



THE UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY SYSTEM



THE JOURNEY CONTINUES...

Edited by:

**Benedict A. Oladele
Christopher O. Ola**

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

KENNETH DIKE LIBRARY

DEDICATION

**THE UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY
SYSTEM: THE JOURNEY CONTINUES...**

Edited by

Benedict A. Oladele
University Librarian (2006 – 2016)

and

Christopher O. Ola
Deputy University Librarian

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CONTENTS

Dedication		iv
Foreword		xiii
Preface		ix
Contributors		xv
1	The History of Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan: The Genesis <i>Ojo, R.A.</i>	1
2	Administration in Kenneth Dike Library: 1948-2016 <i>Adetoun A. Oyelude and Beatrice A. Fabunmi</i>	21
3	Kenneth Dike Library: An Overview <i>Kikelomo Kayode-Edebor</i>	35
4	Kenneth Dike Library (KDL) Users in Historical Perspectives: A Statistical Study of Use and Users' Behaviour Over Time <i>Akinde, Taiwo Adetoun, Oseghale Osagie and Okoroma, Francisca N.</i>	51
5	Architectural and Physical Development of the Library <i>Olayinka C. Fatoki and Cecilia O.B. Adewumi</i>	65
6	Library Setbacks <i>Eguavoan, O.E.L. and Akande, S.O.</i>	71
7	The Story of the First Academic Medical Library in Nigeria: The E. Latunde Odeku Medical Library in Perspective <i>Helen O. Komolafe-Opadeji</i>	83

8	Important Landmarks and Dates of Relevance to the Library <i>Bolarinwa M. Adeyemi and Cecilia O.B. Adewumi</i>	95
9	Activities of the Systems Unit in Brief <i>Ojo, R.A., Dumebi Otulugbu, Titilayo C. Ilesanmi Agwu, P.U. and Alonge, A.J.</i>	101
10	An Evaluation of Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan: 1948-2011 <i>Josephine U. Igbeka</i>	111
11	Kenneth Dike Library: Now and Beyond <i>Ola, C.O.</i>	141
	Index	163

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

2

ADMINISTRATION IN KENNETH DIKE LIBRARY: 1948-2016

Adetoun A. Oyelude and Beatrice A. Fabunmi

Academic libraries are libraries attached to tertiary institutions. These include universities, polytechnics and colleges of education. Academic libraries remain the heartbeat of the institutions which they are set up to serve. They are designed to make use of the institutions' resources to achieve their aims and objectives, and are run by people whose jobs are to make the goals achievable.

Aguolu (1983:6) sees the university library as the most important organ of the institution, with the academic health, intellectual vitality and effectiveness of any university depending largely upon the state of the health and excellence of its library. Libraries from ages past have been indispensable agents of information gathering, organizing, storing, retrieval and dissemination and, in reality, university scholars and some outside users depend on university libraries for acquisition of knowledge (Fabunmi 2004:147).

Administration, by the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2006) is "the people who plan, organize and run a business, an institution, etc." It also gives another definition as "the process or act of organizing the way that something is done". Different organizations and different schools of thought have viewed administration differently. Some view administration as an art, while some view it as a science. Those who regard administration as an art believe that the administration like art (painting, drawing, etc.) belongs to those who have the natural gifts, traits or abilities for it, and that a good administrator does not depend on training or mastery of any special techniques of administration, but by possessing the essential traits of administration. While those that view administration as a science view it as technology that is, a matter of applying administrative principles and rules to the solution of management or organizational problems. Nwakwo (1982) asserted that exponents of administration as a science contributed immensely to the development of administrative

practice; however it is not all administrative issues and problems that can be reduced to the rule of the thumb.

Management is another term often used interchangeably with the term 'administration'. According to Fabunmi (2000), the word management has three interpretations or approaches. They are the process approach, sociological approach and field of study approach. Process approach views management as the use of resources through team efforts to accomplish the organizational goals. It performs the functions of planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling. Sociological approach views management as a class of elites that runs the affairs of an organization. This definition regards only the top executives as management. The field of study approach is concerned with how organizations are administered with planning, administration, supervision and evaluation as its branches.

