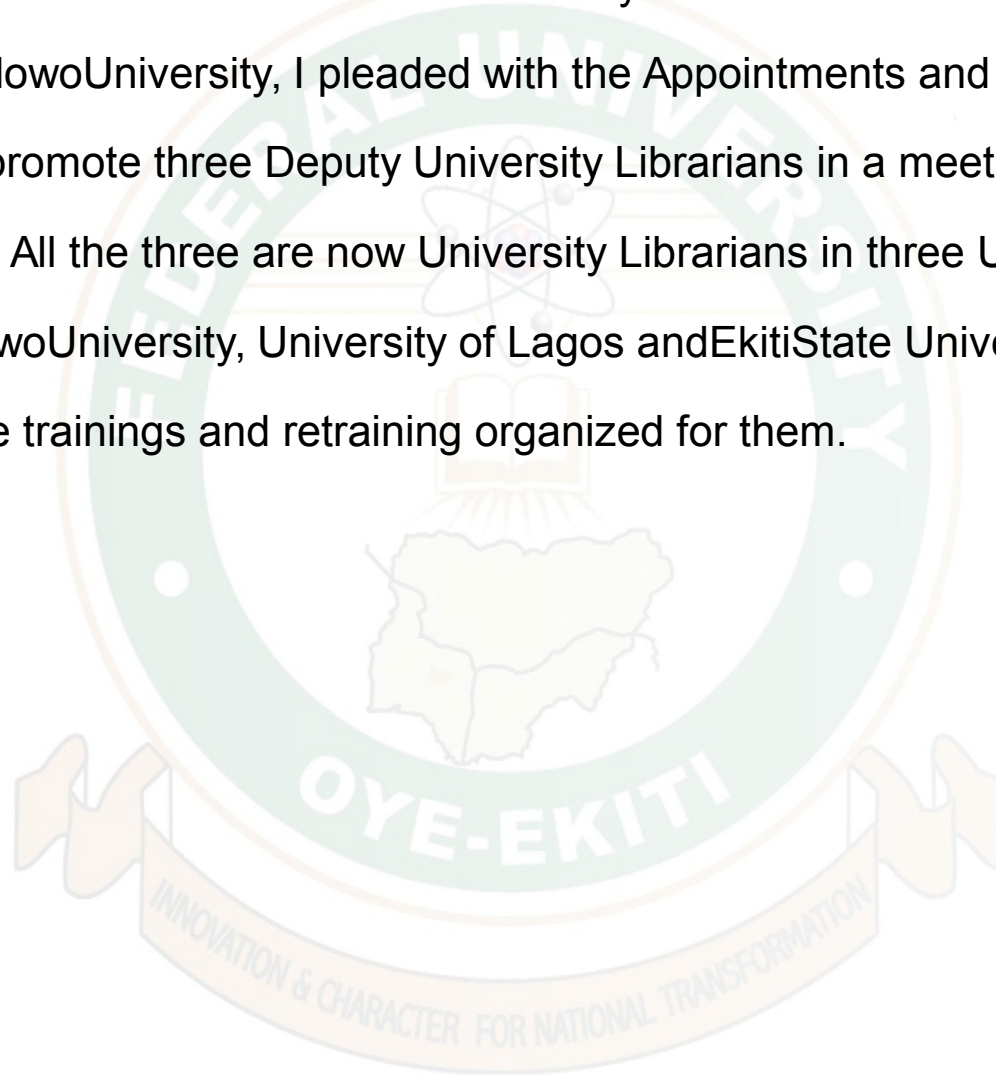
1. The Government and the university managements should pay serious attention to the funding of university libraries. The expected 10% of university statutory allocation should be disbursed to the library in addition to TETFUND's grant so as to take care of its needs.
2. The Government Council of each university should always ensure that a competent person with extraordinary administrative capability is employed as University Librarian of each university.



3. Staff development is also very essential. Librarians and the paraprofessionals should be developed on the job from time to time, because the professional quality of library personnel determines the quality of service rendered. Earlier in this lecture, I highlighted the training I received. Hence, I was able to serve as consultant in the appointment of thirteen University Librarians and two Deputy University Librarians.



Two years before I left the office of the university Librarian of Obafemi Awolowo University, I pleaded with the Appointments and promotion Committee to promote three Deputy University Librarians in a meeting. My prayer was answered. All the three are now University Librarians in three Universities- Obafemi Awolowo University, University of Lagos and Ekiti State University. This was the result of the trainings and retraining organized for them.

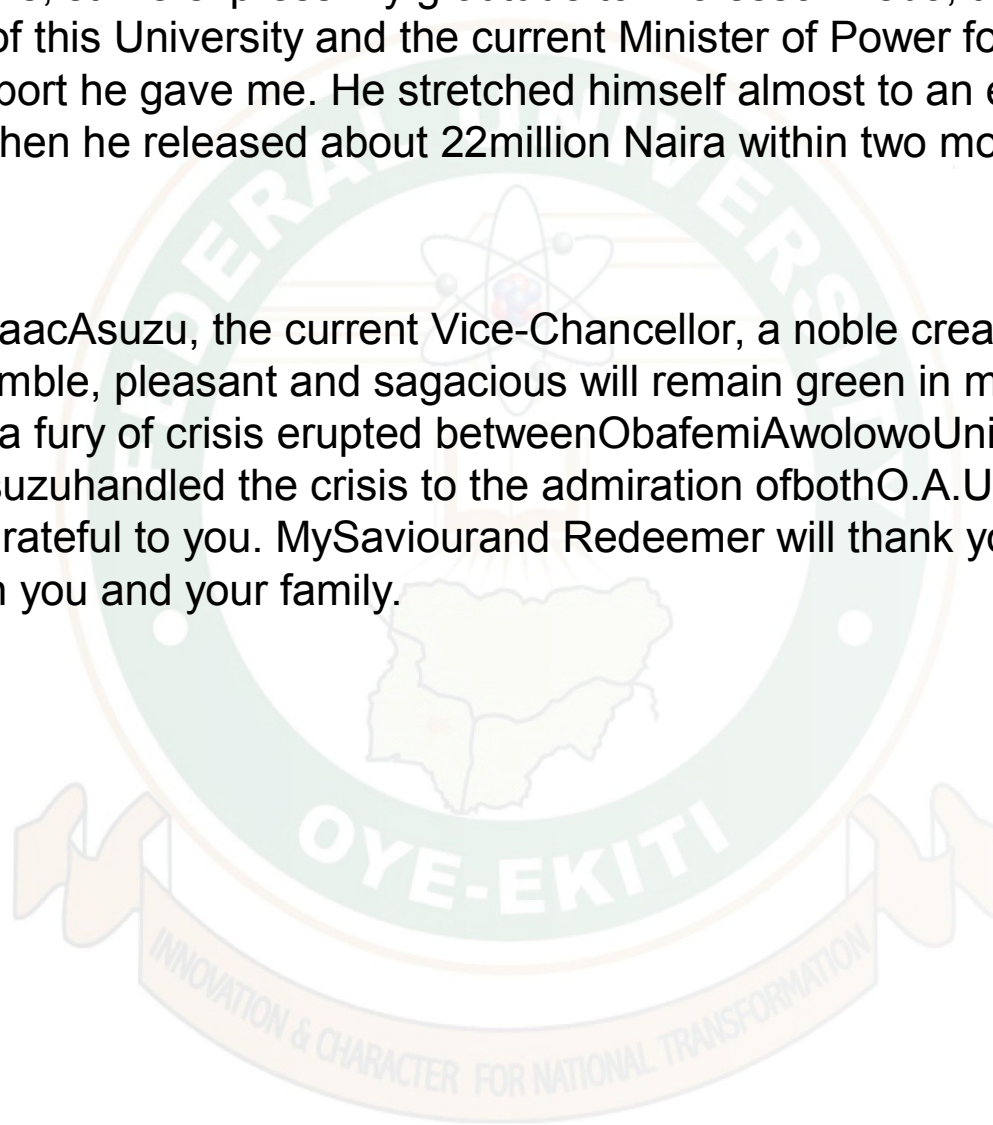




ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



- At this juncture, let me express my gratitude to Professor Nebo, the first Vice Chancellor of this University and the current Minister of Power for employing me and the support he gave me. He stretched himself almost to an elastic limit financially when he released about 22 million Naira within two months to start the Library.
- Professor Isaac Asuzu, the current Vice-Chancellor, a noble creature of God, humane, humble, pleasant and sagacious will remain green in my memory for ever. When a fury of crisis erupted between Obafemi Awolowo University and I, Professor Asuzu handled the crisis to the admiration of both O.A.U and I, Sir, I am supremely grateful to you. My Saviour and Redeemer will thank you and shower his blessings on you and your family.



I will be failing in my duty if I fail to acknowledge the laudable contributions of the following diligent, hardworking, competent and committed men of honour to the development of FUIOYE Libraries.

- **The Ag Registrar, Mr. D.A.Adeyemo**

Since my first contact with him, I find him extremely helpful, attending to library matters with dispatch successfully. Highly reliable and forthright.

- **Professor. Chris Bolu, Director of ICT**

He worked relentlessly and commendably to build the FUIOYE's Virtual Library on very solid foundation. Within one year, the Library's OPAC assumes an efficient level. Books in the library could be retrieved within seconds. The internet connectivity is impressive. We now subscribe to the following databases: E-Granary, TEEAL, HINARI, AGORA, OARE, and MIT. All these databases have access to about 13,278 journal titles while Google and E-Granary have access to over 62,000 books. We passionately appeal to both students and academic staff to effectively use the facilities.



- **Dr. O.O.Fasoranti, Ag. Dean, Student Affairs**

Through Dr.Fasoranti's friends, weeded books from some libraries in the U.S.A. found their ways into FUOYE's Libraries. We still find at least about 20% of the books relevant. We are sincerely grateful to him.

Finally, I wish to put on record my deep appreciation to my members of staff for their punctuality, hard work, commitment, and high integrity. I commend them all.





Thank you all.