Some elements of management identified by various scholars are, goal definition, planning communication, organization, measurement and evaluation, and reporting (Ifidon 1999; Oyelude 2004: 124-125). Others see management as having four functions: planning and strategizing, organizing, leading, and controlling (Gomez-Mejia & Balkin 2002:5-6).

Library Administration

The importance of administration in the society of today cannot be overemphasized. Administration has become a crucial function in all highly organized societies, and the need for administration has been found to be essential especially when there are complex assignments to be performed and two or more people are involved. Any attempt to describe administrative activity on the surface would be dangerous, since it is obvious that much of what it contains will probably be left out. In most cases, administrative work is concerned with facing a variety of crises or tasks by virtue of which a man decides not whether a task exists but rather which task should be given priority over others.

Library administration is the control and supervision of a library or library system, including planning, budgeting, policymaking, personnel management, public relations and

programme assessment with responsibility for results (Reitz 2004). Library administration implies the arrangement of human and material resources available for the library, and carefully using them systematically for the achievement of library objectives. The library administrator performs the functions of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling. Etebu (2010) essentially sees library administration as being effective when there is adequate communication among all staff in the planning, controlling and other activities in the library, and also with the library clientele or users.

Administrative or management styles of libraries differ depending on the organization that set it up and therefore, the management team consists of people who combine and use library resources to achieve the goals of the parent organization. These people must have a system with which to conduct the affairs of the library. Okon (2005) identifies two components within the administrative structure of the academic library - the collated information in written, printed and electronic format, and the intellectual tools i.e. skills such as cataloguing, indexing and reference work. The interplay between the two components, that is, the knowledge base and the skills used by the persons in charge are what makes the library administration.

Since the teaching, learning and research (TLR) functions of the university is crucial and the library that serves it should also meet the goals of the university it serves, there is the need to examine the administration of Kenneth Dike Library with a view to see how far the library has been assisting the university to perform its functions and also to examine the challenges to library administration.

University College Ibadan Library - The Early Years

The administrative history of the University College Ibadan (UCI) Library, as it was then, began with the headship of William John Harris in 1948. The collection of the University of Ibadan academic library, now the Kenneth Dike Library collection started with the Yaba Higher College Library collection and has been built up since 1948. It has steadily been growing to fulfil that early

determination of the first principal of the University College then, Kenneth Mellanby thus expressed: "Whatever else we do I am determined that we have at least a good library" (Harris 1968).

The library administration started functioning from a temporary wooden building at Eleyele, the old site of the University. The University founded with 201 students enrolled in 1948, moved up gradually and became fully Federal in 1962, and by 1985 had an enrolment of 13,862 students (Baiké & Omoreigie 1989). Odularu (2000) put enrollment at inception at 104. The University currently has about 20,000 students enrolled.

From the Eleyele site, the University was moved in 1953 to its current location under the university administration of Dr. J.T Saunders, and a year later, the library moved under the library administration of John Harris. At the old site, there were 12 (twelve) library staff distributed to different sections of the library—the reading room and the lending department, the reference room, cataloging, accessioning and orders department, and the bindery and photographic department, in addition to the university librarian himself, John Harris. The organogram in 1948 would have been somewhat as depicted in figure 2.1:

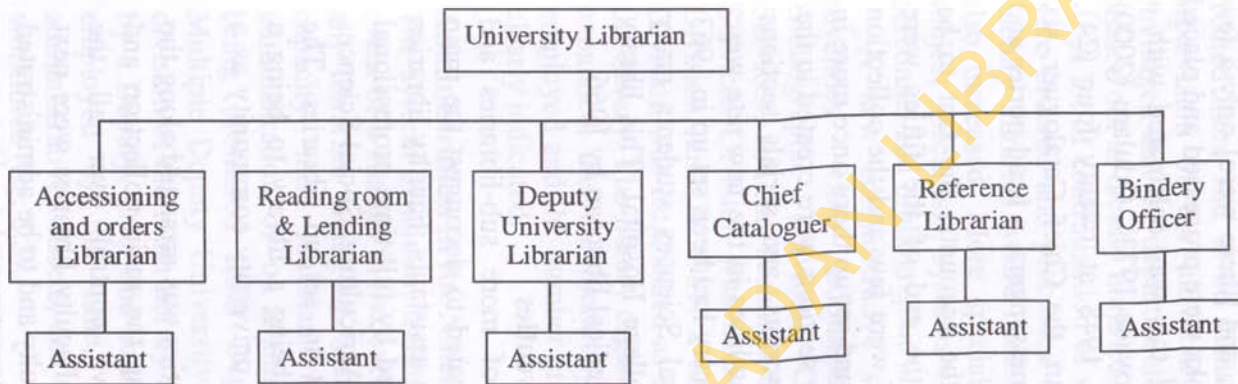


Fig. 2.1: UCI Library organogram, 1948.

The librarian himself "spent most of his afternoons cataloguing books" because a lot had to be done, and [there were] only a few staff to do it". 10,000 volumes of books were processed and placed on shelves by December 1949, and this was celebrated with a dinner party for all library staff (Aboyade 1973). Odularu (2000) however puts the staff strength in 1948 at twenty four (24), consisting of the University Librarian, the Chief Cataloguer, six typists, six full-time assistants, four messengers, a head porter and five student assistants.

In spite of these disparities in the accounts, the fact to be gleaned is that the late forties to the end of the fifties were administratively trying since the staff were few and the collection had to be set up, moved to a new site and set up there once more in more spacious facilities. By 1954 new sections were created in the library—the Africana, Arabic, manuscripts, and serials sections were created. In 1969, the physical facilities in the new site were expanded. Before then, the medical library had been set up in 1963 as a sub-library to serve the Medical Sciences students many kilometers away at the University College Hospital. This library was fully managed by a professional medical librarian by 1966.

Administration in the Sixties and Seventies

The sixties saw the springing up of more sub-libraries and departmental libraries. These were created to decongest the main library. They were managed by library assistants. Faculty libraries were also set up and were administered by full-time professional librarians. The Faculties of Medicine, Agriculture, Social Sciences and Education were among the first to set up libraries. The University Library thus moved from being a library to being a library system of libraries serving the university community as a whole.

Library administration in the seventies was arranged along the lines of the university library (housing the main collection and maintaining centralized administrative control over all the university library resources); then the Faculty libraries were next with a collection to serve the whole faculty and to be administrated by full-time professional librarians; Departmental reading rooms

with collections to serve the departments in the faculties that created them and to be managed by library assistants under the supervision of the university library (Aboyade 1973). It was envisaged that the departmental reading rooms would gradually be phased out as faculty libraries developed and expanded.

A lot of centralization of services was ensured as all materials were ordered and processed by the main library and sent to the Faculty libraries where necessary. This trend continued and staff also increased. More specialized staff were employed, that is, subject specialists, systems analysts, information and technology personnel and bibliographic and indexing specialists.

A new administrative structure therefore emerged in the seventies when administrative divisions were created: Bibliographic Services, Collection Development, Readers' Services, and the Technical Services divisions. The Bibliographic Services Division was later merged with the Reader's Services Division, and in 1987, a new division, the Special Collections Division was established as it could no longer be just a section in the library. The library organogram (see fig. 2.1) had become fully expanded, and the hierarchy of library staff and various cadres employed and the number employed in the various positions were clearly indicated.

Administration in the Nineties

The system of administration did not change so much, but in the event of a change in the overall head i.e. the University Librarian, any librarian taking on headship was usually head in an acting capacity until substantively appointed by the university administration, or on attaining a certain career level for example, being promoted from Deputy University Librarian position. Multiple Deputy University Librarians had emerged, with each division of the main library and the Medical Library being headed by a Deputy. Over one hundred and seventy (170) staff had been employed by this time, with support staff like secretaries, administrative officers, and technical personnel joining the library workforce (fig. 2.2).

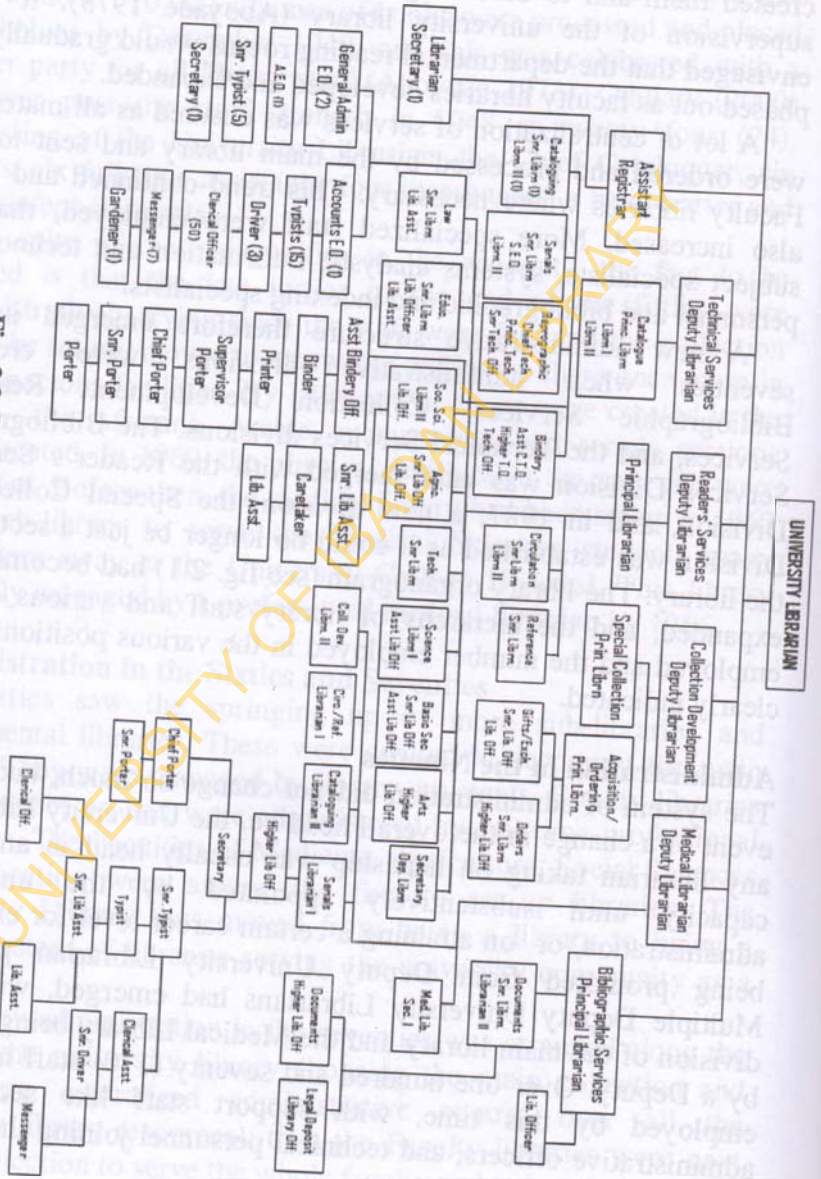


Fig. 2.2: University Library organizational chart.

In 1995, under the administration of Mrs. O.G. Tamuno who became university librarian in 1988 (after Mr. F.O. Aramide who was Librarian in Acting capacity from 1987 to 1988); a committee was set up to review the university library structure. The committee recommended that the library should be managed using a committee system. Five committees were therefore set up to do this. They were the finance, equipment, building and grounds maintenance, automation implementation monitoring committee, and the library forum committee. In 1997, weekly library management meetings were commenced. All Heads of Division were members of the committee. This committee system enabled more staff to become involved in library administration (Tamuno and Toye 1998). The university librarians since Mrs. O.G. Tamuno have used the system successfully.

Since the onset of the new millennium, more committees have been set up as the need arises and many projects have been executed in the library which ordinarily would have been difficult to manage without the input and hard work of members of the various committees.

The University Librarian was represented on some Committees or Boards even outside the library system e.g. Faculty Boards. The resolution of issues concerning the library at such meetings are reported to the University Librarian who uses the information in making changes or taking decisions for the improvement of the particular Faculty library or the whole university library system.

Challenges to Kenneth Dike Library System Administration

The library administration has undergone some changes in the last ten years or thereabouts, not only in terms of headship but also in terms of staffing (for example, staff members retiring from service and only a few being replaced). The population of the university has increased tremendously and so have the demands on the library. Administration is becoming a bit more complex with the expansion of some Faculty libraries, creation of new Departmental libraries and no simultaneous recruitment of staff for the library system. Also lots of expertise is needed as the technologies used in libraries are upgraded. This is a challenge as more skilled hands are needed.

It is also envisaged that some divisions in the library like the Special Collections Division which had been closed down (technically merged into another division) over a decade ago, due to lack of staff and the necessary expertise will be reopened and the ability to provide better services to library users will be ensured. As it is now, the Deputy University Librarian (Readers' Services) as it used to be some decades ago has been performing double roles as Deputy University Librarian (Readers' Services/ Special Collections), taking care of two divisions as it were.

The various administrative segments of the library system are varied and in this case sometimes far apart, but still able to coordinate and perform well above board. A top-down, bottom-up system of information flow seems to be the key to the success of this system. This sort of communication flow has been advocated by Etebu (2010).

A general internal appraisal of the library administrative system reveals that decisions taken at committee meetings are well debated before being accepted and these are disseminated to the generality of staff through memos, divisional, sectional, faculty and departmental meetings. There is room for feedback in the hierarchy as each member of staff can pass opinions to their unit, or sectional heads.

Adequate information flow is not always achieved however, and sometimes this is a challenge. Some sectional heads do not promptly pass information to their staff, and sometimes it is discovered that it is through no fault of theirs. The reason often adduced is that they themselves did not receive the memos in good time, or even not at all, and had to rely on the library grapevine for needed information. This situation is further compounded by the campus wide and even off campus spread of the Faculty and Departmental libraries, with no messengers to deliver mails.

Unrest within the University community, student's protests in the university generally and also Staff or Union protests have been major challenges faced by successive library administrators over the years. These challenges have been surmounted with the administrative and negotiating skills of the management team of the Library most times. They usually find ways of appealing to staff and students for to avoid disruption and/or destruction of the library and its facilities.

A group of librarians at a committee meeting in the Conference room of the Kenneth Dike Library in 2006 once expressed the desire for a positive change in the administration to what they termed a “hybrid University library system”, i.e. an ideal university library administration that would be sensitive to the needs and desires of staff, students and users of the library and which would provide the necessary automated library system that is found in developed countries. The “suggestions for improvement” that they made then are still in the files, some portions of it being slowly implemented. There is hope that the history which will be told after this will even paint a better picture.

Conclusion

The history of Kenneth Dike Library administration is here told, and kudos goes to all the people who have “combined and used library resources to achieve the goals” of the University of Ibadan, particularly to the following University Librarians who have managed the affairs of the library from 1948 to date:

Mr. W. J. Harris	1948-1967
Mr. K. Mahmud (Acting)	1968-1971
Mrs. Olabisi T. Oderinde	1972-1987
Mr. F.O. Aramide (Acting)	1987-1988
Mrs. Olufunmilayo G. Tamuno	1988-1998
Mr. J.E. Ikem	1999-2003
Mr. S.S.A. Odularu (Acting)	2003-2004
Mrs. Adejoke O. Scott- Emuakpor (Acting)	2004 – Aug. 2005
Dr. Georgina D. Ekpenyong (Acting)	September 2005 – June 2006
Dr. B.A Oladele	2006 – 2016

It can be concluded that the administrative flag has been flying high and it should definitely be kept flying high. The collated information in the library and the administrative skills of the library personnel are being adequately utilized to provide the basis of attaining excellence, and the presentation of a world-class library to support the vision and mission of a University aspiring to remain the “first and the best”.

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